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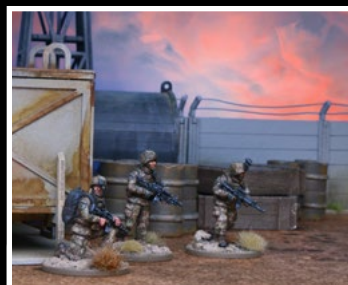
Changing history on
the wargames table



ISSUE 405
SEPTEMBER 2021
UK £5.50



VICTRIX NORMANS
A painting guide



RAID ON FIERY CROSS
Covert action in the South China Sea

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INSIDE



PLUS: THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR * KITBASHING YOUR FREEBIE FIGURES AND MUCH MORE

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FROM THE EDITOR

If you can play the guitar, music can become interactive. You are no longer just listening to music, you're taking part in it. If you play a wargame, you can make history interactive. You are no longer just reading about it, you're re-enacting it, and at the same time wargamers are seeing and manipulating what might have been. Rarely do players choose to refight a carbon copy of a battle, which means just about every wargame ever played is a 'what if', making this month's theme content very easy to compile, but tricky to introduce, beyond the obvious "all games are 'what if's so away you go".

We decided that for our introduction to 'what if' (see page 32), we would ask several different gamers what 'what if's mean to them and how they go about choosing them and turning them into gameable tabletop actions.

That introduction is accompanied by several articles with a 'what if' angle, taking you from the streets of medieval Paris to the South China Sea in the 21st Century. We are also pleased to present several excellent painting and modelling articles this month, covering big guns, French Railway Stations, Normans, and this month's freebie figures.

Happy reading and rolling.

Dan Falconbridge
Editor and Owner

Cover Artwork: Steampunk Redcoats by Neil Roberts.

Below: The Leper Terrorists of France. Turn to page 50 to see what that is all about!



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"THE OUTRAGE AT JEDDO" 78



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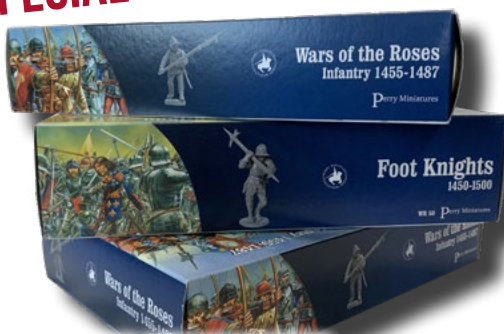
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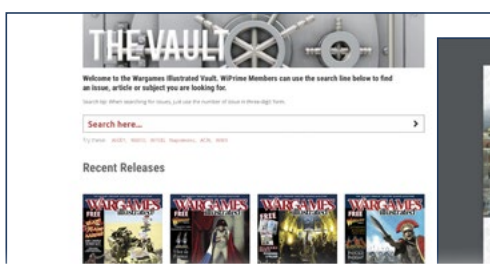


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When it was commissioned, Imperial Research Station 37 was home to nearly 10,000 scientists and researchers working on a vast array of biological and chemical projects. Then, six months before the outbreak of the war, Station 37 went dark. No escape pods were launched and all attempts at communication went unanswered. Only a solitary, repeating broadcast filled the silence: "This station is under quarantine – do not approach". When the war came, the station was forgotten, left to drift lifelessly in its empty system. Now, in the aftermath of the Last War, Station 37 has been rediscovered and its broadcast heard once more...

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QUICK FIRE!

Short, quick-read posts from *W* readers about their hobby projects, notes, news, and observations.

A HALF-BAKED IDEA!

By Bill Witthans

As someone likely to starve without my good wife watching over me, you can imagine my wife and daughter's surprise, several years ago, when they caught me watching the *Great British Baking Show!* [AKA *The Great British Bake Off* - Ed]

I found the show fun to watch, interesting to see how these baked works of art were created, and frankly I could listen to the dictionary being read to me if it was done with an English accent! Little did I know that I would learn some things I could use in the wargaming world ...

I make a lot of terrain. While making a damaged Sphinx model for a friend, I thought about what a pain it was to spread out filler onto the base while creating the underlayment for the drifting sand. I use Durham's Rock-Hard wood putty often; it can be messy and a bit troublesome when trying to apply it quickly in a controlled manner. It spreads well when very thin, gets into cracks, but won't hold shape or stay put. When its thicker it is hard to spread out evenly, retains brush marks, and starts to set.

I spent a few days on other projects, but in the back of my mind I wondered about a new way to apply the filler. Then, bingo! I thought back to the show and how they used icing bags when decorating cakes - would it work with wood putty?

A quick trip to the market and I had a dozen plastic 'icing cones' for \$6 US. I mixed up a fist-sized batch of filler, scooped it into the icing bag, rolled and clipped the bag end closed, cut the other end off, creating about a ¼ inch hole, and I was ready to go.

To apply it you simply point the open tip where you want filler and squeeze the bag! Wow, just like a tube of toothpaste, it worked better than I had hoped.

Who would have thought that watching *The Great British Baking Show* would make one a better model maker? It just goes to show, you never know where that next cool trick will come from!



TIPS FOR USING AN ICING BAG WITH FILLER:

- Varying consistency of the mix, thicker or thinner, helps in control and flow.
- Roll from the "fill" end pushing material towards the tip. Like a tube of toothpaste!
- Small clips are useful to close each end.
- A few soft flat brushes and water can help in moving or smoothing out applied filler.
- A small amount of PVA wood glue added to the mix makes the putty even harder!
- Bags are reusable when cleaned out quickly.



28MM POCKET ARMIES

By Norm Smith

For too long, I have been torn between enjoying the aesthetic of the 28mm figure, but having a table that at its most extended is just under 6' x 4', making a smaller scale the more sensible choice. Perceived wisdom is that on the kitchen / dining table, 28mm best serves skirmish games, with smaller scales serving anything that we might think of as a 'bigger battle'. However, my interests straddle that divide, perhaps formed in those teenage years when Airfix armies quite happily roamed the domestic table, fighting the 'small big battle'.

I have always enjoyed the look of the Impetvs style basing, though it is generally applied along the lines of 120mm bases for 28mm figures and 80mm bases for 15mm.

A few years ago, while at the Phalanx wargame show, the Liverpool Wargames Association put on a demo game covering the battle of Hastings. It was set out on a 4' x 3' table, units were based on 100mm bases and a DBA type variant was in play. It looked beautiful, ticked all of my boxes, and I was sold!

After some pondering, I took the plunge; so far, the effects and gaming realities have been quite pleasing. The 80mm base still looks quite 'unit like', but also fits with the description of 'element' for those that prefer that label. For the first outing, the 80mm scheme has been applied to 28mm Wars of the Roses armies, with bases at 60mm depth for the melee troops and 50mm depth for the missile troops and skirmisher types. Cavalry are on 80mm square bases. Generally, nine or ten infantry figures go onto a melee base in a slightly unformed style, eight or nine on a missile base, and three light cavalry or four heavy cavalry on their respective bases.

Grouping these into a line of three melee bases, with three missile bases out in front, together with an extra element of support such as a spear / pike unit, artillery, or mounted sorts, makes for a nicely sized formation that has enough presence to bring out some tactical nuances. With three such formations per side, giving a centre and two flanks, the armies sit neatly within the limitations of the dining table.

At the moment, I am using *Sword & Spear* rules by Great Escape Games, which recommend around 15 such bases per side on a standard 6' x 4' table or eight on a 4' x 3'.

I have already turned some attention to the Napoleonic era, with two 80mm bases forming the battalion. Each base has two rows of five figures, so there are a total of 20 figures to the battalion.

Having two bases allows the formations of line, assault column, and square to be easily represented. One limitation is that units will always be visually the same size, so for those who want their Austrian, Prussian, or Russian units to look bigger, this will not be the ideal solution, but my intention is simply to mark such units as large and accord them the various advantages that brings, usually more staying power.

I won't be applying an 80mm standard to all of my armies, for example my ACW regiments are formed from three 50mm bases with 18 figures double ranked, but overall, I am aiming to collect several 28mm 'Pocket Armies' from different periods of interest, with unit frontages that have been tamed to work within the home setting; at the moment, it is working for me.



A SHOWCASE OF 60MM MACEDONIANS

By David Lycett

In 2016, quite by accident, I saw some 60mm figures on a forum and enquired about them. They were made by Expeditionary Force of Singapore, and as they were Macedonians (I'm a fan of Alexander) I bought a couple of boxes just to see what they were like!

The rest is history. I was hooked and have spent the last 5 years building up a Macedonian and Persian army. 2021 has seen my dream come to fruition and the results of my labour are shown in the photos.

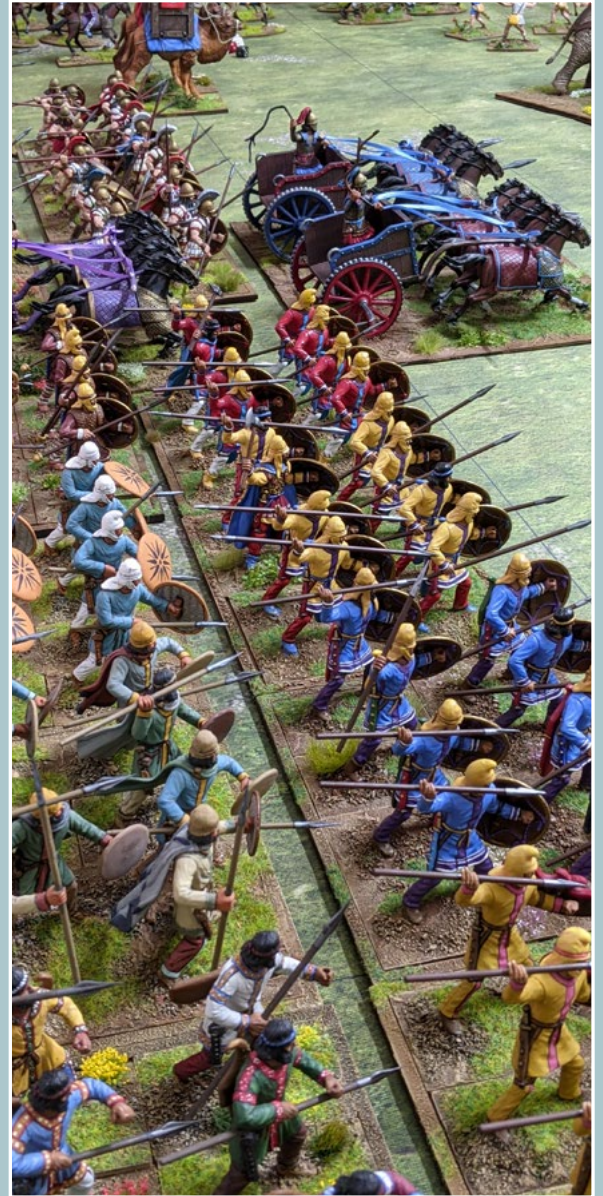
I was also fortunate in meeting Simon Miller and Andrew Brentnall of *To the Strongest* fame and have joined in their participation games at the Partizan shows, which are always an inspiration and great fun.

So, I have the figures and the rules, though the photos of a game in action here are actually of a battle played using the *Bello Ludi Ancient* rules by Peter van Dop - another enjoyable set of rules.



So, why 60mm? Well, apart from enjoyment of the period and the excellent quality of the figures, I think the photos show the size and spectacle one can achieve with 60mm figures. I'm also lucky in that I have a permanent 10' x 6' wargames table. I can just about fit all the figures on it!

So, with these done, no more projects ... But wait a minute, Expeditionary Force do some lovely Mediaeval figures, as well as Romans and Celts, and later this year are set to produce some Biblical Wars figures - all in 60mm. Oh dear!



MORE **QUICK FIRE!** PLEASE!

Send us your Quick Fire! pieces and get yourselves a FREE magazine or Giants in Miniature figure.

Please get in touch with a photo or two and less than 500 words of text about anything similar to what you have seen in this column. So that's painting or modelling projects, rules, wargaming notes and observations.

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OBSERVATION POST

NEW AND FORTHCOMING 'WARGAMES STUFF'
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ARK ROYAL MINIATURES - MID-LATE 17TH CENTURY SHIPS

Barry Hilton of Warfare Miniatures/The League of Augsburg has expanded his 17th Century passion from land to sea over the last 12 months. First came a 'trial version' of a new set of naval rules, *Mad for War*, and now we have an impressive release (14 packs) of 1/1200 scale metal ships for the mid-late 17th Century, covering the Anglo-Dutch Wars.

With ease of assembly an obvious goal, the smaller ships come as one-piece casts. The larger flagships and warships have their mizzenmasts and jib sails attached, but the mainmasts and foremasts require assembly - you'll need to plug and glue them into place on the hull.

The models we have for review include the first two English flagships: *Sovereign of the Seas* and *Royal Prince*, the latter being the world's first three-deck fighting ship. Both are sold together in a 'ship pack' priced at £21.50 (\$32 US).

Smaller ships, like the pictured 38-gun *Indiaman*, *Crompster*, and Dutch *Fluyts* come in packs of three to eight. Again, these models come in 'ship packs', priced at £21.50 (\$32 US), with the option to purchase 'squadron deals' of three ship packs for £56.00 (\$96 US).

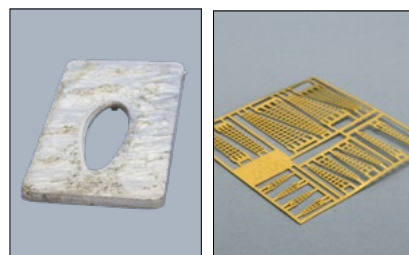
Fine sculpting, casting, and historical accuracy are on display across the range. It also includes some nice optional extras in the form of ratlines and shrouds made of etched brass sheeting, and it is made to measure. Sculpted metal bases are also available.

The market for 1/1200 scale ships of this period isn't exactly crowded, so the introduction of a promising new range is very welcome, particularly one that is price comparable and has launched with so many available options.

The models are being marketed under the moniker of 'Ark Royal Miniatures by Warfare Miniatures' and are available from the Warfare Miniatures UK and US website.



Above: *The Royal Sovereign* in component form. It comes with two longboats, which can be fitted to the hull or pulled at stern.



Above: Metal base and very neat brass etching are added extras.



Above: *Prince Royal* - looking ship shape!



Above: *Sovereign of the Seas*.



Above: *Dutch 38 Indiaman*.



Above: *Dutch Crompster*.



Right: *Dutch Fluyts*.

OFFENSIVE MINIATURES – “JEDBURGH” TEAM

New from Offensive Miniatures, an addition to their Elite catalogue, is a “Jedburgh” Team. This set of four figures joins the Offensive Miniatures British Paras range and represents the teams of specialists who parachuted into France during WW2. Over 90 ‘Jed’ teams joined the fighting in Normandy in the later stages of the war, and Jedburgh Teams are an HQ choice in the recent *Bolt Action* Campaign book *D-Day: US Sector*. This is a timely release then!

Included in the set are three men in action and a radio operator. They come at 28mm scale and look realistic, with well-proportioned details and slender weaponry. They’ll fit in nicely with figures from other 28mm ranges, and should you want to match them up with *Bolt Action* figures, they sit well alongside them. There are slight discrepancies in the scale of some weaponry, but only the most obsessive will even notice it on the gaming table!

The ‘Jed’ teams typically consisted of three men - commander, executive officer, and non-commissioned radio operator - so here we get a bonus model to offer some extra variety.



Above: The full four figure “Jedburgh” team.

The casting is pretty good, but there’s a strange taint to the colour of the metal on some figures - a rather unsightly brown. It is particularly noticeable on the radio operator who is so ‘browned’ that he looks like his nerve has failed him on the battlefield! This, of course, will not be visible once figures are painted, but it makes for miniatures that look a bit lower in quality when fresh from the blister. There’s fine detail and a distinct lack of flash or mould lines on the casting, so it is a shame that the discolouration is present to give us slight cause for concern about the actual metal quality.

Looking specifically at the figures, they are a characterful bunch. They’re hefting a good bit of kit around, which is just right for their behind enemy lines infiltration. Weapons included offer up a good mixture - there’s the standard-issue M1 carbine and holsters for their Colt automatics, but there’s also a Thompson and a Sten gun resting next to the radio.

Though they’re in the British Paras range, the Jeds were a mixture of military personnel from Britain, Canada, France, and the US and they were involved in operations in the Netherlands and South East Asia too - you have a good bit of potential to work these into your force. If you play *Bolt Action* and want to focus on France and the Resistance, then these will be a way to bring an elite aspect to your otherwise rather rag-tag group of Partisans.

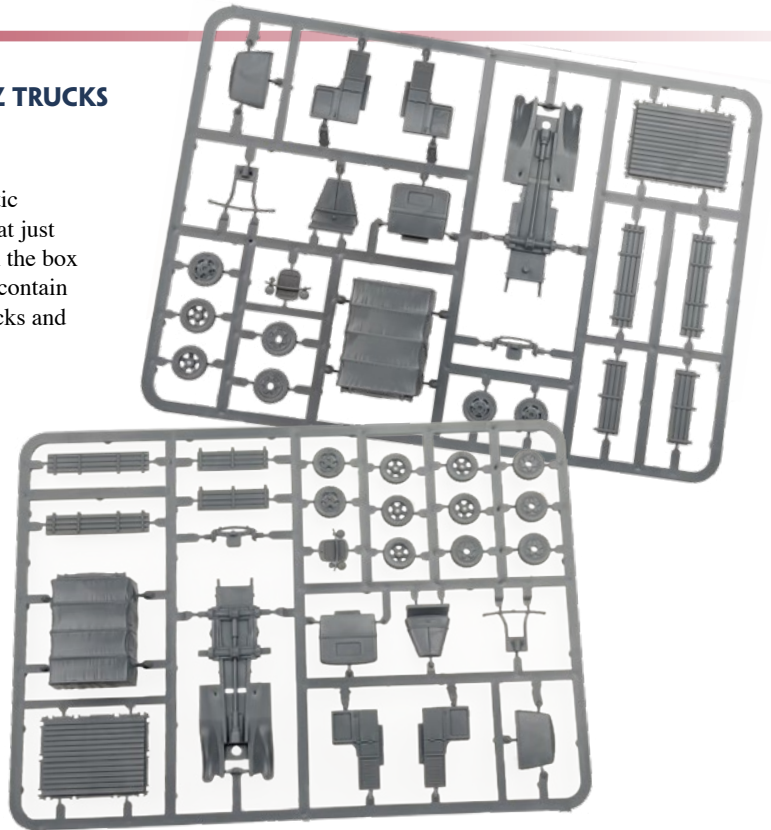
If we ignore the ‘soiling’ present on his uniform, the radio operator is a very cool figure. He’s squatting down and using the Type B Mark II radio (also known as the Jed Set), which has been recreated with a good bit of detail. These sets, a means of communication with Special Force HQ in London, were essential in the Jeds’ war efforts; you’ll probably want to use this figure when using the *Bolt Action* ‘Supply Co-ordination’ special rule to boost the firepower of your Maquisards.



THE PLASTIC SOLDIER COMPANY - RUSSIAN GAZ TRUCKS

A nice little set from PSC here - this box contains six plastic Russian GAZ trucks at 1/72 scale. The price averages out at just £5 (\$7 US) each, so quite a bargain per model. Included in the box are six frames (actually three frames but split in half) that contain all of the parts you'll need to construct three GAZ-AA trucks and three GAZ-AAA trucks.

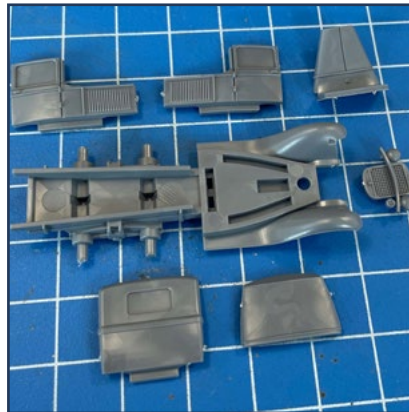
Each half-frame contains all the parts you need to make a truck, and assuming you want each truck to have a canopy and spare wheel (these are optional), you'll use every part. When constructed, these are mighty fine-looking little vehicles and they'll not only fit in well in any 1/72 army you have (Soviet primarily, of course) but can be used as a part of scatter terrain and obstacles for larger-scale gaming as well.



BUILDING A GAZ-AAA

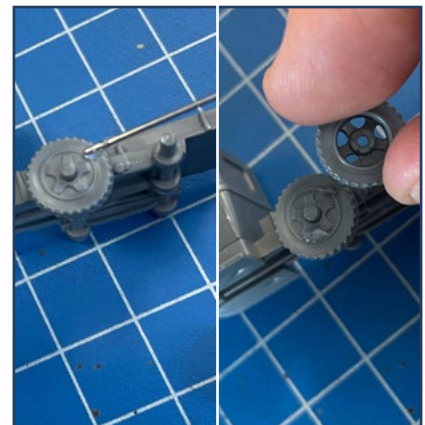
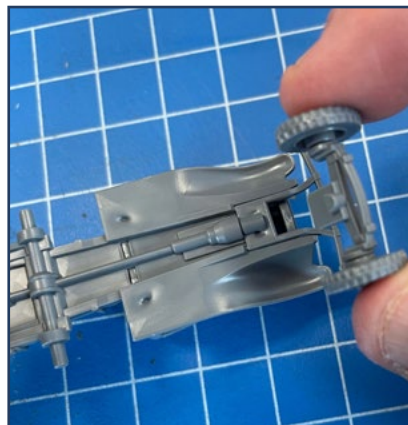
Step one - the cab

We built the GAZ-AAA first; despite the assembly instructions on the back of the box being so tiny that we required a magnifying glass to read the order in which parts should be fitted together, we managed to build it quite quickly. The main area to watch out for initially is that the cab roof should be attached after all the other cab parts have been put together.



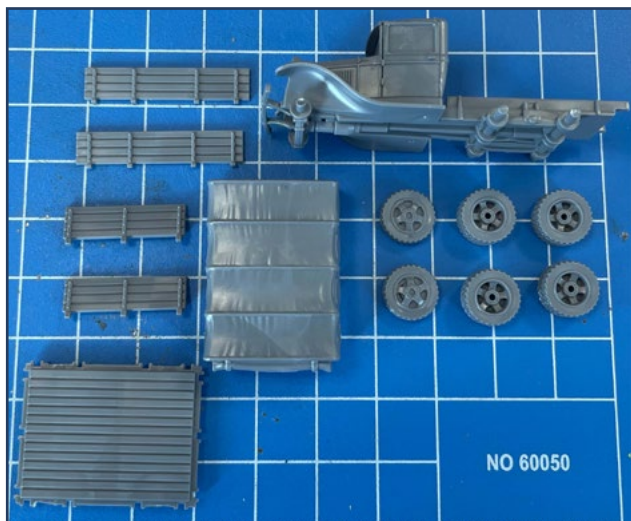
Step two - the wheels and axles

Fixing the bumper, front axle, and wheels comes next; that's not too complex either. If you decide to keep the wheels separate from the axles during the build, in order to speed up painting as sub-assemblies, then we suggest that you glue the double rear wheels together with several dots of glue then push them onto the axle to ensure they match up perfectly. Pull them off the axle immediately (by the back wheel) to ensure a rogue bit of glue doesn't stick them to the vehicle.



Step three - the truck bed

The last stage of the build is making the rear truck bed. The long sides have a right and wrong way round so watch out for that or they won't line up properly. Again, to make painting easier, we left this truck bed separate and unglued. The canopy is optional; we'll probably mix things up on our trucks as we'll be using them as terrain.



The finished GAZ-AAA looks mighty fine - a great recreation of these Ford Model AA knock-downs, built by the Soviet funded NAZ (eventually renamed GAZ) factories. The solid windows do make for less overall realism than some of the other 'blank' window kits that PSC have released, and this might make them less appealing to scale model enthusiasts. For gamers, they remove the need to build an interior or driver, which has undoubtedly kept the price down (fewer parts are needed) and will speed up the build and painting process no end.

With our AAA building experience, we moved to the GAZ-AA; going from parts on the frame to fully built and ready for priming took just ten minutes. Even less experienced kit builders should be capable of building the full set of six trucks in just a couple of hours.



This is a great value box set that has all you need to build six varied vehicles with a good level of detail. Even if you don't have a Soviet WW2 force in 1/72 scale, you'll be able to decorate a *Bolt Action* (or similar) tabletop with these vehicles (potentially in different states of destruction) to act as terrain and cover in many battles.

SARISSA PRECISION – MDF RIVER PATROL BOAT

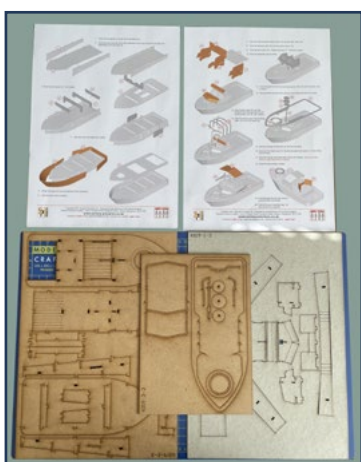
Joining over 40 boats already available from Sarissa Precision, the River Patrol Boat is a flat pack, three sheet MDF kit modelled on the PBRs used in the Mekong Delta and on the Saigon River during the Vietnam War by the US Brown Water Navy.

Having recently constructed his first ever Sarissa buildings, for the *Outrage at Jeddo* article in this issue, Editor Dan's now an MDF aficionado. How will he get on building a vehicle? Over to Dan:

Dan: "I was put into my comfort zone by the familiar charred wood smell of laser-cut MDF even before taking off the packaging! The model comes with the usual construction guide, showing accurate step-by-step illustrations of the model. I tend to find the illustrations easy to follow and pretty much forgo the written text when building Sarissa kits."



1. MDF and instructions ready to roll (or float!) Note that one of the sheets is cardboard. I'm generally not a big fan of the cardboard components, although I do appreciate they are a necessary 'evil' for areas that need to fold or bend.

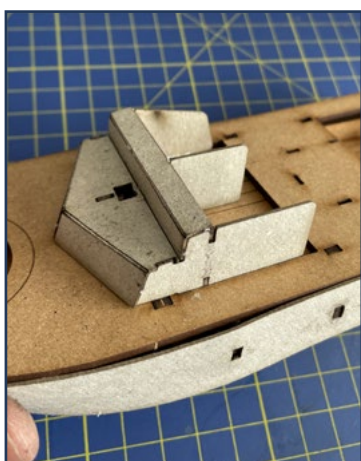


2. Some hobbyists use superglue as their adhesive of choice, but I prefer fast setting PVA glue for my MDF models.

Here the hull base is constructed and the cardboard surround has been fitted in place. The gap between front and back surround was an unwelcome feature of my construction skills - I should have done better with the fit!



3. The cabin is also mainly made from cardboard. It fits together neatly and securely.



4. As usual with Sarissa kits, the parts 'pop' from the frames easily and fit snugly. There is some fiddly fitting required, namely the cabin frame, but all-in-all the River Patrol Boat is quite a basic construction.

In hindsight, my main tip is take your time over the hull surround and get it fitting as tightly as possible.



My build time was around 1hr and 15 mins in total.

Comparing this kit with the other 28mm PBRs on the market (made from resin and metal), this one is both good value and a good size when it comes to accommodating based figures easily. What you don't get, however, are any deck mounted guns - you will need to hunt for your own weaponry. Other than that, this is a good kit, which when painted will look great patrolling the rivers of your Nam tabletop.

PERRY MINIATURES - PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COMMAND AND FRENCH CHASSEURS À PIED

PRUSSIAN INFANTRY COMMAND

Hot on the heels of the plastic Prussian Infantry box set (see our in-depth feature in *W404*), we've snagged a pack of metal 'generic' command figures from sculptor Michael Perry that'll be an excellent accompaniment to your troops and can represent officers, or even a commander.

Five 28mm metal figures are included, four of which are on foot, and they fit in with the various options included in the plastic kit. It's worth noting that a command frame comes in both Prussian Infantry variant sets (advancing and skirmishing), but these metal figures offer pose variation that would only be possible if you did some serious repositioning and sculpting of the plastic figures.

Three of the figures on foot wear Pickelhaubes and, as with the plastic kit, the 1860 model is represented as well as the 1867 version. The model in the more 'bling' heavy 1860 version of the Pickelhaube carries an officer's sword, has his greatcoat rolled over his shoulder, and looks suitably commandeering with his fine curled moustache. This chap, with his earlier helmet (strap up), would work nicely in battles against the Austrians and Danes too.

The other two are in the 1867 helmet type, and the one pointing directions has his strap up, while the other is drawing his blade on the advance, Pickelhaube firmly fixed by the strap under his chin, and with an officers' sash over his shoulder instead of a greatcoat roll.

The final model wears an officer's cap and is in quite a dramatic pose, firing his revolver. Details here are great and this figure feels like it is telling a little story all on its own; his sword scabbard gripped in his left hand with his sash flowing behind as he shoots.

The final figure in the set is an impressive mounted model, wearing the '67 Pickelhaube, with greatcoat rolled, and a fine-looking cavalry sabre slung to his side. He will make for a fantastic commander, calming the men.



FRENCH CHASSEURS À PIED

Elite Light Infantry are next - two packs of Chasseurs à Pied, each containing six metal figures.

These are differentiated from the Line in a great many ways, but let's start by looking at the uniforms. They wear short, double-breasted, piped tunics rather than the long capote of the Line regiments. They also have kepis and epaulettes, worn throughout the campaign, unlike the Line. These details are all nicely represented and the figures showcase the accuracy you'd expect from a Perry Miniatures figure. That level of detail is then greatly enhanced by the sheer amount of gear that they are lugging around.

One code's figures are all busy in various stages of firing their 1866 Chassepots, with curved bayonets removed - two of these figures are crouching. These skirmishers are weighed down with all the gear they can practically carry, including tent poles and a mess tin on top. Michael has also promised us that further codes are coming; it sounds like an 'advancing' one is ready for casting.



The command code offers some differentiation with its two buglers (great figures, these ones!), two officers carrying minimal gear (one does have his greatcoat rolled over his shoulder), and a colour sergeant who is carrying the *porte-fanion* they'd use for recognition in the field. The final figure is gesturing to the others in a suitably dramatic pose, and rounding out an excellent group of figures that add more variety to an already exciting new range from Perry Miniatures.

WARLORD GAMES - JAGDTIGER

We're examining, building, and painting an impressive *Bolt Action* Jagdtiger as a part of our new mission to bring hobby guides for selected new releases into Observation Post. This Jagdtiger - one of less than a hundred that entered combat, if you're keen on keeping things historically accurate - is an impressively detailed and suitably large 28mm scale model and a great choice to pass to our new in-house painter Marc. Check out his insights on the build and painting processes and improve the finish you get on your own scale version of this 71 ton hunting tiger!

This Jagdtiger model was originally produced at 1/72 scale by kit maker Italeri; Warlord Games have retooled the kit to use in games of *Bolt Action* (or your 28mm WW2 game of choice).

Built on the chassis of the heavy King Tiger tank, the kit is a great recreation of the Jagdtiger, including its fearsome 128mm PaK 44 anti-tank gun. This weapon decimated Allied tanks at long range, and in your *Bolt Action* games it suffers no -1 penalty to penetration when firing from a distance.

The kit offers an appealing combination of detail and build simplicity; for such a large miniature, there are remarkably few parts to fix together, and as you can see in these images, it looks fantastic with a good paint job applied. It's not a cheap bit of kit at £27 (\$38 US) but for such an iconic tank we think it's well worth the investment. Now, over to Marc to hear how he found the build and painting processes.

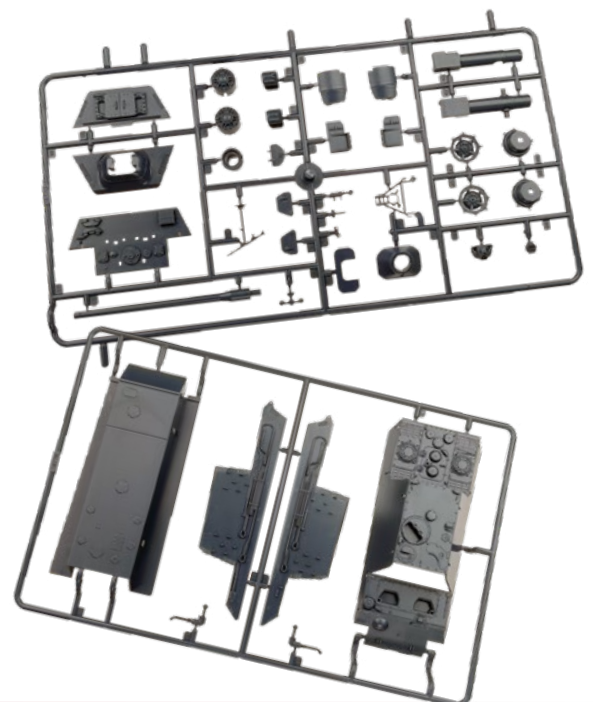


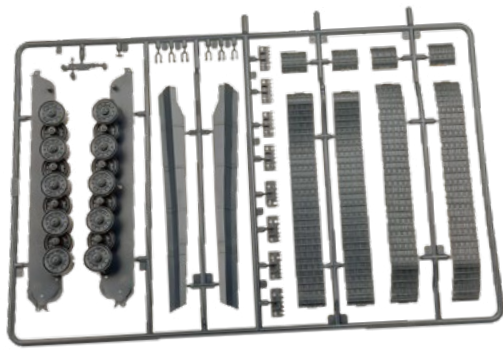
Left: Captain Tom stands next to the Jagdtiger to show off its size (and perhaps sabotage it!) - both models painted by our in-house hobby expert Marc.

THE BUILD

Marc: I was really impressed with how clearly labelled the components were on the frames and in the build manual. Critically, all the numbers correctly correlated with the intended parts (we have all had builds where this is not the case, resulting in time wasted scouring the sprues for the required piece). I am a big fan of kits that give the option of adding side skirts to a tank and that's a feature of this kit. I typically add them as I love the aesthetic that it creates. There are optional guide holes that you will need to drill through if you fancy adding the skirts.

A slight negative comes with the track components. These have feeds to them that face outward, and therefore, they require the careful removal of any plastic sprue parts with a sharp knife. Caution had to be taken to ensure that any visible details of the track were not damaged. This issue could have been removed had the tracks been attached to the sprue using the alternative side. A track positive is that fixing them in place, with each side coming as only four separate pieces, doesn't take long once you have the knack of placing them. The build guide fails to describe the easiest order of construction - I recommend starting with the bottom track first, then adding the additional wheels before adding the top section of track. With all that done the side pieces can be fixed.





DEALING WITH SMALL PLASTIC PIECES

There is little worse than a small component ping-ponging across the room and getting lost in carpet for eternity after you clip it from a frame. To avoid this fate, press any small parts (such as piece 52 in this kit) into a larger piece of Blue Tac before you trim it from the frame. This will ensure that if it does get dropped, it will be easy to retrieve from the deepest pile grey carpets!

PAINTING THE JAGDTIGER

Marc: I chose to paint the tank in the yellow/desert scheme shown in the build manual, developing the highlights along the uppermost parts of the armour panels to create the impression of depth. An airbrush makes this job incredibly simple, but it's just a tool and the same results can be achieved with the humble paint brush too.

The size of the Jagdtiger results in it having several large smooth surfaces. You could use the decals provided provided in the box set, but I wanted to use these areas to show off some chipping and weathering effects.



1. Paint the whole tank in a rust colour (I used Vallejo Model Air: Hull Red, Armour Brown, First Light, and Light Rust), graduating the tones to create realistic highlights and shadows. This will be your underlying colour and what any chipped areas will show.



2. Cover the rust-coloured paint with chipping fluid - a specialist product that is aimed primarily at the scale model market.

Airbrush the armour colour on top (I used Ammo by Mig: Dunkelgelb Shadow, followed by Dunkelgelb Base, with a Dunkelgelb Highlight, finished with an airbrush filter using a highly thinned yellow ink).



3. When that has dried, it's time to chip away some of the outer coating. Wetting the paint on the model then rubbing a Sniperbrush from Ammo by Mig (above left) over the panels and edges, begins to reveal the rust colour beneath. The large surfaces of the tank provide an excellent canvas on which to practice this technique; if you have been contemplating giving it a try, I highly recommend attempting it on this miniature. Refer to photographs of real military vehicles to ensure you get chips in the right places and don't take things too far.



4. To make the chips appear natural I used AK Interactive weathering pencils to create the impression of rust stains on the armour panels. Again, these large surfaces are a fantastic place on which to practice this effect.

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RELEASE RADAR



New regular columnist Dom Sore tells us about the exciting hobby releases that have made a big blip on his Release Radar!

WORLD WAR II APLENTY

Early War Miniatures (earlywarminiatures.com) have five new releases in 20mm. Vichy French cavalry are a niche addition but could be converted to cover a number of other nations' cavalry around WW2. Supporting the cavalry is the French FT17, a small and ineffective tank by the time the war started, but with a charm all of its own. Speaking of ineffective tanks, there are two versions of the Italian L6 tank: Comando Compagnia and a standard autocannon armed one. The Comando has two crew and a dummy machine gun, although the aerials give it away. Finally, there is an Mk4 AVRE Churchill; marrying the massive 290mm spigot mortar with the Churchill makes for one of the most effective of Hobart's Funnies. It has options for open or closed hatches and four different crew members to foolishly stick their heads out! These all are produced in EWM Supercast, part of the growing range of 'plastic resin' offerings from many companies.



Above: L6 Semovente Comando Compagnia.



Left: L6 tank with autocannon.

Getting smaller, because who needs eyesight, we enter the realm of 6mm and three new offerings from Baccus (baccus6mm.com): a Challenger, Achilles IIC, and a Sexton. The amount of detail Baccus gets on such small figures always astounds me, and I will scratch that micro-armor itch one day if I ever decide on an army to do.



Above: Mk4 AVRE Churchill.



Above: Challenger.



Above: Achilles IIC.



Left: Sexton.

DOM TALKS ABOUT DOM

I've been a gamer for longer than I care to think about and consider myself a hobby butterfly; no single period, game system, or scale can contain my flitting! You may have noticed an article or two from me in this esteemed publication over the years - now I get to ramble about new models every month. I'll highlight new releases that appeal to me and will try and show off some of the more unusual options out there.

CARTOONS AND FLYTRAPS

I said I was a hobby butterfly - let's flit! Oakbound Studio (oakbound.co.uk) had a successful recent Kickstarter to produce the *Dreamstone* miniatures game and RPG. *Dreamstone* was an early 1990s cartoon series that had a soundtrack, including Ozzy Osbourne and Frank Bruno on the same song (check it out on YouTube if you don't believe me!). Oakbound have now marked the game for general release. I backed the Kickstarter and I am impressed with the casting and the figures. If you want something a little different, or liked the cartoon, give it a look - it'll be great for the younger gamers.



From cartoons, we move to 10mm Fantasy with Pendraken (pendraken.co.uk) bringing us some new Fantasy monsters. I won't list them all, but there are three different bird types, flying snakes, giant Venus flytraps, and giant tortoises. I am not sure the word giant applies to 10mm figures, although the Venus fly traps are 35mm tall and have a *Little Shop of Horrors* vibe. There are also some new Dark Elf Spider Riders and an Undead Coach. I am very tempted, but I am not sure what rules I would use for them (I never played *Warmaster*).

PLASTICATING AND D-BALLING

Moving away from figures for a moment, Ammo by Mig Jimenez (migjimenez.com) have released a Plasticator; if you are wondering what that is, their guide can explain it and its uses better than me (<https://bit.ly/3gEuWmQ>). It comes in a thick and a thin version and is used as a sealant for porous materials like keying plaster. This acrylic, water-based compound could help with detailing your MDF buildings. Let's not start the debate about whether you need to prime MDF or not though, eh!



We all have static grass in our basing supplies, and sometimes, as you know, it clumps together. War World Scenics (wwwscenics.com) have produced a solution to that annoyance and called it ... the D-Baller. While it sounds like a playground insult, this MDF construction is actually a strange looking sieve that will break

up your balls [Stop sniggering at the back - Ed]. But what to do with all that grass? WWS have recently released a pack of 20 sheep that could munch it. Produced for railways enthusiasts in OO Gauge, there is no reason you can't add them to your 20mm / 1:76 / 1:72 bases to add some variety.





FIERY PIGS AND FIRING ARTILLERY

From sheep to pigs. These ones are from Stronghold Terrain in Germany (stronghold-terrain.de) and, unlike the peaceful grazing sheep, these porcine figurines are on fire and causing a palaver! They have stopped me wondering how I was going to model them for my own SAGA force. Joining them are a mounted Roman Consul and a mounted Roman Tribune along with a rather nice-looking Hannibal Barkas. Produced in 28mm metal, these are welcome additions to the ancient offerings.



Burning pigs.

Jumping forward to the Napoleonic era, Avanpost Miniatures ([facebook.com/groups/avanpost.miniatures](https://www.facebook.com/groups/avanpost.miniatures)) have some new artillery, specifically the British 9-pounder in 28mm with crew. These are resin figures rather than metal, so should make that artillery battery a bit lighter to carry around. There are options to have the gun firing, being loaded, or being aimed; variety is always welcome and adds interest.



British 9-pounder in 28mm with crew.

FROM ANCIENT GODS TO MODERN SARACENS



Above: Hercules.

Footsore Miniatures (footsoreminiatures.co.uk) have added to their *Mortal Gods* range. My favourites are the Persian Chariot and Hercules. Both are large in their own way. Hercules comes in at 40mm foot-to-eye and looks suitably imposing. The Persian chariot has two horses pulling a two-man chariot with a lethal looking blade projecting in front of the horses.



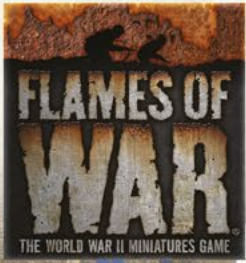
Below: Persian Chariot.



Above: Saracen.

Going from two horsepower to something nearer 160bhp, it's a 28mm / 1:48 Saracen armoured fighting vehicle from Empress Miniatures (empressminiatures.com). Mainly made in resin, with some white metal details, this is a hefty piece of kit and useful from the early 1950s through to modern conflicts. It will be an especially useful addition to something like the *Winter of '79* ruleset. They have also released a 28mm WW2 British 3" mortar and their German foes' equivalent 8cm Granatwerfer. These are excellent incorporations to a WW2 army; the British one might end up with my Home Guard / BEF.

That's all the newness I can handle this month, I need to go and give my butterfly wings a rest. Until next time, fare thee well, and happy gaming!



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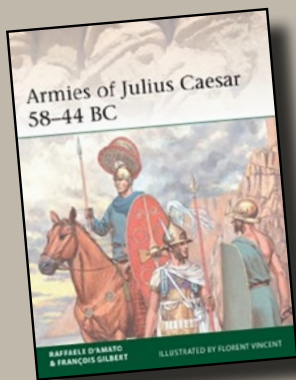
BY NEIL SMITH

Every month when I am rummaging through the new books, I try to find the quirky and off-beat for new projects or unfamiliar takes on old ones. The stranger the action, the more I want to try it on the tabletop. But I guess there is something to be said for the old staples, the Caesars, Vikings, and Stalingrad. Stuff you have read before, so why not read it all over again? I think I have found room for both approaches this month.

ANCIENT

Let's start by rolling our sleeves up and getting ready to fight. You have heard of Sparta, of course, "This is Sparta!" Greece's greatest warriors, Gerard Butler oiled up? Well, stand by, because Myke Cole has news for you in *The Bronze Lie: Shattering the Myth of Spartan Warrior Supremacy* (Osprey). Cole is having none of it, noting that the Spartans suffered many losses that were swept under the rug as they propagandised their victories. They also led all Greeks just once and that was temporary. Cole therefore digs deep into Sparta's military culture and finds it wanting. Is it time to rethink these invincible warriors? Maybe. The wise men down the club will say they knew this all along, but we still add +1 to the Spartans in combat, right?

I would find it hard to believe that the greatest general in history was not an admirer of the Spartans. The Roman commander Julius Caesar certainly gave that impression as he led armies against all-comers across the Empire, including the most famous Romans of his time who thought they could squash this upstart. But generals do not win wars on their own, and historians have re-evaluated great armies and how they worked as war-machines. Raffaele D'Amato and Francois Gilbert are now part of that historical tradition with their *Armies of Julius Caesar 58-44 BC* (Osprey). They bring us a different analysis of Caesar's army, a much more diverse body of men than the monolithic army of traditional histories. Does that mean we need to alter our wargaming perceptions of Caesar's army? Maybe, but I suspect the results will be the same.



MEDIEVAL

Whatever happened to the Dark Ages? Yes, they were not actually dark, but it was cool to associate Vikings with darkness because it added to their sense of menace. Anyway, now it's the sanitised Early Medieval Period. Bridging these two concepts is the subject of Don Hollway's new book, *The Last Viking: The True Story of King Harald Hardrada* (Osprey). This narrative rattles along, taking Harald from his first mention in history, emerging from a proper Dark Ages Viking battle to become a great warrior king who travelled to Byzantium and ended up dead on an English battlefield. That sounds like fun! Vikings tend to be monolithic on the wargames table - get them into melee fast seems to be just about the only order you need - but there was more to them than that and reading this biography might help clarify the nuances of Viking warfare. Harald's career was also one that might be worth following for a campaign game and certainly will provide different scenarios from endlessly stealing sheep off hapless monks before the Anglo-Saxon militia arrives.

Never mind when the Medieval military era begins, when does it end and where? There are many candidates for when with some going back to the end of the Wars of the Roses, while some dip our toes into the argument with the Italian Wars as the transition. But where brings into question the wars on other continents. Maybe we need to know more about them first, and that is where the prolific Stephen Turnbull comes in with his new book, *The Ōnin War 1467-77: A Turning Point in Samurai History* (Helion). I won't even try to give you a synopsis of events, suffice to say it is complicated. But there are some interesting features to this for wargamers, notably urban warfare and the importance of fortified mansions. This war also led into the "Age of the Warring States", which would qualify for consideration as a transitional period. There is lots here to get your teeth into.

18th CENTURY

There is no questioning the impact of the Irish on warfare in just about any era. Pierre-Louis Coudray follows some of the



most famous of them in *More furies than men: The Irish brigade in the service of France 1690-1792* (Helion). Wherever the French interests lay during this period, you could find the Irish Brigade at the sharp end. In Flanders for sure, but they also served the Jacobite cause in Scotland, and they starred at the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745 but paid a heavy price that diluted their effectiveness thereafter. Coudray explores the nuts and bolts of this unique fighting force and explodes some myths along the way (it seems to be the month for that!). This has to be one of the must have units for 18th Century wargamers, and 1745 seems to be the best version of them to paint and fight. That said, maybe reading this book will highlight other conflicts for consideration.

There is one war in the 18th Century that probably deserves a category of its own: the American War of Independence. It was the same as European wars but different, and that's what makes it so interesting: conventional mixed with elements of asymmetric and guerrilla warfare. Robert Dunkerly examines the war in the northern revolutionary hotbed of New Jersey in *Unhappy Catastrophes: The American Revolution in Central New Jersey, 1776-1782* (Savas Beatie). One reason why wargamers should be interested in this book, other than just the pleasure of reading, is that the war in New Jersey had everything you could want. You have proper battles at Trenton, Princeton, and Springfield, and lots of ambushes, raids, and skirmishes. If you want to throw in some RPG action, Dunkerly describes some sneaky espionage for your entertainment.



ACW

Turning to another American war for some unconventional action, what about reading Caroline Janney's *Ends of War: The Unfinished Fight of Lee's Army after Appomattox* (The University of North Carolina Press)? Popular myth has it that when Lee surrendered, that was the war over for the Confederates, but for nearly 18,000 of them it was far from it. The Union sent Provost marshals out to bring them in, sometimes willingly, sometimes not so much. This inability to tamp down the embers of rebellion led to Federal occupancy throughout the South and with it more violence. I don't think I need to spell out the potential for skirmish actions here using any skirmish rules from the ACW through to *Dead Man's Hand* with a couple of tweaks.

WWI

I have room to slip in some eye-candy, if that is the right term, for the Great War. Michael Neiberg's *The Western Front 1914-1916* (Amber) is a broad survey chock full of photographs, detailed maps, and box-outs on key events, weapons, and personalities. His narrative covers the major engagements of the Marne, Mons, Ypres, the Somme, and Verdun. Obviously, this is for the big battle warriors among our readers for 6mm or 10mm, but it is also useful background reading for newcomers and a great jumping-off point for further research and reading.



WWII

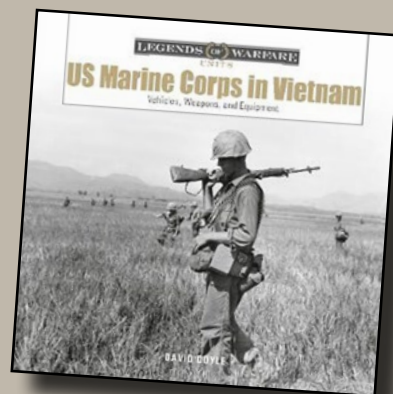
As usual, our cup runneth over when it comes to World War II publishing, so finding just a couple to bring to your attention when there are so many to get excited about is not easy. Let's do some early war stuff, beginning in the snows of Finland in *The Finnish-Soviet Winter War 1939-40: Stalin's Hollow Victory* (Osprey) by David Murphy. This was ignited by the Soviet pre-emptive strike against Finland in November 1939 to protect its flank. But any planned walkover soon fell apart as the Finns doggedly resisted against their more numerous Soviet foes. If there is an honourable defeat in war, this was it. For wargamers, break out the ski troops - I'm sure you can repurpose your German ones if you don't want to go the whole hog, and a white sheet with some trees and rocks should keep the thing cost-effective - because there are many interesting scenarios to play for this war.

Staying in the same time-frame but on a different front, Thomas Anderson is embarking on a multi-volume adventure in tanks with *Panzer Commander: Volume 1: 1939-40* (Casemate). Anderson has hit the motherload of sources - after-action reports written down to the individual tank commander - and has compiled them to create a new reconstruction of German operations in WWII. This volume covers the invasion of Poland and the assault on France. I can't wait to get hold of it because I like the small panzers over the later big cats, a war of manoeuvre over power. I don't know how Anderson's work will affect the rules I play with, but I am keen to find out.

And if you have panzers, you need panzergrenadiers. The obviously industrious Thomas Anderson has you covered here too with his *Panzergrenadier* (Osprey). These soldiers accompanied the tanks, doing the detailed groundwork that the panzers couldn't, but they did not receive their official designation as panzergrenadiers until 1942 - they were known as Schützen before then. The difference between them and ordinary infantry was that these were mechanized to keep up with the panzers, though most rode in trucks not the ubiquitous half-tracks we often see on the table. They were also formed into their own powerful divisions. This Osprey book traces the development of the panzergrenadiers and surveys their vehicles and equipment. If you intend to wargame WWII Germans, you probably need to know all this.

And where did panzers and their grenadiers end up, some of them anyway? Stalingrad, as described by Robert Forczyk in *Stalingrad 1942-43 (2): The Fight for the City* (Osprey). This is the second of his three books for the Stalingrad campaign, but for me the most interesting because

Forczyk gets into the claustrophobic and lethal world of urban combat, and Stalingrad is still the epitome of that kind of warfare. Forczyk describes the intense fighting in such iconic locations as the Steel Plant, Grain Elevator, and the Tennis Racket. Now you might roll your eyes at the thought of another book on Stalingrad, but bear in mind that for some readers this might be their first; go easy on them, then direct them to Beevor's brilliant narrative of the battle. The good news on refighting aspects of Stalingrad is that you don't need many figures; the bad news is accumulating the buildings you will need to recreate the full effect.



MODERN

The Vietnam War is probably another war that needs its own category because there is so much literature on it. I will close this month with two new ones that piqued my interest. The first is standard fare with David Doyle's *US Marine Corps in Vietnam: Vehicles, Weapons, and Equipment* (Schiffer). The Marines served in Vietnam throughout the war, featuring in such major battles as Huế and Khe Sanh, though they did lots of routine grunt-work along with every other frontline soldier in Vietnam. That makes for solid wargaming material, but you will need to know what the Marines had and how to paint and use them. Doyle will help you out with that.

One reason the Americans lost Vietnam was that they could not control the borders. They tried hard enough and Kenneth Conboy's *Spies on the Mekong: CIA Clandestine Operations in Laos* (Casemate) examines one effort to do so. Laos was a melting pot of factions and nefarious superpower activities, many of which will provide useful off-the-wall skirmish scenarios with perhaps an RPG element to them. This book certainly has me intrigued.

And that's your lot for September. If you enjoyed these previews and want to read up-to-date reviews of books suitable for wargaming, check out my Full Paper Jacket Facebook page.

Happy reading and gaming!



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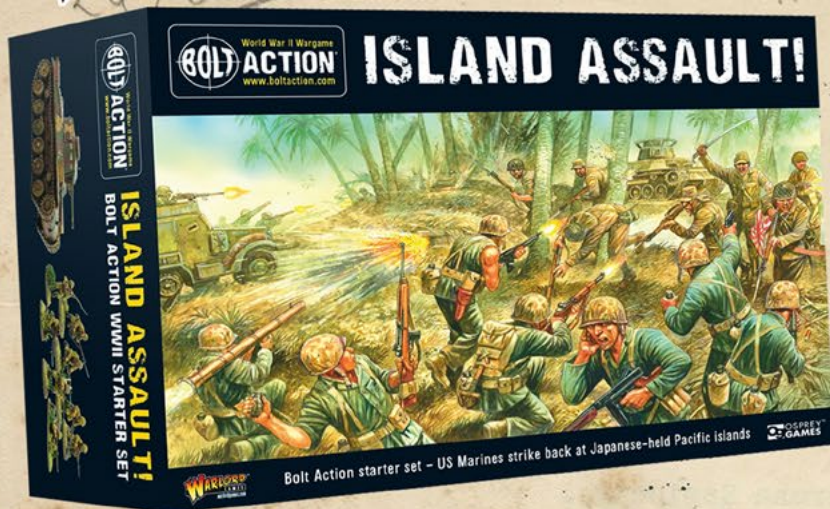
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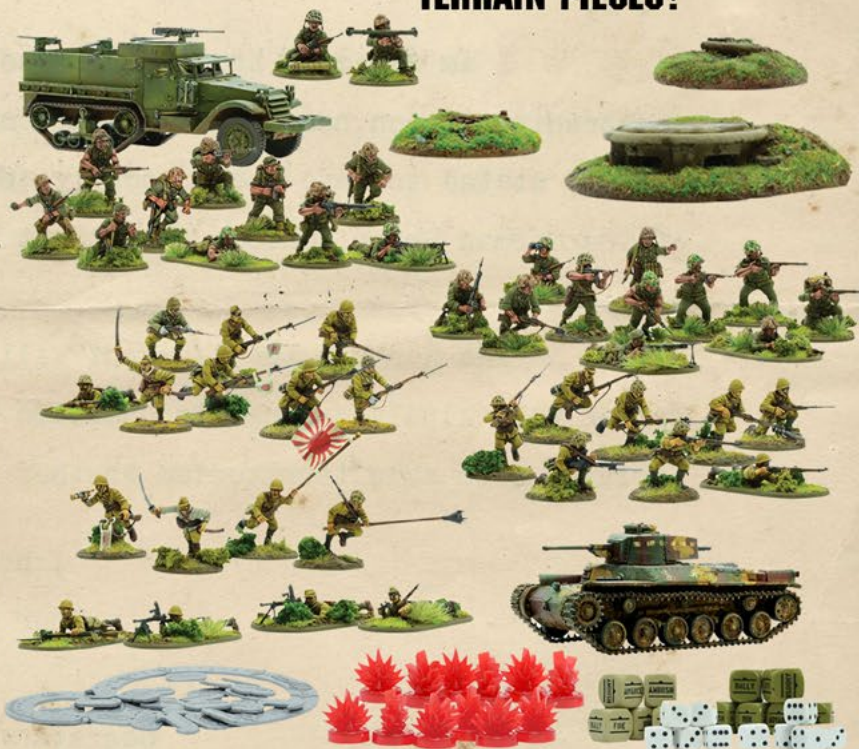
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WELCOME TO 'WHAT IF'S

Folks from the wargaming world throw 'what if' gaming randomness your way!

"I think my worst wargames experience ever (and to make matters worse I was a spectator) was when I was 16 and headed to my local wargames club in my hometown of Stoke to see how historical wargames worked. It was in this massive old building; in the basement, they had a 15mm Napoleonic game set up on a gigantic board. The terrain was modular and correct and they had a BOOK - a play-by-play account of the historical battle it was based on.

"The players were genuine when they told me 'You've come at a very exciting time, this is the fourth week we've been playing and we're finally getting to the first skirmish.' They had been moving, exactly matching the historical records, for three weeks. Now it was time for the fighting, but even here they compared stats on a big chart, calculated damage, and worked out who was victorious.

"That's no way to game. It's not even playing a game! I think they were using *DBM*, but without some player agency you may as well just be reading about the battle rather than pushing models around."

Despite the baptism of drudgery that Mark Latham describes above, he thankfully found alternative historical gaming to enjoy; he is now a prolific game designer and created the legendary 'Legends of' series for Warhammer Historical along with many other systems. This Old West historical game inspired many a 'what if', with its between game tables for injuries, experience, and more.

What makes Mark's and any well designed wargames fun are the systems that allow for player interaction and inventiveness and bring elements of chance to a historical framework. Through these - be they command phases, dice rolls, card draws, formation options, rules for different terrain, campaign systems, and much more - we are always using 'what if's when we

wargame ... unless we hang out in that Stoke basement, referring religiously to our BOOK!

HISTORICAL GAMING TO INFINITY

Every alternate dice rolling possibility creates a multiverse of gaming outcomes. Every wargame has a nearly infinite number of 'what if' moments within it. In one game, the valiant charge of Marlborough's cavalry was a glorious success at the Battle of Blenheim; in another, the players had decided to make the Nebel stream difficult terrain, bogging down the cavalry squadrons and sealing their doom. Elsewhere, the players' earlier campaign actions led to the Duke of Tallard convincing his fellow players, the Count of Marsin and Maximilian II, to hold and resupply, and the battle never happened.

Never Mind the Billhooks creator Andy Callan says: "It seems to me that all historical wargaming is based on 'what if's, or counter-factual history, otherwise

Wi DAILY NEWS

Announcements - Page 15

19 June 1815

World's Premier Newspaper

One Penny

Napoleon victorious at Waterloo



Wellington would win every re-fight of Waterloo, whereas in my experience - and I have re-played it several times - Napoleon tends to have the edge.”

So that’s it? This month’s theme essentially covers all historical wargaming? Well ... yes ... but there’s much more to it, so please do bear with us! In this intro article, we’ll look at some of the ways wargaming notables (as well as *Wi*’s dolts, Dan and James) approach ‘what if’ options to diversify their own gaming.

IMAGI-NING HISTORY THAT NEVER WAS WITH THE FAMILY GRANT

A great jumping off point for ‘what if’ gaming is ‘imagi-nations’. Though the exact origins of the term are a little murky, and will, as with most things related to wargaming, be discussed and disputed over a pint or two, it’s hard to separate the legendary Charles Grant from the concept, and he was using it before many of us had even pushed a regiment of Airfix models across the tabletop!*

Imagi-nations is essentially a way for players to generate their own ‘historic-like’ army, and associated background, nation, internal and global power structure, etc., to bring about all manner of ‘what if’ potential. The joy of imagi-nations is you can take the period, army, and area of the world you are most familiar with, cherry pick elements that fascinate you, bring in and create as many narrative justifications as you desire, and develop a new nation that answers a great many ‘what if’ questions. These ‘what if’s can be things that you might be harder pressed to bring to your standard historical gaming but will feel just right in a different nation. Perhaps you always fancied bringing a vast amount of artillery to battle but just couldn’t justify it within the limitations of your period or army? Then tweak a nation’s history to include a lengthy



Above: The Battle of Blenheim from Wi133, as staged by John Tuckey at Kelham Hall.



Above: The flags of the different imagi-nations, as devised by Charles Grant.

period of defence along its borders; combine that with the presence of a great inventive mind in your nation’s ruling class or government who uses the right resources to push the development of advanced weapons a decade or two earlier than would otherwise be appropriate, and you’re all set to have fun testing the big guns out on the tabletop with a narrative and pseudo historical justification.

Some may argue - probably with the excuse that they can do so over a pint or two! - that imagi-nations is actually ‘what

if’ adjacent rather than an actual ‘what if’ on its own. Well, imagi-nations creations are at their best when driven by very real possibilities - ideas that could have played out had nations put their focus on different products, trade routes, areas of expansion, etc. - and that sounds pretty ‘what if’ to us.

If you’d like to get a better idea of imagi-nations, you can’t do much better than the article by Grant seniors’ son, Charles S Grant, found on page 20 of *Wi*340. It talks about the adventures his father, son, and he had developing and playing out imagi-nations over the decades.

BRITISH INTERVENTION IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Regular *Wi* contributor Pete Brown picks this as the ‘what if’ that he really wants to play: “The Perry’s British Intervention in the ACW would look great and it is fascinating stuff, but I fear it is a bit too fantasy for the chaps at my club!”

Wi Editor Dan’s also a fan of the possibilities here and gets into it in some detail: “The accepted ‘what if’ goes along the lines of the British sending forces to aid the South and thus protecting their own financial interests, particularly in ‘King Cotton’. Despite much ink being spilled over the subject, personally I don’t think it ever came close to happening - there is no way that a nation that ran the largest anti-slavery operation in the world (The West African Squadron) would simultaneously offer military support to a slave trading state. However, it makes for a great ‘what if’ both in terms of one-off games and campaigns. Stretching reality even further, the French could fight alongside the Brits and Confederates.”



* It would be rude to leave Brigadier Peter Young DSO MC out of the picture, so we mention him here; he didn’t fit so neatly into the father and son(s) specific title, but is also an important imagi-nations element!

FROM SOLID BASICS A GREAT 'WHAT IF' IS BORN!

Pete Brown has written many *Wargames Illustrated* articles with a simple 'what if' at their core. What's his advice for doing it yourself?

"So long as the 'what if' in question is plausible then it is no different from most games we play - e.g. the Montcalm battle I created for "Too great a gamble" in *Wi404* could have occurred; the forces are historically accurate and only one or two actual decisions need to be changed for it to have happened. Made up games - e.g. Napoleonic Hussars charging Zulus - need not apply! My advice is to keep it real. The closer to actual history the better, using troops that were in the campaign and drawing on historical fact as much as possible. If you're adding Elephant Tanks to WW2 encounters they didn't feature in, for example, examine how they performed historically and work it into new battles rather than upgrading the tanks themselves into killer weapons. Do the latter and your scenario will be dull for the allied player and feel uncanny."

Mark Latham offers the sage advice that you shouldn't go overboard in your early 'what if' gaming: "Pick scenarios and situations where the smallest change would make the biggest difference and let your strategy and luck of the dice decide what happens. Then in the games that follow, extrapolate out what might have happened next."

DON'T FEAR THE FANTASTICAL - GIVE FICTION SOME FOCUS

The alternate history posterboy of wider 'what if'ing in fiction is steampunk. This sci-fi sub-genre has become arguably the most played kind of weird-wars gaming since it became widely popularised in the 1990s and 2000s. Though there are many ranges and games that specialise in specific steampunk miniatures, there is an extra draw for us historical gamers; many ranges from the colonial period fit neatly into the "imagine if some sort of 'computer' arrived a century or so earlier" idea with minor modifications, or even as they are.



Above: A scene from "Too great a gamble". *Wi404*.



Above: Artizan Designs Sky Pirates and other Thrilling Tales adventures.

The Frame Focus article on page 72, and this issue's wonderful cover art by Neil Roberts, show that Warlord Games' British Line Infantry Regiment are but a few minor modifications away from becoming a steampunk air defence corps! Many of the figures could remain factory standard and still work in a steampunk game; Tesla coil rifles, wind up limb replacements, and the ubiquitous goggles

and cogs can be gifted to your command figures to convey the correct atmosphere.

The possibility space is far broader than difference engines, cogs, arclamps, and airships over London though, when it comes to 'what if' fiction. Mark Latham doesn't just design games, he's an author too, so who better to check in with? "I think all historical gaming is based on the question of 'what if' to an extent. When we line our armies up to fight, we're not usually looking to replicate a real battle, but to see if we could do it differently, or bring characters into play who weren't present. Bernard Cornwell always does this sort of thing in his *Sharpe* novels. As a writer, it's pretty much the same principle, I write speculative fiction, which is sometimes defined as 'the fiction of what could be or might have been', so I guess I spend most of my days pondering the 'what if' question to some degree." No wonder it plays a part in his games! But what about a designer who is less keen on these fictional 'what if' options?



Above: Redcoats in Space. From North Star's Steampunk range.



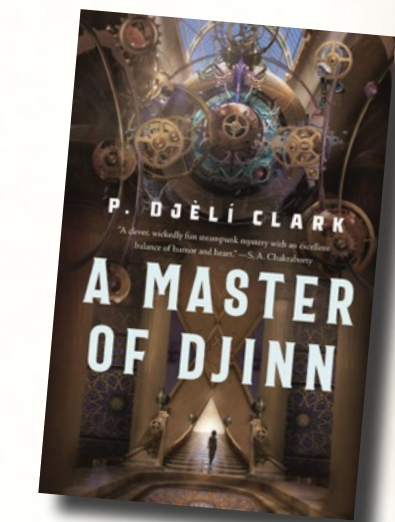
Above: *The 'Battle of the Bastards' offers some gritty Wars of the Roses type action despite being a part of the fantasy series Game of Thrones.*

Despite insisting he has no interest in unhistorical 'what if'ing - "the sort of thing that used to happen 40 years ago with *WRG Ancients*, where it was routine to have battles between Mongols and Spartans and the like, or with technological 'what if's, where the Old Guard has machine guns or flying ships or whatever" - Andy Callan can still recognise the potential: "I guess I'm out of line with mainstream tastes, because 'Wars of the Roses with Dragons' has been a major success for George R R Martin in his *A Song of Ice and Fire* books and the *Game of Thrones* HBO show. Mind you, the TV series I have most enjoyed recently was *The Terror* - basically, Alien on Ice [a figure skating show we want to see! Ed] - But somehow I just can't bring myself to wargame that sort of thing." Even with his avoidance of unhistorical options, Andy couldn't help but get excited about a fantastical possibility inspired by a different author: "I have always thought the apocalyptic battle at the end of Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee at the Court of King Arthur* might make an excellent display game at a show!"

Wargames Illustrated's Project Manager, James, discovered wargaming through Games Workshop and his historical games still get influenced by fantasy and sci-fi ideas at times: "Most of my best ideas for 'what if' gaming come from a non-historical element. They're rarely even 'my best ideas' as I unapologetically nick them from whatever good things I'm reading at the time!"

"I recently finished P Djèlí Clark's *A Master of Djinn* and, although the novel is essentially a police procedural, the unusual setting captivated me. It will work its way into my gaming, and you'll probably see an article based around it in a future issue of *Wargames Illustrated*. It features an alternate 1912 Cairo, where magic has

returned to the world, and Egypt is the global power. Djinn exist in an at times uneasy balance with humanity; Ifrit, Marid, Ghouls, and more play their part in the story, and the author teases a wider world of intrigue when leaders from other nations make cameos at a peace summit, including Kaiser Wilhelm II with a goblin king literally sitting on his shoulder and advising him. How can one read that and not want to explore a WWI where these elements play their part? I can already see a very different front line and all manner of new tactics impacting this alternate reality. Susanna Clarke's *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* offers similar inspiration for the Napoleonic Wars, and there's loads more out there!"



Shieldwolf Miniatures' pack of Djinns might soon make their way onto James' hobby desk!

Inspiration doesn't just have to come from fantasy fiction. Mark Miodownik, a Professor of Materials and Society, may not seem like an obvious inspiration for any historical 'what if' gaming, but his book *Stuff Matters: Exploring the Marvelous Materials That Shape Our Man-Made World*, was in James' reading stack recently. He's now not only got a deeper appreciation of the properties and history of concrete, but he keeps threatening us with an article promoting 'concretepunk' - just how different might history have been if the Romans had worked out how to properly reinforce the concrete that they used? There is, clearly, such a thing as taking it too far!

So, read, read some more, and consider diversifying that reading! Still feel like historical is the only 'right' way to do things? Well, while he wasn't a fan of historical fiction (preferring primary sources) the rightly lauded and much missed Uncle Duncan was a devoted fan of fantasy. He loved *The Lord of the Rings*, including the films, Russian folklore, and

was partial to the occasional *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* binge. So, be like Mr Macfarlane; take in a wide range of genres, make sure you add notes to your books (be they fact or fiction), and keep an open mind in order to expand your wargaming ‘what if’ potential.

ON CAMPAIGN

“I think campaign play is where ‘what if’ gaming really comes into its own”, says Mark Latham, who has been bringing between-game campaign tables and events to his rulesets from the beginning: “An upset in one scenario can impact the next. For example, in my Napoleonic game, *Waterloo*, I presented the Hundred Days campaign as a series of linked scenarios; players could use historical OOBs, or forces of their own choosing. If, for example, the Prussians won against the odds at Wavre, they no longer needed to fight at Plancenoit, you skipped that scenario and instead picked a couple of Prussian battalions to turn up early during Waterloo.”

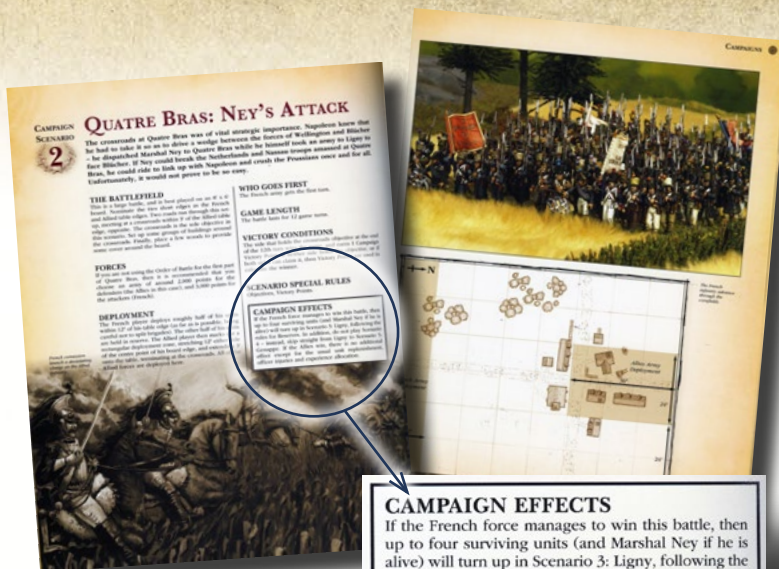
This is an incredibly simple way to add a ‘what if’ element to your games and perhaps different to how many approach campaign play. There’s a tendency to treat the historical events as ‘the way things should be’, providing the complete narrative arc and dictating the battles. What happens in a game will then affect troop availability and quality in the ‘next’ battle. Instead, consider the historical events as the campaign’s historically accurate opening paragraph and let player decisions (in battle or out of it) dictate the rest of the story, even if that means vastly altering huge events. Few umpires would be bold enough to note that the Siege of Harfleur was over particularly quickly in a Hundred Years’ War campaign, leading them to skip the Battle of Agincourt altogether. It would make for a rather unexpected and memorable end to that chapter of a campaign though!

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

“It’s always tempting to pick the big, epoch-changing moments that could change the whole course of human history”, Mark Latham enthuses: “What if Hannibal had crushed Rome? What if the British had won the War of 1812? What if Archduke Ferdinand hadn’t been assassinated (my personal favourite thought experiment)?

“I think I find these ideas fascinating on various levels. In a fictional setting, it’s great to explore those ‘butterfly effect’ moments, while on the gaming table we focus purely on battles. It always makes for an awesome discussion afterwards when Marshal Ney successfully brings home the bacon at Waterloo, or the Romans crush the Germanic tribes at the Teutoburg Forest, or King Harold wins the Battle of Hastings, etc.”

That butterfly effect is something James has been considering while researching the Battle of Agincourt: “Even if you ignore obvious ‘what if’s raised by the many disputed elements of the battle (‘small’ details such



Above: Campaign effect rules. As seen in *Waterloo* by Mark Latham.

CAMPAIGN EFFECTS
If the French force manages to win this battle, then up to four surviving units (and Marshal Ney if he is alive) will turn up in Scenario 3: Ligny, following the rules for Reserves. In addition, do not play Scenario 4 – instead, skip straight from Ligny to Scenario 5: Genappe. If the Allies win, there is no additional effect except for the usual unit replenishment, officer injuries and experience allocation.



INVASION FICTION AND THE BATTLE OF DORKING

Late 19th Century Britain saw a literary craze for what later became known as ‘invasion fiction’, with the release of several books and magazine articles featuring stories in which England was attacked by aggressive forces from France, Russia, Prussia, and even Mars. *War of the Worlds* comes from a chap you may have heard of; his *Floor Games* featured its own ‘what if’s in the island countries HG Wells’ creation used, and if anyone argues you shouldn’t be ‘what if’ing, tell them that the originator was okay with it.

The Battle of Dorking was one of the most memorable encounters to come out of this glut of ‘what if’ wars. Featured in a novelette, the story of the battle was told through the reminiscences of a veteran soldier who volunteered to help defend his country when it was invaded by a Prussian army fresh from their victory over the French during the Franco-Prussian War.



The figure on the left is a Prussian ‘Deaths Head’ Hussar, from North Star’s 1866 range - he’s just the sort of cad who would be terrorising England’s green and pleasant land during the invasion featured in the *The Battle of Dorking*.

Wargames Illustrated ran an excellent article - ‘When England Slept ...’ by Steve Blease - all about wargaming Victorian and Edwardian ‘invasion fiction’. Check it out in *W382* via the *Wargames Illustrated* Vault.

FAULCONBRIDGE, HARDY, AND NAPOLEON'S 1804 INVASION OF BRITAIN

Wi's editor looks to the work of Thomas Hardy for some literature inspired 'what if' gaming:

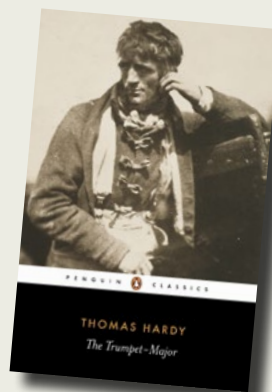
"Thomas Hardy is probably my favourite author. The plot of one of his less critically acclaimed books: *The Trumpet-Major*, revolves around a predicably Hardyan tragic love triangle, but unusually the backdrop to the affair is the Napoleonic Wars, specifically Napoleon's rumoured 1804 invasion of England. Hardy paints a picture of rural England in a state of panic, with a comedic 'dads army' of ill-prepared reservists whose only weapons are vegetables and pikes with which to fight off the French.

"To be fair, the real army is never far away in the form of the Trumpet-Major's regiment, and there are also yeomanry and fencibles on hand to meet Bony when the

invasion beacons are lit (in what turns out to be a false alarm).

"Hardy's research for the book was extensive and included talking to Napoleonic War veterans; he accurately describes the sense of tension and detail in some of the localised preparation for invasion. Reading *The Trumpet-Major* left me in no doubt that Napoleon's 1804 invasion of England would make for a great wargame in which some colourful English county units, not often seen on the tabletop, could be used. Many of these are produced by Trent Miniatures, as it happens.

"Warning: The Trumpet-Major ain't no Bernard Cornwell novel, it's mainly about simpering maidens, confused young men, and 19th Century decorum."



A small section of the huge 600th anniversary Battle of Agincourt display table made for the Royal Armouries.

CENTRE OF THE WORLD?

There's a very Anglo, European, or Western focus in wargames. Even when venturing further afield, particularly with colonial period wargaming, things are Eurocentric when it comes to the forces involved. Other nations not only get short shrift in the armies and specific rules they have available, but sometimes in the ways they are generalised about and represented too.

A big part of this - and something we struggle with when sourcing minis to show in articles about 'less popular' conflicts in world history - is figure availability. Thankfully, many contemporary manufacturers are interested in diverse periods and locations, meaning previously unavailable peoples from around the world and throughout history now have ranges of figures dedicated to them. Who'd have imagined American Pacific Northwest Coast Tlingits in wooden armour available at the click of a button a decade or so ago? Well not us, but the more variety of figures available, the more we can game 'what if' scenarios that bring a different perspective to our tabletop.

This is where historical records and written history enters the picture. Most wargamers read history in one of the western languages of the colonial powers, yet that leaves many cultures and their wars beyond our understanding, particularly if their history is oral and not written.



Above: Tlingits featured in Wi399.

Perhaps this is where we can apply a 'what if' in a slightly different way and open ourselves up to the new perspectives, lifestyles, and experiences that cultures very different to our own provide, if we take the time to investigate their stories. What if we take an interest in them culturally, rather than through the lens of warfare? Can we then change the way we think about some of our gaming, particularly the colonial and post-colonial impacts, and better the world of wargaming for all?



Left: Chinese Pirates.

as the number of troops involved or the actual location it took place!), and the fact that first-hand reports are incredibly sparse and clearly unreliable, there are still loads of Agincourt 'what if's to explore. These can start before the English arrived on French soil: what if Henry V hadn't successfully accumulated the level of funding that he did to pursue his 1415 expedition? What if there was more volatility at the borders? The more ambitious gamer could even explore the 'what if' of how things may have transpired had Henry IV lived and reigned for another decade. Any of these three questions could drastically alter the Battle of Agincourt or remove it from history altogether.

"Moving into France, what if the bloody flux had struck the English army even more severely during their stalled siege at Harfleur, causing more casualties to dysentery? What if they had made the bold choice to march straight past Harfleur? What if the English had not captured the French relief caravan of supplies before that siege? What if Henry V had left more than a single garrison in the town before marching on?

"Even the night before the battle and events when things were underway can raise questions on the tabletop. What if English camp discipline was less rigorously maintained? What if alternate



strategies were chosen? A battle biggie: what if it hadn't rained? Another battle biggie: what if Henry hadn't executed the prisoners taken in the first wave of the attack? There are hundreds of other points where things could have changed. Who could resist trying out some of these variables? Certainly not me! And this is just up to the Battle of Agincourt: what if things went differently there, with a French victory? What 'what if's might have come next?'

WHY THE SEA LION?

It hardly seems fair to the narwhal (nature's awesome flabby unicorn) that the sea lion (a seal that's slightly better at waddling) is the wargamer's favourite seaborne mammal! We can only assume, from our admittedly tiny sample size of wargamers asked, that it's got something to do with the ever-popular WW2 'what if' of Operation Sea Lion. Pete Brown's all excitement when we ask him about it: "If it had happened and succeeded the world would be a very different place - more so than most other 'what if's.'" But Sea Lion's been talked about plenty, so let's look at some other WW2 options.

Wi's James suggests the other WW2 'what if' that almost was as a good Sea Lion alternative: "I think wargamers relish the camp appeal of *Dad's Army* ('Don't tell him, Pike!') and *Allo Allo*; maybe that's why Sea Lion always ousts the Pacific's end of war 'what if': Operation Downfall. The Allied plan would have been the largest amphibious operation ever, but it would have lacked the bumbling fun of classic British comedy, especially when you consider

Photos on this page show Bolt Action models in Operation Sea Lion and Operation Downfall action.



WAKE ISLAND IN THE ROARING '20S

Wi's Editor Dan looks to a WW2 'what if' with a difference - Wake Island 1920s. "Set twenty years prior to the real Japanese amphibious assault of the American held Wake Island in World War II, this ingenious 'what if' game was the brainchild of Adrian Shepard - famous for his early 20th Century demo games at Colours - and was played out at Michael Perry's Wargames Room.

"This version of the assault on Wake Island used a similar configuration of troops to the original battle, with US marines, sailors, and civilian construction workers facing a landing force of the Imperial Japanese Navy, with a few special characters thrown in for good measure. The re-fight concluded with the game imitating life; the Japanese taking the island following a dogged defence by the Americans."



what a brutal battle of attrition was expected. Some sources claim that around 500,000 Purple Hearts were produced in anticipation of losses before the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought about Japan's surrender.

"But those words - largest amphibious operation ever - surely tantalise your gaming tastebuds. Despite this (unless memory and The Vault's search are failing me) we've never actually run an article exploring Operation Downfall or Japan's opposing plan, Operation Ketsugō. I'd like to take this moment to remind our readers that we welcome article contributions; I'd love an excuse to put a load of WW2 landing craft on the desk of new painter Marc and play out the possibilities of Operation Downfall!"

There is also a chance to bring in some weirdness! "What I do love, and this is a massive tangent from history, I know, is when we blur the lines of fantasy and reality a bit". Mark Latham enthuses. "What if the Nazi pursuit of supernatural power was real (*Indiana Jones, Achtung: Cthulhu, Konflikt 47, Wolfenstein*, et al), or the lines between alternate realities/timelines blur (*The Man in the High Castle*)? Then we're into the realms of history, fiction, and fantasy gaming, which ticks all the boxes for me!"

Quite right Mark! We'll leave our whistle-stop tour of 'what if' possibilities there with the hope that it inspired you to jot down some scenarios; fire up your imagi-nations; tinker with your orbat; add some variables to a battlefield's terrain and weather; explore some fantasy worlds; or just get into reading a good book. If you engineer an entertaining 'what if' of your own, we'd love to hear about it. Perhaps you can feature in Quick Fire in a future issue of *Wargames Illustrated*.



Above: *Konflikt 47* brings all sorts of supernatural weirdness and advanced technology to an alternate WWII.

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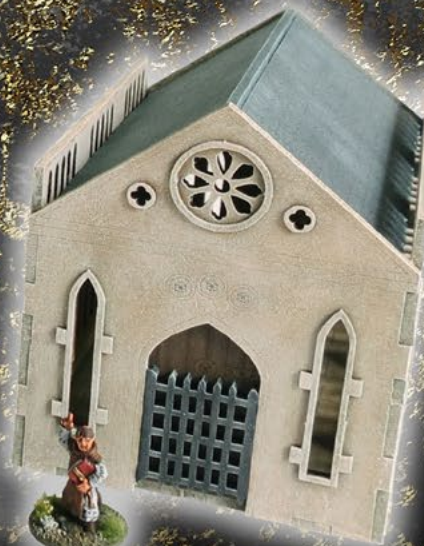
The smaller chapel is an extremely versatile piece, and back view of the cathedral showcases this beautiful and ornate window design!

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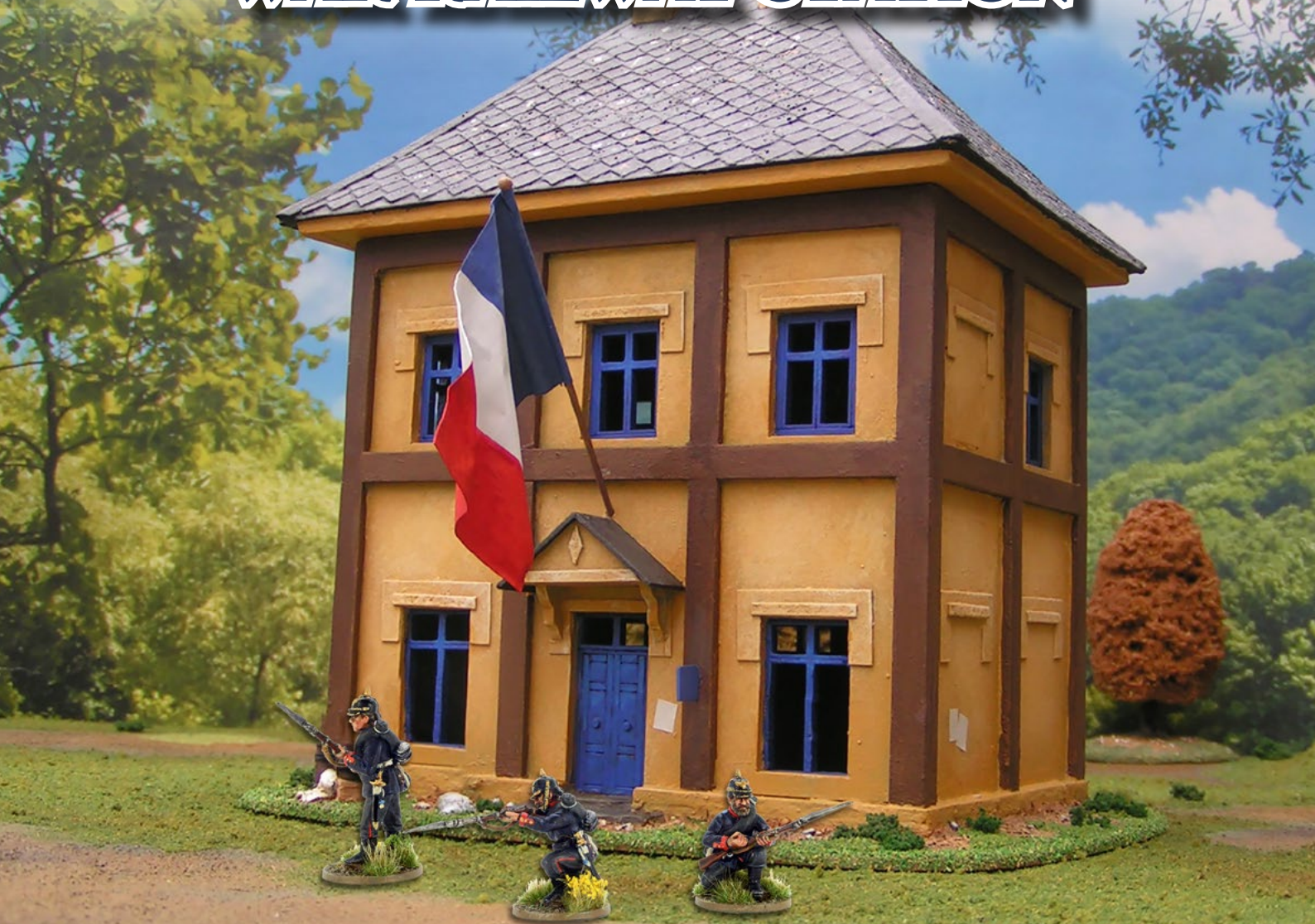
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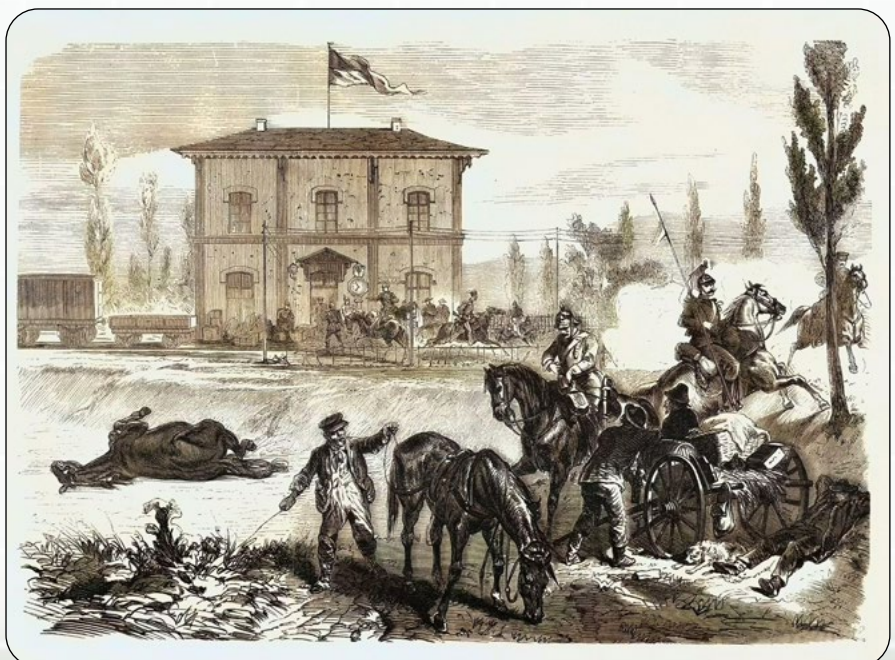


Tony Harwood brings half a century of model making experience to the pages of *Wi* with a build of Courcelles railway station.

INSPIRATION AND PLANNING

Some time ago I was looking for inspiration for my next terrain building project and enquired on my Blog - dampfpanzerwagon.blogspot.com - as to what I should build next. I have to admit that there were a number of unusual requests, but one that stuck with me was to build a Franco-Prussian War railway station in 28mm scale.

The suggestion led me to search for suitable images and I quickly found a black and white sketch of the railway station at Courcelles drawn in the 'French School style', which I thought was perfect. I decided that my first tutorial for *Wargames Illustrated* should be a scratch-built model based on this image and started to work out how I was going to build it.

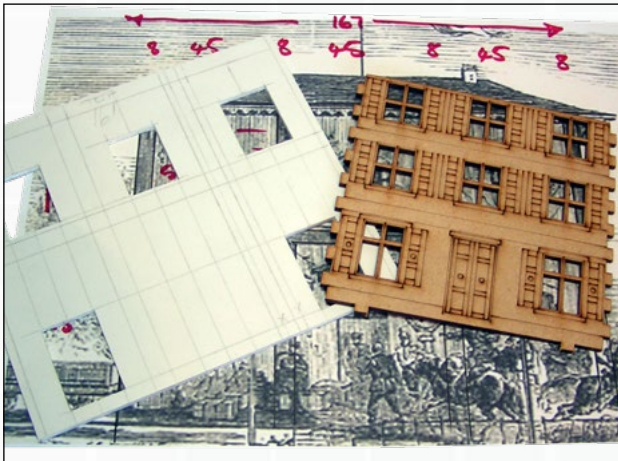


My initial plan was to scratch build the whole structure, but I found what I thought would be the ideal donor building online - a Northern European three-storey house from Sarissa Precision. When the model arrived, I was a little disappointed - the three-storey house was much smaller than I had thought, more like a 15mm scale building. This left me with a dilemma; should I return to my initial idea of scratch building the railway station? In the end, I compromised and used the doors and windows from the Sarissa kit but built the walls and roof from scratch.

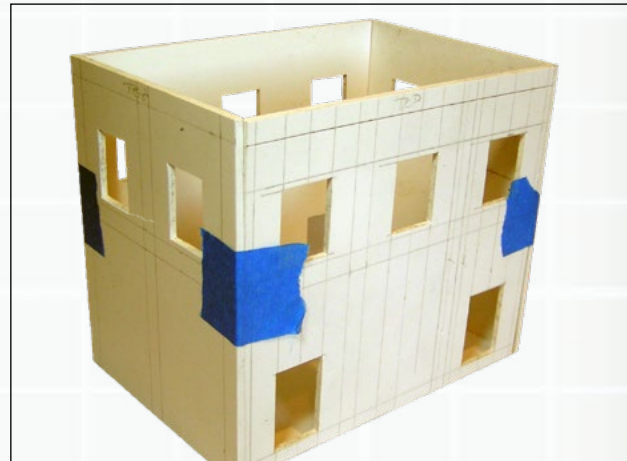
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I've been a model maker for over 50 years, cutting my teeth on the early Airfix kits sold in Woolworths and developing these skills to produce a variety of scratch-built models. Some time ago I started building my own terrain for wargaming and have since written three self-published books, two published by Pen & Sword, and over 100 articles showing how I build terrain. I would describe myself as a model maker first, a figure painter next, and only then a gamer. I believe that building wargaming terrain can be a hobby in itself and it has given me tons of satisfaction over the years. In semi-regular articles for *Wargames Illustrated* I hope to pass on some of the skills that I have learned and show that building your own wargaming terrain can be simple and fun.

BASIC CONSTRUCTION



1. Using a scaled-up image of the Courcelles railway station, the Sarissa MDF kit, and some 3mm thick plasticard I set about building the main railway station facade.



2. The four walls were all built from the 3mm thick plasticard, and here you see the edges held together with blue masking tape. It was imperative that all corners were square and that I took into consideration the thickness of the plasticard when cutting out the walls and window openings.



3. I used the Sarissa laser-cut MDF windows and glued them in place behind the main window openings. I used superglue to hold the window frames in place and made sure that the frames were square in the openings. Superglue was also used to glue the walls together.



4. The decorative pillars and framing (a noticeable feature seen in the original sketch) were constructed from strips of 3mm thick plasticard. Once again, I used superglue to glue them in place. The upper windows were basecoated with a neutral grey acrylic paint, which was also used to paint the interior as I did not want the stark white plasticard to be the interior colour.



5. The lower windows and doors also used parts from the Sarissa kit, but these were modified. I trimmed and glued parts together to make the larger downstairs windows and the single layer of windows above the main double doors.

I have not included an MDF window frame in each of the wall segments. Why? The honest answer is that I didn't have enough large windows in the Sarissa kit and I also thought that having some plain areas might give the walls and model some additional interest.



6. I used card and some eggbox carton card to build and decorate the window lintels. These were glued in place with a mixture of superglue and PVA glue. Notice how I have included these decorative features on all wall segments – even the ones where there are no windows – a feature I have seen on many UK buildings.

The front porch was constructed from a block of balsawood covered in and decorated with plasticard and given a pair of carved lintels.



7. I added a lower shelf or lower wall trim from 3mm thick plasticard and based the station onto an off-cut of more 3mm thick plasticard. This base was then built-up with DAS modelling clay applied over PVA glue (to make sure that it sticks).



8. I used a mixture of sieved sand, fine stones, and acrylic medium to further texture the groundwork. In addition, I glued down some resin and metal luggage and sculpted a couple of sacks from DAS, as seen in the initial sketch.

THE TILED ROOF

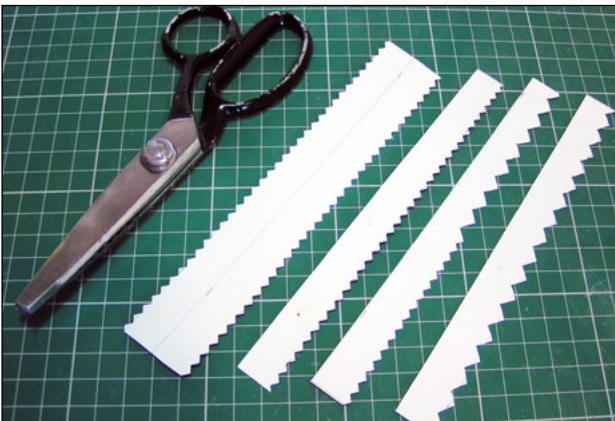


1. The hipped roof was built from thick card and more 3mm thick plasticard. The roof was modelled with a large overhang on the front and sides.

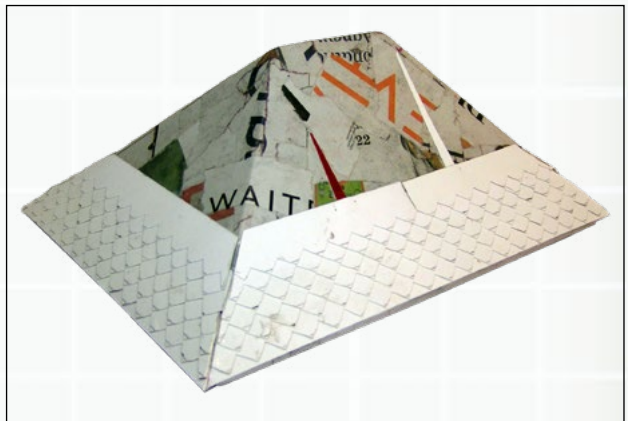
First the plain, untiled roof was strengthened by running hot glue along the internal joints and later with a coat of dilute PVA glue to the outside surfaces.



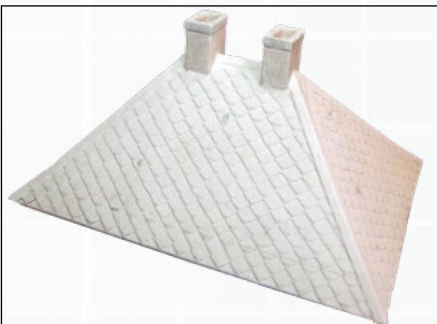
2. I further clad the roof with strips of torn newspaper glued in place with PVA glue, then started to build up the lower roof edge with strips of plain card. This additional card helps to define the shape of the lower edge prior to the start of the tiling.



3. The very distinctive diamond shaped or fishtailed tiles were constructed from strips of packaging card cut with 'Pinking Scissors'. The initial zig-zag was too small to use, so I cut back every-other 'V' with a new scalpel to make the tiles larger and more in-scale.



4. The tiling begins at the lower edge and continues up the roof, making sure to align each layer of tiles with the one below to give the distinctive diamond effect I was looking for.



5. The roof flashing was done with more card, and the two chimneys were constructed from balsawood scraps with thin card detailing. Any gaps were filled with DAS.

The whole roof was then further textured with a mix of ready-mixed filler, PVA glue, and acrylic medium, which was painted on with a large hogshair brush. This coating adds both texture and strength to the roof and 'seals' the card tiles prior to painting.

6. The whole building was basecoated with neutral grey acrylic paint. I added very fine marble dust to this, to add subtle texture (and hide joins) on the walls. The roof was also basecoated with neutral grey and then test fitted onto the station building.



PAINING THE BASIC STRUCTURE

1. At this point the original black and white sketch was of no use. I searched the internet for images of similar railway structures and decided on a pale cream or yellow ochre base with darker columns and framing.

This basecoat was further refined by drybrushing and blending lighter cream colours across the main wall sections.



2. The pillars were painted in a chocolate brown colour - I have no firm evidence that this is the correct colour, but based on the original sketch it is my best estimation. The brown areas took some time to apply correctly.

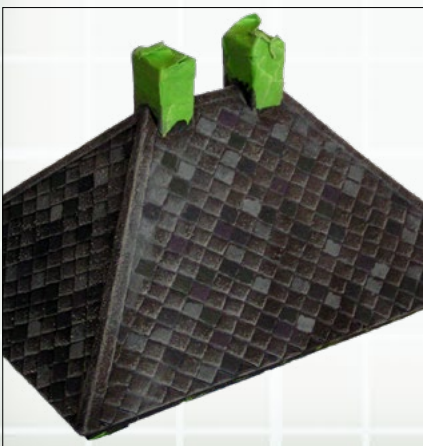
The windows and doors were also painted in a chocolate brown colour, although as you will see this was later changed.

3. Further detail painting added highlights to the doors and painted the main step and awning roof grey.

4. There was just something about the lower windows that didn't look right to me. So I trimmed the lower horizontal window frames from the MDF blanks to give a larger lower section. Once the window frames were sanded smooth, I re-painted them with the chocolate brown colour.

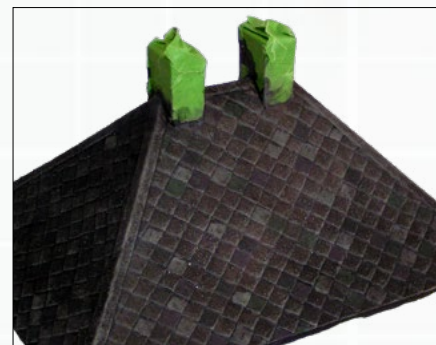


PAINING THE ROOF TILES

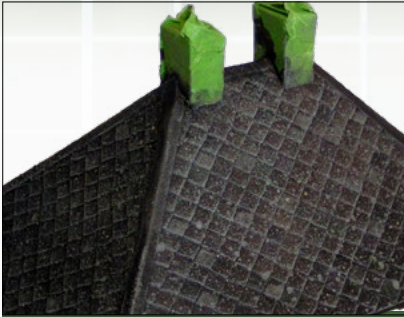


1. After masking off the painted chimneys and lower fascia, I painted the whole roof with a dark brown/black mix. The roof was then drybrushed with some mid-grey acrylic paint, which highlighted the distinctive tile design.

Various tiles were then picked out in different colours - the more random the design the better.



2. The roof was then given a dark wash to tie everything together.



3. The whole roof was then given a 'spattering' of different coloured paints. The spattering was done by flicking different watered-down acrylic paints with a tooth brush and cocktail stick - the effect is very impressive, but messy!



4. The finished roof with, mould, lichen, and bird droppings applied with just simple colour application, this time in a more controlled way.



5. Adding the roof to the building walls (but not gluing it in place) allows you to check everything looks as it should in the complete build.

FINAL DETAILING



A little knowledge is a dangerous thing ... I had seen that many French railway stations were painted with pale blue woodwork. I'm not sure if this was correct at the time of the Franco-Prussian War, but I thought it would make a great addition to this model, and after seeing everything together I decided to repaint wooden areas blue.

The groundwork was painted in my usual Citadel Snakebite Leather colour, highlighted with yellow and white, then individual stones picked out in grey (mixed from black and white). The flag was another feature I had seen on the internet. I had noticed that French railway stations would often have huge French flags mounted on the roof or hanging from angled flagpoles.

The flag post was constructed from a piece of radio control servo rod, which had the finial built up by dipping the rod end into superglue before applying accelerator until a bead shape had been produced. The flag was made from two self-adhesive paper labels painted with acrylics. Once the labels had been stuck in place around the flagpole, I wrinkled the paper flag and applied some painted highlights.

The finished flagpole is just a push fit on the model and can be easily removed if needed. I had thought that the flag looked a little large, however there are many illustrations showing that these huge flags were a common feature on French railway lines of the period.



The items of luggage have been painted in a variety of different colours and finishes.

The final detailing was adding some flocking and static grass to the base, and posters or information leaflets to the walls (a feature seen on all railway stations throughout time).





The finished Franco-Prussian railway station is 200mm wide x 150mm and 250mm tall. It is mounted onto a 3mm thick plasticard base that is 220mm x 180mm.

SCALE CREEP!

This image includes sections from the original Sarissa Precision MDF kit and clearly shows just how small the laser-cut kit parts are when compared to the finished model I made.



MATERIALS USED

- Sarissa Precision 3 storey house
- 3mm thick plasticard
- Card
- Eggbox card
- Balsawood
- Newspaper
- DAS modelling clay
- Sand
- Sieved stones
- Powdered marble dust
- Ready-mixed filler
- Metal rod
- Sticky-back plastic/labels
- Resin and metal castings

Left: The finished model in situ with a 28mm miniature alongside it and shown for scale.

I really enjoyed the challenge of trying to reproduce the original artwork showing the Courcelles railway station, but I admit that this was never intended to be a 100% copy but more of a generic wargame structure. While I felt that the Sarissa kit was too small to be used alongside 28mm figures, it did supply a number of key features for the model.

The Franco-Prussian War railway building took nearly two months of quite 'laid-back' modelling, which was intermingled with other projects. Most of the tedious modelling was confined to cutting out the tiles and building the roof, but I am always willing to spend time detailing roofs; these are the feature that we as wargamers spend most of our time looking down on!

THE LEPER TERRORISTS OF FRANCE



BIO-CHEMICAL WEAPONS AND THE CONSPIRACY OF 1321

Dr Steve Tibble introduces us to a tale of medieval madness, moral panic, and great 'what if' gaming potential set in 14th Century Paris.

The leper terrorists of France were a dangerous and repulsive group in their own right. Their very presence made people back away in disgust and fear.

But this evening they were indeed armed with more than just bad breath and the

imminent threat of contagion. Dusk was falling in the alleyways around the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris. The five deformed men and one woman carried with them the usual weapons of that place and time, 1321. All were armed with daggers and one or two had short swords barely concealed under their filthy rags.

Even more worrying, however, they also carried weapons of mass destruction:

leather pouches containing chemicals that would enable them to contaminate water supplies and kill thousands of innocent Parisians.

The lepers moved painfully, laboriously towards the well in an alley around the back of a local hostelry, no more than 100 yards along from the cathedral. Their mission, like that of twelve other terror cells in Paris that night, and upwards of thirty terror groups across France as

a whole, was to carry out a massive attack. In one fell swoop they would kill the complacent, cruel citizens who had made the lives of the lepers even more miserable than they already were.

Their objective was not merely revenge. It was simple, but also breathtakingly ambitious in its scope. With the healthy inhabitants dead or dying, the shadow world of the leper could come out into the light. No more hiding. No more cruelty or torment just for being different. And no more debilitating, grinding poverty. A single night of coordinated terror attacks could bring all their suffering to an end. The lepers would be able to create a new society, one in which they would be more than just tolerated: they would be the new masters of a new kingdom of disease and putrid decay where they alone would rule.

History tells us that the lepers' plot failed (more on that later). But it makes for an interesting, and very different, medieval skirmish. My intention here is to provide you with the background for a simple 'starter' scenario, and you, the player, to run with it and see where it can take you.

THE SCENARIO

One player takes on the role of the Leper Terrorists, the other the Kings' Guards (an early and far darker prototype of The Three Musketeers) or City Militia.

The action should be played out on a small board - anywhere between 2 x 2 and 4 x 4 (depending on the rules you are using). Much of the playing area should be covered in medieval buildings and



anything else you might find in Paris circa 1321. The only specific stipulation is that the lepers' objective, a well, should be placed near one table edge, whilst they begin the game anywhere (and not necessarily together) along the opposite table edge.

The guards should begin in the middle of the table. Initially, there should be fewer guards than lepers, about half as many, but the guards can shout for back-up, with reinforcements arriving on a D6 roll of 5 or 6. On a score of 1 however, a random leper arrives to aid his comrades.

To win the scenario, the lepers will need to get to the well and release their toxic payloads into the water.

The lepers movement rate should be less than that of the guards, and they are armed with much cruder hand weapons.

Give the lepers the element of surprise at the beginning of the game, with the guards not able to attack until they have line of sight.

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH?

In the event, the brutal and desperate mission of the lepers that night was thwarted. The king's officers and local inquisitors were actually able to pinpoint the ringleaders just before the plot was due to take place. Under their less than gentle questioning, the lepers were encouraged to confess to their schemes, to name other conspirators,



We played our Leper Terrorist game on a 4' x 2.5' board, covered with a Deep Cut Studios mat. The buildings were mainly Tabletop Workshop, the scatter is by Debris of War and the figures are by Gripping Beast and Foundry.



and to implicate those who had financed and organised the plot. One of the most audacious terrorist outrages in European history was thwarted at the last moment.

This whole story is, strangely, both simultaneously true and entirely false.

It is 'true' in the sense that this was what the King of France's secret police and lawyers found out in the course of their brutal investigations. Thousands of lepers did indeed confess to the plot and to the part they were ready to play in it. Like the Templars just a few years before them, when the order was dissolved because of its alleged predilection for devil-worship, the conspirators were eager to confess to a wide range of seemingly bizarre, almost implausible, crimes.

But there was a good reason why so much of it sounded implausible: there was not a shred of truth behind any of it.

Men under torture will say almost anything to make the pain stop. And, again, like the Templars before them, the lepers of France had been brutalised into confessing to everything their inquisitors had suggested, or even hinted at, no matter how fantastical.

A greedy monarchy wanted money, and a fearful, superstitious population were all too willing to believe whatever stories they were fed. Each deserved the other. And the stage was set for the 'Leper Conspiracy of 1321'.

Bernard Gui, the Inquisitor at Toulouse from 1307 to 1324, who was present at the 'questioning' of many lepers, wrote that:

"There was detected and prevented an evil plan of the lepers against the healthy persons in the kingdom of France. Indeed, plotting against the safety of the people, these persons, unhealthy in body and insane in mind, had arranged to infect the waters of the rivers and fountains and wells everywhere, by placing poison and infected matter in them and by mixing [into the water] prepared powders, so that healthy men drinking from them or using the water

thus infected, would become lepers, or die, or almost die, and thus the number of the lepers would be increased and the healthy decreased."

PSYCHOLOGICAL GYMNASTICS

The extent of the psychological gymnastics involved in trying to explain the motives of these leper-terrorists, or even to invent the plot as a whole, was extraordinary. The best the crown could come up with, in their bleakly unimaginative way, was to suggest that the lepers wanted higher status, a bigger house, a better job-title, just like everyone else - *"They aspired to the lordship of towns and castles,"* wrote the cheery Bernard, *"and had already divided among themselves the lordship of places, and given themselves the name of potentate, count or baron in various lands, if what they planned should come about."*

As with the suppression of the Templars, the response of the French crown to the new 'conspiracy' was to deploy the full range of powers at the disposal of the state - legal, military and local resources all marshalled, in a major case of overkill, against the leper communities of France. The crackdown was wide-ranging and shockingly swift. Lepers in the Périgieux region were accused in the spring of 1321 and rounded up en masse on 16 April. By the middle of May, many of these poor souls had been tortured into giving detailed and imaginative 'confessions'. They were then burned.

But there were other profitable opportunities to be seized, and other, wealthier, minorities to be investigated. By the middle of June, lepers tortured and prompted by the king's men had begun to incriminate members of other French minority communities; the 'usual suspects' of medieval society when things started to go wrong. The new victims were mainly Jews. Under torture - of course, always under torture - a leper was encouraged to say that a rich Jew had given him money to place powdered poisons into public water supplies.

An association with witchcraft and heresy was inevitably only a few confessions away from this already heady mix. A female leper was caught with a bag that contained *"the head of a snake, the feet of a toad and hairs of a woman, having been mixed with a certain black and fetid liquid, so that it was not only horrible to feel, but also to see"*. To any normal observer, this sounds like the kind of

WHERE TO FIND 28MM MEDIEVAL LEPER TERRORISTS

You won't be surprised to learn you won't find them 'off the shelf', but what you can use for your lepers (rather cruelly) are Zombie or Revenant figures. We used Gripping Beast Revenants (Dark Age undead) for our terrorists, as seen in the photos. However, not content with the lack of filthy bandages on the models, Marc was on hand to roll some greenstuff and splash some paint about to create that fashionable 14th Century leper look in 28mm (see later boxout).



potion or ointment that the desperate lepers might use to alleviate their suffering. But, twisted and exaggerated, it could also be made to look like witchcraft or satanism.

CASTING THE NET FURTHER

The monarch; King Philip V, 'the tall', was extremely superstitious. He needed little additional incentive to draw ever more mad conclusions from the febrile investigations of his minions. On 21 June, lepers all across France were rounded up and arrested.

The punishments inflicted on them were harsh in the extreme. All lepers were to be tortured, and once they had confessed, burned at the stake. Pregnant lepers were allowed to give birth, but after the baby was able "to live and feed without their help", they too were burned. In the unlikely event that torture failed to produce a satisfactory confession, the few survivors were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Interestingly, as in the case of the trial of the Templars, superstition, credulity, and sadism were combined with greed. These were not mutually exclusive motivations. On the contrary, they all merged together with easy familiarity. The lepers did not have much, but it was decided that what little they had should be confiscated "and placed and held in [the King's] hand".

Once the fun started, everyone wanted a piece of the action, and events became hard to control. Local people began to pre-empt the king's justice, and, incidentally, to relieve the lepers of their meagre possessions before they fell into the king's hands. In Rouen, for instance, enthusiastic townfolk started freelancing, burning their leper neighbours of their own accord - executions were said to be carried out "more by the people than by secular justice".

But it continued to get worse: "In many places, in detestation of the horrible act [of supposed biological terrorism], the lepers, both men and women, were shut up in their houses with all their things, [and] fire having been applied, they were burnt by the people without any judgement." The count of Flanders made the morally correct but unpopular decision not to join in the leper-burning. The arrested lepers in his lands were freed without charge, which, depressingly and predictably, "displeased not a few people". Life was hard, people were superstitious, and unimaginable cruelty was always close to the surface.

Thousands of lepers were burned alive in the aftermath of this fiasco, and just as bizarrely, so were the 'go to' victims of medieval Western Europe: hundreds of Jews.

SIMPLE GREENSTUFF ADDITIONS

SCULPTING SKILLS TUTORIAL

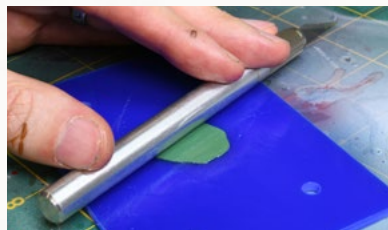
In-house putty pusher Marc shows us how he made the bandages for the showcase Leper Terrorists seen in the article.



1. Two roughly equal segments of epoxy greenstuff were cut. The contact point between the two compounds was trimmed away as this will have started to cure.



2. The two halves were then rolled together to produce a smooth, evenly coloured ball. Had I found hard lumps within the ball, this would have indicated that my greenstuff may be out of date with it having cured prematurely.



3. The ball was first squashed as flat as possible using my fingers. It was then placed on a smooth plastic surface that had been prepared using sculptor Vaseline (regular Vaseline will suffice). It was then rolled flat using the handle of a round scalpel, which had also been liberally slathered with Vaseline.

I aimed to spread the greenstuff out so that it was little more than a pin-width deep. I tried to not press down too hard to avoid the greenstuff adhering to the plastic.



4. A sharp craft knife was used to cut fine ribbons/strips of greenstuff. These will be used to sculpt the impression of bandages on the lepers.

Vaseline was very carefully applied to the blade of my knife to limit the chances of the greenstuff attaching to it.



5. Fine tipped tweezers were used to carefully lift the ribbons from the plastic surface. As with the knife, the ends of the tweezers were covered with Vaseline.



6. The ribbons were lifted into place using the tweezers, carefully fixing one end in place gently, using a free finger when necessary. The tweezers were used to manipulate the ribbon around the limb.

This step was repeated, building up the layers of bandages. The bandages were tidied up using a rubber-tipped sculpting tool.

The greenstuff was left to cure fully overnight, then washed in hot, soapy water to remove any residual vaseline.

TIP!

To smooth the surface, wait a couple of hours for the greenstuff to semi-cure. Now, take a finger dipped in Vaseline and gently wipe along the surface. Apply very little pressure, simply stroke the material.





EXPANDING THE ATROCITIES

The king did not specifically include the Jews in the crackdown of 1321, but local people, many of whom were in their debt, were keen to get them involved. Regional chronicles noted

that the terrorist plot was done by the encouragement and the incitement of the Jews. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the madness sweeping across France, the Jews in some parts were burned indiscriminately and especially in Aquitaine. In the summer of 1321, for instance, on just one small island in the Loire valley beneath the town of Chinon, about 160 Jews were burned.

Once again, money and madness went hand-in-hand. The richest Jews in Paris were arrested and imprisoned. Their debts, assets, and income were assessed. The King of France then took huge sums of money from them before burning or exiling his unfortunate victims. The full extent of the antisemitic atrocities, either centrally or in the regions, is unclear, but snippets of the horror emerge. We know that in Vitry alone, for instance, 40 Jews were imprisoned and died at the royal prison.

The remnants of the tiny Jewish community in France were next forced to pay the French crown a fine of 150,000 livres for their imaginary role in the imaginary plot. In 1322, the vast majority of the surviving French Jews left the country once again, just five years after they had returned.

Perhaps appropriately, lepers were also tortured and prompted to incriminate Muslims in the terrorist outrage - and why not when all the other hated minorities were being blamed? These accusations posed some practical problems, however, even for the most devoted of Philip's servants because there was the minor detail that no Muslims lived in France at that time. The Islamic net therefore had to be cast a little wider. The King of [Muslim] Granada and the Sultan of Egypt were said, even more implausibly than the other accusations, to be fronting the plot.

Finally, and for good measure, the old-fashioned spectre of witchcraft was also raised. The lepers, despite being Christians, were accused of satanic heresies. One tortured prisoner told his inquisitors that at the next 'leper-meeting', they were all going to "*spit on the cross of Christ and upon his body, and also that the body of the Lord and his cross should be trampled underfoot*".

All the elements of the Templar trials were there, and they made a heady cocktail of Jews and Muslims, terrorists and heretics, fear and jealousy, hysteria and calculation, superstition and greed. It was a winning formula, rolled out for the profit of the king and the applause of the crowd.

Within a few months, the whole ghastly affair had blown over. The following summer, the surviving lepers were effectively put under house arrest,





“enclosed in places from which they could never come out, but wither away and languish in perpetuity, so that they would not harm or multiply, men being completely separated from women”.

How did this deranged fiasco ever happen? It should go without saying that the entire plot was fabricated, or imagined, or both, and this multiple pogrom took place without a single person having died of poisoning from the public water supply.

The Jews, as the traditional medieval victims, were an obvious target. Theft and the cancellation of debts were the predictably venal reasons to exploit them, alongside the usual religious and racial prejudices.

The lepers seem to have had little connection with the Jews, either in reality or even in the folklore of prejudice that predated the mad outburst of 1321. But they were feared and segregated because of their condition, and the costs of supporting them provided a financial reason as to why local communities might feel they were better off without them.

Medieval societies were certainly capable of rational thinking and planning; far more so, in fact, than we often give them credit for. But they were also capable of the opposite, using superstition, greed, and hysteria to achieve their goals.

HYSTERIA AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES - A HEADY MIX

These mad outbursts in France were clearly a function of a society on edge and ill-at-ease with itself. Interestingly, and perhaps a warning for our own times of pandemic, the bloodthirsty hysteria of 1321 was just a taster for what was to come: the horrific pogroms that followed the Black Death. When bad things happened, someone had to have sinned and somebody had to pay.

Society occasionally needed outsiders - often conveniently labelled as ‘heretics’ - to take the blame. Sometimes the sick, the disabled, or vulnerable foreign communities could be fitted up to take on that role. In the sad case of the Templars, even crusaders in the wrong place and at the wrong time, they could be heretics.

And just in case we get too complacent, we do not have to look too far back in our own history to see the same sad formulae being played out.

I hope this article has provided you with enough information to expand the gaming potential of the leper conspiracy way beyond the simple scenario I have suggested and into other areas of France (or the world!) and other scenarios or campaigns.

Happy wargaming!



PAINTING VICTRIX'S NEW NORMAN INFANTRY



This article inaugurates *Wargames Illustrated's* new in-house painter Marc. Before his first 'cuppa' had even brewed, we plonked some plastic Norman Infantry on his desk and he created this handy painting guide.

Before getting stuck in with this tutorial, I should mention how impressed I was with this new set. Not only is it incredibly generous, containing 60 models, but the variety is very inspiring; you'll be able to kit out your force with an array of different weapons and armour.

I couldn't resist painting up a small group armed with an assortment of weapons, but for this tutorial I've focused on just one figure. As it's a little more challenging, I picked a figure wearing a padded gambeson. I'll hopefully show you how effectively it can be painted to stand-out amongst your mail clad warriors.



STEP ONE - COLOUR BLOCKING

The miniature is primed in black before the different areas are painted with their basecoat colours. The reason I do this 'blocking' is to get a solid notion of how the miniature will look when finished. It also allows me to check that the colour combinations work before I put in extra painting time refining one area that might later not work cohesively.

I decided to start with muted tones; to make the model look period appropriate and to provide me with the opportunity to push contrast later in the painting process.

BASE COLOURS USED:

- 1- Padded gambeson: Vallejo Model Color, Flat Earth
- 2- Brown leather: Vallejo Model Color, Chocolate Brown
- 3- Steel: Vallejo Model Color, Chainmail Silver
- 4- Blue cloth: Vallejo Game Extra Opaque, Heavy Blue
- 5- Beige leggings: Vallejo Game Extra Opaque, Heavy Brown
- 6- Skin: Vallejo Game Extra Opaque, Heavy Skin Tone



STEP TWO - ADDING DEFINITION TO THE GAMBESON

In this stage, I start to refine the padding, initially creating depth with a wash of one drop of Vallejo Game Ink Sepia and three drops of water. This covers the entirety of the material and where it pools in the recesses it gives the impression of shade.

Ensuring the wash is fully dry, it is then time to add highlights. Each highlight is stippled onto each diamond, initially in Vallejo Model Color Flat Earth with increasing amounts of Vallejo Model Color Light Brown mixed in, building towards Vallejo Model Color Off-White. Highlights are focused on the top half of the diamonds and those which would be exposed to a top-down light source.

To tie the stippled highlights together, I apply a glaze made from one drop of Sepia Ink and four drops of water over the whole gambeson.

In this main photo Victrix Normans clash with Gripping Beast Saxons.



STIPLING

It may seem counter intuitive to 'stipple' when trying to apply fine detail and it certainly takes a little practice. Rest your painting hand against the hand holding the figure or figure holder, but instead of making smooth strokes use that contact area as your pivot point, moving the wrist up and down small amounts to apply a pointillism style to the model.

This gradual build of tiny stippled dots creates more texture and, though in this case we want things to look a little torn and ragged due to the damage, it can ultimately be taken back and forth with different tones to create very smooth blends.

Check out the work of fantasy painter David Soper to see the true potential of stippling - almost everything he paints has been done with a variation on the stippling technique.

STEP THREE - DETAILING THE LEATHER

The brown leather gets a black wash made from one drop of Vallejo Model Color Black and four drops of water. Once it is dry, stippling and edge highlighting techniques bring the detail and definition. Combining stippling and traditional highlighting brushstrokes gives a surface the appearance of texture and slight weathering.

I start with a stippled layer of Vallejo Model Color Orange Brown, three drops thinned with one drop of water, and this covers approximately 40-60% of the leather surface, focused on the most exposed areas.

The next stippled layer, covering less of the surface, is one drop of Vallejo Model Color Orange Brown and one drop of Vallejo Model Color Buff, thinned with one drop of water. A final edge highlight, three drops of Buff thinned with one drop of water, makes it really pop.



STEP FOUR - AND I'M FEELING BLUE

The blue clothing is first highlighted with one drop of Vallejo Model Color Royal Blue mixed with one drop of Vallejo Model Color Off-White and thinned with one drop of water. Focus your highlights on the raised parts of the clothing, such as folds, with a light edge highlight focused on the edge of each part of the clothing. A blue wash, made with one drop of Vallejo Game Color Ink Blue with two drops of water, applied after the highlights have dried, smooths things and adds a little extra saturation.

STEP FIVE - BEIGE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BORING!

The beige leggings are painted in a similar way to the leather and padded gambeson. Highlights are stippled on, focusing on the areas most exposed to a top-down light source. I start with one drop of Vallejo Game Color Extra Opaque Heavy Brown mixed with one drop of Vallejo Model Color Ger. C. Beige WWII and thinned with one drop of water. Cover approximately 70% of the leggings with this, leaving the foundation coat visible in the recesses.

Two drops of Model Color Ger. C. Beige WWII are thinned with one drop of water to establish the more refined spot highlights. The final highlight is one drop of Model Color Ger. C. Beige WWII mixed with one drop of Vallejo Model Color Off-White and thinned with one drop of water. This is applied sparingly to make the edges of folds pop.



STEP SIX - HEAVY METAL

The steel gets a liberal black wash, thinning one drop of Vallejo Model Color Black with four drops of water. Edge highlights of Vallejo Game Color Chainmail bring volume and realism to the metal. A final, fine edge highlight of Vallejo Game Color Silver is used to really pick out edges, and it also applies a few scratches and marks along the blade and helmet.

Finally, a blue glaze is applied, focused towards where the steel would be in the shadows. This glaze is one drop of Vallejo Game Color Ink Blue and four drops of water.



STEP SEVEN - FACE FOCUS

There is very little skin visible on this miniature, but I wanted it to appear quite pale and stand in contrast to the rest of the miniature. I apply a warm skin tone glaze over the whole surface of the skin, using one drop of Vallejo Model Color Brown Rose thinned with four drops of water.

Once that is fully dry, I apply a second cool glaze of one drop of Vallejo Model Color Neutral Grey with one drop of Vallejo Game Color Extra Opaque Heavy Skintone and thinned with eight drops of water; in this instance, application was limited to just the deepest recesses.

I prefer to paint the eyes next rather than after I have developed the highlights on the skin. It means that if I make a mistake painting them, I only need to refine a basic skin tone, rather than matching varying highlight tones. Ensure your paint is a thin consistency and your brush has a good tip. If you need some visual assistance you might want to use a magnifier such as an OptiVISOR to get the figure's eyes just right without troubling your own!

With eyes done, the highlights are emphasised and focused on the raised aspects of the face: the cheek bones, chin, and lips. These highlights begin with two drops of Vallejo Light Flesh thinned with one drop of water. They are taken further with one drop of Vallejo Model Color Off-White added to the mix whilst maintaining the fluidity by adding more water. Increasing amounts of Vallejo Model Color Off-White join the mix until pure Off-White dots the sharpest highlight areas.

Finally, a fine glaze of one drop of Vallejo Model Color Brown Rose thinned with four drops of water is carefully applied to tie the highlights together.



STEP EIGHT - FINISHING TOUCHES

To finish, I painted the base and applied some static grass. A shield, with a freehand design and battle damage finishes things up. I really enjoyed working on the shields for the figures I painted, and as a result, I felt compelled to produce a second tutorial!

Prime members can already access this online - head over to our website to check it out!



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STORMING THE DANEVIRKE



THE ALMOST BATTLE, 6 FEBRUARY 1864

Colonel (Retired) Bill Gray returns to the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein and ponders a ‘what if’ that was mere hours away from happening.

‘What ifs’ have a special place in the hearts of historians and wargamers alike. What if Lee had won at Gettysburg, Napoleon at Waterloo, or if the Germans took Bastogne during the 1944 Ardennes offensive? But very few ‘what ifs’ came as close to actually happening as the probable decisive battle of the 1864 Second Schleswig War.

Where some battles that ‘might have been’ call for a general marching his men for a few more days, getting a new weapon in the arsenal early, or changing a strategy at a turning point, here we are talking only a smidgen of hours and armies separated by barely a kilometer. So, who’s ready to rumble? The time is 4am on 6 February 1864 and we’re sleepily looking out over the Danevirke fortified line on the Jutland Peninsula.

IT’S COMPLICATED!

Let’s take this quiet moment to try and unpack this frankly baffling conflict’s background. I already discussed the “you can’t make this up” politics behind the Schleswig Question in *Wargames Illustrated* 381; suffice it to say that British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston wasn’t kidding when he wrote:

“Only three people have ever really understood the Schleswig-Holstein business - the Prince Consort, who is dead - a German professor, who has gone mad - and I, who have forgotten all about it.”

Very briefly, the issue centered on the independent duchies of Schleswig and Holstein (the latter including the tiny Duchy of Lauenburg) and their relationship with Denmark. The two duchies were technically not part of Denmark, but the King of Denmark was simultaneously the Duke of Schleswig and the Duke of Holstein. By the Treaty of Ribe in 1640, the Danish crown’s claim to both was validated under the condition that the two duchies would never be partitioned or treated differently in their relations with Copenhagen.

The Danish victory in the First Schleswig War upheld this status quo via the London Protocols, but by 1864 Danish progressives were moving the country towards a constitutional monarchy with the hope of formally annexing Schleswig-Holstein. Schleswig was more or less accommodating to change as her population had Danes and North Frislanders in the majority. Holstein, not so much. Holstein was almost completely German, governed by a conservative aristocracy under ancient Salic law (which among other things, prohibited female rule, so if a Danish queen took the throne ...) and in fact desired total separation from the Danes. Indeed, as a German state, Holstein already held membership in the Federal German parliament although ruled by the Danish king.

An abortive Union Constitution failed as a solution in 1858, so when King Christian IX signed the new November Constitution in 1863, pens dropped and armies marched. The constitution left Holstein exactly the way it was, but created a combined parliament for Denmark and Schleswig and revalidated the controversial rights of succession for the Danish throne. The Federal parliament declared this to be a violation of the London Protocols, and a Saxon-Hanoverian corps occupied Holstein on Christmas Eve 1863. German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck cared little about the



You can read about the First Schleswig-Holstein War in Bill’s Wi381 article, available in The Vault online.

grievances of the Holsteiners, seeing this as the perfect pretext to mobilize, invade, and annex territory in his drive for German unification. So, with the Austrians by his side, on 1 February 1864, the Prussians invaded Schleswig and the war was on.

THE BATTLE THAT WASN'T

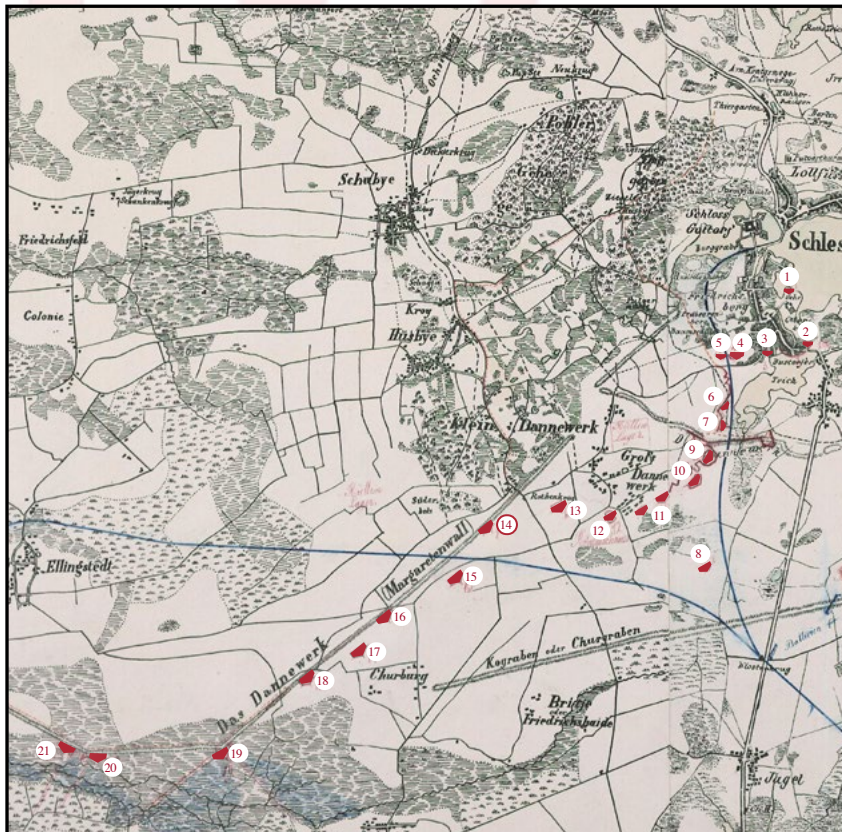
Christian IX immediately evacuated Holstein and pulled back all Danish troops into Schleswig, evidently hoping to diffuse the situation. It didn't happen, so overall command of the Danish army was entrusted to Lieutenant General Christian de Meza, a hero of the previous war, and the army deployed to its traditional defensive positions around the city of Schleswig. One of the army's three infantry divisions would defend the unfordable waterway known as the Schlei Bay, which stretched from the Baltic some 20 km to Schleswig. The army's other two infantry divisions, along with most of the cavalry and artillery, would defend the Danevirke, a lengthy fortification system that stretched from Schleswig westward. All in all, de Meza could count on about 35,000 men to defend the Danevirke, a job which actually required 50,000.

The terrain in the area bolstered the defense of the position, which was pretty flat but contained fields bordered with movement degrading "knicks" (three-foot-high earthen berms with a dense hedge on top). More important was the River Rheider and the Friedrichsheide that surrounded it. This latter piece of real estate was a heath and swamp combo nasty enough to digest a Volkswagen, and the fact that it secured the western portion of the Danevirke nearly to the sea meant that this area could be an acceptable risk and lightly defended. The only problem would be if it froze over.

FROZEN FRIEDRICHSHIDE?

Of course, Mother Nature did her thing, and over the afternoon and evening of 5 February, the temperature plummeted and it started to snow. And snow. And snow. And then snow some more.

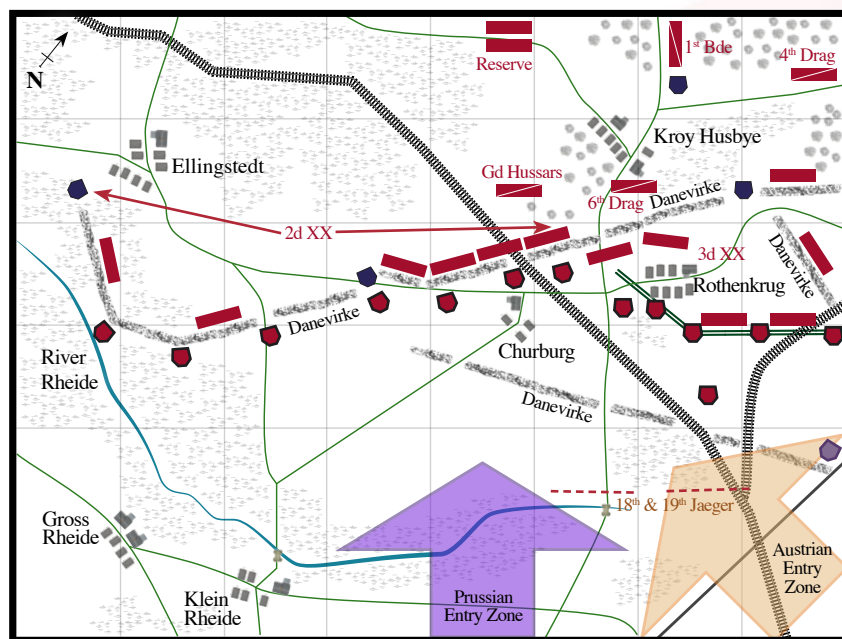
Meanwhile, on the other side of the field stood the not-so-loyal opposition, nominally commanded by the geriatric and decidedly cautious Prussian Field Marshal Friederich Graf von Wrangel. His Prussian I Corps (Prinz Friederich Karl commanding) had been given the task of forcing the Schlei, but was now in a holding pattern after receiving a bloody nose at the hands of the plucky Danes near Mysunde on 2 February. That left the Prussian Combined Royal Guard Division (lead element of Prussian III Corps) under Lieutenant General von der Mulbe and the Austrian VI Corps under the very pugnacious Field marshal Baron



Above: The location of the various Redoubts on the terrain - Redoubt 14, which has been reconstructed at the Danevirke Museum (see over the page) is circled with red.

Gablentz to contest the Danevirke. Thus, it was decided to advance on the Danes early on the morning of 6 February, between the towns of Overselk and Jagel. Evidently Baron Gablentz, as de facto field commander, never seriously considered swinging west through the Friedrichsheide because, although it was cold and snowing, he had no guarantee the swamp would freeze over.

Meanwhile back at Danish HQ, de Meza had no guarantee the swamp would not freeze over, so he called a council of war recommending immediate evacuation. His artillery commander, mortified at losing so much heavy artillery, loudly protested, but in the end (after de Meza cut the telegraph line to ensure Copenhagen's 'approval'), the Danes packed up and without even waving goodbye, slipped away the night and morning of 5 and 6 February.



MAP KEY

- Deployed Danish Artillery Batteries
- Redoubts (with Artillery Batteries deployed inside)
- Prussian Field Redoubt (with Artillery Battery deployed inside)
- Troops
- Cavalry

When the Austro-Prussians walked in, completely unopposed, army command was absolutely dumbstruck and general officer “Gott im Himmel”’s flowed more freely than beer at Oktoberfest. Their first question was why the Danes relinquished such a choice position, but perhaps more importantly, how did they pull it off without anyone detecting it? Regardless, the war proceeded to the fortifications near Dybbol, and although modern historians universally agree he made the right decision, de Meza was relieved from command.

But what if had stayed and fought?



Above: Bruce Weigle's 6mm Danevirke game, played about 15 years ago with his 1864 rules on his fantastic snow terrain.

TO THE TABLETOP, MARSCH!

THE ARMIES

The Austro-Prussian forces at the Danevirke are simply the armies of the 1866 Seven Weeks War two years early, though a white over black German Federal bi-color was carried. Figures in multiple scales, and uniform and other information abounds, so there is little need to discuss these lads here. The Danes are a different matter, but fortunately dress was simplicity personified, and if you ever had a crush on the Brunswick Black Corps of 1815, you are going to like this army.

At this time, Danish infantry and artillery wore the Model 1855 uniform, which was essentially the Model 1848 uniform with

the kepi color changed from medium blue to dark something. The exact color of the kepi along with its matching tunic (double breasted, red collar with red piping to cuffs, shoulder straps and flap) and greatcoat has long been a subject of discussion, but it seems the best description would be Navy, defined today in many armies as a shade of black. White NCO chevrons were displayed on both upper and lower sleeves with officers having silver or gold shoulder straps and kepi band. Trousers were light blue (Navy with red stripe for the artillery, whose guns sported medium grey-green carriages and black iron work), while all belting was black leather, plus a brown cowhide knapsack and linen haversack with a black leather cover. The greatcoat was universally worn as the outer garment for this campaign and



THE DANEVIRKE

Legend suggests the Danevirke was originally ordered built by 10th Century Queen Thyra Dannebod, to protect her people from German incursions from the south. From that point on it was continuously expanded and modernized with 1850 and 1861 seeing extensive reinforcement. And although they were not the massive structures depicted in British tabloids of the day, the Danevirke was no pushover. The entire complex consisted of lines of tall earthen embankments interspersed with artillery redoubts and lunettes.



Above: An aerial view of Redoubt 14, recreated at the Danevirke Museum.

Below: When entering the rear of Redoubt 14 by foot, the impressive defensive height is apparent.



Today, the Danevirke Museum has actually reconstructed the position's Redoubt 14, and it serves as a pretty good example of what an invading army might have faced in 1864. According to the study, *Der krieg gegen Dänemark im Jahre 1864*, this five-sided redoubt had upper parapets 175 paces (Schritten - 24 to 28 inches) long on top of a 24 pace high embankment, which was 20 paces deep. The trench surrounding the redoubt included a parapet 80 paces long in a ditch 10 paces wide and 8 paces deep. An oblique wooden palisade was dug into the trench escarpment and the fort held two magazines, an 84-pounder smoothbore cannon, five 18-pounder smoothbore cannons and two 6-pounder smoothbore cannons.

there seems to have been no distinctive dress for drummers. Swords had silver hilts and scabbards. The red and white Dannebrog was carried on a brown varnished staff with a gilt head. Kepi roundels were white within red.

Danish dragoons wore an identical uniform to the infantry, but with tunic, greatcoat, and pants all light blue, the latter with a red stripe. Head gear was a black, metal trimmed Grecian helmet (similar to that worn by Austrian cavalry), saddle blankets were light blue trimmed red, and belting was white leather. The Guard

Hussars again wore a similar uniform including light blue pants with white stripe and a light blue dolman trimmed in white lace. The pelisse was red with white lace and black fur, the black shako trimmed in silver with a black hanging plume. The saddle blanket was red with white trimmed medium blue Van Dyke edging. Sabre hilts and sheaths were in silver metal.

Finding companies that produce 1864 Danes is a little tricky; I managed to locate just two options. There are some in 15mm from the US firm Old Glory 15s. Their Rank & File product



line includes seven different packs, with Danish infantry in kepi and greatcoat advancing amongst them. North Star Military Figures produce 1864 Danes too, this time in 28mm. This line is particularly well done. All twelve sets, including cavalry and artillery, are sculpted in greatcoat, and Danish fortification guns are included. As an extra bonus, the Danish 18th Infantry Regiment, which still wore the older pattern black shako, is depicted correctly. Unfortunately, the line does not include hussars - if this article causes a rush of 1864 Dane orders then maybe we can push for those getting added. Who's with me!?



The figures seen throughout this article are from North Star's 28mm 1864 range.



THE TABLE

Surprisingly, the unique thing about recreating this battle on the tabletop is not the Danevirke, but the sheer size of the battlefield. The armies are relatively small, with the Danes fielding only 35,000 men, but the length of frontage they had to defend is daunting. Most tables max out at six feet deep to ensure players can reach across to the center, but with a scale of one inch = 120 yards and covering turf from the west of Schleswig to Redoubt 21, you are talking at least an eight foot table representing close to six and one half miles. This of course works for 15mm or smaller scale play, but 28mm may require some creative solutions. Perhaps you can use a croupier stick to push and pull units from afar, war room style!



Above: Bruce Weigle's 6mm terrain allows for this large battle to take place. He describes the action: "This is the final Austrian assault, directed squarely at the center of the Danish line, which coincided with the village of Str Dannevirke. Also shown (barely) are a few elements of the Prussian Combined Guard Grenadier Brigade, which has just broken through on the left (western) wing of the Danish position, at Lle Dannevirke. Besides the locals' houses and the incomplete line of fortifications, the landscape is littered with knicks - the Danes' miniature hedgerows - and the other terrain features you'd expect to find in this wintertime agricultural setting: streams, a few copses, water obstacles, and of course a few ancient berms originally designed to keep out 9th century Germans."

The ground is flat, under snow, and more or less frozen over. Fields should be edged by “knicks” (and a slightly later map from the David Rumsey collection actually details all individual fields for those so inclined). The Danevirke should be treated as heavy field fortifications for redoubts, dropping to medium for embankments. The railroad traversing the area was laid on top of high embankments, such that they can also provide cover, concealment, and melee benefits for units directly behind. Rivers and streams are frozen over and urban areas are of solid masonry construction, but the road network provides no increase in movement due to the still falling heavy snow. Woods are open and provide only light cover.



Above: This miniature recreation of Redoubt 2 from the Danevirke Museum can serve as great inspiration for your terrain making.

The Friedrichsheide is where the game can become a lot of fun; I suggest some sort of roll for any unit beginning movement in this morass. A high range of numbers will allow normal movement for the entire turn because the nearby terrain is frozen over, but a lower range of numbers will reduce movement by half, and perhaps especially low will also disorder the formation. Should another unit begin their move in the same area as one that has rolled already, you should probably apply the same result to them. This might encourage a change in tactics and overall spacing of the troops.

SCENARIO SETTING AND DEPLOYMENT

This tabletop battle begins just before dawn with a freezing chill in the air and concludes just after dusk with snow falling. The ground is snow covered throughout and while this does not degrade cross country movement per se, road movement has no advantage because they are also buried with snow.

The Danes set up first, to defend the Danevirke, and can be placed anywhere

within reason. Historically, only elements of the 4th and 6th Regiments held the extreme western portion of the Danish defense line.

Prussian and Austrian forces enter the board on the first turn from their historical deployment areas with the objective to smash the Danish army so severely that it will either be destroyed or forced to retreat. The Danes must prevent this and hold the Danevirke line at all costs.



Above: How did Bruce create this impressive terrain on the tabletop? Well, there's a full article in Wi329, but he also gave us some specific details: "All of my boards are styrofoam sculpted with a hot knife and covered with fabric, which is then painted as appropriate. Fortunately, there's much less to paint when using white fabric for a snowy board! The Danevirke board required the addition of some field works and 'earthen' redoubts (which I can now reveal were actually just carved balsa wood), the knicks (strips of felt), and the usual straight pin-and-steel wool winter trees. As the snow cover on 6 February was reportedly slushy, it had to be dirtied up a bit too. Pristine white battlefields are rare!"

AUSTRO-PRUSSIAN FORCES

In the game, the Austro-Prussian forces are not a whit different than in 1866, though Field marshal-Lieutenant Ludwig Baron Gablenz (the only Austrian commander to beat the Prussians in battle in 1866), as de facto field commander, should rate at least Good on a competence scale of Poor-Average-Good-Excellent. The Prussians have their needle guns, of course, but the new-fangled breech-loading Krupp rifled artillery should be handicapped. In 1864 the Prussians were loath to risk these weapons being captured; thus, they were not deployed forward as aggressively as in 1870 against the French. A slow and cumbersome resupply process also hindered them, so perhaps a one turn forced withdrawal if out of ammunition, under fire, or within enemy charge range might be appropriate.

The Austrians are bound by the bayonet happy tactics of the day, advancing in mass formation and thus enfiladed by anything that shoots at it. There should be a requirement for Austrian line infantry to attack any enemy unit that comes within charge range or withdraw immediately. On a Conscript-Regular-Elite effectiveness scale, all Austro-Prussians (Guard included) count as Regular. An exception is made for Austrian Feldjaeger - they are Elite and can also deploy into extended order. Unlike at Dybbol, and to the delight of the Danes, no Austro-Prussian siege artillery is available.

DANISH FORCES

The Danish are rated Regular, with perhaps the 1st and 11th Infantry Regiments excepted. These two formations formed the 7th Brigade under the notoriously 'bat-shit-crazy' aggressive Colonel Max Muller, so deserve an Elite rating. General de Meza, though perhaps not as bellicose as Gablenz, was nevertheless an experienced and capable commander and should also receive a Good designation.

Danish infantry weapons included six types of rifled muzzle loading muskets, to include Minié rifles, converted Minié rifles, and the homegrown M1848 pattern. Artillery included the M1863 83 mm rifled 4-pounder cannon, while the rest were smoothbore, the most common being the M1834 infantry and cavalry 12-pounder. Again think Austrian in 1866, but though the Danish infantry attacked en masse (and thus



Above: Colonel Max Muller by Otto Bache 1886.

enfiladed) they did not have a field doctrine requiring charge regardless of circumstances. There were no light infantry units as these had been dissolved in 1860 in favor of expanding the regular infantry.

RULESETS

I could only find two sets of rules that specifically cover the Second Schleswig War, one being my own *Revolution 1848 Age of Valor* variant to *Age of Eagles II*. The other is the 1859, *Grand Tactical Rules for the Second Italian War of Independence and 2d Schleswig War* rules from Bruce Weigle's top notch and well-respected 19th Century product line. You can get my rules as a free download; both rulesets actually include hypothetical scenarios for this specific battle.

Otherwise, any set of rules that cover the 1866 Austro-Prussian War (and there are several) will work just fine. Simply treat the Danes as Austrians but without a mandatory bayonet charge against enemy units that come within a certain distance of friendly infantry formations.





FURTHER READING AND REFERENCES

As for references, my *Age of Eagles* Website provides a free public portal to a OneDrive folder where public domain flags, images, maps, and documents can be downloaded. Many are general staff studies and are extremely detailed, with order of battle and similar information tailor made for wargamers. The bad news is that most are in German or Danish ... maybe take them as an opportunity to learn a new language!

If you're not such a keen linguist, there are two readily available books - Kindle and print - that should fit the bill. The first is Mike Embree's *Bismarck's First War, the Campaign of Schleswig and Jutland 1864*, published by Helion & Company in 2006. It's a good, very detailed, and extensively referenced tome, with good maps and lots of order of battle data. The second is Tom Buk-Swienty's *1864, the forgotten war that shaped Europe*, first published by Denmark's Gyldendal in 2008. The history is just as solid as Embree, but this highly readable tome takes a deeper look

at the people involved, particularly the common soldier. And in case you're wondering, yes, this was the book on which the famous Danish television mini-series *1864* was based. On that note, if you do nothing else after reading this article, watch episode seven of *1864*, concerning the Prussian attack on the Danish Dybbol entrenchments and subsequent Danish counterattack. If that doesn't convince you to get some figures on the tabletop, perhaps with this 'what if', then nothing will!

On Outpost Duty 1864 by Vilhelm Rosenstand.



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On the mean streets of Super Megalopolis, criminal gangs clash with the forces of order!



BLAM! BLAM! AARGH! SNATCH!

Did the free rules given away with the last issue leave you hungry for more grid gaming Action? Have no fear, Daniel Mersey is here, with a new scenario for his game of *Blam! Blam! Aargh!*

BACKGROUND

The background for this scenario is simple: watch the climax of almost any low budget 1980s straight-to-video Action movie and there you have it - an attempted snatch!

In this scenario, the attacker must rescue a Hostage - intelligence and surveillance teams have done their jobs well and have identified where the Hostage is being held. Negotiations have failed, so it's time to send in a snatch team.

- The attacker must rescue the Hostage and remove them from the table.
- The defender must prevent this from happening.
- If the Hostage is killed, both sides lose.

This scenario can easily be switched to any genre setting, but I've chosen a modern/near-future world and presented two squads for this setting. Old West, WW2 commandos, Sci Fi,

Superheroes, and many others can be used - whatever takes your fancy. The *Wi* team have raided their figure options and mixed some of North Star's *Fistful of Kung Fu* figures with modern military options. The Hostage here is a gang kingpin who the 'SWAT-ish' team are trying to snatch up and use as an informant. The crims are trying to prevent it from happening.

The squads I've suggested for this scenario are a good example of *Blam! Blam! Aargh!* squad building - they're not built to equal points values; instead, they are designed to create an interesting interAction on the tabletop and generate an exciting game. With squads such as these, it's a nice idea to play the scenario twice, with each player controlling each side once.

You could, of course, change the Hostage to a gadget, code-breaking device, or (my personal favourite) a 'floppy disk', as rescued by Lewis Collins in the Italo-

German Action movie *The Commander*. In this instance, a 'dead Hostage' means that the gadget has been damaged beyond repair or data retrieval.

TABLETOP LAYOUT

Intel and eyes in the sky have located the Hostage's whereabouts, secured in a small building on the centre spot of the board (in the central area). You need to place a building there to represent this, ideally single-storey. If your only building options are taller you can ignore the higher storeys for this scenario, or fight your way to the upper floors using floor plans.

The Hostage's building counts as cover. The attacker must enter the area at some point to release the Hostage (see the Rescue Action, detailed later).

Other terrain layout depends on your setting. Denser terrain gives a very different game to open terrain, so try both. One player should lay the terrain,



Hiding out in Jane's Diner, the main objective building in this game, the crims protect the kingpin.

We've put loads of crims in to make for a dramatic image. In game no more than two may be in this area.

and the other player then chooses whether to play as the attacker or the defender.

Once attacker and defender are decided, the defender places their models as they wish on the tabletop. There must be at least one but no more than two models in the Hostage's area. You've seen the movies; these Hostages are never guarded as well as they should be!

The attacker does not place any models until the first Phase's Blind Bidding has taken place. Whoever wins the first bid must choose the Move Action; the attacker uses this to start moving models onto the tabletop into any edge areas they choose.

SPECIAL RULES

THE HOSTAGE

Represent the Hostage with a suitable model, which starts the game in the central area. The Hostage only moves when controlled by the attacker.

The Hostage may never be moved by the defender and cannot be deliberately targeted by either player.

The attacker may only move the Hostage once they have been freed with a successful Rescue Action (see below). Select one attacking model in the Hostage's area and move the Hostage along with that model whenever it moves (the Hostage's movement is free and costs no additional activation). The attacker is aiming to move the Hostage off the table.

"Caught in the crossfire" - After the Hostage has been freed, any Shoot Actions into the area containing the Hostage model may result in the accidental death of the Hostage. If any Shoot Action rolls more 1s than it rolls total hits, the Hostage is gunned down. Neither side wants this, so be careful!

The Hostage is not affected by Fight Actions.

NEW ACTION: RESCUE

Rescue can only be used by the attacker, and only if both of the following circumstances exist:

1. The attacker has at least one Non-Stun Token model in the area where the Hostage is held.
2. The defender has no Non-Stun Token models in that area.

There is no dice roll required - the Rescue Action automatically succeeds as the rescuers have done this before and came well equipped! This frees the Hostage; that model may now be moved by the attacker as part of any future Move Action (see the previous section).

This is chosen in the same way as any other Action, except that only the attacker may choose it - they must win the Initiative to use it. The defender

does not get to carry out the same Action: when the attacker chooses Rescue, the defender cannot take any Action.

VICTORY

The attacker must rescue the Hostage and remove them from the table. As soon as the first attacker model is placed on the table, the Hostage rescue has begun. They must keep at least one (living!) model on the table at all times until the Hostage is escorted from the table.

- The defender must prevent this from happening. Once the attacker enters the table, the attacker must have at least one model in play until the Hostage is removed from play - if this is not the case at any point, the defender wins.

- If the Hostage is killed, both sides lose.

There is no time limit on operations.



Instead of using a SAW, our crim Hard Case has magic that we are treating as functioning in exactly the way that a semi-automatic weapon would. It fits the look and feel of the figures far better!

BLAM! BLAM!
AARGH!

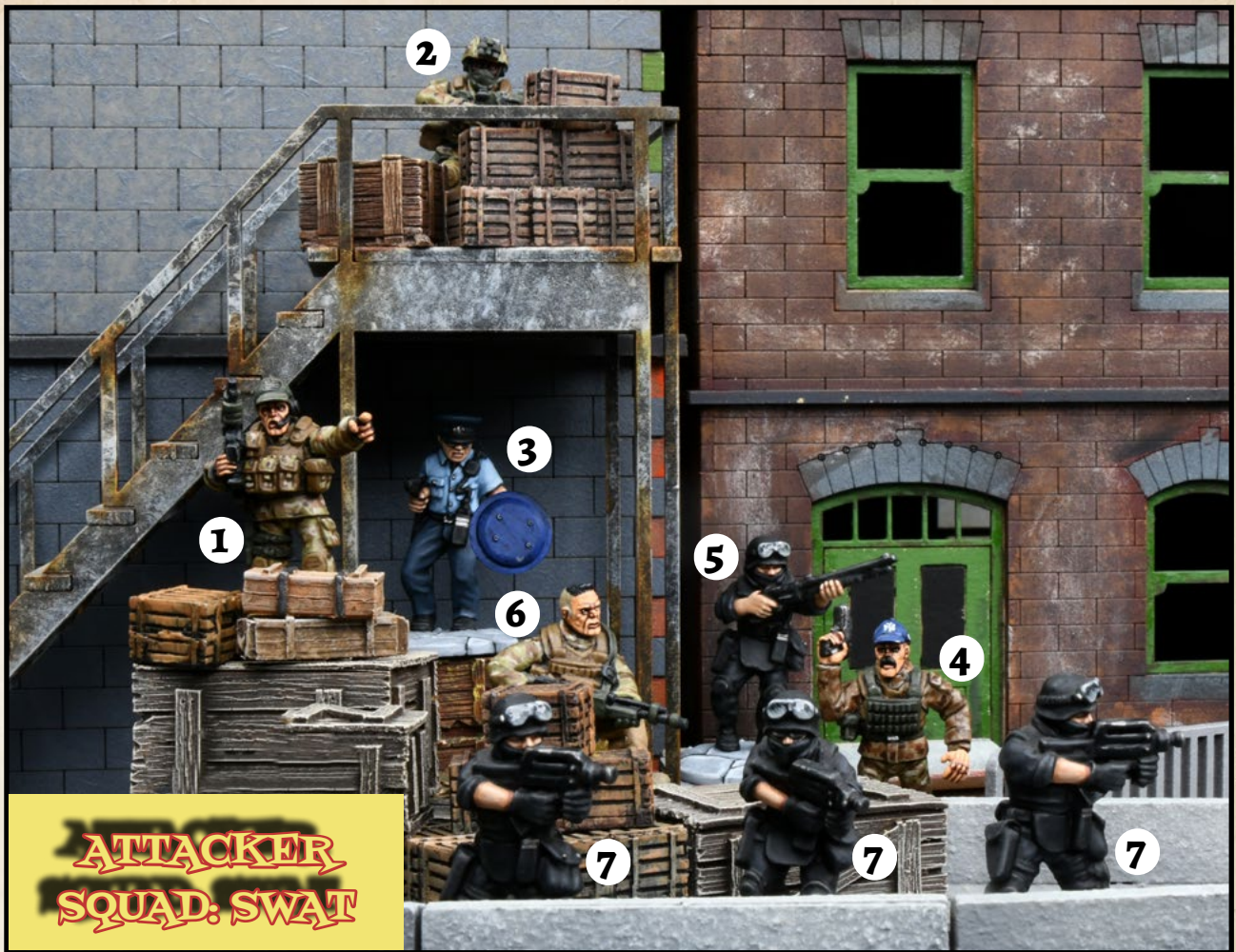
ATTACKER SQUAD: SWAT - 15 IPS

KEY	MODEL ID	SHOOT DICE	FIGHT DICE	PROTECT DICE	MORALE DICE	SPEED	SPECIAL RULES
1	Leader	SMG Advanced Handgun	3	1	4	1	Leader Back Up Weapon
2	Sniper	Advanced Bolt Action Rifle	2	1	3	1	Good Shot
3	Shielder	Advanced Handgun	2	1	3	1	Ballistic Shield
4	Grenadier	Advanced Carbine	2	1	3	1	Grenades
5	Scout	Sawn Off Shotgun Advanced Handgun	4	1	4	1	Camo Back Up Weapon
6	Gunner	SAW Advanced Handgun	2	1	3	1	Back Up Weapon
7	Trooper 1	Advanced Carbine	3	1	3	1	
7	Trooper 2	Advanced Carbine	3	1	3	1	
7	Trooper 3	Advanced Carbine	3	1	3	1	

For balance, you may wish to boost the attacking squad beyond the defending squad as they've got a tough job to do; extra firepower will help. This will be particularly true in low terrain setups.

DEFENDER SQUAD: CRIMS - 15 IPS

KEY	MODEL ID	SHOOT DICE	FIGHT DICE	PROTECT DICE	MORALE DICE	SPEED	SPECIAL RULES
1	Leader	SMG Advanced Handgun	4	1	4	1	Two Guns at Once
2	Hard Case 1	SAW	4	1	4	1	
3	Hard Case 2	Advanced Carbine	4	1	4	1	
4	Crim 1	Advanced Carbine	2	1	2	1	
4	Crim 2	SMG	2	1	2	1	
4	Crim 3	SMG	2	1	2	1	
5	Crim 4	SMG	2	1	2	1	
5	Young Punk 1	Advanced Handgun	3	0	2	1	Agile Bloodthirsty
5	Young Punk 2	Advanced Handgun	3	0	2	1	Agile Bloodthirsty
5	Young Punk 3	Advanced Handgun	3	0	2	1	Agile Bloodthirsty



Most of the figures seen in this article are from North Star's A Fistful of Kung Fu range.



COVER MOUNT KITBASHING YOUR REDCOATS

Focus



In-house hobbyist Marc builds some 'what if' steampunk creations from the British Line Infantry frame that comes free with this issue.

You might already have plans for this month's fine Warlord Games freebie - perhaps the British will become part of a 'what if' campaign, where all three British columns make camp at Isandlwana together (you'll need a few more figures, of course!) and you'll see how the Anglo-Zulu war goes from there. If, however, you want to try a different kind of 'what if', you could take your inspiration from Neil Robert's incredible cover art and build some steampunk models; that's what we did!

EXAMINING THE INSPIRATION

The British Line Infantry were Neil's starting point for his fine artwork; he's added all kinds of steampunk extras - advanced weaponry, extra kit, clockwork parts, and more. The beauty of steampunk is that there's a huge possibility space to explore and play around in - flip through the barmy mix of companies in the new edition of *In Her Majesty's Name* and you'll see everything from military units and advanced technology to horror and the occult.

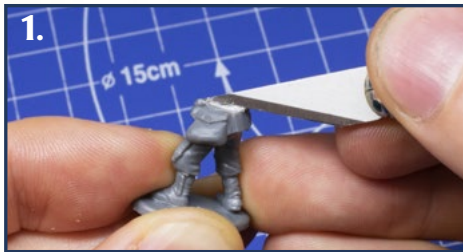
We followed Neil's lead, bringing tubes, valves, pistons, mechanisms, and some wild guns into the alternate Victoriana mix! The dirigible in his art, that this steampunk company rides in, is clearly high above the smog of London because the skies are blue. We imagine that if it dived lower, closer to the factories burning fossil fuels to power the massive machines and advanced difference engine driven technology, things would be far greyer and grimmer. This smoggy atmosphere justifies a plethora of breathing masks and goggles on the folks that populate these fictional worlds, so that's something to consider too. A big steampunk top tip - fight the urge to just stick a cog on it and call it done! A circuit board in the hat band of a character doesn't make it sci-fi; therefore, a large cog shoved onto a pith helmet won't make these historical figures steampunk!



KITBASHING AN ARMoured RIFLEMAN

To make this infantryman appear more heavily armoured than his compatriots (and those shown in the artwork) we added a suitably scaled, armoured upper body. The piece we used is pure hard sci-fi from Wargames Atlantic's Iron-Core range, but as you can see in the finished and painted photos, works just fine.

1. The British Line Infantry body has its torso clipped away, after which a sharp craft knife cleans and smooths the area. This allows the replacement of the original upper body with his new WA armoured torso.



2. With the new torso, we now have a new arm fitting challenge. Thankfully, the Games Workshop ones we've picked were quite a close match and only required a small amount of greenstuff under the right armpit to fill a visible gap. We already knew this would work because (and you should do this with your own kitbashing) we had already done a 'dry fit' where we Blu Tacked bits together first. The smoothness of this fill was not a concern as it would get hidden beneath piping later in the build, and you can see the start of pouches too, made at this point because we had some spare mixed greenstuff.



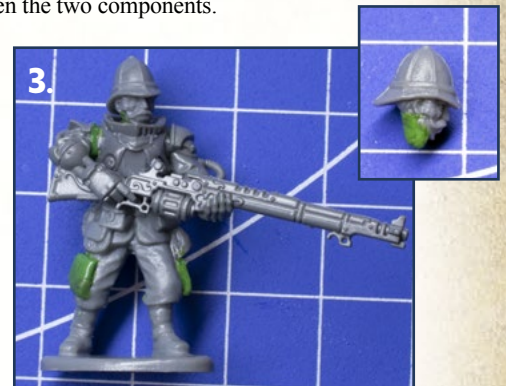
HIDING HOBBY SINS (AGAIN)

If you recall our last Cover Mount Focus, from *W403*, we mentioned that the joy of creating a *Turnip28* miniature is that you can hide some of the kitbashing-created gaps and misalignments with liquid greenstuff, using it to replicate mud splatters, fungal growths, and so on. That kind of organic splatter is not possible when it comes to the generally cleaner nature of steampunk miniatures. Therefore, alternative approaches are needed. You can add extra armour plates, tubes, fabric hangs, and more; Perry Miniatures frames can be great for this, with all sorts of fine spares found in their 100 Years' War options, for example.

Adding pouches can not only hide gaps, but also rebalance a figure if it appears top or bottom heavy. You'll find pouches on frames (North Star's new *Stargrave* sets have good ones with curved backs, meaning they fit many different figures and surfaces) or you can make your own; there is a section in this article that deals specifically with that. On this figure, pouches go on both legs, one replacing the bayonet detail. A large pouch on the back of the miniature hides the unsightly area between the two components.

3. Sometimes a fit won't be so perfectly, with this head, a neck section had to be built from greenstuff to fix onto the torso. Elements like this take a little more experimenting than the 'out of the box' fit of standard miniatures, but as long as you keep the neck thinner than the head and leave chin definition, things will be fine!

Once fixed in place by adding a small drop of superglue to the torso, then fixing the greenstuff neck to it for a stronger bond, very little of the neck is visible on this miniature, but it is still important to have the head at the right height and angle.



4. Tubes get one end fixed to the torso (again using some superglue) and the other into the neck, representing breathing aids as the soldier is not wearing a mask. These tubes hide the messy join between the torso and the arm.



5. Once the pouches were cured, I added flaps.

6. Here you can see the finished miniature. Ultimately, we decided to replace the head with one without a moustache, and added additional piping. The great thing about kitbashing is that you can let your imagination run amok; it is completely down to you when your figure is actually finished, though we recommend that you don't go too over the top. Less is more!



PARTS USED

Warlord Games: Anglo-Zulu British Line Infantry - Body (torso removed) and head.

Wargames Atlantic: Eisenkern Stormtroopers - Upper body.

Games Workshop: Skitarii Rangers arms and rifle.



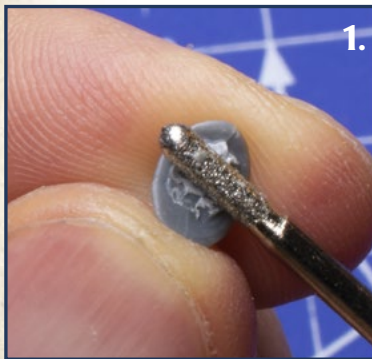
OTHER AIRBORNE INFANTRY

The artwork behind this project has two infantrymen at the fore, along with a commanding officer, so we couldn't just kitbash one of these options; the rest had to join the crew!

ANOTHER INFANTRYMAN

The first challenge to overcome was that the second infantryman needed a head with a breathing mask; Wargames Atlantic's Death Fields: Les Grogards sci-fi figures provided the solution!

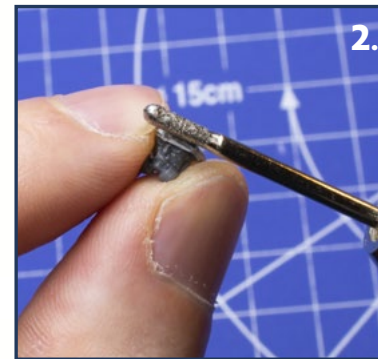
This figure's gear - his rifle and backpack - came from an alternate Les Grogards set (the Command and Heavy Support frame) and these were a serendipitously fine fit, but things became a little trickier with the head. We combined the lower part of the Les Grogards head and the Warlord Games pith helmet.



1.

1. Remove the Warlord Games helmet first, using clippers, then clean away any jagged edges with a rotary tool, file, or sharp blade. The aim is a perfectly smooth finish with only the helmet remaining.

2). Detach the gasmasked half of the Wargames Atlantic head. A rotary tool made a clean surface along the cut, filed so the curve at the top matched that of the curve at the bottom of the helmet.



2.

3). The parts are glued, and any gaps filled with greenstuff. Once in place, tubes connect the gasmask with the backpack. Final touches were to add a Tesla coil element to the rifle tip and aerials to the pack, all snagged from our bits box.



3.

CLOCKWORK CO

Our focus on the commanding officer turned to his bionic or clockwork arm. We needed to locate an option to build this with, and as it went into the realm of grimy sci-fi rather than the cleaner style, we looked to Games Workshop's Adeptus Mechanicus range. These figures are a treasure trove of bits; the Sicarian Rust Stalkers frame is loaded with bionic limbs and deadly looking weaponry. The only problem is that the hands come in the shape of claws, but this can be resolved by cutting the tips away and filing them smooth. The spikes on the guard of the sword that the arm holds were also removed - GW loves spikes!

The British Line Infantry frame does not include a raised arm to attach the Ad Mech bionic bit to, so we sculpted one with greenstuff. A cuff sculpted on top hides the join.

The important thing here is to try and get the length of the limb just right. It doesn't matter how well you match parts, if one arm or leg is a little too long or short your final model will look strange. The merest millimetre of inaccuracy is amplified massively due to the small scale that we work in, so take care here!

With everything in place, tubing was added to give the miniature a more steampunk feel and to further replicate the cover art.



GARNET WOLSELEY - CONVERTING A GIANT IN MINIATURE

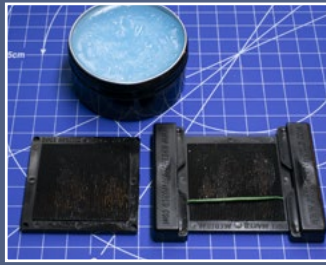
Who can lead the steampunked British infantry? How about Sir Garnet Wolseley from *Wt's* own *Giants in Miniature* range?

The challenge here is adapting a different material. Metal is less forgiving and tougher to cut, so we found quick fixes to bring a steampunk feel. A quick weaponswap, tubing added, and an antenna fixed to the top of the helmet covered all that was required. However, this left Wolseley staring directly through the antenna, so we twisted the head's direction with a pair of pliers wrapped in soft material to protect the miniature.

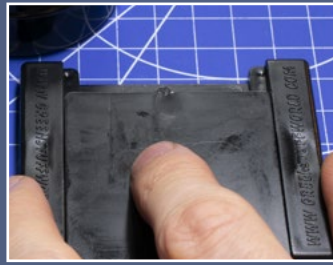


CONNECTING THE DOTS - MAKING AND ADDING TUBES

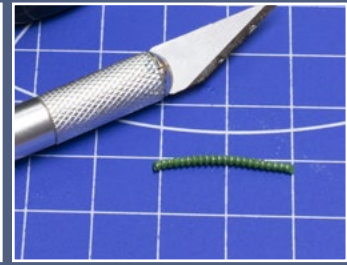
Tubes can bring a sense of cohesiveness to the parts you add, connecting a weapon to a pack, or a shield generator to a power source, for example. Basic greenstuff sausages do a decent job of this but ribbed textures look more impressive. You'll need a roll maker to create these - ours was from Green Stuff World.



1. Cover the sides of your roll maker with sculpting Vaseline, make an even diameter sausage shape from greenstuff, then place it on one of the roller's ridged sides.



2. Place the other ridged side on top and move it gently back and forth. Barely press down just enough to feel a slight tension and resistance.



3. Carefully remove the now grooved sausage with tweezers, grabbing it from the end, and leave to partially cure for about an hour. Cut it to length (it will remain pliable) and you're ready to fix it to your figure with a blob or two of superglue.

THE JOY OF PAINTING

One of the most rewarding things when kitbashing figures is when you splash on the paint work. Your brushwork will bring the disparate parts together and, like magic, turn a figure made from random bits into a miniature that is complete and shows no evidence of the mishmash of parts.

Our figures retain some historical accuracy, taking the inspiration for colours from the cover art, which follows historical reference but with added steampunk flair. The metallics are quite heavy and allude to the more mechanised life these soldiers experience compared to their historical counterparts.



MAKING POUCHES TO HIDE GAPS AND CREATE BALANCE

After putting the British parts together, the figures all looked a little top-heavy. To counter this, I added pouches to their lower halves. Many box sets have various sized spare plastic gear in them, and you can use those to add bulk and cover joins.

If you want to, you can create very simple pouches of your own with greenstuff. Apply a basic greenstuff shape to the model, then use a sharp-edged modelling tool to slice away the edges, creating the pouch shape. Once that is cured, add a flap with a small amount of flattened greenstuff on the upper half of the pouch. Cut the edges with a blade into shape, then finish things off with a small dot of greenstuff for a button.



FANTASTIC PLASTIC

Games Workshop pioneered plastic miniatures that offered plentiful spare parts on their frames, but other manufacturers have more than caught up in recent years. Perry Miniatures, Wargames Atlantic, North Star, and a great many more usually have far too many heads, weapons, and more included in their box sets. Use these parts to start up (or add to) your own 'bits box'. As a rule, never throw away anything! Organisation is key here; we recommend lots of sealable bags labelled with a marker, so you can quickly find your bits.

AFROFUTURISM AND ALTERNATE HISTORY?

Afrofuturism is at a very condensed level an Afro-centric look at sci-fi possibilities. More than this though, it can also be applied to earlier periods. For our models, we have considered an alternative African history, which still shows elements of African culture by envisioning a possibility space where the progress of these nations has been less decimated by the spread of colonialism.

AFROFUTURISM MAHDISTS

Perry Miniatures' plastic Madhist Ansar are the basis for a force that opposes the British. The goal here was to retain the general feel of the original Perry models whilst giving them a sleeker more steampunk adjacent feel. Researching afrofuturism online provided many images for inspiration; Marvel's *Black Panther* currently reigns in the Google search results, but the afrofuturism aesthetic is as broad, exciting, and visually spectacular as the African nations that inspire and inform it.

A collection of Wood Elf (now known as Sylvaneth) Sisters of the Thorn components provides the extra bits for these conversions. The parts look minimalist, organic, and sleek while presenting some bold design and technologically advanced lines.

The conversions are quite simple; essentially a basic weapon and shield swap with the addition of flowing capes. The most complicated aspect was that the capes needed much of their thickness filed away with a rotary tool. The time and care required here was worth it, allowing them to fit seamlessly to the Madhist miniatures. A little greenstuff work will hide any areas that are not seamless joins, such as the hands.

The elven hands were a little larger than those on the Perry figures; this is something you'll encounter when mixing Games Workshop's 32mm heroic scale parts with more accurately scaled historical figures. Happily, hand size discrepancy barely registers on the finished models. If poses and arm positions are natural, people won't even notice the slight differences in the size of parts when you get gaming.



MEDIEVAL WWII

Here you can see some weird WWII kitbashes that we couldn't help playing with:

ARMoured MARINE

This build combines WWII US Marine parts from Warlord Games and Agincourt English Men at Arms bits from Perry Miniatures. Removing the neck and much of the chin from the US Marine's head to ensure that the fit was perfect, was done very gradually. Another challenge was adding some armoured shoulder pauldrons, to give the miniature a little more balance (initially, it looked light around the shoulders).

EXECUTIONER

This build started with a metal Hexexecutioner from Gripping Beast's *SAGA: Age of Magic* range. A period accurate helmet and WWII weaponry is all that's needed to really change the feel, period, and even genre of this figure!



PARTS USED

Perry Miniatures: Body, arms, and head from Madhist Ansar box set.

Games Workshop: Shield, cape, and spear from Sisters of the Thorn/Eternal Guard box set.



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“THE OUTRAGE AT JEDDO”



THE ATTACK ON THE BRITISH LEGATION IN TOKYO, 1861

Pete Brown presents an unusual samurai skirmish game involving those sneakiest of spies and assassins, the ninja!

Ah, the life of an Ambassador: top quality accommodation in the swanky end of town, Chauffeur driven cars and endless Black Tie parties where they serve gold wrapped chocolates in neatly stacked pyramids. But it was not always so. In fact, the life of a British Diplomat during the mid-nineteenth century could be downright dangerous, as the Empire expanded rather too quickly and often into countries that did not always welcome Queen Victoria's rule with open arms. Japan, one might have thought, would have been one of the safer countries to be sent to, but, as always with the mysterious East, things were not what they appeared.

SETTING THE SCENE

For most wargamers, our interest in Samurai era Japan tends to wane after the extensive civil wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Tokugawa Shogunate had provided a period of

relative stability, but this was shattered in 1853 with the arrival of American warships, led by Commodore Perry, that effectively forced Japan to open its ports to European traders. A series of unequal treaties with Western Powers followed, and whilst there were those within the Japanese Government who welcomed trade and the opportunities that contact with the West brought, there were just as many who opposed it and felt that Western culture was a corrupting influence. To be fair, diplomats like the British Ambassador, Sir Harry Smith Parkes, did not help matters, as they adopted a very arrogant attitude toward their Japanese hosts. One British contemporary described Parkes' interview with the Tokugawa Shogun as: “A most stormy, badgering style of interview, I can tell you. Parkes is not overburdened with politeness to the Japanese. I almost fear he will goad them too far...”

The desire to drive out Western culture led to a number of attacks on European sailors and traders in Japanese ports, as well as on Japanese officials who supported Western intervention. A

French minister was attacked and his servant killed in 1860, and in January 1861, Henry Heusken, a Secretary to the American delegation, was ambushed in the street and murdered by assailants dressed in black and wearing facemasks. Indeed, a foreign visitor was killed every month throughout 1861, with the United States legation being attacked and set on fire in 1863. It is against this background that we now move to the British legation in Edo. Here, the Tokugawa Government has guaranteed the safety of the British ambassadors sent to negotiate trade agreements and placed guards on their legation compound to protect them.

A STAB IN THE DARK ...

On the night of 5 July 1861, a group of assassins arrived outside the British legation. Numbering about twenty, the *New York Times* described them as Ronin, implying that they were unemployed soldiers, or masterless Samurai, who had taken it upon themselves to avenge the wrongs being inflicted on Japan by the Western powers. Who actually ordered the attack was never established, mostly

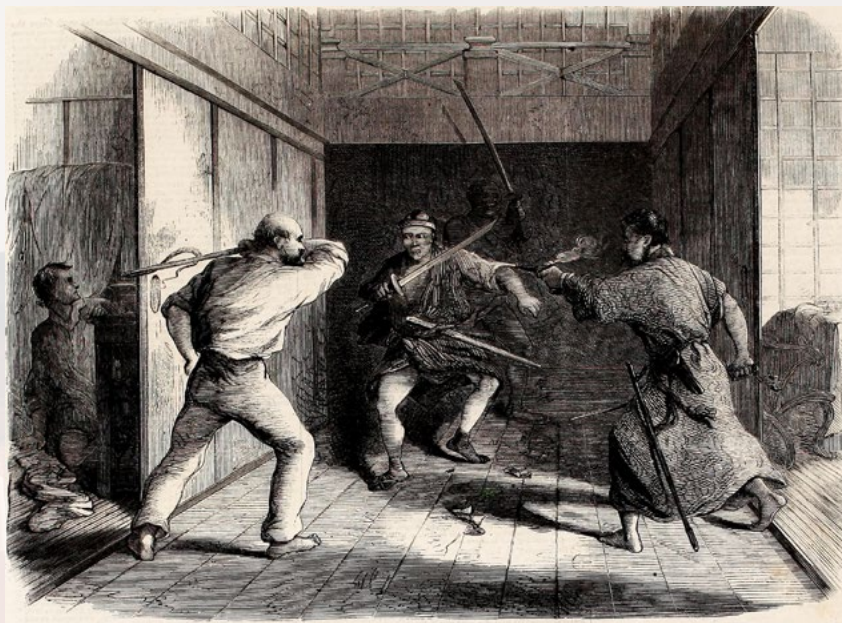
because the British had done a good job of upsetting just about everybody in town and the list of suspects was too long.

Initially, an unknown number of the attackers climbed over the legation wall and approached the gate, where they killed the guard and opened the doors for the others to enter. Once inside the compound, they split up and began to search for the British delegation, encountering a cook and a local priest, who they killed straight away. Hearing the disturbance, Lawrence Oliphant, the legation secretary, got out of bed, and armed only with a riding crop, went into the hall, where he was immediately confronted by a sword-armed assailant. His attacker swung his blade several times overhead, but on each occasion Oliphant was saved by a wooden beam on the low ceiling which blocked the attack. On the last attack, he was relieved to see George Morrison, Her Britannic Majesty's Acting Consul at Nagasaki, lean past him and shoot his assailant in the chest. The attacker reeled back, but then retreated outside. Morrison later found the bullet flattened on the floor, and assumed that his attacker must have been wearing armour under his clothes that stopped the bullet!

Morrison and Oliphant were now attacked by another sword-armed assailant who cut Morrison in the head and injured Oliphant's wrist and shoulder before being dispatched. The third member of the delegation, Sir John Rutherford Alcock, joined the others and gathered in a bedroom at the end of the corridor. From here, they could hear the attackers ransacking their bedrooms in a desperate attempt to find them. The British armed themselves with swords, pistols, and any other weapons they could find before once again venturing out into the courtyard.

By now, the Guards, who should have been looking after the legation compound, had been roused and charged into the courtyard to engage the Assassins. A general free for all ensued, with wounds being given and received on both sides. When the attackers eventually retreated, they left behind three dead along with one assailant mortally wounded. Four of the attackers were cornered in a teahouse and surrounded, at which point they all committed suicide by *seppuku* rather than be taken alive. Although they had not managed to kill any of the British delegation, they did kill three guards and seriously wounded another twelve before being forced to flee, so these were no slouches when it came to swordplay.

When it was all over, Morrison returned to his bedroom where he found the headless corpse of one of his attackers.



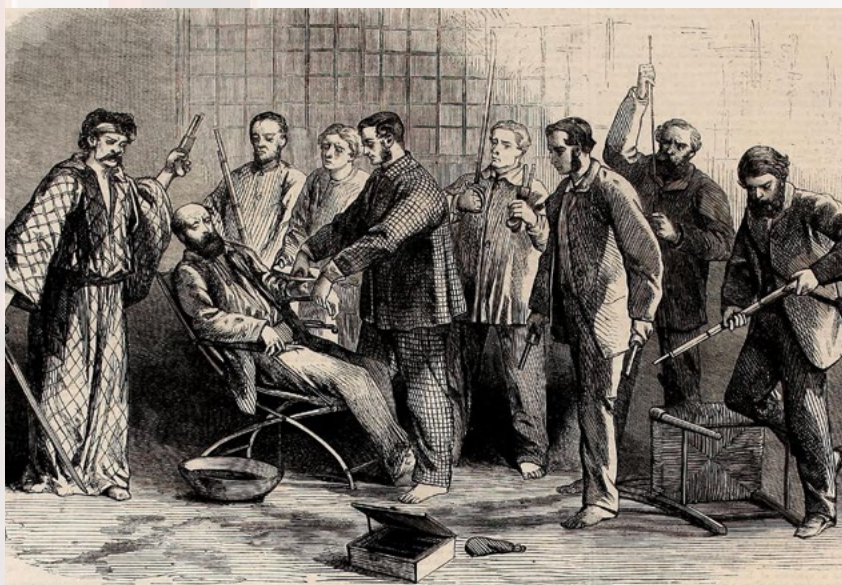
Above: The outrage on the British Embassy at Jeddo, Japan: Attack on MESSRS. Oliphant and Morrison. From *The Illustrated London News* (1861).

This was taken away and his room cleared, but it was not until the next day that he was to find the missing head under his sideboard.

AMBASSADOR, YOU ARE REALLY SPOILING US ...

This incident seems to have all the hallmarks of an excellent skirmish game, with assassins attempting to get into the complex, carry out their deadly mission, and escape before the guards are alerted and come charging to the rescue. The presence of Victorian British Ambassadors provides an interesting alternative faction in what would otherwise be a fairly straightforward Samurai skirmish game.

Alright, I admit that the historical accounts of the incident describe the attackers as being Ronin and the images that subsequently appeared in *The Illustrated London News* were of partially armoured Samurai attacking the plucky Brits. If you prefer, you can use miniatures of Ronin or other lightly-armed and armoured Samurai to represent the assassins, but I thought this was too good an opportunity to miss and wheeled out my ninja miniatures! Now I know their historical authenticity is questionable, but come on! Its assassins! Attacking a delegation of Victorian British ambassadors in Nineteenth-Century Japan! This has Hollywood ninjas written all over it. My ninja miniatures are from Warlord Games, but I think there are a few from various Samurai ranges as well as a couple of Fantasy ranges. What can I say? I like ninjas. Plus, they are pretty easy to paint compared to Samurai.



Above: The outrage on the British embassy at Jeddo, Japan: midnight scene in Mr Alcock's room at To-Sen-Ji, Jeddo. From *The Illustrated London News* (1861).

BRITISH LEGATION



For the British delegation, you are spoiled for choice as loads of companies now produce Victorians with guns for Steampunk games, Darkest Africa, and any number of other Victoriana ranges. The problem you might have is in only choosing three! The Guards were all standard Ashigaru types, so I used miniatures from my big battle games, as I had lots of these and I could keep bringing them on the board to force the attackers to flee rather than hope to defeat the Guards in battle.

Terrain for this encounter is relatively simple. For the compound, I placed a wall with a gate in it along one board edge of a 4' by 4' board. Everything inside the wall was considered to be the inside of the British Legation compound, which amounted to a 3' by 4' playing space. I then placed a number of buildings within the compound, including the main house where the British ambassadors had been staying historically, and the teahouse, where some of the assassins had been cornered at the end of the attack. I also scattered some carts, barrels, and ornamental ponds around to provide some cover for the skirmish to come.

I used the *Ronin* skirmish rules published by Osprey, which I picked up from North Star miniatures. Other skirmish rules are available, but this particular ruleset caters for man-to-man combat rather than groups of figures or warbands, which I thought suited this encounter best.

A CLASH OF WORLDS

When Commodore Perry of the USA arrived with a four-ship armada in 1853, Japan had already resisted more than one attempt at foreign access to their shores. However, the Tokugawa Shogunate (or Edo Period), after managing to maintain some form of peace in the country after the turbulence of the civil wars, was entering a period of decline. The shogunate's national power was on the wane, whilst the daimyo's and regional power was rising. Japan was also trying to modernise its industrial base and create a modern navy and army. A series of trading and diplomatic treaties were forced upon Japan by the USA, and other foreign powers began to encroach. This brought in cheap foreign goods, which wiped out some areas of Japan's products, especially the cloth industry.

As a consequence of increasing foreign dominance of trade and modernisation of the nation, many Japanese were dissatisfied

with such things and sought to maintain as much independence as possible. They also wished to retain the values and way of life that was unique to Japan. A number of Samurai clans tried to maintain their traditional ways and strove to bring back the dominance of the Imperial Court rather than the parliamentary reforms that saw the *bakufu*, a council of daimyos and elected officials, in charge. This conflict led ultimately to such Japanese resistance as the Anglo-Satsuma War of August in 1863 and the Boshin War of 1868 - 1869, which was a civil war between conflicting ideologies. Eventually, a compromise was found, with Japan continuing to revere the Emperor as a 'living God', using the most militant aspects of the Bushido code to guide much of Japanese life, and continuing to modernise, which ultimately led to a desire to gather access to greater resources and a cheaper labour base. The concept of a modern Japanese Empire created through military conquest was born.



NINJA: FROM REALITY TO FANTASY

During the long feudal wars in Japan, the ninja (also known as the *shinobi*) did indeed exist, acting as a form of secret agent or mercenary. They specialised in spying, deceiving, and launching surprise attacks. Grouped into their own clans, they were considered dishonourable by the various Samurai clans, but were still employed by them for their skills. Most notably used as spies and assassins during the Sengoku period from the 15th to the 17th Century, the end of the Shogun Wars and the peace created by the rise of the Togogawa Shogunate saw the need for ninja / *shinobi*-type operatives decline, resulting in the idea fading into history.

However, following the restoration of Imperial Power under Emperor Meiji in 1868, the role of the ninja / *shinobi* as spies, assassins, and elite warriors entered into popular fiction and myth. Becoming more legend than history, the ninja became a being who could become invisible, move without sound, control the natural world, and even walk across water without leaving a trace. Over time, the historical reality of the *shinobi* during a turbulent time in Japanese history was superseded by their perception in popular culture, appearing in fiction, TV shows and movies as elite, often principled warriors or evil assassins for hire.



THE GAME'S AFOOT!

Begin by asking the British player to place his three characters in rooms within any of the buildings on the board. He can place them anywhere, but they must all begin in different rooms. The player may choose to put them in adjoining rooms of the same house, or different rooms in different houses; the choice is his. The aim here is to force the Assassins to search the compound for the British Ambassadors at the start of the game, which they had to do historically. If placing the figures in the houses makes their location obvious to the attacking player, note their location on a piece of paper instead. Should the British player wish to move any of the Ambassadors, they must place the miniature on the board and move it as normal in their turn.

The attackers all begin within 6" of the gate to the compound. They start with the initiative, if using *Ronin* rules, or they get to go first if using other rulesets.

At the beginning of every turn, the British player should roll to summon the Guards! Roll a D6. On a roll of a 5 or 6 they turn up. In the next turn, the player needs a 4, 5, or 6, and the next turn a 3+ and so on. Start the Guards next to the gate on the turn they arrive and they may move and act as normal in that turn.

The stats provided below are for *Ronin*. This rule set personalises each combatant, allowing you to arm them as you wish and give them special abilities that turn each one into an individual character. For such a small skirmish as this, they are an ideal set to use. I have armed the

British Ambassadors with revolvers and swords, although you could give one a rifle instead. Rules for modern firearms are on page 59 of the rulebook. The stats for the British are rather beefed up, but they need to be able to survive against the odds for a couple of turns before the Guards turn up. I have provided one set of stats for the attackers if you want them to be *Ronin* or unemployed soldiers. I have also included stats for ninjas, who are by far the harder opponent for the British and who are more than likely to complete the mission, killing one if not all of the Ambassadors. It might be fun to play out the scenario with one group of attackers, then swap sides and play it again with the other set just to see how you get on.

If the assassins kill two or more of the British ambassadors, they win. If the British can keep at least two ambassadors alive by the end of the game, they will win. The game is best played whilst sipping sake and eating Ferrero Rocher, just to get the best of both worlds.



FIGURES AND TERRAIN

The figures seen in this article are Warlord Games *Warlords of Erehwon* Samurai and Copplestone Castings Adventurers. The ponds and bamboo are by Two Sheds Fred, and the trees are by Debris of War. The Gaming Mat is from Gale Force Nine. The buildings are Sarissa Precision MDF - airbrushed by our in-house painter Marc.



THE ATTACKERS (RONIN OPTION)

Type	Rank	CP	Initiative	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Points
Leader	2	3	3	3	2	Medium	22
8 x Ronin	1	2	2	2	1	Light	16

Weapons: Katana and Yari

Attributes: Leader is a "Commander"

THE ATTACKERS (NINJA OPTION)

Type	Rank	CP	Initiative	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Points
Chunin	4	4	3	4	2	Light	NA
5 x Ninja	3	3	3	3	2	Light	NA

Weapons: Katana and Shuriken

Attributes: Acrobatic and Kenjutsu.





THE DEFENDERS

Type	Rank	CP	Initiative	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Points
Morrison	3	3	3	3	2	None	26
Oliphant	2	2	2	3	1	None	24
Alcock	2	2	2	3	1	None	24
Guards	1	2	2	2	1	Medium	18

Weapons: All the British Delegation have a revolver and sword each. All the Guards have Katana and Yari.

Attributes: Morrison is a “Commander”. Oliphant is “Tough”, whilst Alcock has the “Intuition” skill. All three should be treated as if they have the Kenjutsu special ability. The Guards are Ashigaru.



ENTRENCHING A BIG GUN



Barry Evans takes a Victoria Miniatures artillery piece and adds an impressive trench emplacement to create a vignette.

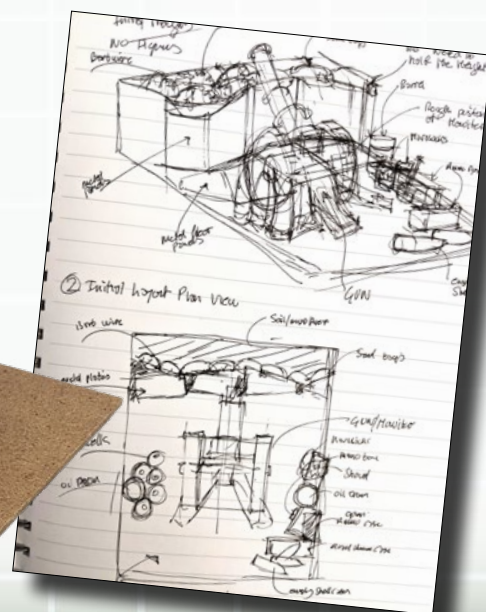
I have always liked WW1 artillery pieces, especially those protected by a trench wall or emplacement of soil and sandbags. With that in mind I set about creating a vignette display of my own, one that conveyed the drama of an entrenched big gun but used 28mm heroic scale miniatures, rather than the standard historical ones.

Looking through the Victoria Miniatures catalogue, their Heavy Mortar and Gun Crew with accessories was the perfect choice for the figures. Although there are a number of artillery emplacements commercially available, I decided to make my own from scratch.

BUILDING THE SCENE

PLANNING AND INITIAL LAYOUT

I sketched out my initial ideas before placing the figures on the base area. The crew, gun, and stowage pieces were fixed with Blu Tack so that I could work out the exact measurements for the front trench emplacement.



PREPARING RESIN MINIATURES

The miniatures are made from resin, and therefore need degreasing and any mould lines or bits of flash removed before painting. Scrubbing with a toothbrush and washing-up liquid removes any possible casting release agent. Once dry, you should remove as much of the mould lines and flash as you can with a scalpel. Be sure to wear a mask if you file off elements - resin dust is extremely toxic.



Finish off your prep by priming. I use Halfords grey primer to give a good key (surface) for further painting.

TRENCH WALL AND BASE CONSTRUCTION

The base is made from hardboard, cut to size, with a separate piece of foam board glued to its upper surface. The trench wall is created by using a piece of packaging foam cut to fit and enhanced with extra components - wooden planking and some corrugated sheeting supported by posts as well as a small viewing platform. The planking and ladders are made from balsawood strips, the corrugated sheeting is sweet packaging leftovers, the posts were made from plastic strips. The small viewing platform was made from balsa then glued together and tested to ensure the rangefinder figure was at the right height.



The base is a combination of wooden planking, soil, and two plastic pieces representing metal plates in the ground. All of these were glued into position and a visual check was made using the artillery piece.

MAKING GREENSTUFF SANDBAGS

1. Cut roughly 50% blue and 50% yellow from your strip and gently knead together.
2. Roll out the greenstuff to form a long sausage.
3. Flatten the green stuff sausage on the top with a wet knife.
4. Cut the sausage into the lengths you require and create texture by pressing a textured cloth onto the surface.
5. Move the sandbag to its resting place and create a fold line along the length of both sides of the bag. You can then add folds to the surface with a toothpick or sculpting tool.
6. The sandbags are placed individually onto the top of the trench while still damp and left to cure over a few hours.



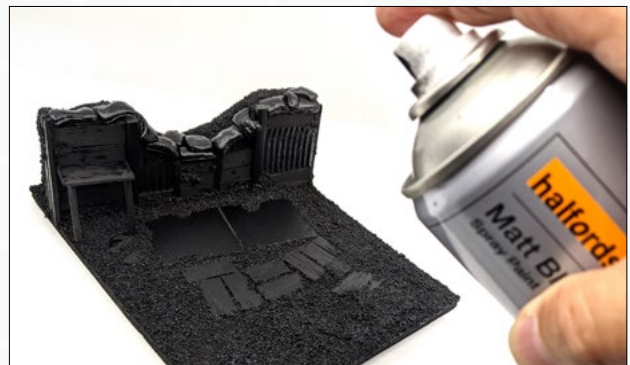
BASE GROUNDWORK FIRST STEPS

PVA glue followed by Serious Play's ground scatter were applied to the surface. Once dry, any loose scatter was brushed off. The base was ready for priming.



PRIMING

The trench emplacement was then primed using a Halfords black primer and left to dry for about an hour.



PAINTING THE SCENE

THE TRENCH BASE AND SANDBAGS



1. The trench base was first painted with a mixture of Crafter's Choice Earth Brown paint plus a little Vallejo Black, applied as a drybrush.



2. Once it had dried, I drybrushed Citadel Base Mournfang Brown over it.



3. While waiting for this to dry, the base colour for the sandbags was applied in Vallejo English Uniform.

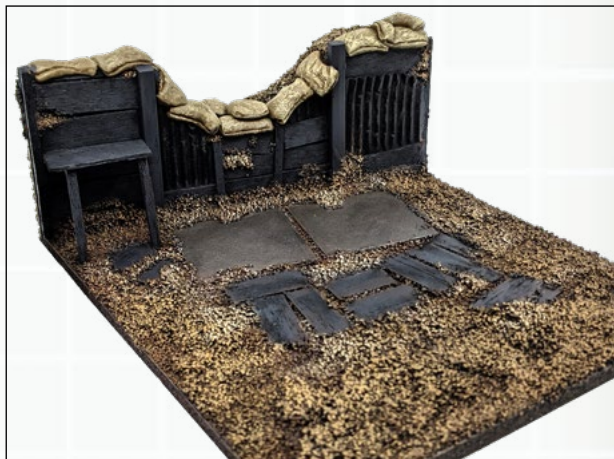


4. The next stages of the groundwork were a drybrush of Citadel Base XV-88 followed by a drybrush of a mixture of Citadel Base XV-88 plus Citadel Ushabti Bone on all.

PLANKING AND CORRUGATED SHEETING



1. All the planking and corrugated sheeting were drybrushed lightly with Vallejo German Dark Grey.



2. The large metal iron sheets on the ground were drybrushed with the new Ammo Gun Metal DIO drybrush paint.



3. Army Painter Soft Tone Quick Shade was then applied to all the metal parts. The wooden planking received a further drybrush by adding a small amount of Vallejo Off White to the previous Vallejo German Dark Grey. Once dry, all of the metal parts were drybrushed with a Vallejo Burnt Sienna Pigment.



4. A mixture of Army Painter Quick Shades was applied to the planking and posts to give a weathered look using Military Shader, Green Tone, and Strong Tone. Everything was then fixed with a coat of matt varnish.

GRASS AND WEATHERING



1. PVA glue was applied to all the areas where grass was needed, then static grass and grass tufts applied.



2. Weathering was applied using pigments from MIG and AMMO MIG - Dark Earth and Kursk Sand.



3. A quick visual check was then made placing the Howitzer model on the vignette, and everything was looking good.

PAINTING THE FIGURES

HOWITZER CREW

The crew were all painted with similar techniques to the one shown here; I wanted to give them a French WW1 feel. Although a lot of Citadel colours and washes are used, you can substitute them for alternative colours and washes from other manufacturers by using one of the many conversion charts available online.

1. The main areas of the clothing were blocked in as a basecoat over grey primer. Vallejo German Black Brown was used for the hair, Warlord Brown Leather for the straps and boots, Citadel Dark Reaper for the trench coat, Citadel Deathworld Forest for the trousers, Vallejo Black for any metal areas, Vallejo US Field Drab on the ammo box and gaiters, and Vallejo Tan for the face.

2. To add shadow to the figure, washes were applied to the different basecoat colours. Citadel Nuln Oil was applied over the trench coat and hair, Citadel Reikland Fleshshade over any flesh areas, and Citadel Agrex Earthshade over any brown areas, including the ammo box and gaiters.



3. Once the washes were dry, all the base colours were then repainted on the raised areas of the figure. Further highlights were added to the high areas by adding a small amount of a Vallejo Off White or Citadel Ushabti Bone to the basecoat paint. You should always leave a small amount of the previous layer showing with the exception of the metal areas, which have Citadel Leadbelcher applied. This was followed by a top highlight of Ironbreaker. The brass areas were painted with Vallejo Brass. The inside of the goggles was painted with a Vallejo Bark Blue and a highlight reflection added by mixing the blue with white.

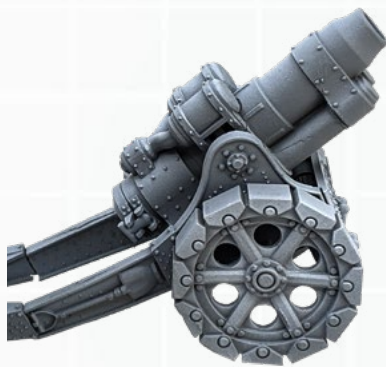
To complete everything, a dark outline was painted between key surfaces to visually enhance each area. I think this is essential at this scale to make the figure really pop. A matt varnish seals everything in place.



AIRBRUSHING THE HOWITZER GUN

1. The gun was assembled and primed with Halfords Grey primer, but I decided to leave the wheels off as a sub-assembly to aid airbrush painting. Paint was applied to the gun via an airbrush using Vallejo Sombre Grey and White, primarily spraying from above to create a realistic looking light source.

2. With the base created, I re-applied the basecoat of Vallejo Sombre Grey and added successive small amounts of Vallejo 2nd Light and White on each layer, building up to the final highlight. I also applied the same technique to the stowage jerry cans and armaments.



BRUSH PAINTING AND WEATHERING THE HOWITZER GUN

1. With the airbrushing complete, the next stage was to paint edge highlights and any nuts and bolts on the gun. The final airbrush highlight colour was mixed with a little white and applied to the edges to make the gun stand out.

2. Citadel Ironbreaker was the basecoat on metal parts of the gun and Citadel Base XV-88 used as a basecoat for any wooden handles on the extras. A lighter colour was mixed in with the base coat for the highlights.



3. It was now weathering time, but first the gun needed a satin varnish. Weathering as simulated with oil washes from Abteilung 502 oils. This was applied with a brush onto the gun to achieve the desired result.



4. With painting complete, the Howitzer Gun was placed and tested on the completed trench emplacement. So far so good! The rangefinder figure was also placed onto the emplacement.



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Using my initial sketch and preliminary photos as a reference, I glued the gun, crew, stowage, and shells (these were painted in a similar way to other elements on the model) into place. A camo net was added to the oil drum for extra decoration, completing the project.





RAID ON FIERY CROSS



COVERT ACTION IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

Bob Giglio and Dennis O'Toole put forth a hypothetical raid on a Chinese military facility in this modern 'what if' scenario.

"The South China Sea islands have been China's territory since ancient times. It is the bounded duty of the Chinese government to uphold China's territorial sovereignty and legitimate maritime rights and interests."

Excerpts from China's President Xi's speech at the National University of Singapore, 2015.

This is a hypothetical modern scenario of a covert raid. A Special Operations Force of unidentified origin (American, German, French, Australian/British/Canadian, Taiwanese, Russian, Indian, etc.) assault a Chinese military facility located on a man-made island in the South China Sea. While this 'what if' action has not, to our knowledge, occurred yet, given China's continued building of man-made islands, it could be a real near-future possibility and makes for an interesting thought and gaming experiment.

BACKGROUND

Since 2015, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has created over 3,200 acres of islands out of coral reefs in the South China Sea (SCS). These islands are then converted to military airfields. It is easier to maintain and harder to sink an island than an aircraft carrier! The Chinese Government states it has historically used the SCS as a trade route and fishing grounds. The militarization of Spratly Islands has become the main point of contention with Vietnam,

Malaysia, and the Philippines, each claiming their national rights for the legal 200-mile access/ownership. The United Nations has not made a stand, and the complainant countries have filed suit with the World Court.

China has established numerous military installations in the SCS, primarily in the Spratly and Paracel Islands. In the Spratlys, China has built airfields at Subi, Mischief, and Fiery Cross islands, along with potential missile, radar, and helicopter infrastructure at several smaller formations. In the Paracels, China has established a significant military installation at Woody Island, as well as radar and helicopter facilities in several other areas. China continues construction across the region, meaning that it may expand its military presence in the future. The larger bases (Subi, Mischief, Fiery Cross, and Woody Island) have infrastructure necessary for the management of military aircraft including fighters and large patrol craft. These missiles, radars, and aircraft extend the lethal reach of China's military across the breadth of the SCS.

Several of the islands serve as bases for surface-to-air (SAM) systems and ground-launched cruise missiles. These missiles serve to make the SCS deadly for foreign ships and aircraft that do not have stealth capabilities or that do not enjoy a layered air-defense system. The SAM installations, buoyed by networks of radars, can effectively limit the ability of enemy aircraft to enter their lethal zone without significant electronic-warfare assistance. The Chinese fighter aircraft on the larger islands serve to make the skies over the SCS even more dangerous than they otherwise would be. Foreign ships are also threatened at distance by cruise missiles based in the SCS.

The islands of the South China Sea are conveniently located for China, but do they really represent an asset to China's military? The answer is yes, but in an actual conflict, the value would dwindle quickly. There is no effective natural cover on the islands that China has created, and even man-made defensive installations may not survive a coordinated attack. The durability of an airfield depends on the immediate



availability of materials and equipment in order to execute repairs after an attack. It is not obvious that the islands China has created in the SCS will be robust enough to continue to operate after missile and bomb attacks. Although the larger islands have aircraft shelters, it is an open question as to whether these shelters could long survive a concerted attack.

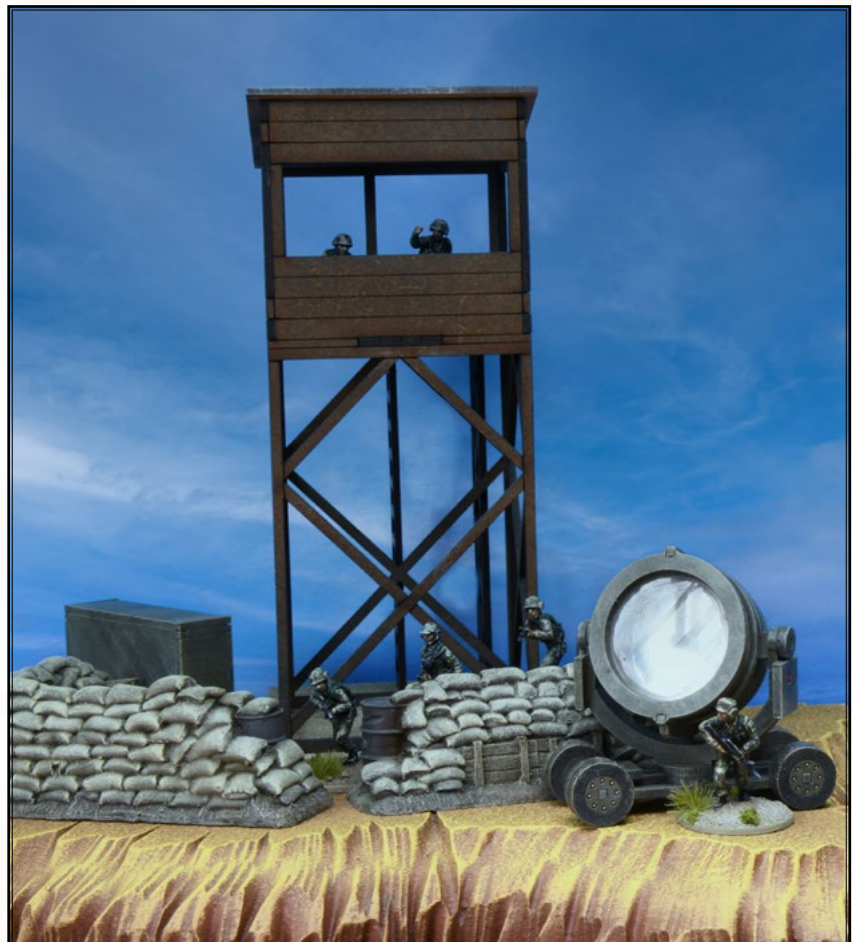
The most important contribution that the SCS islands may offer to the Chinese military is through the radar installations that China has established on many of them. These collectively enhance the lethality of China's defensive networks by helping to provide a much fuller picture of the SCS than China would otherwise enjoy. That said, the radars themselves are individually vulnerable to a wide array of attacks, including kinetic methods such as missiles launched from submarines, stealth aircraft, or other platforms, electronic warfare, cyber-attacks, and raids by special forces. In a conflict, China could quickly lose access to its established radar network. Still, the network offers China a relatively low-cost way of complicating the job that foreign military forces face in penetrating the SCS.

All the military capabilities of China's SCS islands depend upon secure communications with mainland China. Most of the islands constructed by China cannot support extensive logistics stockpiles or keep those stockpiles safe from attack. In a shooting war, the need to keep the islands supplied with fuel, equipment, and munitions would quickly become a liability for presumably hard-stretched Chinese transport assets. Unfortunately for China, the very nature

of island warfare, and the nature of these specific island formations, could make it difficult to keep installations in service for anything but the short term.

The islands of the SCS have some military relevance but are more important as a political claim to waterways and

undersea resources (the latter of which have been destroyed in the process of island-building!). Militarily, they represent a thin layer on China's air defense system. Under certain conditions this layer could disrupt freedom of action for foreign government ships, at least for a while.





THE GAME

The Chinese do not know which ‘foreign invader’ has sent forces, so this should be kept secret unless the Chinese can inspect a dead body or take a prisoner. Of course, the foreign invader will endeavor to try to prevent that, even retrieving any dead, to help keep deniability, as governments do.

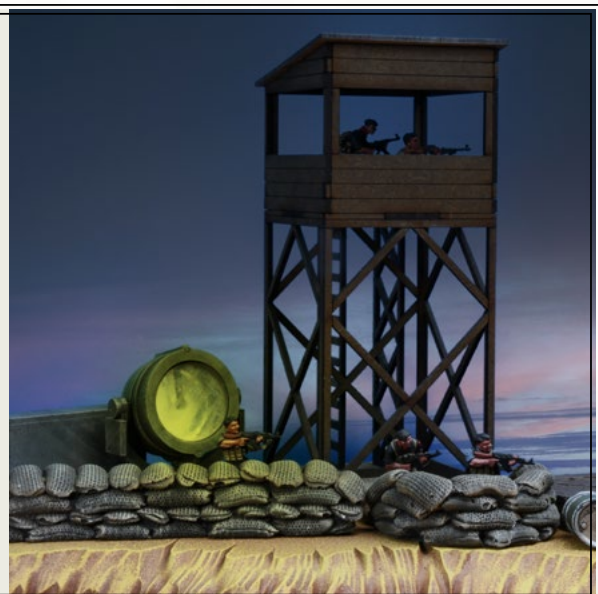
- This game must have a referee, due to the nighttime and hidden movement aspects, plus any special circumstances that may arise (i.e., shooting at fuel tanks, generators, lights, etc.), and to go over the layout for the foreign invader forces prior to their planning of the raid.
- Scenario is designed for *Force-on-Force (FoF)* rules, and all statistics given are for *FoF* rules, but should be easy to modify for the ruleset chosen.
- Number of figures to number of real men is a 1:1 ratio.
- The Special Operations Force can be from any government: American, German, French, Australian/British/Canadian, Taiwanese, Russian, Indian, or for whichever there are modern figures available (should be in black scuba gear if possible).

- The raid occurs during darkness. The Chinese will have the aid of searchlights to increase their range beyond normal effective 18", but the Special Operations Force have night vision capability, therefore their effective range is the entire table.
- Chinese military has had some trespass attempts by local fishermen and commercial shipping passing through the area; although told to be on alert for military action, there has been no obvious display of aggression from any attacker.
- Foreign invader has initiative for turn 1, then roll each turn thereafter as ruleset dictates.
- Game duration is eight turns after the alarm is raised (i.e., when shooting starts), then the foreign invader must automatically withdraw (for fear of Chinese response from other islands).

Referee’s Eyes Only: There has to be an overt attack at some point. Either the foreign invader team is discovered, or the tech huts are destroyed and a fight occurs while attempting to exit the island.

SPECIAL RULE - NIGHT COMBAT: THE FOLLOWING IS FOR *FOF* RULES

- Foreign invader teams are using suppressed weapons and may be hidden.
- Chinese can only see beyond 18" if the area is illuminated with searchlights or other illumination.
- Chinese can attempt to spot within TQ range (Optimum Range) beyond 8" only if the area is illuminated as noted above.
- Searchlights are at sentry posts (illuminates a 2"-wide zone across the entire table).
- Lights are on tall immobile poles illuminating a 60-degree arc up to 24" range.
- Referee determines when hidden figures are within illumination, which allows better chance of being spotted.



FOREIGN INVADER FORCES

BRIEFING

Fiery Cross Island is 27 acres in size, a runway is being built, and it appears that a communications array will be completed within months. Because the South China Sea is an area where your government - and many others - wants to maintain an influence, an attack based on Communist Chinese 'bullying' of the weaker local nations is important. Your 'public' purpose is to demonstrate that China's attempt to establish control in International Waters will not happen without confrontation. Your elite force is combat proven with deployments in recent combat zones and is skilled in the use of advanced combat technologies. Destruction and mayhem will help to conceal your actual mission, which is to acquire the cryptological information stored in the Communications Buildings ('Tech Huts').

MISSION AND VICTORY CONDITIONS

- Aerial surveillance has allowed you to discern the various buildings and geographical features on the island (the referee will go over the layout before you plan the raid), with the most important being the two 'Tech Huts'.
- Enter the two Tech Huts and remove/download from the encrypted hard drives: 2 victory points per hard drive ...
- ... Then destroy the buildings and electronics, to conceal the theft: 1 victory point per destroyed Tech Hut.
- You must engage the Chinese defenders to confuse the actual objective.
- In order to conceal which government forces were involved and allow for deniability, do not leave any casualties (killed or wounded), or it will be a substantial point gain for the Chinese.
- When you withdraw, all figures must leave via the sea.

SPECIAL RULE - HARD DRIVE REMOVAL

Each Tech Hut requires three successful TQs to gain entry. Then roll a D3 to determine the number of hard drives available once inside. Achieve one TQ to remove/download each hard drive. Each team member may roll an attack for each separate hard drive. Once the hard drives have been removed or downloaded, then destroy the Tech Hut. To destroy a Tech Hut takes six successful TQs. Each team member may roll an attack against the same Tech Hut simultaneously.



Above: A support team equipped for night fighting moves up under cover.



Above: A member of a US Overwatch Team (far right) crouches in cover as a Chinese patrol moves past.

FORCES

Two squads, each of eight members, with each squad divided into three teams: Overwatch, Support, and Mission:

- Overwatch Team: Sniper and spotter, each with suppressed sniper rifles.
- Support Team: Four members, each with suppressed assault rifle and grenade launcher.
- Mission Team: Three members, each with suppressed submachine gun, shotgun, and explosive package or electronic copy device.
- All members have communication with other teams, night vision (NODs), suppressed assault weapons, demolition charges, and heavy body armor (two defense dice).
- Each team has four actions/reactions, but only one move per turn unless pulling back.
- Statistics: Tactical Quality D12, Morale Quality D10.
- All teams may go on waiting/overwatch unless in low morale.

NOTES

- Initiative: Roll a D12 per active team for total number of dice for initiative.
- Movement: Tactical 12" and +1 TQ die. If moving over 18" then considered exposed and +1 die for enemy to spot and hit.
- Advanced Medicine: Upon Checking a Casualty, roll a D6: 1 = Dead and Dependant (tactical move only and -1 firepower dice), 2 = Critical Wound and Dependent, 3-4 = Light Wound, 5-6 = OK

INITIAL DEPLOYMENT

- Overwatch Teams start turn 1 anywhere on table as desired.
- Support and Mission Teams enter turn 1 anywhere from sea as desired.
- All units are considered hidden until spotted, and locations and entry points must be noted on the map for the referee prior to the start of the game.

CHINESE DEFENSE FORCES

SITUATION

Your Force is on the newly constructed Fiery Cross Island, 27 acres in size, which has been formed from the coral and sand in this atoll. A landing strip suitable for Supply and Fighter aircraft is being built as well as support structures. Your platoon is guarding this Chinese island. This part of the Pacific Ocean is recognized in all languages as the South China Sea, and therefore belongs to China. To date, while these new islands have been bothered by local fishermen trespassing in the waters nearby, a few shots across their bow have driven them off. International commercial shipping continues to pass close by and occasionally at night, despite complaints of illegal trespass by your Chairman. Although told to be on alert for military action, there has been no display by any country thus far. Therefore, threat level is currently low and the need for more skilled troops is negligible.

MISSION AND VICTORY CONDITIONS

- Each enemy KIA but body not recovered by Chinese: 1 victory point.
- Each enemy KIA and left on field: 3 victory points.
- Each enemy captured alive: 5 victory points.

Locations to defend are the administration building, barracks, fuel depot, HQ building, and the two Comms Stations ('Tech Huts').

FORCES

There are two officers, two sentry post teams, two patrol teams, and six squads:

- Two Sentry Teams: four figures each, and each with a DShk heavy machine gun and powerful spotlight.
- Two Patrol Teams: one NCO, one RPD/LMG, one RPG, and one infantry with AK-47.
- Six Squads: one NCO, one RPK/LMG, and four infantry with AK-47.
- Tactical Quality D8; Morale Quality D8.

Chinese Labourers and Technicians:

- Two D10 labourers, armed with assault rifles.
- Technicians are unarmed and numbers available are outlined under initial deployment.
- Tactical Quality D6; Morale Quality D6.



Above: A patrol team cautiously moves out having lost contact with a sentry team on the other side of the compound. Figures from *The Assault Group*.



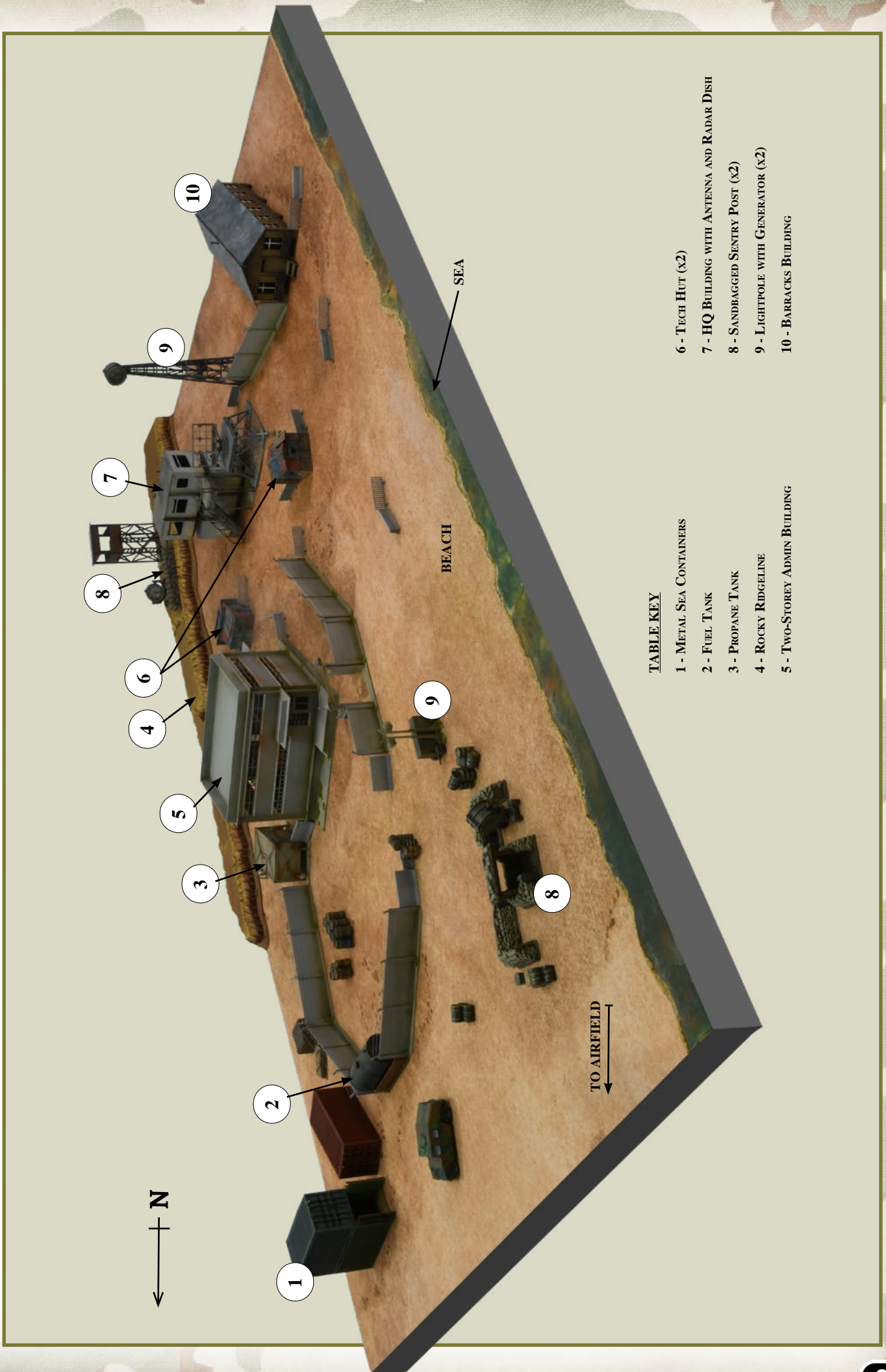
Above: To represent our labourers we used Gringo 40s Viet Cong figures.

NOTES

- All sentries, whether in their post or on patrol, will respond to an alarm.
- All Chinese are well-supplied for ammunition and have communication capability with other teams.
- All Chinese have two actions/reactions per team/squad per turn but cannot spot hidden if unit moves over 8".
- Cannot shoot at hidden units until spotted by team.
- Initiative: Foreign invader has initiative turn 1. Turn 2 and thereafter, roll a D8 per active team for total number of dice for initiative.
- Movement: Tactical 12" and +1 TQ die (if moving over 18" then considered exposed and +1 die for enemy to spot and hit).
- Basic Medicine: Upon Checking a Casualty, roll a D6: 1 = Dead; 2-3 = Critical wound and dependant, 4-5 = Light wound, 6 = Ok.

INITIAL DEPLOYMENT

- Sentry Teams start in the sandbagged (improved cover) sentry posts (takes 1 figure to work the searchlight, which illuminates a 2"-wide zone across the entire table). Each sentry post may sound the alarm on their phase if they spot the enemy (sounding the alarm is by shooting DShK or using communications).
- Patrol Teams are deployed as desired, walking the island, but each must start at least D3x12" from each other and from any sentry post.
- Six Squads and two officers start in barracks.
- Chinese labourers are housed in the administrative building; they will only deploy if under command of an officer, but their morale quality will always remain D6 (i.e. not affected by officer).
- D3 Chinese technicians start in each Tech Hut (Chinese Army forbidden to enter these).



TO AIRFIELD

BEACH

SEA

TABLE KEY

- 1 - METAL SEA CONTAINERS
- 2 - FUEL TANK
- 3 - PROPANE TANK
- 4 - ROCKY RIDGELINE
- 5 - TWO-STORY ADMIN BUILDING
- 6 - TECH HUT (X2)
- 7 - HQ BUILDING WITH ANTENNA AND RADAR DISH
- 8 - SANBAGGED SENTRY POST (X2)
- 9 - LIGHTPOLE WITH GENERATOR (X2)
- 10 - BARRACKS BUILDING

TERRAIN

Reference the map for the basic setup. Distances between buildings can vary depending on space and terrain available. Likewise, the shape of the buildings also depends on types available. The runways (under construction) are off-board to the north. You can change the terrain, depending on items in your collection, and/or add more items, but the key is that you must have the two Tech Huts, two sentry posts, administration building, two light poles, and barracks.

GROUND COVER

- The entire surface is beach and coral, with solid beach running 3" wide along the sea, so sandy colored tablecloth/boards for a 6'x5' table is recommended.
- The ridgeline is 2" high and rough with two footpaths (half movement unless traversing via the footpaths).

BUILDINGS AND OTHER COVER

- The administration building is a two-storey modern building used by administration and construction personnel (non-combatants) as well as a few technicians.
- The barracks is a large one-storey building.
- Pipes, wood, and other objects (whatever you have terrain-wise), and other items that do not need to be protected from the weather, should be scattered around the tabletop.

- The HQ communication building is a small, round, one-storey construction with one-door access and windows. [Ours is different to suit our terrain collection - Ed.] It has a large antenna with one or more satellite dishes on the roof.
- The fuel depot is a large gasoline tank located near the administration building at end of the runway with gasoline drums. A smaller propane tank is near the administration building too.
- Two tall immobile poles, each with two lights that illuminates a 60-degree arc up to 24" range feature on the tabletop. At the base of each light pole is a wheeled generator that provides electricity for the lights.
- Two sandbagged (improved cover) sentry posts each house a DShK Heavy Machine Gun and a Powerful Searchlight (illuminates a 2"-wide zone across the entire table).
- Two large metal storage containers are on the board-edge near the off-board runway to the north and contain items that need protection from the elements.
- The Tech Huts are two one-storey communication buildings, each circular in design with one-door access and no windows. [Our 'Tech Huts' look like 'Lack of Tech Huts'. Again this is down to the scenery we had in our collection. Maybe the Chinese have disguised them! - Ed.]
- Miscellaneous stationary construction vehicles will add flavour to your board.

The figures seen in this article are by Empress Miniatures, Gringo 40s, and The Assault Group. Most of the scenery is by Sarissa Precision and the battlemat is from Deep Cut Studios.



HOW IT PLAYED

Force on Force rules were used for the playtest with our gaming group, The Colonial Boys Club. We have plans to run the game at an upcoming convention so needed to put the scenario through its paces. In our game, the Foreign Invaders managed to achieve a major victory and all casualties were rescued.

Special thanks to The Colonial Boys Club members that were involved in the various playtests and their recommendations: Robert Giglio, Steve Hanson, Jeff Hobbs, Dennis O'Toole, and Jeff Roncone.

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Here we have David and Sandra discussing the costs of the extension that David wants to build to house his wargames collection



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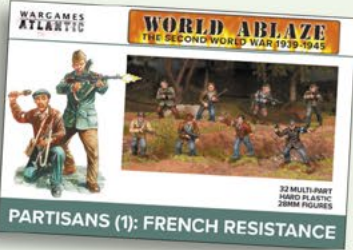
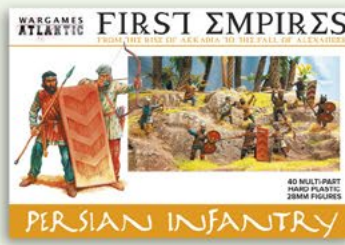
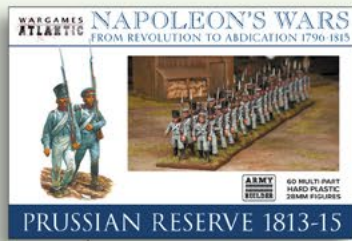


Above: Our forthcoming GiM Dante, in the Inferno.



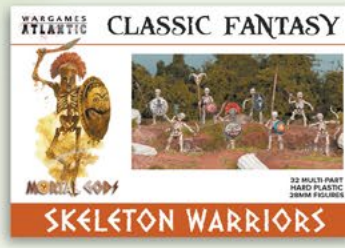
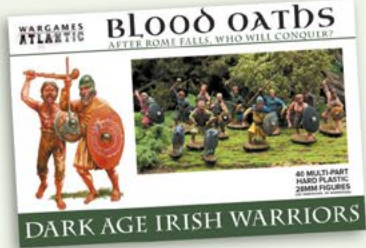
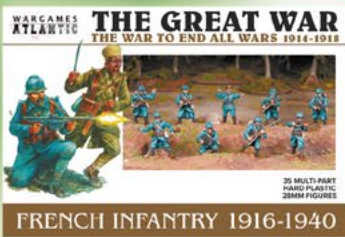
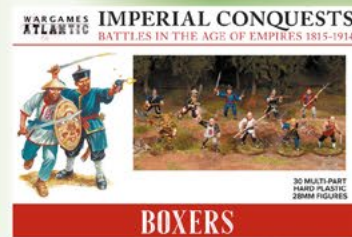
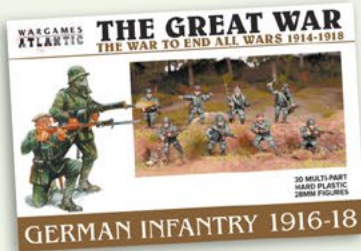
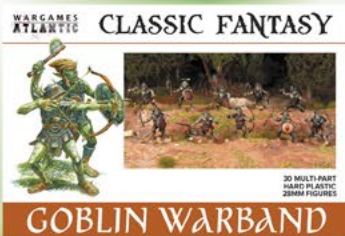
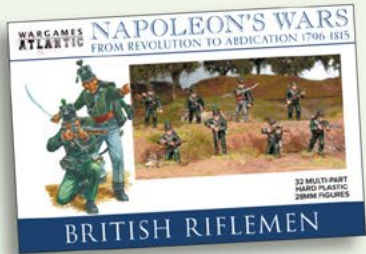
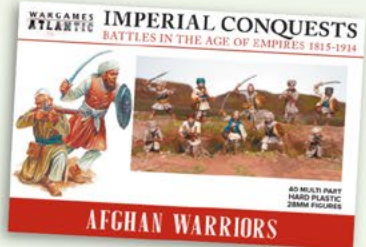
Above: Ancient 'unseen' John Blanche paint jobs.

Non-fantasy Saxons, along with historical articles on the Franco-Prussian War, Zheng He, and painting and modelling guides will ensure historical purists are also well catered for in the October issue.



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