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## FROM THE EDITOR

Having been the first to arrive, set up, and subsequently become totally engaged in a game of *Death in the Dark Continent*, it wasn't until halfway through the evening that I looked up from my slice of tabletop Africa then around the room to see what the other members of my local wargames club were playing that evening.

Casting a casual eye across the half dozen scattered tables, I spied two games of *Dragon Rampant*, *Gaslands*, *7TV: Apocalypse*, something I'd never seen before involving 'spacemen', and *Frostgrave*. "Hang on," says I to the room, "are we the only pair playing a historical wargame over here?". My question was greeted with a mix of disinterest and nonchalance (i.e., posh disinterest).

It certainly wasn't the norm for only one in seven games at the club to be of a historical bent, but it also didn't appear to be a cause for concern, or indeed of any interest at all. In fact, a post-match straw-poll of the gamers taken towards the end of the evening indicated that their hobby crisscrossed between historical, fantasy, and sci-fi without any concern or consideration.

The question of "Is Fantasy just another period?" was first posed in the pages of *Wargames Illustrated* back in February 1992 and has been debated endlessly ever since. Accompanying that Reader's Letter, the then editor (and founder) of the magazine, Duncan, included a photo of some fantasy figures along with the caption "Figures painted by John Blanche from the editor's collection (which includes well over a thousand fantasy figures)". However, we did then have to wait another six years for a fantasy article to appear in the pages of *Wi*, in the form of *Getting Started with Warhammer Fantasy*. Since then, fantasy and sci-fi articles have appeared in the pages of *Wi* regularly, but always playing second fiddle to historical content. And that's the way it always will be.

If you haven't already gathered, all this talk about "fantasy" is a prelude to this month's theme of *Just add Fantasy*. It's the first time we've ever had a Fantasy theme in the magazine (although we have come close with *Near Future* and *Post Apocalypse*), so it was with both excitement and trepidation that we decided to go with it; but our reason for doing so was - in a satisfying full-circle kind of way - connected with Duncan's caption on his Reader's Letter photo back in 1992 ....

*Wi* has recently inherited and dusted off some fantasy figures painted by the aforementioned John Blanche - Games Workshop's Art Director and genius behind much of their artistic iconography. We present photos of those figures, seen for the first time in over 40 years, on pages 74 - 77 and accompany that with a few other Fantasy themed articles with which we hope to prove that fantasy really is "just another period".

Happy reading and gaming.

Dan Faulconbridge

Owner and Editor

Cover artwork: *Talos the automaton* by Neil Roberts.

## CREDITS

Produced in the UK and the USA

**The Wargames Illustrated team:**  
Daniel Faulconbridge, Ian Bennett,  
Asun Lose-Campos, James Griffiths,  
Joe Smalley and Marc Shucksmith-Wesley.

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## CONTACTS

**Customer Service & Subscriptions**  
help@wargamesillustrated.net  
Tel (UK): 0044 (0)115 922 5073

**Contributors:**  
contributors@wargamesillustrated.net

**Advertisements:**  
adverts@wargamesillustrated.net

**Quick Fire:**  
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**Distribution:**  
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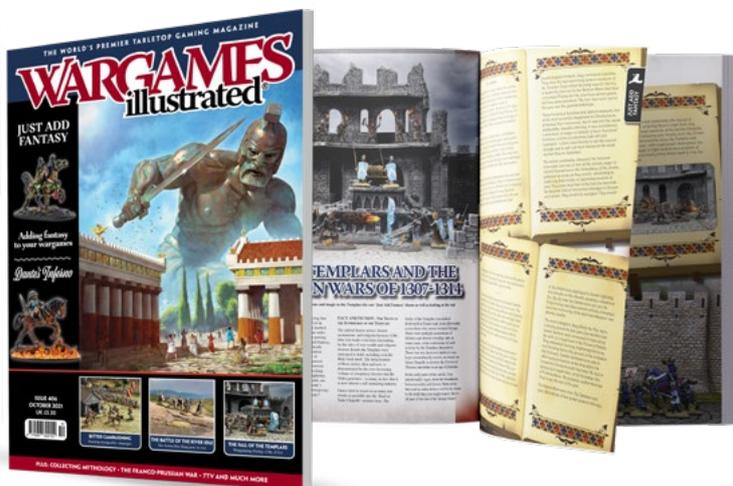
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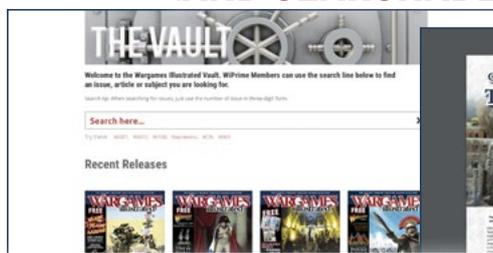


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# QUICK FIRE!

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

## DALEK TROOPERS

By Karl Tebbit

Inspired by our Daleks in *Stargrave* article in *Wi*404, Karl Tebbit has used Greenstuff to kitbash a few plastic Stargrave Troopers, transforming them into these excellent Dalek Troopers as seen in the 1984 episode of *Doctor Who: Resurrection of the Dalek*.

(Background terrain by Sarissa.)



## TURNIP28 ROOT SHRINE

By Maarten Boot

Did the *Turnip28* articles in previous issues catch your attention? Perhaps you're wondering 'how can I make a giant Root Shrine from scratch?' Well, grab a drink, pull up a chair, and I'll tell you how I built mine!



1. Have a plan! For something weird like a big ol' turnip Root Shrine it's good to already have some sketches or some other reference material.



2. Using a small styrofoam egg as a base (some aluminium foil works too) start applying layers of air-drying modelling clay. It doesn't have to be expensive stuff; I got some cheap stuff from my local hobby shop.



3. Once you're happy with the overall shape, it's time to add details! This part can take some time, slowly building up elements of interest. After adding additional tentacles and experimenting with figures for scale, I added more wood, a banner, and sculpted the wheels out of green stuff.



This is not a historically accurate model - play around with the details and have fun with it. It can be really helpful to let the clay dry between stages, creating a 'save state'.



4. With all the details in place, it's time to add texture. In the case of a giant turnip that means scratching a lot of grooves into its surface. I made sure to keep the bottom (wheels, base, figures) separate from the main turnip body to make it easier to handle when adding texture. Wear a mask when doing this - the scratching generates some really fine dust.



I also used this step to add some basing material. For the muddy world of *Turnip28*, I went with used and dried coffee grounds mixed with white glue and brown paint.

As a final step, coat the clay with a thin layer of white glue. This adds a protective layer, stops the clay from activating when in contact with moisture, and also helps with painting.



5. Painting *Turnip28* regiments is a joy. There's no need to be super precise, which is really liberating. I used a base coat of black, then sprayed white primer from above at a roughly 45-degree angle. Here you can see the sprayed root and more *Turnip28* figures ready for painting.



6. The spray creates a gradient that can be toned with coloured washes. Decide on the colour of your turnip and go to town with successive layers of the thin washes, showing the sprayed 'highlights' through from beneath. Fill in other details - wheels, wood, and miniatures - in a similar way and you're pretty much done.



7. The final step is to go in with some muddy brown and dirty up the lower parts of the model.



*Left: A close up of the bizarre looking Toff riding atop the shrine.*

Enjoy your turnips! For me *Turnip28* is all about experimentation and creativity - you can play around with loads of different kits, models, textures, etc. The main thing is to have fun!

*Below: Maarten's impressive Turnip28 army on the tabletop.*





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# OBSERVATION POST

NEW AND FORTHCOMING 'WARGAMES STUFF'  
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## RULES, SUPPLEMENTS, & FIGURES

### CROOKED DICE - SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE AND SORCEROUS SENTINELS

#### SPINS

The arrival of Crooked Dice new releases at *Wi Tower* usually incites a discussion or two. The main debate point this month was who was everyone's favourite character in 1980s TV classic *The A-Team*. Project Manager James surprised nobody by revealing he's a fan of Hannibal (they have a mutual love of plans coming together) while Web and Media man Joe had the hottest hot take: "Mad Murdock's hilarious and I actually think he's even better in the remake movie."

#### SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE

This talk of *The A-Team* has nothing to do with Crooked Dice's releases, of course. Oh no, especially not this quartet of single piece, metal-cast figures!

The set costs £15 (\$21 US) and the models can also be purchased individually. Each of these figures is sculpted with an astonishingly clean level of detail and refinement and the sharp casting carries those details beautifully.

Tiny elements like zips and chains are clearly defined and the poses and faces of the models do a great job conveying the personalities of ... well, you can see who from the pictures!

The Crooked Dice range is 28mm, but these figures seem to be slightly bigger from the foot to the eyeline, sitting somewhere between 28mm and 32mm. It's nothing that would be noticeable when lined up on the tabletop.

The pose of Practical Mechanic is very dynamic, which we like, but his brawling fists slightly hide his face; that's about the only criticism we can think of. Otherwise, this is a special set of miniatures for any '80s fan.

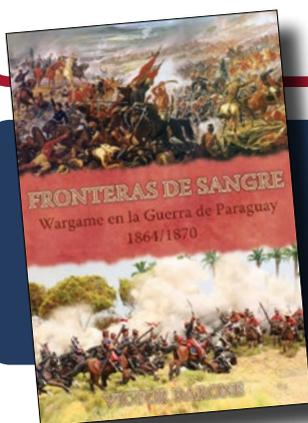


Above (left to right): *Seductive Schemer*, *Bold Planner*, *Practical Mechanic*, and *Unlikely Interloper*.

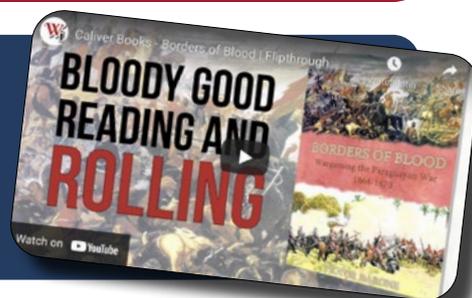
#### SORCEROUS SENTINELS

From '80s TV we shift to the early '80s fantasy adventure movie 'classic' *Krull*. These Sentinels, who feature in the new Crooked Dice game *7TV: Fantasy*, have a look akin to the film's Slayers. These are bizarre figures in insect-like armour with chitinous plates, three-eyed masks, and unusual looking bladed weapons.

They are all single-piece metal casts and cost the same as the Soldiers of Fortune set. A big part of the appeal with these models, other than the uniquely odd look, is that they should be a real dream to paint. The studio job is all black with a hint of red at the tips of the weapons and they look very effective thanks to the sharp points across the armour.



*Fronteras de Sangre (Borders of Blood)*, sobre el que puedes encontrar un video en el canal de YouTube de *Waragmes Illustrated*, está ahora disponible en español.



## GRIPPING BEAST - GENERAL, VIKING WARLORD, AND BLACK KNIGHT

It's been some time since we've looked at figures for Gripping Beast's various historical gaming options; happily, a couple of new characters have just become available for us to examine.

### THE ONE-EYED GENERAL

This figure is part of the Polemarch Successors range; unlike Gripping Beast's SAGA models, the codes here don't include bases, just the one single-part metal model for a very reasonable £3 (\$4.15 US).

Sculpted by Steve Saleh, this is a slightly shorter than 28mm figure, but the wider leg stance probably takes a mm or two off his height. He'll still fit in well with whatever 28mm figures you might have. We like this figure quite a bit - the pose is strong, the armour has some fine detail, and the rear is mostly covered by a flowing cloak that adds drama and varies the surfaces. He should be a fun one to paint.

We're guessing he represents Antigonus the One-eyed. The Polemarch Successors range is designed to help players build the armies of Alexander's successors and Antigonus will fit well there, but you could also use him in armies before Alexander's death too. Our one quibble is that Antigonus' formidable stature is not well represented by this rather short figure. If you want a tall figure read on!



Above: *The One-Eyed General.*



Above: *Viking Warlord.*

### VIKING WARLORD

Ready to lead your force in *SAGA: Age of Vikings* is this very tall figure. Listed as 28mm scale, this Colin Patten sculpt is closer to 32mm and will look very imposing at the head of your warband. He's somewhat similar in pose and design to the one that comes in the four-point starter warband, but has a spear thrust forward.

There are good details present in his equipment and lots of material textures to vary up the painting. The spear is separate, as is the round shield - always appreciated to aid painting - and it comes with the usual round Renedra plastic base. He costs the same as the One-Eyed General.

### THE BLACK KNIGHT

We go from history to fantasy with this old school styled Bob Naismith sculpt; a mounted skeleton Lieutenant designed for *SAGA: Age of Magic's* Undead Legions but perfect for any fantasy force of Undead.

This eight-part metal kit feels like truly excellent value at £7 (\$10 US) and offers up a lot of variety. The undead mount is a chunky single-part horse that's well on the way to decay. More zombie than skeleton, the mount looks suitably 'icky' as it gallops its rider to battle. That rider can be built with a flail or axe and has two head options with gloriously silly horned helms. You can add a tattered cloak and beefy shield too, should you be so inclined.

Once built, the Black Knight looks great, and we're reminded of some of GW's early Vampire Counts releases when we look at its gothic stylings, particularly the mount's armour and its ribbed design.

*Right: The Black Knight can be built with various head, cloak, and weapon options.*



## OSPREY GAMES - STARGRAVE: QUARANTINE 37

The paint has barely dried on our *Stargrave* crews and there's already a new supplement, adding exciting extras to the already popular sci-fi skirmish game that was released in mid-2021. This 96-page, full-colour book takes your initially galaxy spanning gaming to a singular location - Imperial Research Station 37 - formerly a hive of activity holding ten-thousand scientists and researchers, but now an abandoned and dangerous location with all kinds of plague infected dangers and bugs inside. Let's don our space suits, pack a good supply of hand sanitiser, and plunder some technology!

Joseph A. McCullough's introduction describes how *Quarantine 37* puts *Stargrave*'s focus onto sci-fi horror, a topic we think is well suited to skirmish level gaming. Unable to choose between unrelenting hordes of 'plague zombies' and deadly 'alien bugs', he has decided that Station 37 has more than enough room for both. Each option gets its own mini-campaign, and thanks to the very divergent types of antagonists involved, these have a distinct feel.

As well as the scenarios that make up the new campaigns, there are new crew options (with extra backgrounds, powers, soldiers, and rules), simple rules for solo-play (including a solo campaign), and more.

### BRINGING BONUS BACKGROUNDS

The book's first chapter has two new backgrounds to add to the existing ones in *Stargrave*. Aristocrats are wealthy individuals who as well as having their own stat modifications and core power choices, provide financial benefits to your starting crew. An aristocrat captain lets you pick a free ship upgrade and provides an extra 50cr when you build your crew. A first mate aristocrat will gift you 50cr too; that could mean a hefty 500cr to start your crew.

Hunters are far more attuned to the creatures of the galaxy. They search out live animals to sell, or kill and harvest for valuable pelts, scales, venom sacks, etc. If you choose a hunter background for your captain or first mate, you'll get some exciting new core power options.

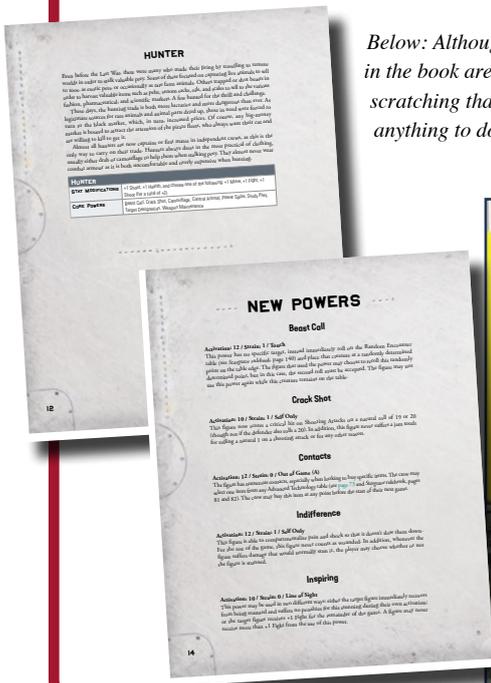


### I HAVE THE POWER!

There are eight new powers in total and for hunter players *Beast Call* looks like a lot of fun. It allows you to roll on the *Random Encounter* table and place that model on a table edge. Combine that with the *Control Animal* power in the main rules and you can essentially summon and control beasts to ruin your opponent's day. Aristocrats can use *Contacts* to increase the amount of *Advanced Technology* available to them, or simply use *Investments* to gain 50cr. We can see aristocrat crews having quite a bit of snowball potential in campaigns after spending their ill-gotten gains.

Perhaps you will use the extra credits to treat yourself to some of the new soldier options: *gunfighters* dual wield and can deal out serious damage; *robot mules* have four gear slots, can haul loot with no penalties, and can pass gear to friendly figures; *Q-bots* are designed to obtain loot; *Ravaged* are scarred survivors of *Hastian's Plague* who feel little pain.

*Below: Although the photos of figures in the book are nice, it's slightly head-scratching that very few of them have anything to do with the what is being discussed in the text.*



## NEW RULES AND THE HORRORS OF HASTIAN'S PLAGUE

What is Hastian's Plague? It's the 'Z-disease' that is spreading through the galaxy, eating away the hosts' brains and reducing victims to violent, mostly mindless husks ... so zombies, basically. The optional 'Infection' rule brings potential zombification to your own crew in a very entertaining way. Any crew member who has taken damage from a creature with the Zombie Infection attribute in the previous game is at risk - your opponent can pick one of these crew members and if they fail a Will Roll they will be replaced by a plague zombie. This means that the best laid plans can go awry as the model key to your strategy suddenly becomes an uncontrolled creature in the midst of your crew. There's also a Reanimation optional rule that can bring the dead back as a plague zombie.

The final new rule is Pings, which represents the tension increasing pulses you get from a motion-tracker in the best horror sci-fi worlds. Pings are tokens that get revealed when they move into contact with a crew member, at which point a roll on the Ping Table will launch something horrible your way. This mechanic brings tension to the Strike from the Shadows scenarios found in the book's Alien-like campaign. A ping could be a meagre Worker Bug, but if you're unlucky three Warrior Bugs could decimate your crew.

## THE SHUFFLING DEAD

Chapter Three is the first of two competitive mini-campaigns in which up to four crews can participate. This zombie themed group of four scenarios will work best if you ditch the game's standard playing areas and build a 'dungeon' setup of interconnecting rooms and corridors. It's tense stuff, beginning in a medical lab with pods that spawn zombies into the battle; moving through the station, dealing with dangerous damaged conduits sending out radiation, power spikes, and explosions; and finishing in the cargo bay as you attempt to escape in shuttles, fighting through a fluctuating containment field. Mr McCullough has a knack for mixing a cool narrative with neat gaming extras and this final battle is a great example of that, full of tension and (hopefully) an eventual triumphant escape.

## STRIKE FROM THE SHADOWS

Deeper into the station, the second campaign is all about those aforementioned 'pings' and the 'bugs' they represent. The first scenario - Hydraponics - has a smart mechanic that will bring terrors down onto the tabletop. The losing initiative roll each turn gets cross-referenced with a table; should the roll be low you'll encounter something relatively safe - place a bug or ping - but if you're unlucky enough to lose the initiative with a higher roll ... the shadows do hide some horrors.

The scenarios here are an action romp! From the flooding hydroponics chamber, onto a train, out of that train after it crashes, before a final climactic ... we don't want to spoil the fun, but we greatly enjoyed the progression and escalation.

## ALL BY MYSELF!

There's usually a whole lot of space needed to describe how games successfully (or in many cases unsuccessfully) translate their rules to solo play. Not so with *Stargrave!* Things are kept basic and the introductory paragraphs suggest that your gaming will require "a lot of player creativity". That's game designer talk for "this is more guidelines than anything else" we reckon, and that's no bad thing - it puts the agency in player hands; the fun is up to you!

*Quarantine 37's* solo gaming focuses on player versus environment; that means you're focused on working through the campaign provided. Build a standard crew (only half of them get used in the first two scenarios, so you can learn the nuances of solo play), avoid some powers as they're redundant in solo play, and use loot as the simple way to determine 'victory'.



The turn sequence is altered with the Creature Phase landing between the Captain and First mate Phase. This makes the monsters far more dangerous and is a simple tweak that works well.

The solo campaign - Back to the Ship! - is big on drama and takes your crew through some cool set piece actions that work very well when playing on your own. It's never going to be as much fun as pitting your wits against another human, but if you want to roll some dice and push some minis around, why not give it a go? The suggestion to play these solo games cooperatively is a good one too and something we're tempted to have a go at.

## TECH AND BEASTIES

The book ends with twenty new advanced technology options and a bestiary of bugs and zombies that dwell on Station 37; these have various unique attributes, from acid spew to self-immolation! Add in some varied and vibrant art, some good-looking North Star figures, and you've got a great new *Stargrave* book.



## WARGAMES ATLANTIC - LATE ROMAN LEGIONARIES (1): LORICA HAMATA

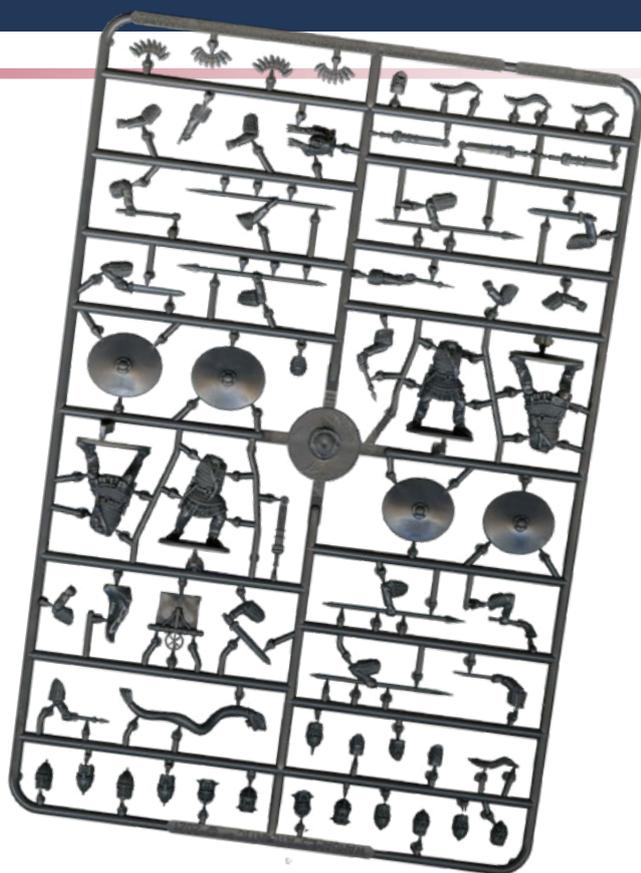
Another month, another Wargames Atlantic range! This one's called Decline and Fall and will eventually contain sets to cover the crisis of the 3rd Century through to the fall of the Western Empire. Goths and Franks have been promised 'soon' but for now we're enjoying this box set of 24 hard plastic, multi-part, Late Romans.

Their main distinguishing feature and selling point is listed in the set's name, they head to battle clad in *Lorica Hamata*, which means you get a good bit of mail on your figures and makes painting them a pleasantly speedy process.

There's an abundance of Roman figures available in 28mm plastic, but models suited to the later period, wearing a predominance of mail, are much less common. We rather like Gripping Beast's set of 40 plastic Late Roman Infantry, but most of those figures are unarmoured archers and spearmen. Where Wargames Atlantic's new set excels is in letting you build its full contingent of 24 men in mail and wielding your choice of spatha, spear, plumbata, and seriously hefty parma shields.



Above: A closer look at just some of the parts on the frame.



Above: You get six of the same frame in the set.

Below: Painted examples by Wargames Atlantic.

The body poses, whilst detailed with good looking mail and other gear, are a little lacking in dynamism and variety. Their static appearance does feel somewhat appropriate for the troops and makes building them in ranks easier, so it's not all bad. The good range of additional components and weapons also brings some variety. This is helped by three helm options: the Niedebieber, ridge, and Spangenhelm, as well as fur caps and crests plus the expected musician and standard bearer options to add command flair. We passed some frames to our in-house painter Marc and told him to get some painted up to a very speedily done gaming standard.



## SPEED PAINTING THE LEGIONARIES

**Marc:** These figures are well suited to army building, so I decided to put my brush skills to the test and paint some as quickly as possible, ready for speedy engagement against the enemies of the Empire.

Once the miniatures were removed from the frame, cleaned, and built, I primed them in black. A silver primer could save time on a full unit - we just didn't have any in the office. With that done, painting was a two-stage process that you could easily add further layers of detail on later.

1) I painted the largest area first - the mail - with a flat head brush, using Vallejo Game Color Chainmail and a little water. I then worked my way around the miniature, painting each of the foundation colours in turn. The paints below were all thinned with a little water to improve their flow and allow for quicker brushwork:

- Skin - Vallejo Game Colour Heavy Skintone Extra Opaque.
- Leggings - Vallejo Model Color Neutral Grey.
- Red tunic areas - Vallejo Model Color Flat Red.
- Metal - Vallejo Game Color Chainmail.
- Wood - Vallejo Model Color Iraqi Sands.
- Leather - Vallejo Game Color Charred Brown.
- Beige tunic areas - a 1 to 1 mix of Vallejo Game Color Heavy Brown Extra Opaque and Master Series Paint (MSP) Creamy Ivory.

For each component, two coats were required to produce a perfectly smooth and fully opaque finish. This may seem counterintuitive when painting fast, but by keeping paint thin it dries faster and is easier to control, thus cutting down your actual painting and waiting time.



2) The aim here was quick but effective finishes, so to add depth I simply applied washes to the miniatures. I kept these washes quite heavy and liberal:

- Skin - Vallejo Game Color Flesh Wash
- Red areas - Vallejo Game Color Red Wash
- Yellow, beige, and light wood - Vallejo Game Color Umber Wash
- Other areas - Vallejo Game Color Black Wash

If additional depth was required, I waited for the first wash coat to dry before applying a second.

This approach is great for batch painting lots of troops in a very quick space of time. I feel that it looks very effective on the tabletop. All that's left to do is your preferred basing.

*Right: A selection of Legionaries painted using this technique, equipped with the supplied shield.*



## THE ELEPHANT SIZED SHIELD IN THE ROOM

Those shields, they're quite large, aren't they? Parma shields weren't bucklers, of course, but these seem excessive and made it difficult to position the arms and weapons at times. We decided to try an alternative shield set that we picked up from Fireforge Games. These resin cast Rho shields come in packs of 12, so you will need two packs to equip all the legionaries. That's an extra ten Euros, but the shields are far more appropriate in size and have details on the face, which will help you speed paint your legionaries.



*Above: The size difference between the Wargames Atlantic and Fireforge shields is readily apparent.*

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# RELEASE RADAR



**Dom Sore's back to tell us about the exciting hobby releases that have made a big blip on his Release Radar!**

Crooked Dice produce some great quality and very random 28mm models, and some of their recent releases are particularly interesting: a bear, Bigfoot, and a Giant bat ([crooked-dice.co.uk](http://crooked-dice.co.uk)). I may not ever use them in a game, but I am very tempted to get them and work out some sort of justification later. Once wargame shows start up again be sure to go buy things from Crooked Dice, owner Karl is a very nice man. Tell him I sent you!



Above: Bear.  
Right: Bigfoot.



Another 'I didn't know I needed this until I saw it' release is Bifrost Miniatures' highland Dwarves range ([warbases.co.uk](http://warbases.co.uk)). Part of the Dungeon Denizens range, I am especially drawn to the Rob Roy highwayman figure and the great characters in the command pack.

Right: Highland Dwarves.

## TABLETOP TERRAIN AND BETTER BASING

Every wargames table welcomes fresh, shiny, new terrain. To that end, Empires at War have released some new 28mm scale Spanish/Italian buildings that would be perfect for setting up a small hamlet. ([empiresatwar.co.uk](http://empiresatwar.co.uk)). They come in painted and unpainted variants, though I would go for the painted option - it isn't that much more expensive than unpainted and looks good for the price. They have also released some ACW/Old West buildings: a Wind Water pump, Water Tower, and a mightily impressive Thompson House for the Battle of Gettysburg. The first two only come in unpainted forms but you can get the house painted in grey.



Basing can be a chore, so why not take the pain out of it and use pre-made scenic bases to go with that Wild West theme courtesy of Iron Gate Scenery ([irongatescenery.co.uk](http://irongatescenery.co.uk))? They have released a range of 28mm scale resin bases with wooden detailing, perfect for the inside of a saloon or perhaps a fantasy tavern. They come in 25mm, 30mm, 40mm, and 50mm diameters.



**THERE'S A WORLD OF WAR TOO**

WWII is one of the big gaming eras, which means we get to see a lot of releases for it each month; thankfully there are some good ones! The first to catch my eye is from Emperor Toad's Emporium; a set combining all their new 28mm Volksgrenadier support teams ([emperortoadsemporium.co.uk](http://emperortoadsemporium.co.uk)). This consists of 21 figures, giving you two Panzerschrecks, an MMG, mortar, Flame thrower, HQ, and two radio teams (some shown right).



Delve a bit earlier in the war to find Blitzkrieg Miniatures hitting the shops with their rendition of the highly maneuverable 1/48 French H39 ([blitzkriegminiatures.com](http://blitzkriegminiatures.com)). This 3D model comes in four parts and is provided to the customer cleaned with the supports removed. Blitzkrieg think you can put it together in under half a minute; challenge accepted - they have no idea how cack handed I am!



Above: 1/48 French H39.

More vehicles roll onto the tabletop for the British forces in 1/56 scale thanks to some new Die Waffenkammer

releases ([diewaffenkammer.com](http://diewaffenkammer.com)). The Austin K-5 was a heavy cargo truck that carried the 6-pounder as a portee, while the Humber Mk1 Scout car has tantalising options; a choice of Bren gun or Twin Vickers as armament, though I am sure we can use the spare somewhere.

Finishing off WWII, I made a return visit to Baccus ([baccus6mm.com](http://baccus6mm.com)) to see their latest tiny new WWII gear. Highlights for me are the Staghound Mk1, Recce HQ, and the Valentine AVLB bridging tank.



Above: Austin K-5.  
Below: Humber Mk1 Scout car



Left: Valentine AVLB bridging tank.



Above: Recce HQ.



Above: Staghound Mk1.

**FLAGS AND FINIALS**

I am not much of a painter, I just about manage to stay within the lines (and have been known to cross a few). So, when it comes to banners, shields, details, etc, I like to get whatever help I can. Never is this help more welcome than with regimental flags from the 19th Century and I'm happy that Iron Duke Miniatures have come to my rescue ([irondukeminiatures.co.uk](http://irondukeminiatures.co.uk))! They have ten new flagsheets for your 19th Century forces, including four blank ones for East India Company native regiments that you can add to your own numerals. Top tip: use decals to add

the numbers on and to avoid using a brush for anything too refined!

When making flags, I always forget about making the finials, some of which can be highly elaborate. I'm less capable at sculpting finials than I am at painting flags, so I'm joyous about the new finial releases from Steve Barber Models ([stevebarbermodels.com](http://stevebarbermodels.com)). These tiny horses will fit atop flag poles as finials for Neapolitan troops, which takes all the stress away and look absolutely lovely in the process.





### MEDIEVAL CIVVIES

Suitable for SAGA are the rather substantial villagers range from Sally 4th Miniatures ([wargamesbuildings.co.uk](http://wargamesbuildings.co.uk)). These figures will be great when it comes to interfering with play, or they can act as objectives. With everything from children playing, people milking cows, drunk and brawling tavern dwellers, and much more, there are a great many possibilities.



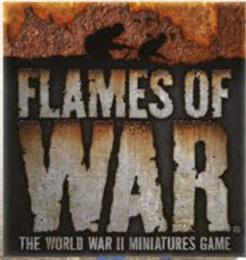
### DRAGOONS AND COMMANDERS

Just when I thought my English Civil War army was nearing completion, along comes Avanpost with some new dismounted dragoon figures ([facebook.com/groups/avanpost.miniatures/](https://facebook.com/groups/avanpost.miniatures/)). Comprising seven armed dragoons plus two horses, they are superbly detailed figures with a lot of character. I need another unit or three, right?



Leaping back in time, there is a new Emperor on the scene from Fireforge Games ([fireforge-games.com](http://fireforge-games.com)). This one is Byzantine and comes in both mounted and foot variants. Do I have a Byzantine army? No. Do I want an Emperor to lead my non-existent Byzantine force? Hell yes! He does only have a sceptre, so I'm not sure he will be any good in combat, but he does look mighty fancy!

And with that our release exploring ends. This month's selection almost felt too organised, but I'll do my best to bounce around like a hobby pinball in the next one. Until next time, fare thee well, and happy gaming!



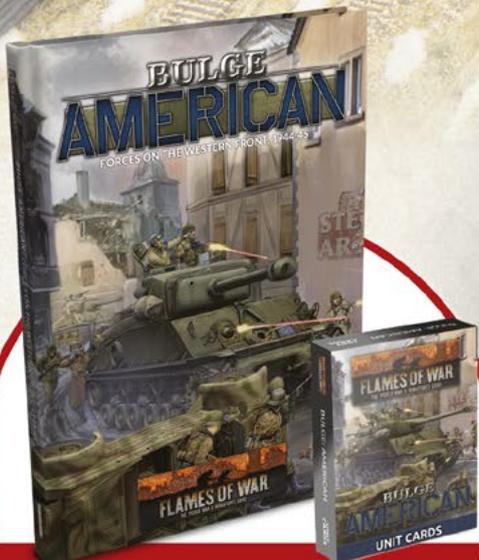
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# FULL PAPER JACKET

## BOOK PREVIEWS FOR THE DISCERNING WARGAMER

BY NEIL SMITH

Every month I compile this column, feeling the pressure of too many books to discuss and too little space to do it in. What I try to do is select books that wargamers can pick up, be inspired, then play. That seldom happens, but I might have cracked it this month. You can decide.

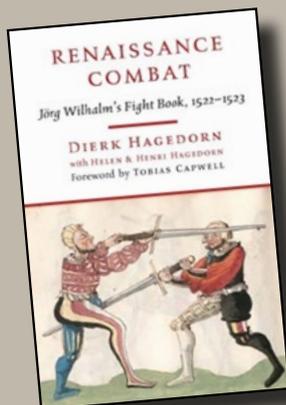
### ANCIENT

Is there anything left to say about Greek Hoplites? I think they might be the most studied infantrymen in the ancient world. But history never really rests on its laurels, and there is always some new angle to find on even the most familiar topics. That's what Richard Taylor seems to have accomplished in *The Greek Hoplite Phalanx: The Iconic Heavy Infantry of the Classical Greek World* (Pen & Sword). It doesn't seem to be so much the hoplite phalanx that is being rediscovered here, but its context in the wider military sphere. And that should prick up those wargaming ears. I can see some modifiers being modified after this book hits the rules lawyers.

### RENAISSANCE

I have two books from the 16th Century that should bring more attention to this fascinating period of warfare. The first is for skirmish enthusiasts: *Renaissance Combat: Jörg Wilhelm's Fight Book, 1522-1523* by Dierk Hagedorn (Greenhill). Wilhelm taught warriors in the 16th Century how to fight, and Hagedorn is the foremost modern scholar on this subject. All the different combat techniques are explained in detail with accompanying illustrations, which is perfect for re-enactors, of course, but also for those who might think medieval warriors just charged at each other and cracked skulls. The only problem I foresee with this is injury and pain if you do practice the techniques. Best to start with something blunt!

Our second book takes us into a series of wars that I have never seen wargamed, though there must be some out in wargames world that give it a go. And



why not? T J O'Brien de Clare brings us *One Faith, One Law, One King: French Armies of the Wars of Religion 1562-1598* (Helion). He provides a potted history of the wars and original research into the battles; introduces the major players; summarizes how the armies operated in the field; analyses the organisation, equipment, and tactics of the armies; and uncovers the numerous innovations of these wars that built the platform for the major 17th Century developments, perhaps mistakenly labelled as the Military Revolution. Everything you need to get started wargaming the French Wars of Religion is in here; all you need are the figures and rules and, just like that, a new project is born.

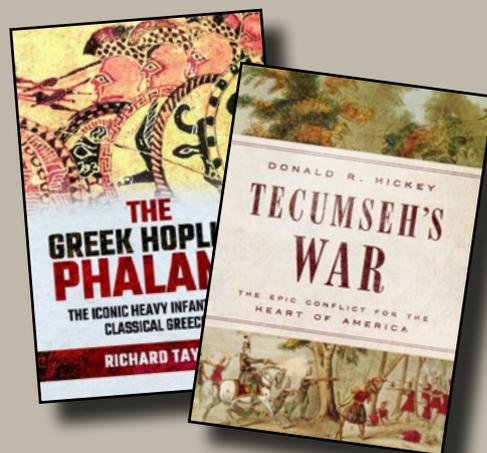
### ENLIGHTENMENT

It seems a bit odd to start the Enlightenment period with someone who was very far from its purpose, or so it would appear. *Blackbeard: The Hunt for the World's Most Notorious Pirate* by Craig Cabell (Pen & Sword) digs behind the myth to uncover the real Edward Teach (i.e., Blackbeard), then narrates the story of how he was hunted down, leading to a bloody engagement that cost Teach his life. Not only is this one of the great historical stories, it's about pirates, and who doesn't love pirates? I certainly cannot get enough of them, even though I recognise that the Hollywood version of them is way off base. But for me, what is different about the Blackbeard story is the interaction between the pirates, the colonial government of Virginia, and the Royal Navy. There are so many pirate 'what if's right there in addition to the actual history. For skirmish gamers on land or sea, pirates make for colourful and exciting wargames.

Maybe you are looking for something more formal and bigger? Rex Whitworth might have the book for you with his *Gunner at Large: The Diary of James Wood R. A. 1746-1765* (Pen & Sword). There are different ways to get interested in a new period. My least favourite is reading the big picture books then moving into the action. I'd rather follow the soldier's experience, working out from there to understand what's going on. That is why I like diaries. This one from an artilleryman in the 18th Century is



right up my street, and maybe yours too. Wood tracks his activity in war and peace, though it is the wars of the mid-century that we want to read about. A significant peculiarity of Wood's career is that he fought in India, a theatre we know less of than the European and American battlefields. He also discusses maritime operations, so this might result in two projects for the price of one.

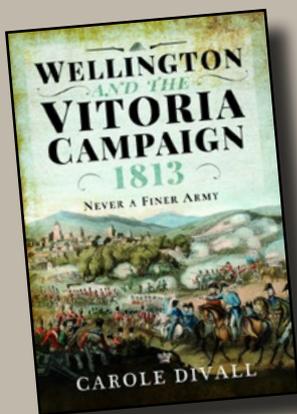


### 19TH CENTURY

I am not quite sure where to put my next book. It is a conflict that took place in the Napoleonic era but was something quite different. Donald R. Hickey's *Tecumseh's War: The Epic Conflict for the Heart of America* (Georgetown University Press) is the military history of the war that finally doomed the woodland Native Americans in North America, but not without an intense struggle on their part. This was also not the adjunct to the War of 1812 as has been previously supposed, but a war in its own right. As such, there are numerous scenarios that could bring the coalition of tribes into the fight with frontiersmen and the still new United States of America's forces. The British were also involved in supporting the Native Americans. So, if you are looking for something off the beaten track with miniatures that could be used in other conflicts, this might be one for you.

### NAPOLEONIC WARS

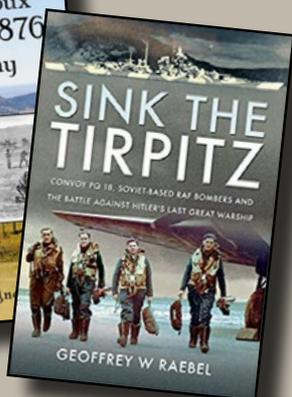
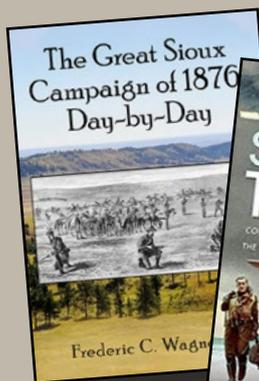
If you are of the opinion that far too much is written about the British in the Napoleonic Wars, you might want to skip to the next section because we are heading to the Peninsular War with Carole Divall's



*Wellington and the Vitoria Campaign 1813: Never a Finer Army* (Pen & Sword). You could argue this was Wellington at the peak of his powers, managing an Allied army and outmanoeuvring the French before bringing them to battle and beating them soundly. It was certainly a textbook victory and one worth playing Napoleonic wargames for, if you don't already. Divall is very good at taking her readers into the action using the words of those who fought, so this book checks all the boxes. And speaking of insight, why not read Divall in tandem with Gareth Glover's *Marching, Fighting, Dying: Experiences of Soldiers in the Peninsular War* (Pen & Sword)? Other writers have described British soldiers in action during the wars, but Glover uses only letters, which enhances the immediacy of the experiences. As a wargamer, I like to know what the men that my figures represent went through because I think it helps my 'historical' decision making rather than just closely adhering to the letter of the rules. Books like Glover's and Divall's help with that.

#### VICTORIAN

My next two books, from the same publisher, focus on American heroes but in very different circumstances and with polar opposite outcomes. Frederic Wagner III's *The Great Sioux Campaign of 1876, Day-by-Day* (McFarland) examines in great detail the campaign that led to the defeat and death of General Custer at the Little Big Horn in 1876. Along with Gettysburg, this must be the most iconic battle in US history, but like many 'last stands' it is almost impossible to wargame



because who is going to be foolish enough to repeat Custer's mistakes? Maybe Wagner's interpretation might reveal some points where we can 'change' history; although the combined opposing tribes might be quite happy with the way things turned out.

#### GREAT WAR

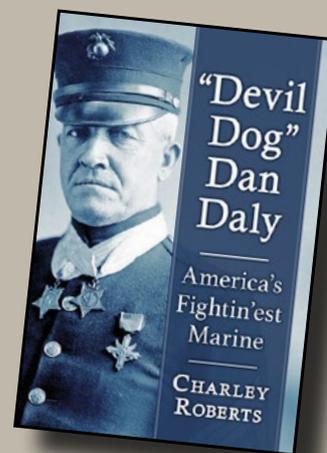
Our second hero is an undoubted American military legend. Charley Roberts narrates the story of *Devil Dog Dan Daly: America's Fightin'est Marine* (McFarland). Here was a US Marine, five-foot-six in his socks and 132 pounds wet-through, who was awarded two Medals of Honor and nominated for a third! His first came in the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900. This was a conflict worth exploring for wargaming opportunities because there was a lot more to it than *55 Days at Peking*. Daly's second Medal of Honor was awarded for his actions when his unit was ambushed in Haiti in 1915. I'll confess I know next to nothing about this conflict but intend to find out with the help of this book for starters. His third nomination came at Belleau Wood in World War I, one of those actions that brought the US Marines their glorious reputation. Daly didn't win the medal but became famous for his admonition while leading a charge: "Come on you sons of bitches, do you want to live forever?". A fascinating character indeed, and one worth exploring through wargaming.

#### WORLD WAR II

That brings me to the monthly dilemma that is World War II. I say this every month, but I really could write the whole column on this conflict alone with so many books published on it. But keeping with a 'familiar but not so familiar' theme this month, I've chosen Donnell Clayton's *Eben-Emael and the Defence of Fortress Belgium, 1940* (Pen & Sword). Most of us believe that this airborne glider attack was a walkover that looks nice on the table but is not much of a game. Clayton tugs the reins on that, pointing out that Eben-Emael was only one of 19 forts attacked and some of them held out for days. We know the result, of course, but maybe he has something we can get our teeth into. I'm also always on the lookout for solo and co-op gaming ideas, and this certainly has potential in that direction.

In a similar vein for wargaming, but working in a number of directions, I'm intrigued by Geoffrey Raebel's *Sink the Tirpitz: Convoy PQ 18, Soviet-Based RAF Bombers and the Battle Against Hitler's Last Great Warship* (Air World). This is the story of the Arctic convoy that came after the convoy that was shattered by the threat of the German battleship Tirpitz, lurking in its Norwegian fjord like a nasty, heavily-armed spider. Convoy PQ 18 came

locked and loaded with a multi-ship and aircraft escort. The Tirpitz emerged from its lair to find out a squadron of bombers was tracking it, so it scurried away, and the convoy passed. But where's the fun in that for wargamers? This would make an ideal wargame with multiple options, including solo and co-op, and at different scales; small for a convoy action, or big if your game is to take out the Tirpitz.



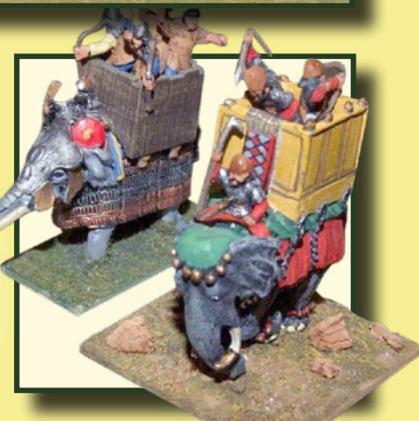
#### MODERN

You can't get much further from the frozen Atlantic than the jungles of Laos. Ken Conboy's *The Erawan War: Volume 1: The CIA Paramilitary Campaign in Laos, 1961-1974* (Helion). This is the story of the CIA stirring up as much trouble as they could for the communists in the state adjoining Vietnam, and one in which the vital Ho Chi Minh Trail ran through. But as you might expect, the CIA don't broadcast their activities, so we need history's perspective to make sense of it all. What Conboy has done then, is expose a multi-factional war, supported by all the information you need to wargame it in this typically excellent volume from Helion's *Asia @ War* series.

We conclude with Russia's 'Vietnam'. Mark Galeotti's *The Panjshir Valley 1980-86: The Lion Tames the Bear in Afghanistan* (Osprey) takes us into the struggle for a vital arterial route in the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. When the Soviets invaded in 1979, they thought they had it all figured out, but they reckoned without Ahmad Shah Massoud, the 'Lion of Panjshir', and his resilient forces. Both sides brought new weapons and developed new tactics in the ongoing struggle, and as usual with Osprey, they supply enough maps and illustrations for us to follow the action. Here we have lots of potential wargaming action fought over roughly the same terrain. That should save some money!

And that's your lot for October, but if you want to read reviews of these books and more, follow my Full Paper Jacket Facebook page.

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# THE TEMPLARS AND THE DEMON WARS OF 1307-1314

Dr Steve Tibble brings demons and magic to the Templars for our 'Just Add Fantasy' theme as well as looking at the real events surrounding the Order's fall.

It hopefully goes without saying that there were no demons involved in the events of 1307-1314 that marked the destruction of the Knights Templar order. Much of the flavour text and gaming fun in this article is fiction and fantasy, but it all comes alongside a heady dose of wild historical inspiration. Extraordinarily, the collapse of the Order really was accompanied and propelled by many accusations and rumours of demons - shocking stories of devil-worship, blasphemy, sodomy, and heresy. How could one, when presented with this month's theme, resist applying a contemporary alternative twist to those events of 700 plus years ago?

## FACT AND FICTION - THE TRUTH OF THE SUPPRESSION OF THE TEMPLARS

The tabloid horror stories, bizarre accusations, and religious hysteria of the time was made even more fascinating by the tales of vast wealth and religious treasure hoards the Templars were rumoured to hold, including even the Holy Grail itself. The attractiveness of these stories, then and now, is demonstrated by the ever-increasing volume of conspiracy theories that the Order generates - so many, in fact, that it is now almost a self-sustaining industry.

I have tried to weave in as many true events as possible into the 'Raid on Saint-Chapelle' scenario here. The

Order of the Templars was indeed destroyed in France and, soon afterwards, everywhere else across western Europe. There were multiple accusations of idolatry and demon-worship, and, in some cases, even confessions of such activity by the Templars themselves. There was not, however (unless it was kept extraordinarily secret), an attack on Saint-Chapelle to destroy the Crown of Thorns and usher in an age of demons.

In the early parts of this article, I am intentionally vague about the boundaries between reality and fiction. Many areas that read as make-believe will be far closer to the truth than you might expect; this is all part of the fun of the fantasy theme!

## THE BURNING

It was an overcast March evening in Paris, 1314, and the cold wind swept up the Seine. Onlookers turned up their collars and huddled slightly closer to their companions. The place, appropriately enough for a scene of execution, was the Ile des Juifs - the island of the Jews - near the palace garden of Philip IV, king of France. He was called, perhaps ironically under these most ugly of circumstances, 'the Fair'. But no one was interested in irony that day.

As the sun slowly set, two elderly male cult-members were brought out. Both tired, bedraggled, clearly worn out by their troubled confinement in the local dungeons. Whatever had taken place, you knew it had not been good, and it had not happened quickly. These were men reshaped by their experiences, knocked down, tantalised, and then knocked down further still. They had reached the end ...

... But there was something in their manner that said that they had not been entirely beaten. These condemned men refused to conform to their role of broken and conquered Satanists and devil-worshippers; the way they held themselves, the way they looked at each other, showed that despite their suffering, the physical pain, and

be remembered for the truth they told and the power of the devils they served; those who had persecuted them would be dead within a few months.

The men burned that day were the greatest demon-masters that the Templars had ever produced. The senior of the two was the Grand Master and Supreme Mage, James of Molay. The other was his loyal chief magician, Geoffrey of Charnay. Within a few weeks, undoubtedly through the power of those two men, minor devils and ancient familiars allied with the Order were positioned to strike and started to take their revenge.

Pope Clement V, who had allowed the suppression to take place, was the first to feel the power of their hatred. Demons in the employ of the Templars still had many senior contacts at the Vatican. They fed him a series of sophisticated and extremely painful poisons. He died on 20 April 1314. On the night that his body was laid out to rest, the last demonic powers

of the Order were deployed to launch lightning bolt attacks on the church, causing a disastrous fire. By the time the flames were put out, the Pope's body had been almost entirely consumed - an ironic mirroring of the devil-worshippers' own ghastly deaths.

The main instigator, King Philip the Fair, met a similarly gruesome fate just a few months later. Lesser demons were concealed in trees along the path of a royal hunt in the Forest of Halatte. They ambushed the king, frightening his horse, and throwing him to the ground. In the confusion that followed, Templar familiars were able to inflict serious injuries on the king before his household retainers could intervene. He died in agony a few weeks later, on 29 November 1314, at Fontainebleau. As predicted, neither man had lived to see the end of the year.

The Demon Wars were over. The Templars were gone. But echoes of their power remain to this day.

psychological torment, they remained resolute. They were the last surviving demon-masters of the Templar Order; their burning was (in theory at least) the final act in the Demon Wars that had convulsed France for the previous seven years, but they were uncowed. The two men were led to the pyre and the guards withdrew.

These hardened heretics and demon-masters, two of the most powerful magicians in Christendom, protested their innocence, but it was not the usual implausible, maudlin whining. It was considered, a statement of anger on behalf of their 'heretical' brethren, a form of corporate last will and testament - a final opportunity to set the record straight and to spit out their hatred at the weak mortals they so despised.

The smoke eventually obscured the heretics from sight, but one or two of the crowd, eager to drench themselves in the immediacy of the drama, gathered as close as they could - stretching to catch any final words or agonising sounds of pain. They later said that in the last few seconds the heretics' talk of innocence changed to threats and curses. They would be avenged. They would

## BUT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?

Believe it or not, much of what I've penned in the flavour piece above happened as described (mostly!). The deaths of James of Molay, and Geoffrey of Charney, the masters of this putative demon-worshipping sect, occurred. James of Molay really did curse the French king who had persecuted him and the Order, as well as the Pope who had been too weak to defend them. Both of those cursed men died in unpleasant circumstances before the end of the year.

Before you get too excited, the paths of history and fantastical conspiracies sharply part company at this point. Disentangling the truth from the many conspiracy theories is a job for the later part of this article, but it deserves a brief summary before we dive into the fantasy wargaming options. As always with the Templars, the truth is even stranger than the fiction!

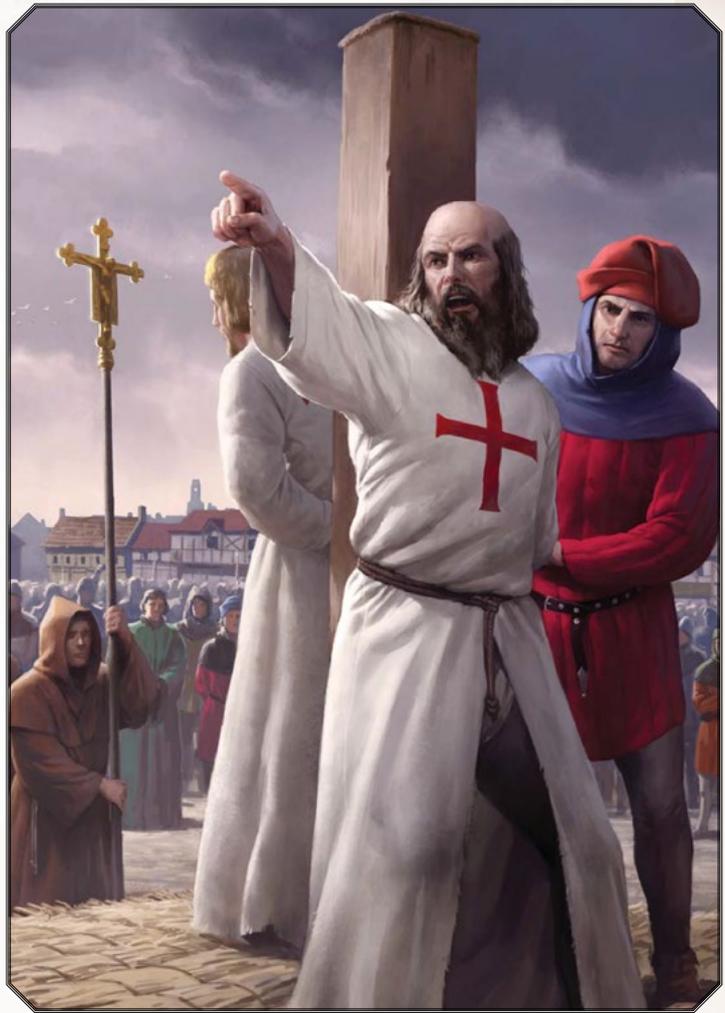
The burning of the two famous 'Demon-Masters' is ostensibly a classic image from a ferociously religious age; humble, battered heretics, counterpoised by hatred and religious invective. In the context of the crusades, one might assume that this kind of event was typical. It was anything but. In fact, it was an ending, rather than a beginning. The crusades, the archetypal wars of religious frenzy, had ground to a halt, but the hunt for heretics continued.

The burning took place just a few years after the final loss of the Holy Land. The men burning at the stake in Paris that night were no normal heretics - not, in fact, 'heretics' at all, despite the accusations that had been brought against them. On the contrary, they were the last of the Templars - the cream of the crusading movement, famed for their bravery and devotion to the Christian cause.

## HOW COULD SUCH AN ORDER FALL SO FAR?

The suppression of the Templar Order was carried out across Christendom, but the impetus behind it originated in France at the court of King Philip IV. Not coincidentally, although the Templars operated throughout Europe and the Mediterranean, it was mainly in France or in areas under French control that large numbers of shocking, hugely incriminating confessions were initially forthcoming.

There was no warning of the suppression. The axe fell as suddenly as a guillotine blade. In October 1307 the king's troops moved in force against the Order. This was the medieval equivalent of the Night of the Long



Above: Illustration from *Knights Templar: A Secret History* (c) Osprey Publishing Ltd. [www.ospreypublishing.com](http://www.ospreypublishing.com)

Knives when Himmler's SS turned on Ernst Röhm's SA 'Brownshirts' - both were vicious attacks on institutions that had been lulled into a false sense of security by the narcotic complacency of power and their own fanatical loyalty.

The king's motives, and those of his closest advisors, in carrying out this extraordinary putsch are not entirely clear. But the bloody consequences have been the subject of endless confusion, scholarly debate, and an entire industry of conspiracy theories. Which I'm only going to add to here, with the fantasy scenario ahead. Sorry!

I'll atone for my historical sins shortly, in the conclusion of this article, but for now, here's a full-on fantasy Demon Wars scuffle, presented within the *Frostgrave* rules but suitable for just about any skirmish game.

## REDUNDANCIES - TIME TO MOVE ON

Of the three main military orders, only the Templars looked redundant - and it was this lack of purpose which made them uniquely vulnerable. Their old competitors, the Hospitallers, had made major efforts after the loss of the Latin East in 1291 to create a renewed strategy and a more appropriate set of 'corporate objectives'. They quickly started building a substantial military base in Rhodes and established naval patrols around the eastern Mediterranean - and at the same time they also fell back on their original duties of looking after the sick.

The youngest military order, the Teutonic Knights, slipped easily into another crusading role on Europe's other eastern front - pagan Prussia.

Only the Templars were left - underemployed, unfocused, and with few friends. Arrogance and a lack of imagination meant that they had been slow to adapt to the new world order. They continued to advocate boots-on-the-ground action in the Middle East to try to liberate the Holy Land once more. But this was their only idea, and it was far too ambitious and unrealistic - no one was buying what they had to sell.

The Teutonic Knights had been accused of witchcraft by some of their opponents, and the Hospitallers, who still exist today, had had false accusations of heresy hurled at them, but it was the famously devout and heroically disciplined Templars who committed the major 'crime' of becoming redundant.

## GAMING THE DEMON WARS

### THE RAID ON THE SAINT-CHAPELLE

The Demon Wars began with simultaneous attacks on the Order's properties throughout France on the suitably ironic day of Friday 13 of October, 1307.

The focus was aimed squarely at the Templar headquarters in Paris. Crack squads of royal knights led the assault, accompanied by siege engineers - some wielding huge axes, while others were equipped with battering rams, each strengthened by a tiny sliver of the True Cross. They hurled terracotta pots full of holy water into the rooms they assaulted, incapacitating and stunning the occupants before charging in. Most of the attacks went off as planned, but even as they did an unexpected resistance and counter-attack of the most dangerous kind was underway.

The Templar Grand Master could never match the sheer numbers of men King Philip was sending against the Templars, but he knew where the Christians were at their most vulnerable. The ultimate source of King Philip's power was the Crown of Thorns, a precious relic of enormous strength, held nearby in the king's grand but poorly defended private church - the Sainte-Chapelle.

James briefed his last remaining elite squad of brother knights, ordering them to fight their way through to the inner sanctum of the Sainte-Chapelle, crack open the reliquary and ritually burn the Crown of Thorns. If this could be done, the Templar cult still had a chance - with royal power diminished, the Order could begin to fight back from a position of strength and eventually bring Satan back to rule the material world.



Figures seen here by Footsore, Fireforge, and 1st Corps.



## GAME BACKGROUND

The Saint-Chapelle is under constant guard and the men are aware of the fighting taking place nearby; they have seen some of the Templar devil-worshippers being paraded past the chapel doors and onward to the dungeons and interrogation rooms of the Palais de la Cité but are ever vigilant in their defence.

## FROSTGRAVE - THE FROZEN CITY BECOMES THE SAINT-CHAPELLE

With magic at its fore and many other fantasy elements within its rules, the game of *Frostgrave* is an excellent skirmish option with which to play this game. If you have another fantasy or historical skirmish game that you're more familiar with, you can, of course, modify these suggestions and use them in your chosen ruleset.

## THE FRENCH - DEFENDER WARBAND AND SETUP OPTIONS

The defender controls the royal guard and must protect the Crown of Thorns.

The centre of the table should include some sort of inner sanctum containing the Crown, and be protected by three experienced, battle-hardened sergeants - use the Knight stats profile. These sergeants may not leave the central area of the table unless they pass a Will Roll (TN17). Modify this roll with a +1 per enemy that has been taken out of the game.

Another D6+3 guard patrol the rest of the table and should be placed randomly, divided into groups of three (or as close as possible). Pick these at random from the Standard Soldier Table (roll a D6 and count down). On a roll of 6 you may choose to re-roll using the Specialist Soldier Table (roll 2D6 and count down - if your roll is high enough to go off the end of the table you may choose any option).

All the above elements are found between pages 29 to 31 of the *Frostgrave Second Edition* rulebook.

Leading the defenders are a modified Knight with 14 Health and +3 Will and two junior chaplains. The chaplains use the Starting Apprentice stat line and randomly select two spells from the following table (see the *Frostgrave* rules for details of the spells). Re-roll any duplicate spell (four different ones must be used in total):

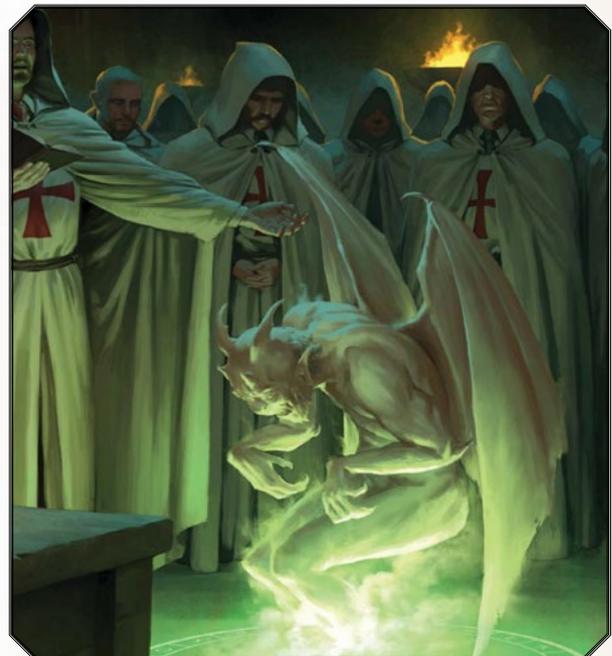
D6 roll	Spells
1	Blinding Light
2	Combat Awareness
3	Wall
4	Slow
5	Enchant Armour
6	Circle of Protection (all Attackers classed as demons)

## DEFENDER REINFORCEMENTS

Reinforcements are also close at hand as the chapel is in the heart of the royal palace complex. To determine how many more Royal troops will join the battle at the start of each turn, the French player rolls one D6 + the turn number. For each number above 7 they will get a reinforcement model (e.g. On turn 5 a roll of 5 will = 10 in total bringing three reinforcements). These enter from any of the board edges.

For each additional figure who arrives, roll another D6:

D6 roll	Royal troops
1 - 3	Guard (randomise as above)
4 - 5	Sergeant (not fixed to centre of board)
6	Chaplain (randomly choose just one spell from the table above)



Above: Illustration from *Knights Templar A Secret History* (c) Osprey Publishing Ltd. [www.ospreypublishing.com](http://www.ospreypublishing.com)

## THE TEMPLAR ELITES - ATTACKER WARBAND AND SETUP OPTIONS

The attacker must destroy the Crown of Thorns and enters the table from a board edge of their choosing.

Pick this warband as you would a standard *Frostgrave* warband but with 800 gold crowns to spend and up to ten soldiers allowed.

The Templars are led by Geoffrey of Charnay, one of the Order's most skillful mages, and commander of the Templars in Normandy. He is accompanied by his devoted cult followers including his apprentice in battle. The rest of the warband are fanatical brother knights, with skills honed by years of fighting and assassination missions in the Middle East, along with their retainers. Geoffrey of Charnay should use the rules for a wizard and his second in command is his apprentice. These two should be treated as level 10 (choose their advances before the battle).

## TURN ORDER AND ACTIVATION

The French defender's main knight and the Templar attacker's Geoffrey of Charnay activate in the wizard phase. These figures and 0-3 soldiers that started the phase within 3" and in line of sight of the wizard, may be activated as per the standard *Frostgrave* rules.

Any one of the French chaplains (other chaplains will activate as if they are regular soldiers this turn) and the Templar's apprentice activate in the apprentice phase. These figures and 0-3 soldiers can activate as above.

Activate any remaining models in the soldier phase. There is no creature phase unless you add in some scenario rules that call for it.

## SCENARIO MODIFIERS

Various scenarios from the *Frostgrave: Second Edition* rulebook have interesting elements that could be used in your game to represent the Crown and the environment. Here are some suggestions, but remember that the most important element of the game is that you come up with a way for the Templar player to destroy the Crown and, thus, win the battle. We suggest using *Frostgrave's* treasure system as a part of this and randomising which treasure counter represents the Crown of Thorns.

- **The Library:** The Set-Up rules for this scenario are perfect to represent the inner confines of the Saint-Chapelle. Treat the central treasure as the Crown with the Templar player needing to pass a Fight Roll in order to 'pick it up' (which we will consider destroying it). For extra victory points, the Templar could attempt to also exit the table through the scenario's doorways, but the main goal is the destruction of the Crown.
- **The Living Museum:** You could use this scenario's five statues and associated random treasure reveals/construct summoning as an alternative to the central guards.
- **The Complex Temple:** Another randomisation option for the Crown of Thorns here.
- **The Orb:** Yet another possible way to represent the Crown of Thorns - treat the winged imps that defend it as an arcane security system.
- **The Ice Storm:** Even more Crown possibilities! The icicle smash rule could represent the Crown sending out defensive thorn projectiles.

## AN EMBARRASSING TRUTH

Contrary to this bold and utterly fantastical mission to destroy the Crown of Thorns, there was no combative resistance from the Templars in Paris or beyond, all of whom were devout Christians and loyal Frenchmen. Unlike the state-of-the-art castles they manned in the Holy Land, their buildings in France were generally unfortified; being in the heart of Christendom, this was hardly surprising. Much the same was true of the brother knights who were caught up in the initial wave of arrests - unlike the elite warriors who fought so hard in the Middle East, the brothers stationed in the West were mostly administrators, and those who were not were most often wounded brothers, broken in mind or body, recuperating in a place they knew (or at least thought) to be safe.

The Order's headquarters in Paris were an exception. They were fortified and would have been capable of putting up a limited defence if they had been ready.



## SEX, LIES, AND VELLUM

The suppression of the Templars was the most extraordinary story of the Middle Ages and the confessions the Templar knights made as their Order was being dissolved make incredibly compelling reading: sex and heresy, demons and idolatry, monks and magic, riches and power, cannibalism and sorcery.

Disappointingly, however, almost none of it was true. One stressed Templar, brother Bernard of Parma, was so scared - and hence so highly motivated - that he made up what was an almost entirely new religion in his efforts to appease his torturers. The Order existed to worship an idol implausibly called 'Maguineth', he said - a name presumably derived from 'Mahumet' or 'Muhammad'. The previously devout recruits to the Templar Order were expected to give all their money to this idol and were - one imagines - encouraged not to tell their friends and relatives that this was what they were doing.

There was a very tangible upside to this devil worship. This idol would, in return for their devotion and sacrifices, save the lives of the brothers. But, and Bernard was clearly scraping the barrel at this point, it was also very useful in performing far more pedestrian acts - it was good for germinating flowers, for instance, and it also helped trees to grow more quickly. The slightly limp and disappointing ending to the confession suggests strongly that brother Bernard's desperate imagination was running on empty by this time. Not surprisingly, few other Templars seem to have been aware of this parallel religion that was supposedly at the heart of the Order.

In fact, the charges of idolatry that were brought against the Templars were so absurd that they now appear ludicrous. Only the most gullible or credulous of judges - or, more cynically, those who already knew what their verdict was - would take the forced testimony and other 'evidence' seriously.

*For our Satanic Templars, we used Gripping Beast's Hexenjager and Order Militant Fanatics. This photo also features our Giants in Miniature Dante figure.*



But they were completely unprepared. The 'Demon Wars', as we are fancifully calling them, started as an undeclared raid, an unannounced putsch conducted with overwhelming force. The Templars, as the French king had planned, were taken by surprise.

In practice, most of the 'action' involved in the suppression consisted of stunned and unarmed men - often elderly non-combatants - being arrested, tortured, and imprisoned - and then later executed. I often feel there is a parallel between the end of the Templars and the Valkyrie conspiracy of 1944. Both are compelling and fascinating sideshows in already intriguing periods. But they are both also tantalisingly difficult to wargame because of the lack of military action involved - and hence the more satisfying results that can be achieved by turning it into a fantasy scenario. That doesn't mean the history lacks interest however!

### SHOCKING ACCUSATIONS

The sins of the Templars were a huge surprise to everyone - there was no backdrop of significant complaints about devil worship, heresy, or any other major misdemeanours. Some of the same monks who were tried, tortured, and later executed, were on royal service, helping the king of France's officials. When the order for the suppression was issued, some arrested Templars had to be escorted back to Paris by the very people they were helping.

The Order was entirely unprepared for the accusations put to them and the combination of shock, dislocation, and torture - particularly the latter - was overwhelming. Almost everyone, from the master down to the newest novice, confessed to everything. After the shock had passed, however, the Order gradually started to regroup and defend itself. By the Spring of 1310 no less than 600 Templars had retracted their initial confessions. The trumped-up charges of devil worship and satanism were so patently absurd that their defence soon began to gain momentum.

But recanting was even more dangerous than failing to confess in the first place. Once a confession had been made, any backsliding laid one open to charges of having become a 'relapsed heretic' - or behaving, as the Jesuits so vividly used to say, like a 'dog returning to its vomit'. And the penalty for such a relapse was death, potentially in the most horrible way. King Philip and his lawyers acted swiftly to stop this resurgence in its tracks. Fifty-four of the Templar retractors were reclassified as 'lapsed heretics' based on the defence that they were trying to mount - they were burnt at the stake in Paris as an example to anyone else who might think about resistance.

The defence of the Order collapsed as the survivors realised that any attempt to achieve legal recourse was only going to end in death. The Templars'

remaining brothers were either sent to other monasteries to live out their lives in obscurity or submitted to heavy penances.

### TROUBLE AT THE TOP

There remained the issue of the Templar leadership. On 18 March 1314 a special council was convened in Paris, to conclude the matter once and for all. The four main leaders of the Order were put on trial in front of royal and papal representatives and sentenced to life imprisonment. "Since these four, without exception, had publicly and openly confessed the crimes which had been imputed to them," wrote the monkish continuator of the chronicle of William of Nangis, "they were judged to be thrust into harsh and perpetual imprisonment".

Two of them, Geoffrey of Gonneville and Hugh of Piraud, accepted the sentence. But the master of the Order, James of Molay, and Geoffrey of Charney, the master of the Templars in Normandy, preferred to recant the confessions they had made under duress despite the obvious consequences - they declared their personal innocence, together with that of the entire Order. The last of the Templars did not play the parts of victims or heretics as meekly as they were supposed to. On the contrary, they "were seen to be so prepared to sustain the fire with easy mind and will that they brought from all those who saw them much admiration and surprise for the constancy of their death and final denial".



*Above: A Templar and Defender trade magical blows. Visit the Wi website for a guide on making these effects.*

Talk of last-minute curses and threats spread quickly around Paris and, in part, inspired the fantasy elements of this article. Ultimately James of Molay and Geoffrey of Charney were cherished as martyrs. Giovanni Villani, the famous Florentine chronicler, wrote that on “the night after the said master and his companion had been martyred, their ashes and bones were collected as sacred relics by the friars and other religious persons, and carried away to holy places”.

They, and perhaps the whole Order, had their weaknesses - but at least they had the decency to die well!

### CATAclysm AND CONSPIRACY

Contrary to the glamour and secrecy surrounding the Templars, the answer to their enduring reputation and the thousand conspiracy theories they have inspired, lies in acts that are astonishingly trivial and mundane.

The Templar records were lost soon after the order was suppressed. Their rival, and extremely similar, military Order, the Hospitallers, found a new role. They tried to adapt, and they were - slightly - less arrogant than the Templars. The Hospitallers survived and so did their records; the disputes they lay out are often very different, some are trivial, some less so, but they all share one quality - they are colossally boring! They are the dregs of old arguments, the dull everyday records of landownership and privilege compiled by monastic orders with nothing better to do. The one thing they do not give a scope for, however, is conspiracy. With records as prosaic, venal, and dull as this, the scope for paranoid fantasies is almost zero.

With the Templars, however, it was very different. Almost nothing remains. We have only two surviving documents from their records relating to the Latin East - and even these are both copies rather than originals. The Order's most critical archives, the ones that would have shown links with all manner of conspiracies - devil worship, the Holy Grail, or the Shroud of Turin, for instance - have vanished.

Their destruction was more than just a sad historical footnote, or a nuisance for academics. The lack of real records created a vacuum. All that were left were a few stray scraps, the Templar confessions and their trial papers - the frightened, self-serving testaments of broken men, desperate to please their torturers. These were men eager to confirm any mad occult theory their inquisitors wanted to hear about, no matter how crazy or far-fetched. These fantastical theories have multiplied exponentially over the years - a phenomenon which is, of course, broadly in line with the growth of the internet.

The trial of the Templars was so absurd that it would be funny if it were not so sad. For many of the brothers, it was a personal tragedy. But even more depressingly, it was an inglorious and shoddy end to an Order that had been a home and inspiration to generations of Europe's bravest knights. The crusades would continue, in one form or another, long after Philip and his show trials were just a distant memory. But with the destruction of the Templars, the spirit of crusading would never be the same.

An era of extraordinary passions had come to an end.

*Scenery by Gale Force Nine. Gaming Mat by Deep Cut Studios. Figures (mainly) by Gripping Beast.*



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# JUSTICE LEAGUE TOWER ON THE TABLETOP



Tony Harwood builds a great looking tabletop tower inspired by a viewing of *Justice League*.

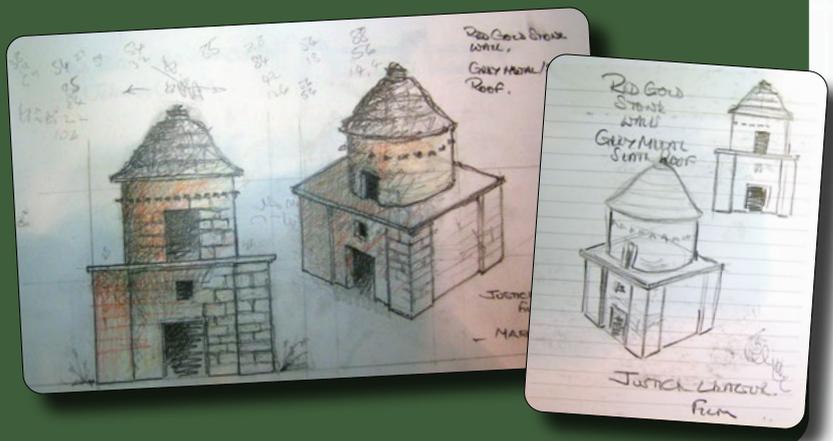
Terrain building inspiration comes from unexpected places sometimes, such as this 'blink and you'll miss it' tower from the 2017 DC film *Justice League*. It's on screen for less than 30 seconds; however, the first time I saw the film in 2020, I annoyed my wife by continually pausing the film so I could produce some simple sketches.

The model is based on the smaller of three similar structures seen in the film. I have no idea what the buildings are meant to be - they look like temples or administration buildings - but can see that they'd probably fit well on many a tabletop setup for various periods.

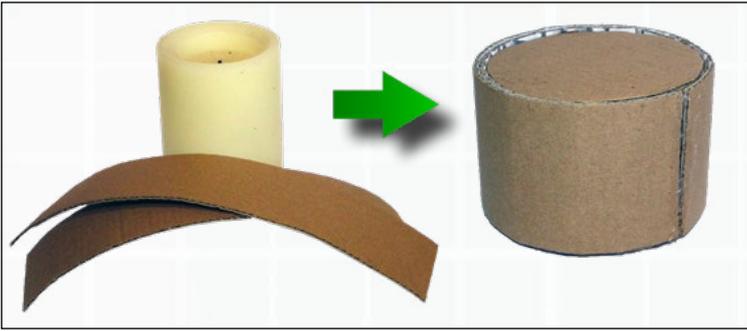
I built the model to accompany 28mm scale miniatures, and the basing style is themed to fit in with my gaming/display board. It was constructed from basic materials: corrugated cardboard, foamboard, and egg box card for added detail.

## INSPIRATION AND PLANNING

These two sketches show how I develop my working plans for models. The simple pencil sketch was done while watching the film and the second coloured sketch refined the design. The various pencil notes were made while watching the film and doing further planning, adding the model's dimensions prior to construction.



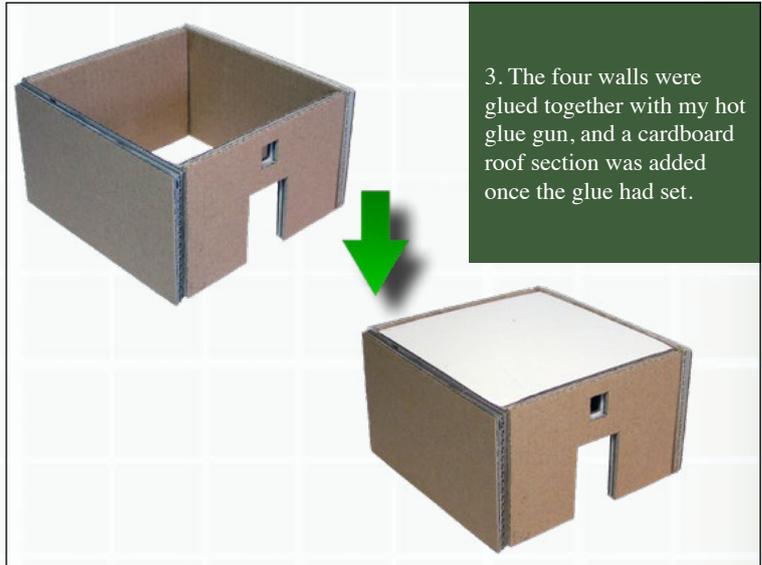
## CONSTRUCTION AND INITIAL DETAILING



1. I started with the upper round tower of the build as I thought this would be the most difficult part to reproduce. The tower walls are built from corrugated cardboard. To help with accurate shaping, I formed it around a battery-operated candle, gluing it together with my hot glue gun. The roof top was also cut from corrugated cardboard and added on top.



2. The tower walls were built from two layers of high-quality corrugated cardboard (I used the packing case that came with an electrical appliance). The main shapes, window, and door areas were cut out with a snap-off bladed craft knife.



3. The four walls were glued together with my hot glue gun, and a cardboard roof section was added once the glue had set.



4. The walls were detailed with some 5mm thick foam board to produce the distinctive corner buttresses. I used a mixture of superglue and PVA glue to ensure a firm bond.



5. I used more 5mm thick foamboard to make the roof, allowing a slight overlap along all edges as detailed in the initial sketch.

*Two parts not glued together.*



6. The whole model was then covered with strips of torn newspaper, glued in place with PVA glue. I find that this simple technique produces strong but light model cores on which I can then start to add detail or surface texture with no worries about damaging the structural integrity of the model.

### MATERIALS USED

- Corrugated cardboard
- Newspaper
- Foamboard
- Egg box card
- Insulation foam
- Plastic card
- Thick card
- Toilet roll card
- Plastic button
- DAS modelling clay

Two parts not glued together.



7. I cut the doorway from the upper round tower and covered the exposed edges with more torn newspaper and PVA glue.

It may not be too apparent in this image, but I have also thickened up the lower walls by adding a 5mm thick internal wall to the interior. This is most noticeable around the doorway. This additional foamboard adds to the strength and, in particular, the look of the piece. I felt this was important because the doorway walls previously looked a little too thin.



8. I am a firm believer in adding as much surface detail and texture to my models as I can before painting. The first step here was to add slabs to the roof; these are made from toilet paper rolls that are cut up and flattened, before being glued down with thick PVA glue.



9. Further detailing (even though it won't be easily seen from a distance) is added to the interior with more torn newspaper and PVA glue mix cladding.

## EGG BOX CARD CLADDING



1. I have used egg box card (the flat sections of a pulped paper or standard UK card egg box) cut into regular rectangles to model the individual stone blocks of the tower. The texture of this kind of card is helpful in creating a stone look.

These rectangles were each trimmed and detailed before being glued in place with thick PVA glue, making sure to line up the edges around corners.



2. Egg box card cladding continued until all the lower walls were completed. I have varied the egg box card and even included a couple of thick card stones to add variety to the thickness and finish of the cut stone blocks; for example, the lintel over the main doorway. It takes a little longer to create details like this, but is well worth it.



3. The upper round tower was clad in the same way.

I have also 'edged' the stone slabs of the square building roof with some toilet roll card.

I should add that at this stage the upper and lower tower are kept separate to make painting a little easier.

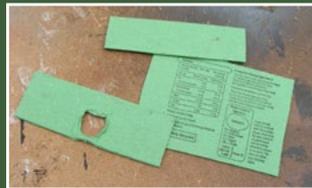


4. After filling in any obvious gaps with some DAS modelling clay and filler, I have painted the whole model with a mix of ready-mixed filler, PVA glue, and grey acrylic paint to which I have added some very fine sand. This finish has many benefits: it acts as a sealing coat to the newspaper, adds additional texturing to the cardboard walls, and the grey will not be as stark as my more usual white primer should I accidentally miss a bit when painting the model.

#### WORKING WITH EGG BOX CARD

I first became aware of this material and its use in model making when watching a YouTube tutorial on building 1/12 scale dollhouses. The tutorial detailed how you could model bricks and garden flagstones from it due to the texture.

In the UK fresh eggs are usually sold in cartons, containing six eggs (pictured) but you can also find cartons that hold more. The cartons are manufactured by spraying pulped paper or card over a mould before it is dried by heat. This gives the cartons two distinct sides; a smooth surface next to the mould, and a more knobby or rough surface - it is this which is ideal as a modelling material.



I cut the lid top and lid sides out with a pair of scissors and store them until needed. As with many hobby related items, never throw out or recycle things non-hobbyists might consider only fit for the bin!

You can glue egg box card with hot glue, superglue, or my preferred method - thick PVA glue. The great benefit of egg box card is that it is free and can be easily textured; it is also very light and takes paint easily. I have even used the machined or smooth opposing surface to model metal doors or furniture.



Above: Strips of egg box card can be used to model timber lengths. Just cut the card into strips and texture them more if needed after they have been glued in place.



Above: You can use the card to model stone blocks as well as random flagstones.



Above: The card also works as a great roof tile material, either at single thicknesses or doubled-up. Here they are further textured by sealing with a ready-mixed filler, PVA glue, and acrylic paint mix.

## BASECOATING

I gave the whole building a basecoat of mid brown, mixed from Ochre, Burnt Umber, and Grey acrylic paint. This was applied in several light coats to ensure a good foundation for subsequent painting. The inside of the upper tower got the same paint mix before being glued in place, filling any gaps with DAS modelling clay and touching-up exposed parts with more browns.

I added the protruding stone blocks around the upper round tower at this point too - they are small sections of 5mm thick plasticard glued in place with superglue. If you have a go at this build yourself, I suggest adding them before you start painting!

You'll notice that I've left the top unpainted - this is because I'll add an extra element over it later.



## BASING



1. The base was constructed from some spare 3mm thick plasticard, and detailed with card flagstones before being painted. The main building was then glued in place, and the groundwork built-up with DAS modelling clay over diluted PVA glue to ensure a firm bond and avoid any shrinkage.

2. The groundwork was further textured with sieved stones, fine sand, and some sawdust applied over PVA glue, then sealed with diluted PVA glue that I mix with 'Wet Water'. This is water to which I add some flow improver or washing-up liquid to reduce water tension and ensure the glue secures all the loose texturing.



## PAINING THE TOWER



1. Painting began with an all-over coat of orange/red acrylic paint, which was 'scrubbed on' with a large, stiff brush. The different colours were mixed on the model to make subtle tonal changes across the surfaces. I lightened the tone and drybrushed it onto the model to add more volume.



2. I picked out random stone blocks in both lighter and darker colours - the effect looks a little stark, but after more drybrushing and washes, it will be softened.



3. After applying more drybrushing with a mixture of different colours, the walls are now looking more natural but still missing a little something so ....



4. ... The next stage is to 'splatter' the walls with a mixture of different coloured, watered-down acrylic paints. I use a stiff brush and 'flick' the bristles with a couple of wooden cocktail sticks. I recommend practicing this technique 'off model' as it can be a little difficult to perfect. It is also very messy!



5. The groundwork was painted in my usual Citadel Snakebite Leather colour mix. This old style GW paint is very difficult to acquire, but can be mixed from Ochre and yellow, and there are conversion sheets online that suggest other brand alternatives. Drybrushing the rough areas with a little white added to the mix, and picking out individual stones in grey (highlighted with white), makes a more natural look, then a couple of brown washes finish things off.

## BUILDING AND PAINTING THE ROOF



1. I constructed the domed roof from an offcut of insulating foam glued to a card disc. The foam was far from the correct shape and needed some work. First, I trimmed it with a large knife, then sanded it down with abrasive paper and sanding sticks until I had the unique domed shape. The sanding was a little messy, so this was done in the garden rather than in the workshop.

2. Like the main building and tower, I used pieces of torn newspaper applied over PVA glue to clad and strengthen the foam. It also filled up some of the areas where I had left gaps in the previous stage.



3. The roof was then coated with the ready-mixed filler, PVA glue, and grey acrylic paint mix.



4. After test fitting the roof to the tower, I added a plastic button to its top and sanded the surface to smooth out the finish.

I used the point of a pencil to score some detail of texture into the roof, then highlighted the edges with some lighter grey paint before adding rain streaks created from watered-down acrylic paint. The roof section was glued in place with a mix of superglue and PVA glue.

After varnishing the whole model with some Galleria matt varnish, I added ground foam and static grass tufts to the base, creating some realistic foliage.

The finished Justice League Tower is 140mm wide and deep and 190mm tall; it is mounted on a base 240mm wide and deep.

Even though this model is based on a tower that appears for less than a minute in the film, I felt that it was worth both sketching and building. The model could have many uses and feature in a wide variety of different gaming genres both historical and fantasy.



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# LAST STAND AT DRAGONMARK PASS

Daniel Mersey presents a scenario and army lists for using North Star's *Oathmark* miniatures range in his *Dragon Rampant* game.

When I sat down to design *Dragon Rampant*, the fantasy adaptation of my *Lion Rampant* medieval big skirmish rules, I was searching for a modern on-tabletop experience inspired by the fantasy games that got me started: old school fantasy gaming, if you will.

When I first saw North Star's lovely 28mm plastic fantasy miniatures (the official miniatures of Joseph A. McCullough's *Oathmark: Battles of the Lost Age* wargame rules), their styling placed me right back into that happy and innocent era of fantasy worlds as viewed through *Fighting Fantasy* books, *Dungeons & Dragons*, *Tunnels & Trolls*, and the adverts from manufacturers in my dad's *Military Modelling* magazine. These new North Star miniatures evoked a real feeling of 1970s and 1980s fantasy gaming without all the silly oversized weapons, spikes, power dressing with shoulder pads, and so on that came later to the fantasy genre. So, for me, they were a perfect fit for some classic, Olde Worlde *Dragon Rampant* armies, straight out of the pages of the fiction and adventures I grew up with.

With these plastic miniatures in mind, I set about designing a new scenario that evoked that era - a simple to play scenario with good tactical decisions required and a classic fantasy backstory that makes you really want to win. After some delightful pondering and reminiscing, I settled on an epic fight to turn back the enemy's evil (or good!) hordes at a steep sided mountain valley: Dragonmark Pass.

## ARMY LISTS

This scenario can be played with any rules and miniatures, but I enjoyed putting together a few *Dragon Rampant* warbands based on the *Oathmark* plastic boxes and metal blisters sold by North Star. You could even use the *Oathmark* rules for this scenario, of course!

Feel free to choose from these warbands for the scenario's attacker and defender, mix and match them for armies of alliance, or use your own beloved *Dragon Rampant* warband.

For such a momentous battle, players may agree to deploy warbands costing 36 points or 48 points instead of the usual 24 points. Increase the dimensions of the valley and cliffs accordingly.

Select your 24 / 36 / 48 points warbands from the following lists. The beauty of the North Star range is that you'll need little more than two plastic box sets and a blister pack or two of metal minis to get everything you need! It's easy to match up the unit

descriptions against the North Star boxes, but the folks at *Wi* have also taken photos of the *Oathmark* figures, to match up to these lists. Very handy!

You can purchase upgrades as usual, such as magical arms & armour, wizardlings, and the gamble of employing a Cleric in case your opponent marches into the valley at the head of an Undead army.

#### ARMY OF THE DWARVES

- Lord and bodyguard @ 6 AP: Elite Foot and Leader
- Dwarves with heavy armour and two-handed weapons @ 6 AP: Elite Foot
- Dwarves with hand weapons @ 6 AP: Offensive Heavy Foot
- Dwarves with spears @ 4 AP: Heavy Foot
- Dwarves with bows @ 4 AP: Light Missiles

North Star figures needed: Dwarf Infantry box set, Dwarf Heavy Infantry box set, and Dwarf King, Wizard and Musician blister.



#### ARMY OF THE ELVES

- Prince and bodyguard @ 6 AP: Elite Foot and Leader
- Armoured elves with spears @ 4 AP: Heavy Foot
- Unarmoured elves with hand weapons @ 5 AP: Offensive Light Foot
- Elves with bows @ 6 AP: Sharpshooter Light Missiles
- Watchers @ 2 AP: Scouts (add Invisibility @ +3 AP)

North Star figures needed: Elf Infantry box set, Elf Light Infantry box set, and Elf King, Wizard and Musician blister, Elf Light Infantry Champions blister.



### ARMY OF THE GOBLINS

- Warlord and bodyguard @ 6 AP: Offensive Heavy Foot and Leader
- Goblins with spears @ 3 AP: Light Foot
- Goblins with hand weapons @ 4 AP: Bellicose Foot
- Goblins with bows @ 4 AP: Light Missiles
- Pricklers @ 2 AP: Scouts
- Wolf riders with hand weapons @ 6 AP: Heavy Riders with Fear
- Wolf riders with bows @ 6 AP: Light Riders with Fear

North Star figures needed: Two Goblin Infantry box sets, Goblin Wolf Riders box set, and Great Goblin, Shaman, Drummer blister.



Warlord and bodyguard



Goblins with hand weapons



Wolf riders with hand weapons

### ARMY OF THE HUMANS

- Earl and bodyguard @ 4 AP: Heavy Foot and Leader
- Humans with spears @ 3 AP: Light Foot (may upgrade to Heavy Foot @ +1 AP)
- Humans with hand weapons @ 5 AP: Offensive Light Foot
- Humans with bows @ 4 AP: Light Missiles
- Cavalry with hand weapons @ 4 AP: Heavy Riders
- Cavalry with bows @ 4 AP: Light Riders

North Star figures needed: Human Infantry box set, Human Cavalry box set, and Human King, Wizard and Musician blister.



Earl and bodyguard



Humans with hand weapons



Humans with bows



Cavalry with bows



Undead Duke with ghostly banners



Skeletons with bows

#### ARMY OF THE UNDEAD

- Undead Duke with ghostly banners @ 8 AP: Elite Foot and Leader with Undead (No Feelings) and Fear (Leader trait: Unstoppable March of the Dead)
- Skeletons with spears @ 3 AP: Light Foot with Undead (No Feelings)
- Skeletons with hand weapons @ 6 AP: Bellicose Foot with Undead (No Feelings) & Fear
- Skeletons with bows @ 4 AP: Light Missiles with Undead (No Feelings)
- Skeleton horde @ 1 AP: Ravenous Horde with Undead (No Feelings)

North Star figures needed: Skeleton Infantry box set, Revenant Infantry box set, and Necromancer, Undead King and Drummer blister.



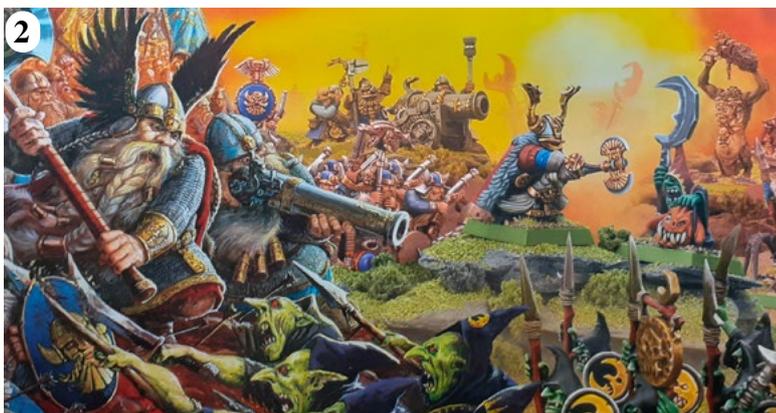
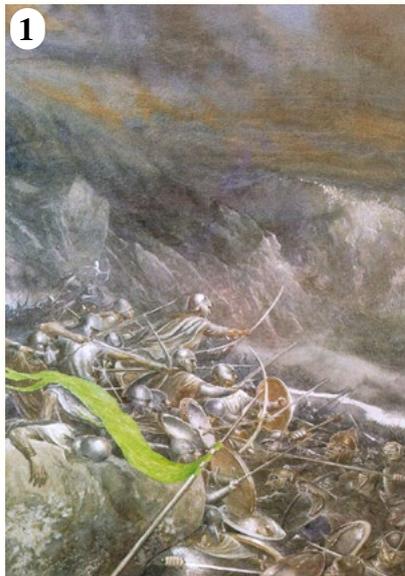
Skeleton horde

#### CLASSIC MATCH-UPS

Here are just a few ideas to get you going, straight out of the early years of fantasy fiction, world building, and wargaming (along with some increasingly modern examples that hark back to the fantasy classics)!

- Good versus Evil: Humans, Dwarves and Elves versus Goblins and Undead - as seen in ... too many to list! This is the classic fantasy, no grey area, bad is bad, good is good, kind of stuff! (1)
- Dwarves versus Elves - as seen in ... pretty much anything involving dwarves and elves! Tolkien's Middle Earth history has an enmity going back to the time the Dwarves murdered the Elf King Thingol of Doriath in the First Age.
- Dwarves versus Goblins - as seen in ... *Warhammer's* seventh edition box set *The Battle for Skull Pass*. (2)
- Humans versus Undead - as seen in ... think the desperate defence against the Ray Harryhausen classic living skeletons, raised from Hydra teeth in *Jason and the Argonauts*. For a more contemporary spin, the White Walker fights at Hardhome and Winterfell in *Game of Thrones*.
- Good version and evil version of the same armies - as seen in ... Good Dwarves versus Evil Dwarves, featuring truly ridiculously oversized helmets in the case of Games Workshop's original Chaos Dwarves. (3)

Right: Alan Lee's illustration of the Battle of Five Armies from *The Hobbit*.



Above: Dwarves take on goblins in this picture from the front of *The Battle for Skull Pass* box, showing both art and figures.



Above: Ludicrously tall hats are very in this season at Paris Fashion Week, we hear.

# SCENARIO: LAST STAND AT DRAGONMARK PASS

## BACKSTORY

Days of happiness have deserted the Olde Worlde. Storm clouds gather. Villagers mutter about strange omens. An army marches. All that stands between the gates of the kingdom and the enemy hordes is Dragonmark Pass: a steep-sided, narrow channel that cuts a safe path through the mountains.

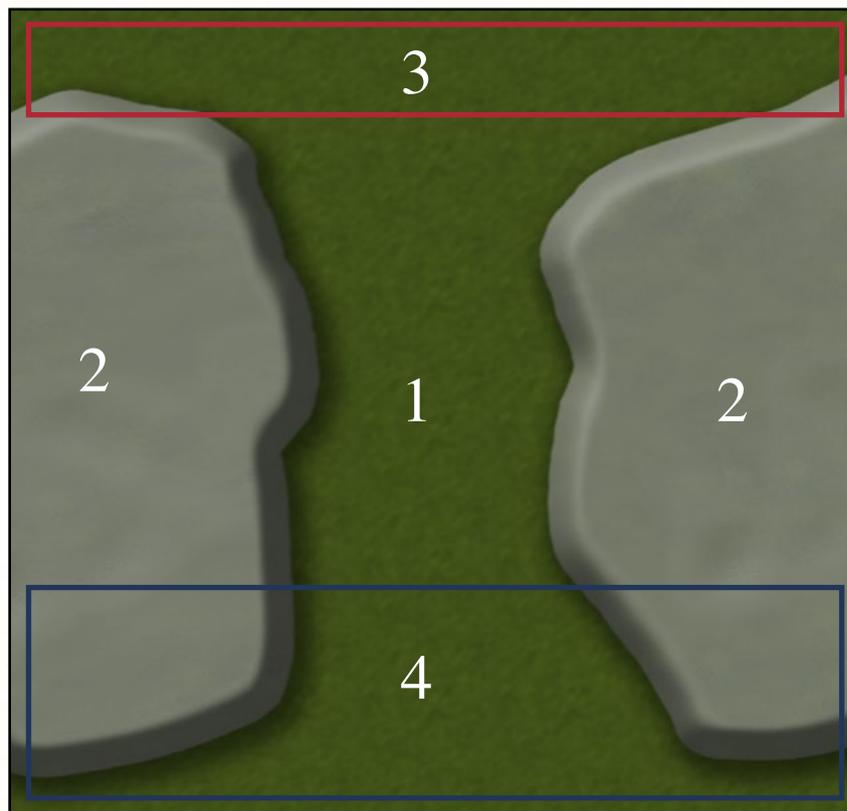
And all that stands at Dragonmark Pass is a small but worthy force of the kingdom's best warriors. If this warband can hold back the enemy's advance, it will gift precious time to prepare the kingdom's defence. But if the advancing horde's vanguard can bring swift victory in the pass, the whole of the kingdom lays undefended before them.

## TABLETOP LAYOUT

1: Valley level - this is open, good going, and approximately 18" wide. Keeping at least one of your units on the valley level is vital to winning the scenario.

2: Cliffs - any shaded area does not count as valley level and is again approximately 18" wide. Some areas of the cliffs should have rough terrain placed on them. The shadowed line is the cliff edge.

3: Attacker's deployment zone - 100% of the attacker's points must be deployed here.



4: Defender's deployment zone - up to 75% of the defender's points may be deployed at valley level, and the rest on the cliffs. In a 24 points *Dragon Rampant* game, this is 18 points of units in the valley.



## GAMING GUIDE

Make sure that the areas at valley level and the areas of cliff (including the slope up it) are clearly defined.

The attacker takes the first move. Play until one side has claimed victory - there's no set number of turns in this scenario.

No unit may move across, up, or down the cliff edges; if a unit has to move across the edge, it is removed from the game counting as routed - that fall is going to hurt! Units can shoot down from the cliff edge if the whole unit is deployed along it, but no units may shoot up at the cliffs from the valley level. Missile shots from one side of the valley to the other are allowed, as are shots along your current cliff. (But see the next paragraph.)

The entrance to each range of cliffs is an upwards slope reaching a crest at the table's centre point, so units fighting on the slope will count as uphill/downhill accordingly. When shooting, a unit can shoot on its own side of the crest but cannot shoot at a unit on the other side of the crest unless it is touching the crest line.

The cliffs can be represented by stones, rubble, or even string or some other linear marking to show the edge. I certainly don't have a tall valley model! But upon reflection, I could make a good argument for buying one now ....

To spice things up on the cliffs, you might choose to use the Dangerous Terrain rule from page 55 of the *Dragon Rampant* rulebook. Who knows what nasty surprises wait on the mountain's slopes?

## FROM FANTASY TO REALITY

As a happy side note, this scenario has plenty of uses outside of the fantasy genre. The valleys of Afghanistan immediately spring to mind for colonial skirmishes with *The Men Who Would Be Kings* as well as more modern actions. Perhaps you've already considered deploying 300 Spartan hoplites at the 'hot gates' of a certain valley in the Greco-Persian wars ...

Once the *Wi* team had their Dragonmark Pass board set up, they couldn't resist getting out some ACW troops and sending Wilder's Brigade into action!



## VICTORY

The scenario ends immediately when one warband no longer has a unit on the valley level (anywhere on the table that is not classed as the cliffs). The opposing side wins.

- A win for the defender means that precious time has been gained and the kingdom's army musters in time to throw back the invasion.
- A win for the attacker means that a swift advance occurs, before the kingdom's army can act - the kingdom is yours and it's time for a new king!

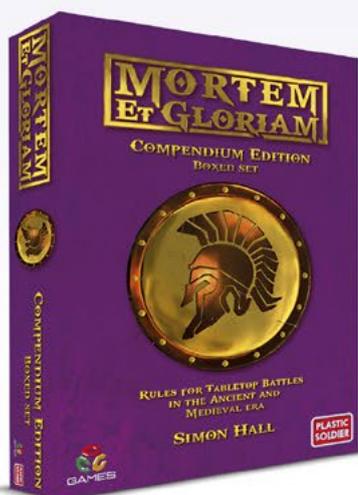


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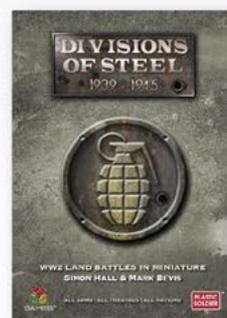
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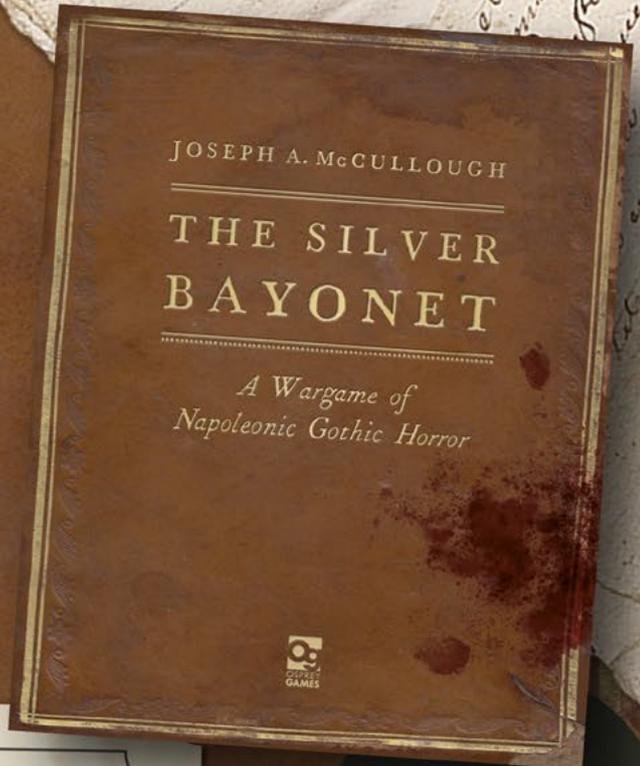
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**WINTER  
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As the wars of Napoleon ravage Europe, chaos and fear reign and the darkness that once clung to the shadows has been emboldened. Supernatural creatures take advantage of the havoc, striking out at isolated farms, villages, and even military units. Most people dismiss reports of these slaughters as the rantings of madmen or the lies of deserters, but a few know better...

*The Silver Bayonet* is a skirmish wargame of gothic horror set during the Napoleonic Wars. The game can be played solo, co-operatively, or competitively, with players progressing through a series of interlinked adventures. It is a game of action and adventure, where musket and sabre meet tooth and claw.

Written by Joseph A. McCullough  
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# BLUT UND EISEN

## FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR RAILWAYS



Colonel (Retired) Bill Gray looks at the railways of the Franco-Prussian war on campaign and on the tabletop.

Think of the Franco-Prussian War and images of a less barbarous American Civil War may come to mind, with tactics succumbing to the overpowering onslaught of technology. The words *Zündnadelgewehr*, *Chassepot*, *Krupp Stahlkanone*, and *Mitrailleuse* immediately surface, yet more radical investigation concludes that perhaps the real reason for the Germans' eventual victory, and the real heroes who delivered it, were neither Krupp breach loaders nor Prussian fusiliers.

Pour yourself some Jägermeister or a good Schnapps and let's talk a bit about Germany's vaunted but overlooked Eisenbahntruppen (Railway Troops or EBT) and the rail system, the construction of which was unique and drove battlefield tactics in a very unexpected direction.

### MEN OF IRON - THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The man who drove this military innovation was - sit down for this one - not German, nor French. The gent was a Scottish-born American, Union Brevet

Major General Daniel C. McCallum, the Military Director and Superintendent of US Railroads during the ACW. He collected not less than 24,000 souls from civilian railways, put them into uniform after appropriate military training, and organized a pool of railway construction units to attach to military forces in the field. Their jobs included repairing the sabotaged rail of a retreating enemy, destroying friendly rail under similar situations, repairing equipment, operating enemy railways, and even building railroads - around 2,000 km of them - when necessary.

Admittedly, most European militaries (Prussia included) looked at ACW tactical fare as nothing more than a bar room brawl between two (very drunk) armed mobs. But to his credit, Generalfeldmarschall Graf Helmuth Karl Bernhard von Moltke identified railway operations as more of a technical than military subject and became keenly interested. After all, when the Union invaded the Confederacy, they found a railway system that was very sparse given the enormous size of the country; yet

very fragile as well, since most southern systems were designed for short-haul operations. Somehow, McCullum made it work; von Moltke was impressed.

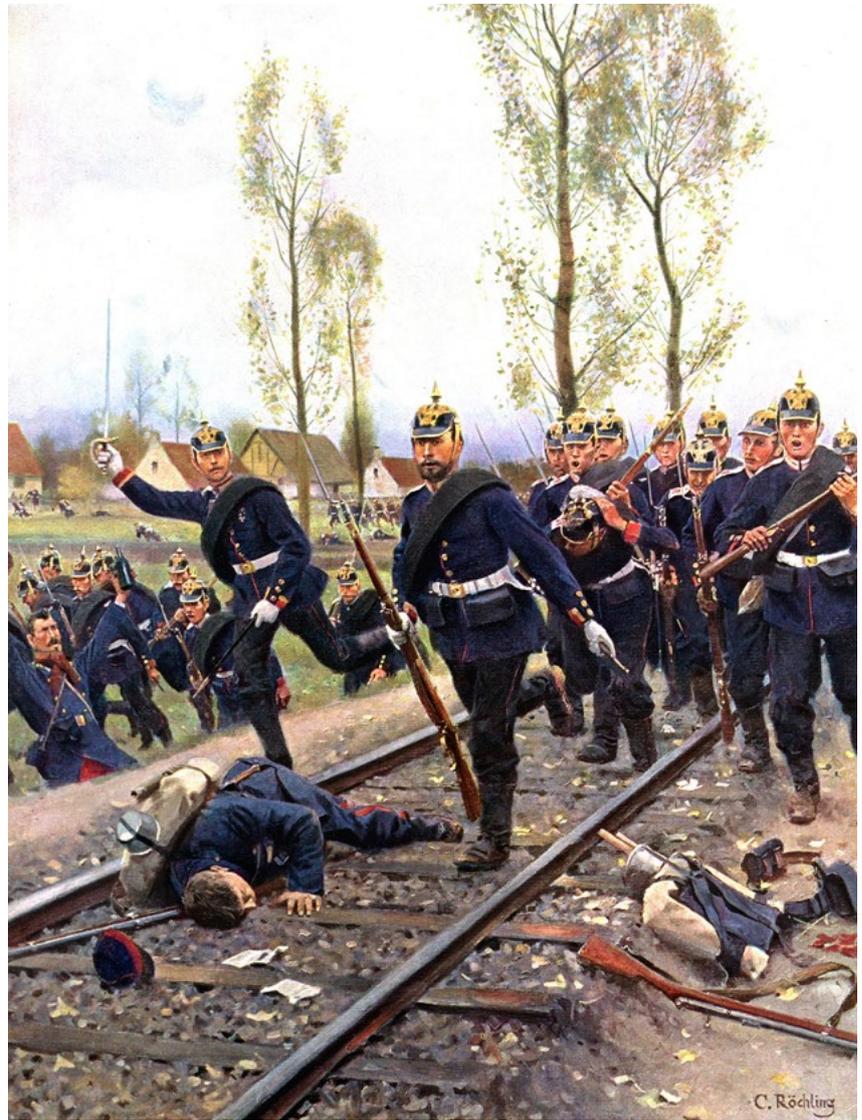
Accordingly, and as part of his general staff organization, von Moltke created a permanent joint military-civilian commission as part of the *Haupt-Eisenbahnbüro* in Berlin. He then established a series of individual line commissions under the Trade Ministry, reporting directly to the Prussian General Staff, with one to manage each east-west railway line to include coordinating the crossing of national borders of all states within the North German Confederation. These *Betriebskommissionen* also took over responsibility for operating enemy railroads captured as friendly forces advanced. A Weapons & Warfare website article noted:

*"The line commissions remained inactive until the outbreak of war, when their first task was to issue emergency schedules to the key stations along the line. These schedules, which had been prepared in advance, were far more*

*detailed and sophisticated than a simple timetable, setting out precisely the composition of each train, the number of men to be moved and even refreshment stops: The execution of these schedules was to be so precise that many trains would be able to make connections en route, dropping and attaching cars to ensure that units would be complete, in their order of battle, when their trains arrived at the concentration areas."*

The completion of the Schnitzel version of McCallum's operation seems to have occurred on 10 August 1869 when a 90-man *Feldeisenbahn-Abteilung* was created as part of the Prussian Guard Pioneer Battalion. Designed to do exactly what their Union counterparts accomplished, this was soon followed by five more railway battalions, one for each army, plus a sixth with the Bavarian army; the powerhouse kingdom of the South German Confederation. While the formations maintained only a cadre in peacetime, upon mobilization, reservists with railway skills raised the strength up to 20 civilian engineers, four officers, and 200 foremen or soldiers.

Their work proved so successful - they literally built a brand-new railroad to circumvent the besieged fortress of Metz - that in later years their strength was increased to eleven officers, 272 men, and five vehicles. As an aside, uniforms for these doughty lads were the same as their respective country's military pioneers outside of differing badges and button markings - handy!



*Above: Prussian troops make their way down a French railway track. Painting by Carl Röchling.*

*French Chasseurs à Pied and artillery ambush a Prussian train. All figures by Perry Miniatures, train and track by Sarissa, embankment built for the article.*





Finally, and in the interest of fairness, we must also note that von Moltke was lucky. He had a veritable clone working in France, Maréchal Adolphe Niel, the Minister of War, whose “intentions were quite similar and his vision no less lucid.” Niel was fully supported by Napoleon III, but his untimely death and the suspicious resistance from an anti-imperial, conservative legislature ultimately meant a centralized railway command within the French military never happened. When the French created their own corps *franc de chemin de fer* on 22 July 1870, it was too little, too late. Later permanent units, created by the Cadre Law of 1875, copied the Prussian system down to the last rail spike.

### ROADS OF IRON - THE BATTLEFIELD SURPRISE

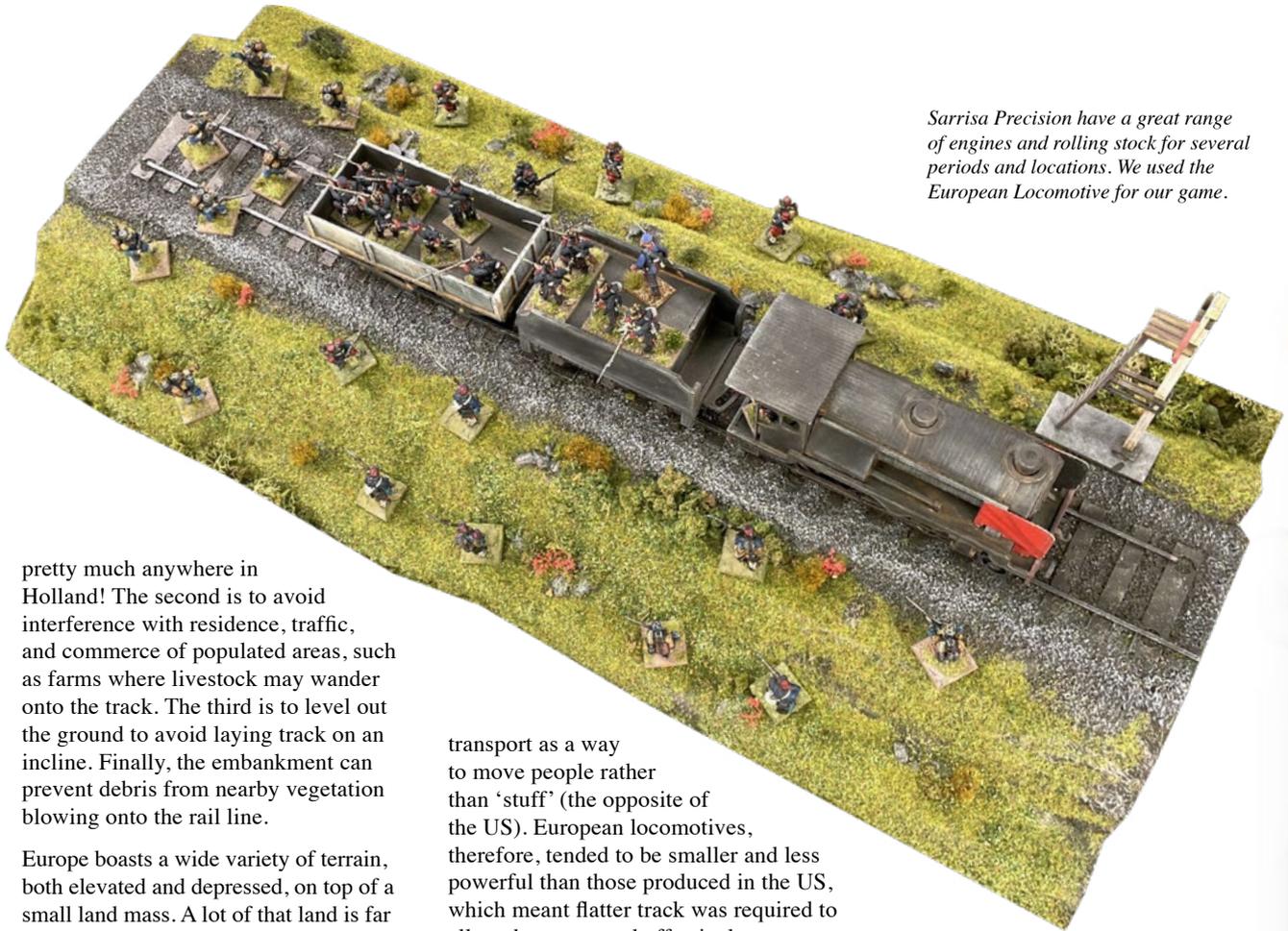
The primary objective of both sides in the Franco-Prussian War was the destruction of their opponent’s army. For the Germans, however, a primary goal on the way to completing that mission was control of friendly and enemy railroads. This was something the ACW had hammered home and is why EBTs were created. What von Moltke and others missed, however, was the battlefield impact rail had as a force multiplier (wargamer translation - die roll modifiers, or DRMs). The way Americans built railroads was very different to the way Europeans built railroads in a general

engineering sense. The presence of a railroad on a European battlefield in 1870 could have a direct impact on the battlefield tactics used, something rarely seen in the ACW.

European railroads tended to be built on the top of large earthen embankments, often as high as 30 feet (sometimes more), while American railroads were laid generally at ground level. There are three or four important reasons why a railroad track might be elevated on what is essentially an earthen berm. The first is to elevate the track above perpetually wet lowlands or other areas prone to flooding during harsh weather. This includes swamps, marshes, or



Above: French troops destroying railway lines.



*Sarrisa Precision have a great range of engines and rolling stock for several periods and locations. We used the European Locomotive for our game.*

pretty much anywhere in Holland! The second is to avoid interference with residence, traffic, and commerce of populated areas, such as farms where livestock may wander onto the track. The third is to level out the ground to avoid laying track on an incline. Finally, the embankment can prevent debris from nearby vegetation blowing onto the rail line.

Europe boasts a wide variety of terrain, both elevated and depressed, on top of a small land mass. A lot of that land is far less 'flat' than America, and European weather is, on average, much harsher. In 1861, a lot of the US was still unsettled real estate, with many population-light areas. Europe, on the other hand, had been fully cultivated for hundreds of years prior to the first English settlement in Jamestown; there was little chance of a rail line running long distances and not crossing paths with a small town, farm, or livestock in Europe.

Centuries of European development also meant that it had a developed river, canal, and road system. That led European nations to emphasise rail

transport as a way to move people rather than 'stuff' (the opposite of the US). European locomotives, therefore, tended to be smaller and less powerful than those produced in the US, which meant flatter track was required to allow them to travel effectively.

All of this led to the building of large, high embankments to level out the turf the track was laid on. It also meant that any real estate with these rail 'embankments' in the neighborhood had - in effect - a mini *Danevirke* fortification line (see my article in *Wi405*) ready for use! These elongated earthen mounds could block line of fire and hide movement; they could disrupt movement for any unit trying to climb up the things and down the other side; yet they could speed movement across broken terrain if you advanced in road

column down their spines. As soldiers with Chassepots and Needle Guns no longer needed to stand up to shoot and could fire prone, even firing from the top of the mound afforded advantages.

It was, in fact, irony of the bloodiest sort that Germany's EBT, while instrumental in gaining ultimate victory from an operational perspective, pushed Prussian and allied armies towards areas where, in theory, the French could count on an ad hoc but effective obstacle system to assist their defense.



*Above: The storming of the railway embankment outside Orleans by the First Bavarian Corps on 11 October 1870.*



# BLUT UND EISENBAHN ON THE TABLETOP

## CAMPAIGNING

Translating EBT and railroad terrain to historical gaming can be done by making it an integral part of a campaign system - an operational level extra to your gaming with the primary purpose of generating tabletop scenarios.

A campaign allows players to modify history by deploying for eventual battle under more favorable conditions and with more resources than originally happened. Who could refuse the excitement of an extra French corps showing up at Mars-la-Tour, assuming operational maneuvering was up to snuff?

As such, players can create their own campaign system, but an easier solution for this (and other periods) is to use a traditional hex and counter boardgame that covers this Franco-German spat at the campaign level, at least as a base template. In fact, it was just such a game that piqued my interest in the EBT and military railroads in general. This was the old 1972 SPI game *Franco-Prussian War* by Jim Dunnigan, a double-blind system that had a complete rules section on using the EBT as the furthest point an army could use an enemy rail hex for supply or locomotive transport.



Above: Compass Games' *On to Paris*.

Other such games at this scale have been few and far between but include the S&T magazine game *Franco-Prussian War* from 2012 and Compass Games' *On to Paris* from 2016. Neither cover the subject well, though the latter does include rules for the EBT to construct new rail lines to bypass garrisoned French fortresses. A selling point of *On to Paris* is that its website offers free downloads of map art and all the rules.

I personally use the 1972 SPI game, modified with a different scale (10km per hex, one week per turn, units are corps or independent division) and custom rules. The limited intelligence option for this game is a blast and the map is very clean, with only major terrain, fortresses, and railways displayed - remember, the idea is not to win the campaign game per se, but simply use it as a way to generate scenarios. Within that context, campaign procedural emphasis should be keyed on making railway systems absolutely crucial, if not mandatory, for moving troops long distances and maintaining supply. Otherwise, your miniature army should be decremented or penalized on the tactical tabletop. This will mean most operational movement is directed to where railroads lay.



Above: SPI game *Franco-Prussian War* by Jim Dunnigan

### MODIFIERS FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

My considerations led to my campaign allowing:

- The French one EBT unit (the previously mentioned franc de chemin de fer) and the Germans seven; one for the Guard, one for the Bavarians, and five army level formations.
- A combat unit movement of eight hexes per turn. This meant that my EBT always moved four along contiguous rail hexes regardless of terrain.
- No enemy railway hex, including friendly tracks captured by the enemy, to be used for transport or supply unless a friendly EBT had moved through it to reclaim it. Four enemy rail hexes per turn (with a railroad crossing a major river counting as two hexes) per EBT could be converted for friendly use, with said hexes available for friendly transport and supply the turn after reclamation.
- An optional extra: German EBT (only) may build four contiguous hexes of new friendly rail per turn so long as it connects one rail line to another. This connector would be available for both supply and transport use the turn after created.

There was a little more to my mod than that - units had to be within so many hexes of a friendly rail line for supply, automatic sabotage of friendly rail hexes by retreating forces was assumed, and so on. So long as rules lawyers are kept in tow (high die being a very effective though seldom used arbitrator) the process seems to work quite well.

## BATTLEFIELD

Now that the EBT have driven your forces into battle, you have a couple of choices to test your tabletop mettle. Most Franco-Prussian War miniature rulesets come in two flavors: big conflicts or smaller scale battles.

For those large battles, where the primary unit is the brigade or regiment (e.g., Gravelotte - 18 August 1870 - with 301,132 total combatants and 1,252 guns), there is some question as to how much impact railroad embankments would have on a game, and admittedly rules, such as Bruce Weigle's excellent *1870* and *1871* product line, seem to downplay the impact to something akin to a linear obstacle.

For games where the basic infantry unit is the battalion, such as with David Waxtel's classic *They Died for Glory*, there is no question at all. Yes, this conflict was known for its huge engagements, but there were plenty of other smaller battles as well, especially after the war dragged on into the Republican phase. This means historical, campaign, or player designed pick-up games like Amiens (20 November 1870, 25,000 French and 43,000 Prussians) are easily gamed with battalions. Indeed, portions of larger battles can be carved out for play, while the skirmish around the Siege of Lichtenburg on 10 August 1870 had but 5,000 on the field total.

At this scale, the impact of railway embankments can be huge, and if your favorite ruleset does not account for this, here are some modifications to consider. Most concern DRMs a la Rich Hasenauer's *Regimental Fire & Fury*, so if you are familiar with this tome, or even the Brigade set, what is set out below can provide a flavor of what I am talking about. I would suggest, however, if the embankment historically was significantly less than 12 feet high, it should be counted as a decrement to movement only.



### MODIFIERS FOR YOUR GAMES

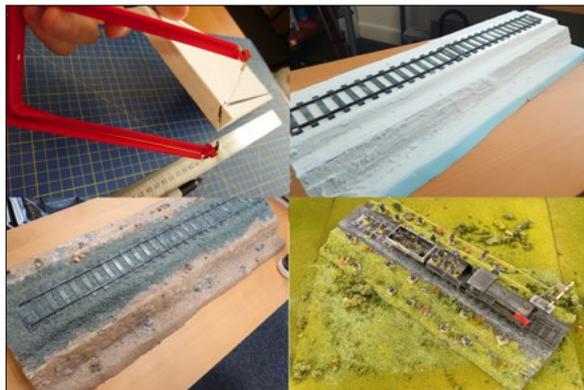
The following rules for Railroad Embankments can be used fully in your games, mixed, or modified to suit your own preferences or research.

- They block line of sight and line of fire, even detection and fire from higher elevations if the target unit is directly behind the mound.
- They disorder any unit trying to cross from one side to the other or moving down the spine of the embankment in any formation other than road column. Open order troops such as chasseurs à pied or Jägers are exempt from this penalty.
- They are considered rough terrain and movement over them is done at half movement rate.
- A spine negates the impact of any other terrain it goes through if a unit marches along it in road or march column.
- They disorder any enemy unit attacking a stationary friendly unit defending the embankment frontally. This disorder should be in addition to any already received.
- They are treated as medium cover for a defender being shot at frontally with small arms, and light cover for artillery. Here the assumption is that the defenders are on the other side of the embankment or lying prone on top of it.
- They allow any unit occupying them the same line of sight or line of fire advantages as a unit on elevated terrain such as a cliff or hill.
- They will silhouette units marching down spines or crossing from one side to the other, giving any enemy scheduled or opportunity fire a positive DRM.
- They may be considered too steep for artillery to be dragged from the bottom to the top, as specified by scenario.



### MAKING THE EMBANKMENT

WiPrime Members can head online to find out how our in-house Modeller Marc whittled up the railway embankment seen in the photos.



### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

It might be wise to note that the Franco-Prussian War was not a very casualty heavy war in comparison to earlier periods, which may be especially surprising given the technology used in combat. The speed in which casualties were taken more often caused units to go to ground or simply crack and flee rather than continue to take losses.

Make sure any use of a railroad embankment reflects this reality, then have fun! The use of this new iron battlefield obstacle historically will likely favor the French, and although it may not guarantee victory, it will make the Wurst warriors' triumph painful. Very painful.



# 50TH ANNIVERSARY

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# 50TH ANNIVERSARY

# Collaborative game design and Covid 19

## MAKING 7TV: FANTASY



**Have you heard the one about the game designer, the academic, and the group of students who walk into a global pandemic and make a tabletop fantasy game?**

We're big fans of *7TV: Fantasy* at *Wargames Illustrated*. The narrative tabletop game, with its unique blend of 'making a movie' meta narrative, classic fantasy characters, and trope heavy scenarios, is the perfect excuse for us to dig into our non-historical miniature collections and get some classic fantasy figures onto the tabletop.

*7TV: Fantasy* is a vibrant, varied, eclectic, fun, and exuberant box set; this is perhaps a reflection of its design team. Many of the game's ideas and rules were created by a group of passionate students from Edge Hill University who, with a couple of grizzled veterans at the helm, sailed the good ship *Fantasy* over choppy and unpredictable Covid-19 infested waters and successfully completed their mission to make a modern game that reflects all that is good (and so bad it's good) in classic fantasy.

Let's meet the cast of characters who battled their way through this epic story of game design adventure in a time of adversity and strife.

### DRAMATIS PERSONAE



• The Steadfast General - Karl Perrotton - Crooked Dice head honcho and one of the coordinators of the *7TV: Fantasy* game design collaboration.

• The Cunning Mystic - Dr. Peter Wright - Lecturer on Edge Hill University's Creative Writing course and co-coordinator of the *7TV: Fantasy* project.



• The Keen Apprentices - an eager team of volunteer game designers; students on the Creative Writing program with varying knowledge of the fantasy genre and gaming but united by their mission to construct a tabletop gaming champion.



• The Despicable Foe - Covid-19 - a global pandemic that brought ongoing challenges to the design process.

## THE FORMING OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Many aeons ago (in 2016) the Steadfast General and Cunning Mystic had a meeting of minds and established the Edge Hill University and Crooked Dice connection. Creative Writing students would work on Crooked Dice tabletop games, learn some skills, and hopefully go on to become the new blood in the world of tabletop game design.

*7TV: Pulp* was released in 2019 (covered in *Wi380*), and after that success the gaming gaze turned to fantasy. A couple of the remaining *Pulp* designers joined forces with a new group of Edge Hill students to begin work on *7TV: Fantasy*. Their task was to cram as much classic retro fantasy as possible into a single box of gaming delights and to learn about the intricacies of game design along the way.

Here the students from Edge Hill University very kindly tell us about their experiences.

## LOOKING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD

As with *7TV: Pulp*, *7TV: Fantasy* is a game that references classics of the genre and lovingly replicates, pastiches, and takes inspiration from them. Was that a challenge for the Edge Hill University students who, for the most part, were born after many of the films, TV shows, and books represented were created?

“Like most people born in the 2000s I have a fascination with anything retro, and my parents ensured that my ‘cultural’ upbringing as far as films were concerned was quite broad”, says Sarah Hinks. “Even so, fantasy was a genre I didn’t delve too deeply into before the project. I actually thought it would be fairly stale by now, given the number of cliches it has established. Needless to say, my viewpoint has now changed! Karl set us a ‘reading list’ of sorts - an array of films designed to serve as inspiration - which helped me at least become more familiar with works like *Conan the Barbarian*.”

**“I definitely became more aware of pulp elements and nostalgia surrounding fantasy when we were going through sources of inspiration. There were so many classics I’d never even heard of.”**

WILL CLARK

Charlie Smith also enjoyed working through Karl’s ‘reading list’: “I’m definitely more grounded in modern day fantasy literature and film; however, having an excuse to watch classics I’ve skipped was a welcome way to spend my time and one of the most enjoyable parts of the project.”

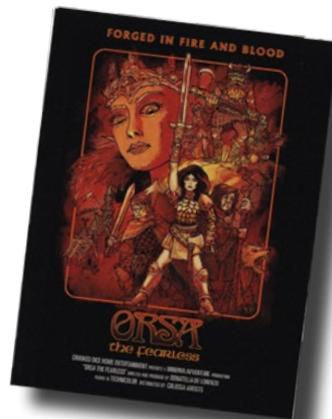
## WELCOME TO WARGAMING!

Though some of the *7TV: Fantasy* team had experience with tabletop gaming, it was new to many of these Creative Writing students. They were guided by Karl and their tutor Peter (who has designed games himself) and gradually developed an understanding of the design process.

“Most challenges came from the differences between the established *7TV* formula and the fantasy genre”, says Will Clark. “For example, in *Pulp*, there were a lot of ranged attacks with pistols and ray guns. In *Fantasy*, many more characters were melee-based, so more movement was necessary for the actual battle to begin. There were lots of opportunities too, like how could we solve the distance problem?”

Should we make the battlefields smaller? Introduce other types of attacks that have a longer range? There was a lot we could work with.”

Isabel Lovell “knew absolutely nothing about tabletop wargames before this project”, but has clearly learned a great deal, capably connecting the beats found in storytelling and gaming: “In a lot of ways, a tabletop battle like *7TV: Fantasy* is a narrative in itself. At the start, both sides must travel across the battlefield to reach their opponent, achieving things that will give them an edge later, preparing for the fight to come. When the battle starts, attacks are few, as the pieces are still moving into an optimal position, then get more aggressive and daring as the battle continues because you have more to lose. In the end, one side will emerge victorious, whether that be through brilliant strategy or brute force. The profile cards in *7TV: Fantasy* only add to this narrative, helping to cement characters and add flavour to the kind of battle you have due to the kind of people that the characters are.”



**“Edge Hill has modules for making games, and one specifically for making narrative tabletop games. Knowing about player immersion, framing, ludonarrative, and such from my education was definitely a big help in making *7TV: Fantasy*.”**

WILL CLARK

Kitty Gregory sees the importance in player choice, something that *7TV: Fantasy* offers in abundance with its toolkit of options and inspiration: “I think the key thing to bear in mind is that you should give the players enough guidance so that they can have a narrative experience if they so desire, but to also give them the freedom to stray from the mould and let the game play out on its own, making unexpected twists and turns in the process. This creates a different kind of narrative experience; one that’s more personal and organic.”

Unlike the rest of the team, Dan Cliffe was a history student who took several creative writing elective modules. He was more familiar with gaming than some but still learned through the design process, implementing some of his historical research techniques and thoroughness: “I think my best work was on the proofreading I did. I looked over all the special effects and profile cards several times, and each time I think I improved the clarity and consistency of the game and it’s wording, something I think is quite important for both returning and new players.”

#### STORYTELLING PEDIGREE

Will Clark enjoyed working on the game’s invented movie production studio for the meta narrative elements behind *7TV: Fantasy*’s game-based storytelling: “When making *Minerva Adventure*, there was a lot of world building and creative work, the sort of stuff that people typically think of when it comes to creative writing.”

“There is deceptively an immense number of narrative elements to consider when creating the game,” says Charlie Smith, “It’s like a giant machine. One screw out of place makes the whole thing fall apart. Whenever there’s a new piece of story content, there’s always the consideration

of how well it fits into the universe we’ve created. It is also this scope that allows us to create such a multi-layered and expansive world, and that has been something really fun to explore.

“I think the strong foundation *7TV* has in a clearly realised concept that draws from classic cinema has helped me realise why those movies we’re drawing inspiration from became popular in the first place. It has been a great way to study storytelling. I also think there’s a fine level of exposition in games writing, and that has also helped me to edit down my own writing.”

#### IT’S A KIND OF MAGIC

“I would say one of the biggest challenges that we faced was the magic system,” says Connor Dwyer, speaking of the magic grimoires included in the box set that bring spells to *7TV*: “We wanted to really bend the rules and see how exciting we could make spell casting, especially considering spells are such a grand part of other tabletop roleplaying games, but trying to keep magic from getting too complicated and overbearing was tough. We had to keep in mind that *7TV* is all about fast paced, exciting action and great narrative. Magic should be something to support that, not detract from it. I’m certain we have found the perfect middle ground.”

Each grimoire contains six spells that encapsulates a style of classic fantasy magic; from Fireballs and Dimensional Gates, through Soul Drains and Circles of Protection, to Fae Fire and Glamours. The team couldn’t quite have it all though; a fantasy classic mainstay didn’t



make the final cut. Isabel Lovell laments: “One spell that never made it into the grimoires was invisibility, though not through lack of trying! Every revision brought a new set of problems.”

Sarah Hinks agrees: “Sometimes we found that there was a disparity between what we wanted to do and what could be achieved. We spent a long time debating invisibility: it could have been achieved with a status effect, but it would have been tricky to remember which models were affected by it when planning how to attack. In the end we had to abandon it.”

It seems that Invisibility was an area where the designers had to ‘murder their darlings’ and move on to their other design challenges. “Invisibility taught me that sometimes it’s better to quit while you’re ahead; in the end, sadly, it had to be scrapped”, Isabel concludes.



## A CAST OF FANTASY CLASSICS

The game contains 230 different profile cards that represent the mightiest of heroes through to the lowliest of grunts. A big challenge for the design team was researching and refining this massive cast of characters.

Isabel Lovell was tasked with writing the fae cards - perfectly suited to her childhood fantasy interests - and the lizardfolk: “When we were creating the profile cards, we started with quite a generic fantasy stereotype for the base, but then we had to consider what films that stereotype fit into and what moves and actions they would be able to make as a consequence; when there was an obvious overlap, what could we take away from the card to make the character still recognisable?”



“For the lizardfolk, the research was quite straightforward; I was able to sit down and read the cult classic this stereotype was based off of, which allowed me to build up a decent picture of what would be expected of the profile. The fae were a bit trickier as fae folklore differs slightly in practically every source you read. Wide research here allowed me to create a more rounded view of each faerie, and hopefully means that the finished profiles are all-encompassing of their folklores.”



Dan Cliffe became one of the team’s rules obsessives and approached characters with a keen eye on gameplay: “I find it easiest to think about what the most iconic and recognisable aspects of that profile are, and then think about how they can be adapted to work within the ruleset of 7TV, ensuring that they make sense within the context of a tabletop wargame. I think starting with the iconic narrative elements of each character before designing gameplay helps to ensure that the finished profile captures the essence of the fantasy archetype we’re trying to depict. I am pretty proud of some of the individual profiles I worked on, such as the Wyvern and Death Knight.”



“Due to the open-ended nature of wargaming, it’s essential that the tone for the series be portrayed correctly through its figures. When designing the profile cards for these characters it was important to convey a certain sense of personality for each in order to complement their differing play styles.”

MATTHEW TAYLOR

## PANDEMIC PANIC?

“Honestly, I feel that we all really came together as a team. Given the circumstances, I would say the final game is a testament to how the team have managed to work together this year,” Conor Dwyer says when asked

about working through the Covid-19 pandemic, which saw the UK experience three different nationwide lockdowns of differing scales during 7TV: Fantasy’s development.

Nathan Dawber adds: “Fortunately, some of the more intensive game design aspects of developing 7TV: Fantasy were completed before the pandemic, which would have been much harder to do in lockdown.”

Isabel Lovell describes the isolation as “Tricky, and a little disheartening at first

- Wednesday meetings on campus had been the highlight of my week.” But she and the rest of the team were happy with how things progressed. “I’d be lying if I said it wasn’t tough,” Sarah Hinks takes up the thread, talking about how the team had to change to online communication. But it was often the highlight of my week when we’d all join that Zoom meeting and catch up on the project’s progress. Learning to deal with unpredictable circumstances is a life skill - lockdown is just more of that. Honestly, the team’s been amazing, and I know there’s always someone there if I need help.”

Kitty Gregory adds: “Everyone approached the situation with a sense of purpose and determination, and the weekly Zoom calls have been no different to our usual weekly meetings, except Karl was able to have a more active part in them.”

The team’s hard work has paid off and the final game is available now. It’s over to you, our fine readers, to evolve this story of game design discovery and triumph - now that lockdown’s eased across the world you can get gaming in the world of 7TV: Fantasy and enjoy what Crooked Dice and Edge Hill University have created together. How about trying out the Raven’s Revenge scenario which will feature in our next issue, created by Crooked Dice’s Karl and Nathan Dawber, one of Edge Hill’s student designers?

# BUILDING BREEZEHOME - PART ONE



Callum France takes inspiration from the *Elder Scrolls* world and makes a stunning terrain piece. Though fantasy themed the design and techniques in this two-part guide can be easily transferred to all kinds of historical terrain building too!

*The Elder Scrolls: Call to Arms* is an exciting tabletop skirmish wargame from Modiphius, set in the fantasy world of The Elder Scrolls video game series. With the release of the *Skyrim Civil War* expansion, I wanted to build a playing area to depict the opening conflict of the civil war - the Battle of Whiterun - and there seemed no better place to start than building the Dovahkiin's starter home.

Many fantasy settings have a base of operations that the player can call home - a building to store their loot, rest after adventures, and share a bottle of mead with world-weary companions - in the *Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*, this starter-home is Breezehome, and in this guide I'll show you how to build such an auspicious home. Part one takes in the lower-level walls, texturing techniques, various wood and stone designs, and works up to the upper panels. Part two will finish the build and detail some painting techniques.

## HIT THE WEB AND GET BUILDING

When beginning a project like this, a good scale diagram helps speed up the process immensely - it saves time on bad cuts of materials and such; if you fail to plan, you plan to fail!

Scale diagrams for Breezehome can be found on the *Wargames Illustrated* website - search for Breezehome. I created these taking references from *Skyrim* itself, so the size is as accurate as possible when using 32mm scale figures.

### SHOPPING LIST (FOR BOTH PARTS)

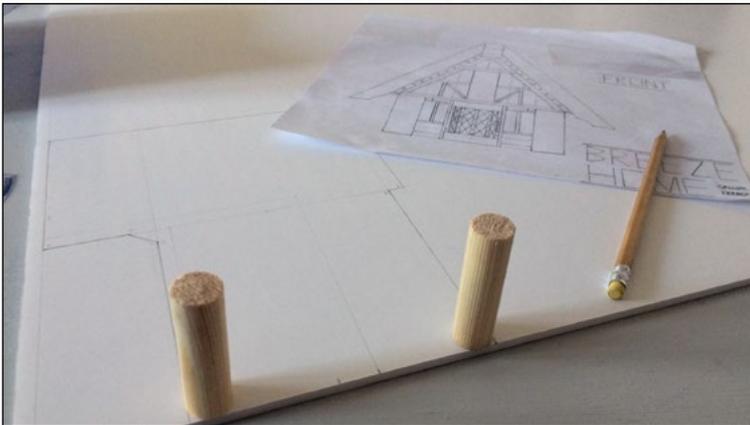
#### TOOLS

- Hand saw (if using any pinewood like we did)
- Exacto knife (also goes by Stanley blade, retractable blade)
- Sandpaper (I recommend buying some 80 grit, 120 grit, and 240 grit)
- Gorilla wood glue (I like Gorilla, but any strong-bonding wood glue will do)
- PVA glue
- 30cm ruler (a metal one is best)
- Protractor
- Pencil
- Wire brush (can also be found as a weed brush)
- Spare rolling pin (don't use your kitchen one as you'll never want this near food again!)
- An old large paintbrush (used to paint on PVA, so make sure it can be ruined)
- Spare Tupperware (to store your air-drying clay)
- Optional - clay sculpting tool

#### MATERIALS

- 1mm-thick balsa sheets (the amount depends on the size. I bought 20 sheets at 10cmx10cm)
- 2 meters of 6mm-thick wood strips (I used pinewood, but balsa strips would be easier to use)
- 2 meters of 1.3cm (1/2 inch)-thick balsa strips (must be balsa for some specific applications as pine is too tough)
- An A1 sheet of 5mm-thick foamboard
- 1 meter of 18mm-diameter dowel
- 1 meter of 18mm half-dowel
- 1 meter of 18mm quarter-dowel
- 75 x 7mm-wide coffee stirrers (smaller sizes work, you'll just need to use more of them)
- Matchsticks (without the flammable match end)
- Cardstock (I used an old cereal box)
- 1kg of DAS air-drying clay (any air-drying clay should work)
- Small rocks
- A sturdy tube (plastic or card - as long as you can warp clay around it)
- Spray varnish (matt, satin, gloss - any will work)
- Cocktail sticks
- Barbeque skewers
- Mesh fencing (I used Jarvis 'OO' wrap from my local hobby store, but anything with a fine pattern will do)
- Optional - Greenstuff (or Milliput, any two-part sculpting material)

## THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE BUILD



1. Draw the floor space of the building on 5mm-thick foamboard and cut it out, holding the blade as straight as possible in order to keep the edge from being angled. If placing other elements helps you visualise the scale then you can do that while drawing.

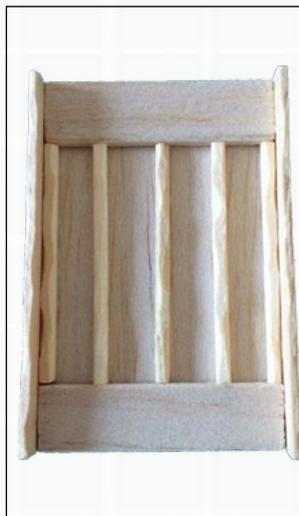


2. Reference the plans online to draw the first level walls. It will be useful to label them as this guide will refer to them by letter.

## DETAILING WALL A - A DOOR AND PLANKING



3. The front door, with its central location, is an area to build everything else out from. A 4cm x 6cm piece of 1mm balsa makes the door base, then two 4cm x 1cm strips get glued (double stacked for extra thickness) to the top and bottom. Gorilla wood glue ensures a firm bond, and it is important to weigh glued pieces down to prevent warping.



4. Cut five matchsticks to 4cm in length. Texture their edges by making small nicks with your exacto blade (essential when it comes to painting as it truly sells these pieces as real bits of wood) and glue them onto the door front. The middle three should have a greater width between them than the outer two. Finish the door with coffee stirrers trimmed to 6cm in height (with distressed edges as before) glued to each edge of the door, sealing it in. Glue the door in the middle of Wall A.



5. To create the plank panelling on the walls, cut coffee stirrers to 2cm and 4cm in length and distress them, even cutting large chunks to change the shape of the plank. Use fine sandpaper (around 240 grit) to smooth the ends, rounding them so they look more natural. You should also smooth the front of each panel at the ends to create an angled finish. Place three 2cm stirrers horizontally at the wall base, then place the 4cm planks vertically. Allow a slight gap between each plank, so that the edges will catch the paint when drybrushing.



6. Finish Wall A by adding matchsticks as shown in the picture, trimmed to fit the width and height. These add visual interest and cover the spot where the planks change from horizontal to vertical. Remember to distress the edges before gluing them down! Don't worry about the pillars in the picture, we'll cover those next.

## THE FRONT WOODEN SUPPORTS



7. Take your 18mm dowel and measure out two pieces, each just above 6cm in height, marking with your pencil. I used a hand saw to cut, carefully scoring along each pencil line first and gradually rotating the rod so the cut is even across the dowel - this stops snapping and jagged edges. When cut, sand both pieces' ends so they stand level. I also rounded the edges using progressively finer sandpaper, just like I did with the planks. The final touch is to take a metal wire brush and aggressively score the dowel, running lengthways to simulate the trunk texture. The deeper and more numerous the grooves, the better this will look when painted.

## WALLS B AND H - SUPPORTS AND DETAIL



8. I recommend buying dowel that has been pre-halved for these walls; doing it yourself is difficult and potentially dangerous. Cut two 6cm lengths in the half-dowel just as before; sanding, rounding, and texturing with the wire brush. Glue one down onto each wall. The dowel wants to be slightly off-centre - for Wall B there should be roughly a 3cm gap on the right and a 4cm one on the left. This is reversed for Wall H. While that's drying, make more wood planks using coffee stirrers (as detailed earlier) to detail the walls.



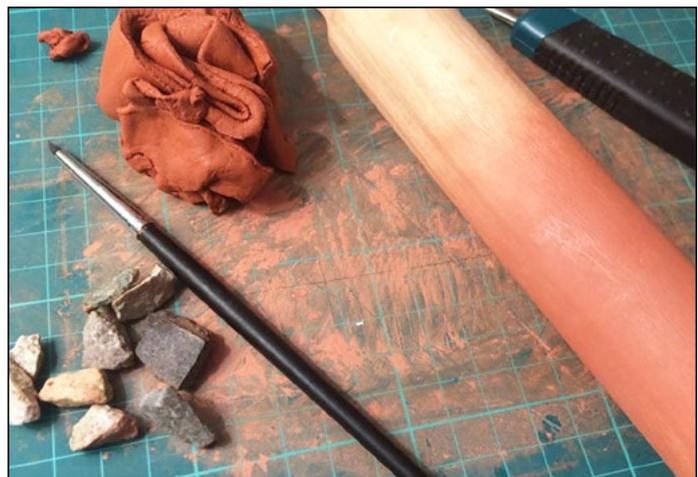
9. Wall B (left) and H (right) are opposites, so pay attention to the pictures and apply the different planks and matchsticks. The angled piece has corners cut at around a 45-degree angle so it sits flush. This finished off the first floor wooden walls. Though the photos here show the walls fixed in place, **DON'T GLUE THEM TOGETHER YET!**



### MAKING A ROLLER FOR STONE TEXTURED WALLS

a) Decide what tube you will make into your texture roller. I used the core from a fabric roll but anything structurally strong is fine. Make sure it is large enough to cover your entire wall height.

Gather some air-drying clay (I used DAS, but any brand will do), a rolling pin, a smooth and wipe-clean surface (I used a spare cutting mat), some sculpting tools (though these aren't essential), and lots of little stones. I grabbed a handful from outside, washed them in soapy water, and left them to dry.



b) Roll the clay into a long rectangle on the surface, to around half a centimetre thick, then trim it to fit your roller. Take your rocks and press them into the clay to make an indent, then remove. Vary the rocks to add variety in the texture. I found it best to work in vertical lines, as if building a cobblestone wall. This will take some time, but the better the job you do here, the better your textures will look.

c) Once you've done the entire surface, carefully slide your knife under the clay to lift it off. Coat the roller in glue (I simply used the Gorilla wood glue again) and gently stick the clay to the roll. Where the two ends meet, you may have to smooth with a clay sculpting tool (or your finger) and redo some of the rock indents. Leave to dry, standing upright, overnight. When it is completely dry, coat the entire roller in a few layers of spray varnish. Try not to leave the clay drying in a particularly warm area - especially not in direct sunlight. This causes the clay to crack excessively.

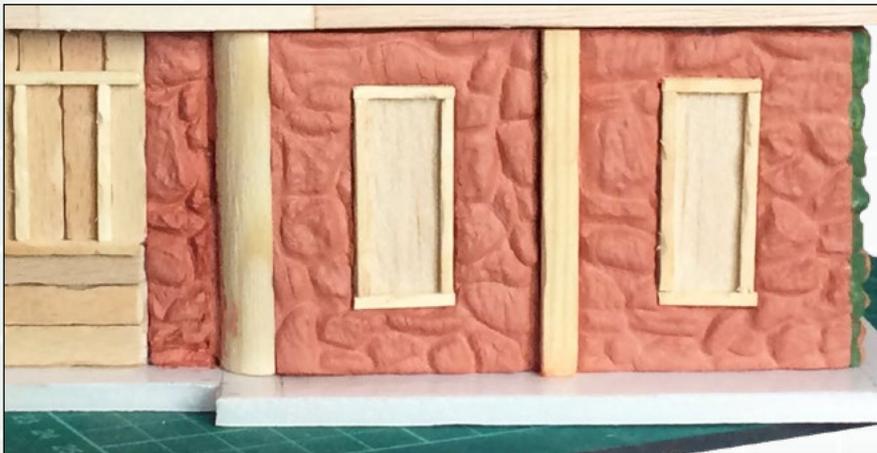
## APPLYING TEXTURE TO THE WALLS



10. Firmly press your roller into the clay, starting from one edge and moving in one continuous motion across. Keep the pressure even and if you make a mistake, simply re-smooth the clay and start again! Once you have your desired texture, slide the blade underneath to separate the clay from the surface, measure it against your wall, then cut the clay to size.



11. For the sections of cobblestone wall with exposed wood (Walls E, F and G), prep the area with wooden strip lengths as before, then fit the clay texture between, gluing it in place with Gorilla wood glue. Use a sculpting tool to smooth the clay up the edge if there are any rough patches. After around 30 minutes, or when the clay begins to harden slightly, you may wish to use a sculpting tool to further deepen the recesses between the rocks. Once you're happy, leave to dry for around 24 hours. When the clay is dry, you can cut and file any proud edges.



12. For Walls E and G, there are two windows embedded into the stone. Before rolling out any clay, cut two rectangles 1.5cm x 4cm from balsa sheets, trim matchsticks to form the frame of the window, and glue. Apply clay texture to the wall, press the window frame in, remove, then cut out the indent. The window can now be glued into the cavity.

## PUTTING IT TOGETHER

13. All the walls are now prepared, it's time to build. Test fit each in their proper place, leaving a slight gap between the wall and the edge of the foamboard. If the walls do not sit upright, sand the bottoms down with 240 grit sandpaper until they stand unaided. If any walls aren't wide enough, you can add coffee stirrers to each end to bulk them up and sand them down to the required thickness. When building Breezehome, I sanded the cobblestone wall edges at a 45-degree angle so that they fitted together smoothly.

Once happy with the dry fitting, you can begin gluing. Liberally apply Gorilla wood glue, working one wall at a time. As you can see, I supported the inside using cocktail sticks. You may notice that the cobblestone foamboard has warped slightly. This occurs because air-drying clay shrinks as it dries. Do not fear! These bends are unnoticeable in the finished product.





14. For the corner trunks, I used quarter-piece dowel secured with glue, filling any gaps with clay. They connect Walls B, C, D, and the end of Wall G.

When the construction has dried, cut another piece of foamboard slightly smaller than the floorplan piece. To help with the size, you can hold the building upside down and trace the outline to see the necessary overhang. Do not glue it down yet, this will form the base of the second floor.

## THE FIRST SECOND FLOOR PANEL



15. Cut out three identical second floor panels using the templates online. If your lower walls ended up larger than the guide provided, you'll need to ensure that the bottom line on each of these upper panels is the same width as the wall below. Glue 1mm balsa sheets over the panel. For the first panel, to go above wall A, cut a half-dowel 6cm in length and texture it before gluing it down to the panel.

16. Texture the panel using the same coffee stirrer, balsa, and matchstick techniques as before, applying them as seen here. Cover the panel with the coffee stirrers and trim their edges to fit the roof angle. Add 1.5cm wide, double depth balsa to follow the panel edge, cutting their ends to the correct angle, and continue to build these details up in further layers. At the tip where they join, you can see that I decided to add another doubled-up piece of balsa to bulk up the arch. Finish with matchstick decoration.



17. As you can see here, all the detailing is layered neatly on the edge without any proud pieces. If you do have any wood sticking out, simply sand it back down.

## THE OTHER SECOND FLOOR PANELS



18. The other two second floor panels are identical. Glue down your 1mm balsa sheet, decide how many exposed planks you want, then apply them. In my build, I used around five for each panel. These will be more raised than the original balsa sheet, so glue another piece of balsa on top of the previous one to make sure the entire panel is level before preparing the trim as with the first panel.

Use your texture roller and create the cobblestone wall texture as before. Press the panel into the cobblestone texture and trim with your exacto along the indents, then glue it to the panel, leaving the planks exposed. Finally, while the clay is still wet, press down your matchsticks into the clay, fixing them with glue and leave it all to dry.

## PUTTING THE TOP TOGETHER



19. Back to the top piece of foamboard - you may have noticed in some pictures I covered the edges in of it in wood. I recommend you do this now. The process is very simple. Cut several 5mm-wide strips from your 1mm balsa sheets and glue them along the foam edges to protect the piece and provide a better texture. Liberally apply your glue and hold the pieces in place for several minutes to allow time to bond. Don't worry about overhang, it can be sanded with 240 grit sandpaper once dry.



20. Time to stick the top piece down! Dry fit multiple times and file anything that causes a bad fit until all of the pieces are flush. Liberally apply wood glue to the top piece. I recommend gluing it upside down, placing the bottom piece onto the it so the weight helps make the bond. Place extra weights on the bottom piece to ensure the entire structure remains flat as it dries, then leave it overnight.



21. The last step this month is to glue each of the second-floor panels down: do the same as you did for the first-floor walls here. Ensure they stand up straight - if they don't, simply sand the bottoms with 240 grit sandpaper until they do and prop them up at a 90-degree angle. Make sure that the back two panels line up or you'll have an enormous headache when you get to part two of the build!

**In part two I will show you how to finish the roof structure, add tiles and other details, then paint it to make a home fit for a Dovahkiin.**

# A TREASURE TROVE OF BLANCHITSU FANTASY CLASSICS!



**North Star's boss man, Nick Eyre, reminisces about Uncle Dunc, the early painting days of John Blanche, and a hidden haul of fine fantasy figures.**

When our great friend Duncan Macfarlane passed away on 1 June 2021, he left behind a wargaming legacy in the magazines he pioneered and the shows and tournaments he was a part of. He also left behind quite a collection of miniatures, including a precious set of classic fantasy figures painted by legendary artist and Games Workshop visionary John Blanche, all bequeathed to *Wargames Illustrated*. When I mentioned this collection to *Wi* Editor Dan he was very excited, particularly with this issue's fantasy theme imminent, and he went hunting for the models. Nestled amongst countless boxes of historical collections were scattered pockets of early John Blanche creations - classic fantasy figures in beautiful 'old school' paint schemes that show the same unique style and flair that John is still known for decades later.

While Dan was dusting and photographing the figures, he asked me to write down a little backstory. I knew about the figures because Duncan

had passed a few to me for rebasing back in 2002. The instructions were to break the figures off the bases that John had mounted them on and redo them with a more modern static grass and tuft style. It felt almost sacrilegious, but they were Dunc's figures and I was following orders, so I took a deep breath and got busy maiming John's work in the nicest way possible. I saved various details, such as the sculpted mushrooms, and tried to change things as sympathetically as possible.



*The figures above have their original bases, those below were rebased in 2002.*





Left: John's art as seen in the 1979 Tolkien Bestiary.

Below: A closer look at the front and back of these amazingly detailed Blanche figures from the late 1970s.



Doing this rebasing gave me the chance to check out John's work up close. This was a real privilege as I have been a lifelong fan of his style and illustrations; they imprinted fantasy imagery on my mind even before I knew of him as the specific creator through his illustrations in 1978's *Tolkien Bestiary*. By the 1980s I was doing my best to copy elements of John's work - his flag and shield patterns - in my own figure painting.

**WHO IS JOHN BLANCHE AND WHAT THE HECK IS BLANCHITSU?**

John Blanche, just in case there is someone reading this who doesn't know, is a fantasy artist (and figure painter) who joined the embryonic Citadel Miniatures back in the early 1980s and became Games Workshop's art director. He was responsible for the worldbuilding and visuals in just about every major and minor fantasy and sci-fi game the Nottingham based behemoth produced and his work is synonymous with all things Games Workshop.

Although John didn't consider his art to have a particular style, those who emulated him did, transferring his illustrative style to miniature painting, and calling it Blanchitsu. It's a somewhat ephemeral painting and modelling style that is hard to describe, but that doesn't stop many painters from adopting it. It usually features elements of grimdark, limited palettes, some kind of iconography or oddness, and a good bit of creativity and figure conversion.



*John's Blanchitsu pages - a regular feature in White Dwarf magazine.*



**A TREASURE TROVE OF CLASSIC FANTASY**

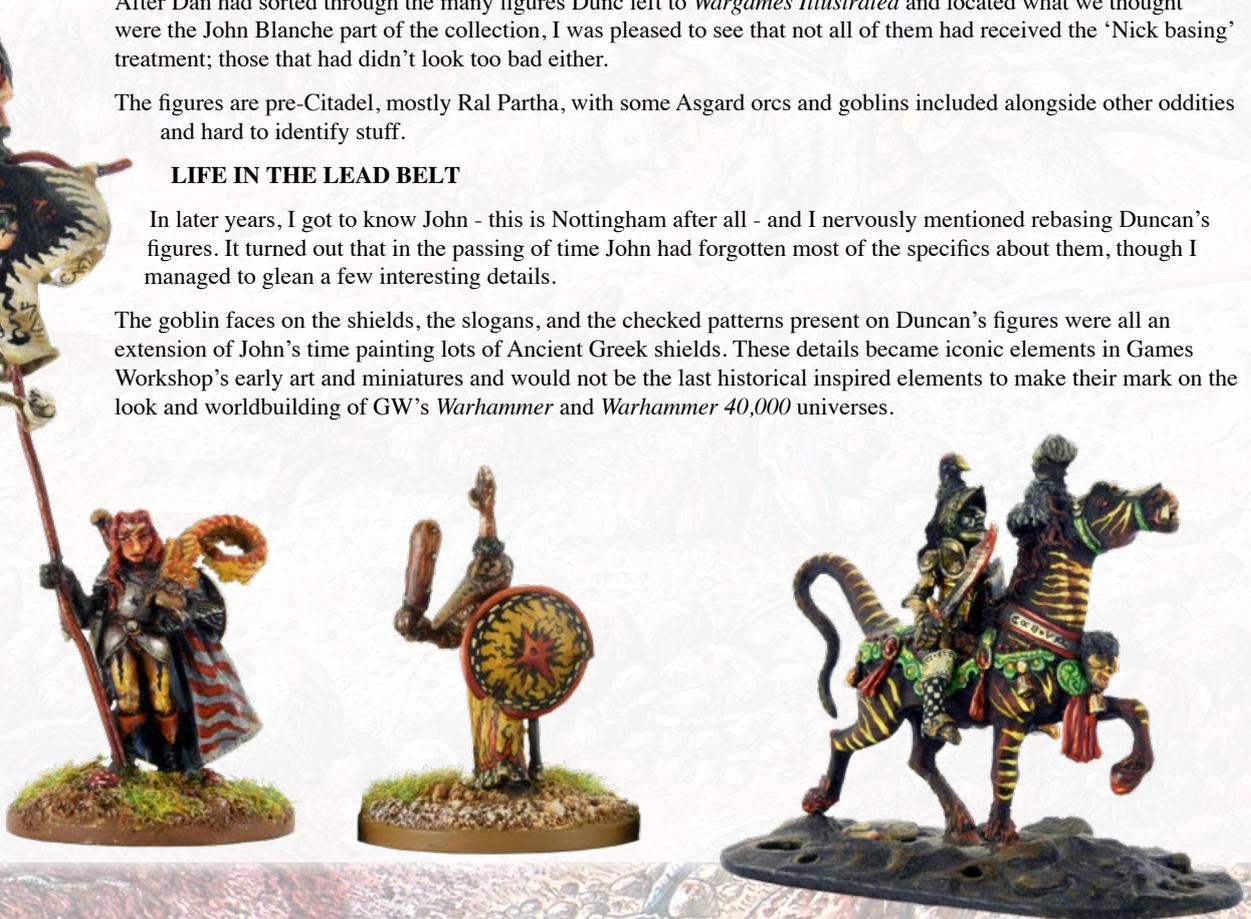
After Dan had sorted through the many figures Dunc left to *Wargames Illustrated* and located what we thought were the John Blanche part of the collection, I was pleased to see that not all of them had received the 'Nick basing' treatment; those that had didn't look too bad either.

The figures are pre-Citadel, mostly Ral Partha, with some Asgard orcs and goblins included alongside other oddities and hard to identify stuff.

**LIFE IN THE LEAD BELT**

In later years, I got to know John - this is Nottingham after all - and I nervously mentioned rebasing Duncan's figures. It turned out that in the passing of time John had forgotten most of the specifics about them, though I managed to glean a few interesting details.

The goblin faces on the shields, the slogans, and the checked patterns present on Duncan's figures were all an extension of John's time painting lots of Ancient Greek shields. These details became iconic elements in Games Workshop's early art and miniatures and would not be the last historical inspired elements to make their mark on the look and worldbuilding of GW's *Warhammer* and *Warhammer 40,000* universes.



## A PAINTING MAESTRO ON FLAT AND IN SMALL SCALE 3D

When seeing the detail and quality present here, you might be shocked to know that the figures were painted with Humbrol enamels thinned with turps. They were done long before acrylic paints that had been specifically designed for figure painting came along, but the dense colours from these railway modelling paints, when applied by a talented artist such as John, create a rich finish akin to oil paints. The Humbrol paints allowed John to do easy wet blending, making smooth transitions well before it became *de rigueur* with competition painters in more modern times.

The figures were not commissioned; Duncan would cycle over to John's in the late Seventies and buy figures and illustrations that John had completed. John admitted that was a bit of a life saver financially at the time, supplementing his early, intermittent freelance work.

The fantasy figures shown here were once in John's personal collection; I recall John saying he picked Ral Partha because he was impressed by the level of detail in the miniatures, something not that common in the late '70s. Duncan did commission John to paint a Renaissance army, and Dan and I think we found some of it but unfortunately not the whole thing.

The level of fine detail on the figures shown here is phenomenal, and they represent an important snippet of the developing visual motifs that would continue in John's figures and illustrations through the decades. It's wonderful to see these early paint jobs again - they are a part of the history of wargaming, and a great little memorial to our friend Duncan Macfarlane.



*John Blanche painted Renaissance figures.*



## BACK TO THE FUTURE?

We must confess we don't generally pay too much attention to what's new from our "noisy neighbours" here at Wargames Illustrated, but we were very interested to see the August 2021 new releases from Games Workshop, specifically in their Orc range. Take a look at the photos of their new figures below - its striking how much of an influence Blanchitsu has clearly had over these new sculpts!



# BATTLE OF THE RIVER IDLE

## THE SUTTON HOO KING GOES TO WAR

**Daniel Mersey provides an excellent opportunity to take the most famous archaeological artifact in England into battle.**

If you collect early medieval armies, there's a fair chance that you will own a chap wearing the Sutton Hoo helmet. It doesn't matter which manufacturer made him, how new or old he is, or whether he's in scale with the rest of your collection ... I bet you've got one.

So, wouldn't it be good to use that model in the reflight of a battle that the Sutton Hoo helmet (and warrior!) quite possibly took part in?

Although not a definitely ascertained fact, a popular school of thought suggests the identity of the warrior from Sutton Hoo's

Mound 1 burial or cenotaph was Rædwald, the Wuffingas king of East Anglia. And amongst Rædwald's other recorded activities was his role in the Battle of the River Idle in AD 616 or AD 617:

*This year was Ethelfrith, king of the Northumbrians, slain by Rædwald, king of the East-Angles; and Edwin, the son of Ella, having succeeded to the kingdom, subdued all Britain, except the men of Kent alone, and drove out the Ethelings, the sons of Ethelfrith, namely, Enfrid, Oswald, Oswy, Oslac, Oswood, Oslaf, and Offa.*

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.



## RÆDWALD AND EDWIN

In the early 7th Century AD, Britain was divided into many expanding kingdoms. The sources we have make certain things clear: treaties were made and broken, royal heirs were sometimes forced into exile to survive ambitious coups, and kingdoms were generally at one another's throats - whether British, Irish, Pictish, or Anglo-Saxon.

Edwin of Deira (one half of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria in northern England, along with Bernicia) was forced into exile after his father died and the Bernicians took control. Æthelfrith of Bernicia came to power around 604, and Edwin first took shelter in the Welsh kingdom of Gwynedd and then in the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia in the English midlands. By 616, Edwin was located in Rædwald's kingdom of East Anglia.

Æthelfrith must have seen Edwin as a threat: here was another true claimant of the Northumbrian throne, and with his arrival under Rædwald's protection, Edwin had a powerful ally. According to the Anglo-Saxon writer Bede, Æthelfrith urged the East Anglian king three times to kill or surrender Edwin. Apparently, Rædwald's wife talked him out of this treachery and instead, on the third occasion, the East Anglian king marched at the head of an army to reclaim Northumbria for Edwin.

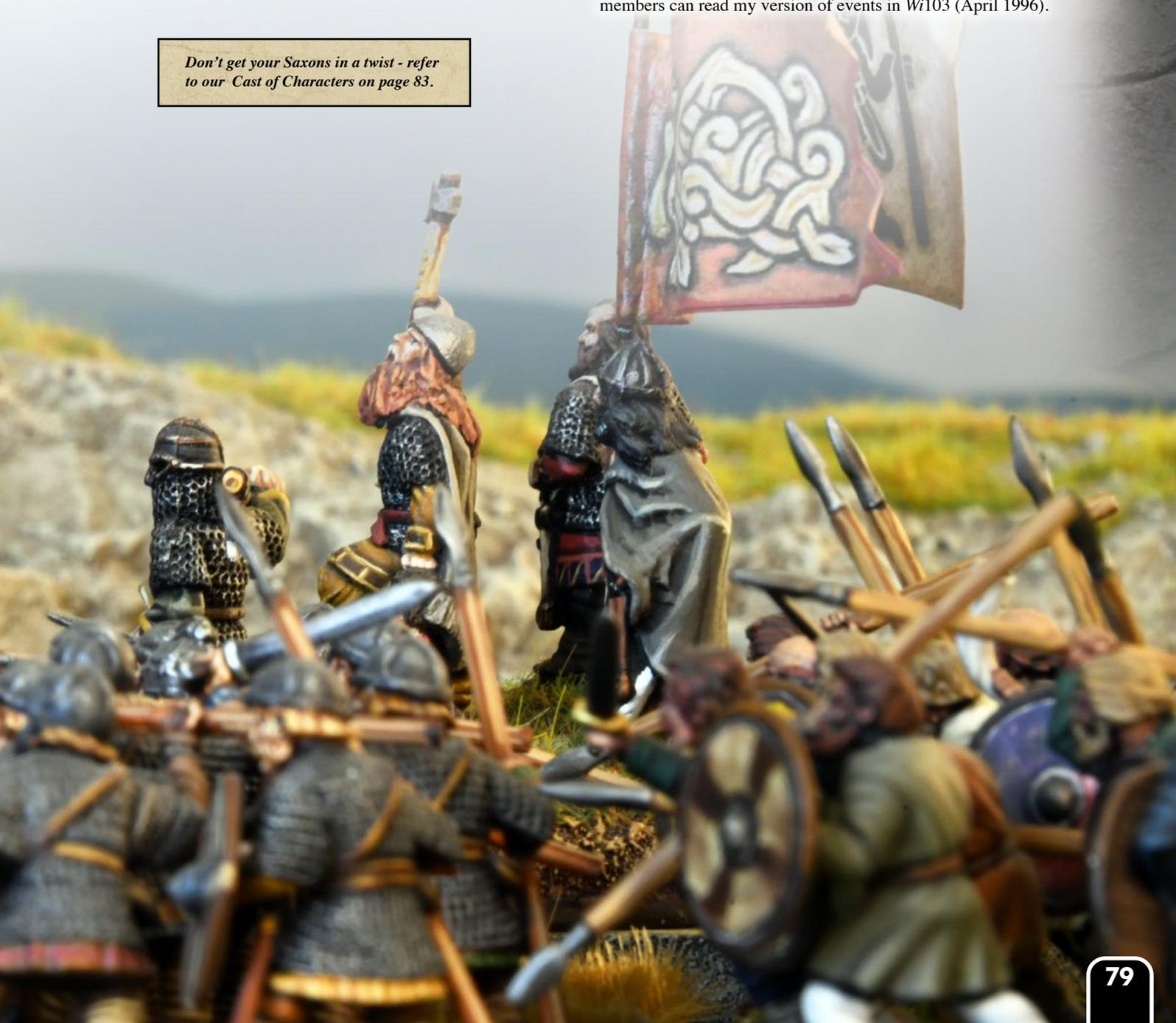
*Don't get your Saxons in a twist - refer to our Cast of Characters on page 83.*

This rapid response caught Æthelfrith unprepared, and he mustered an army to confront the invaders, meeting them in battle upon his kingdom's southern boundary at the River Idle (in the English East Midlands).

According to Bede:

*For as soon as the messengers had returned home, he raised a mighty army to subdue Ethelfrid; who, meeting him with much inferior forces (for Redwald had not given him time to gather and unite all his power), was slain on the borders of the kingdom of Mercia, on the east side of the river that is called Idle. In this battle, Redwald's son, called Raegenheri, was killed. Thus Edwin, in accordance with the prophecy he had received, not only escaped the danger from his enemy, but, by his death, succeeded the king on the throne.*

Æthelfrith's smaller army was overwhelmed, although not before slaying Rædwald's son. The path was clear for Edwin to claim the Northumbrian throne. It is likely that Edwin continued to owe allegiance to Rædwald, who in turn became an even more powerful ruler with this 'client king' in the north. Later, after Rædwald's death (there's that potential Sutton Hoo link again), Edwin expanded his Northumbrian kingdom, coming into conflict with many of his neighbours. His reign came to a brutal end in the 630s at the hand of Cadwallon of Gwynedd and Penda of Mercia. That is a story for another day, although Prime members can read my version of events in *Wi103* (April 1996).



# ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOMS

## THE BATTLE

A much later account of the battle by Henry of Huntingdon adds further details. He notes that the battle took place on the river's eastern bank and that the Northumbrians quickly took the initiative and charged at their enemies despite the East Anglians outnumbering the Northumbrians.

Henry tells us that the East Anglian army was divided into three forces: one controlled by Rædwald, one by Edwin, and one by Rædwald's son Rægenhere. Æthelfrith's warriors incorrectly identified Rægenhere as Edwin and cut him down and routed his warriors, which drove the East Anglian king on to battle harder and break the enemy with Edwin's help.

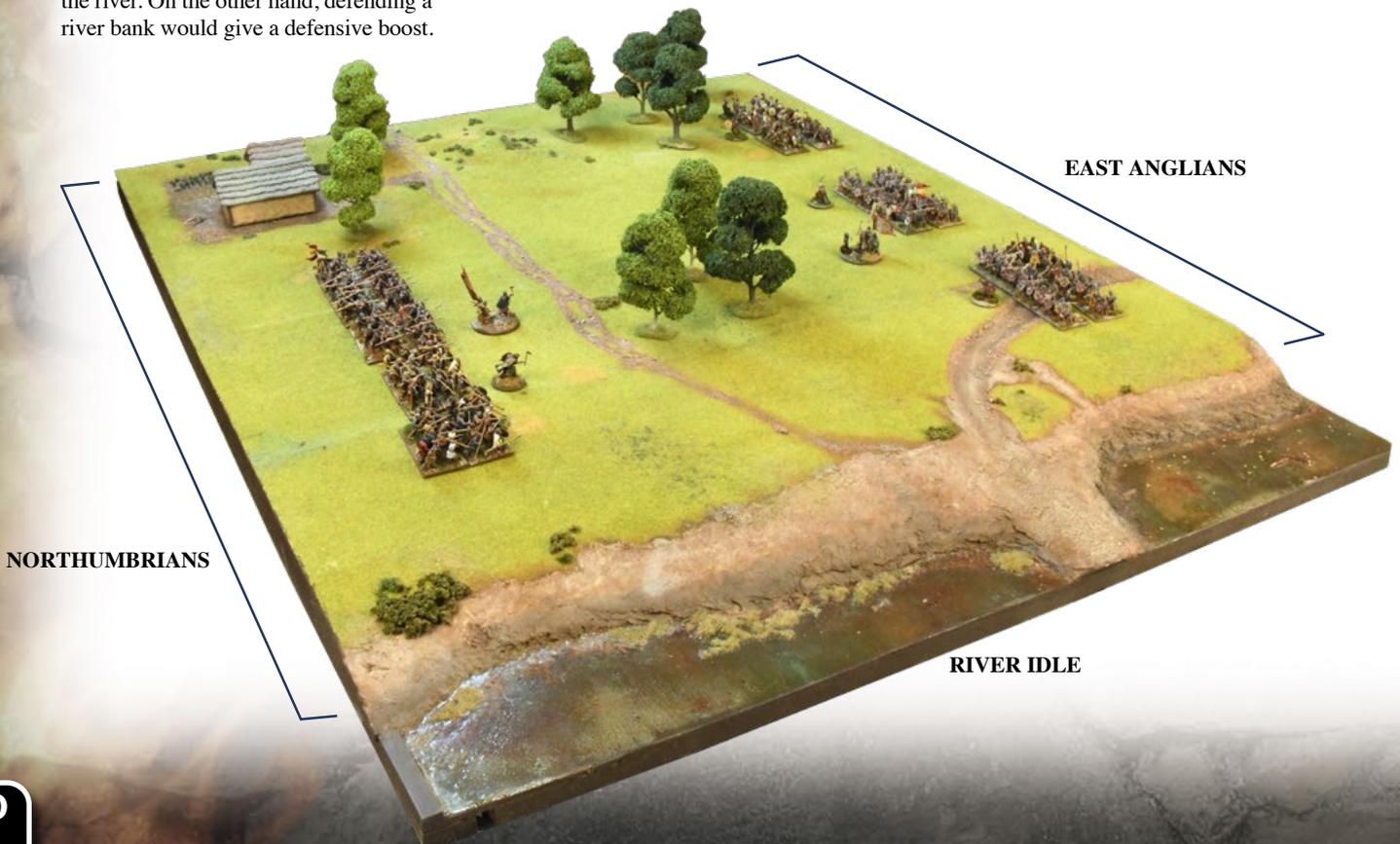
The Northumbrian warriors were reportedly veterans compared to their enemies (as noted, they were also a smaller force, suggesting that Æthelfrith only had time to march with his own household troops), and Æthelfrith's death came when he was separated from his guard and cut down atop a pile of bodies of his slain foes. At this point, the demoralised Northumbrians routed from the battlefield. This gives us a good scenario plot whether Henry's account is accurate or not!

## THE REFIIGHT

The battle took place at a river; it's not clear whether the battle was fought across a ford or using the river as a secure flank. Henry of Huntingdon wrote that the fight took place on the river's eastern bank, but no mention is made of the river's effect on the battle other than it ran red with English blood. This suggests to me that it was not fought across the river. On the other hand, defending a river bank would give a defensive boost.



The short version is, you choose! Depending on the rules you use, you may decide to allow whichever player deploys first to choose the direction the battle takes; in, over, or alongside the river. If you fight with the river down one flank, you won't even need a river terrain piece, just note that it forms the table's edge and will affect any units moving off table in that direction.



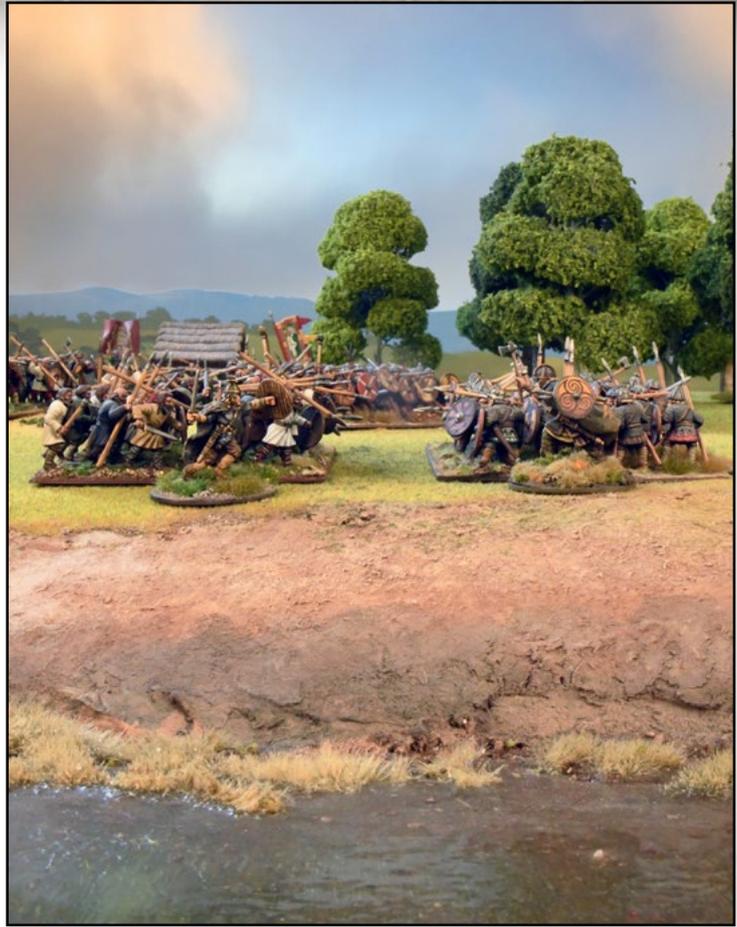
If you fight across the river or at a ford, the riverbank should provide a defensive bonus and the river should be an obstacle to movement.

The Northumbrian force may be depicted as a smaller but more experienced army - see my suggestions in the following sections for how to represent this.

Once again referring to Henry of Huntingdon's account, Æthelfrith had determined that the best way to end the threat to his authority was to slay Edwin in the battle. With this inconvenient rival out of the way, there was a strong chance that the East Anglian army would end their campaign to replace Æthelfrith. This can be made into an interesting sub-plot of the scenario.

The East Anglian player should choose three warband units (if your rules use them, they must be command units), then secretly write down which of these contains Edwin, which contains Rædwald, and which contains his son Rægenhere. Don't tell the Northumbrian player! The East Anglian player aims to keep Edwin alive, while the Northumbrian player strives to kill him. To encourage the East Anglian commanders to attack rather than sit back defended by other units, give them a bonus when moving into contact with the enemy, and a significant disadvantage when they are contacted by an enemy unit. When one of the named commanders has his unit destroyed, the East Anglian player must announce who has been killed.

Once the battle ends according to your chosen rules, determine the final victor using the following chart (no matter how the battle ends).



<b>East Anglians are defeated and Edwin is slain</b>	<b>Major Northumbrian victory</b> The threat from the south is ended and Rædwald is forced to accept a Northumbrian overlord.
<b>East Anglians are defeated and Edwin survives</b>	<b>Minor Northumbrian victory</b> Northumbria survives intact, but the threat of Edwin remains - time to open further negotiations with Rædwald.
<b>Northumbrians are defeated and Æthelfrith survives</b>	<b>Minor East Anglian victory</b> The East Anglians must push further north in the hope of bringing Æthelfrith to battle once again, or forcing him to flee into exile.
<b>Northumbrians are defeated and Æthelfrith is slain</b>	<b>Major East Anglian victory</b> Edwin is free to claim the Northumbrian throne and support his southern ally whenever called upon.



## THE ARMIES FOR DUX BELLORUM

In my *Dux Bellorum* rules, both the Northumbrians and East Anglians are covered by the Saxon list. Ideally, use the Late Period option, and both the Warrior and Shieldwall options are workable (as discussed below in relation to *DBA*).

Rædwald seems a good candidate for increased Leadership Points or the Experienced Warlord strategy, and I'd suggest that the Northumbrian army is based around a solid core of Noble troops set against East Anglian Ordinary troops (only the three East Anglian commanders should be Nobles).

Veterans should again be limited to the Northumbrians. This will create the smaller Northumbrian army versus the larger but less experienced East Anglian force suggested by Henry of Huntingdon. Loyal troops can be used by either army.

In the true spirit of historicity, neither side can choose the Assassination tactic.

As an added bonus, there's a river battle scenario in the book that can be used as the genesis of this battle.

## THE ARMIES FOR DE BELLIS ANTIQUITATIS

When it comes to scenario-based *DBA* games, I'm prepared to play fast and loose with the army lists. Therefore,

I suggest sticking with twelve element armies and choosing both from the III/24 Middle Anglo-Saxon list. This list is supposed to begin in AD 617 with the start of Edwin's reign, but to me it better represents 7th Century



Left: Figure wearing the Sutton Hoo helmet by Footsore Miniatures.

armies than the early Warband army (II/73). Alternatively, for a more dynamic, varied battle, one side could be Early Anglo-Saxons and their opponent the Middle Anglo-Saxons; this can be explained away either by the Northumbrian onslaught being represented by Warband, or the more brittle (less experienced) East Anglians being prone to break in *DBA* Warband style.

Right: A figure (on the right) by 1st Corps wearing the Sutton Hoo helmet.

Below: A Gripping Beast Sutton Hoo helmet wearing figure.



## THE EYE OF WODEN

The Sutton Hoo helmet (right) is perhaps the most famous artifact found during archaeological excavations in the British Isles. It has come to embody the face of the Anglo-Saxons, with its hollow 'eyes' staring out at the modern viewer as a tantalising and mysterious glimpse of our ancestors. Whilst the story of the Sutton Hoo helmet is fairly well known and easy to research, a piece of recent research relating to some subtle detailing on the helmet has inspired an interesting new theory.

Sutton Hoo Archaeologist and Engagement Manager Laura Howarth explains:

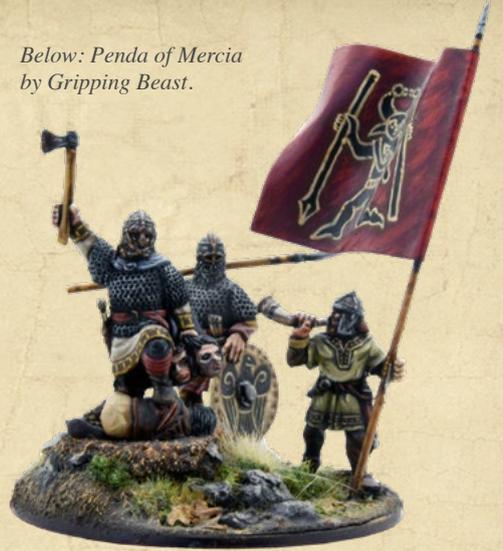
"Recent research conducted in the last couple of years has looked at the foils on the left eye of the helmet, which consists of Cloisonné work. Cloisonné work is where you have thin sheets of gold waffle foil with garnet stones sitting on top. Garnet can be quite a dull stone, but the foil acts as a micro reflector light, so the light is coming in through the stone and it's popping out and shining brightly. But the left eyebrow of the helmet is missing these foils. If you know anything about mythology, you will know that Odin, or Woden in the Anglo-Saxon culture, sacrificed his left eye for knowledge. If you transport yourself back to an Anglo-Saxon Feasting Hall, in the flickering firelight it might appear that the wearer of the helmet was missing his left eye, and thus embodying the power of the gods".



# CAST OF CHARACTERS

- **Æthelfrith:** Also spelled Ethelfrith and Ethelfrid. King of Bernicia from the early 590s, he also took power in Deira around 604 to unite the kingdom of Northumbria. Æthelfrith seems to have had a successful military career - he was possibly the leader who defeated the Britons at Chester and Catraeth (the latter immortalised in the poem *Y Gododdin*) and the Dal Riataans at Degsastan, and the Britons nicknamed him 'The Twister'. His luck ran out at the River Idle; although after Edwin's demise, Æthelfrith's son Oswald came to power.
- **Cadwallon:** Welsh king of Gwynedd who defeated Edwin in 633 having previously suffered a Northumbrian invasion of north Wales. After a successful campaign in Northumbria, he was slain by the Northumbrian king Oswald in 634.
- **Edwin:** Son of King Ælle, exiled heir to the Deiran throne (Deira being one half of the larger kingdom of Northumbria, along with Bernicia). With Rædwald's assistance, he was victorious at the River Idle, claiming the Northumbrian throne after a lifetime in exile. He met his end at the hands of Penda and Cadwallon in the 630s.
- **Penda:** A formidable Mercian warlord who was allied to Cadwallon, sharing in his success against Edwin but surviving defeat by Oswald. The eventual slayer of Oswald in the 640s, before meeting his own end in 655 at the hands of Oswiu (son of Æthelfrith and brother of Oswald).
- **Rædwald:** Also spelled Redwald. The King of the East Anglians, a powerful leader who sheltered the exiled Edwin of Deira. Often considered to be the warrior commemorated in Sutton Hoo's famous Mound 1 burial mound. We do not know how he died, but it most likely happened in the 620s.
- **Rægenhere:** Also spelled Raegenheri. Rædwald's son who died in battle at the River Idle.

Below: Penda of Mercia by Gripping Beast.



However, you may wish to use the III/24b list for the Northumbrians - the Blade hirdmen representing Æthelfrith's veterans - and the earlier Warband hirdmen for the East Anglians. You may also consider fielding Edwin's force as an ally, meaning that it is harder to command on the battlefield, but nothing in the accounts we have suggests that he went into battle with a significant number of his own warriors.

Other than these considerations and the battlefield layout, a standard game of *DBA* can be played.

*The figures seen in this article are by Gripping Beast, unless otherwise stated. Trees and cliff by Debris of War.*

## THE ARMIES IN OTHER RULES

The pointers given for *Dux Bellorum* and *DBA* should apply no matter what rules you choose to refight the Battle of the River Idle. The key notes are:

- The riverside location.
- A smaller but more experienced Northumbrian army.
- An East Anglian army divided into three parts.
- The task of identifying and killing Edwin.



# GOING GREEK

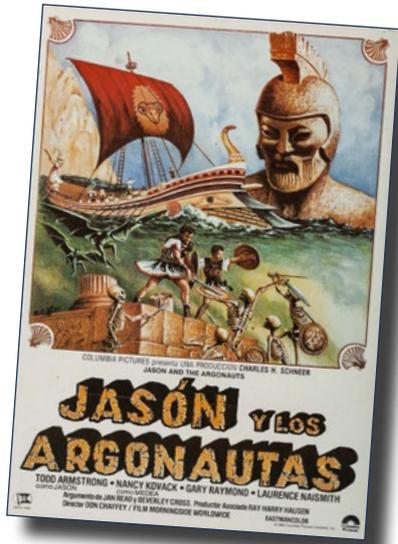
## MYTHOLOGY IN YOUR WARGAMING

**James Morris is a fan of Greek mythology, and he thinks you should bring some to your tabletops. Here he presents his top nine reasons why Greek is the way to go in gaming.**

Greek myth was always going to be a side project in my gaming; it's still a side project even though I now have over a hundred models for it. I mostly blame *Jason and the Argonauts* and the *Of Gods and Mortals* ruleset from Osprey, although eBay and Etsy are both players here as well, as I'll explain.

As gamers, we all have multiple periods clamouring for our attention; new lines of miniatures and rules constantly do battle with our mini painting and gaming backlogs. Why on earth would you consider a diversion into Greek mythology on top of all that? Well, according to Greek myth, there were nine Muses and nine bends in the River Styx, so here I present my own Grecian nonad of reasons why you might want to consider a wargaming dabble into the world of Jason, Perseus, Medea, and more.



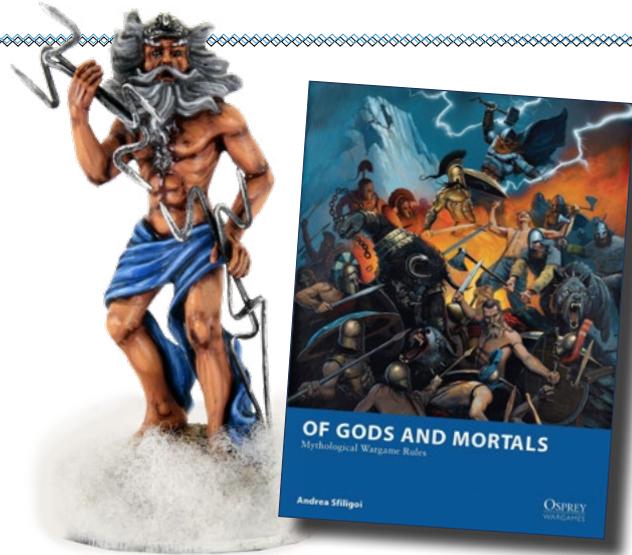


## ACCESSIBILITY

Greek mythology has been the subject of popular media for many hundreds of years, most recently perhaps in the Percy Jackson series of novels and movies; video games such as *Assassin's Creed: Odyssey* and *Hades*; and Stephen Fry's books such as *Mythos* and *Heroes*. The stories of the Greek heroes include names, places, and detailed descriptions of the monsters that they faced, making finding source material for gaming a snap. There are other cultures of the ancient world that have left us no written records of their mythology - Picts, I'm looking at you here - leaving us to try to fill in the gaps with guesswork. Greek myth? No such problem.

## APPEAL

Carrying directly on from my last point, the accessibility and continuing popularity of Greek myths means that they appeal to a broad spectrum of potential gamers. Pretty much everyone can name Zeus as the King of the Gods and can recognise a Minotaur, which is a great thing - it gives Greek mythological gaming a common currency across all age groups. My demo group were running games of *Of Gods And Mortals* at a gaming convention a couple of years ago and had a steady stream of players aged from seven to seventy with little need to give a detailed briefing of the game setting - "It's set in mythological Greece," was enough to get everyone started.



## SCALE OF GAMES

Another factor that makes Greek myth gaming ideal for a dabble is the small scale of the encounters. The deeds recorded in the most famous myths are perfect for skirmish gaming: when the Argonauts take on the Harpies, the sons of Boreas - Zetes and Calais - take to the air to drive them away; Heracles and his nephew, Iolaus, combine forces to defeat the Lernean Hydra; and, although Jason fights the earthborn warriors single-handedly in the original story, the iconic movie version has him battling skeletons with several companions.

There are larger skirmishes as well, such as Heracles and the Argonauts holding off the Gegenees (six-armed monsters) on the shore in the land of the Doliones, or the battle between the Lapiths and the Centaurs. This means that anything from a handful of models up to several dozen is quite adequate for a bit of Greek myth action.





### FIGURE AVAILABILITY ONE: EXISTING COLLECTIONS

Ancient Greeks are one of the most collected armies in wargaming. You might have one in your cupboard from playing *WAB* or *DBA* back in the day. If you go to a club, there's every chance that more than one person will have a few Greeks stashed away somewhere. This popularity means that second-hand collections are easily (and often inexpensively) available, whether on eBay or through various internet sellers. Thanks to this, I haven't painted a single hoplite in my force, they're all snagged from other folks' collections. There are, of course, differences in equipment between different periods of Ancient Greek history, but they are easily merged in the pursuit of a mythical game if that doesn't bother you. The Greeks themselves depicted earlier periods, such as the Trojan Wars, in later equipment, so I don't feel bad about it.

### FIGURE AVAILABILITY TWO: NEW TOYS

You can speculate whether we're in a golden age of figures, but for Greek myth it's hard to argue against it. In terms of made-for-purpose 28mm wargaming products, we currently have the hard plastic Greeks from Victrix and Warlord Games, as well as Greek Skeletons, Fauns, and Centaurs from Wargames Atlantic/RGD - all of which are available as single sprues from various online sellers, so you can just buy what you want and tinker with them.

3D printing provides a growing range of models with many Greek options - Etsy is currently the premier site for licensed sellers of prints, with heroes, Harpies, Hydras, and Cyclopes all available. The Reaper Bones range also deserves an honourable mention here, especially in the 'big cheap monster' department. Large creatures that might cost an arm and a leg in metal or resin are available for around a third of the price in plastic, requiring minimal or no assembly.

Dark Alliance, the Ukraine-based company that specialises in 1/72 scale soft plastics, has Centaurs, Minotaurs, Amazons, and Cyclopes at very reasonable prices. It's also worth a look at various toy options - 54mm plastic Greeks can make excellent titans or gods - and German company Schleich makes large models of Cerberus, the Hydra, and the Chimera.

Finally, there are metal figures, and the options are so plentiful that a comprehensive listing is well beyond the scope of this article. Hoplites are freely available in all scales; Foundry has the largest collection of these in 28mm, as well as a comprehensive Greek myth range including gods, heroes, and monsters. SHQ has a decent range of gods and goddesses; Steve Barber Models, North Star, Bad Squiddo, Otherworld, and Eureka all have some gods and creatures. Footsore Miniatures has recently released the *Mortal Gods* Mythic range, although the prices (especially for the monsters) are towards the higher end of the spectrum and may not suit gamers who just want a side project on a budget. US-based Crocodile Games is also worth a look for *Wargods of Olympus* - a complete battle game and miniatures range based on Greek myth.



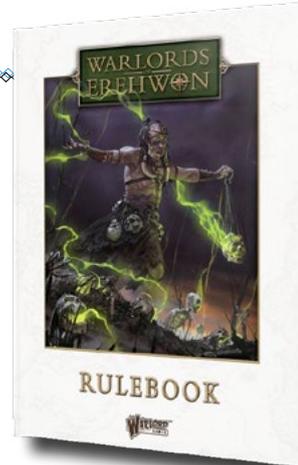


## RULES

Adding an element of Greek myth to your gaming can be as simple as statting up an extra unit or hero and putting them into a straightforward game using your favourite ancients or fantasy rules, or you might want to look at something more specific.

For a small-scale skirmish, you can't go too far wrong with Ganesha Games' *A Song Of Blades And Heroes* - a deceptively simple game that plays in around an hour and is easily and cheaply available as a PDF.

Moving into slightly bigger encounters - and specifically written for mythology - *Of Gods And Mortals (OGAM)* from Osprey Games is an elegant and fun set of rules, pitching gods and their followers against each other and containing a set of profiles for the Greek pantheon, amongst others. Another set for mythological gaming is *Mortal Gods Mythic* from Footsore, a stylised skirmish game with plenty of supporting miniatures. Rick Priestley's *Warlords of Erewhon* (Warlord Games), Daniel Mersey's *Dragon Rampant* (Osprey), and the venerable but highly playable *Hordes of the Things* (WRG) will all cope well with large skirmishes or small battles. I have barely scratched the surface here - an internet search will reveal many options, including home-grown free of charge downloads.



## COLOUR

The colour of the ancient world is one of the enduring appeals of gaming, with its bright Persian fabrics and bronze shields and armour; with the addition of the mythological aspect, anything goes.

It's perhaps not a coincidence that my Greek myth side project took off while I was working on lots of World War Two miniatures. Bored of splinter pattern camouflage? Fancy painting something red or shiny? A change is as good as a rest!

Picking up a few hoplites or harpies can help to clear that painting block when facing another platoon of 1940s Russians. This also probably explains why so many of us enjoy painting the odd Space Marine.

## LITTLE AND LARGE: 'SMALL OR FAR AWAY?'

One of our favourite topics - nay, obsessions - as wargamers is 'scale'. How do Foundry's Fallschirmjäger compare to Warlord's? What is the correct length of a Sherman tank next to 28mm minis? Can you mix Gripping Beast's Anglo-Danes with Footsore's? Why are different models in the same range different sizes? Why does his head look like a pumpkin? And so on ... but when we are delving into mythology, all bets are off.



Heracles is a bit on the big side? He's a demigod and a hero, why not? You've got a 40mm mini for Athena in a 28mm game? Go for it - she's a goddess! How tall was Talos, the bronze giant? As tall as you want!

Mythological gaming offers the opportunity to mix and match miniatures from a wide range of sources with no worries about rivet counting. If like me, you spend a lot of time on historical projects trying to get the details right, a side project with this much latitude can be a real breath of fresh air!

## SCENERY

There are some gaming genres that look tempting for a side project due to low numbers of miniatures but require much more investment in terrain - Old West gunfights, Roman city gangs, and Chicago gangster shoot-outs all come to mind here. Mythological Greece is a simpler proposition altogether - a sandy gaming mat, some (olive) trees, and rocks and you're good to go. Ruined temples sourced from fish tank ornaments, 3D prints, or wedding cake pillars may be historically suspect in Ancient Greece but are fair game in a mythological Greek landscape. Tourist souvenirs and plastic toys with a suitable paint job can also be a great source of cheap statues for scenery.

**So, there you have it - nine reasons why you might want to give Greek myths a try. I spent years resisting my inner Harryhausen, but eventually the combination of a holiday to Crete, watching Percy Jackson films with my family, and plastic hoplites put paid to that! Give it a go - you won't be sorry.**

# BETTER CAMPAIGNING!



Cory Ring offers some thoughts on the world of tabletop campaigns and how to get them right.

Campaigns can be one of the most rewarding wargaming experiences, but they can also strike fear and frustration into the heart of many gamers. I would argue that my best and worst gaming experiences have come from playing in campaigns, and it doesn't take much for the experience to swing from one extreme to the other. How do you maintain the fun and challenge in a campaign? I hope this article will provide some insight.

## A STEADY CONTROLLING HAND

I have run and played in many campaigns and getting the most out of the experience begins at the organization level. This applies to the one organizing the campaign, but it's also helpful if players act sensibly too! If things go awry early, through poor organization and planning, disinterested and unengaged players is the usual result.

I played in an Etruscan campaign set in ancient Italy that was quite disastrous. We didn't use a referee, bickered about movement, and one side quickly won the first key battles with everyone else

rapidly losing interest and wanting to move on to something else. It was a shame really, because we had spent a lot of time planning, painting beautiful armies, and crafting terrain.

On the flip-side, I played in a French and Indian War campaign with a talented game master (GM) that kept the narrative and scenarios interesting, used blind movement, and included lots of random events; we had a very fun and memorable time. The GM also encouragingly told us that he would incorporate any figures (and terrain) that we painted during the course of the campaign into the games, and it really challenged the group to collect and paint more reinforcements! This benefitted the club in the long run and led to a truly epic climactic final battle for the campaign. We still talk about this one!

My first tip to running a smooth campaign is to use a GM. It is not an easy job, but there is a lot of excitement and enjoyment that can be had in running an entertaining campaign for a great group of players. If we had used a GM

in the Etruscan campaign, things could have been different; they could have calmed the bickering, of course, but more importantly, could have salvaged things through some crafty use of reinforcements, misfortune, or other balancing elements to reduce the impact of those early victories.

In retrospect, we could have simply rebooted the campaign, but I recall us being too burned out to even give it a go! You can have a successful campaign without a GM, but I believe the best experiences come from campaigns that are run by a GM, and it's unlikely a campaign will go awry in the hands of an adept GM.

Just like in role playing games, a GM in a tabletop gaming campaign can be fair and impartial, keep the narrative moving forward, provide some play balance if needed, and ensure that everyone has a fun but challenging experience. The GM should be the one tracking map movement, time, weather, random events, supply, reinforcements, recuperation after



From small skirmish actions to larger battles, a good GM will keep on top of the possibilities and ensure players are involved with the key moments in-game.

a battle, troop fatigue, straggling, and any other conditions that might apply.

### PRE-PLANNING PREVENTS PATHETIC PERFORMANCE

The key to successful GMing is preparation. Make sure you have your maps, orders of battle, victory conditions, and other important information organized and ready to provide to your players. This is the time to get out your old books, search the internet, and put in the research! Be ready with the information you'll need to anticipate your players' likely questions and potential concerns regarding key elements of the campaign.

In an AWI campaign I ran, I was ready with the maps and OOBs but overlooked some key initial information and questions such as: is the river fordable? How many men can the fort hold? Is the local population supportive of our cause? It goes without saying but you'll definitely need to research the basic topography and historical campaign situation of your chosen campaign. You'll never be able to predict the questions players will throw your way or the ideas they come up with completely, but the more research you've done the more equipped you'll be to answer on the fly and provide them with a believable framework to progress within.

### ADAPTABLE PREPAREDNESS

Don't over research and plan for every potential outcome or question! You could spend years researching every detail and never get around to actually playing! Remember, the whole point of this is to have FUN! I would recommend focusing on the basic information that the generals would know at the start of the campaign, and then, much like in an RPG, improvise later as situations develop. You can use breaks between the games to research the information you are missing too.



### SMALL SCALE AND SCOPE

Don't be overly ambitious and attempt to recreate something huge. Trying to refight the entire American Civil War would be folly - a better option might be to focus on a more limited area and timeframe. How about Stonewall Jackson's Shenandoah Valley campaign, Hood's Nashville campaign, or the Gettysburg campaign? Even within these there's vast scope for variety and tactical nuance.

Consider the need to finish your campaigns too! ACW commanders tended to get sacked or moved out West if they weren't successful; this creates a believable timeframe for the players. Give your Federal commander the Spring of 1862 to get the job done or he is sacked!



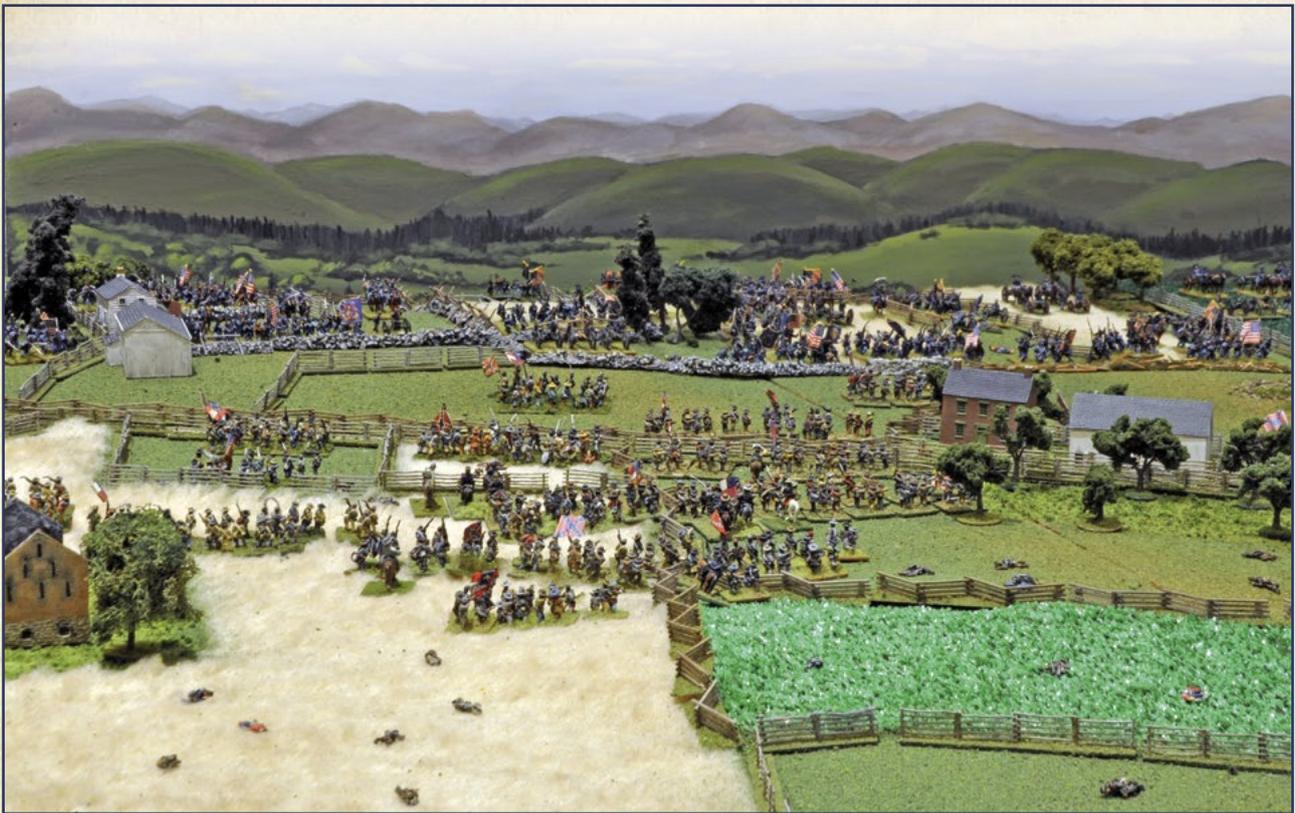
#### FOR EXAMPLE - POSSIBLE GM RESPONSES TO "IS THE RIVER FORDABLE?"

"No, based on scouting reports it is too deep this time of the year in this area."

"There might be some locals in the nearby village that know of a ford but asking them will delay your movement by one."

"You'll need to send some cavalry scouts further down the river to find out."

The choices are endless; the way players respond to a GM's simple statements might lead to some of the more memorable skirmishes and battles of the campaign. Years from now the club could still be talking about the dramatic 'fight for the ford'!



### TECHNOMANCY

I'm an old school gaming Grogard, but today's technology gives us plenty of opportunities to communicate faster, and with a larger group of players. This isn't the days of the old 'by mail' pencil and paper campaigns!

I'm starting an ACW campaign soon, and I plan to include players from the USA, UK, Germany, and Australia. We will keep in touch via email and Facebook messenger, and I'll create a Facebook group page for each side in the campaign to provide news articles, intelligence, rumors, pictures, 'letters from home', etc. I'd suggest keeping this simple and using easily accessible social media technology. You don't need to code your

own website for this! I ran a test game this winter where I messaged pictures and videos of what the players could see on the battlefield to them, and they had to make decisions based on this limited information. It worked wonderfully, and I'm really looking forward to getting this campaign going soon!

### SIZEOLOGY

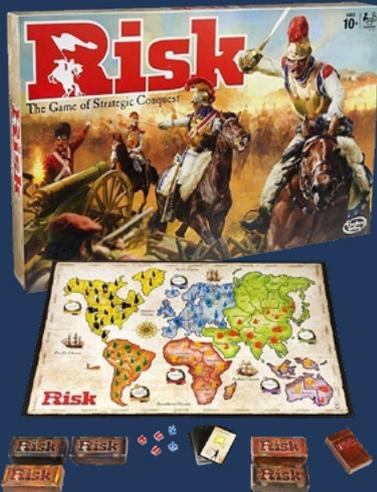
The time it takes to fight the battles is a key factor in a campaign that maintains the players' interest! Most gaming clubs will be able to fight a battle somewhere between once a week to once a month. The narrative of the campaign should ideally play out like the plot of great book or movie and build to a climactic battle!

The GM needs to interpret the map moves by both sides to determine if the battle will be a key battle to be played on the tabletop for the campaign. It's almost like you're editing the story, casting the focus on the key moments, and deleting any of the less vital chapters.

In my ACW campaign, I'm predicting we will have four or five key battles and lots of non-critical skirmishes. Entire larger battles shouldn't necessarily be considered 'key' either; there is nothing wrong with the GM saying that a certain portion of the battle will be the 'key' action fought out on the tabletop. This makes larger corps actions much more manageable. An example of this from the ACW might be the action around the Carter house at the Battle of Franklin, and not the entire affair.



*Little Round Top, Gettysburg - one of the tables in a Wargames Illustrated ACW campaign.*



## RANDOM RULESETS

I'd recommend the GM should decide the outcome of skirmishes and battles they deem as less vital to the arc of the campaign narrative with an easy boardgame or dice system. Generating a result with something like *Risk* will remove the sheer amount of tabletop gaming players would otherwise have to do.

Smaller, key battles that need to be fought would be best resolved with a set of skirmish rules. Don't be afraid to use multiple rulesets for different sized battles. In my ACW campaign, I plan on using *Brother Against Brother* for key small skirmishes, *Johnny Reb* for mid-sized battles, and *Brigade Fire and Fury* for larger battles. Different groups around the globe will be fighting it out, so it's important that they can approach their battles with whatever rules they like to play.

The job of any GM becomes the collection of results, interpreting them, and 'plugging them in' to the ongoing campaign. As the GM, I will provide an OOB, terrain plan, and victory conditions and let the participants who are involved fight it out while the rest of the players anxiously await results. The players in my campaign will take the role of army and corps commanders, so this is a good level of command perspective for them to game where they can't control every nuance of the battle.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Here are some items that I think should be included in just about any campaign. I'll use my ACW campaign plans as an example, but most of these elements should work for almost any period:

### OOBs

I keep my campaign focus on corps and divisional sized units. These will be the elements that players will order around the map, and it keeps things at a manageable level and leaves players with a realistic level of information and agency throughout. In my upcoming campaign, the setting is middle Tennessee in 1864, as opposed to a grand sweeping region, which allows me to keep things tight.

### Map and movement

Always look for historic maps but reinterpret them for ease of gameplay. I prefer adding dots at intervals to represent about a day's march for infantry, but you could just as easily add a hex overlay and use boardgame movement. In my dot-to-dot movement system, cavalry can move two dots, infantry one, and artillery can keep up with their assigned divisions. A forced march adds an extra dot of movement, but the units will be fatigued and fight in any upcoming battles at a morale grade worse.

### Roads

Its good to put in the research to know what are proper roads and what are smaller roads and trails. I allow corps to move down the larger roads, and divisions to move down the smaller roads. Large Corps of multi-division formations can move down the smaller roads too, but they will move slower and be strung out. The effect of this on a game is that reinforcements will trickle in.

## Supply

How are the troops receiving their food, ammo, medical supplies, and other essentials? I suggest keeping this as simple as possible. In my ACW campaign, the Federal troops will be supplied from a large fortified city with river and rail transport available. Any threat to their supply lines must be dealt with or they will begin to suffer morale detriment in the games. The Confederate forces must essentially live off the land or with the help of the local population. The Confederate supply state is therefore in a slow, constant degrade; again, the easiest way to surface this to the players will be negative morale modifiers on the tabletop as well as rules for 'low on ammunition'. They can improve their supply situation by capturing Federal supply depots, cities, etc.

### Local population support

How is the local population reacting to the campaign? I use a simple tracker from 1 to 10. The campaign starts with the Confederacy at a 6 and it goes up or down for every key battle they win or lose. It can also be affected by losing a favorite general, capturing a key city or fort, random political events, etc.

The higher the number the more recruits they will gain, the faster wounded units can recover post-game casualties, and the hope for the Government in Richmond to send reinforcements. If the number is low, the opposite is true; morale will decrease, desertions will rise, reinforcements will be few, and the local population will be less inclined to assist.

### Weather and random events

These are some of the elements that the players can't control. Results range from sleet, snow, and mud, to swollen rivers or extreme heat. Use the weather from the actual campaign as a starting point to create a quick chart that randomly

shows any changes. It can be something as simple as rolling a D6 for each day of the campaign (or turn) with the weather remaining 'normal' on a 2-5, improving on a 6, and getting significantly worse on a 1. Severe weather should mainly affect movement rates and morale.

Random events can be generated from a table or tables created by the GM to represent potential outcomes. This could be anything from a change in the political power of high-ranking generals, and the way that impacts the overall goals of the armies, through to more localized activities that come from the area and its population - unrest, burning a city, spies, disease, etc. It may be worth considering different possibilities at different times of the campaign, such as using a table with more volatile events when more players are engaging in battles.

### Flavor

Add some flavour of the time to your campaign! Encourage players to write OOBs in the language of the period, take black and white game photos for the other players to see, write newspaper articles, etc. This really helps bring the campaign to life! Use period newspapers and diaries for inspiration.

### GET IT DONE!

When the elements all come together, a campaign creates long-lasting gaming memories and is a great hobby activity to invest some time and energy into as a GM, or indeed as a player if you want to 'research' things from that angle before creating your own.

Planning a campaign might not suit everyone, but you won't know unless you have a go! Perhaps you're the next great GM and don't even realise it - get busy scribbling some background, create some maps and tables, and bring the gift of great wargaming fun to long standing and new groups of friends!

# Giants IN Miniature

## Dante's Inferno



**In-house painter Marc shows off some fire and glow techniques while painting our latest Giants in Miniature release, Dante.**

Back in my more pretentious days, I took it upon myself to read as much classical literature as possible and I was drawn to the first part of the epic poem the *Divine Comedy*, by Dante: *Inferno*. The book's imagery has stayed with me long after that initial reading; when I saw the Giants in Miniature interpretation of Dante - released to mark 700 years since the famous Italian poet's death and ostensibly modeled on how Dante might have looked at The Battle of Campaldino, 1289 - I finally had the chance to create a showpiece depicting his journey through the inferno.

For me, the most iconic of the Circles is the Seventh Circle: Violence. It is here that murderers, tyrants, butchers, and warmakers are subsumed in the Phlegethon, a river of boiling blood and fire.

Displaying Dante here would present some challenges: sculpting fire to make a river of flames, painting those flames, and adding the glow of the Phlegethon to Dante. This guide focuses on the techniques I used to conquer those challenges. You can use the advice to reproduce what you see on these pages when you paint Dante, or you can apply the fire and glow techniques to other projects. A modelling or painting technique seldom has a single application - I used the object source lighting (OSL) effect elsewhere in this very issue to add glow to a magical spell for Steve Tibble's Fall of the Templars article (page 28), for example.

### BUILDING THE FLAMING BASE

Before getting stuck in and sculpting flames onto Dante's base, let's look at the basic technique in isolation. Once you know how to make a flame you can easily transfer your knowledge from flat bases to other areas of your figures such as the tops of torches or onto the open palms of magic users to create new and interesting flame areas.

#### SCULPTING AN INDIVIDUAL FLAME

- 1 I mixed a small ball of Greenstuff, using equal parts blue and yellow medium.



- 2 I used my fingers to form this into a cone shape.



- 3 A sculpting tool was used to press down around all of the edges of the cone. This has two consequences: firstly, it fixes the flame to the base; secondly, it starts to create the hard edges of the flames.



# PAINING GUIDE



- 4** Tweezers were used to gently grip the top of the cone, which was then twisted. This pulls the Greenstuff, creating hard edges.



- 5** Again using the tweezers, I pinched aspects along the side of the cone and pulled upwards, adding a slight twisting motion.



- 6** The top of the cone was pulled off, using tweezers, to create the sharp peak of the flame.



- 7** Finished! A roaring fire has been created, we've learned the technique, and created a fire token for use in our future gaming too. Nice!



With the ability to make fire mastered (without burning my fingers even a little bit, I might add!) I needed to know where each component would go on the base that I chose for the figure. I used a pen to mark out Dante's position and superglued the grasping hands and leering faces of a few skeletons from the *Wi* bits box in place.

You can see the first two basic Greenstuff flame forms in position here too, done to the end of stage three in the guide above. How did I go from here to the finished inferno base?



## DEVELOPING THE INFERNO FURTHER

- 1 Once fixed in place, I teased out the top of the flames as above, using tweezers to twist and pull them upwards.



- 2 The process of adding flames continues with another smaller one on the other side of this skull. This is an operation that will require patience, but the result, I think, makes that patience worthwhile!



- 3 Leaving the flames behind for a moment, I superglued a piece of slate onto the base. Dante will be mounted on top of this. The slate gives me a distinct area to work the next flames around and will provide a good shape to apply glow effect close to the level of the fire.



- 4 The only thing left to do now is repeat the same flame technique ... a lot! Sculpt individual flames that are spread at enough of a distance so that you can detail them without hitting others. Let these dry before you go back to add more between them and gradually fill in the gaps. Eventually you'll have a raging inferno ready for painting.



## PAINTING FLAMES

Painting fire can be quite daunting, but I have created this approach to be as accessible as possible; drybrushing is the predominant technique.

The key thing to remember when painting fire is to reprogram your painter's brain and reverse the usual approach. A figure is darker in the recesses and lighter in the high points, but flames are lighter in the recesses and darker at their high points, representing the intense heat at the centre, with the flames cooling as they move away from that core heat source.

## REALISTIC FIRE

- 1 I painted the base white to ensure the colours on top would pop. It was important for this to be as white as possible, so I used multiple thin coats until the Greenstuff colour was totally hidden and would not tint the basecoat with its green tone.



- 2 I started by thinning one drop of Deep Yellow Vallejo Model Color with three drops of water. This was liberally applied as a wash over all of the flames. I left this to fully dry, naturally (no hair dryers, this time).



- 3 One drop of white was thinned with two drops of water. This was then applied to the root of each flame to add a more intense base colour at the core. I wasn't too worried if I hit the flame tips as the following drybrushing stages would hide any errors.



## ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

While I am very happy with the way the finished piece looks, there is one element that I wish I could change - the final composition of the base elements. The horse's forward hooves impede sight of the skeletons a bit too much from the main viewing angle. This is something that might seem pedantic, but if I was to enter the piece in a competition, it is tiny details such as this that could make the difference. I wish I had positioned them slightly further to the front of the base and tested the overall base composition with Dante in place before getting into the painting.

The lesson here is to always assess your finished models and work out where and how to improve next time. We learn every time we undertake a painting project if we take the time to ask questions of our approaches while we work and when we are finished.



- 4** Three drops of Fluorescent Yellow Model Color was thinned with one drop of water. These Fluorescent paints tend to be inherently thinner than other paints, so ensure you don't add too much water and be prepared to give them a good shake too. The mix was then applied to the root of each flame, covering the white that was applied in the previous step, creating a warmer yellow than the surrounding flames.



- 7** I then mixed the Red with pure Black, at a ratio of two drops of Red to one drop of Black. This was drybrushed over the top fifth of the flames.



- 5** The next stages were to develop the cool outer aspects of the flames. Orange Fire Vallejo Game Color was selectively drybrushed over the flames, covering just the top third to half of each flame. What once looked like a somewhat indistinct yellow blobby thing is suddenly starting to heat up!



- 8** Black was drybrushed over the very tips of the flames.



- 6** Red Vallejo Model Color comes next, drybrushed over the top quarter of each flame, continuing to cool things down.



- 9** To give the fire that finishing touch I added hot embers by applying very tiny dots of white and black amongst the flames. That's one piping hot base!



## THE SKELETON CONUNDRUM

I considered how to paint the skeletons rising from the fiery inferno for quite a while. Should they be the typical bone colour, or should I paint them in a charred dark tone to represent them being consumed by flames for eternity?

Ultimately, I decided to go with a dark tone - it fitted thematically and contrasted very effectively with the fire by really letting the OSL effect pop on the dark of the finished skeletons.

- 1 The rock and skeletons were painted black. Be careful when doing this, you don't want to slip and ruin the glow of your painted fire



- 2 The skeletons were stipple highlighted using two drops of neutral grey thinned with one drop of water, with a focus on the raised aspects of their features such as around the eye sockets. I don't recommend drybrushing here, the risk to the surrounding flames is too great. By stippling the grey on, using controlled 'stabbing' motions, you can get a good effect of dry charred bone while keeping the paint away from your flames.



- 3 A final stippled highlight was applied on the most raised aspects of the skeletons, using two drops of Neutral Grey, one drop of Off White, and thinned with one drop of water.

The rock was also painted following the same colours and approach as I used when painting the skeletons.



- 4 It's once the OSL effect is applied to the skeletons that things get exciting!



# WiPRIME

## PAINTING DANTE

This guide puts its focus squarely on the fire and flames, but I also recorded my painting process on the GiM Dante figure too. There's not enough space in the magazine for that, but WiPrime Members can head online to see a Prime exclusive second part to this article: how I painted Dante and his mount.

## OBJECT SOURCE LIGHTING - BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Object source lighting (OSL) is an advanced painting technique that can be used to apply a realistic glow effect to your figures and create the ambiance of light falling across a model. Some painters obsess over OSL, approaching the fall of the light as if they are one of the Renaissance's grand masters or even some kind of light obsessed mad scientists, but we're not going to be that extreme about it! This is a relatively simple way that you can bring some glow to a figure.

- 1 With Dante in place on the base things look good, but the fire somehow feels less warm than before. That's because Dante has none of the expected lighting effect cast onto him.



- 2 When applying an OSL effect, the first thing I do is look for which parts of the miniature are near the light source and have a direct line of sight to it. I picked up the miniature and had a good long look, then started to establish the light effect; if you want to make your life easier, use a small directional light and shine it at the model from the angle of the intended light source. Let real light guide where you will place your simulated glow.

I start with relatively opaque paints, in this instance two drops of Mars Orange Scalecolor thinned with one drop of water, applied on the edges that are most exposed the light source.



### OSL'S OVERRIDING RULE

When creating a realistic OSL effect, the most vital rule that you adhere to is that the glow effect you paint is never lighter than the bright point of whatever is casting the light. The moment that happens, your glow will look uncanny and impossible and the whole effect will be ruined no matter how perfect your brushwork.

### LANTERN

Here you can see how the OSL technique can be used on other miniatures. I adapted the colours slightly, being warmer, more towards the yellow tone. Exactly the same process was followed. The key thing is to ensure that the colours should be warmer and closer to white the closer they are to the light source.

Hard edges will also typically reflect more light; therefore, they will have more of a white tint.



- 3** Next I apply a colour to bring more harmony between the glow colour and the subject the glow is cast onto, in this instance red. I made a red glaze, thinning one drop of Flat Red Vallejo Model Color with four drops of water. This was applied around the areas that I had previously painted orange. Successive coats were painted to intensify the red effect, waiting for previous coats to dry.



- 5** Finally, the warmest colour I am using is applied to the most extreme exposed parts of the horse and rider, using two drops of Marduk Yellow Scalecolor Fantasy and Games thinned with one drop of water. Notice that though the glow looks convincing, it is subtle. This is the best approach when starting out with OSL.



- 4** The warm highlights are then re-established using two drops of Mars Orange thinned with one drop of water.



- 6** Not quite satisfied with the impact of the glow, I decided to go even further and have a stronger OSL effect by taking the glow all the way to Dante's robes and onto some of the metal elements.



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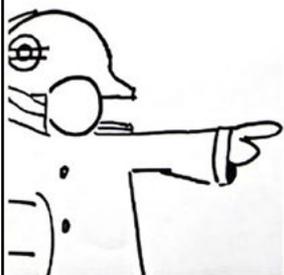


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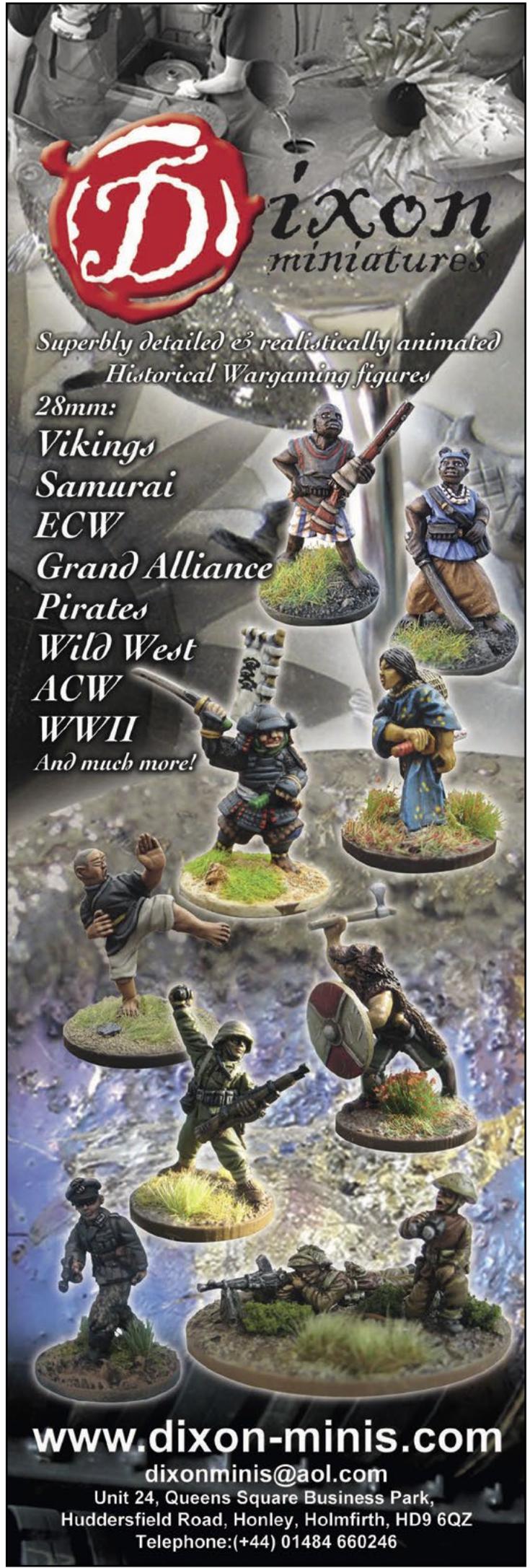
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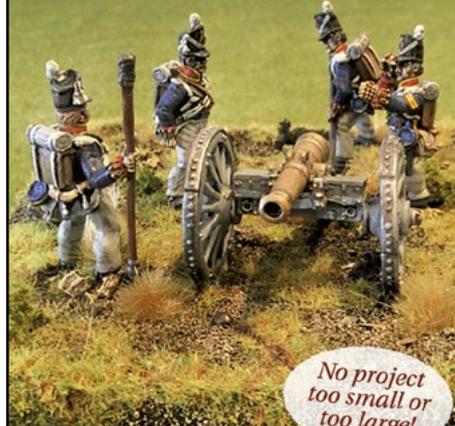
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