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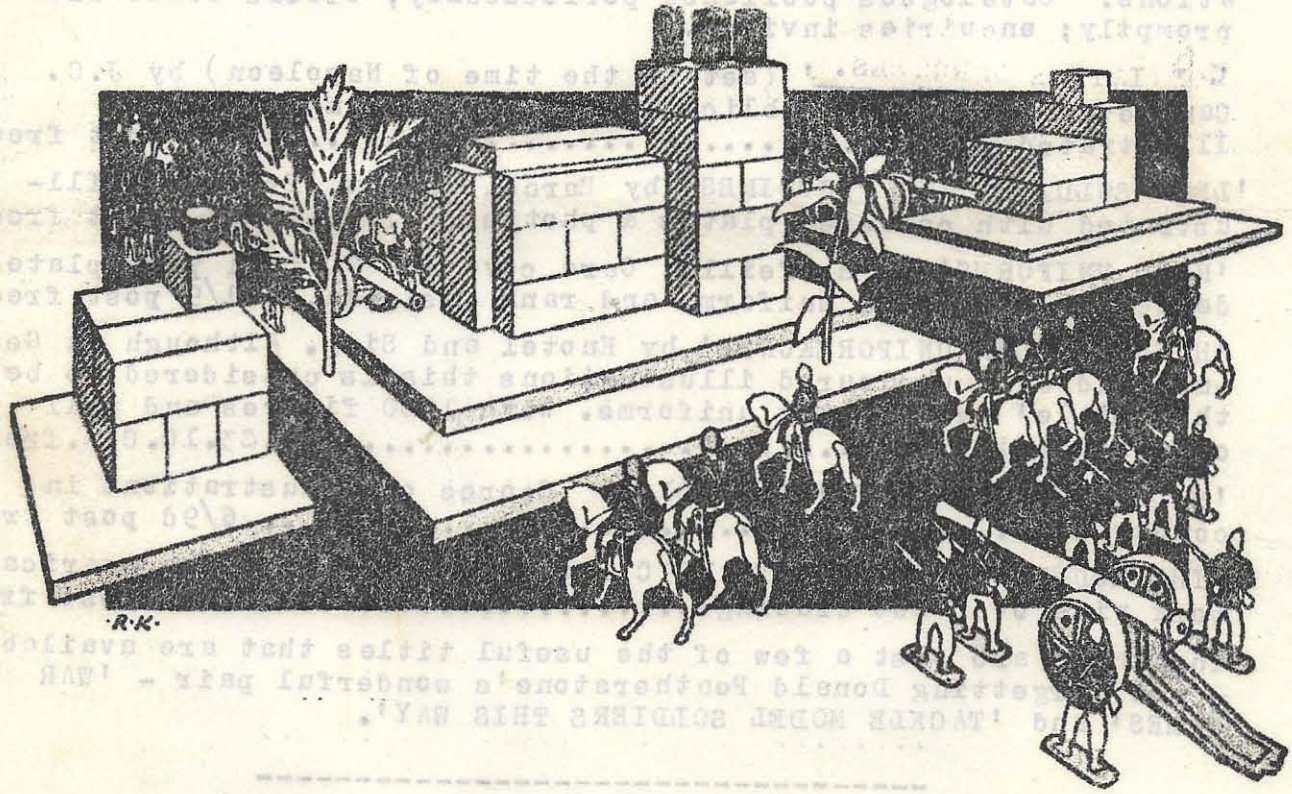

WARGAMER'S NEWSLETTER

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Send your requirements with full details to the Editor who will be pleased to quote you a price

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WARGAMER'S NEWSLETTER

No.41. August 1965.

EDITORIAL

This month sees the start of an idea that has been germinating in the mind of the Editor for some time; there is nothing to show at the moment but the first shots have been fired in what might well turn out to be a revolutionary affair! The operation is being outlined to readers because it is considered that they should know about it as it could have a most beneficial effect upon wargaming certainly in this country if not throughout the world.

WARGAMER'S NEWSLETTER has been run for over three years by the Editor at a relative financial loss besides considerable personal inconvenience - but it was always his view that the hobby needed such a magazine and that it filled a most useful role in stimulating the growth of wargaming. With some justification, it can be claimed that the Editor has, in this country, dragged up wargaming by his shoestrings through books, radio, television, organising conventions - and this magazine. Jack Scruby has, in a different way, done much the same thing in U.S.A.

WARGAMER'S NEWSLETTER should be a better presented and more impressive journal of the fast-growing hobby it represents. It should be bigger so that it can present more features and information. Neither of these things can come about without some better financial support - and that support the Editor feels could well come from the commercial organisations who make money out of wargaming and the collector.

With that in mind, an advertising brochure containing a number of specimen adverts has been circulated to all known commercial groups involved in wargaming accessories. In future there will NO advertising in the WARGAMER'S NEWSLETTER but only in the brochure, a copy of which will be given away free each month with the NEWSLETTER. This alone adds about £5 per month to the postage bill! The space gained by lack of adverts will be given over to more articles and wargaming features - this month, for example, at least three more pages would result!

Subscribers will shortly see for themselves which commercial groups have taken advertising space and supported the NEWSLETTER, realising that a strong and flourishing magazine is not only beneficial to the hobby but a sound economic proposition.

DONALD.F.FEATHERSTONE.

YET ANOTHER WATERLOO!

by

PATRICK GRIFFITH

Being unable to attend the Military Festival, I decided to hold my own. This report of it may perhaps be of some interest to readers of the Wargamers Newsletter.

On the Tuesday after the Battle of Waterloo had been fought out at the Duke of York's Headquarters in London, it was fought yet again on the outskirts of Liverpool. I got together four wargamers and prospective wargamers, and two more spectators - including two history teachers - and some 1,500 converted Airfix figures from my own collection and from that of my friend Stephen Peach. I commanded the British Army, and he took the French front lines as Ney. A Napoleon was found to co-ordinate the French and to command their reserve, and a Blucher to come in after six table moves ("six hours" after the first shot at 11.00 a.m.) with the first Prussians. The table-top was about 7 feet by 5 feet, so the troops were realistically thick on the ground, laid out as nearly as possible in the actual battle order. Wellington was inferior in artillery and cavalry, so was reluctant to attack, preferring to use his strong defensive position to the full. His reserve was behind his right centre and if possible he would have liked to have used this to attract the main French reserve, including Lobau and all the Guard, far away from Plaucenoit where the Prussians were hourly expected.

The French, however, refused to be drawn in this way. They were only too well aware of the Prussian menace on their right flank, so did not commit the reserve, but in the afternoon moved it over to the right to meet Blucher. Perhaps this cantion was their undoing, for it meant that they did not beat Wellington decisively in time.

During the early hours of battle they successfully captured both Hugoumont and La Haye Sainte, and by their massed bombardments drove the English and Dutch lining the crest of their ridge to seek cover on the reverse slope. At that point the French launched their main attack between La Haye Sainte and Papelotte. They had initial success; a Highland unit broke in panic and guns were captured, but up the hill, impetus was lost and the break-through was delayed. Meanwhile, infantry and cavalry reserves were hurrying past Mont St. John from Wellington's right centre to plug the gap, and a well-known charge by the Scots Greys helped to repulse the infantry, but itself fell foul of the enemy batteries. It was not in vain, however, and the main French assault was held.

On Wellington's right there was little but skirmishing until 5.00 p.m., Pires cavalry charged an unbroken infantry brigade and were destroyed, and then some Brunswick infantry were driven behind the ridge, but no major attack was made. An abortive attempt to advance the French batteries on the left was bogged down by limited counter-attacks, and as on the other flank, the battle became a skirmish over the gun line. At this point Blucher appeared.

His advance guard looked greater than Napoleon had anticipated. Ney panicked, and after disputing Plancenoit, withdrew all the infantry to the road by the Belle Alliance under cover of the massed artillery. Wellington ordered a general advance, and after crossing the ridge, captured some guns beside Hugoumont.

Darkness was closing in, so the French pulled out to their rear covered by a rearguard which did not, in fact, see action.

Our Waterloo seemed to follow the original quite closely, the differences being that the attacks on the British line were not pressed to the limit, the Guard was not used in them, Hugoumont fell early in the action, and the French were able to make an orderly withdrawal. Perhaps the similarities can be explained by the starting dispositions, which were the same. Our commanders were not free to lay out their troops as they pleased, but had to follow the prototype. As at the Military Convention wargame the French attacked on the right, in an attempt to split the British from the Prussians, but unlike the Festival game, the Allied right was pinned down and could not mount a compensating attack to draw off the enemy reserve. The French had the initiative, but their task was the harder, and the only way I can visualise their success against Wellington is by a concentration of all the reserves, all the cavalry, and the greater part of the artillery in one 'masse de rupture'. They failed to do this, and as in the real thing frittered away their strength in unco-ordinated skirmishing. It seems that when a general is given troops laid out in historical dispositions the temptation is too strong, and he goes and makes all the mistakes of his predecessor.

The rules used were simplified to allow faster action, but unfortunately they also led to high casualties, especially from artillery. This helped to stop the chief French attack between La Haye Sainte and Papelotte, but also deterred the Prussian and British advances at the end. The infantry moved only six inches per turn, so mobility out of the firing line was perhaps slowed down. It was, for instance, impossible for Blucher to reach the French road to the rear before nightfall, so he could not make the most of his decisive preponderance.

In retrospect it was a satisfactory encounter - several people were introduced to wargames, and the Battle was brought to a credible conclusion, with Napoleon being taken home by car to St.

Helens! The action did not follow the original too closely, yet history was not outrageously reversed. An effective compromise was made between the "historical inevitability" of the forces engaged and the lie of the land, and the "freewill" of the generals to use them as they wished.

MORE ON AVALON HILL GAMES

by

B. O'BRIEN

I'm pleased to see that you are now acting as agent for Avalon Hill. I now have Afrika Korps which is first rate and Midway which I consider is very good, but Midway does need some amendments to make the situation realistic. In particular, the use of one heavy cruiser to represent the Japanese invasion fleet. It is possible, in the game as published for the Atago to be pushed forward, screened by a host of Battlewagons and heavy cruisers and to survive a couple of air strikes (assuming average luck on dice), and then still be capable of carrying out the landing. We have added the 12 transports that were originally the number used in the operation - just try to screen that lot against air attack! What it means, in effect, is that the Japanese commander does not dare to let his transports get with range of enemy air strikes. By the way, we give the transports a screening power of 1, and two hits to sink. 50% hits on the transport fleet are reckoned to be enought to render the invasion force unable to carry out its function. The other alteration we have made is to halve the aircraft shot down when only A.A. fire is involved. Studying the actual actions it seems that guns, whilst obviously shooting some aircraft down, tended more to keep the bombers at a distance, and spoil their aim. On the other hand, directly fighters took a hand the action was very different, and a flight of fighters seemed to be able to carve through a bomber formation in double quick time. We have therefore left the losses table as published for all cases where fighters are involved in the defence factor. We are now considering bringing in destroyers and submarines - the Americans had about 20 in the area.

May I implore my American subscribers who send me money orders to write me a letter giving me the number, value and date of that money order because when they arrive here they have no indication whatsoever of the sender's name. I have at least 3 hanging around here which I am frightened to cash because I have not the slightest idea who sent them.

PUBLICATIONS

AVAILABLE FROM JACK SCRUBY

JACK SCRUBY'S CATALOGUE OF MILITARY MINIATURES.....7 shillings

A 58 page catalogue containing lists and illustrations of military miniatures designed by Tom Cox, Jack Scruby, Greenwood & Ball, and Holger Eriksson in scales ranging from 40mm to 20mm in a great variety of periods. The catalogue includes some information on uniforms, helpful hints for the beginning wargamer and the lists of cannons, wargame ships, buildings and paints available from Jack Scruby.

JACK SCRUBY'S NAPOLEONIC CATALOGUE.....7 shillings

A special illustrated catalogue of 20mm and 30mm Napoleonic figures with complete colour guides for Napoleonic soldiers.

TABLE TOP TALK.....21 shillings for a year's subscription (6 issues)

A bi-monthly magazine designed to keep the collector and wargamer up-to-date with his hobby. It is an "all purpose" magazine featuring articles on various aspects of the hobby by prominent people within the hobby. Regular features include a literary review by Newell Chamberlin, a Letters column in which readers can submit their opinions and a Classified section for advertising. Table Top Talk is a must for anyone interested in wargames and military miniatures.

ALL ABOUT WARGAMES - Rules for Tactical Musket Period Wargames... 10s. 6d.

By Jack Scruby. Emphasis is on the Napoleonic era. The book explains the use of the Morschauser Roster System and the Unit Wargames as well as such interesting rules as the Liberal Move Game, Pursuit by Cavalry and Night Moves, etc.

RULES FOR A STRATEGY-TACTICAL WARGAME by Jack Scruby.....7 shillings

An illustrated book which explains how to play a "board type" strategy wargame and still use military miniatures while fighting tactical actions.

NAPOLEONIC ARMY ORGANIZATION by Fred Vietmeyer.....7 shillings.

An illustrated book dealing with the historical organization of major Napoleonic armies and how to set up wargames on the same basis.

ADDRESS ALL ORDERS OR ENQUIRIES TO: Judith Scruby MacInnes,
53 Finborough Road,
London, S.W.10.

English Representative for JACK SCRUBY MILITARY MINIATURES.

MUST LIST

I am indebted to Richard Paul Smyers for the following: "I wonder if many of your readers have heard of the line of miniature military vehicles offered by Superior Models Incorporated, 2600 Philadelphia Pike, Claymont, Delaware, 19703. This company offers tanks, self-propelled guns, half-tracks, armoured cars and sundry trucks and other vehicles in a scale of 1" = 108". The catalogue lists 45 American, 13 British, 9 Russian, 13 German and 7 Japanese vehicles at prices from $1.20 to $2.25, with an atomic cannon and transporters at $6.00. Some have faults in details, the gun on the Panther tank being one in particular, but most show a high quality that is well worth the money. I would advise prospective buyers to try a few samples first, to see if the models meet their standards, but if they do, Superior Models should be given careful attention by modern wargamers."

Carl Johnson who advertises regularly in this Newsletter has some very fine HO scale metal tank kits of three or four pieces each.

He sells the World War I Renault for $1.00 and the Mk.V at $1.50.

For the benefit of readers, and to prevent confusion:-

ORDERS	FOR Bellona Models and custom built models to Deltorama Ltd.
ORDERS	FOR Bellona Prints etc. to Merberlen Ltd.
TRADE ENQUIRIES	TO Merberlen Ltd. the manufacturers of Bellona Models.

This firm are now turning out a small but very useful scenic accessory in their range of fallen trees in 20 and 30mm scales. Painted up and left dotted around the battle-field, these look most realistic and provide extremely good hiding places for light troops.

WATERLOO ROUNDTABLE BY FRED VIETMEYER

On June 19th, 1965, a group of sixteen midwestern wargamers and kibitzers met at the home of Ted Haskell in Lansing, Michigan to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of Waterloo.

The focus of the event was a beautiful three dimensional scaled wargame table of the battlefield scenery using a scale of 900 yards equals one foot and 20mm troops at a ratio of 200:1. Seventy-two slide sequences were taken by Ed Strauss of Fort Wayne, Indiana, with taped commentary by Ted Haskell.

A lecture on the Napoleonic infantry battalion tactics and organization was given by Fred Vietmeyer and a surprisingly extensive coverage was given of the entire event by the press with a pleasant steady stream of visitors.

Each of the four major British-French actions were shown and photographed in detail and then a short six move wargame was fought of the action using the Midwestern Napoleonic rules common to Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Michigan and Kentucky. Yes...the last charge of the Guard failed again but the whole battle was "nip and

THE COM/BATT UNIT by R.G. Green

The basic unit of modern infantry is the Battalion. If a model unit were a full-scale battalion, it is unlikely that there would be many different units on the table. As most wargamers like to see several different units in the same game, the answer is to scale down the battalion.

The British Infantry Battalion of the 1950's had 6 companies: the H.Q. company of 3 platoons - admin., signals, and motor transport; the Support company of 4 platoons - anti-tank, medium-M.G., 3" mortar, (each of 6 weapons) and the assault platoon; and 4 Rifle companies each of 3 Rifle platoons.

The Rifle Platoon had 4 sections: the H.Q. section of 10 men - Platoon commander, sergeant, runner, radio op., 2" mortar team of 3, and 3.5" rocket launcher team of 3, and 3 Rifle sections of 10 men - N.C.O. with sub-M.G., 6 riflemen, and light-M.G. (Bren) team of 3.

For transport each Rifle platoon had 1 Austin Champ and 2 3-ton lorries. Each of the 18 weapons of the Support company had a universal carrier to two or carry it. The Assault platoon, with flame-throwers, mine detectors, etc., had 13 carriers.

In the 1960's the support weapons have been issued at company level. The Rifle company has 3 Rifle platoons, as before and a Support platoon of 3 sections - a section of 2 anti/tank guns, a section of 2 medium mortars, and a section of 3 medium M.G.s. at Company H.Q. The Assault platoon is kept at battalion level. Notice that the supporting firepower of the battalion has been increased to 8 A/T guns, 8 medium mortars, and 12 medium-M.G.s. Also in each Rifle section of the platoons, 1 rifle-man and 1 man of the light-M.G. team have been removed in preparation for replacement by a 2 man team with a "Carl Gustav" rocket launcher.

On the basis of the organisations above, I decided to compose my model units with 4 full-scale Rifle platoons, and a Support platoon of 4 sections: medium-M.G., medium mortar, anti/tank, (each with 2 weapons) and assault section (with 2 flame-throwers and 2 mine detectors). This makes the model unit exactly one third of a full-scale battalion, and it may be used as a battalion by calling each of the platoons a company. Alteratively it may be used as a company by

/contd.

The Com/bat. unit (contd)

leaving one of the Rifle platoons on the shelf with the Assault section of the Support platoon. The title Com/Batt is a fortunate coincidence.

You may calculate for yourselves that the transport needed is 4 jeeps, 8 3-ton lorries, 10 universal carriers, and a command vehicle at Unit H.Q.

I use troops by Airfix, and they fight as squads fixed to card trays 9/8" square. A Rifle section (full-scale) consists of 3 squads: a rifle squad - 3 men in arrowhead formation; a sub-M.G. squad - 1 sub-machine-gunner and 2 riflemen in arrowhead; and a light-M.G. team of 2 men. The H.Q. section also has 3 squads; the H.Q. squad - officer, radio op, and sgt. with sub-M.G.; P.I.A.T. (I use the term generally) team of 2 men; and a light mortar team of 2 men with a 2" mortar. The numbers are similar to those of the new Infantry Company, and this leaves room to add 2 more P.I.A.T. teams to the platoon.

So in all the rifle component of the Com/Batt Unit will need 48 trays or squads - 12 light-M.G.; 12 sub-M.G., 12 rifle; 4 H.Q.; 4 P.I.A.T.; and 4 light mortar. Certain alterations may be made e.g. in German and Russian units the Rifle squads may be replaced by Sub-M.G. squads; and in the absence of light mortars, flamethrower teams (2 men - flame pack and grenadier) may be used.

Each weapon of the Support platoon has a 3 man crew and a carrier with driver.

I should like to thank N.D. and R.M. for their information and T.B. for the Red Army organisations (which are similar to those of the British).

British Home Stores in London are selling a card of "Combat Troops" at 2s. 11d. per 100 figures made in Hong Kong; they look very much like Airfix! Also on sale at the same store is a "Battle Group" comprising 8 men, 2 tanks, 20 guns with 8 shells in plastic but none of them seem to be in a set scale; the men being possibly 30mm the tanks look like 4mm reproductions of a Tiger or Panther tank, whilst the guns look big enough for 54mm! Half are in green and half of the force in grey and sells at 3s. 11d.

ANOTHER WARGAMES CLUB!

It is hoped to start the JOHANNESBURG (SOUTH AFRICA) WARGAMES CLUB with seven or eight members. This group recently put on their own re-fought Waterloo on June 18th at the Jo'burg War Museum (full report later). Dave Naish, Phyl Van Wyk and Ken Nolan are the leading lights of this group, who hope to print their own magazine. If you live in South Africa - get in touch!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

by

KEITH HUBBARD

The Wargamers Convention of the Miniature Collectors of America held several months ago in Philadelphia. It is pretty late to be reported on now, but it was, on the whole, a thoroughly successful meeting with several wargames demonstrated, both Drum and Musket and Ancient.

I was successful in getting a movie projector and showing a film called "Two Hats" actually a recruiting film for the Air Force Reserve, but having a great deal to do with a life sized wargame between two mythical countries carried out jointly between units of our Army and Air Force with one side wearing the "Aggressor" type uniform. The wargame was fought out on actual terrain within the limits of the Mythical countries superimposed on North Carolina.

Many members brought figures to display and sell and there were one or two commercial firms present with models and figures for sale at half price.

Attendance was very good and I would estimate that what with the coming and going some 50 to 60 persons were there at one time or another.

The convention opened with a combination get acquainted and business meeting in the morning, followed by a sort of round table discussion of rules and battlefield set-ups which lasted as I recall until about lunch time.

The afternoon was more or less devoted to wargame demonstrations and figure exhibitions, and the evening session ended on a high note with Blair Stonier serving as Pipe Major for a series of bagpipe music and marches by his pipe band, or members of the band, in full Highlander uniform.

Some days later I joined the association and invited them to hold their next convention out here at the Air Base. I understand that the matter is under consideration at this time.

To illustrate how out of hand a hobby like this can get - I am presently involved in the following:-

Sometime in January Walt Koffel (my nearest wargame opponent) and I are due to set up a 1000 figure diorama of a Civil War Battle

(Antietam) in the Bucks County High School, teach a history class on the battle and after school hours are over, give a demonstration of a wargame to interested students and faculty.

A couple of weeks ago I was photographed in colour with a complete battleground layout of 30 mm Revolutionary figures for inclusion in the Sunday magazine section of the Philadelphia Daily Bulletin. If it does come out soon I'll try to send a copy to you.

I am presently engaged in a mail (so far) type wargame with Pat Condray and his associates of the "Condray Confederation". The countries of Cardor, Schlessburg and Luxia (on his side) and Azuria, Krimsonia and Kathenburg (on my side). Pat lives in Maryland on a road appropriately named "Powder Mill Road". The war looks like it will eventually involve as many as 8 to 10 persons as players and opponents.

I am still struggling to get together a 20 mm fleet of Roman War Galleys to oppose my present fleet of Viking ships. I might say that I am having about as much trouble getting the fleet organized as the Romans in the latter days of the Empire.

In the book department - I have come across an excellent book on the Roman Occupation of Britain called BRITANNIA written by a George Patrick Welsh. Anyone reading this fine piece of military history that doesn't long to lead out a miniature legion or two in battle must be either hopelessly addicted to Gunpowder and modern times or not an aficianado of the hobby at all.

Have also come across an excellent book on the German East African Campaign called DUEL FOR KILIMANJARO. The author's name escapes me but it is out in paperback. It has several illustrations and maps and while the author is definitely sympathetic to the German commander and troops, it gives a fine picture of the German struggle to hold German East Africa during World War I.

New wargamers are turning up all the time in this area, and even the editor of the Daily Bulletin is not only interested in the colour picture story of the wargame hobby but has asked if I can give some reading material on it as he is interested also in the hobby!

This evening I will motor up to a town about 14 miles away to see a window display mentioned in the paper, of a castle and soldiers from the collection of a local inhabitant....I've never heard of him, but who knows, perhaps in time the wargame ranks will be augmented by one more!

HINTON HUNT FIGURES

Military and Historical Models.

Collectors and wargamers - there are many recent additions to Hinton Hunt Figures listed in both 54 mm and 20 mm - including the new CRIMEAN RANGE in 54 mm scale; plus numerous other items in our Napoleonic Range in 20 mm scale. Highlanders and French Old Guard have recently been added.

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ANNOUNCEMENT!

Hinton Hunt Figures now have a stall at the CAMDEN PASSAGE ANTIQUE MARKET, ISLINGTON (off Islington High Street, London.) Nearest Station THE ANGEL (Underground).

Open only on Saturdays from 10.30 until 5.30 p.m.

++

UNIFORM PRINTS AND CARDS

Hinton Hunt Figures have made available to the Collector and Student of military uniforms, several wide ranges of coloured uniform prints and cards by well-known artists, covering the widest variety of periods and nations. There are also several booklets on these subjects not previously listed

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For full lists - please send LARGE stamped and addressed envelope (with 6d. stamp) to:-

HINTON HUNT FIGURES,

'Rowsley',

River Road,

Taplow,

Bucks,

England.

LOOKING AROUND

AIRFIX MAGAZINE, JULY 1965 - An article on military modelling by Chris Ellis describes converting the Airfix Bren Carrier into various types of flame-throwing carriers. There is an interesting section on photographing models with one article entitled "Giving Models a Military Look" which should prove of great interest to wargamers and collectors. There are also two or three useful and informative letters in the correspondence section.

MINIATURE AUTOWORLD, JULY 1965 - Nothing specifically of interest to wargamers in this magazine but there is always some interesting data on terrain in relation to model car set-ups which could well be adapted to wargaming. Also information about military models occasionally given.

MODEL MAKER, JULY1965 - An interesting article describes the Revell Kit of The Victory as "...what must certainly be termed the finest plastic kit we have ever built." Plans are included also for a Navy Patrol Boat and a C Group Destroyer 1944 period plus an article describing with illustrations an Elizabethan galleon. There are also plans and notes for H.M.S. Pegasus, a Seaplane Carrier of the 1917 period.

I am told that the Air Magazine INTERAVIA recently published a defence supplement. It covered ground equipment and included the first pictures that the writer had seen of the new Vickers Medium Tank developed for India. It is a 37 Tonner with the engine of the Chieftain but thinner Armour and a Centurion turret and 105mm Gun. Looks a very efficient piece of machinery. Also there is a diagram of the new British light tank with parts common to the Abbot SP 105mm gun but the turret and armament of the Saladin armoured car. The sum total of this would appear very much like a later mark of Valentine though of course it will be more advanced mechanically when finally developed.

HISTORY TODAY, AUGUST 1965 - This contains an excellent article "FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO; THE GREAT SIEGE OF MALTA 1465" by T. H. McGUFFIE (author of that excellent book RAND and FILE).

Read in conjunction with the book "THE GREAT SIEGE" by Ernle Bradford, this article stimulates a heady desire to collect models of this period, build up forts and a harbour and have a go at it on the table-top!

MINIATURE FIGURINES,

5 Northam Road,

SOUTHAMPTON, Hampshire.

Dear Wargamer,

We would like to apologise for any inconvenience or delay you may have suffered during the first weeks of Miniature Figurines. This is almost inevitable during the take-over of an existing business but we now feel most of the snags and problems are sorted out and we are raring to go.

The first new figures to be produced will be the continuation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; these will of course, include mounted troops. Within a very short time, we shall be able to offer an Austro-Hungarian Army following the pattern set by our predecessors. It is also our intention to re-model several of the earlier cavalry figures and of course, produce new. We can promise that the remainder of the Austro-Hungarians will be available within the next three weeks as well as the first of our American Civil War series.

We have many interesting plans for figures and accessories as we are both active wargamers. All these things need time but we can assure you that we are working to our capacity to bring out more interesting and wanted lines.

We sincerely hope the reputation for prompt delivery Alberken enjoyed, will be continued by us and our one aim is to satisfy you all. We will welcome as before, any criticisms and suggestions you may want to put forward.

May we take this opportunity of wishing you happy wargaming and look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Yours sincerely,

NEVILLE DICKINSON

PETER GILDER

"Miniature Figurines".

BOOKS
REVIEWED

Carl Johnson tells me that he has a book (52 pages) of text and photos entitled "Billy Yank - Soldier of the North" by Howard K. Hayden (price $3.95). It is easy to read and is an introduction to the Union soldier. It may not interest the collector who has many books on the subject but it too is a good starting point. All of the information was verified by "The Company of Military Historians" who have reviewed the book and sponsor it for younger readers. He will have some descriptive literature shortly.

John Margiotta writes:- "I would like to bring just one book to your attention. "The Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783" by A. T. Mahan. This is a military classic recently re-published by Methuen at 30s. Od. It studies all the political, geographical, economic and psychological factors of war at sea and is absolutely essential to wargamers interested in the American Revolution. It was only after I had studied this war that I fully appreciated the importance of naval warfare on history and on wargaming. Wishing no offence to American readers I am inclined to believe that the better management of our fleet in this war would have led us to ultimate victory. Vol. IV of Lawson's "History of the Uniforms of the British Army" was published on 28th June. This takes us into the Napoleonic period. Roll on Vol. V!!"

I notice in the July Airfix Magazine a book entitled "Armoured Vehicles"- from their conception to the present time compiled by G. Bradford. It can be purchased from Merberlen Limited at 7s. 6d. plus 6d. postage. It is a publication of the Miniature AFV Collectors Association.

I have also received the usual interesting list of new and second-hand military books available from Ken Trotman, 3 Ash Close, Naphill, High Wycombe, Bucks. England.

NEW COMMERCIAL WARGAMES

I have received two excellent boxed games from the Milton Bradley Company of Springfield, Mass. 01101, U.S.A. (Chad Valley in G.B.) The first "DOGFIGHT" pits two squadrons of American Spad fighters against two of German Fokker triplanes, but there are numerous extras such as Anti-aircraft fire, no-mans-land etc. to contend with. The game is basically simple and only lasts around an hour; the rules are easily understandable. Despite this, it is a game which needs as much skill as luck. Each plane is equipped with cards giving attack and defence values - the luck lies in drawing the right cards, the skill in the way you play them.

The second game "HIT THE BEACH" is a land wargame - Pacific area W.W.2. I've not yet played this one but it looks good. Other games are "BATTLERRY" (Civil War - Bull Run to Shiloh) and "BROADSIDE" an 1812 Naval wargame. These games appear to be admirably suited t fill in that odd hour when a wargame finishes early! Basically simple, they can be expanded into large-scale operations.

LETTERS

Alan C. Gibbs (113 Gaer Park Road, Newport, Mon.) writes: "Bill Cainan and I have fought over the Patville Valley, and this has resulted in a crushing Federal defeat. The armies used are converted Airfix, and include Louisiana Tigers, La Grange Light Guard, Pennsylvania Lancers, Charleston Zouaves, Virginia Cavalry, Berdan's Sharpshooters, 72nd Pennsylvania Zouaves, Georgia Volunteers and 6th Wisconsin Volunteers. I have plans for North Carolina Militia."

(Alan Gibbs has produced a new range of model soldiers under the name of "King's Shilling Models" which he is producing at the rate of one per month. He reports that they are unusual in that the figure can be made in the uniform and position desired by the purchaser. He describes one that he has made as a Fusilier for the 8e Légèr in campaign uniform, suitably tattered and mud-stained. They are made of cloth on a wire frame and are 4" tall. Infantry cost £5.0.0., Cavalry £8.0.0 and stand bearers £6.10.0. At present, he has models of a British Private of the Peninsular War, 2 Frenchmen and a Drummer of the 8e Légèr 1808).

Derryck Atwell writes: "Up to press, my main opponent is my 8 year old son; we have fought two U.S. Civil War actions - mind you, I have to see that the dice roll his way most of the time, but it is fun. I saw the advert for the Belgian Waterloo Fiesta and foolishly mentioned it to him - now, I'm landed with a trip to Belgium!! You have a lot to answer for!"

David Bradley writes: "I very much enjoyed the Military Festival last Saturday, the re-construction of Waterloo being particularly impressive.

"At present I am in the second year of an Economics Degree at Bradford Institute of Technology, this means I only have time for wargaming during the holidays, but I am able to study the theoretical side of the hobby, rules, organization etc. My main interest is still the modern period and I am developing a W.W.I set-up, but seeing the Napoleonic set-up last Saturday, I have been attracted by that period.

"As I am living in a Hall of Residence, I am working out various schemes for a portable wargame set-up which could be set up and dismantled quickly, stored easily and yet still be able to use model soldiers."

Hal Klepak of Montreal writes: "An English wargamer, John Kellett from Norfolk, who is a student at McGill had a week-end with me. We put on a reasonable wargame as regards size - around 2,200 men (keeping it - the number - low since we tried some new ideas). It was Napoleonics and was fought on the floor as usual. John commanded the Anglo-Wurttemburg forces, while Les Carter commanded, in conjunction with Robert Feber, the Russian, Prussian, and French enemy (obviously not historically correct). Bob Umbarger and myself were field commanders under John. We experimented with the idea of having absent commanders, that is John, supreme commander of Anglo-Wurttemburg forces, was in one room with a staff member as aide, and the commander of the enemy was in another room with an aide. This, of course, caused some confusion as when we sent a note to our C-in-C, by the time the couriers arrived back with orders, the whole situation might have changed completely. This produced the confusion characteristic of Napoleonic battles and added greatly to the realism. A good but confused time was had by all concerned except perhaps for John, who was reported to be pacing back and forth in the other room in agony waiting for another report. I must admit that when the battle became intensely hot, there were some moves in which my scribe and I were too worried to send word back. The British, because of terrain (at least that is what we say) were immediately at a disadvantage (the enemy's guns having longer range than ours since theirs quickly mounted hills and there were none on our side at first as we moved up). The mauling we received from the French and Prussians was rough but the Russians were out-shot consistently. We fell back on some diplomatic manoeuvres and got a draw in the end."

Allan R. Sloane of 23 Edgewood Road, Lexington, Mass. writes: "We have a club of wargamers which goes under the title of "The Eastern Massachusetts War Game Club". Just yesterday, our membership increased by five as I discovered that there was a group of kids just one town north of me. We are quite a young group as the average age is 15-16, and no one is over 17. Our main interest is World War II and after, but conflicts of any sort interest us. I know of a couple of people who subscribe to your magazine who are in the group; among whom are Bruce Weeks, our president; Jim Dretler; and Dana Ketchum. If you know of anybody else in the Mass. - Rhode Island - New Hampshire area, it would be much appreciated if you could send me their names and addresses.

"Our group has had several meetings and we're still trying to compile a set of rules that everyone will be familiar with. Although everyone will keep and use their own set of idiosyncrasies, we can use the club rules when we get together. The rules will resemble Tarr's in a small way, but will be more complicated.

"We are planning to have a campaign using U.S. Geographical Survey Maps for the basis of terrain. These are excellent maps and are only 30¢ a piece. Maps can be bought for any part of the U.S. and many of its possessions.

"Our armies are composed mainly of ROCO, DBGM, MINITANK (or any other names) models. There are a few Authenticast lead models too.

"I hope that someday in the near future, we can publish some sort of rule book that contains all the accepted rules, options, and ideas of Mass. wargamers.

"We had a regional meeting (7 members) of our club (17 members) on Saturday the 20th. We played a game where Ray Delaney and myself defended my home town of Lexington. We used USGS maps. The German attackers, Dave Chisholm and Ernie Jones, were unable to outwit the British defenders.

"In the game we used simultaneous timed moves of 2½ minutes each. This makes for a fast-moving game. Not too realistic for some people, but confusion reaches a high point in the last 10 seconds of the move. (After moving, we have simultaneous fire). We used Roco tanks, Airfix infantry, and metal, British APC's and Saladins."

Ian M. Logan of Glasgow writes: "I must protest strongly against some of the very misleading notions put out by Bill Gunson.

"Where on earth did he get his figures on the rate of fire of the Chassepot and the Needle-Gun? He says that infantry could load and fire a volley in about one minute. This is very far from being correct. Even in Wellington's day the infantry could load and fire volleys at the rate of three or four a minute. If it took four times as long to load and fire a breech-loader, then the Chassepot would never have been introduced. In fact, the main objection to the early breech-loaders was that they fired so rapidly that all the generals were afraid they would not be able to organize sufficient supplies of ammunition to the front lines. The rate of fire from Chassepot and Needle-Gun was AT LEAST TWICE that of the musket - more like eight to twelve shots per minute.

"As for the cavalry, I am afraid Mr. Gunson is the one who has come a cropper about the Sudan campaign. At Omdurman in 1898, the charge was made by the 21st Lancers, not the 17th. They did break through the Dervishes, and they did inflict a lot of casualties on the way through. Then they reformed in rear of the enemy, dismounted, and drove the enemy away by carbine fire. They did not wish to charge again for the

simple reason that the enemy were in position in a deep dry watercourse, which was the main reason why the first attack had not been fully successful. One can read up Sir Winston Churchill's account of it in "The River War".

"Mr. Gunson also makes the common error being too generous as regards the shock action of cavalry against infantry. He makes it that if cavalry reach enemy infantry they have an even chance of success. Study Napoleonic and later 19th Century battles and one will find that cavalry success against infantry was a rarity unless the infantry had already been demoralised or badly shaken by artillery fire, heavy losses, caught in a bad formation, or taken by surprise. Against unshaken infantry in formation, one chance out of six would be more realistic.

"Mollwitz in 1741, Dettingen in 1742, Fontenoy in 1745, and Minden 1759 give sufficient proof of the resisting power of infantry, even when formed in line and armed only with muzzle-loading muskets."

CSM Ronald W. Sargent, 4/5 Bn The Royal Hampshire Regt., P.B. Drill Hall, Newport, Isle of Wight writes: "I was aware that Germany was the home of the flat figure, but in all my time there I have never seen any on sale. Cowboys and Indians, and Romans and Huns, seem to be the most popular games judging from the toy shops I visited.

"At the moment I am in the (slow) process of raising armies for a Franco-Turkish War out of converted Airfix figures. It is going to be a continuation of the dispute over the Holy Places that set off the Crimean War, and is reckoned to have taken place just afterwards. French Foreign Legion and Union Infantry form the basis of Napoleon III's army, whilst the Turks are being recruited from Arabs and Japanese Infantry! It will be some time however before the first blood is shed."

Bill Holmes (of Deltorama) writes: "Have been frightfully busy with models, and have launched myself into tailor-made one-only specimens for special order. One was for Norman Newton as a background to Napoleon bidding adieu to his Generals in 45mm scale. Quite some job. Another is the castle I have made for Peter Young in 30mm. It has surrounding city walls enclosing a small town, Nuremburg style, wherein the houses open up and contain beds, and all mod. cons. Under the castle is a dungeon fitted up as the complete torture chamber with fire, red hot irons, ball and chain, and the rack. In one corner I installed a whisky still."

Bob Trimble writes:- "I still can't think of a really good way to simulate Ach-ach fire in wargames. I've thought of combined dice throws; guessing where the plane will be on its pre-planned flight path, marked out on a map of the table-top before take-off and which must be followed exactly - this may be the best idea.

Tony Bath writes:- "I feel that I must take exception to John Cook's remarks in the July Newsletter. Some of my best friends don't like flats and everyone is entitled to their opinions as to what type of figures are the best. But to say that "any wargamer who has not the desire to make an original or conversion should not have taken up the hobby" is an intolerant remark which might well put off many people who got the idea they weren't wanted unless their interests lay in that direction.

"I have never had the slightest desire to either make an original figure or to convert, and I don't think anyone is likely to suggest that I shouldn't have taken up wargaming. Mr. Cook seems to have lost sight of the fact that the raison d'etre for being a wargamer is to fight wargames, not necessarily make figures. Modelling, painting etc. are all facets of the hobby, but the whole idea, basically, is to fight games; whether you fight them with beautifully made original figures or just counters; whether you reproduce actual battles or fight Avalon Hill games, doesn't matter - it's the game that counts.

"There's room for all sorts in the hobby, Mr. Cook!"

C. Beaumont writes:- "I have rules concerning the definition of a retreat or rout. To have executed a RETREAT all units must leave the field within 6" of any one road leading to their baseline. Units not doing so are considered lost.

"If 50% of the retreating force exits outside that area (within 6" of line of retreat) the army is considered routed."

Stephen Connally writes:- "It seems strange to me that most wargamers have not taken into account the fact that when guns are blown up, horses may also be hit with splinters and maybe killed. I use the following rule for this purpose.

"Whenever a gun is destroyed and the limber is within 3" a dice is thrown and the total halved and that is the number of horses hit. If the dice lands on an odd number, call it the next one down, e.g. 5 would become 4. Half of 4 is 2 therefore 2 horses are hit, a 4, 5 or 6 saves them. Limbers cannot be pulled by less than 3 horses.

"With this rule I have had enemy batteries stuck in no-man's-land, not being able to move."

Peter Garratt writes:- "I have been reading H. Rider Haggard's "Child of Storm" about the Civil War between the Zulu Princes Cetywayo and Umbelazi ending in the battle of (I've got to look this one up) Endondokusuka, in December 1856. Though novels, Haggard's works about the Zulus have helped me in a project I have undertaken at school, writing a history of Zululand from the massacre of Piet

Retief and 68 other Boers by King Dingaan on February 8th, 1838, to the overthrow of Cetywayo at Ulundi in 1879. Haggard is now one of my favourite authors, ranking in my esteem beside Edgar Rice Burroughs, who, if the number of wars in his 60 books are an indication would have been a very imaginative wargamer if he had known about the hobby. In fact, someone with time could probably get a good wargame going out of some of his brilliant ideas. If you don't believe me read his "A Princess of Mars" for some new ideas."

W. R. F. Jenkinson writes:- "With reference to Tony Bath's suggestion for a magazine devoted to Ancient Wargames, I don't really think it's a good suggestion. The Wargamers' Newsletter is surely the correct medium through which all wargames should be discussed otherwise one will end up with separate magazines for all different war periods, at a much greater cost than your Newsletter. After all, even though one might not necessarily be interested in a particular period there is always a chance of picking up a few new tips, so I say keep it all in one magazine; even if you increase the size and cost!"

(I understand that Tony has received a promising number of enquiries, however! Ed.)

Malcolm Woolgar writes:- "My long search for Crimean uniforms and equipment detail has ended successfully! Thanks to a tip from a B.M.S.S. member I made my way to the Victoria and Albert Museum Library. Thumbing down the index under "Uniforms - British Isles - Army" I located manuscripts "British Army Uniforms 1844-1855". The librarian produced three fabulous volumes of the Reynolds manuscripts (these were volumes 20, 21, and 22, so there were more where they came from!) For two hours I sketched and jotted in my notebook, and some day I'll go through my regiments correcting the mistakes in detail that I made originally. For one thing all the haversacks illustrated were white - mine are black!

"I can't stop drooling over these books. One volume deals with the infantry and covers every regiment in numerical order starting with the Foot Guards, then the 1st Foot, 2nd Foot and so on. Another deals with the cavalry in similar fashion, and the third covers general staff, artillery, engineers, medical staff etc. There are plentiful water colour sketches of uniforms, uniform details, badges, lace, buttons, photographs, and copious manuscript notes. If only someone could publish them for general purchase!"

Bill Mell writes: "Have received a set of Napoleonic rules from Dave Gladding's "County" Group (B.M.S.S. Wargames Section). One idea I shall adopt concerns counter battery fire or elimination of gun crews. They never have a gun knocked out as I/we do, ruling that it represents a battery and a lucky shot just would not do that. Instead, for every gunner "knocked off" that battery's dice throw is reduced by one - which does reflect the diminishing effectiveness of the battery as a whole. I like this, it's easy, realistic and effective."

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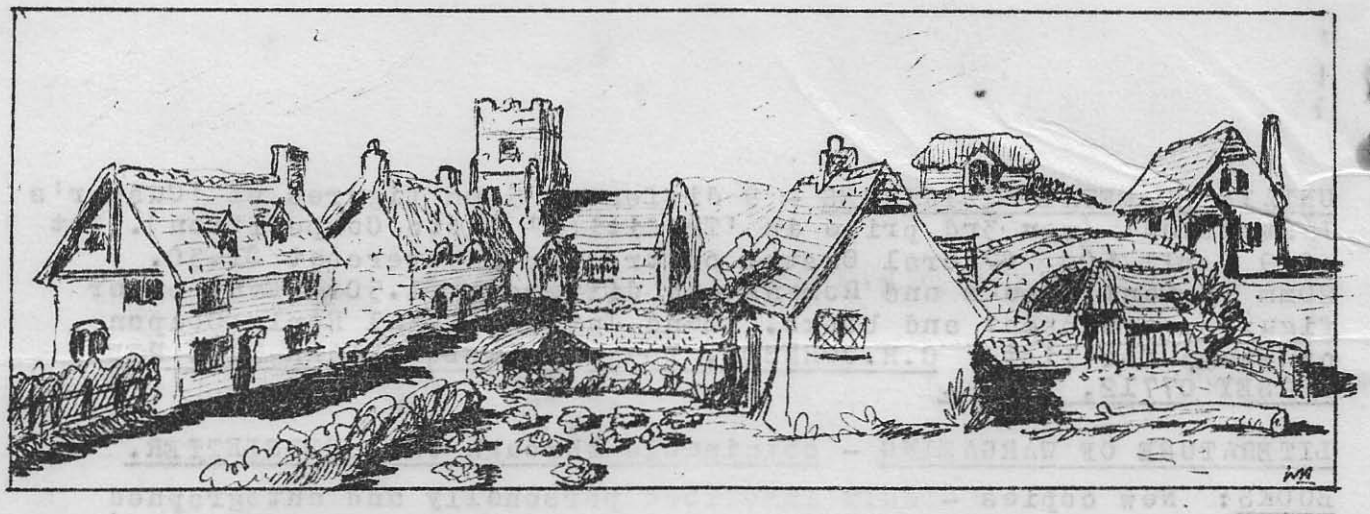

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