WARS OF THE ROSES

WARGAMING THE MEDIEVAL BATTLE FOR ENGLAND

FREE

NEVER MIND THE BILLHOOKS

Wargaming Big Skirmishes and Small Battles in the Wars of the Roses

By Andy Callan
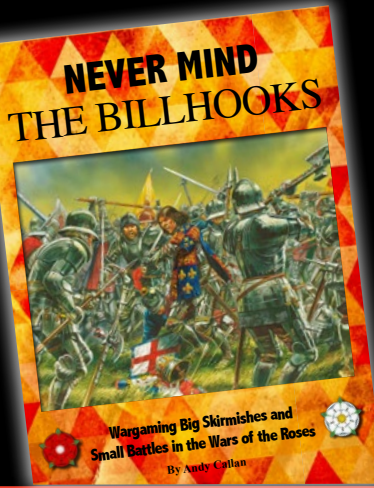
CONVERSION MASTERCLASS
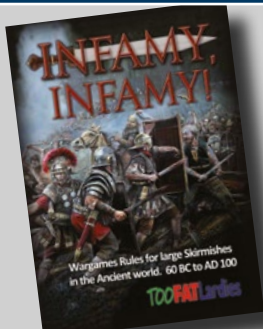Converting 15mm Ancients

BYRCHO'S CELESTICHORD
Exclusive scenario for *Frostgrave 2*

SCAN HERE WITH YOUR PHONE TO SEE WHAT'S INSIDE

PLUS: INFAMY, INFAMY! • WARS OF THE ROSES • FROSTGRAVE • AND MORE

FEATURED

THIS MONTH

WARGAMES illustrated®

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FROM THE EDITOR

Following several months delay caused by Coronavirus, it is with great pride that we present our free ruleset, *Never Mind the Billhooks* with this issue of *Wargames Illustrated* magazine.

A fast-paced small battle/large skirmish game, 'Billhooks' first came to my attention when friends of the magazine Andy Callan (who first wrote for us in Wi01!) and Steve Wood (of Arcane Scenery) asked if I would like to play a game of "these fun Wars of the Roses rules Andy has devised". I was (bill)hooked after only half an hour of play!

Fast forward a couple of months and then fast forward through a global pandemic, and forsooth here it is! Playtested, fine-tuned and presented as a 32 page rulebook free with every issue of *Wargames Illustrated* (and as a PDF to Wi Prime members). We hope you won't mind us stealing 16 pages of magazine content to go some way towards alleviating the horrendous shipping costs. Play 'Billhooks' and you will be sure it was worth it.

In tandem with your free rules, this month's theme is the Wars of the Roses, in which we present a couple of painting articles, Andy's Designer's Notes for the rules and two smashing articles by Simon MacDowell in which he tells us about some smaller battles in the WotR - ideal (but not exclusively) for 'Billhooks' - and talks us through the make-up of a WotR army.

But what's in the magazine for those of you for whom the Wars of the Roses is "not my period". Fear not, there's plenty more in the form of *Frostgrave*, *Hail Caesar*, *Mortem et Gloriam*, *Swordpoint 2*, converting 15mm figures, Command and Control and more besides.

Happy reading.

Dan Falconbridge

Editor and Owner

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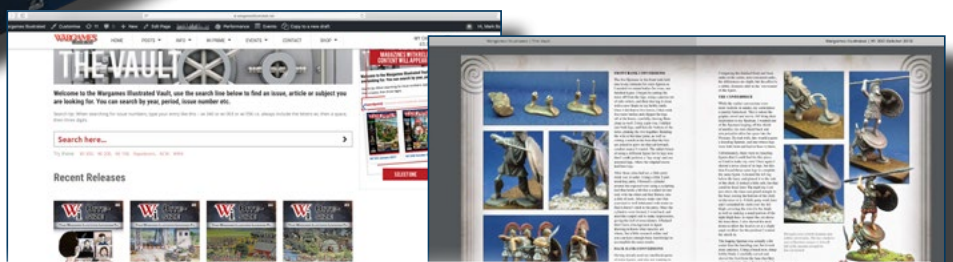
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QUICK FIRE!

Quick Fire is a new (and hopefully expanding) feature in which we present short,
quick-read posts from Wi readers about their hobby projects, notes, news and observations.

WHEN STATIC GRASS GOES WRONG

By Bill Witthans

Several years ago I decided to learn to make my own static grass tufts and as part of the project I built myself a negative ion grass applicator. Not content with buying one, or a simple small conversion using a cheap 9 volt battery powered electric bug zapper, I went full tilt and made a 120 volt powered applicator that Darth Vader would be proud of!

It works great - full coverage over big areas.

Me being sorta stubborn I was determined to justify making it and having just finished some 15mm French cavalry I decided to use it to static grass the bases.

Here's the finished photo - what do you all think? Perhaps a tad too much?

Seriously the applicator works great, but for basing where you also have a metal figure the electric charge causes the grass to gather on the model. For terrain and other projects it's great but really more of a model railroaders item or even static plastic modelers tool.

For basing a plastic squeeze bottle like the ones used in restaurants for ketchup or mustard actually works fine for static grass application.

See more of Bill's work (and not just his mistakes!) at historicalhobbies.com

AND TALKING OF STATIC GRASS….

You may have seen our video 'unboxing' of the Killing Fields SG Static Grass Battle-Mat on the Wi Youtube channel (if not go and check it out, then come back here). After we had made the video we were given a top tip for getting rid of creases in static battle mats - soak them in water. It works! Using a washing line, hosepipe and plenty of water - sprayed on lightly - "bang, and the creases were gone" (after several hours drying on the line on what turned out to be the hottest day of the year).

A GHOST SHIP FOR *BLACK SEAS*

By Rick Hudson

Having painted up a Warlord Games frigate as a 'ghost ship', I have been experimenting with ideas of how to include it in games of *Black Seas*. This is what I've come up with so far:

A. Choose any scenario and play as usual with the exception of the following rules.

B. The first turn is played as normal.

C. At the beginning of the second turn a D6 is rolled. On an even number, play the turn as usual. On an odd number proceed to point D.

D. Each player rolls a D6. The player who rolls highest places the model that is representing the Ghost Ship on the game board. It may not be placed any closer than 5" to any ship belonging to the opposing player. The turn then proceeds.

E. The Ghost Ship remains in the spot it was placed until the end of the turn: i.e. for game purposes it is an entirely stationary object, not influenced by wind etc.

F. The Ghost Ship is surrounded by a spectral fog emanating in a 3" diameter around its central point.

G. If any ship is unable to avoid the Ghost Ship and spectral fog it is immediately destroyed if its path passes through the body of the Ghost Ship model.

H. If any ship passes through the spectral fog only, the controlling player rolls a D6 and applies the following result:

   - 1 or 2 the unfortunate ship is destroyed.
   - 3 or 4 the ship suffers an attack as if it had received a full broadside from a normal version of whatever type of ship is being used in play.
   - 5 or 6, the ship survives but becomes mysteriously lost. The ship is placed at any point within 6" of the Ghost Ship, facing in any direction by the opposing player. It may not be placed on dry land or in any location that would cause its destruction. However, it may be placed in a position that could cause damage/destruction in the following turn. For example, it may not be placed on rocks, but may be placed so it is sailing towards rocks.

I. At the end of the turn the Ghost Ship is removed from play. From then on, until the end of the game, repeat this process.

Note: If an opponent's ship is destroyed by the Ghost Ship, you must laugh uproariously with spiteful glee, if you fail to do this you MUST buy your opponent a grog or rum (or suitable substitute) for this severe and reprehensible breach of gaming etiquette.

TERRORS GHOST SHIP

Little did Rick know when he supplied us with this piece; the new 'Terrors of the Deep' box set for Black Seas contains rules for Ghost Ships. Black Sea players: you now have two sets of rules to choose from!

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.

Send your emails to: wi@wargamesillustrated.net

Use the subject title 'Quick Fire!'.

WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THOSE FREE FIGURES…?

By Jason Noble

Like every big kid who salivates at the goodie bag on the front cover of a mag, I eagerly await my copy of *Wargames Illustrated* to come flopping through the front door in its (recyclable) bag.

My guilty pleasure is ripping open the bag to see what my freebee frame is this month – not because I NEED any more miniatures (my wife will verify the clear lack of NEED for more miniatures) it's the 'lucky bag' aspect I love. Whoever thought it was a good idea to give away samples of different eras and fighting forces peppered throughout history?

At first I just hoarded and coveted them, fingered the hard plastic sprues, rolled around on a bed of miniature spikey Crimean bayonets and Roman pila and stacking frames in teetering towers of miniature grey plastic gold ... but not actually doing much else with them. The dilemma is that it's nice to have them and I'm damned if I'm giving them to anyone else, but I don't really collect that era, so what do I do with them?

Diorama … diorama … when you're sliding into first and shelves about to burst, diorama … diorama … (If you've not seen *Parenthoo*' that may be a bit abstract). I've got stacks of random miniatures amassed in small guerrilla bandit groups just waiting for the chance to strike. The diorama offers so much opportunity to play around with another unfamiliar period of history and everything that involves with interpreting that in a small group of miniatures. There's the research, the narrative, new uniforms to paint and a chance to use new painting techniques that you wouldn't ordinarily use on normal rank and file… my god, have a bit of fun and let my last few hairs down. Time has always been my greatest enemy but there is nothing like a pandemic to free up a couple of hours a day to indulge a bit of hobbying.

I've not been desperately ambitious with my first - I've kept it simple and even left an opening for miniature extraction from diorama - just in case I ever do start to game the Anglo-Zulu Wars. I'm *not* going to (but then I may … but I probably won't … but ...). My painting skills are - what's a good euphemism? - battlefield ready? To be perfectly honest I enjoy producing a neat and tidy finish but the thought of spending days painting a single miniature seems a bit indulgent, and who has the time?

Just for reference I got the Flashman miniature from Chiltern Miniatures a few years ago and the Warlord Miniatures Zulus were my wonderful free gift from *Wargames Illustrated*. I think for my next diorama I'm going to use the WW2 Commonwealth troops sprue - no idea how, but my grandfather fought in Burma during the war so I may do a bit of research around that.

Anyway, I just thought I would share my little project with you and say "thanks for the free minis!"

Ed: Great idea Jason – I'm pleased to hear you are putting the freebies to good use. You may struggle to make a diorama out of this month's free Wars of the Roses rulebook, but it's Samurai next month, so plenty of scope there.

A SPOT OF INTERNAL DECORATING

By Adam Dews

Let me set the scene, my dad has always made Dolls Houses for as long as I can remember, and he is still making them now in to his 80's. I used to help him paper the buildings.

So, when I started making MDF wargames buildings having read articles and seen other modellers works with paint/plaster, roof tiles etc, I just followed suit, I would paper the interior walls or add posters etc.

I then went down the route of coffee stirrers for cladding walls and floor boards. I tried my hand at making countryside walls from wall paper (didn't really work for me), However as the great Bob Ross would say "There are no mistakes, just happy accidents".

Not until I bought the *Guide to Making and Painting Laser Cut MDF Model Kits* by Gary Faulkner / Sarissa Precision, did I have the light bulb moment of going back to the 'Dolls House way' of using printed paper on other parts of the building.

Finally, I thought I may get a roof looking how I see it in my mind. (I really struggle with roofs.)

Having been given the British Command Post from North Star Military Figures at Christmas, I thought I would give it a go.

After constructing the building, the gable end was papered using brick paper, I papered each side of the chimney and the chimney breast (using the MDF frames in the kit), and then filled in the small edge between the two, the other outside walls were painted using tester pots.

The roof paper and the floorboards were printed and after marking and drawing cardboard templates they were stuck to the templates and fixed to the building, the walls were papered inside in long strips the height of the wall and around the interior, I have previously papered buildings using printed wall paper strips like you would in your own home but decided against this to save myself time.

I even used the floorboard print to make skirting boards to hide the join between the walls and floor, and finally I used the same brick work as the gable wall to paper the fireplaces.

You don't need fancy graphic software either, I use PowerPoint to make seamless large area prints (A4), and I used both the sheets in the back of the book (scan and print) and free to use 3D textures from the internet.

Papering buildings is just another tool/aid in your arsenal, don't let anyone say only Dolls Houses are papered.

OBSERVATION POST

NEW AND FORTHCOMING 'WARGAMES STUFF' YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT.

RULES, SUPPLEMENTS & FIGURES

LUCID EYE – TOON TERRORS

SPINS

Lucid Eye Publications produce several eclectic figures range, all with intriguing names like 'Savage Core' or 'Blades and Souls'. One such is the 'Toons' range. Perfectly fitting their title, the Toons are squat but perfectly formed miniatures, designed to look like cartoon characters. The Toons range is sub-divided into: Toon Realms, Supers, and Terrors. This latest Toon release is from the Terrors category.

Shallow King

Shallow Ones

Ugons

With more than a nod to H.P. Lovecraft's *Call of Cthulhu* mythos, the Toon Terrors are weird creatures from another world, or possibly another dimension, described by Lucid Eye as 'A Cartoon themed range of Cosmic Terrors'. In line with other Lucid Eye ranges we are given more background information by being told the Toon Terrors inhabit the town and environs of "Old Port" - "What terrors await in the spooky streets, the dank docks and the gruelling graveyards after dark?"

Clearly theses lovingly designed and well-cast figures await somewhere in Old Port - at a cost of £6 for a pack of four or £3.50 for the leader/king figure.

1898 MINIATURES: THIRTY YEARS WAR SPANISH

SPINS

1898 Miniatures have released three more packs of foot to expand their 28mm Thirty Years War (TYW) Spanish range. As with their previous releases these would fit well in any European army of the first half of the 17th century, but they have been designed in particular with the Spanish tercios of the TYW in mind.

These three packs are all pikemen cast in dynamic poses as they go into action. There are two packs described as 'attacking' (TE13 and TE14) that are in the 'at charge' position with pikes leveled at the enemy, actively 'fencing' with their pikes. The third pack is described as 'pikemen receiving cavalry' (TE15) in the 'charge for horse' position with the pike's butt firmly placed on the ground, braced by the right foot, and the business end of the pike pointed up at a mounted assailant. The figures come with separate scabbarded swords and rather sharp wire pikes!

As with 1898s previous releases these are very attractive miniatures, and with each figure in a six figure pack being different, they will allow interesting looking units to be formed.

The 'at charge' packs really look like they are getting stuck in, and with the slight variety to each figure's pose, you can well imagine them each desperately trying to get a blow in against their opponents. Some of the 'charge for horse' figures have their right hands grasping their sword hilts, exactly as required by the drill manual, while some are keeping both hands on the pike, no doubt worried by the enemy cavalry bearing down on them. 1898 have suggested future releases of commanders, artillery and cavalry to round out the Spanish, before moving on to their implacable enemies, the French. These great miniatures are a "must have" for any TYW Spanish army!

TEST OF HONOUR: SOHEI MONKS

UNBOXING

It's always a thrill to get a new release of *Test of Honour* figures in for review, not only are the figures always well designed with great character, they are well cast and the presentation is great. The artwork on the packaging and components – cards in the boxes and packs – is always evocative and alluring, and of course all new *ToH* miniatures are very useful for those looking to expand their *Test of Honour* games with new recruits.

This latest release features a Sohei Temple Guard Box set plus single packs of Sohei Musketmen and Sohei Fanatics. The Sohei were Buddhist warrior monks comparable with the religious military orders of Western Europe like the Teutonic Knights.

The six figures in the box are: Mounted Sohei Superior Saburo, Sohei Sergeant, Sohei Creed Bearer, Sohei Temple Guard with *nodachi* heavy sword, Sohei Temple Guard with *tetsubo* heavy club and Sohei Temple Guard with a pair of swords.

Above: Sohei Musketmen.
Below: Sohei Fanatics.

Above: Sohei Temple Guard with a pair of swords.

Left: Sohei Temple Guard box.

Superior Saburo (multi-part mounted figure) leads the defence of the temple-fortress, galloping at his enemies to deliver a devasting one-off attack with the 'Divine Strike' card.

The Sohei Sergeant (a fantastic figure, with musket held aloft) can send his troops surging forward in a sudden wave (or unleash a sudden blast of gunfire if you use him as a gunnery sergeant) - a definite contrast to the steady ashigaru of the clans.

Meanwhile the Creed Bearer carries a banner daubed with inspiring prayers and religious slogans, making it more likely for nearby believers to trigger their Strike bonuses.

The devout Temple Guards themselves are the toughest fighters, hand-picked from among the warrior monks and able to shrug off minor injuries and carry on the battle unaffected. You can make them even harder to defeat with the 'Final Guardians' trait.

Skill cards include Holy Relic, Hallowed Walls and Power from Grief.

Enough round MDF bases are included in the box for all the figures.

The pack of Sohei Musketmen contains three model gunners in three different highly-animated poses, it comes with three cards. The 'Reckless Shooters' trait allows musket-armed troops to move faster but limits them to firing at the nearest enemy. Whilst the 'Grab a Musket' skill lets a character shoot with the gun of a nearby friend.

The Sohei Fanatics are all brandishing the iconic naginata polearm weapon. Give them the 'Unstoppable Frenzy' trait (card included) to make them even more devastating during Follow Up attacks. The 'Righteous Slaughter' skill has a similar effect for a character.

These miniatures can also be fielded as 'standard' Sohei warrior monks.

At £35 for the box set and £12 for the packs of three figures, you will find cheaper 'Samurai' figures, but you won't find any that are better looking.
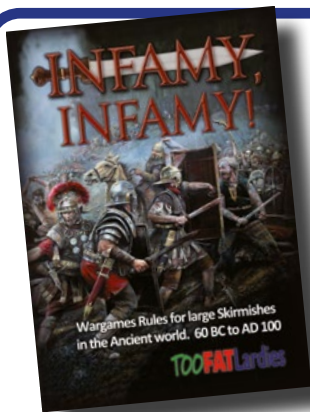
TOO FAT LARDIES: INFAMY, INFAMY!

WARGAMES RULES FOR LARGE SKIRMISHES IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

FLIPTHROUGH

One thing about rule sets from the Lardies is that the titles do make you smile and I was already well disposed toward this publication as soon as I unwrapped it. This A4 size 104 page soft back rulebook is produced in full colour and is illustrated throughout with diagrams and pictures of games in action which help to explain how the rules work but that also help set the scene. Alongside the main text are occasional text boxes, which give examples of play or provide further explanations about the rules on the main page. I found the rules very straightforward and easy to follow and the text was clear with no "legal jargon" that sometimes bogs down rules designed for competition play. However, the big question on everyone's lips is: "Is this *Sharp Practice* for Ancients?"

Well, those of you who have played *Sharp Practice* will find a lot that is familiar here. Units are activated when their chit is drawn from a bag, or their card drawn from a deck, whichever you prefer. As well as unit cards there is also that damned frustrating end of turn card, or "Tempus Fugit," which can end a turn whether all the units have activated or not. Leaders still have levels of command which affect how many orders they can give their men and they can influence their troops using their command initiative or by use of the flag cards, or in this case, the "Signa" cards, to make their men move a little further or fight a little better. The players begin the game holding six "Signa" cards that, when played, also allow them to use special abilities, such as throwing pila, or to activate units that failed to activate that turn. When these are played they are then shuffled back into the deck and may appear again over the course of play, but players would be foolish to throw these away too early on. Moving, shooting and fighting are pretty straightforward, with units either taking models as casualties or more usually taking "shock." The build up of shock reflects the slow deterioration of the unit's fighting ability and when shock is double the number of the remaining figures in the unit then it is usually all over for them. Officers can rally units to remove shock and hence prevent them from routing. Included at the back of the rules are army lists for the Imperial and Republican Romans, Germans, Gauls and Britons. There is also a simple campaign system that allows your Leaders to grow their reputation, gain a retinue and climb the greasy pole to success. In short, if you already play *Sharp Practice* then these rules will be easy to pick up.

Above: Signa cards.

However, *Infamy, Infamy!* is actually a very different game, both in atmosphere and in the way it plays. Designed to replicate ambushes and skirmishes on the frontiers of the Empire, the deployment at the beginning of the game relies on scouting and ambush points, a nice touch that ensures this is not a "line 'em up and charge" style of game. The Roman player will never really be sure where all the barbarians are going to appear from and will have to be constantly watching his flanks. The really clever parts of the rules are in the detail. Roman soldiers are drilled and as such can usually respond to changes on the battlefield. Special abilities such as "Rallying Back", filling up ranks when casualties are inflicted or interpenetrating friendly units really gives you the feel of a well disciplined group of men even at this small scale. The barbarians, on the other hand, need to generate "Fervour" to be really effective in combat and this takes time. Spend too long winding up your men and the opportunity to attack may be lost. If you don't spend long enough, they may not have the power to punch through the Roman line.

I was particularly impressed with the rules for chariots. In many rules chariots are dismissed as rubbish light cavalry, but in this set it is clear that the Lardies have really thought about how they were used historically. In *Infamy* they can be used to drop off heroes to take part in melee but they can also remount them to fall back or for a quick escape. When used to gallop past the Romans, hurling javelins, any success adds to the Fervour of barbarian units watching, simulating them being inspired by the actions of their heroes and leaders. The scenarios that are included in the rules are not stand up fights but take the form of raids, ambushes and rescue missions, and the inclusion of "Infamy" cards means that the players may have alternative objectives to the obvious.

I really liked these rules. The Lardies have crammed a lot of game into these 100 pages and it is clear that they have worked hard to make the Romans and barbarians distinctive and different, both in the way they appear and perform on the wargames table. The campaign system and the ability for leaders to progress and gain a retinue is a great idea and the whole package makes for a great Ancients skirmish game.

WARGAMES ATLANTIC: GERMAN INFANTRY 1916 - 18

SPINS

The latest plastic box set in the expanding and eclectic Wargames Atlantic range is - German Infantry 1916 -18.

Inside the box we have five identical frames from which you can build 30 multi-part 28mm figures, representing Germans soldiers from the later years of the First World War.

Above: Wargames Atlantic figures compared with Great War Miniatures metals.

Taking a closer look at one of the frames - we can see how tightly packed it is, with a total of 92 different clip-off parts.

You are left pretty much on your own as to 'what's what' on the frame - with no guide included in the box.

Each frame has a total of 23 heads: six with caps, six covered by gasmasks (and topped with stahlhelms) and 13 offering a variety of different helmets, including early pickelhaubes. There is some nice details here in the form of moustaches, pipes and grimacing mouths.

Elsewhere on the frame you will find arms carrying grenades, pistols and what looks like Karabiner 98a rifles. Other weapons include one MP18 sub-machine gun and an MG-08 light machine gun, plus ten stick grenades.

It's a really packed frame and you have a wealth of different options available when equipping your bodies. The figures also go together neatly, with a minimum of extra cutting or shaping.

On the 'cons' side, the figures are a little heavy/large in the shoulders and there is a conspicuous lack of webbing/harness when viewing the figures from the rear.

It is easy enough to make up an officer as well as standard infantry and stormtroopers – with enough accessories to take your models trench raiding.

Priced at $35 or £25 you won't be disappoint at either the quantity or quality of the figures and there are enough options to satisfy both large battle or skirmish gamers.

ANZIO MINIATURES: CHINESE WW2/CIVIL WAR

SPINS

If you are looking to wargame the Chinese in World War Two or in their Civil War of 1945 - 49, then you're hardly spoilt for choice. Despite featuring heavily in the *Bolt Action Empire in Flames Campaign Book*, Warlord don't make a dedicated range of figures, and in fact the only ones I could find in 28mm come from US-based Brigade Games. But not to worry, you frustrated Kuomintang (KMT) and Communist (PRC) gamers are in luck thanks to the release of this new range or figures from French company Anzio Miniatures.

These seven new packs of figures can be used to represent Nationalist or Communist Chinese soldiers during WW2 or the (last) Chinese Civil War. The infantry come six to a pack for 10.50€ whilst the command, artillery and mortar crews are 7.00€. (Note: Shipping to the UK was 8.60€, regardless of how many packs you order, when I checked it out.)

The figures are divided into packs based on their weapons and/or roles.

Although the castings are lovely and crisp the designer has struggled a bit with some of the anatomy – there are some soft shoulders and unconvincing proportions - however you will have seen much worse. The coolie hat being carried on the back of some of the figures is a nice touch.

Unfortunately the Anzio Miniatures website currently provides very little information about the figures, other than the title names of the packs, so don't go there to gain any information about the Chinese in World War Two or the Civil War, or indeed to be told what a "C 19 Squad" is!

If you are looking for 28mm figures for the Chinese Civil War 1945 - 49 or for the Chinese in World War Two these figures are certainly worth checking out.

REFIGHTING HISTORY VOLUME 8:
## THE SEVEN YEARS WAR WESTERN THEATRE.

Having covered the larger battles of the Seven Years War in Europe in previous volumes, Charles S Grant turns to small actions of the war for this latest volume in the "Refighting History" series. This A4 size hard back book runs to 192 pages and is full of colour pictures of the author's Seven Years War miniatures in action.

As well as full colour maps, there are also colour prints depicting some of the units who took part in the various battles and skirmishes covered in this volume.

The author begins by talking about his miniatures collection, how he went about basing and organising it and includes colour pictures of the units as well. This did make me smile, as not many people I know are playing games with 40 figure infantry battalions, as the author is, especially not for skirmish games but each to their own I suppose! The scenarios covered in the book are generic, and can be used for any rules system, although rules such as *Sharp Practice* are mentioned as being ideal for this scale of game.

The next chapter covers some optional rules that gamers might like to add to their existing rules to help get the feel for smaller actions, such as the need to escort prisoners or the possibility of wagon drivers "hot footing" it as soon as the enemy turn up.

There then follow nine wargames scenarios based around historical actions that occurred in Germany during 1760. Each scenario begins with the historical background, which I found very interesting in most cases, before moving on to outline how the wargame could be played. Special rules are provided to help recreate the situation that the opposing commanders found themselves in as well as a break down of the forces involved and how they translate into wargames units. Each scenario is well presented, is clear and easy to follow, helped by the inclusion of colour maps of the wargames table set-up. Full colour photos of the game in progress sit alongside the text, making this an easy book to read.
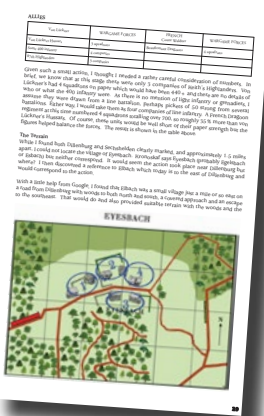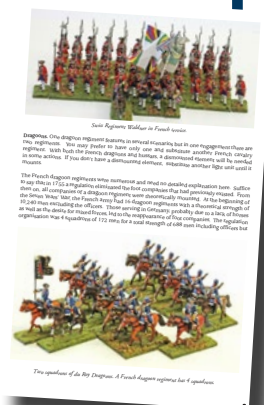
Writing balanced small-scale scenarios is a tricky business to get right and I am not convinced about some of the scenarios included here. The first scenario, for example, involves some sleeping French dragoons who have to wake up and escape before a larger British force moves into the town and takes them prisoner. Tactical options are limited and with the chance of your troops "waking up" down to a random roll, the French player is more reliant on luck than skill to escape. That said, there are plenty of medium-sized skirmishes in this book with balanced forces on both sides, and there is nothing stopping you amending the wargames forces you use for each scenario to better suit your collection or taste.

Overall, a very nice book that any fan of the Seven Years War will find interesting – offering them more games at this lower tactical level.

UNBOXINGS, FLIPTHROUGHS AND SPINS

You will notice that our *Observation Post* features sometimes include in their titles sub-headings of 'Unboxing, Spins or Flipthrough'. These are terms taken from our online Primetime Bulletin, which our Prime members will already be familiar with.

WIPrime members get to see **video** unboxings of games and miniature box sets, along with video 'flipthroughs' of new rulebooks. Plus interactive 'spins' of figures - using the wonder of modern technology all the miniatures you see on the pages of *Observation Post* spin around at the swipe of the mouse, providing a 360 degree view of the figure.

To find out more about WIPrime visit wargamesillustrated.net

WARLORD GAMES: TERRORS OF THE DEEP

UNBOXING

Any of you who thought that *Black Seas* by Warlord Games was a serious simulation of naval warfare in the Age of Sail are about to be disappointed, but anyone else who wants to add a bit of silly monster fun to their *Black Seas* games is in for a real treat.

The new Terrors of the Deep box set has six resin monster models, six game cards and an eight page rules booklet.

All the models are made from resin, with the Kraken and Narwhal featuring metal attachments.

Above: The Leviathan.

The Leviathan

Resembling a giant pre-historic fish, the Leviathan is the biggest of the six models and consequently the meanest in the game, with a total of 70 hit points - the same as a Third Rate ship. It's a well sculpted piece, looking suitably scary and a robust bit of kit to boot.

The White Whale

Whilst not based on a real whale this model is more akin to *Moby Dick* the famous boat smasher from the book of the same name. In the game the White Whale uses its massive head as a 'Mighty Ram' and a 'Water Jet' for its second attack.

The Megalodon

Megalodon (which means 'Big Tooth') is an extinct shark that has somehow survived in the world of *Black Seas*. It's actually the weediest of the Terrors but still packs a punch with its first attack of 'Shark Bite'.

The Sea Serpent

This two piece resin kit looks a bit like a snake-dragon hybrid. Again, a great looking model with fine detail just begging to be painted. In the game it has the ability to coil around a ship - grappling and damaging the vessel.

The Kraken

That classic giant squid-like sea monster made famous by *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* and numerous other seafaring legends. This model comes in two parts, with the main body made of resin and metal tentacles. Great detail on the resin body, particularly the suckers and gaping mouth.

Giant Narwhal

Last and very much least is the Giant Narwhal. Compared with the other Terrors, the least impressive of the models, but featuring a nice metal horn which in the game is used as a 'piercing tusk' and on the tabletop will be adept at puncturing gamers' fingers.

Above: The Kraken.

Above: The Giant Narwhal.

Rules Booklet

The A5 booklet begins with initial general information about using the Terrors in your Black Seas games. One Terror per game should suffice, deployed in the centre of the table, from whence it will Speed towards the nearest ship.

Following these initial general rules the booklet provides stats for the six monsters and all their special attacks, including such things as the Leviathan's Crushing Bite, Sea Serpent's Snake Bite and the White Whale's Mighty Ram.

The Terrors' stats and rules are followed by rules for a Ghost Ship, which - whilst not included as a figure in the set - can easily be modelled using any *Black Sea* vessel and used in the game to strike fear into living crewmen and even (if the ghost ship comes within 1") spirit them away.

The booklet concludes with a monster - heavy scenario called Bermuda Triangle which allows you to get all your Terrors on the table in one game.

Finally we have the all-important game cards, on which players track hits caused to the Terrors and from which they can check stats and special attacks.

All in all a nice twist on wargaming in the Age of Sail. The models themselves look great and the rules provided are well conceived and delivered with alluring style, all designed to tempt even the most po-faced naval gamer into trying his or her hand at a bit of fun fantasy action.

BLASTER – SCI-FI AND FANTASY MAGAZINE

Being the splendid people we are here at *Wargames Illustrated* we don't mind giving a heads up to another, new, wargaming magazine (especially when it's so different to our own).

Blaster is a collaboration between five bright young(ish) games designers who have come together to produce what they are calling a "wargaming anthology". Joseph McCullough (*Rangers of Shadow Deep*), Ash Barker (*Last Days*), Mike Hutchinson (*Gaslands*), Sean Sutter (*Relicblade*) and Joseph McGuire (*This is not a test*) are all riding the wave of a new generation of wargaming that merges fantasy and sci-fi tabletop figure action with elements of Role Playing games. *Blaster* is an impressive collection of articles written about their respective games which add new scenarios, rules and other add-ons.

Weighing in at 82 pages, *Blaster* provides you with a lot of reading material, with each contributor supplying one article for his respective system. When I say "weighing in", I should say "downloading in" because *Blaster* is ostensibly a PDF publication, downloadable from DriveThruRPG at a price of $19.99. Although DriveThruRPG do actually offer a Print On Demand service with a "softcover, premium color book" costing $24.99.

With plenty to get your teeth into for fans of all the games mentioned above, *Blaster* offers quality, well written content with a stylish modern look.

Good luck to - um I say … - the young upstarts!

Find out more at *drivethrurpg.com*
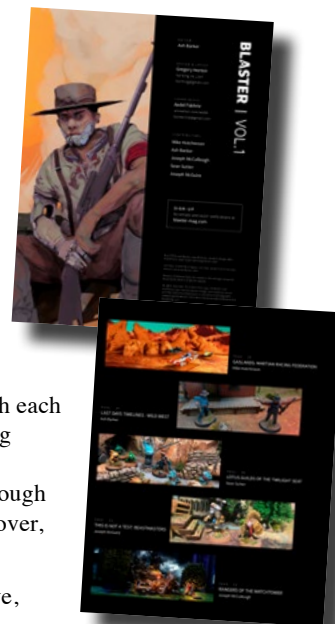
WARLORD GAMES: NORMANS

SPINS

I think it's fair to say that any wargamer with a penchant for Normans is well catered for. Whether you're a fan of plastics from Conquest Miniatures or metals by Gripping Beast, Crusader Miniatures, Footsore, Foundry, V&V or anyone else I've missed – there's a lot of choice out there. Warlord Games already have a pretty comprehensive collection of Normans in their Hail Caesar range, with these three new Command packs: Unarmoured Cavalry, Mounted Knights and Unarmoured Infantry adding to Crossbowmen, Archers, Characters and other infantry and cavalry.

These new figures are as competently designed and well-cast as you would expect from Warlord with nice anatomy on both the men and horses. There's nothing particularly exciting here, the end result being standard Norman 1066 fayre. Anyone looking for a little Sicilian or 'on crusade' flair (something you get with some of the Gripping Beast and Crusader figures) will be a little disappointed, but these figures are fine examples of Bayeux Tapestry Normans.

When there are so many of one particular figure type available, as with Normans, how one range mixes with another becomes particularly relevant. To that end we have included some comparison shots so you can see for yourself.

One other thing of note is the weapons packs provided in these Warlord Games packs. I'm a big fan of being offered metal lances for my figures – and there are more than enough in each pack. I'm not so keen on the swords though. Nice to have them, but what's with the stumpy blades? They look more like a Roman Gladius than a Norman longsword.

Ultimately Norman collectors like myself now have even more quality figures to add to their armies/store under their bed and pretend to add to their armies – and that's never a bad thing!

WARLORD GAMES

Black Powder

Pictured: Fully Assembled and Painted 1st Battalion 1805-1811

AVAILABLE TO PRE-ORDER TODAY

Pictured: 1st Battalion Grenadier, Standard Bearer and Officer

SPANISH NAPOLEONIC INFANTRY

Our BRAND-NEW Spanish Napoleonic Infantry sets are cast in one-piece using our acclaimed Warlord Resin, giving incredibly crisp detail, each box of 1st or 2nd & 3rd Battalions contains 25 Infantry with leaflets and flags - These Grenadiers, Fusiliers and Standard Bearers look truly fantastic on the tabletop.

FULL PAPER JACKET
BOOK PREVIEWS FOR THE BUSY WARGAMER

BY NEIL SMITH

These are changing times, so they tell us. But when weren't they? Still, we need to evolve and that goes for this column too. Rather than flood your brain with a tsunami of books, we are being more judicious in our selection of monthly publications and will walk through them rather than run. We will also kick around some wargaming ideas generated by these books to get you started. To that end, we are going to survey the top 20 or so books and keep them in chronological wargaming order for you; so if you don't like Romans, skip them, although who doesn't like Romans?

ANCIENTS

We start September with the warrior society that the Romans most admired. Paul Anthony Rahe continues his in-depth examination of the Spartans in *Sparta's Second Attic War: The Grand Strategy of Classical Sparta, 446-418 BC* (Yale University Press). This is the period when the already stretched relations between Sparta and Athens snapped, bringing on the Peloponnesian War. And that means hoplites; two phalanxes of heavily armoured men smashing into each other, though let's not forget the peltasts, cavalry, archers, and other light troops. Rahe gets into all that, providing ideas for campaigns and battles.

As the Greeks continued along the path of mutually destructive wars, a new power emerged in the north: Macedon. That name inevitably brings up the most famous Macedonian, Alexander the Great, but what Adrian Goldsworthy highlights in *Philip and Alexander* (Apollo), is that Alexander built on the deeds of his father, Philip II, who conquered Greece while developing a combined-arms warfare that his son sharpened into one of the greatest armies ever to take the field. Philip's conquest of Greece provides rich material for wargamers and an array of enemies to fight. Goldsworthy is also a top military historian whose books are always worth reading.

That brings us to the aforementioned Romans, the conquerors of Macedon and just about everywhere else they targeted. If you are new to the Romans, or just need a refresher course, then these two new books will get you into the feel of things: Conor Whately, *An Introduction to the Roman Military: From Marius (100 BCE) to Theodosius II (450 CE)* (John Wiley & Sons) and Simon Elliott, *Romans at War: An In-Depth Study of the Roman Military in the Republic and Empire* (Casemate). Whately's book looks interesting because it follows the careers of three soldiers in different periods, examining their lives in detail, while Elliott surveys the big picture with many different wars, battles, and enemies to ponder.

For most of us, I suspect, the mighty Imperial Legions of the 1st Century CE spring to mind when we think of Romans. Nic Fields's *Britannia AD 43: The Claudian Invasion* (Osprey) follows the usual Osprey Campaign series format: a brief survey and lots of illustrations to spark the imagination and help with painting. This is the story of how the Romans attacked Britain with 40,000 men, including four crack legions. The enterprise lends itself to a miniatures campaign with major battles against the Britons to wargame, and no doubt countless skirmishes. The key is that we don't know everything about the Roman invasion, but enough to experiment on the table. And, of course, Fields's book sits well with the other two Roman books this month. Reading all three could prove quite immersive.

EARLY MODERN

We skip forward across the centuries to another two books that could work in tandem. Nick Lipscombe's *The English Civil War: An Atlas and Concise History of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms 1639–51* (Osprey) brings us high quality annotated maps. Those are especially important for following the fluctuations of wars lasting twelve years and will be an invaluable aid for wargamers setting up a campaign game, maybe using Helion's new *In Deo Veritas* rules that have had me rethinking 15mm battles. The problem with Lipscombe's title is glaring with our second book, Arran

Johnston's *'Ready to Bleed': The Armies of the Scottish Covenant 1639-47* (Helion). The Covenanters might be outside the mainstream of the common Cavaliers v Roundheads thinking for the British Civil Wars, but, as Johnston highlights, they fought in Scotland, Ireland, and England, and they engaged in skirmishes, sieges, and big battles. They are certainly worth a second look.

Thinking of armies away from the mainstream lands us in the late 17th Century, which is garnering a lot of wargaming attention, partly through the number of excellent books being published on it. Helion has led the way with their excellent Century of the Soldier series, the latest of which is Bruno Mugnai's *Wars & Soldiers in the Early Reign of Louis XIV Volume 4: The Armies of Spain and Portugal, 1660-1687*. Mugnai introduces us to the travails of the Spanish as they tried to fend off the Sun King's meddling and expansionism and the Portuguese War of Independence, while adding some of his own expertly painted colour plates for uniform guidance. This is a rich area for wargaming with the Spanish, Portuguese, French, English, and Algerians all in action at one time or another. If you have not been following Mugnai on his explorations into the wars of Louis XIV, now might be a good time to jump aboard.
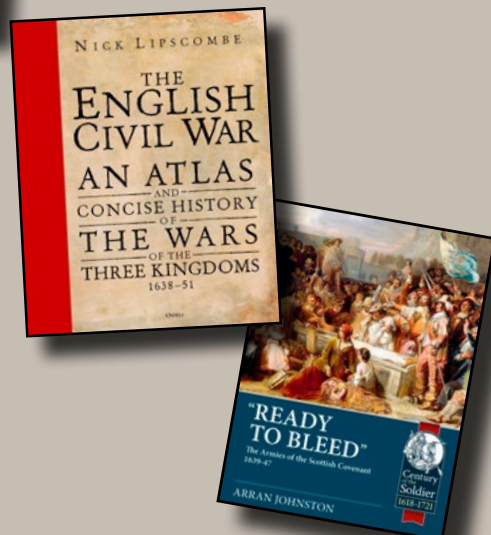
18TH CENTURY

If you want to show off, remember the phrase *kleine krieg*. That is a fancy way of describing irregular warfare as practiced by the hero of our next book, *Johann Ewald: Jaeger Commander* (Knox Press) by James McIntyre. Ewald had quite the military career and specialized in small unit tactics in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. He fought in the Seven Years War, the American Revolution, and in the Danish Army during the Napoleonic Wars, and he kept notes. This would be an ideal scenario generator for skirmish games in those periods.

Staying in the 18th Century, but venturing out to sea, Quintin Barry brings us *The Battle of the Chesapeake 1781: The Royal Navy and the Battle that Lost America* (Helion). You probably know about the British capitulation at Yorktown in 1781 that effectively ended the American Revolution. What Barry describes, however, is the failure of a British fleet to break through the French cordon, sealing the army's fate. The naval battle was inconclusive, but that kind of high-stakes fight is what makes naval wargaming so much fun, and it looks great on the table too.

19TH CENTURY

Our trip through the 19th Century this month brings up two wars that we don't see often enough on our tables. The first is the Crimean War and the classic charge of the Light Brigade. Nick Thomas describes the action in *Into the Valley of Death* (Pen & Sword). On 25 October 1854, 673 British cavalrymen charged down a valley lined by Russian cannons and were slaughtered. Who wants to wargame that, right? Thomas argues, however, that the charge could have worked given some better decisions and circumstances. There's your wargame! The second underplayed conflict is the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Quintin Barry delves into the story of *Bazaine 1870: Scapegoat for a Nation* (Helion). He was the Marshal who carried the can for the humiliating French defeat, unjustly Barry argues. What interests us here are the intense battles fought around the fortress of Metz in which Bazaine commanded.

This was also one of the last 'classic' wars with coloured uniforms and formation manoeuvres, and it looks great on the table, especially in the smaller scales.

WWII

I am always on the lookout for potential wargaming scenarios, so these two books caught my eye: Don Aines's, *Strange and Obscure Stories of World War II: Little-Known Tales about the Second World War* (Skyhorse) and Victoria Panton Bacon's *Remarkable Journeys of the Second World War* (The History Press). Not all the stories apply, of course, but there will be some worth building skirmish games around.

The next three books are connected and cover my favourite campaigns in the western theatres of WWII. Alexander Joffe's *Operation Crusader and the Desert War in British History and Memory* (Bloomsbury) might be the definitive account of the campaign to relieve Tobruk in 1941 and is set in that brief period where the Axis forces were ascendant in the Desert. That is also the most interesting part of the Desert War to wargame as the British attempt to fend off Rommel at his best. But we should not forget Rommel's allies *The Italian Army in North Africa, 1940-43: Luck Was Lacking, But Valor Was Not* (Helion) brought to you by Ralph Riccio and Massimiliano Afiero. This is everything you need to know about the Italians, and it seems that some of our wargaming assessments of them might be way off base; you decide. I will tack on the end here the book I have been waiting for with eager anticipation: James Holland's *Sicily '43: The First Assault on Fortress Europe* (Bantam Press). This is about the tough fighting to take that crucial island, and no one gets into the nuts and bolts of a campaign more than Holland. It is surely essential reading for anyone interested in the Western theatre. I note also that Holland's *Normandy '44: D-Day and the Battle for France* (Bantam Press) is out this month in paperback.
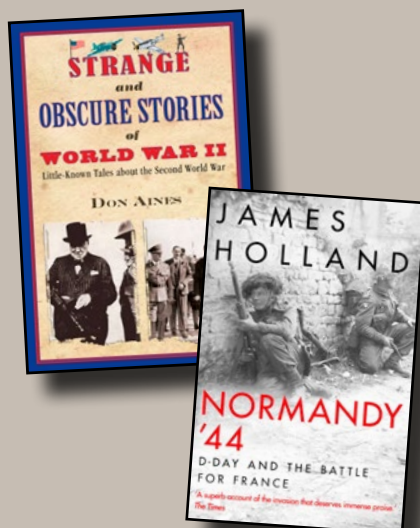
Harrison West's memoir *Sunshine Soldier: A WW2 Combat Infantryman's Story* (Bookbaby) reminds us that D-Day was not the end of the war but the start of a new phase. West landed in Europe after D-Day and took part in combat operations through until October 1944. Then after a brief rest, his Division, the 79th, advanced into Germany, fighting until the end of the war. West was one of the 10,971 men from his Division wounded in combat. I have always wanted to create a campaign based on the experiences of a single soldier; this might be the book I need to do that. There are less German memoirs from WWII, but Arno Sauer's *In the Hell of the Eastern Front* (Frontline) walks us through Fritz Sauer's wartime experiences fighting the Soviets around Leningrad. As with West, Sauer's narrative inspires more than a few scenarios for skirmish games, which can be linked in a mini-campaign involving that soldier.

Still in WWII, but on a completely different track, Mark Stille's *US Navy Ships vs Japanese Attack Aircraft: 1941–42* (Osprey) has me thinking of ideas for a co-op game. As the title suggests, Stille surveys those actions where Imperial Japanese warplanes attacked US warships across the Pacific; he considers which planes were used and their tactics, and how the Americans fought them off after a disastrous beginning at Pearl Harbor. This type of action could be fought as a straightforward wargame but would also make for an interesting co-op game with all the players against a programmed warship, or conversely as a warship crew against a programmed air attack. Needless to say, that idea could extend to all sorts of air actions from the Dambusters to the Falklands. It is surprising sometimes where one book can take you as a wargamer.

MODERN

Two new books from the post-WWII era focus on the Vietnam War. Peter E. Davies's *Ho Chi Minh Trail 1964–73: Steel Tiger, Barrel Roll, and the secret air wars in Vietnam and Laos* (Osprey) examines US attempts to cut that vital communist supply route. The idea of trying to move supplies along a table under air-attack is an appealing scenario, and something different from the usual Vietnam skirmish games. However, along more traditional Vietnam wargaming lines, Chris McNab's *US Air Cavalry Trooper vs North Vietnamese Soldier: Vietnam 1965–68* (Osprey) puts you into the world of airmobility; helicopter assaults to interdict the NVA or VC that became increasingly adept at defending those attacks. The wargaming possibilities for that are just about endless given Vietnam's varied terrain.

And that's it for September. If you want to read reviews of recent books on Military History, check out *hamsterwrangler.com/beating-tsundoku*.

If you are looking for 28mm or 15mm Vietnam/Far East buildings then our *Sarissa Reimagined Range* can supply a varied selection of huts, outposts and watchtowers. They all come painted as seen complete with detritus and foliage on the bases - ready to game straight from the box.

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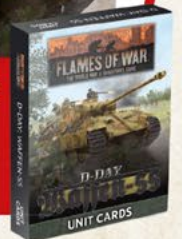
'Billhooks' Games Designer Andy Callan tells us a bit about where it came from and why.

This all started a few years ago with some games of *Sharp Practice* by the TooFatLardies. My local group enjoyed the scale of the game - bigger than a skirmish, smaller than a battle - and the card-driven turn sequence. But then along came Studio Tomahawk's *Muskets and Tomahawks* and we tried that too and found ourselves getting the two games hopelessly mixed up. Probably a case of more grey hairs than grey cells!

I solved our problem by coming up with a game that combined what I found to be some of the best elements of the two sets, together with some ideas of my own and we have used my "Big Skirmish: Rules for old wargamers with short attention spans" ever since. But it turned out that wasn't the end of the story….

We soon found we had a similar problem with *Saga* and *Lion Rampant*. Some bits we liked, others we didn't and we could never quite remember the mechanisms and subtleties of the rules from one game to the next. So the medieval period looked like being set aside. And then we discovered the Perry 28mm plastic Wars of the Roses range.

You know how it is. "I'll just buy a box of these to see what they are like…". And then you find they are very nice indeed and you bring a few along to a club night and everybody else likes them and before you know where you are you have enough for a game. But what rules to use?
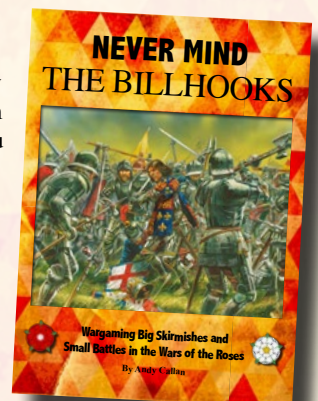
Easy ... I'll just do a quick re-write of my 'Big Skirmish' rules and we'll be off and running. Only we didn't get out of the blocks, it somehow didn't have the right 'period flavour'. So, in the end I had to go back to first principles and do a more or less complete re-write until, after more than a hundred hours of editing and endless play tests we now have a new game that we are happy with and one which the guys at *Wargames Illustrated* liked so much they decided they would give away for free with the magazine.

Never Mind the Billhooks is set at the Big Skirmish/Small Battle level, the sort of thing that probably went on a lot of the time, particularly up around the Scottish borders, without ever troubling the chroniclers. My original inspiration was Nibley Green, Gloucestershire, fought in 1470 between the private armies of Lords Lisle and Berkeley, with no more than 1,000 men a side (See *Feuds, Raids and Anarchy* for more on Nibley Green).

Billhooks is a card-activated game with points-based random army generation and using only good old D6s. You roll dice to hit and dice to save (depending on armour) so it's very familiar Old School in that respect. Longbows are deadly but not dominant since their arrow supply is limited, so to win a battle you have to get stuck in to melee. Cavalry and skirmishers have their uses but it's the heavy infantry - Men-at-Arms, Bills and Pikes - who will win the battle for you.

All the key rules are on a short cribsheet (with no confusing tables of plusses and minuses) and you should find yourself playing along without too much reference to the main rules after only a few turns. A typical two-player game with about 100 figures a side will play out in one to one and a half hours but it will easily expand to a bigger, multi-player set-up once everyone is familiar with the common and easily-memorized mechanisms.

If you want to re-fight Towton please look elsewhere. This game is not a simulation of a typical Wars of the Roses set-piece battle. Truth be told, nobody really knows the tactical detail of what went on in those battles anyway because "The Wars of the Roses were ... unfortunate in their historians". (Oman). You can find my own attempt at simulating such scrum-like affairs in the Paper Soldiers book I did with Peter Dennis *Wargame the Wars of the Roses: 1455-1487* (Helion & Company).

By contrast, *Never Mind the Billhooks* is very much a lightweight, 'Beer and Pretzels' sort of game. The turn of a card or a roll of dice can be significant, and occasionally decisive, but don't take a defeat to heart. With this game there is always going to be time for a quick re-match.

I LIKED IT SO MUCH I BOUGHT THE COMPANY

By Dan Faulconbridge

The above statement is a massive exaggeration, but now I've got your attention I did just want to add to Andy's points by saying that after myself and Asun from Wi played *Never Mind the Billhooks* we liked it some much I asked Andy if we could work on the rules, make them look pretty and give them away free as a supplement with *Wargames Illustrated* magazine. Being the all-round good egg that he is Andy never had any desire to profit from their publication and was all too happy for other Wars of the Roses buffs and converts to get their hands of the rules.

Several months of editing, proofreading, playtesting, photography, Coronavirus and designing later and - voila! - bagged with this magazine are the collective efforts of the small but enthusiastic team involved (particular thanks to Steve W, Pete B, Matt B and Asun). We hope you enjoy them as much as we did/do and that your billhooks never grow rusty.

Photos taken during an early Billhooks playtest.

THE PRESSURES OF COMMAND
CROWD CONTROL PART 2

In the second part of his article on Command and Control, Pete Brown looks at overhauling how we approach this topic in our wargames.

"No battle plan ever survives contact with the enemy."

Helmuth von Moltke

In last month's article I tried to provide an overview of how a number of popular sets of wargames rules approach the subject of "Command and Control". Some drew cards to activate units, some rolled dice, others required you to send a messenger to deliver hand written orders whilst some used no Command and Control system at all. Each has their pros and cons and each has their supporters and haters.

The issue I found with practically all of the systems, however, was not how they simulated the delivery of orders to the units, but rather the fact that all armies could deliver orders and all their troops could obey them. In other words, if an order is received to "wheel to your left, change formation to column, march to the farm and form back into line", it is assumed that the unit receiving that order could carry it out with the precision of the Grenadier Guards on Horse Guards parade.

Don't get me wrong. I think that all wargames should try to simulate effective command and control, with good generals with an effective staff system being better than those with less effective command. However, the rules should also reflect the training and discipline of an army and its ability to carry out these often complex manoeuvres that wargamers tend to take for granted. Let me give you an example from the Ancient period, where the differences between armies were often fairly stark.

To my mind, Ancient armies fall loosely into two groups: Organised and often disciplined armies, in which men were formed into units, had identified leaders and command structure and a means by which orders could be conveyed through this structure. The obvious example is the disciplined Roman army, although the New Kingdom Egyptians also had identifiable units, as did the Assyrians, the Macedonians and so on.

When I am playing Ancient wargames with my Macedonians, my Egyptians or my Romans, I can do so using most commercially available wargames rules without too many issues.

The next group are disorganised and often ill disciplined armies. You know the sort of people I am talking about here. The kind of army you smell long before you see them. The kind of army that is not hard to track as it leaves a trail of beer kegs and half eaten boar in its wake. The kind of army that, inexplicably, wears less clothes into battle than it does on the march to get there and which also, equally inexplicably, paints itself blue. I am talking here about the Ancient British, Gauls, Germans and Celtic mercenary armies of all varieties.

Units of these armies would be based on tribal loyalties, not on troop or weapon type, and such units could vary considerably in size. There may not

> *"If words of command are not clear and distinct, if orders are not thoroughly understood, then the general is to blame. But, if orders are clear and the soldiers nevertheless disobey, then it is the fault of their officers."*
>
> *Sun Tzu*

be any identified command structure beyond saying who is in charge of each tribe and who these men generally swear loyalty to as their leader. There would be no organised staff system of messengers to convey complex orders as the battle progresses and little means of communicating with each other on the battlefield beyond very simple blasts of horns or beating drums to convey the start or end of the attack. Discipline could be optional, with units deciding to charge or not to charge as the mood takes them. Formation, if one is discernable at all, might best be described as a "mob", or "bunch", rather than a unit. Imagine a crowd at your favourite sporting event and you will get the idea.

The two types of armies I have described above are clearly different. One is much better organised than the other. Yet, how do they perform in your chosen set of Ancient rules?

ECCE! ROMANS!

Let me begin by taking you back in time to ancient Britain. Two armies are facing each other on opposite hillsides. On each flank are woods and, although the valley between them is mostly good going, there is one small but nasty looking bit of marshland.

On one hill stands Roman General Ludicrous Sextus. His men are deployed in their cohorts, their centurions standing by, and around him are arrayed his staff officers. Sextus identifies that if the Barbarians attack he can funnel them into the gap between the woods on one flank and the central marshy area, as anyone trying to move through that will get stuck. Peeling a grape, he sends orders to the cohorts at the front of the army to wheel slightly to their right so that their flanks now rest on the wood and the marsh. As his staff officer gallops off to deliver the message, he orders

skirmishers into the wood and to the edge of the marsh to protect his flanks should the enemy try to pass through. A staff officer gallops off shouting "Skirmishers, front and centre". These would be drilled and trained skirmish troops who are well armed and know their business. Upon receipt of the order they move quickly to their allotted positions. Sextus now retires to his tent to eat "quails eggs" and "wolf nipple chips" whilst he awaits developments.

On the opposite hill stands Badvoc, Chieftain of the Iceni. He has brought his tribe to the hillside and has persuaded a couple of other local chieftains to bring their tribes too. On his right is Mungo, Chieftain of the Helvetii, who does not really get on with Badvoc but has decided that he hates the Romans more and so is prepared to serve alongside him. On his left is Badvoc's son, Blag. He is commanding the other loose

Above: Simon Miller's Battle of Mancetter game from Salute 2019.

> *"Manoeuvring with an army is advantageous; with an undisciplined multitude, most dangerous."*
>
> *Sun Tzu*

confederation of smaller tribes that have turned out to help. Each of these groups is deployed in its own tribal and clan groups, and so some are large and well armed and others are smaller and less well equipped.

Seeing Badvoc, Blag waves his battle-axe above his head before turning to roar defiance at the Romans. Blag is a good lad, thought Badvoc, but not the sharpest tool in the box. However, he is the biggest and the nastiest and hence, by three falls and one submission, he is in charge.

They have agreed that Mungo will attack with his forces through the woods to outflank the Roman position. When this attack is underway, Badvoc will attack in the centre. Blag has been told that he can send forward skirmishers but on no account should he attack directly ahead as there is a dirty great marsh there. Instead he is to hold his position. A blast of a horn will be the signal for Mungo to attack and he is to sound a horn when he engages the Romans in the woods, as Badvoc will no longer be able to see him or his forces.

Badvoc's troops are still milling around on the hillside. Some are saying goodbye to their wives and girlfriends, many of whom have accompanied the army to the battlefield. Badvoc did not forbid this, as the wives will cheer on, or scold, their husbands during the battle. The trained warriors of his bodyguard, the only ones with any armour to speak of, have started bullying and shoving the men into two loose warbands, after which they will take their position in the front rank. Some skirmishers have gone forward to shoot slings and short bows at the Romans, but these are men and boys who, through youth or infirmity, cannot charge with the warband and they are generally badly trained and armed.

Watching the skirmishers begin to descend the hill, Badvoc prepares to give the signal to attack….

OF RULES AND MEN

So there we have it. A fairly standard set up for a Friday night wargame, with two Ancient armies fighting over some pretty simple terrain. So, here is how it usually plays:

Mungo moves his warbands together through the woods on the Roman left. As they move into the trees, Badvoc is instinctively aware of their progress and, through use of his "Druidic Long Sight" (read, wargamer's God-like overview) can see how well the combats are going with the drilled Roman skirmishers deployed there. All is not going well and so Badvoc decides on a change of plan. Using his "Jedi Mind Powers" he communicates his will to Blag, who now starts moving his forces forward toward the Roman right. Having approached the marsh, Blag now forms his men into a column, which snakes nimbly past the tricky terrain before reforming into ranks again on the other side! Meanwhile, the

Above: Warlord Games' Romans against 'Tribesmen of Germania'.

Above: "Inevitably our Celts, Ancient Germans and Vandals will be based in lines and columns on a roughly rectangular base and look no different in terms of formation to the Romans."

central Roman skirmishers have decided to charge the barbarian skirmishers opposite them to prevent their harassing fire. Despite the barbarian force being made up of old men and little boys with slings, they decide to stand to receive the charge, held in place apparently by Badvoc's sheer force of will and the realisation that if they fall back they might block the warband's advance.

Meanwhile, Sextus looks on appalled and only dreams of the day he could get his Roman legions to perform such complicated and co-ordinated manoeuvres.

BACK TO BASICS

So let's talk about warbands in broad terms. This is a group of people, often bound by ties of clan or family, who are all from the same tribe or mercenary group. Their leaders are usually selected because they are the head of the clan, or the best warrior or perhaps they are elected by consensus. However, the amount of influence this leader can have on his warband is very limited, and usually boils down to "stay here" or "follow me". Things like: "Ok, can everyone form a four wide column on the standard at the front please. Yes, that's it … thanks … keep moving at the back …" is much more tricky.

Warbands will generally not have had any drill or training in moving as a group and will act in a very similar manner to a group of demonstrators or

soccer hooligans facing a line of police. We have all seen this type of situation on news footage, where a line of riot police wait with shields interlocked whilst an unruly mob throws bottles and stones at them from short range. Admittedly, our Ancient warband will be a bit better armed and a bit more determined to close with the enemy, but broadly the similarity holds.

If you look at our wargames figures, it is not surprising that we think our warbands should be able to wheel or change formation. Inevitably our Celts, Ancient Germans and Vandals will be based in lines and columns on a roughly rectangular base and look no different in terms of formation to the Romans. Visually, we can easily see how to wheel the unit on the front corner, or turn the bases 45 degrees to form a column but what we forget is that our actual historical warband will not be standing in neat lines and columns but will be milling about in a loose mass. Complicated

formation changes are just not possible because the warband has no formation to begin with!

Army commanders would have equally limited options when giving instructions to these warband leaders. They could all sit down before the battle and devise a plan which may involve sneaky manoeuvres through the woods or hidden troops in dead ground. Many historical battles show without question that barbarian commanders could be just as good at strategy and tactics as their Roman counterparts. What they were less good at was adapting to changing circumstances. If part of the plan failed, or a trap was sprung too early or the Romans did something unexpected, barbarian armies lacked the command and control ability to react quickly or to change the overall plan. Their troops also lacked the training to respond quickly to orders that were more complicated than "Charge" or "Retreat"!

> *"Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without the strategy."*
>
> *Norman Schwarzkopf.*

> *"In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensible."*
>
> *Dwight D Eisenhower*

Now I know what you are going to say. This is a wargame and so our units have to have clear rules about base sizes and how we move those bases to get from A to B. We also need to have equally clear rules about wheeling, turning on the spot and formation changes to allow us to not only get from A to B but to make it clear who can make charges to the flank, who can move across certain terrain and so on. I cannot disagree. A rule system with no clear guidelines on movement would be a disaster. Instead, what I am arguing is that the rules on movement should not be the same for both armies. By all means, include rules about wheeling, formation changes from column to line, interpenetration and so on. However, these rules should only be for the disciplined armies. The introduction should read, "Owners of barbarian armies can skip this section completely…"

THE WHEELY STICKY PROBLEM

There are loads of things that Roman armies could do that barbarian armies could not, but let's just look at one aspect: wheeling. We have all done it a thousand times with our tiny units on board and if asked to wheel a unit a wargamer will know what to do without even asking, no matter what rules he is using. One front corner of the unit stays in place whilst the other corner moves through 90 degrees so that the unit is now facing to its flank. What could be more simple?

Well, lots of things really. Enabling a unit that contains hundreds, or even thousands of men to perform this manoeuvre on the parade ground takes discipline and months of training, and to enable it to undertake the same manoeuvre under stressful battlefield conditions takes iron command and control and experienced commanders. Now get a mob of farmers, tradesmen and goat herds, with a core of warriors, some of whom have had a bit too much "Dutch Courage" and most of whom have not seen each other in months, let alone had time to train, and get them to perform the same wheel with the same amount of precision. How do you think we will do? How do your rules reflect this? Can your Celts wheel as efficiently as the Romans they are facing? Unfortunately, the answer for some of the most popular Ancient rules on the market at the moment is "Yes," which is what bothers me.

FROM ANCIENT TO MODERN

Although I have chosen two very different armies to make my point, I think it can be applied to a lot of rules systems for a number of different periods. British Guards from the Seven Years War should be able to wheel and change formation, but should Jacobite Highlanders? If they can, should it take them a whole move to do so whilst remaining stationary whilst the Government troops can do it on the march? I think an argument could be made to allow Zulus to wheel, but what about Mahdist Ansar and Fuzzy Wuzzies? They have no training whatsoever, so should they be limited to moving forward and back or toward the nearest enemy only? Consider well disciplined Mongol forces fighting Christian European armies, who had little command and control and even less discipline. Whilst Mongols could undoubtedly wheel, change formation and perform feigned flights, should the movement options for the European force be limited to advance, charge or retire?

ONE POSSIBLE SOLUTION?

Barbarian generals were just as aware of strategy and tactics as their civilised counterparts and there are many historical examples of barbarian armies hiding troops in dead ground, or attacking from cover or attempting to outflank their opponents. Playing a barbarian army should not be a dull case of lining up your men and charging! However, changes to your plan once battle is joined should be difficult. I suggest that, before the game begins, the barbarian General should sit down with the umpire and explain his plan. If no umpire exists, perhaps he could note his plan on a scrap of paper for examination by his opponent when the game is over. The barbarian player should identify his overall strategy: "I intend to hold the right flank and centre and commit the bulk of my forces to an attack on the left." The strategy could contain some elements of contingency: "If the left attack falters, there will be two blasts of a horn and both the centre and right will also attack." The strategy could also include the odd surprise such as a warband hidden in a wood that can charge when a different signal is given (fire arrows shot into the sky or drum beats, for example). The strategy can thus cater for one or two different contingencies but overall it should remain pretty simple to understand. If you find yourself saying something like: "But eighteen blasts of the horn means a 45 degree turn by just the left flank troops, not a 90 degree turn which is twenty blasts" then you have probably overcomplicated things. Players will then have to stick to their plan, no matter what, as barbarian commanders had no way to change it once battle was joined. Once your army is deployed, it should be very difficult to re-deploy it or react to surprises the Romans may spring on you. I know this makes barbarian armies tough to play, and even tougher to win with, but if we are genuinely attempting to replicate the differences in command and control and training and discipline, then surely this is the way to go?

"Command revolves around deciding what needs to be done. Control seeks to turn those decisions into appropriate action."

Australian Navy Manual

CONCLUSION

Whether you subscribe to cards and chits, pips and points, written messages or command rolls, I think it is important for our wargames to differentiate between those armies with good levels of command and control and those that do not. What is equally important is somehow reflecting the ability of the troops under your command to carry out those orders. Too often wargames

Below: Figures by Front Rank from the collection of Tim Adcock.

units such as warbands or untrained militia are given the ability to change formation, wheel, and counter march like trained and disciplined troops and equally often barbarian or inexperienced Generals are given a level of command and control over their troops far in excess of the control level their historical counterparts enjoyed. We need to have clearer lines between the abilities of our trained and disciplined armies and those that are not. Games such as *Mortem et Gloriam* are leading the way in this thinking, with not every unit being able to perform every manoeuvre exactly as the player would like, but I still think there is room to develop this idea within our games.

In closing, I know that ultimately we play games with the aim of having fun and that perhaps no-one will want to play with an army handicapped by poor command and even worse troops. Those armies certainly would not make an appearance in competitions! I imagine this goes back to an even older argument about whether we are playing games or simulations, and I do not want to be drawn down that long and rocky path. However, I do think it's worth thinking about your own chosen rule set and ruminating on the points made above. Now is a good time to do it, as you have plenty of time on your hands.

FEUDS, RAIDS AND ANARCHY

WARGAMING SMALL SCALE ACTIONS IN THE WARS OF THE ROSES

Beyond the Box Office big bashes of the Wars of the Roses like Towton and Bosworth were countless smaller battles and big skirmishes. Simon MacDowall introduces us to some of these wargame-able "Deadly Brawls".

The Wars of the Roses were a bit like a great big, family squabble gone out of control. On the surface they were all about the uncles fighting over an inheritance - that inheritance being the throne of England. Then the sons, daughters, nephews, nieces and cousins piled in, each looking to get just a little bit more for themselves at the expense of their relatives. They encouraged their neighbours and friends to join in until every noble house in England was involved in a deadly brawl that lasted more than 30 years. Don't think it was just the men. Without the machinations of Margaret of Anjou (the Red Queen),

Elizabeth Woodville (the White Queen) and Margaret Beaufort (the Red and White Queen), the Wars of the Roses would not have been half as much fun.

Technically the Wars - there were at least three of them with bits of uneasy peace between — were about which house would rule England. Would it be the house of Lancaster (red rose) or the house of York (white rose)? Both were descended from King Edward III and had equally dodgy claims to the throne. Great battles were fought at St Albans (twice), Northampton, Wakefield, Towton, Barnet, Tewksbury and Bosworth. King

Henry VI (Lancaster) was deposed and later murdered in the Tower of London. Richard of York was killed at Wakefield but his son was crowned King Edward IV. When Edward died of natural causes his brother became King Richard III after a couple of princes went missing in the Tower. Richard then lost the crown to Henry Tudor at Bosworth.

That, however, was not all there was to it. As the senior members of the two great families were fighting it out for the throne, others saw opportunities to settle grudges with annoying relatives and to better themselves at the expense of their

"If you fancy a little foray into the historical wars that inspired Game of Thrones, you do not have to build large armies to fight set-piece battles."

WARS OF THE ROSES 1455 - 1485

Map legend:
- Area supporting the House of Lancaster
- Area supporting the House of York
- Red — Family supporting the House of Lancaster
- Blue — Family supporting the House of York
- Large battle sites with dates
- Smaller battle sites

SCOTLAND

PERCY / GREY — Hedgeley Moor 1464

PERCY

DACRE — Hexham 1464

Durham — Hedworth Moor

North Sea

CLIFFORD

TUDOR / NEVILLE — Richmond

BEAUFORT

Lancaster — Ripon, MOWBRAY — Catton, York, CLIFFORD

Scarborough

PERCY

Isle of Man

Irish Sea

Towton 1461 — Hull
Wakefield 1460 — Ferrybridge — Ravenspur

Gargrave Church (West Yorkshire)
Aughton

TALBOT — Darwent, Don

Chester — Lincoln

GREY — Blore Heath 1459 — Stoke on Trent 1487, Stoke Field 1487
FITZALAN — Shrewsbury, STAFFORD — Trent
MOWBRAY — Atherstone, Stamford, Lynn — Caister Castle, MOWBRAY — Norwich
Bosworth 1485, STAFFORD, Losecote Field 1470

TALBOT
Ludlow — Kenilworth, Warwick — Lutterworth — Ely — Bury St Edmunds
Mortimer's Cross 1461 — 1460 Northampton
STAFFORD — Edgecote Field 1469 — TIPTOFT — DE LA POLE

ENGLAND — 52°

TUDOR — Milford Haven, Pembroke
NEVILLE — Gloucester — Oxford — St Albans 1455 — VERE — BOURCHIER
STAFFORD — 1471 Tewkesbury
The Battle of Nibley Green (1470) — Barnet 1471 — LONDON

BEAUFORT — Bristol, Bath — STAFFORD — Canterbury — Dover

COURTENAY — Salisbury — Winchester, MOWBRAY
FITZALAN — Southampton — Hastings

Launceston — Exeter — Dorchester — Isle of Wight
COURTENAY

Plymouth — Dartmouth

English Channel

FRANCE — 50°

Channel Islands

North — 0, 50 km, 50 miles

54°

Isle of Anglesey

neighbors. So if you fancy a little foray into the historical wars that inspired *Game of Thrones*, you do not have to build large armies to fight set-piece battles (although you can do that too).

The set piece battles themselves were relatively small. Bosworth, for example, had less than 10,000 men on each side. The many actions resulting from feuding families settling scores with their neighbours were very much smaller still. A great lord such as the Duke of Suffolk raised two knights and 300 archers in 1475. Sir John Paston, with only 30 men, held Caister castle for two months against the Duke of Norfolk. Such small scale actions are perhaps best fought on the wargames table with individually based figures representing one to five men.

There are plenty of small scale historical scenarios that translate onto the wargames table. Alternatively you could set up a mini-campaign with historical or fictional families fighting it out for dominance. Each contingent could perhaps have one or two knights, half a dozen esquires or non-knighted men-at-arms, and a hundred or so lesser men. The latter would be spilt more or less evenly between archers and billmen, up to half of whom could be mounted for mobility (although they would dismount to fight).

AMBUSH THE WEDDING PARTY

On 24 August 1453 Thomas Percy, Lord Egremont, gathered a force of some 700 Percy supporters including his brother Richard Percy, and John (later Lord) Clifford. Their objective was to ambush the bridal party of Sir Thomas Neville and Maud Stanhope as they passed through Hedworth Moor on the return from their wedding. This affair, a chapter in the long running Percy/Neville feud, was a precursor to the Wars of the Roses. The Nevilles were prepared for trouble. The bride and groom were accompanied by the Earl and Countess of Salisbury, John Neville (later Lord Montagu) and several hundred armed retainers. They succeeded in repulsing the Percys.

The 'battle' of Hedworth Moor was apparently relatively bloodless but it set the stage for the much bloodier conflicts to come, with the Nevilles initially taking the Yorkist side and the Percys the Lancastrian. It makes for a great little wargames scenario. Each side can have three nobles, maybe twice that many men-at-arms, and 500-700 archers and billmen. The Nevilles will also have women and children as well as a fairly large number of other non-combatants.

Although a bit out of the ordinary on the wargames table, ambushing a wedding party had long been an opportunity of settling scores with rivals as weddings required one family or another to move from the relative safety of their strongholds. As far back as AD 450 the soon to be Roman Emperor Majorian successfully ambushed a Frankish wedding party, claiming it as a great victory. Such a scenario, therefore, does not have to be restricted to the engagement at Hedworth Moor.

HOLD THE BRIDGE

Holding a river crossing is a classic small scale action as success or failure could be vital in any campaign. So it is not surprising that the stalwart defence of a bridge, or an audacious assault to seize one, have taken on heroic proportions through the ages. The Roman Horatius holding the bridge over the Tiber, the Saxons defending Maldon against the Vikings, and the Americans seizing the Ludendorff Bridge at Remagen in 1945, are famous examples.

In March 1461, the armies of Yorkist King Edward IV and Lancastrian King Henry VI were converging on Towton. The Yorkists had to cross the River Aire. Edward sent Lord FitzWalter with a small detachment (probably about 100 men) to seize the crossing, which he did. At dawn the next day, John Lord Clifford (who had fought with the Percys at Hedworth Moor) led around 500 men

to seize the crossing from the Yorkists. The Lancastrians caught the Yorkists by surprise and overwhelmed them.

When he learned that the Lancastrians had taken Ferrybridge, Edward counter-attacked. Clifford was, however, able to hold the narrow crossing against increasing numbers of Yorkists until Edward sent another force to a crossing three miles west to outflank the Lancastrians. Clifford retreated but was caught by the pursuing Yorkists before he could reach the safety of the Lancastrian lines.

Ferrybridge makes for an intriguing wargames scenario. It starts our with a very small force being surprised in a dawn attack followed by a counter-attack and a flanking action. It could be used as a model for a fictitious scenario which starts off with only a few men with others being fed in as the game proceeds.

RAVAGE THE ESTATE

If you had a quarrel with a neighboring noble family, and you could not ambush them on their way back from a wedding, another good way of getting at them would be to ravage the estates of their tenants. This would allow you to undermine their power and prestige even if you are not strong enough to pry them from their castle. There were many such incidents throughout the Wars of the Roses which could make excellent templates for historical or fictional game scenarios.

In the aftermath of Hedworth Moor the Percys attacked the Neville estates across the north. Richard Percy and a band of ruffians went on a spree of pillage and plunder, culminating in the kidnapping of the Bailiff of Staincliffe from Gargrave church (West Yorkshire) who had somehow offended the Percys. Other Percy retainers plundered the property of William Hobdon, vicar of Aughton while Sir John Neville raided the estate of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland at Catton, Yorkshire. Such scenarios played out across England in similar feuds such as between the Mobrays, Howards, Pastons and de la Poles in Easy Anglia; or Sir Thomas Talbot and William Lord Berkley in Gloucestershire.

The potential for small scale wargames here are only limited by the imagination. Many need only involve a dozen or so men on each side making them perfect for a 1:1 scale game. A classic scenario might involve one knight, two or three men-at-arms, and six to nine retainers (up to half of whom could be archers) attacking a poorly defended village or estate. They might come onto the table mounted, dismounting to fight on foot. Most of the defenders would be rustics with improvised weapons. A message is sent to the castle for help and in a number of umpire-determined game turns relief arrives in the form of a mounted force of sufficient strength to have the potential to drive off the attackers.

BESIEGE THE CASTLE

Sieges are notoriously difficult to recreate on the wargames table and they were quite rare in the Wars of the Roses. A full siege is best played out with 2-6mm miniatures on a grand scale but aspects of siege warfare offer plenty of scope for smaller actions.

In 1469 Sir John Paston's son and 30 men defended Caister Castle in Norfolk against John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. The Pastons held out tor two months but were eventually forced to yield the castle.

A small siege such as this offers plenty of opportunity for skirmish games involving only a few men. For example you could run a game involving a sally by the defenders to disrupt the siege works or destroy equipment. The idea would be to create as much damage as possible,

then get back safely to the castle before reinforcements from the besiegers are able to cut them off. Another idea would be for the defenders to try to get a supply wagon through a lightly guarded part of the siege lines. Scenarios such as these would not require the presence of an actual castle or lots of siege works (although they would add great visual appeal).

RAID THE BORDERLANDS

The Scots took advantage of England's squabbles in the Wars of the Roses to make incursions across the border. When the Percys of Northumberland were not fighting the Nevilles they had to contend with frequent incursions by the Scots. In 1456, King James II of Scotland led a destructive chevauchée through Northumberland, burning and pillaging as he went. A simple game scenario could be built around a small force of Percy

retainers attempting to catch and destroy a party of Scots raiders.

Raids across the border were not limited to major incursions. The infamous border reivers, both English and Scots, made a living out of raiding their neighbours. Gangs of marauders numbering anything from a handful to a couple of hundred would descend on rival homesteads to take anything of value they could lay their hands on. Think of the American Wild West or modern urban gang warfare and you will get the right idea. A game scenario could simply involve two rival families fighting it out, or one attempting to drive off the livestock of another. Most troops involved would be irregular, lightly armoured men, many of whom would be mounted. Another angle would be to have the Warden of the Northern Marches coming in with a more professional force to try to sort things out.

PHOTO-TASTIC

Many thanks to Michael Perry for providing all the marvellous photographs for this article. He also made all the figures! All available from Perry Miniatures in their 'Wars of the Roses' range.

SCOUT THE ENEMY

Major battles were often preceded by a clash of scouting parties. One or two days before Bosworth (August 1485), King Richard III's scouts clashed with the Stanleys who were encamped near the village of Atherstone in Warwickshire. Five men of rank are recorded as killed in the engagement which probably indicates that a clash between small scouting parties escalated into something more serious.

I recently ran a game based on this skirmish. Henry Tudor was advancing down Watling Street to link up with the Stanleys who were encamped at Atherstone. Richard III was on the move from Leicester to intercept Henry's army and his scouts clashed with the Stanley's near the village.

The game starts off with a small number of scourers (light cavalry) from both armies skirmishing on table. Then Lord Stanley deploys his archers and men-at-arms on a hill to block the enemy advance. A turn later King Richard's vanguard arrives and attempts to drive off Stanley. Shortly afterwards Stanley is reinforced by his brother William. I fed in a series of reinforcements for both sides until the game developed from a minor skirmish into a small battle. You don't have to go as far as that. It is quite possible to keep the game at a skirmish level with each set of reinforcements numbering only a handful of men.

Such an action is typical of a clash of scouts and could fit any number of historical or fictional scenarios.

FIGHT THE BATTLE

So far I have deliberately concentrated on small scale actions that could be played out with a small number of individual miniatures. However, as your collection increases, there is always the temptation to fight out something that starts to approach a proper battle.

The Battle of Nibley Green (1470) is a fascinating example of a neighbourhood squabble turned bloody. It came about from a quarrel between Thomas Talbot and William Berkley over the inheritance of Berkley Castle. Talbot challenged Berkley to battle and the latter accepted. It was a rather foolish thing for Talbot to have done as he could only raise about 300 poorly equipped men from his tenants. Berkley's levy was supplemented by the garrison of Berkley Castle, and miners from the Forest of Dean, giving him 1000 men in total.

Despite his inferior numbers Talbot led his men in a charge against Berkley as the latter was deploying. Berkley's archers broke up the charge. One of the Dean Foresters, a certain 'Black Will' shot Talbot through his open helmet visor. Leaderless, Talbot's men fled the field.

It is not hard to see how Nibley Green might be tweaked for a tabletop game where any two feuding families agree to settle the matter in a formal battle with several hundred men of each side.

RUN THE CAMPAIGN

The historical feuds between the the likes of the Percys and Nevilles, Pastons and Mobrays, Talbots and Berkleys, or the border reiver families, make for great little mini campaigns. Each player could control a family with a set number of retainers and seek to better his position at the expense of his rivals, using diplomacy and bribery to gain support from other players, or at least neutralise them.

Alternatively the Wars of the Roses is a great backdrop to a fictional campaign with rival houses being loosely based on historical originals - a bit like *Game of Thrones* where the Starks were most probably based on the Percys. The possibilities are endless.
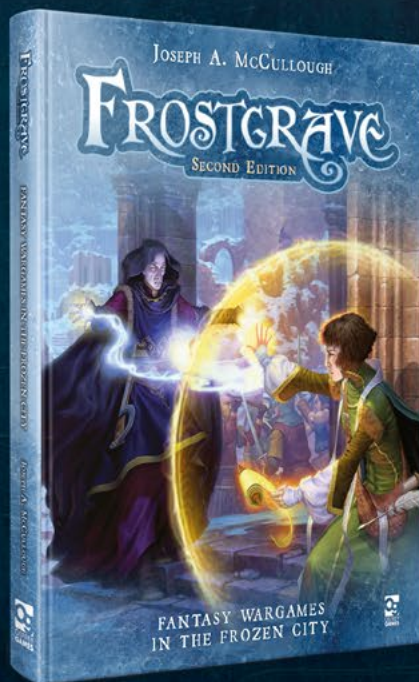
The Battle at Ferrybridge - prelude to Towton. Illustration by Graham Turner from CAM 120, Towton 1461 © Osprey Publishing Ltd. www.ospreypublishing.com

WORKING WITH ULTRA-CHEAP
SAND AND GRAVEL

Swedish model making maestro Jan Karrman hails the use of cheap sand in terrain making.

Adding up the money spent on materials can be a shocking exercise. Luckily, there are some model-making materials that are also very cheap. Something that I use a lot but costs next to nothing is sharp sand and gravel. If you spend a couple of pounds at the builder's merchant, you will have enough for several years of terrain model-making.

Both sharp sand and gravel come in big sacks, and of course you do need somewhere available to store them. I kept mine outdoors without any problems, but if you have enough room in a shed or a garage, even better. Remember that when you do want to use the sand and

the gravel, it is important to dry both out thoroughly, since not doing so can lead to bacteria doing strange things to your terrain! I always put a good amount in an oven proof dish and bake in it until it's totally dry. It does take a while but you don't have to do it often. Then store in a bucket with a lid. That's all very good I'm sure, but what can I do with it? Well, quite a lot.

TRICKY SHORELINES

One area of terrain I have always found difficult when modelmaking is where land meets water. No matter how much I have tried to sand and shape the foam so that it looked good, making a realistic shore line always proved tricky. My subject matter is often Scandinavian and it doesn't help that much of the Nordic coastline is also

very uneven, with rocks of different sizes both near and in the water.

When recently terrain model-making for the Battle of Dänholm, I thought I would try something a bit different. Rather than letting the landscaping material (in my case paper-based floor underlay) go all the way to the water, I would make the joining area entirely out of sharp sand and gravel.

I finished the foam (floor underlay) 4-5cm before the water's edge, put down plenty of PVA glue and built the final bit up using gravel and sharp sand. I used a large brush and dripped diluted PVA onto the sand and stones to make sure everything bound together. Any glue that ran into the wrong area could easily be wiped away during a 24 hours drying period.

Everything was painted with acrylic paint before sprinkling on more sand, until I was happy with the result.

I then painted and drybrushed the land, before painting the water last - using a smaller brush to take the paint in between the gravel and using a much larger one for applying and texturing the paint further out.

I use a lot of acrylic paint to help provide a textured look, but that does means I need to be patient and let the paint dry thoroughly before giving it a wet look. A couple of layers of clear fast drying acrylic varnish and I'd done. By the way, I put varnish on thickly so all brush marks disappear and let the varnish dry really well before I paint a second layer.
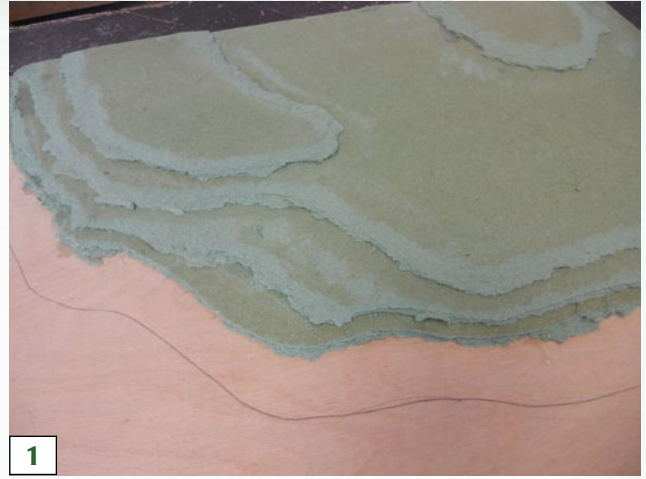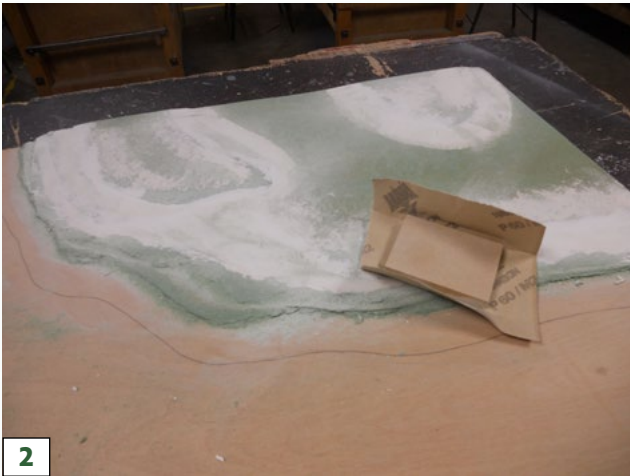
OTHER STUFF

I also use large amounts of sharp sand and gravel for other land features.

After having built and shaped hills and fields, etc. I paint the surfaces with cheap acrylic wall paint and then thinly spread sharp sand onto the still wet paint. Since the grit varies in size it gives the surface an interesting texture and when it's dry I paint it again and do the normal rounds of dry brushing, flocking, etc. Because of the rough texture, this requires less flock, which also saves money.

If I am in a hurry and not after a perfect result I just paint the roads directly where I want them, using a 1" brush and some acrylic paint of whatever base colour I think will work. Taking pinches of sharp sand, I sprinkle carefully on either side and sparingly in the middle of the road. After dripping diluted PVA glue onto the sand I then let it dry thoroughly. You can also build up walls, etc. using the gravel.

Again, if you are in a hurry, sharp sand can help with creating fields as well. I found this out the night before Salute 2017 when I still had not made a large field in the middle of the board I was making.

In desperation, I took a glue bottle and 'drew' thick lines roughly an inch apart where I wanted the field to be on the battlefield. I threw sharp sand on top, turned the board over after ten minutes and painted it soon afterwards.

When we won an award for best looking table, I could not help but think about how desperate and close I had been to tears less than twelve hours previously!

I use these materials for a lot of other things as well. I base buildings, figures, trees, etc. all in the same way and it helps to bring things together visually.

As you can see, I find these materials not only cheap, but also versatile and easy to work with and I hope that some techniques might help you with your model-making as well. Good luck!

NEVER MIND THE BILLHOOKS

HERE'S THE

PAINTING guide

Steve Wood provides an easy 'wargames standard' painting guide aimed at getting your forces battle ready for *Never Mind the Billhooks* in super-quick time.

The following article should help you paint your retinue for *Never Mind the Billhooks* and hopefully give you some ideas regarding colour schemes. But first, a couple of caveats!

I am by no means a professional painter. All of my models are painted with wargaming in mind and are used to fight battles with my wargaming buddies. I tend to use whatever technique will get my figures onto the table in as fast a time as I can manage!

The second caveat is regarding colour schemes and uniforms. The information for this period is sketchy at best. We don't really know how the armies lined up or how they fought in any great detail.

The same is true of the 'uniforms' that the troops wore. We do have details of the likely coats of arms, the flags and banners and therefore, to some extent, the household livery colours and badges that were in use; but there are few contemporary records. I've put a couple of references that I used at the end of the article. The whole point of our gaming group in moving to the Wars of the Roses period for wargaming was to give us some respite from the 'button counting' that goes with some other eras, notably Napoleonics. (Which incidentally, is my favourite period!)

With this in mind, my retinue is entirely fictional. The leader is Sir Harry Hotspur, ably assisted by Sir Eric Diehard and

Sergeant Daniel Rose (who usually takes the left wing). The majority of my army has a white and blue livery, although in this article, I am using a couple of other colour combinations. Within reason, you can choose whatever colours you see fit but again, I've included some actual colour combinations used by the historical houses of the time at the end of the article.

I've given examples of painting billmen and bowmen who were the mainstay of the armies of the time. The techniques can easily be used for other troops.

All figures are Perry Plastics.

All paints used were Vallejo, unless otherwise stated.

PAINTING THE ARMOURED BILLMAN

1

The model was prepared and assembled in the usual way - scraping off any mould lines that can be seen, then assembled using polystyrene glue. Using polystyrene glue rather than cyanoacrylate (super glue) is my preferred option as not only do you get a better joint but the glue will provide some filling.

I then spray primed the model using Army Painter Plate Mail.

Once it was dry I gave the model a heavy wash using Army Painter Dark tone (black) ink.

2

Using a dry brush technique, I quickly dry brushed the model first in Army Painter Plate Mail and then with Silver (70997).

I also picked out the chin and lower face with Flat Flesh (70955).

3

I then block painted the detail:

1 - New Wood (311) was used for the bill staff.

2 - Prussian Blue (70965) for the leggings.

3 - Leather (70871) for the shoes, belt and dagger.

4 - Brass (70801) for the tip of the dagger's sheath.

The figure could have been based at this point and would have look fine for the table, but I wanted to put in a bit more effort.

4

I have touched up some areas to finish off.

A wash of soft tone ink on the flesh and bill staff and boots has added a bit more shading.

I also touched up the silver - dry brushing where I thought it a bit rough!

This technique of getting armoured figures painted quickly works just as well on the heavily armoured foot knight units of the time.

APQS

Army Painter quickshade is a superb product in that it does exactly what is says on the tin and always gives first class results. In addition, the quickshade provides a good protective coat to your model. I do, however, share the reservations of many in the hobby who think that the product is expensive. This is not helped by the fact that the product goes off as the tin is emptied and no amount of thinning helps. I have yet to get to using anywhere near over half a tin before I have to replace it. Once you are halfway down the tin, the air in the tin reacts with the quickshade to produce a skin which leads to the product spoiling. If Army Painter could produce a tin half the size, I am sure that they would convince more wargamers to use what is otherwise a first-class product!

PAINTING THE BOWMAN

1

The archer was primed in leather brown, before painting the flesh and helmet.

1 - The bow was painted with Old Wood (310).

2 - The tips were painted with German Camouflage Black Brown (70822).

2

Next I block painted the main colours. I used a Black (70950) and Red (70957) scheme for the livery. The moulding on the figure makes this straight forward to do, you don't have to be an expert at painting straight lines!

1 - I used Stone Grey (70884) for the sleeves.

2 - Leather Brown (70871) for the boots.

3 - Buff (70976) for the bottom of the gambeson.

3

I picked out some of the detail using:

1 - Camouflage Black Brown (70822) for the belt and wrist guard.

2 - Orange Brown (70981) for the pouch.

3 - Black (70950) for the dagger sheath.

4 - Plate Mail for the buckles.

The model was then painted with Army Painter Dark Tone (Black) Quickshade and left to dry for 24 hours before spraying with matt varnish.

4

Just to add a bit of detail and depth, I dry-brushed the helmet with Silver (70997).

Highlighted the face with Flat Flesh (70955) - particularly the nose!

I also carefully re-painted the red side of the tunic to give it a richer colour and retouched the sleeves and gambeson with the original colours.

I also added some arrows to the base. These are from the Perrys' kit and the arrow shafts are painted with Iraqi Sand (70819), the feathers painted with Off White (70820) and then a heavy ink wash of strong tone applied.

Once dry, I retouched the arrow flights with white and recoated the shafts with Iraqi Sand (70819).

EXAMPLES OF LIVERY COLOURS

Blue & White: Richard, Duke of York

Black & Red: John Neville, 2nd Earl of Westmorland.

Green & White: Edward Neville, Lord Abergavenny.

Yellow & Green: John Bouchier, Lord Benners.

Blue & Red: William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke.

Black and White; Humphrey Talbot

You can reverse these colours for different houses and pretty much any combination will do. It simply depends on your taste and how closely you would like to stick to the history that we are aware of.

PAINTING THE BILLMAN IN GAMBESON/QUILTED JACKET

1

This time after assembling the figure, I primed the figure with Army Painter Leather.

1 - I then painted the helmet and bill hook with Plate Mail.

2 - The face and hands were done with Flat Flesh (70855).

2

1 - I block painted the gambeson with Buff (70976).

2 - The laces with Off White (70820).

3 - The tunic sleeves are German Camouflage Beige (70821).

4 - The leggings, Burnt Red (70814).

5 - Boots and belt, Leather Brown (70871).

6 - The bill staff is painted with New Wood (310).

3

The figure was then painted with Army Painter Strong Tone (dark brown) quick shade.

Note that I paint the figure - not dip it - that way I can control the amount of shading. It also saves wasting the quick shade and is less messy!

I then left the figure to dry for 24 hours before varnishing with Army Painter Matt Varnish.

Once again, apart from basing, your figure could be used at this point.

4

I dry-brushed the helmet and billhook with Silver (70997) to make them stand out.

I also carefully highlighted the quilting on the gambeson with Buff (70976).

The face received another light ink wash before highlighting the nose and cheeks with Flat Flesh (70855).

BASING

All the bases were carefully covered with Vallejo Dark Earth Textured paste (26218) to blend the figure bases to the Renedra plastic 20mm square bases.

All the figures in my retinue are separately based in this way to allow casualty removal from the movement trays. To add a bit of detail, the billmen had some Woodland Scenics Fine Talus sprinkled on as the paste dried.

Once everything was dry, I carefully paint the base with my favourite brown. It's actually an emulsion paint from B&Q (UK DIY store) called Delhi Bazaar. I also have emulsion pots in Chocolate Brown and one very similar to Iraqi Sand.

B&Q do a great colour matching service - if you take in a paint sample on a piece of paper, they will colour match it and produce a big pot of paint for about three quid! This is ideal for scenery and basing and means that you can save your nice paints for the figures.

The base was then highlighted by dry-brushing with the original brown mixed with Iraqi Sand.

I finished off the base with some Woodland Scenics - scatter and then add some Gamers Grass tufts or flowers - or both.

REFERENCES

From Freezy Water Publications:

Standards, Badges and Livery Colours of The War of the Roses by Pat McGill and Jonathan Jones.

Armies, Battles and Commanders of the War of The Roses. Volumes 1 and 2 by Martin Stephenson, Dave Lanchester and Pat McGill.

From Osprey:

Towton 1461 by Christopher Gravett.

From Helion:

Wargame the War of The Roses by Peter Dennis and Andy Callan.

I also used the *Perry's Art work* by Peter Dennis as well as images from my Pinterest board.

THE CRUSADER HINTERLAND STRATEGY

The first article in this short series (Wi392) looked at the crusaders' 'coastal strategy' in the Holy Land, and how we might translate that strategy into a stimulating wargames campaign. In this article Professor Steve Tibble leads us into the next phase of the Crusaders' military activity - the 'hinterland strategy' that broadly ran from 1125-1153.

Above: A crusader supply unit is ambushed outside Damascus (27 July 1148). Featured in CAM 204 The Second Crusade 1148. Illustrated by Christa Hook © Osprey Publishing www.ospreypublishing.com.

In many ways this hinterland strategy provides an even richer, more satisfying backdrop against which to run a campaign. Rather than static sieges, this involved armies manoeuvring in the field across large swathes of the Middle East - and even the sieges were easier to play out on the tabletop, as they often deteriorated into large-scale skirmishing.

MOVING INLAND

So, what was the 'hinterland strategy', and why was it necessary?

Well, capturing the coastal area was an essential precondition for survival, as it safeguarded the lines of communication back to Europe. But it was all still very fragile - for the most part, the crusader states were just a thin coastal strip of land on the fringes of a Muslim dominated Middle East.

If the Franks had a substantial hinterland, however, they would be able to create a defence in depth. And if they were able to control the interior, their states would be able to put down roots and mature. In this strategic context, the key issue was how far one could push the envelope. Could the old Christian cities of the hinterland, such as Damascus, Aleppo, Shaizar and Homs, ever be recaptured? And, if so, could they be held against the inevitable Muslim counteroffensives?

The Eastern Mediterranean had a far richer urban heritage than Western Europe, and this was reflected in the relative importance of the large cities. These major centres were a critical factor in the long-term control of the region. Their significance was well known to contemporaries, and they emerged as pivots of military and political activity throughout the twelfth century.
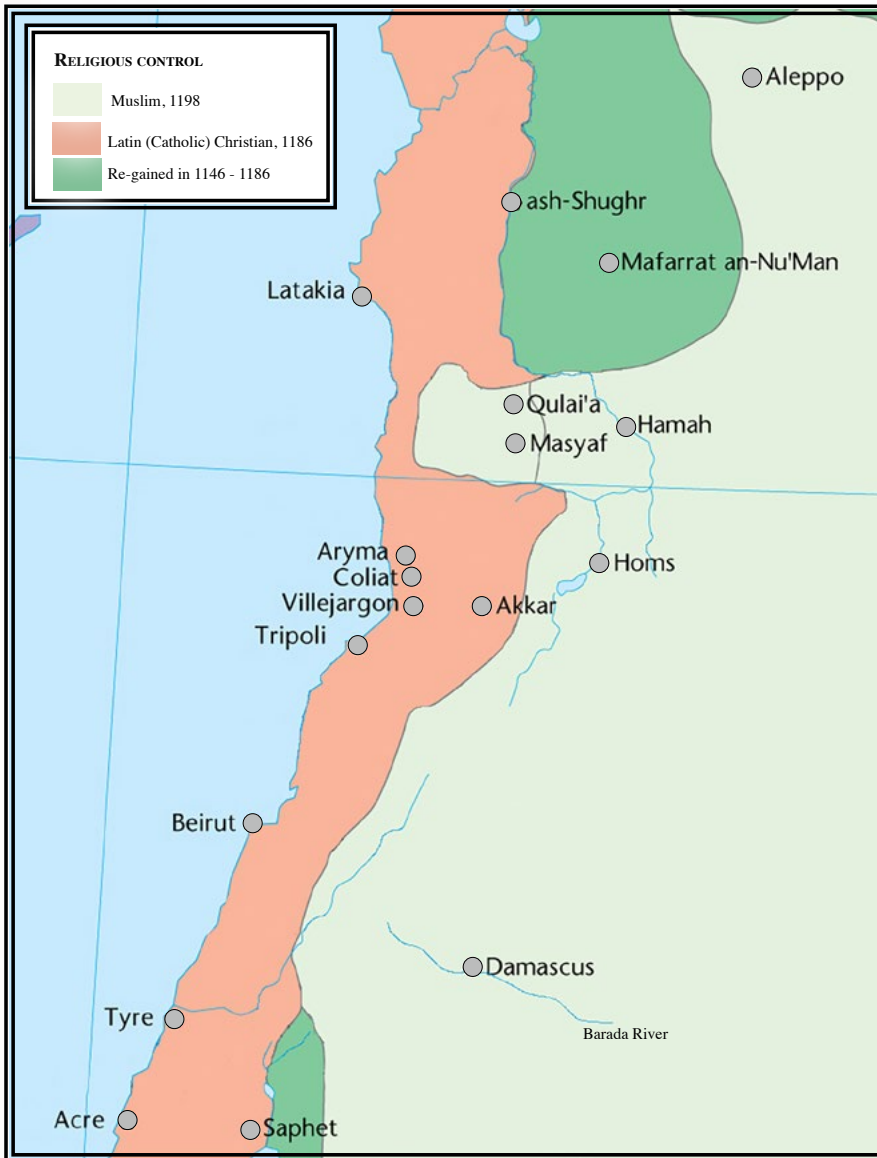
All of the major Muslim cities were attacked in earnest on several occasions, in increasingly desperate attempts to open up the interior. Aleppo was the objective for two serious campaigns (1124–5 and 1138); Shaizar was besieged twice (1138 and 1157); and Damascus was the target of concerted assaults in 1129 and 1148. The crusaders knew the areas of vital importance to their long-term security and pursued them whenever feasible.

THE DAMASCUS CASE STUDY

Damascus was perhaps the most tempting objective, and provides a useful case study.

Damascus was the biggest prize – the great Islamic regional centre, a major commercial and population hub and the pivotal Muslim opponent of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. A prosperous Christian provincial city at the time of

THE LATIN HOLY LAND 1146-86

Religious control

- Muslim, 1198
- Latin (Catholic) Christian, 1186
- Re-gained in 1146 - 1186

Aleppo

ash-Shughr

Mafarrat an-Nu'Man

Latakia

Qulai'a

Hamah

Masyaf

Aryma
Coliat
Villejargon
Tripoli

Homs

Akkar

Beirut

Damascus

Barada River

Tyre

Acre

Saphet

The crusader army marched towards Damascus in July 1148. Their arrival was punctuated by two short but intense battles. The first of these was a fight through the well-irrigated orchards on the south and south-west of the city - a battle which is crying out to be played out on the war-games table, or as an exhibition game at a show. The terrain was unique, almost a form of medieval bocage, and the unfamiliar nature of the fighting was dramatic enough to impose itself forcefully on the imaginations of contemporary chroniclers. It was almost entirely unsuitable for heavy cavalry, so the Muslim defenders must have hoped that neutralising the knights, the 'super-weapon' of the Frankish field army, would put them in a stronger position.

The individual plots were small enclosures, bisected by irrigation channels leading from the Barada River to the north. There were only narrow, dangerous pathways between them. To make matters worse, ownership of the orchards was defined by mud walls along their boundaries, and many of the owners had also erected small watchtowers on their property to guard their crops. Every small-holding was a separate battlefield, and one in which the normally vulnerable light infantry and archers could find themselves in a position of equality with the cavalry.

The Damascenes stationed as many of their archers as possible in the watchtowers, so they could pick off the crusaders as they approached. The

the Arab invasions, it had been overrun by Muslim armies in 634 – and despite early attempts by the Byzantine military to recover it, it had remained in Muslim hands ever since.

Its capture would free up vast tracts of fertile land in the Hauran and beyond to attract settlers and create much needed fiefs to support the army. It would bolster the eastern flanks of the crusader states. It would prevent the political and military union of Syria and Egypt, and help stem the flow of nomadic tribes into the region from the north.

The Franks were understandably beguiled by the prospect of capturing it, and had spent the second half of the 1120s harassing and, unsuccessfully, besieging the city - all to no avail. In 1148, however, an allied army was gathered - Western crusaders, pilgrims, local Christians and Eastern Franks - and the crusaders were ready to try again.

buildings and compounds within the fields were also fortified, acting as a rudimentary set of pill-boxes for the Franks to overcome. Blockades were set up at key junctions, manned by local troops and villagers. There was even a primitive form of roadside ambush with which to contend. Traps were set up behind the mud walls that lined the paths, where there 'lurked men armed with lances who, themselves unseen, could look out through small peepholes carefully arranged in the walls and stab the passer-by from the side ' – not exactly an IED, but dangerous nonetheless.

The Frankish knights dismounted and had their precious horses taken back to the relative safety of the rear. The fighting quickly descended into a series of small but brutal skirmishes. Several of the barricades were stormed and, as the crusaders moved forward, the defenders of the orchards were outflanked and killed. Faced with seemingly unstoppable Christian heavy infantry and dismounted cavalry, they eventually broke and ran back to the city. The battle of the orchards was over, but another battle was about to begin.

The main body of the Muslim army was drawn up on the far banks of the Barada River, to the north of the orchards which the crusaders had just fought their way through. The regular 'askar cavalry of Damascus was there in strength, alongside Turkic mercenaries. There were also levies from the local villages, the 'ahdath urban militia

from Damascus and, ominously for the crusaders, ever-growing bands of ghazis and other volunteers. Large numbers of archers were thrown forward to contest the crossing, together with longer range 'ballistae '.

The local Frankish troops, the vanguard for the battle through the orchards, were exhausted by this point. They could make little headway against the enemy troops drawn up in front of them. The Emperor Conrad, frustrated by the delay, pushed his fresh troops up to the front line, eager to demonstrate their famous prowess with the sword. He and his men 'all leaped down from their horses and became infantry, as is the custom with the Germans when a desperate crisis occurs. Holding their shields before them, they engaged with the enemy in a hand-to-hand fight with

swords. The Damascenes at first resisted bravely, but soon, unable to sustain the onslaught, they abandoned the river and fled to the city'.

By the end of the day, on the evening of 24 July, the Franks had begun to fortify their positions on the west side of the city, 'cutting down trees and building stockades with them, and destroying the enclosures'. Well protected in their new camp, they would be able to start the siege of Damascus in earnest on the following day.

Early the following morning, however, there was a sortie from the city, looking to contest the Christian occupation of the area north of the Barada. The fighting was fierce and extended along the river. The battle on Sunday 25 July was clearly hard-fought. Charge was met with countercharge and, despite the casualties, the Damascene forces gave a good account of themselves.

The fighting on Sunday was inconclusive, but Muslim troops were still guarding the city in force, and, because of their superiority in numbers, were operating aggressively outside the walls. At nightfall, the city militia and most of the infantry retired into Damascus and manned the walls, while the regular cavalry of the 'askar stayed in position opposite the Franks. Significantly, there was still no sign of an effective blockade around Damascus, let alone a full siege.

Both sides needed to regroup, but by Tuesday 27 July, the siege had still barely begun. If the crusaders had any siege engines or catapults in their baggage train,

there is no record of them ever being positioned or used in anger. If they had not brought any with them, and were planning to make them in situ from the wood provided by the suburban orchards, they had certainly not had time to do so yet.

Damascus was not even under a significant blockade, let alone a close siege. Other than in the west of the city, Muslim troops were able to enter and leave at will. Volunteers and mercenaries continued to flood into the area and, as if that was not bad enough for the crusaders, word began to arrive of fresh Muslim armies mustering nearby.

The Frankish army's position to the west of the city was good for a longer, more traditional siege, as it was defensible and had relatively good access to food and water; but it was also facing some of the strongest parts of the city's defences. The fortifications to the south of the city, on the other hand, which the army had marched past as they approached Damascus on Saturday, coming up the road from Darayya (now a suburb of Damascus) , were thought to be weaker and more amenable to a swift assault. By Tuesday night the decision to shift position had been made, albeit with misgivings on all sides.

In the event, the situation deteriorated very quickly. The withdrawal from the Barada River and the orchards took place relatively smoothly, but Muslim forces naturally moved in behind the retreating army and occupied their positions among the smallholdings as they left. When

the army got to the southern walls of Damascus, it was obvious that the city's defences were not as weak as had been hoped and, even more importantly, that water supplies were insufficient for the army to remain there.

Going back was not an option, as Muslim troops now defended the orchards in great strength, and staying where they were would clearly lead to disaster. As the day

wore on, the Christian army's leadership had no choice but to retreat. And by now even that would not be easy.

The Frankish army withdrew in good order, which cannot have been easy, and was a continuing testament to their tactical professionalism. The Muslim forces did not pursue the Franks too closely, contenting themselves with killing stragglers and harassing the

DEATH FROM THE SKIES - ARTILLERY AT SHAIZAR

The siege of Shaizar in 1138 was one of the few occasions where we have good contemporary commentary both from the besiegers and, even more unusually, from those on the receiving end of a sustained medieval artillery bombardment.

We live in a time where 'remote' destruction is the norm – when the television news from a war zone looks like video game footage. We find the close up, visceral nature of face-to-face death repulsive and unnerving: the stuff of horror movies. The opposite was true in the Middle Ages. Warfare usually involved getting blood on your clothes. You would expect to see your opponent before you died, or before you killed him.

Catapults were different. The effect of artillery in a siege was as near as the medieval mind got to our form of 'remote' killing. The shock it created, emotional as well as physical, was immense. Usama, the Arab writer and a member of the ruling family of Shaizar, was away at the time but pieced together personal recollections from other people who had been on the receiving end of the bombardment to create an intimate history of the attack on his home town.

The Byzantine engineers had positioned batteries of 'terrifying mangonels' outside and the damage to the less fortified residential buildings was severe – one of Usama's friends had part of a millstone thrown onto the roof of his house and the entire structure was levelled in a single blow.

The emir's residence in the citadel was an obvious target and received a great deal of attention from the Byzantine artillerists. Aiming at the emir's standard, 'a stone from a mangonel hit the spear [i.e. with the banner attached to it] and the broken half with the spearhead flipped over, spun around and fell into the path just as one of our comrades was crossing it'. Like a scene from *The Omen*, the 'spearhead, attached to the spear fragment, fell from a great height right through his collar-bone and into the ground and killed him'.

In another episode, one of the soldiers serving under Usama's father stood next to an old man urinating against a section of the outer wall. He turned his head to give his comrade some privacy, and a second later found that 'the old man had been struck on the head by a mangonel-stone, which crushed his skull and pinned him so that his brains ran down the wall'.

The sheer volume of anecdotes about the power of the Byzantine artillery carries echoes of the shock felt by those who had to endure the bombardment. Above all, it was the unseen and potentially catastrophic nature of the blows which seemed to resonate. In a deeply religious time, the catapult, and death from the skies, looked uncannily like the hand of God in action.

rearguard. They did not want to provoke the crusaders into a full-scale battle, with all the risks that would entail.

The Franks had been unable to blockade the city - on the contrary, substantial Muslim reinforcements and supplies were entering at will. No formal siege train, no catapults, no siege tower had been deployed by the Christians. Increasingly surrounded, the 'siege' was only going to end one way.

Damascus had not been cowed into surrender. There had always been a vague hope that, once confronted with a powerful Frankish army, the Damascenes would have opened up negotiations, agreed to some form of condominium or alliance, or might perhaps even have surrendered. But if any of this had been going to happen, it would have happened already, at the moment of initial shock. That moment had passed. Once the crusaders' bluff had been called, they did not have the means to deliver on their implicit threat. There were insufficient troops to surround the city. Even a blockade was impossible.

The size of the original crusader armies, the presence of several kings and many other Western celebrities, together with the spectacular recriminations that followed its failure, meant that the 1148 campaign against Damascus received more attention, both at the time and in the present day, than it perhaps deserves. In fact, it was an attack, a demonstration

that barely became a blockade, rather than a full-blown siege. The Christian troops were eight kilometres outside of Damascus on Saturday 24 July, and fought their way into the outskirts of the city successfully. But by Tuesday 27 July, they were already discussing the best way to extricate themselves – and by Wednesday they were on their way back to Jerusalem.

On the most obvious level, the siege of Damascus was a prime example of the tactical failure of the Frankish art of siegecraft. They did not have the specialist resources to undertake a swift assault or sufficient manpower to enforce a lengthy blockade.

But, far more importantly, it also confirmed their underlying strategic

weakness. Lack of resources meant that allies were essential. But it was enormously difficult to implement effective strategy within an alliance - every decision became a focus group, every setback became a conspiracy.

Similarly, the crusaders might be able to identify the correct strategic objectives, yet even with every resource marshalled in pursuit of these objectives, it was not enough. However great the stretch, success remained tantalisingly out of reach.

Ironically, the siege of Damascus just ended up showcasing the demographic catastrophe that continually faced the Christian states – the Franks were too few in number to capture or to hold any of the major population centres of the interior.

GREAT VISION, SHAME ABOUT THE RESOURCES

The hinterland strategy phase which followed the capture of the coastal cities was sound in principle, but far more ambitious. Ultimately it ended in failure. The manpower issue was insoluble, and without the additional land that a successful hinterland strategy would have brought with it, the longer-term demographic problems could never be adequately addressed. Frankish siegecraft was severely limited once it moved beyond the coastal littoral.

The failure of these sieges was never a consequence of any lack of strategic intent. There were well focused (and generally successful) attempts to generate allies and reinforcements for each of the main expeditions. The campaign against

Damascus in 1129, for instance, had been preceded by several missions to the West which had succeeded in persuading large numbers of crusaders to help with the cause. Similarly, the campaign against Damascus in 1148 was accompanied by the French and German armies of the Second Crusade, who had been lobbied intensively to help.

The tactical reality, however, was that Frankish armies, once inland, were outnumbered, surrounded and isolated in enemy territory - beyond the coast, it was unusual for any crusader siege to gain sufficient purchase around a heavily populated Muslim city. Even when it did, far from a Christian fleet (and hence lacking a cadre of experienced siege engineers), and without sufficient logistical support to transport timber, the crusaders could not bring sieges to a swift and successful conclusion.

But even if the crusaders had been able to capture some of the major inland centres of the Muslim Middle East, it is by no means clear that they would

have been able to retain them - if the crusaders had been able to break into Damascus in 1148, for instance, they would almost instantly have been under siege themselves, with very little chance of relief.

The Franks tried hard to square this circle. Their strategic objectives and intent were generally sound. But they were ultimately too few in numbers to take a major Muslim population centre. More ominously, it was also a symptom of the deeper systemic issues facing the Christian states of the Middle East.

WARGAMING THE HINTERLAND STRATEGY

The hinterland strategy is classic wargames campaign territory. Almost every aspect of it lends itself well to multi-player dynamics. Taking the siege of Damascus as a case in point again, we find several potential factions on the Christian side (visiting crusaders, local Franks, and the Military Orders) and similarly tense fault lines on the Muslim side (Zengists from the north, the

Damascene locals, visiting jihadists from Lebanon, and so on). The possibilities for diplomatic (and not so diplomatic!) interactions abound.

Similarly the lack of Frankish manpower meant that all major sieges were, in fact, more like loose blockades. This was irritating for the crusaders but helpful for us - there were often major skirmishes around the suburbs and local villages - and these can be quickly turned into battles that can be more easily played out in a face to face evening game.

It also gives us a chance to field some of the medieval troops that rarely get an outing on the wargames table - the civilians, the bandits and the pilgrims all have a role. So too do some of the more esoteric troop types such as Byzantine artillerists and Assassins (usually helping the Franks) and the Muslim infantry of the urban militias that rarely feature in more set piece encounters. As the crusaders found to their cost, when they moved inland, there were always a lot more people waiting to meet them.

WARS OF THE ROSES WARGAMES ARMIES

As part of this month's Wars of the Roses theme Simon MacDowall provides us with a beginners guide to the armies of the WotR.

Every noble house maintained its own private army in 15th century England. Comprising men-at-arms, archers and billmen, these retinues enabled the great men to conduct violent feuds with their neighbours and relatives. If the king went to war he would call on his Dukes and Earls to support him with their retinues. They in turn would summon their knights and esquires to provide men from their estates. When there were rival factions, or even rival kings, the support or treachery of a key noble and his retainers could swing the balance.

After England's defeat in the Hundred Years War with France there were an abundance of unemployed professional soldiers who did not fancy returning to subsistence farming. Such men were taken in by the magnates and given food, lodging and cash in return for military service. As the more than 30 yearlong Wars of the Roses dragged on, new generations of battle hardened men stepped up to take the places of their fathers and grandfathers. These full time retainers were the core of a noble's retinue but in times of trouble he could call up the tenants from his estates to supplement their numbers.

Royal authority allowed the king to raise men from the towns and shires through what were known as 'commissions of array'. Such levied troops were

not professional soldiers but they could handle weapons. From the time of Edward III (1312 – 1377) men throughout England had been encouraged to practice archery. In 1363 the king famously ordered that "Every man in the same country, if he be able-bodied, shall, upon holidays, make use, in his games, of bows and arrows … and so learn and practise archery."

SIZE OF THE RETINUES

The number of men a noble might be able to field depended on his wealth. A Duke or Earl might be able to call on around 1000 men while a mere knight could probably only afford a few pages, an esquire or two and, perhaps, a dozen archers. These retainers would be maintained by the knight or noble, wear his livery (see inset), and act as his enforcers.

LIVERIES AND BADGES

Every noble had his own livery colour (or colours) which would be worn by many of his retainers. He also had a number of distinctive badges which also might be worn. Neither the livery colours nor badges bore any relation to the noble's coat of arms.

This is a list of the livery colours and badges of some of the more notable lords and those mentioned in my articles. I have used modern names for the colours rather than the heraldic terms with the exception of 'Murrey' and 'Tawney' as neither have neat modern equivalents. Murrey is a deep crimson, approaching burgundy, while Tawney is a brownish orange or russet.

NOBLE	LIVERY COLOURS	BADGES
King Edward IV	Blue and Murrey	Yellow sun in splendour; white hart
Edward, Prince of Wales	Red and Black	White swan; white ostrich feathers
Richard of Gloucester, later King Richard III	Blue and Murrey	White boar; white rose
Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick	Red	White ragged staff; white bear
John Neville, Lord Montagu	Black and Red	Yellow griffin
Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland	Black and Red	White crescent moon; white lion passant; white shackles
John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk (until 1461)	Blue and Tawney	White lion rampant
John Howard, Duke of Norfolk (from 1483)	Red	White lion rampant
Sir John Paston	Red	White griffin over a blue wreath
John de Vere, Earl of Oxford	Tawney	Blue boar; white stars
Sir William Stanley	Red	White hart's head
Thomas, Lord Stanley	Tawney and Green	Yellow eagle; yellow eagle feet
Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, later King Henry VIII	White and Green	Red dragon
Thomas, Lord Clifford	White	Red wyvern
William, Lord Hastings	Murrey and Blue	Black bull's head
Thomas Talbot, Lord Lisle	Blue	White hart resting with yellow antlers
William, Lord Berkeley	Red	Red unicorn
Henry Beaufort, Duke of Somerset	White and Blue	White yale (goat-like mythical beast)

"The Wars of the Roses offer incredible potential for interesting wargames. From small skirmishes between feuding families to the largest battle ever fought on English soil, Towton, 1461."

The ability to raise his own troops allowed the noble to enforce his will within his demesne and beyond. It was also a burden, as titles of nobility came with the obligation to maintain and provide a certain number of troops to his overlord. Maintaining a full-time body of professional soldiers was quite an expense. There are records of some experienced esquires avoiding knighthood in order to spare themselves the expenses that came with the title.

There are records that give us an indication of the number of men the lords and knights could raise and maintain. In 1452 Sir Walter Strickland contracted to provide his overlord (the Earl of Salisbury) with 150 billmen and 145 archers. Half of them were defined as "horsed and harnessed" - harnessed meaning wearing armour. This is a large

retinue for a knight, others might only have a dozen or so men. In 1475 Richard, Duke of Gloucester raised ten knights and 1000 archers while the Duke of Norfolk had two knights and 300 archers.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE WARGAMER?

It means that you don't have to amass a huge number of miniatures before recreating the anarchy of late 15th century England on the tabletop. The feuds of the Nevilles and Percys in the North, the Pastons and Mowbrays in East Anglia and the Talbots and Berkleys in the West only involved a few hundred men on each side (see Feuds, Raids and Anarchy). Some engagements could be fought out as skirmishes with individually based miniatures, others as small battles.

TROOP TYPES

There were three main types of troops in the Wars of the Roses.

Men-at-Arms. Primarily nobles, knights, esquires and other men of rank in 'full harness' ie: wearing full plate armour. They would all be mounted but they usually dismounted to fight on foot. There were two reasons for this. The first being that, with so many archers around, horses were particularly vulnerable. The second being that their followers would be concerned that the nobles might ride off and desert them if things went wrong. The usual practise in battle was for the men-at-arms to dismount to fight in the front rank alongside the billmen and archers. Their horses would be taken to the rear and would not be remounted until the battle was over. Occasionally a small number of men-at-arms might remain

mounted, ready to attack a flank or spring a surprise attack. The preferred weapons for men-at-arms would be the lance on horseback or poleaxe on foot.

Is it necessary to raise duplicate miniatures for each man-at-arms wargames unit - one mounted and one dismounted? The short answer is no. Almost all my men-at-arms are on foot only. I have a number of mounted figures which I can use as a separate wing or to allow some to mount up in those very rare occasions where this could happen (Richard III at Bosworth, for example).

For the most part battle began and ended on foot. This would not necessarily be the case in some small scale engagements such as a lighting raid or a relief force arriving on table. For such games, players may wish to field some mounted men-at-arms.

Archers. These would be the most numerous troop type in any retinue. Armed with the famous English/Welsh longbow they did not have the same battle-winning impact that they did in the Hundred Years War with France. This was because both sides tended to have similar numbers of archers and they cancelled each other out.

Typically the archers on both sides would deploy a few paces to the front of the men with close combat weapons. Battle would begin with an archery duel which would hopefully soften up the enemy before closing into hand-to-hand combat.

Most archers would have worn some protective equipment, the most common

being a helmet and a padded jack. Veterans would have picked up bits and pieces of other body armour from previous battles and many contemporary illustrations show archers wearing partial plate armour.

A number of veteran archers would be mounted for mobility only. They never shot nor fought while mounted. For the most part, therefore, it is not necessary to field any units of mounted archers. For a raid, ambush or similar small skirmish action it might be useful to have some archers initially mounted. While they did not 'fight' on horseback, I am sure that they would not be averse to riding down a few fleeing peasants.

I had always wanted a unit of mounted longbowmen, not for their battle effectiveness but because I think they look great. Painted in Henry Tudor's livery, they act as a small bodyguard for the future Henry VII, escorting him onto the battlefield and moving around with him.

Billmen. Armed with bills, halberds, glaives or spears, these men fought in hand-to-hand combat alongside the men-at-arms. Their weapons had evolved from peasants tools to become rather effective 'can-openers' for dealing with fully armoured men-at-arms.

The billmen would tend to wear similar protective equipment as the longbowmen with helmet, jack and bits and pieces of mail or plate armour. It is mostly likely that a contingent of billmen would be led by a knight or esquire in full plate and

some of the most senior veterans would probably have amassed a fairly complete set of armour.

When the archers had done their work by softening up the enemy, they would withdraw through the ranks of the billmen behind them. The billmen and men-at-arms would then close into a deadly hand-to-hand combat to settle the issue.

It is worth noting that medieval records mentioning 'archers' often refer to all men of ignoble rank, around half of whom would have been billmen. In the numbers quoted above, therefore, the Duke of Norfolk's '300 archers' would most likely have been around 150 longbowmen and 150 billmen.

Other troops. Most armies had a small number of lightly armoured non-noble horsemen known variously as 'scourers', 'currours' or 'prickers'. Their job was primarily scouting, raiding and rounding up deserters. They played very little part in set piece battles but they would be invaluable in a small scale actions such as a raid, pre-battle skirmish or a relief force. For such actions it is worth building up a few units of scourers who might ride in on an unsuspecting estate to drive off the livestock.

Crossbowmen were rarely used in the Wars of the Roses but they did appear from time to time. At the siege of Caister castle (see Feuds, Raids and Anarchy) Sir John Paston's most senior retainer was killed by a crossbow bolt. For the most part, however, you do not need any

crossbowmen in a Wars of the Roses retinue but you could have a few if you wish. Most crossbowmen were probably mercenaries from France or Burgundian Flanders.

Handgunners, did take part in a number of engagements. They were usually (perhaps always) Burgundian or French mercenaries - the Burgundians supporting the Yorkists and the French supporting the Lancastrians. As such they would be costly troops available only to the armies of kings or very great lords.

French mercenaries fighting for Henry Tudor were probably Swiss trained pikemen and halberdiers. As with the handgunners, the ability to hire men from abroad would be limited to kings and pretenders to the throne. Scottish troops were often involved in the north, also occasionally joining English armies, such as that of Margaret of Anjou. It would seem that spears were more common amongst the Scots than bows or bills. Those Scots fighting for Henry Tudor at Bosworth were in French pay and probably would have been trained and equipped like the French pikemen and halberdiers.

RAISING THE ARMY

There are plenty of great miniatures available for the Wars of the Roses, especially in 28mm. In my view the best sculpted and most flexible is the extensive Perry range of metals and multi-part plastics. They cover all the troop types you could possibly need, including light cavalry and European mercenaries. Front Rank have a very good range and can mix with Perry although they suffer from overly large heads, hands, feet and weapons. Wargames Foundry's range was designed

LIVERIES AND BADGES

Knights banneret and more senior nobles had the privilege of leading men into battle under their own banners. These were square flags which displayed the noble's coat of arms. Lesser knights (knights bachelor) might display a pennon but would fight under the banner of a more senior noble. Banners were richly embroidered and were either stiffened with buckram or held by a baton at the top as well as against the flagpole. This kept the banner fully displayed rather than flapping in the wind.

The standard was a very long tapering flag with a rounded split tail. It had the cross of St George 'in the hoist' (against the flagpole) with the field in the noble's livery colour(s) and bearing his badges and motto. With its relatively simple badges and colours, the standard became an easily recognisable rallying point for men wearing the same livery colours and badges. It is probable that only men of rank had standards. They proclaimed the noble's location on the field.

I tend to give them to my most senior nobles who command battles (divisions) or armies, while smaller units are identified by the banners of the leading knight. Some units would carry a simple square flag in the noble's livery colour(s) bearing one of his badges. These would be much easier to recognise than the complex heraldry of the banner and, unlike the standard, did not indicate the noble's presence on the battlefield.

John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury leads his men forward. figures by Foundry and Citadel with Talbot's head by Wargames Factory. Flag: Freezywater.

by the Perrys and are similarly well proportioned but of slightly smaller stature. I have mixed them with Perry Miniatures quite successfully. Old Glory also have an extensive range which are also smaller than Perry or Front Rank.

Although there are miniatures available in 6mm and 15mm scales, given the small size of most engagements and the great variety of 28mm figures, I would suggest that 28mm is the scale to go for.

The best way to start raising your armies is to pick a couple of noble families from competing factions. Paint up the noble and a few men-at-arms from his immediate retinue with one of his knights or esquires carrying his standard or banner (see inset). The beauty of the fully armoured men-at-arms in the later 15th century is that they did not carry shields nor wear surcoats so you do not need to paint up lots of tricky heraldic devices. If you like doing this (as I do - a bit) then some men did wear tabards either displaying their coat of arms or (for lesser men) the livery colours and badge of their overlord.

The next step is to raise the bill and bowmen in roughly equal proportions. Close retainers would probably wear the lord's livery colours in the form of a vest or tunic over any armour. These would sometimes also include the lord's badge. Others would simply wear their own clothes. What I tend to do is to to paint retainers in livery colours but not always paint the badges. This allows me to swap them around as many livery colours were the same while badges were specific. For example, Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick's livery colour was red. So too was that of John Howard, Duke of Norfolk. I have several archers and billmen in red livery so I could use them to form the retinues of either noble.

A small wargames contingent for a skirmish might include the lord, his standard bearer, a couple of other knights or esquires, and a dozen or so billmen and bowmen. If a number of players each raise similar small contingents then you already have the beginning of a small campaign where feuding families try to get the better of each other. Join the small

contingents together and you can begin to form armies that could support a claimant to the throne.

Unless they are carrying a flag or displaying coats of arms, most troops are pretty well interchangeable. If you paint up men in livery colours then (if you leave off the distinctive badge - which was not always worn) they can support any number of nobles that wore those colours.

REALISING THE POTENTIAL

The Wars of the Roses offer incredible potential for interesting wargames. From small skirmishes between feuding families with only a dozen or so miniatures on each side to the largest battle ever fought on English soil (Towton, 1461), they offer endless variety. You could even set up a fictional or semi-fictional campaign based on a number of noble families fighting it out for supremacy. These could be based on historical families or be imaginary families inhabiting an imaginary world.

THANKS AGAIN

Many thanks (again) to Michael Perry for supplying the photos for this article, all from the Perry Miniatures War of the Roses range.

LEGIO WARGAMES

The author of this article is Simon MacDowall of Legio Wargames. To find out more about Legio, purchase (or download for free!) their games - including War of the Roses rules *The Tree of Battle*, go to **legio-wargames.com**.

CONVERSIONS MASTERCLASS

Bob Amey has been converting figures man and boy for over 40 years. In this article he shares his wealth of experience, with a focus on his 15mm Ancients collection.

I have been wargaming for many years and have been converting figures for most of them. I started with the *Airfix Magazine* which had great ideas, by Gerald Scarborough, detailing makeovers for Airfix AFVs. I started by changing the basic Sdkfz 234 armoured car into a Puma, carving a turret from balsa wood. Then a German Mk IV metamorphosed into a StuG self-propelled gun, the Scammel tank transporter into a lorry and my favourite, the Panther, into a JagdPanther which was very exotic for those days!
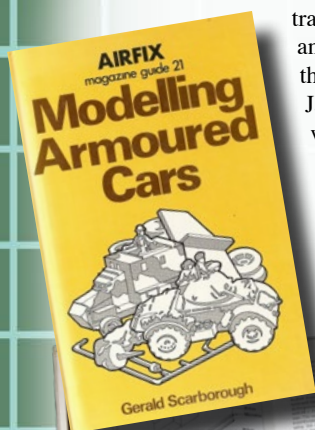
I was lucky that there was a superb local model shop in King Street, Cambridge that sold plastic card, filler, balsa wood and other goodies!

It was not all tanks in those early days. I converted the Airfix 20mm plastic figures. The WW1 Germans became the British defending Rorke's Drift and the Zulus were Romans with their armour 'smoothed' into skin with a hot knife blade. Very time consuming and dangerous!

It was not until I moved into 15mm Ancient gaming that I started converting metal figures. I dabbled with a few Essex Miniatures but it was when Xyston figures were released that my ancient converting seriously began. My first Xyston army was the Scythians. In the rule set I used, light horse were armed with a bow and were also expected to fight hand-to-hand. So I converted a few of the horse archers to have a spear. I used the Xyston Scythians, the Thracian Getic Horse Archers, the Thracian light horse and a few Kappadokian light cavalry with heads changed for variety. It was while converting these figures that I took the decision to replace any moulded spears or lances with the Xyston wire

spear/pikes. This was a revelation that I had not seen before. Previously I had made lances/spears for my 28mm armies in the past but it was a laborious task which involved beating a flat 'bat' on one end of a piano wire spear with a hammer and then shaping this to a spear point with a grinding wheel.

After deciding which figures to convert I made it a rule that the new wire spears and lances would be held in place by at least two points of contact with the base figure. I still go to conventions and you can guarantee that somebody is asking for Super Glue to replace wayward lances and spears. You can also guarantee they will not make it home or even to the end of the game in some cases. So my ethos is to make a good job in the first place.

One thing which is very important here is the quality of the metal used by various figure manufacturers. Some are excellent: Essex, Peter Pig, Magister Militum, Two Dragons and Xyston use superb metal that can be moved and drilled with ease. Figures that are brittle like those from Irregular, Forged in Battle, Lancashire Games and Kurasanian are frankly not suitable. So choose your base figure wisely.

TOOLS OF THE (CONVERSION) TRADE

Having the correct tools makes converting much easier. Here's a list of what I use, all of which can be found cheaply in DIY stores or your local model shop.

Stanley throwaway knife. While the blades are sharp I use them to clean new castings and cut the figures as required. As the blades lose their edge I use them to add basing materials, filler etc.

Flat nosed pliers. By which I mean that the jaws which squeeze the model must be flat - serrated jaws will damage the figure.

Larger 'normal' pliers. Used for cutting up piano wire, which is tough stuff.

Mini side cutters. These are used to snip off weapons that are already in place and where large pliers cannot reach.

Jeweller's pin vice. Used for drilling holes and channels on figures. Get one with a rotating plate at the end away from the drill. Vices which don't have this make your hands very sore if you are working on large numbers of figures. I mainly use 1mm and 1.5mm drills.

Blu-Tack. I could not work without this wonderful product! It is used whenever I want to hold figures, horses and weapons in place while the glue sets.

Glue. I use two part epoxy adhesive. My preferred brand being Evo-Stik Epoxy Rapid. I arrange the figures and weapons/shields in place on a wooden surface and hold them in place with Blu-tack. I try to do no more than 6 to 8 bonds with each mix of adhesive. I NEVER use Super Glue - it is not strong enough and the bond soon breaks. As a bonus, Epoxy resin also fills the gaps between the two parts to help the bonding process.

Holders. The figure needs to be put onto a base of some kind while the adhesive sets or paint dries. I use strips of wood or lolly sticks from pound shops.

Eraser. I use these for holding heads while drilling a hole for the 'pin' to join to a new body.

Map pin. To make a 'dint' when drilling a hole. It stops the drill 'wandering' across the surface.

Hot glue gun. I use this to hold figures on 'holders' and after painting the join 'snaps' off easily.

THE TRICKS OF CONVERTING

'I play Ancient wargames using the *Field of Glory* rules. The associated army list book covering the early Classical periods has changed. In this army list the Sassanid army needs a new figures type, a mounted archer with a lance. To create this model I began with a 'base figure' (seen right) of the Essex SA4 Sassanid light cavalry with bow, javelin, shield and the characteristic 'onion' domed helmet. Unfortunately the packet of four figures has only one pose, so I thought I would try and see how many different figures I could make. Here's what I did.

The first two changes were very easy:

1. I cut off the point of the javelin and bent what was left of the spear into a bow shape. Clipping off the bow in the quiver along the way. This gives a figure raising his bow in triumph!

2. For this figure I cut off the end of the spear and, using the flat nosed pliers, nipped the side left into a flat blade and trimmed into a sword shape.

3. Step 2 was then modified by adding a wire bow under the shield.

4. Here I added a lance across the figure's back - using the pin vice to ream a small channel in the desired direction. The lance can then be glued in place and held in position with a couple of blobs of Blu-Tack. This should be done before gluing the rider in place, but if you are following my lead do check the lance will be clear of the horse when the rider is attached.

5. (a) In order to equip the rider with a thrusting lance I disconnected the hand from the helmet then nipped it with the flat nosed pliers until it looked like a table tennis bat. Using the map pin to make a guiding mark I then drilled a hole with the pin vice, before trimming the hand around the hole.
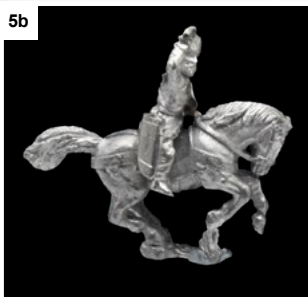
(b) Next I reamed a channel in the horse's head - between the ears – giving the new lance a place to sit. After setting the rider in place I glued the new lance to the hand and on the horse's head.

(c) Here you see the lance being held in place with a 'sausage' of Blu-Tack. Later I will clip the lance to the required length.

6. So far all of the conversions have used the same basic Sassanid rider, for the following section I used a head cut from a Sassanid infantry figure - with typical 'onion' helmet (a).

(b) To adapt the head I made sure the neck where the figure was beheaded had a flat surface. Then marked where the spigot would be pushed into the head with a large pin. I then used a pencil eraser to hold the head in place while drilling a hole directly into the skull (gruesome stuff!). I glued the head to a small length of spare spear or piano wire and allowed it to dry.
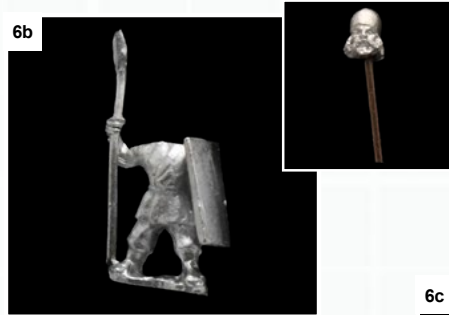
(c) While the new head was drying I removed the existing head from a cavalry figure, again making sure the neck was flat. Then I drilled a hole into the figure's neck, finally snipping the wire attached to the new head to the length required. This can be checked by assembling the figure to make sure the head fits well on the neck without leaving a gap. Then I glued the head, spigot and trunk together holding them in place with Blu-Tack.
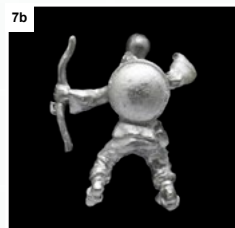
7. The figure created in step 6 above can also be enhanced with a spare shield. I tend to put these on the back of the figure. When I glue shields in place, I always glue the figure to the shield and not vice versa. I suggest you hold the shield in place on a wooden base with Blu-Tack. Then apply the glue to the shield and then the figure onto the shield. Hold in place with Blu-Tack. I know it is counter intuitive, but I find it is a much better way as the figure is much bigger and hence it is easier to see where it is being placed.

8. Casualties are another of my favourite tricks to add variety. I have tried to create casualty figures lying on the ground but with little success. I find it easier to create 'dead' horses.

Here's how to do it.

(a) Pick a suitable horse with its head held up or down.

(b) Trim off the base of the figure.

(c) Then carefully pare off the flank of the horse that will be on the ground. Ease the legs down so they too touch the ground. Finally smooth the surface of the horse that will be on the ground.

I then add a standing infantry man to be the unhorsed rider. I used an odd archer figure I found in my bits box with a new head. Then when basing your units place the dead horse on the ground with the figure standing beside it as if he has just fallen off.
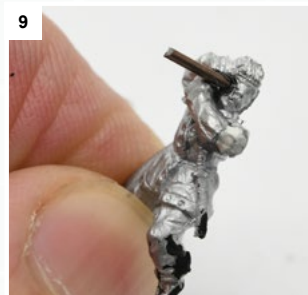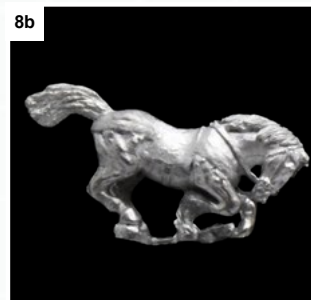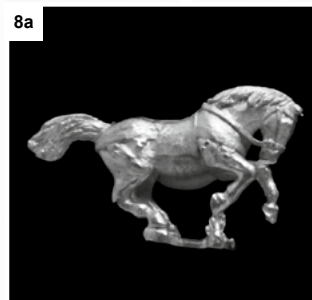
9. I have also made a couple of casualty models using failed conversions.

Having glued the arm back on as if the rider is holding his face, I then add a javelin/arrow in the face, nasty!

FLAGS AND BANNERS

I am not a fan of paper flags and banners, however well they are glued on they just look naff. For my flags, pennants and banners I use tin foil from a tomato puree tube.

Here's how you can make them:

Cut the tube across at the top and bottom and then down the length. You must be careful here as the tube is VERY sharp. Clean well until all traces of the puree have been removed. Flatten the tube with a rolling pin or round glass jar. Finally use fine emery paper or a sanding block to take off the glossy surface which allows the paint to adhere properly. There is a choice here you in that you can take off as much as possible without rubbing a hole in the foil or you can rub holes on purpose. This gives a 'well worn' effect that looks interesting.

28 FOR 15

I love Little Big Man Studios' flags, banners and shield transfers. They are magnificent!! I was talking to Stephen Hales of LBMS a couple of years ago about my 15mm Sassanid army, telling him that I was going to use 15mm banners for the individual units and 28mm banners for the commanders. He did not think that it would work so we agreed to differ. When complete I sent him some pictures and he was convinced.

FLAGS

Flags are reasonable simple. You cut a piece of wire to the required length. Then cut some of the tin foil to the size required adding about 3mm to the width where it will wrap round the flag pole. Bend the foil round the pole but leave a gap so the pole can slip in and out. Glue the flag and put the pole in place. Crimp the edge of the flag round the pole until it is tight and wipe off any surplus glue. This will leave a jagged edge at the top of the flag pole. I wait until the glue has dried and then add a blob of glue which has nearly set to the top of the pole above the flag. The flag should then be Blu-Tacked so it hangs upside down. Check this to make sure the blob is not deforming and is staying round. Again allow to dry.

BANNERS

Banners are a bit more involved. It is very difficult to try to solder two pieces of piano wire together to form a 'T' shape. So I use the tin foil and glue both parts of the 'T' to the foil allowing them to touch. The banner should be prepared as already described for flags but they will hang from the cross piece. Glue this in place and allow it to dry. Then simply add the vertical pole to the back of the flag allowing the top to just touch the horizontal bar.

Some banners have slots where they hang down (see Sassanid command banners). This can be copied by cutting the foil as required, being careful here as it weakens the banners. I then spray the finished flag with Halfords' white primer. I also use their black and grey primers depending on how the figures are to be painted.

a

b

c

MORE NEXT MONTH

We will be revisiting Bob's fantastic 15mm Ancients collection next month, when we take a look at his Scythians, Thracians and Alexandrians amongst others.

DESIGNER'S NOTES: SWORDPOINT 2

Gripping Beast have just released the second edition of there 28mm large scale ancient and medieval battle rules *Swordpoint*. We asked the rules writer, Martin Gibbins, to tell us "why?". What's in the new rules and why did the old ones need updating?

We published *Swordpoint* in November 2016 in hope rather than expectation, since it was entering a congested field of established, competing rules for ancient and medieval wargames. It was also swimming against the rising tide of skirmish games. As it turns out we need not have worried, as the print run of 3,000 copies is nearly exhausted and the various army list books and period supplements we issued to accompany the rules continue to sell strongly.

REPRINT, REVISION, OR REWRITE

Any ruleset requires extensive playtesting before it can be released into the wild, and we spent a long time doing this as thoroughly as possible. Even so it is impossible to cover absolutely every point, and of course playtest groups have their own biases and preconceptions. It is only when the wider world gets a chance to read and comment on your baby that little things come to light. Thus every ruleset accumulates a body of errata and explanations over time, and we maintain an online FAQ and errata for *Swordpoint*.

Once the end of a print run is in sight there are several choices. If the originators' business model has moved on, the rules may be allowed to fade away, but we remain committed to *Swordpoint* (with four period supplements in various states of preparation we would have to be!) and so our choices were between a straight reprint, a revision, or a complete rewrite.

Given the amount of valuable information in the FAQ, a straight reprint seemed pointless. After all, if you know that some of your prose could be made clearer to everyone's benefit, why not do so? A complete rewrite was also out; that would mean testing a new ruleset for several years and having to redo all the supporting publications too. This left us with a revision as the way to go.

NEW INCLUSIONS

At a high level this decision allowed us to alter the overall format. Given that the original rules were published alone, we had to include some sample army lists for players to use initially. With the complete set of army list books being in print now, those pages could be repurposed and so instead of army lists, the new book contains our twelve base scenarios, which no longer have to be downloaded from the internet.

Next came the decision to incorporate rules for torsion artillery. We had left these out of the first version, partly due to space concerns and partly because such weapons appear in so few battles. It became apparent that players wanted to use them, so they are now included, along with a list of those armies that can employ them.

We moved on to considering the actual text of the rules, mining the FAQs and threads on our forum plus the correspondence we receive at Beast Towers to determine where additional clarification - or a complete rewrite - of a rule was necessary to ensure it would not be prey to a variety of interpretations. In some cases, this actually reduced the word count, much to my surprise.

IMPROVEMENTS

We also took the opportunity to improve a few rules slightly, so that for example mounted infantry can now ride around the table rather than simply enjoying an extended deployment move, and stampeding elephants can be wrestled back under control - eventually.

In addition to tidying up the prose in several areas, there were one or two parts of the rules which had given rise to discussion amongst the forum and Facebook group members. These were firstly, that the movement rules could sometimes be exploited in a-historical ways, and secondly that missilery could be too effective. The former required a change in the descriptions of movement, and an increase in the number of examples provided. The latter was a little more knotty.

One of the tensions in a historical wargame occurs when a specialist combat unit advances against a specialist missile unit. Think Greek hoplites against Persian sparabara, or French knights against English longbowmen. In a good game, it should be touch and go whether the attackers can make it through the attrition of the missile barrage to contact, but when they get there, they should have the advantage in combat, unless so shredded that they are already at the last

gasp. The players' perception was that it was too hard to get to the shooters, and that they fought back too well once you did. I say the players' perception because this is the most important thing; the rule writer might be able to deploy a mass of statistics to "prove conclusively" otherwise, but if players are convinced of something, it will become the "downside of the game" to the detriment of the game's reputation.

Solving this conundrum in an appropriate and not disproportionate manner took some time and several evolutions. We are lucky to have a solid group of tournament gamers attending regular events, and over the last couple of years they have been willing to allow us to test a variety of possible rule changes at these. This gives invaluable information about a rule under the pressure of competition, which is the best way to try and break it. As a result we have made some alterations which slightly decrease the effect of an individual unit's shooting, without impacting on that of a well-positioned army as a whole; and which reduce the combat capabilities of pure archers, without affecting those units that shoot but also carry wicked melee weapons. Between them these should reduce the number of occasions on which the game deviates too much from "historical reality" as perceived by the players.

It is worth mentioning our philosophy here, which is that we provide a game which approximates to reality as far as we can without giving up the fun part of the game or losing playability. If a rule requires two pages to explain, it is a bad rule, even if the result is "realistic". Also we strive to replicate "reality" by making adherence to historical tactics the best way to win, and do this by appropriate rule mechanisms rather than by prescription. For example, we do not force a player to operate his army as a coherent, mutually supporting whole, but one who does not will find his units struggling to succeed.

SUPPORT

The last point we needed to address was the player who had purchased the original rules but did not want to be forced to buy another copy. We have done so in two ways; firstly, all the supporting publications work with both versions of the rules, without amendment. Secondly, we are making available a free PDF download document covering all the changes from version one to version two, so that a player will not need to purchase a copy of the new version unless he wants to. Hopefully the new version will attract a new slew of players to the game.

We will continue to promote the game through tournament events at a variety of locations, as soon as this becomes practical again. As I write this, we do not know the situation regarding autumn events, but I hope we will be able to attend the WAR event at Ascot in November - I look forward to seeing you there!
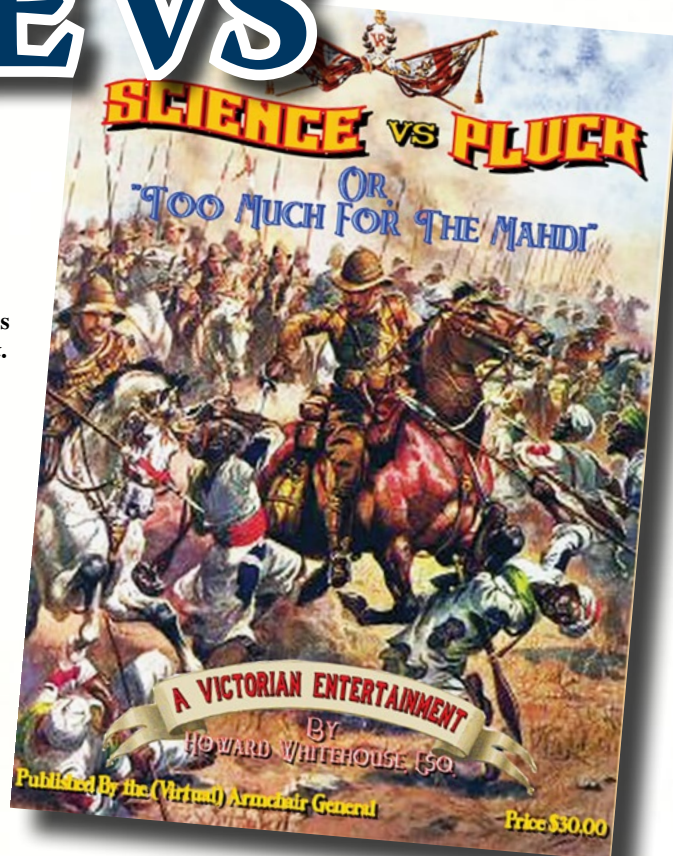
WHY I LOVE ...
SCIENCE VS PLUCK

For our irregular "Why I Love ..." series Pete Brown shares his affection for the umpire-led Colonial rules *Science versus Pluck*.

I make no secret of the fact that I came to wargaming through role-playing games. Back when I was a lad, school wargaming and role-playing clubs used to share the same after school space and, as a result, I was as familiar with 1/300th micro tanks (very popular back in the day) as I was with *Dungeons and Dragons*. At university it was easier to drop in on a role-play game than it was to lug armies back and forth between term times, and so wargaming took more of a back seat. However, when I moved to Worcester, I fell in with a disreputable bunch at the Worcester Wargames Club (the Friends of General Haig) where role-play games and Space Pixies were not considered "proper" games. One chap at the club had a gorgeous 15mm Sudan collection, full of wild Fuzzy Wuzzies and Dervishes being opposed by blue-jacketed camel corps behind kneeling camels. It was very reminiscent of old Hollywood films such as *The Four Feathers* and *Khartoum* and it immediately fired my imagination, but what made the game even better were the rules. It was my first introduction to *Science vs Pluck* and I was hooked, combining as they do, everything that's great about role-playing with everything that's great about wargaming!

WHAT IS SCIENCE VS PLUCK

First published nearly 30 years ago and written by Howard Whitehouse *Science vs Pluck* (SvsP), or to give it its alternate name, *Too Much for the Mahdi*, is a set of wargames rules designed for the Sudan campaigns from 1881-1899. The first time you realise that SvsP is unlike any rules you have played before is when you see the rules themselves. The first edition of the game came as two books, one for the players, or Officers, and one for the Umpire, following a very similar format to role playing games of the time, that usually had a "Players' Guide" and a "Dungeon Master's" guide.

The *Officers Pocket Book* contains information players will need, such as movement rates, firing charts and so on, but most importantly it outlines how the game is to be played. The players all take on the role of British officers working, in theory, in co-operative play to defeat the Fuzzy Wuzzies, who are played by a neutral umpire. The players are expected to get into character, taking on the role of upper class Victorian chaps, displaying stiff upper lips, a straight bat and with exclamations of "I say!" and

"Jolly bad show!" positively encouraged. What I really liked about the players' book was all the little bits of information that help set the scene, such as the kinds of tactics the players might like to use, how to maintain supply and even further reading material the players might like to source themselves. There are extensive quotes from historical sources, especially from original British documents of the time, and from those who were actually there. These quotes set the scene or occasionally provide tactical advice such as, when firing: "frequent changes of objectives is objectionable. Those selected should be fired on until destroyed." There is advice on how to set up camp, the posting of sentries and even the kind of kit a well equipped gentleman should carry on campaign. All of this is stirring stuff and is written throughout in a style reminiscent of *Ripping Yarns* and similar Victorian "Boys Own" tales.

The Umpire's book contains much of the same information as the Players' book, in terms of tables of movement, firing distances and so on. However, these are presented in much more detail alongside the bulk of the wargame aspects of the game. More importantly, the Umpire's

guide provides instruction on how to umpire games, how to create scenarios and provides tips on "free kriegspiel", which is essentially how to make stuff up when there is no specific rule to cover an eventuality. Rules are provided on how to create the Officer characters for your group to play, including characteristics and even their previous campaign experience. Again, this book is crammed with information for the umpire to use when creating a Sudan campaign, with the subjects of desert wells, gunboats, observation balloons and even the awarding of medals covered in some depth. The author has gone to great trouble here to provide a really great resource for his budding umpires and this is one I have returned to time and again when planning my campaigns. Speaking of which, the book also contains a section on running campaigns set in the Sudan, should you have the time and inclination to do so.

PLAYING THE GAME

Rather than turn this article into a long book review, let's move on and talk about how you actually play the game. The first thing you need to know is that the games can be played through pretty quickly, especially if there are not many units on both sides. For example, a column of the Camel Corps being ambushed by a couple of commands of Dervishes could play out in an hour and a half. This makes these rules ideal if you want to play a series of smaller, linked battles as part of a short campaign. I have played out three battles in an afternoon at the wargames club fairly easily with time to chat in between. Equally, if you want to play out a larger battle (I have used these rules to play Omdurman) then through role play and the umpire's descriptions combined with concealed enemy movement, you can easily have a great game that can last all afternoon.

Let's assume you are playing a straightforward game with three players where a column of British infantry, a column of Camel Corps and a column of Egyptian infantry under British command are all escorting a camel train to an isolated outpost. The umpire would gather the three players together and give them their characters, explaining their mission and discussing the troops under their command. The board would be laid out with the outpost at one end and the three columns at the other. In between would be a wide desert with a scattering of dry wadis, hills, rough going and perhaps a small town or oasis, in which may well lurk the Mahdist enemy. The players would be encouraged to discuss their plan, in character of course, before making their first move. Meanwhile, the umpire will have his map of the board on which

may be hidden enemy units, or perhaps a record of which turn the enemy will come on board or whatever other fiendish plan he has in mind for that scenario.

Cavalry are encouraged to scout ahead of the army and there are rules for spotting hidden enemy in different types of terrain. If the players send out scouts, the umpire will describe clouds of dust being visible behind hills that could be a herd of camels or perhaps enemy cavalry? Enemy scouts might be seen on a hilltop, or enemy cavalry suddenly appear from behind a hill, riding across the column's front before disappearing behind another hill. All the while, players will have to adapt the orders they are giving the troops under their command to suit the changing circumstances. Should I form square? Should we move the cavalry forward to reconnoitre, but not too far forward in case they get cut off? Should we chase off those snipers?

This game of cat and mouse between the umpire and the players can go on for as long as you like and is often my favourite part of the game, as the players bicker about the best tactics, or one player leads his cavalry off to chase some enemy scouts leaving the other players pulling their hair out. Sooner or later the enemy will rise up from rough going, charge over the hill or, in some of my games, arrive on board behind the players leading to some pretty panicked 'about face' manoeuvres.

Now you might imagine that the Dervishes will now charge hell for leather at the nearest British columns and die like lemmings, but actually the rules allow the Dervishes to react differently depending on the strength of fire they are under and

how many casualties they have taken. They may, for example, go prone, or retire to safety, or believe they have the upper hand and charge full speed. Whilst this is a very simple AI system, it does free the Umpire from any allegations of playing the enemy too well and maintains his air of neutrality should it start to go wrong for the British.

In most cases the British will now form into line and start firing away at the advancing enemy. It is worth knowing that these rules are based on "stands" or bases with each one representing a company of British or Colonial troops, a squadron of cavalry or a hundred or so Mahdist fighters. As such, the game suits smaller scales such as 15mm or even 10mm. There is no reason why you could not use 28mm but your games might be over a little quicker than expected. Once the shooting starts, players roll 1D6 for each stand firing, with point blank shots sometimes being capable of causing two hits on a 5 or 6. The number of hits is then cross referenced on an effect table and a further D6 rolled to see how effective the fire was. A good volley from five or six stands of British could easily remove three or four stands of Madhists, with machine guns or artillery lifting this to six or seven on a good roll. You can begin to see why you might need lots of attacking Mahdists if you're going to have any hope of getting into melee. Should melee occur, it is decided in much the same way, with stands rolling dice against each other and with the Fuzzies having a much better chance than they did when advancing over the open desert. These rules are pretty straightforward, but the players still have a central role even when the shooting starts. As officers,
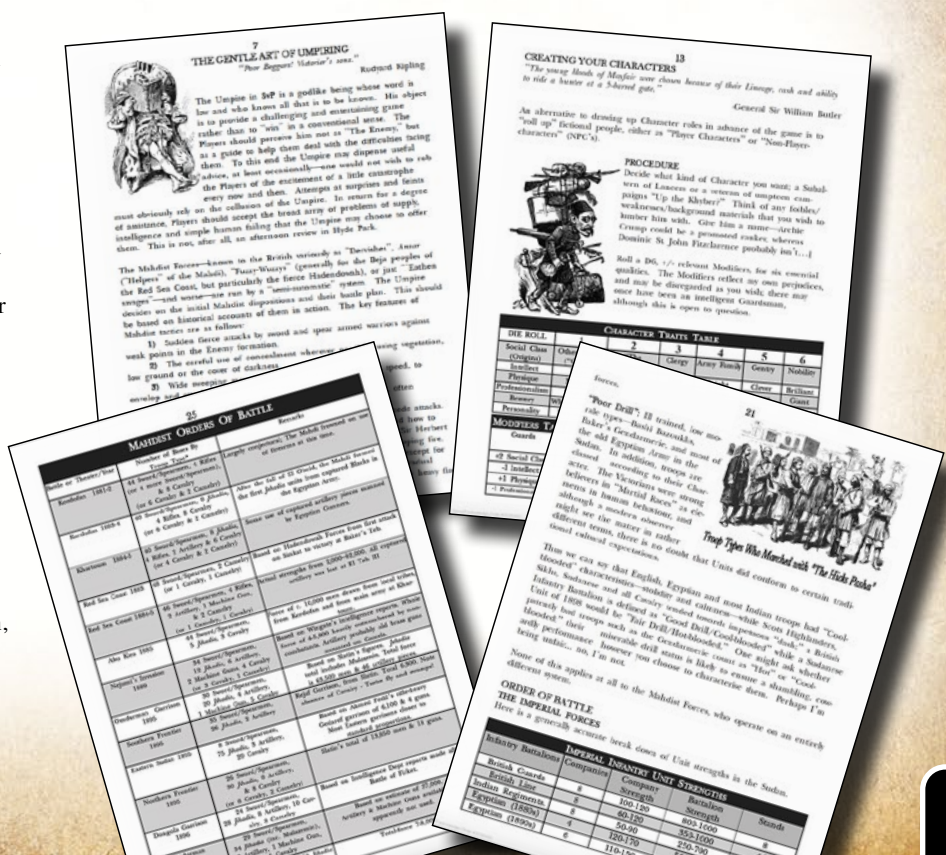
THE DESIGNER ADDS HIS BIT!

I was gratified by Pete Brown's article on 'Why I Love Science versus Pluck,' my first published set of rules, more than half my lifetime ago, in 1987. I've always been interested in colonial warfare, since my dad took me to see *Zulu* in 1964. As a teenager I made Sudan era armies from Airfix WWI Germans, Bedouins and Robin Hood figures. But the problem with colonial battles was that they were incredibly one-sided. Even with basic concealment rules ('draw a map and show where the Ansar are hiding') it was clear that the Imperial forces would act as if a battle was just about to happen on this piece of model terrain. And, of course, it was. And the Imperials mowed down the enemy. What if they didn't know where the battle was going to take place? Or, indeed, whether? (Yes, I've played with no enemy. It was all argument, sheer chaos, defeat from the jaws of a day out in the countryside.)

In the 1980s I'd played role playing games, and liked the format of 'game master versus players' a lot. But all the RPGs I'd seen involved the players solely as 'skirmish figures.' A character might have, at most, a handful of NPCs to order about and carry his stuff. What if the characters were officers, commanding actual units? What if the player group had a command structure?

I liked that idea as well, and combined them in SvP. Over the years I've played games beyond the Sudan, from Zululand to the American West to French North Africa. I have not, alas, written the extensive player material to teach people how to be officers of the Zouaves or command Buffalo soldiers, but various people came up with their own. Besides, 'Act like an arrogant cavalry officer who can't believe he's in charge of these scoundrels in this benighted land' covers a lot. Oh, you have to choose the right people to play SvP anyway – the tournament player may not enjoy the free form style – and place those people in the right roles.

Pete is right to say that SvP is one of those games that provides great stories. Wargamers aren't great at following orders. Here are some of my favourites.

- The game where the Desert Column officers quarrelled, and one formed his own separate square on a hill. The others failed to 'fill in' the space where his battalion had been, and left a huge gap for the Ansar to rush into. Which they did.

- The Little Big Horn campaign, disguised as a British mobile column chasing the Zulu king. The chief scout recognized it, asked me about it in secret, and quietly left the board with his Sotho – or Crow – riders. Smart move.

- Isandlwana, the Italian supply depot in Ethiopia. Nobody spotted that one.

- The game where Duke Seifried demanded to know where the scouts had all vanished to, and laughed when I opened my hand full of 6mm cavalry.

- The one where the British cavalry commander yelled at the player running the Abyssinian scouts for not charging the whole Ansar host. In English, which the player mimed not understanding.

At present SvP is available only as a pdf, for hardly any of your fine silver money, at - www.wargamevault.com/product/142718/Science-Vs-Pluck-3rd-ed?src=newest

I recommend it.

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their figures have to move to key areas of the battlefield and inspire soldiers on a particular stand to increase their fire, or to perform a desperate emergency response to a new threat, retire or advance and so on. Placing themselves in such dangerous parts of the battlefield is always risky, and rules are provided to cover the possibility of players being shot or overwhelmed in battle by attacking Fuzzy Wuzzies. Again, these are great fun, with players having the possibility of being saved by a lucky pocket watch or going down fighting, revolver and sword in hand.
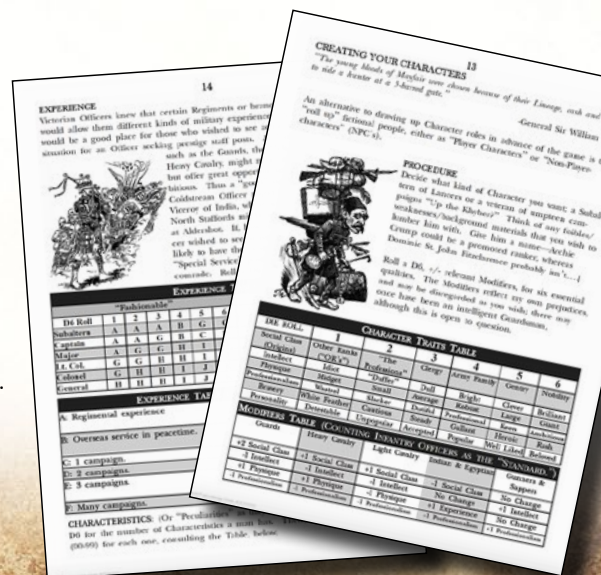
Winning and losing is not as clear-cut as it would be in other games. Since the players are co-operating toward a common goal, they either achieve it together and all "win" or fail, and all "lose." However, this is a not really the point of the exercise. The goal lies more in the story telling aspect of the game, presenting the players with problems that officers in the Sudan campaigns may have encountered and challenging them to come up with solutions. SvsP produces the type of games that promote the most laughs and the most war stories told over a pint in the pub afterwards, and I think it is this shared experience that draws me to these rules most of all. I have played competitive games such as DBM in the past and whilst I enjoyed them, they are completely different from the gaming experience you get from SvsP.

If your not interested in the Sudan as a gaming period, do not despair. I have adapted the basic idea to suit my Aztecs vs Conquistadors collection (Too much for Montezuma anyone?) and I could see them working equally well in many colonial periods, such as the Italians in Abyssinia, Wellington in India, or even for Zulus.

Last time I looked online I think these rules were on version 3 and downloadable as a PDF. I believe that the two books have been combined into one, with the repeated material excluded. Original copies of the first print edition appear from time to time online but generally remain rare as hen's teeth. If you are looking for a game that brings a clear role-playing and storytelling aspect to your wargames, look no further. If you are already a Sudan gamer and have not tried these rules, I would encourage you to do so as they really do bring a new aspect to the period. Right, I am off to get a gin and tonic, stick on a fake moustache and lead my troops across the desert. "I say Smithers, what a bally good shot!"

BRYCHO'S CELESTICHORD

A FROSTGRAVE SCENARIO

The recent release of *Frostgrave: Second Edition* prompted us to give friend of the magazine and *Frostgrave* author Joseph A. McCullough a prod and ask him to supply us with a new and exclusive scenario. He's come up trumps with this innovative offering for you. Make sure you have some string and a couple of 6" square boxes to hand! Read on, all will become clear….

Working on *Frostgrave: Second Edition* proved a great opportunity to take stock and review all of the things I had created for *Frostgrave* over the five years of its existence. So, as part of the process, I read through the original rulebook and all eight expansions. I also read through all of the *Frostgrave* material in the six issues of *Spellcaster* magazine. Mostly, I wanted to make sure that none of the changes I was working on for Second Edition invalidated any of that

material, and that any impact it had was minimized. Thankfully, since I was only making small changes to the core system, only small tweaks were necessary, most of which I address in an appendix in the new rulebook.

Reading through all of this material also gave me a chance to review the world-building I had done for *Frostgrave*. As I've stated several times in the past, I have always tried to keep *Frostgrave* a very open setting, where more is left unexplained than explained. I believe this allows players greater creative freedom to imagine the Frozen City in their own way and to tell the stories they want to tell about their wizards. That said, those eight expansions must have settings

and characters and monsters, so some world-building was necessary. Generally, specific people, places, and creatures that appear in the game only do so once. The Lich Lord rose and fell, never to be seen again. The infamous, ancient mercenary group, The Reavers, appear for one scenario in Perilous Dark and are never again mentioned, etc. There are, however, a few items that caught my imagination enough that they've appeared more than once. I introduced the rangifer, essentially reindeer-men, in *Thaw of the Lich Lord* and then greatly expanded upon them in *Spellcaster* #3. They also play a significant role in the *Frostgrave* novel, *Oathgold* by Matthew Ward. I introduced the section of the city known as the Hallowed and its barbarian

invaders in *Forgotten Pacts*, and will be returning to that topic in *The Red King*, the first expansion for Second Edition.

Of these few reoccurring ideas, my favourite is perhaps the most minor – the great astromancer, Brycho Tarran. I invented Brycho as part of the background for a specific scenario, 'Brycho's Celestium'. This scenario originally appeared in the ebook release, *Arcane Locations* and was later collected into *The Frostgrave Folio*. That scenario includes the most complex terrain requirement of any scenario I've ever written. Essentially, it requires a three-level, circular, step-pyramid, where each of the steps can spin independently of one another. Due to this requirement, I'm not sure how many people have ever actually played the scenario, but it has led to some great terrain building posts on Facebook and the Lead Adventure forum over the years!

Brycho Tarran (whose name is a little homage to the famous Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe) would appear again as part of the background of *The Maze of Malcor*. This book covers the magical school of astromancy in greater depth, and I could hardly do that without mention its most famous practitioner. But that's it for Brycho, one scenario and a background mention. It hardly seems enough for such a great wizard and crazy inventor.

Recently, I've been thinking about what else Brycho might have invented, what other wonderful devices might lie in the ruins of *Frostgrave*, having turned from beautiful creation into fearsome death trap. This pondering led directly to this new scenario, 'Brycho's Celestichord'. Like its predecessor, this scenario is

The board set up and ready to go, with 'string grid' in place and 'cubes' off to the side.
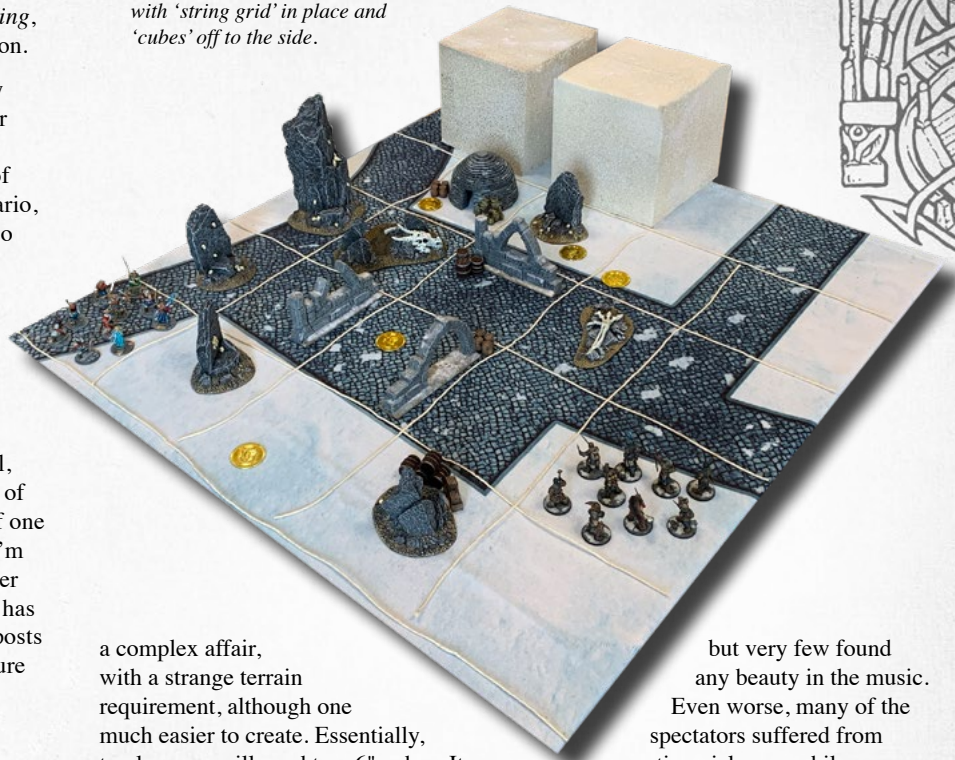
a complex affair, with a strange terrain requirement, although one much easier to create. Essentially, to play, you will need two 6" cubes. It doesn't matter what they are made of, or how they are constructed, so long as they are the right size and flat-sided. You'll see why they are necessary in a minute!

BRYCHO'S CELESTICHORD
A FROSTGRAVE SCENARIO FOR TWO PLAYERS

After the death of the famous, if reclusive, astromancer, Brycho Tarran, his estate was divided and mostly sold off at auction. This auction included numerous notebooks in which the inventor sketched out ideas for strange, and mostly impractical, devices. One of these notebooks contained instructions for creating a 'celestichord', a vast musical instrument that could 'play the sounds of the heavens'. This notebook eventually ended up in the hands of a young, wealthy, and enterprising wizard who saw the celestichord as his path to fame.

Over the next several years, dozens of magical workmen were employed to construct the building-sized device. Most of it was assembled underground, while a large stadium was built around it. Essentially, the instrument consisted of huge blocks, set into the floor, that would be pulled up by the movements of the planets and the stars. As blocks rose and fell, they would play musical notes, creating haunting scores. The idea was that dance troupes would perform complex routines that would move over and around these moving blocks, creating an artistic spectacle unlike any other.

When the celestichord opened for the first time, no one doubted the uniqueness,

but very few found any beauty in the music. Even worse, many of the spectators suffered from motion-sickness, while many others had fainting spells. The celestichord closed down after a single performance, and there it sat until the cataclysm arrived and covered the city in ice and snow.

SET-UP

This scenario must be played on a table exactly 2' wide and 2.5' long. Before setting up terrain, the table should be divided into 20 distinct 6" squares – essentially turning the table into a grid with four columns and five rows. Players can use tape or string to mark out this grid on the table. Once that is done, the table should be covered with terrain as normal, but every piece of terrain should be completely contained within one of the squares – none of the terrain should cross over any of the lines.

Choose one of the four corners of the table, and mark the square containing this corner as 'zone 1'. Reading the zones left to right, and then down a line, number the rest of the zones 2 through 20.

Place the central treasure token in the centre of either zone 10 or 11 (which should be in the middle of the table), roll randomly for which. Players should each place two additional treasure tokens following the standard rules, except that every token must be in a different zone.

Warbands should set up as normal for this scenario.
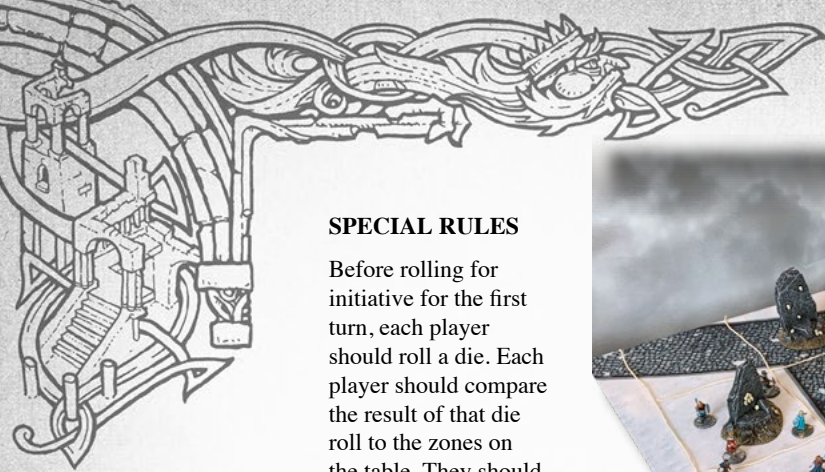
SPECIAL RULES

Before rolling for initiative for the first turn, each player should roll a die. Each player should compare the result of that die roll to the zones on the table. They should then take a 6" cube and place it on that zone on the table. Any terrain or treasure tokens in that zone should be placed on top of the cube. This represents this section of the floor rising up. If the players roll the same result, only one cube will be placed.


Part way through our game. Scenery by Gale Force 9 and Renedra. All figures by North Star.

At the end of every turn, the cubes should be removed from the table and everything on top of them placed back on the table. Both players should roll again, and set-up the cubes in their new zones. Any terrain, tokens, or figures, that are standing in these zones moves up to the top of the cube. So, every turn, sections of the floor are rising and falling, taking everything in the zone with them. This movement of the floor has no effect on items or figures in that zone, other than lifting them off the ground or setting them back down.

If a figure is only partially in a zone when it rises, roll a die, on a 1-10 the figure stays on the ground, moving the minimum distance required to be fully out of the zone, on an 11-20, it moves up with the zone, moving the minimum distance required to be fully inside the zone.

Additionally, when making this roll at the end of a turn, and after resetting the cubes, the players should compare their rolls, take the difference between them, and compare that to the Brycho's Celestichord Event Table below. For example, if one player rolls a 12 and the other rolls a 5, this triggers item seven on the event table (as 12 – 5 = 7).
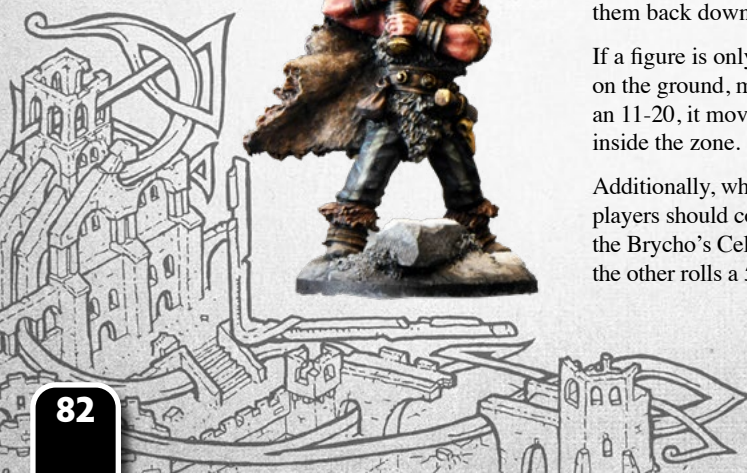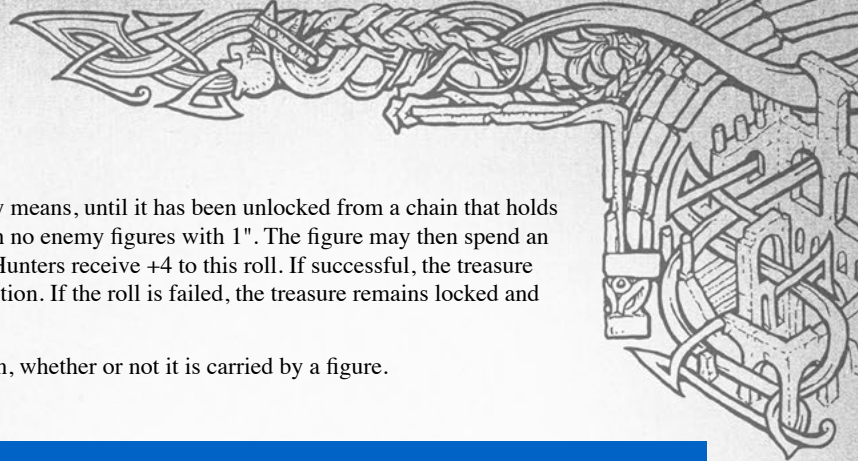
The central treasure may not be picked up, or moved, by any means, until it has been unlocked from a chain that holds it. To unlock the treasure, a figure must be adjacent to it with no enemy figures with 1". The figure may then spend an action to make a Move Roll (TN16). Thieves and Treasure Hunters receive +4 to this roll. If successful, the treasure has been unlocked and that figure may pick it up as a free action. If the roll is failed, the treasure remains locked and the action is lost.

The target point for this scenario is the nearest treasure token, whether or not it is carried by a figure.

BYRCHO'S CELESTICHORD EVENT TABLE	
DIE ROLL DIFFERENCE	**EVENT**
0	Roll a die and place an extra treasure token in the centre of that zone. This may only happen once during the scenario. If called upon to do it again, treat the result as no result.
1 - 2	Each player may select one non-spellcaster member of the opposing warband. That figure is immediately moved to the centre of a randomly generated zone.
3 - 4	Every figure that is within 6" of a raised zone, immediately suffers a +0 Shooting attack (this does not affect figures actually standing atop the raised zone).
5	Every figure that is within 6" of a raised zone, must make a Will Roll (TN14) or receive no actions during its next activation.
6	Place a minor demon in zone 6.
7	Place a starfire elemental in the centre of zone 7. (Found in *The Maze of Malcor* p.88. If this book isn't available, use a small construct instead.)
8	Place a small construct in the centre of zone 8.
9 - 12	Place an imp in the centre of the zone that corresponds to the difference.
13	Place a small construct in the centre of zone 13.
14	Place a starfire elemental in the centre of zone 14. (Found in *The Maze of Malcor* p.88. If this book isn't available, use a small construct instead.)
15	Place a minor demon in zone 15.
16	Every figure that is within 6" of a raised zone, must make a Will Roll (TN14) or receive no actions during its next activation.
17	Every figure that is within 6" of a raised zone, immediately suffers a +0 Shooting attack (this does not affect figures actually standing atop the raised zone).
18	Each player may select one non-spellcaster member of the opposing warband. That figure is immediately moved to the centre of a randomly generated zone.
19	Roll a die and place an extra treasure token in the centre of that zone. This may only happen once during the scenario. If called upon to do it again, treat the result as no result.

TREASURE AND EXPERIENCE

Roll for treasure tokens as normal after the game. The figure that recovered the central treasure also gets one free roll on the Scrolls of Lost Magic Table in *The Maze of Malcor* (p.71) if that book is available. Experience is gained as normal for this scenario with the following additions:

+25 Experience points if the wizard is ever on top of a raised zone.

+15 Experience points if the apprentice is every on top of a raised zone.
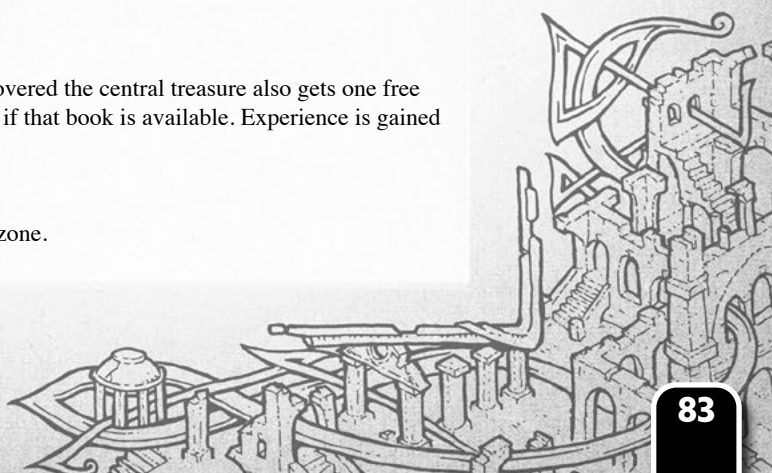
GIANTS IN Miniature

LORD CALLAN

Ben Macintyre of Brush Demon shows us how to paint Lord Callan, or any other WotR man-at-arms for that matter.

In tribute to the author of *Never Mind the Billhooks*, for our latest Giants in Miniature figure release we present Lord Callan; fearless (and totally made up) fighting commander of the Wars of the Roses – the perfect frontman for your Billhooks army.

The Giants in Miniature figure range is produced by *Wargames Illustrated* and is available from our website or via North Star Military Figures. Lord Callan is our 54th figure in the range, which features such 'Giants' from history as Wellington, Caesar, Queen Victoria and … Van Helsing. If you want one don't delay – each figure is a limited edition and several (including Flashman and Harald Hardrada) have already sold out and will never be cast again.

Start out by cleaning, removing any mould lines, and priming your miniature. Prepping your miniature is a very important step as it will help make the painting process much smoother and more enjoyable.

I've used Vallejo paints for this miniature but you can use any brand of paint. Just make sure that you are thinning the paints properly before you apply them and that you use an appropriately sized brush. I generally work with a size 1 brush for most things, however there are elements such as the fleur de lys that will require a small brush such as a size 00.

PAINTING GUIDE

1 To start with we block out each area in the darkest version of the appropriate colour. These form the basis of the subsequent layers, and will act as a shadow.

1. Vallejo Gunmetal Grey
(Armour)
2. Vallejo Black Red
(Surcoat Red)
3. Vallejo Blue
(Surcoat Blue)
4. Games Workshop Bugman's Glow
(Flesh)
5. Vallejo Burnt Umber
(Leather)
6. Vallejo Burnt Umber
(Wood)
7. Vallejo Tinny Tin
(Gold details)

2 Now we have the base colours all blocked in, we can go back and start to add highlights to pick out the details and to increase the 3D effect of the miniature. Leave a small amount of the previous layer showing in the deepest recesses to add to the effect.

1. Vallejo Oily Steel
(Armour)
2. Vallejo Red
(Surcoat Red)
3. Vallejo Blue mixed with Royal Blue (50/50)
(Surcoat Blue)
4. Games Workshop Cadian Flesh
(Flesh)
5. Vallejo Beasty Brown
(Leather)
6. Vallejo Burnt Umber mixed with Khaki (50/50)
(Wood)
7. Vallejo Brassy Brass
(Gold details)

3 Next up is to start adding more depth and contrast to the different areas of the miniature with a further layer of highlighting. We want to pick out the areas and edges that catch the most light. Focus on applying these colours to the upper edges of cloth folds, the ends and edges of straps, and the sharpest edges of his helmet and armour.

1. Vallejo Silver
(Armour)
2. Vallejo Vermillion
(Surcoat Red)
3. Vallejo Royal Blue
(Surcoat Blue)
4. Vallejo Basic Skintone
(Flesh)
5. Vallejo Beasty Brown
(Leather)
6. Vallejo Khaki
(Wood)
7. Vallejo Gold
(Gold details)

4 At this point we want to do one last highlight to really push the contrast. The brighter the colours the smaller the area they should cover, so it's best to apply them with a smaller size 0 or 00 brush.

1. Vallejo Chrome
(Armour)
2. Vallejo German Orange
(Surcoat Red)
3. Vallejo Magic Blue
(Surcoat Blue)
4. Vallejo Light Flesh
(Flesh)
5. Vallejo Khaki
(Leather)
6. Vallejo Khaki mixed with Vallejo Ivory (50/50)
(Wood)
7. Vallejo Silver
(Gold details)

At this stage I like to go back and increase the definition between each different area, and darken the deepest recesses. For this I use a small size 00 brush and either black, or the appropriate colour from stage one, and carefully paint it directly into the recesses and joints between areas.

This is also the best stage to paint in extra details such as eyes, teeth and the livery badge on his chest.

After that all that remains is to give the miniature a coat of varnish to protect it, and base it to match your chosen game system and battlefield.

COMPANY PROFILE:

Jon Sutherland continues to investigate figure ranges and manufacturers that you may have missed, but shouldn't ignore.

Cibo's Little Dudes is a Swiss-based figure manufacturer with a number of ranges that may well have passed you by. It is run by Simone Volpi who tells us that the company is born from a "strong passion for the soldiers' miniatures". Simone designs and directs the sculpting of the miniatures, usually in periods she has thoroughly studied and has an affinity with; Nigerian and Italian themes run through her selection of ranges.

Most of the Cibo's ranges are 28mm, although they also have an extensive 18mm Napoleonic range covering most of the major protagonists. CLD's 28mm "Risorgimento" (Italian Unification Wars 1848-1871) range covers the Austrians, Bourbons, Ducato di Parma, French, Papal States and Sardinians. Collectively the range extends to an impressive 140 packs! Simone has also developed an Italo-Turkish range (Italo-Turkish War 1911-1912) with 28 packs and a 19 pack range covering the Italian invasion of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) in the 1930s.

We are going to take a closer look at the modern Nigerian range, consisting of 40 packs covering Nigerians, Cameroonians and Boko Haram figures,

Above: Nigerian Mobile Police armed with AK47.

Above: Risorgimento - Garibaldi's Regiment from the Italian Unification range.

1. *Boko Haram Infantry 2 (MN25): Eight unique sculpts, four with balaclavas and four with head scarves. All of them are armed with AK47s, two are kneeling and the rest are either firing or advancing at the ready. Head to toe, they are pretty much 30-32mm. The detail is good and consistent and the non-descript "uniform" allows you to go down the ex-Nigerian military look or something a bit more casual. There are several other packs to supplement this one including command, militia and special weapons.*

2. *Boko Haram Infantry with Rifles (MN27): A nice pair of figures armed with rifles and ideal for use as snipers. They are armed with fairly old-fashioned magazine weapons looking very much like a Russian SKS/Simonov self-loading carbine. One figure is posed aiming at a target and the other is moving into position. The helmet on the firing figure is interesting; perhaps an old-fashioned paratrooper's helmet as it has no brim or back. Both figures have extensive ammunition packs and equipment.*

3. *Nigerian Army Infantry with Helmets (MN14): This is an eight pack squad of figures wearing ballistic vests and helmets made by Nigeria Machine Tool. The Nigerian police and the military have been buying increasing numbers of these for their units fighting Boko Haram. Having looked on the Internet, I painted these up as police as I thought the areas on the front and back of the vests were perfect to have POLICE written on them! I stuck tiny pieces of paper with POLICE in reversed out type rather than spend a day trying to write it sixteen times with a paint brush! These are my favourite figures from the range; they are workmanlike with a good balance of poses in the pack.*

(Above) Boko Haram Infantry with RPGs (MN26): Four figures in this set armed with RPGs and carrying them at various angles on their shoulders. Again there is a mix of head-gear, two with scarves, and one with a balaclava and the fourth with a skull cap. There is a second, similar pack of four figures carrying RPGs (MN30) and these could easily be used for conflicts outside of Africa. Boko Haram tends to use RPGs as close quarters artillery and seem to have plentiful supplies of the weapon.

including both foot figures and vehicles for the ongoing conflict. The range sits alongside a broader Bush Wars range addressing earlier African conflicts across Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa, collectively another 51 packs. At the time of writing, with the prices in Swiss Francs, a four figure pack is around £8.00, the eight figure packs are just over £15.00. Although there are several other companies offering modern African figures, this is certainly the largest and most comprehensive on the market.

I asked Simone to tell us a little about herself and the range.

SV: I was born in Italy, but have had a long association with Nigeria, briefly living there as a child and then working in the oil and gas industry for twenty years. I have travelled across most of Africa, but it's Nigeria, Angola and Mozambique that I am most familiar with. So when I decided to open a miniatures company, I started thinking about a range dedicated to Nigeria. As I was still in Nigeria during the Boko Haram conflict, I decided to create this new range. All my ranges were created firstly to satisfy my own needs and personal taste; after all I believe this is more of a hobby than a business.

JS: Who designed and sculpted the range and what were your influences?

SV: The range was designed by me, and sculpted by Adam Gayford at Spikey Entertainment Ltd (Adam has sculpted for various companies including Harwood Hobbies, Four A Miniatures, Splintered Light Miniatures and Monday Knight Productions). I had collected a lot of research material during my stay in Nigeria which was used to develop the range.

BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY

In recent years the Nigerian conflict has hit the headlines in the West with a huge refugee displacement crisis, mass kidnappings and 37,500 deaths since 2011. Like many 'Modern' wargames ranges this one certainly courts controversy and some gamers won't be comfortable playing with the figures.

This range covers Nigeria's ongoing battle with the insurgent group Boko Haram (meaning Western education is a sin). Boko Haram is one of the largest African Islamist militant groups and the Nigerian government and army have struggled to contain them. The conflict reached a peak in 2014-15 and since then the Nigerian military have begun to roll back the group. The Nigerians have been assisted in this by Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. Boko Haram has been pushed out of several provinces in the north-east of Nigeria, but the war rages on with no immediate promise of peace in the region. The conflict is highly significant as Nigeria is the largest oil producer in Africa. Consequently, the stability and safety of the country is paramount not only to regional security, but also for economic interests far beyond the continent.

JS: What's in the range right now and how did you settle on pack sizes and prices?

SV: There's quite a lot out already. I have Nigerian army units wearing helmets or berets, supported by heavy weapon teams and mortar units, and obviously a command section; there are JTF units (Joint Task Force) - a special military unit combining army and navy personnel, created to fight terrorists in the delta/swamp areas of the country and Nigerian police units including Mopols (Mobile Police, a paramilitary arm of the Nigerian police force), in berets or helmets. I've also got Cameroonian army units and commandos and of course various Boko Haram units, including heavy weapon teams and RPGs.

JS: Which wargame rules do you recommend for your range?

SV: Any of the existing modern warfare rules. I personally like to use *Bolt Action* rules adapted to modern warfare).
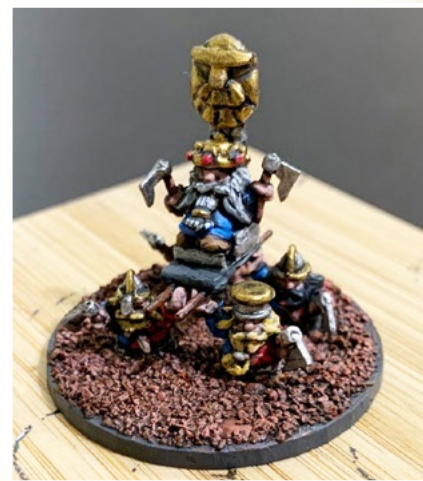
JS: Where is the range going from here?

SV: The range is already pretty complete and right now I am developing a new 12mm fantasy range, but I am sure there will be some additions during 2020.

JS: Can you see any of the figures being useful for other theatres or periods?

SV: The figures could be used for any modern conflict in Africa, especially for the Boko Haram side which could represent any irregular/terrorist faction in Africa. This is also true for both the Nigerian and Cameroonian units which may be used as well to represent other African regular or para-military groups.

More on www.ciboslittledudes.com.

Above: New 12mm fantasy range.