



Military Muddling



Volume 9 Issue 6

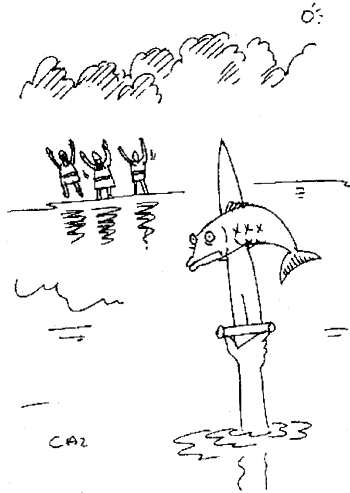
Chestnut Lodge Wargames Group's Newsletter

May 1998

Editorial

This issue sees a welcome return to the 10pt type so beloved of one reader that he was moved to remonstrate with me over its absence.

This issue has a lot more to it than its predecessor and I hope there is a bit of everything in it for everybody - except Sci Fi. I was particularly impressed by Arthur's article on Game Design, a clear-sighted example to us all. I was also at the sharp end of Mr Harman's criticism's over my incautious remarks about Peter Hofschroer - at last controversy.



I did put a note out via e-mail reminding players to get their offside and onside reviews in from the Games Weekend. I have received quite a few. Some from person/s otherwise engaged in MegaGame projects. So thank you to the regulars and what about the irregulars (you know who you are). Will I have to start a personalised e-mail campaign and name and shame? Mr Grumpy is straining at the leash ever offering to write his customary missive (I think he likes it, you know).

Contributions for Military Muddling

Please send your contributions electronically if at all possible. Text files are best. I will attempt to re-type hard-copy if necessary.

If you have any images, pictures or maps please send them as hard copy if you can.

E-Mail contributions are welcome:

Nick_Luft@compuserve.com

Post:

Nick Luft,
43, Finmere, Bracknell, Berks, RG12 7WF



Deadline for next issue

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20th June 1998

Letters

CLWG Mailing List

The time has come for me to play with a new toy, so I've decided to change the software on which the unofficial CLWG mailing list is being run.

The new software will provide a couple more facilities.

1. Replies to messages from the list will now automatically go back to the list, and not the original sender.
2. You can send commands to the list server yourself, to subscribe, unsubscribe, get a list of other members, and a couple of other less useful things. Send an e-mail to <listserv@msw1.demon.co.uk> with the word HELP in the message body to get instructions on how to do this. (You are still welcome - of course - to send requests for me to do these things manually, which will be subject to the traditional d6 weeks delay)
3. The rambling of the list users will be automatically archived, should any maniac out there want to review old debates.

That's about it. I look forward to not hearing from you.

Mark Weston

Cost of Meetings

John Rutherford has been informed that in future the hire cost for the room above the Bedford Park pub will be pounds 50 as against the pounds 15 we pay at present.

A brief discussion took place at Sunday's meeting during which it was requested that I give an update of our financial position. It seems best to start with a reminder of the budget I presented last business meeting as amended by the increases in subs and meeting fees agreed at that meeting:

BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 1997/98

Anticipated Expenditure

Hall hire	310 (1)
MilMud	700 (2)

TOTAL 1010 (3)

Anticipated income at 1996/97 rates

Subscriptions 825 (4)

Meeting fees 216 (5)

TOTAL 1041

Assumptions:

1. Five meetings @ £50, four meetings @ £15
2. Ten issues @ £70 per issue
3. Assumes conference and games weekend cover costs.
4. 30 members @ £25, 6 members @ £12.50
5. 9 meetings with an average attendance of 8 @ £3 per head.

As it happens we're

1. Slightly worse on memberships (29 waged, 4 unwaged and 1 free (editor's prize) for a total of pounds 775)
2. Experienced much reduced costs on MilMud due to Nick's splendid efforts (4 MilMuds for pounds 42 against budget of pounds 280!) and as a result we're well ahead on budget.



"Erm . . . I'll have that one, it's cheapest"

We can thus afford to pay the 50 pounds for the remaining two meetings we're due to have at the pub for this year (July and September) if we wish (even without drawing on our reserves which we hold for situations such as this).

I can appreciate the feeling that we're being ripped off by the pub but on reflection my personal opinion is that we've been getting the pub cheap for some time (and without a guaranteed booking as a result). I suspect that we won't find another venue much cheaper (the Church hall for the Saturday meetings cost £50) though it may be slightly less shabby and better lit.

John Rutherford has kindly suggested using his house as a venue and I'm willing to offer my place as an alternative/overflow (its only 10 minutes walk from John's) but it may give John a problem with his family. [*or John's family find he is the problem?.. ed*]

I'd suggest continuing with the Bedford for the present while looking for another venue (there are a few more pubs along Streatham High Road for a start these days) but we need to hear from everyone on this. I hope the above makes the financial situation clear but I'm happy to fill out any area that's not clear.

Brian Cameron

Games Day

We have had a bit of brainstorming at the club recently and we are looking to put on a Games day and possibly a terrain building day. Do you think that any of your club would be interested? We may even be able to stretch to some prizes.

Adrian Peacock,
Club President
Kingston Games Group
White Hart Public House,
Hampton Wick (Just over Kingston Bridge!)

OK, dear reader, please let the committee know if this is what you want.

Murphy's Heroes

I am hoping to organise a weekend trip to Delft in the Netherlands on the 26/27 September 1998 to attend this wargaming event run by our Dutch friends. The aim will be to take a good carload (perhaps a Ford Galaxy). According to my contacts 'the first day is open for the general public and the second day will be a fantasy extravaganza organised by Marc Lagrand.' More info will be available soon.

Please register your interest with me if there is any chance at all you may want to go. No commitment at this stage.

John Rutherford

I have seen several e-mailed replies to this from eager Europhiles; it should be a popular project, especially judging from the glowing report received last year from Jerry and Jim.

*Streatham
17th day of -----, 174-*

Gentlemen,

I consider'd you may find my recent sojourn in France to be of interest. Although a State of War exists between us, when I encountered the estimable Duke of Rouchfoucaud in the Channel Islands (I believe you know of him from your time at Menorca) and he invited me to visit the Realm of King Lewis, I seized the Opportunity. The Duke's Wine-cellar's are extensive and his Daughters agreeably hospitable. He seemed content to allow me to make some Sketch-maps of Mr Vauban's works in his domain which I have sent to the War Office.

My wife Elvira is well although somewhat fatigued, and while we were in France spent an inordinate time with the Young Fellows of the Duke's Entourage, thereby as you will imagine vastly enhanced her acquaintance with the French tongue.

The Duke kindly allowed me to review a French Regiment of Foot quarter'd near his Castle. The Men were of poor quality, ill-shod and stinking of Garlic; but they did show an admirable dexterity and understanding of Gunpowder unusual among our own brave beef-fed Boys. Perhaps the Frog feels the need to use Explosives freely when he stands two hands shorter than an Englishman owing to his wretched Frog diet of Gruel, Oysters, Blood-sausage, Snails, and water'd wine.

I made a merry Jest to the Duke; he telling me the Frogs call the English Channel "La Manche" meaning "The

Sleeve" I told him "The Sleeve" contained a strong British Arm which would give the Frogs a Mighty Drubbing so saying I dealt his Sergeant Major a Blow to the Beak which tapped his Claret, causing much hilarity and drawing of bayonets!

I have since conceiv'd the Project of writing a little Manual for the use of British Foot, rather on the lines of a French volume of Tactics and Drill, related matters &c. &c. I have purchas'd, in the hope it may prove useful to my Brother Officers. I have procur'd the help of a Scribbler, named Samuel Johnson, who has agreed to help me from a literary standpoint. Any of you who wish to help me with this work, please let me know.

Your Obedient and Humble servant,

Colonel James de Vere. 8th Foot

Game Reports

WHAT YOU MISSED AT THE MAY MEETING

Brian Cameron

What you missed was a cracker of a game, the second run of Jonathan's Beans, Bullets & Burritos game (a title clearly ripped off from a text book in true Brian Cameron style....) on Mexican politics in the early 20th century. I liked it more than the first run mainly because we managed to get into the politics more (it also lacked the presence of Jonathan's hugely irritating mate who says nice things about me as well). We also probably understood the campaign side of the game better. The game was certainly worth the all-day session.

The basic set-up was of two provinces with all the players as Constitutional party rebels against government forces umpire controlled by Pickles. There were two provinces with maps on separate tables with the players distributed between the two.

The game thus had the interesting premise that we were all on the same side, something of a first for a Chestnut Lodge game and a concept that took some getting used to.

I must admit I was rather on auto-pilot at the start, taking the part of a good team player, playing third fiddle to Andy Reeve and Jerry Elsmore, waiting to get worked over by the two of them (come on, its not that unreasonable an expectation!). Mukul was very much playing his own game on the other side of the mountains. However we played as a team until the crunch point. This was when the government had been defeated and we were due to have constitutional convention to sort out the future. It became clear at this point that Dave Boundy and co in the other province had proclaimed themselves the 'revolutionary council' and we were (eventually) invited along to 'ratify' their decisions. I found this as less than attractive prospect and amazingly we all held firm with the result in which there was a long period of negotiation on the basis on which the convention would be held. The next phase of the game was thus delayed for. I would guess, at least an hour, while we haggled. In the end Dave and his council gave way but not without Dave being the front-runner for the Neil Parker Dodgy Dealing Award.

After this the convention ran on the basis of Jonathan's Mexican constitution game which he ran at one of the games weekend/convention a while back. As a re-cap, for each of the issues to be discussed the players are allocated one of four positions: Strongly for, For, Against, Strongly against. While it may seem a bit simplistic it works very well (as Bernie Ganley demonstrated with his Russian Civil War megagame where it was used for the Bolshevik internal game) and there is always a certain fudging going on. This phase lasted most of the afternoon and provided a very god debate and haggling session as one tried to sort out other people's positions and find allies.

Eventually the constitution was formed, provisional elections arranged, deals done as to who was going to get what job and we all rode off into the sunset and lived happily ever after (well till the next revolution!). I hope my own up-coming political debate game, Congress of Vienna works as well and as entertainingly as this.

Attendance was nine and in all it was a much better meeting than the rather disappointing sounding March meeting.

Beans, Bullets & Burritos – Mexico 1913

Presented by Jonathon Pickles

Mukul Patel

This was a slightly slicker version of Wind that Swept Mexico. The game in two parts an initial military phase where the Federal government were trounced by the Revolutionaries and then a political phase where the revolutionaries have to come to an agreement on a constitution.

The military game was fairly routine, enjoyable, slick but the lack of a played Federal opposition took some the risk out this phase of the game. The really interesting bit was the political bit. Wow this was fun. We had a massive argument with the so called first chief of the revolution Caranza (aka Dave Boundy), his argument was not one generated by the briefings in the game but arose from actions during the game. This argument was passionate, heated, protracted, and very real. It was very enjoyable. After this argument was settled due to some nasty mushrooms we had a constitutional conference, this produced much less passionate but more crafty debate. This conference went surprisingly well after we ditched the neutral chairman, (Pickles) and got Gonzalez (Simon Weston) in as chairman. We only had one person out of 8 breakaway from the conference and reject its legitimacy.

This was a very good game, with surprisingly violent and but immensely enjoyable political argument. Dave Boundy played it brilliantly and contributed greatly to my enjoyment of the game. Dave seems to have a talent at playing nutters.

Thank you Mr. Jonathan



Games Weekend Reports

Games Weekend

Mukul Patel

The Venue

This was held at a new venue, in Hounslow. The new venue a church hall, was OK, and a lot better than the Riggindale Church Hall, like it had a good number of chairs and decent tables. I travelled by car, so I have little idea as to how easy it was to get to by public transport. I think there are rumblings between the treasurer and the events organiser that we could use the new venue for the Conference. I think it may be an OK venue for the conference but I still prefer the school hall at Eardley. The big advantage of the St Francis hall over Eardley though is price. Incredibly Brian Cameron reduced the price of admission on the gate to only 15 pounds !!

I thought the whole event went very well, good games and enjoyable fun, well worth attending. The only significant misfires in the programme were a poorly attended planning for the megagame Clash of Titans and not having enough players for Dave Barnsdale's game Rasputin Must Die. I was kind of looking forward to seeing Rasputin die in the game.

Middle Earth Figure Game

All the games I played were pretty non historical fantasy types. I just wanted to play in some fun games.

The game I most enjoyed was A Middle Earth figure game by Dave Mott. I loved the game. It was simple, easy to understand, easy to play game. The game was a figure game developed from a set of Middle Earth board game rules. It had been stripped down of twiddly fiddly rules and elements. The original board game had been subjected to criticism, and been developed to improve its quality. Dave Mott had also put significant effort into presentation of the game, this showed and made the game even more fun to play.

The most significant thing about this game was my re-acquaintance with the dreaded mechanism "the ZOC" (Zone Of Control), after a huge number of years. I always remembered ZOCs being dead fiddly boring and restrictive and frankly weird to understand, in other words crap. This time round they suddenly seemed OK, easy to use and understand. This surprised me. Now there is a certain style of playing and decision making with ZOCs that is pretty simple and yet produces reasonably credible results.

The only significant minus in the game was the lack of command and control rules. Frankly though this is not a great problem as I am certain that it would be relatively easy to tack on Command Control mechanism, and anyway this was fantasy game so they all communicated by telepathy.

Dave Mott has tried adapting the systems of this game to work with some form of ancient warfare, but without easy success so far. It will very interesting to see if can succeed, because my instinct is that it can.

Conclusion Middle earth figure game is a great fun game with room for a little bit of development. Thank you greatly Dave.

SONS OF HELL

Onside Report

John Rutherford

What some folk call a 'traditional' CLWG game; a map and some counters, with battle resolution determined by free kriegsspeiling and no set time structure. Numbers meant we played only the Puritan side, with Brian and I acting as the Royalists. Very early stage of the war: July/August 1642.. What happened? The Puritans in Dorchester assembled their forces while the Somerset Puritan Bedford waited over the border as the Royalists (including Ralph Hopton) used Sherborne Castle as the base for cavalry raiding. Denzil Holles burned a Royalist manor house and became Dorset's first war criminal. Will Whiteway MP recruited successfully in Poole and Wimborne. Towards the end, the Royalists sallied out towards Dorchester and attempted to capture it, but were chased off by the advance into Dorset of Bedford. Not an impossible outcome; historically the Puritans were more aggressive, chasing the Royalists out of Sherborne by combining forces more quickly.

I hope people found this an insight into the early stages of the English Civil War; and how local

rivalries became tangled into the national politics.

This game was inspired by a recently published County History of the War in Dorset, by Tim Goodwin.

Dorking Battles On

Onside Report

Jon Casey

At last the truth can be revealed. My article in MilMud Volume 8 Issue 4 about the genesis of the Battle of Dorking game that I put on at last year's games weekend omitted one small detail - namely the fact that I never expected to run the game as a straight map game at all. The impetus for designing the game actually came from Dave Nilsson's discussion at the previous conference about Victorian science fiction games, and the intention was to use the Dorking planning session to get the players into a Victorian military scenario but then spring a War of the Worlds type Martian invasion on them. Unfortunately Dave had to miss the 1997 games weekend and so this element got missed out of the game's first run - one of the reasons for its reappearance in this year's programme (the other being that I didn't have time to design a new game from scratch)

This time I intended only to play the Red side (see briefing). John Rutherford and Nick Luft devised the Red plan for the 1872 manoeuvres, which provided for a concentration of regular and volunteer forces at two main encampments at Cambridge and Tunbridge Wells and the deployment of the Militia brigades to cover the various potential landing areas.

The Red order of battle was:

III Corps (Tunbridge Wells)

5th Division (2 regular brigades, one volunteer brigade)

6th Division (1 regular, 2 volunteer brigades)

7th Division*

2nd Cavalry Division

IV Corps (Cambridge)

8th Division*

9th Division*

3rd Cavalry Division

Army Reserve (London)

The Guards Brigade

*each comprising one regular and one volunteer brigade.

Graham Hockley and Trevor Farrant volunteered to run the Blue invasion force, enabling Dave and me to umpire the game, and thus producing a faster resolution than last year. They opted to land in Dorset and seized Weymouth on the first day despite a spirited defence by the Dorset Militia. The Reds reacted cautiously at first, not being sure whether this was a feint or the real attack, but began shifting forces west to contain the invaders. The Blues, having secured Bridport and Lyme by the second day, spent a couple of days landing the rest of their force, rather than driving inland with their available forces as the Blue force had done in the 1871 manoeuvres. On day 4 they began their advance, reaching Shaftesbury the next day and Salisbury on day 6, where General Hockley decided that his troops should rest for a church parade on the seventh day.

The invaders seemed strangely inactive over the next few days, although there were a number of actions between the two forces' cavalry screens and advanced guards. This was not so much because Blue was worried about the threat from Red's cavalry to their lines of communication as from a desire to safeguard their professional futures by ensuring that this time the exercise would produce the result the War Office wanted. By day 10 Red had assembled most of its forces in the Andover - Winchester area, and the next day the main engagement took place on Salisbury Plain, which ended with Blue being driven back and surrendering the following day.

I beg to differ with Mr Casey (obviously some pen-pushing wallah), but it was all the Duke of Cambridge's plan, hrrumph! And a dashed good idea, what! The Queen has personally communicated her pleasure at seeing all those upstanding volunteers. A splendid day indeed! Tunbridge Wells is a damn fine town at this time of year.

I shall see to it that that throughly decent young chap, what's his name, Hockey (strange sort of name for a fellow, being named after a sport) gets a plum job somewhere, probably on with the Guards.

-oOo-

Offside Report

At this point Dave announced a further landing of unknown forces in the Isle of Thanet *. After a brief period of confusion in which the combined Red and Blue teams thought that they were being attacked by the dastardly French, it

became clear that these invaders possessed some rather advanced (albeit steam-powered) military technology - including gigantic three-legged walking machines, a sort of crawling land ironclad, two heavier than air flying vessels and armoured infantry with flame-throwers. Using slave labour they plundered the Kentish mines for coal to power their machines.

The British Army responded with ingenuity, using flying columns of cavalry and horse artillery to harry the invaders and batteries of Congreve rockets against their flying ships, although the suggestion of allowing the invaders to capture a number of patients from a smallpox isolation hospital was rejected as "inhumane". They eventually drove off the invaders, who departed leaving quantities of their equipment behind....

I enjoyed both parts of this game; I felt that all the players entered into the spirit of the first part and I was pleased to see that it produced a very different result from last year. Dave's Martian invasion game was great fun, particularly the efforts to think what Victorian technical resources could be brought to bear against the invaders.

*(where, of course, the 1871 Blue force, "like all other successful invaders of these islands" had landed - Dave's Martians had obviously read 1066 and All That)

Those dastardly Martians. I think my attempt at role-playing the infamously reactionary Duke of Cambridge came a bit unstuck at this point. The dear old Duke went west with apoplexy. No doubt one of those modern Major-Generals (an ENGINEER, damn his eyes!!), stepped into the breach. Interestingly though I still attempted to run the game as the CinC, delegating tasks to the players. I don't know how they felt about that.

It was quite exciting, attempting to pease together intelligence on the Martians so we could find their weakness. At times Mr Rutherford was anticipating the muscular heroes of John Buchan with his Kentish mining exploits: how those stalwart yeoman threw off the yolk of un-English slavery. Haa! Stiring stuff!

A KING FOR BOHEMIA

Onside Report

Brian Cameron

This actually turned out to be a design session rather than a game and thanks for those who turned up to play and then proved so helpful in putting the system to rights. For those who don't know, A KING FOR BOHEMIA is my forthcoming megagame set in the period of the Thirty Years War. The object of the session was to try out a system for the campaigning aspects of the game.

Despite the very useful discussion at the January meeting what I had, it quickly became clear, was still going to be too cumbersome, with a too many phases to get through in a hour long turn. The subsequent discussion made me realise that I was still trying to represent both the relatively slow pace of the campaigning and the long distances which could be covered fairly quickly along the Spanish Road (the route between the Spanish recruiting grounds in Lombardy and their territory in the Netherlands) with one system and this was making it too complex. I've thus gone for a system which represents the general campaigning and I'll then write some special rules for the Spanish Road. Hopefully I've got it this time! You'll have the opportunity to find out at the June meeting (actually at the end of May) as I haven't had the time to work on the French Revolution game and I'll run this instead. What follows is the system as it currently stands.

The map.

This will be structured as a number of roughly equal areas.

The Turn

Each year long turn will be divided into six 2 month seasons:

- 1) Feb/Mar
 - An early start from winter quarters will involve attrition.
 - Raise taxes
- 2) Apr/May
 - Normal start.
- 3) Jun/Jul
- 4) Aug/Sep
 - Harvest time - reset food counters.
- 5) Oct/Nov
 - Bad weather (if early on-set of winter then extra attrition)

6) Dec/Jan

- Winter quarters

Each turn will last one hour and seasons will start on the hour, ten past, twenty past, etc. This will facilitate co-ordination between maps and provide an opportunity for contact between the political and military games during the course of the turn.

Pay

1. Each **season** troops must be paid on the basis of 1 per 5,000 men or part of.
2. Failure to pay troops will mean that they can move but one ARREARS marker will be placed on the army counter

Movement.

1. Each season is divided into 3 movement phases.
2. In a phase an army may:
 1. Move 2 areas but gain 1 Fatigue marker
 2. Move 1 area
 3. Remain stationary and remove 1 Fatigue marker

Organisation

1. For the purposes of feeding, armies are divided into Large and Small. An army is classed as small if it has 15,000 men or less.
2. Each state will have a limit on the number of armies (usually 1 or 2) which it may field.

Feeding

1. A large moving army consumes 1 food point from an area each **movement phase**. This can be from any area it moves through.
2. A small moving army does not require a food point.
3. A stationary large army consumes 2 food points.
4. A stationary small army consumes 1 food point.
5. If all the food points in an area have been consumed and an army needs to have one from that area then 1 Hungry marker is placed on a small army and 2 on a large army.

Desertion

1. At the end of each section an army will lose 1,000 men for each Hungry marker it has.

Harvest

1. At the end of section (5) the FOOD CONSUMED markers are removed from an area up to Food supply value of the area. Any surplus are left.

Taxation

1. Areas have a Tax Value - this is the amount that may be raised without any effect on the area.
2. Double this amount may be raised but with a significant chance of a revolt and all taxation being lost. The area will remain in revolt until pacified by an army.
3. Expelling a religious minority reduces the Taxation Value of an area by One.
4. The Taxation level is reduced by One for every Two Food Consumed markers in an area during Phase (2).

Extortion

1. An army may effectively tax an area (extra to any normal taxation it has paid) for an extra 1 as it passes through. Place an Extortion marker which reduces the Tax value by one during the next Tax phase.

Loot

1. An army may stop and take one complete section to loot an area. This annuls one ARREARS marker. Place a LOOTED marker in the area. This reduces the Tax Value of the area to half (rounded up) for the next Tax phase.
2. An area cannot be looted if it already has a LOOTED marker.

Mutiny

1. At the start of each **season** total the ARREARS markers on an army and add 1 if there are ANY Hungry markers. Roll 1d6. If the score is less than the total markers the army mutinies. It will go to the nearest undefended city and occupy it. It will accept no further orders until it has been paid its arrears. All Arrears and Hungry markers are then removed and it will accept orders again.

Winter Quarters

1. Troops in winter quarters are paid at half rate (round up) and require feeding at half the normal rate (round up).

Recruitment

1. An army must remain stationary for a movement phase to recruit. It must also be able to feed itself. Roll 1d6, score = number of men (in thousands) recruited. Marker the extra number on the army counter. Cost is 2 per 5,000 men recruited

Garrisons

Any city or fortress has a garrison. This is automatically replaced by the owing player if it has been lost in a siege, etc. It does not require paying or feeding.

Combat

- 1d6 per 5,000 men (if less than 5,000 -1 per thousand less than 5)
- Add 1 per die if Spanish
- Total score.
- Subtract 2 per Hungry or Fatigued marker
- Higher score wins.

Losses

- Loser: 1d6 per 5,000 men involved. Retreat to nearest friendly area.
- Winner: 1d6 per 10,000 men involved. Remains in area.



Princes and Mercs

Presented by Brian Cameron

John Rutherford

My raffish, not to say depraved, Duke did his best to push up the price of pink paint by

building up a collection of that 'new' kind of art featuring the accurate reproduction of female flesh tones. This apparently gave me Dukely honour equivalent to capturing cities.

A very 'open' system by Brian gave this game an economic as well as diplomatic flavour and resulting in some great horse-trading and stitch-ups. If games like 'Macchiavelli' are like this I see the attraction; I must give it a try one day. Great fun. Only sorry Brian wouldn't let me keep that Fallen Madonna painting.

Editor, please print a copy here:

Sorry the quantity of flesh tones in the picture caused my Cyber Naughty-Boy Vigilante program to censor those lovely curves.

Games Weekend

Offside Report

by

Dave Barnsdale

I was only able to get to the second day and I played two games (OK, yes I played Germany at the Washington conference but Germany was taken as about as seriously as she was taken in the historical conference - not at all). Both games shared the theme of Command and Control.

In a Foul Country

The first simulated the problems of Wars of Roses armies wandering around the countryside in an era where there were no maps. Me and John Rutherford had to give feedback from the troops as to how tired they were and to play the local peasants who'd say things like "It be an easy/hard walk to Reading from here." The two leaders had to make decisions on the basis of this limited information. As such they were facing very much the kind of problems the historical leaders faced.

Driving Down Dixie

The second, Driving Down Dixie, was a figure game and as such gave far more information to the players. The command and control problem was simulated by the fact we had to throw dice before any of our commanders did anything. It was a fast moving game with rules that I was able to

handle despite my lack of sleep the previous night catching up with me at that point. It also seemed to simulate fairly accurately the confusion of real American Civil War battles. Where it fell down was that we as commanders were not really in any way relating to the problems of the commanders. The real commanders had to get off their arses and chivvy their subordinates into getting the troops moving while ensuring the troops didn't degenerate into a mob. The rules were based on the principle that we were all lazy bums who were incapable of mounting a coordinated attack and as players we had to work round this reality to ensure our somewhat disorganized attacks could be organized to come in waves so the enemy was worn down.

Footnote

To reflect my belief in spelling reform I've used American spelling and I've dropped superfluous final 'e's where they follow 'v'. This only changes the spelling of four words in the piece so I hope you will tolerate this eccentricity. - DB

[surly som mistak, ed]

DRIVING DIXIE DOWN

Presented by

Peter 'What guns, sir?' Howland

John Rutherford

My first experience of a mid-nineteenth century toy soldier wargame. Our huge Union army blundered forward and was expertly chopped up by the cottonpicking Rebs who had superior Generalship.

I found the system of orders, which trickled uncertainly down through a bumbling military hierarchy (meaning that usually my intentions were impossible to implement) very frustrating. I know the intention is to avoid the 'God-like omnipotence' a player feels looking down onto the table; but I found the Union unbelievably crap until Peter assured me they really were that bad. No wonder the war lasted so long despite the huge material predominance of the Union.

It seems to me the game would work well as a two-player game, whereby the inability to get entire Corps to do anything would be counterbalanced by the need to think battlefield wide. The long periods of stasis as orders are transmitted, received and then not acted upon

makes commanding only two Corps rather lacking in a sense of fulfilment. If I have a constructive comment to make as a beginner, it would be to say how surprised I was at the lack of difference between 'parade ground' manoeuvring, before contact with the enemy, and advancing or changing formation under fire. While I believe the latter should be very demanding, I just found it infuriating that my two Corps took five hours to advance three miles to contact with the enemy. In fact, my left Corps, commanded by a useless git, never did reach contact as it was frozen by incompetence into being unable to advance in a straight line into vacant space.

Features

FORMAT OF CLUB GAMES

Arthur Harman

There is, surely, no reason we cannot design games with "novel ideas and obscure subjects", to quote Jonathan Pickles (MilMud 9/3, p.2) that last two or three hours and have minimal learning curves? The latter restrictions, the result of the format and duration of club meetings, would, I believe, apply equally to most recreational games - whether commercially produced or otherwise - and may thus be entirely appropriate, for those who want to design wargames that can be played successfully by a wider audience than their friends in CLWG. Issues: -

Learning curves

Learning curves must, in my opinion, be largely the result of the interface (for want of a better term!) of the game's subject matter, its structure and any rules mechanisms that are administered by players themselves. Familiarity with the historical or fictional subject matter reduces the need for lengthy briefings/explanations. The classic wargame example must be von Reisswitz's original Kriegsspiel, first published in 1824, which was intended for Prussian Army officers who would already know the capabilities of the arms of service and current tactical doctrine, so that no explanation of the setting of the game, beyond an appreciation of the tactical/grand tactical situation would be required. Indeed, the Kriegsspiel - unlike von

Clausewitz, a contemporary of its inventor - effectively divorced military operations from politics by pitting imaginary Red and Blue armies against each other in engagements that were rarely set in a wider context than that Red had invaded Blue (or vice versa) to indicate which force was operating in hostile territory. Within CLWG, for example, it might be reasonable to assume that Andy, James and Mukul, to name but three, would require far less in the way of briefing materials for a WW2 or modern game than this writer; though I might, in all modesty, suggest that I would need less than most for games set in the Peninsular or American Wars... Familiar game structures also reduce the pick up factor. Once one has experienced a committee game, a role-play or a face to face toy soldier battle, it is relatively simple to adapt to differences of setting and detail in other examples of the genre. Some game formats are easy to learn, precisely because they make assimilating unfamiliar systems unnecessary: the Prussian Kriegsspiel, again, relied upon players' existing knowledge - in this case how to issue orders to units or subordinates - so they did not have to learn how to control their troops. Its overall structure, umpire implementation of verbal or written orders and updating of the visual map display, made 'player-proof' rules irrelevant, reducing the participants' learning curve yet again. When I umpired 'Game of War' the details of the systems used - based upon an American Kriegsspiel derivative - were never communicated to the players, who were, quite correctly, only interested in the results of their decisions, not the minutiae of how those results were determined. In fact, the 'Strategos' format is quite simplistic, and, some would argue, too heavily influenced by die rolls, rather than by close analysis of the tactical situation. Its great merit, however, is that it is extremely quick to use, and reduces/prevents umpire fatigue. Where the players have to administer rules, the designer should keep any new and/or unfamiliar mechanisms as simple as possible.

Obscure subjects

Obscure subjects will require more extensive background and briefings, so don't combine with unfamiliar game structures or complex rules. Conversely, if wishing to experiment with a novel game structure, or to test new rules, use a familiar subject so that pre-game briefing can concentrate upon them, rather than the historical/fictional setting.

Repeatability

Structures or rules should be capable of being reused, whereas the avoidance of hindsight by

choosing an obscure subject, or creating a disguised scenario, prevents repetition of the game with the same players, or any with knowledge of the first presentation.

DISGUISED SCENARIOS

John Rutherford

We have recently had two games (by Pickles, *Babylon 3* and Wallman, *X-Mobile Group*) in which a real historical scenario was disguised in a science-fiction setting. I think both games worked well; although some may ask 'why disguise?' Why not just re-create the history? This made me wonder if there are any guiding principles to creating a successful 'hidden scenario'. Here are my initial suggestions, hoping to set off a debate.

In summary, the best use of 'hidden scenarios' is to help players approach problems afresh, avoiding preconceptions and the temptation to avoid historical errors with hindsight. Further, it offers the designer a chance to alter initial conditions, or the way events develop, which may shed light on the historical events being 'hidden', without being accused of acting anachronistically or with a cavalier regard for historical truth.

Here are some possible guidelines to achieve this.

1. Reduce the variables to a reasonable number, for example by using an existing 'fantasy' setting where most of the limits and 'givens' are known to the players. (Jim Wallman's 'Cruel Void' universe fits the bill for those familiar with it; the 'Babylon' worlds, being primarily showbiz not game, is more problematic' compare the difficulties with turning Star Trek into a game of any sort, whether role-play or spaceship combat, or even diplomacy.)
2. Disguise the scenario fully. At least initially. Players may spot quickly that it's 'anti-terrorist' or 'international diplomacy' quickly enough, but if you give the game away immediately by using obvious parallel names it takes away one of the points of being 'hidden'.
3. Use the scenario to test possibilities. Some of the best SF writing, in my opinion, speculates about the future by changing only one or two variables and then working through the consequences. The results can be surprising and

intriguing. In Jim's 'X-Group' he said afterwards there was no way the 'Starship Marines' could in fact defeat the terrorists, any more than the 1973 paras could defeat the IRA, or even deliver decisive blows. But wait if by some technological wizardry perhaps, it could be done; it would be a different game but perhaps a more valid use of the 'hidden' element. The key thing is the avoidance of hindsight.

4. Devise a plan to persuade the Blimps and Tankies that playing astronauts, elves and dwarves is indeed a respectable form of military gaming, which can shed useful light on the 'straight' historical games. If this problem is insurmountable, find a very obscure war and pinch a scenario from that.

And there are of course the what if scenarios. What if Napoleon had invaded UK, in 180?. Maybe these could provide food for thought?

Saddle Points

Trevor Farrant

Lets plunge straight in at the deep end and examine the pay-off matrix given here.

		Player B				row
		1	2	3	4	min
Player A	1	8	9	-2	-5	-5
	2	6	4	1	18	1
	3	7	-4	-3	10	-4
col max		8	9	1	18	

The matrix represents player A's gain. What strategy should each player adopt? In this case the highest row minimum (maxi-min) is equal to the lowest column maximum (mini-max) of 1. When this occurs a saddle point is said to exist. If you like to think of a real saddle then the optimum solution for both players lies poised on the crown of the saddle. To move left or right will result in a fall, however don't deviate (stay upright) to maintain a perfect balance.

Whenever this occurs both players can adopt a single pure strategy and this will give the value of the game. Player A will always play strategy 2 because it minimises his losses, whilst player B will use strategy 3 for the same reason. In other words A is going to win 1 every turn and so the value of the game is 1. The result is a rich player

A and a poor player B, but with neither player satisfied (game wise) because they have no decisions to make. What use is a game like this once you have sussed the strategy? I would suggest none at all! This seems obvious but if you have ever played go for broke or junior monopoly (monotony) you will know why. In these cases the value of the game is 0 (quite literally!) for each player and the only random element are the dice rolls. In which case you might as well just roll a die, the highest wins and save yourself two hours.

Games such as these favour the intellectually challenged and should be avoided at all cost. The best (or certainly fairest) games are generally 0 sum games but if the random element is based purely on skill (chess) or skill and a small element of luck (18XX railway game) then so much the better. However this formula does not always result in a good game. For example noughts and crosses is a 0 sum game based solely on skill but is so simplistic that soon the only result attainable is a draw 0.

The moral of the story, design 0 (or close to 0) sum games with elements of skill and luck mixed proportions suitable for your intended audience.

THE NAPOLEONIC FAIR

15th FEBRUARY 1998

Arthur Harman

I have not attended this event for a couple of years, but found that little has changed, unless the number of visitors seems to have increased to a point where the main hall, occupied by the trade stands and military historical societies, resembled an overcrowded tube train in the evening rush hour until well into the afternoon. Not a suitable outing for the claustrophobic! -especially as the fair guide did not contain a plan to enable one to find one's way around the stands, with the result that I failed to find Iain Dickie of Miniature Wargames until nearly three o'clock.

There was the usual mixture of antiquarian book and print sellers, publishers of facsimile and modern books, medal dealers and wargame supplies companies. Victor Sutcliffe, an antiquarian bookseller with whom I have dealt for many years, had told me beforehand that he would not be taking a stand this year, because there would be "too many wargamers" (his words) who would thumb through his stock but not buy

anything. I could see his point, for his colleagues in the trade did, indeed, seem to have much of their stock left to pack at the end of the day. [*Maybe wargamers don't buy antiquarian books as they are not interested in the books as things, like collectors, and they value the information less or know of other sources? I dislike the book collector who collects and never reads, these obsessives inflate the second hand book prices ed*]

This year the programme had been increased to include three lectures or discussions: the first, concerning the theory that Napoleon was murdered on Saint Helena, had, I am told, nothing to add to what has already been published on the subject; the second was Peter Hofschoer's introduction to the first volume in his history of the Waterloo Campaign from the Prussian perspective, which I shall review when I have time; and the third, which, despite pleas from female colleagues to "bring him back with you", I ignored in order to do some networking with publishers at the bar, offered an opportunity to meet Sean Bean, star of the 'Sharpe' television series based upon the books by Bernard Cornwell, and some other members of the cast. Strangely, the bar also seemed to be occupied by officers and men of the 95th, none of whom I recognized as having appeared in the television series...

It was an enjoyable, if crowded, event at which one could easily recoup the cost of entry, £5, by purchasing new books at discount from Spellmount, publishers of the excellent Napoleonic Library reprints of Peninsular War memoirs and works on the period by Ian Fletcher.

On which note, for anyone who may be interested, Ken Trotman is planning a limited edition facsimile of William Maxwell's 'Peninsular Sketches by Actors on the Scene', two volumes, 390 & 388pp, two engraved plates, at a subscription price of only £45. For this small sum, you can purchase a beautiful copy of a work containing many valuable Peninsular

- Leaves from the Journal of a Veteran
- The British Cavalry in the Peninsula
- The British Campaign of 1809, Under Sir Arthur Wellesley
- The Capture of Ciudad Rodrigo
- The Storming of Badajoz &c., &c.

Contact Richard Brown at Ken Trotman Ltd, Unit 11, 135 Ditton Walk, Cambridge CB5 8PY, Tel. 01223 211030.

The demonstration wargames were on display in an anteroom leading to the lecture hall, so there was little opportunity to observe them closely for the audience passing through. If any of them were, in fact, participation games, the location must have made attracting and keeping players very difficult. What I saw suggested the games were of the traditional Salute-style beautifully painted figures and sculpted scenery variety, with nothing new or original in terms of structure or rules, but anyone who spent more time watching or actually participated might correct that impression...

An interesting observation I made during Peter's talk was that David Chandler, apparently recovered from his stroke, had a facsimile French Marshal's baton and a chapeau bras concealed inside his briefcase!

MegaGames

Clash Of Titans: Barbarossa 1941

Mukul Patel

After the game was I was asked by Dave Boundy "was it worth it?" My reply was, "No".

I once said about 5 years ago that I would never design a megagame. The reasons were the work involved. To my regret I broke that promise. Actually the work involved is not the most difficult thing. The greatest difficulty I had in designing the game, was the responsibility, I owed to people. The responsibilities were to deliver an enjoyable realistic game. The realistic part is not massively difficult, map games have been done before and are not incredibly innovative, the devil in map games is the detail, and the skill is reducing that detail as much as possible. The bigger challenge is create an enjoyable game for all the players. I don't so much mind if umpires don't enjoy themselves as much, but having people who actually pay for game is a big responsibility. This perceived responsibility made the process of designing and preparing Clash of Titans very much of a burden and desperately unenjoyable.

It made me think how the heck do people design these games time and time again and not become completely ticked off especially when they get loads of criticism and slogging off, from people like me ?

Tips for those considering designing a game, Have a very firm idea of what YOU want the game to be about, and to include. Consider carefully is a megagame the only way you can have game deliver what you want. If there is an alternative style of game that can do what you want, do that. Be able to write in English, unlike me. Hope to enjoy good luck and good friends who can help and support if you need it. Know what you might be letting yourself in for by talking to those who have designed megagames.

Finally my greatest thanks to those who helped me with the game, and a special mention to Graham Hockley for his postcard, very touching. Graham you don't know how much I agreed with your cartoon.

Failure in MegaGames

Dave Barnsdale

MegaGames are totally different from games like chess in that it is more a question of avoiding doing the wrong thing than doing the right thing. The pressure of time means that it is easy to see your mistakes in the pub afterwards but very difficult to see this in the thick of it. What is the secret of success in megagames or more precisely what is it that stops us seeing the obvious at the time?

The Russian Civil War was a game I'd been looking forward to. Chernov is my great historical hero and to play him was like a dream come true. But while playing the game I seemed to have an instinct in finding the worst move. I made only one good decision and that was to break with the Bolsheviks - from then on it was all downhill. Jerry afterwards said to me I was being too hard on myself. I was totally involved in my character and that was more important than "success". But in fact I found it a very frustrating day. Yes I was very involved in Chernov but I was acting out a script that had a marginal relation to the game world and the game world had a habit of intruding on my script and depriving me of the happy ending that was part of the play I thought I was in. I don't think I was miscast. The historical Chernov had a similar

instinct for snatching defeat from the jaws of victory but perhaps that is why I identify so strongly with Chernov - he shares with me the same faults. The Russian Civil War brought home to me that if I was to have success in megagames it was not a question of understanding game theory but of understanding myself.

Yendor was for me by contrast fairly successful. I had a simple problem - to solve the murder of the NPC noble. Soon, single handedly creating alchemical forensic science, I was closing in on the murderer. Finally I had one last experiment to do before I had the proof I needed. At that point I got stuck. I suddenly became obsessed with one method despite knowing that the necessary ingredients weren't to be had but the only essential ingredient in Yendor Alchemy is imagination and I'd never been short of that before. Of course the murderer got himself killed in the trial by combat but the point was not to get the murderer but that *I* should be the one to get him. What stopped me? Fear of success. The reason I have this problem is unique to me but the problem itself is one I share with many people. What's more, the reasons that I go into mental gridlock in megagames has the same cause as my failure to achieve many things I have attempted in life and that I reckon is also true of most people.

Being able to understand yourself enough to see why you fail means far more than being able to win in a megagame.



Comments on *Aweary of the Sun*

John Rutherford

This went better than I expected for my first Megagame, although there were problems, especially the way the time went, which surprised me, and the more experienced gamers too! The future problem I face is the difficulty of ever replaying it, as in there is far too many people who know where all the goodies are...and exploration and discovery is a key part of the

game. Still, I've got a while to ponder this as any possible replay is years off.

Again, my sincere thanks to all the CLWG people who helped me with this project. And also to those who played in it. It has been a real learning experience.

Book Reviews

SOWING THE MUSTARD SEED; THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY IN UGANDA

by

Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, Macmillan
1997.

John Rutherford

An autobiographical account of Museveni's rise to the Presidency. An essential book for anyone interested in African politics; for war-gamers and military historians some fascinating insights into the formation and operation of the guerrilla units Museveni led against Amikn, Obote and Okello with Tanzanian support. If I had the time and skill I'd like to make a comparison between the ideas in this book and the accounts of the guerrilla warfare tactics of Ho Chi Minh or Che Guevara. Instructive and humbling when one realises the challenges Africans continue to face.

'1815: The Waterloo Campaign; Wellington, his German Allies and the Battles of Ligny and Quatre Bras'

by Peter Hofschroer, published by Greenhill
Books, 1998, £25

Arthur Harman

I had better begin by declaring my interests in this book: I lent Peter my copies of *Wellington's Despatches*, the *Supplementary Despatches* and Dalton's *Waterloo Roll Call* to facilitate his researches; he has stayed at my home several times while visiting London museums and libraries; on

two occasions he has obtained complimentary tickets for me to the Napoleonic Fair, and has also given me a copy of the above book, wherein my name will be found amongst the acknowledgments. So, you must decide for yourselves whether I can give a truly impartial review.

Much of this book - the first of two volumes planned by Peter - comprises a detailed account, with numerous extracts from primary sources, of the participation of the Prussian Army from the commencement of the Waterloo Campaign to the withdrawal after the Battle of Ligny.

The only other readily available book on this engagement until now has been *The Eagle's Last Triumph: Napoleon's Victory at Ligny, June 1815* by Andrew Uffindell (Greenhill, 1994): a shorter volume, which also describes the Battle of Waterloo - albeit only briefly - and only devotes to the Battle of Ligny itself about half the number of pages that will be found in this book. In his Preface, Mr Uffindell writes: 'The major revisionist view of this text concerns Allied co-operation against the French. The Prussian contribution to victory gains its due recognition, without being overstated. Wellington's conduct, although faultless on the battlefield of Waterloo itself, was flawed in the early stages of the campaign.'

A similar, but far more robustly expressed, sentiment inspired Peter Hofschroer, who states in his Preface: 'My contention is that the accepted view in the English-speaking world of this campaign and battle needs challenging and revising...there has been no serious attempt to present the *German view of this campaign* in English. Drawing mainly on German archives, published and unpublished sources, this work presents, supports, explains and justifies the point of view of the overwhelming majority of the Allied participants in this campaign, the Germans.' (my italics)

In this, he has succeeded admirably, creating a very different perspective on the campaign from that with which most readers will be more familiar, derived from British memoirists (such as Costello, Cotton, Mercer et al.) and modern accounts based upon them (Howarth and Keegan, for example), which is conceded even by Allan Mallinson, in an otherwise hostile review in *The Spectator* (28 February 1998 issue, pp. 29-30), who grudgingly accepts that it is 'a useful account of the part played by the Prussians'.

Peter's book, however, has a further controversial contention: '...that the Duke of Wellington did indeed deliberately mislead his Prussian allies into fighting a battle at Ligny on 16 June 1815 in unfavourable circumstances and in the knowledge that he could not offer adequate assistance, and that subsequent to this he endeavoured to mislead future students of the campaign by falsifying parts of the record.'

Strong stuff! and it is this, one suspects, which has led the reviewer to call it, 'an offensive and deeply flawed book'.

Mallinson's review makes much of when, exactly, Wellington may have received definite intelligence of the French concentration and so could make an appreciation of situation that would justify issuing orders for the concentration of his own forces, claiming that 'Hofschroer's specific accusation of abandoning the Prussians at Ligny *centres on the long-disputed message from Lieutenant-General von Zieten, on whose corps at Charleroi the weight of Bonaparte's offensive fell the day before.*' (my italics)

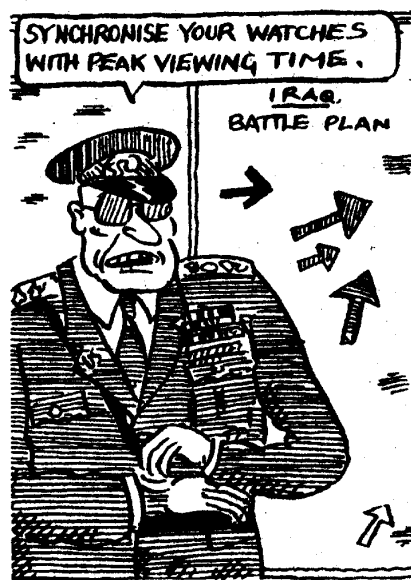
Whilst Peter does, indeed, believe that the Duke was culpable in not issuing orders for the concentration and deployment of his forces sooner than he did, whereas the reviewer opines that 'Wellington went later that evening to the Duchess of Richmond's ball...still not knowing enough of the situation to make the crucial decision where and when to deploy the bulk of his army.' this argument is not crucial to Peter's belief that - once he realised he had been 'humbled, by God!' - the Duke deceived Blucher into offering battle at Ligny on 16th June 1815 by promising to support him, knowing full well that his own army was too dispersed to effect a concentration in time to march to assist the Prussians.

Peter examines the contents of two documents as major pieces of evidence in respect of his belief. Firstly, the Duke's letter written in French to Blucher, headed:

*'On the heights behind Frasne,
16th June 1815, at 10.30.'*

and thus referred to as 'The Frasnes Letter', which contains false statements regarding the positions of the 1st (British) Division of the Prince of Orange's Corps, the Reserve, the Cavalry and Lord Hill's Corps. This he regards as 'the most damning piece of evidence' in support of his theory, and it does make a convincing prima facie case against Wellington.

Its evidential value, however, is weakened by the fact that the



original document does not exist today: first discovered after research in the Prussian War Archives, it can now only be found in facsimile in an account of the campaign by General von Ollech, published in 1876. In view of the conspiracy theory being advanced within Peter's book concerning Wellington and, presumably, some officers on the British Staff, one could, perhaps, argue that The Frasnés Letter might, itself, be a clever forgery (hence the uncharacteristic grammatical error in French by the Duke, who had attended a French military academy?) by a Prussian officer or historian determined to prove Wellington's guilt! It is a pity that the publishers did not include a photograph of this facsimile and proven contemporaneous examples of the Duke of Wellington's handwriting to present this crucial piece of evidence to readers, rather than merely reproducing a Victorian engraving of little artistic merit or historical significance showing the British at the Battle of Quatre Bras!

The second is the so-called 'De Lancey Disposition', attributed to Sir William De Lancey, but first appearing in print only in the second edition of Gurwood's *Dispatches of Field Marshal The Duke of Wellington*, published in 1847, in the form of a copy, made supposedly by De Lacy Evans. The original of Evans's copy has apparently disappeared since Gurwood returned manuscripts to their contributors, whilst no copy in De Lancey's hand has ever been located. The reviewer's claim that 'the anomalies in the famous 'De Lancey Disposition' were painstakingly addressed by Major-General Robinson in the *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute* in 1910, yet Hofschroer makes no mention of it except in the bibliography' is simply untrue - Peter discusses Robinson's failure to prove that De Lacy Evans copied it on page 340! It is true that Peter does not examine and discuss Robinson's analysis of the Disposition in greater depth, but as his contention is that it is not genuine, Robinson's attempt to defend the Disposition as an accurate statement of the *arrangements made for* Wellington's forces, rather than their *positions*, which the author himself admits relies upon an interpretation of the title 'Disposition' that 'he has never himself hitherto seen .. suggested' is irrelevant.

Ropes, for example, whose book (*The Campaign of Waterloo*, 1906, but reprinted by Worley Publications) both Peter and Robinson ('one of the most careful, valued, and widely-read writers upon the Waterloo Campaign') cite with approval, follows the latter, traditional interpretation, but is dismissed in the review ('Ho-hum'), apparently for being an American.

Robinson confesses that the Disposition would, without De Lacy Evans's explanation of the meanings of the columns into which it is divided,

and upon which much of his argument rests, 'be entirely incomplete, and doubtless is not in the exact form in which the original, without further explanation, would have reached Wellington.' He never, however, considers the possibility that this document might not be a reasonably accurate copy, by De Lacy Evans, of an original by Sir William De Lancey, and so is concerned only whether the ambiguities of the document might have 'misled Wellington' in composing The Frasnés Letter.

Peter's view is that the Disposition was written - by whom is unclear, but certainly not De Lancey, and probably not De Lacy Evans - to 'prove' the truth of the assertions made in The Frasnés Letter, which it post-dates by as much as thirty years, so he does not need to consider Robinson's interpretation of its title as it could not have influenced the composition of that document.

The Spectator reviewer does not refer specifically to The Frasnés Letter, but comments that '...all the documents that Hofschroer cites are open to interpretation'. Perhaps Mallinson believes The Frasnés Letter to be a forgery designed to support Prussian criticisms of the Duke? If so, then he must surely concede the plausibility of Peter's suggestion that the De Lancey Disposition was a fabrication intended to support Wellington's subsequent statements about the concentration and deployment of his forces...

The reviewer quibbles over some points of detail, such as whether Chesney's *Waterloo Lectures* qualifies as a work of the first half of the nineteenth century, ignoring the fact that the date of composition and that of publication may be quite different. The reviewer also appears unaware that David Hamilton-Williams, the author of *Waterloo: New Perspectives The Great Battle Reappraised* (Arms and Armour Press, 1993), a book which sought to discredit William Siborne's *History of The War in France and Flanders in 1815* by reference to the financial dealings which affected the accuracy of his famous dioramas (one of which, restored, may be seen in the Waterloo Gallery in the National Army Museum, Chelsea; another is in Dover Castle) has himself been discredited and the book withdrawn by its publishers.

The majority of the half-tone illustrations are portraits of generals of the various nations, most of which will be familiar to readers with collections of works on the Napoleonic Wars and not particularly useful in advancing the book's argument. The maps, however, are numerous, and excellent, enabling one to follow the concentrations and manoeuvres of the armies which lie at the heart of Peter's theory.

This controversial, and stimulating book - even if you conclude that Peter has not succeeded in convicting the Duke of Wellington beyond reasonable doubt, you must agree that he has made out a strong prima facie case that will be difficult for the Duke's apologists to counter - is a welcome addition to the extensive literature on the campaign, which will make you await the second volume on the great battle itself with eager anticipation.

Hofschroer on the Prussians and Wellington.

A Reply to Nick Luft's comments

John Rutherford

Trick? A strong word. Perhaps putting spin on the truth is more diplomatic...

I do not believe Blucher would expect Wellington to pay excessive attention to 'accuracy' in his reports to him; he would act with professional caution and use him as one source of information among many. The issue of trust between allies is, as you say, central to international military endeavour in the next century. We are moving into an Age of Coalitions.

A WATERLOO LETTER

A reply to Nick Luft's comments

Arthur Harman

I thought your comment (MilMud 9/5, p.11) that Peter Hofschroer's theory that Wellington deceived Blucher into offering battle at Ligny on 16th June 1815, by promising to support the Prussians, claiming that his Anglo-Dutch forces were more closely concentrated than he knew to be the case, as a 'case of an armchair historian musing too long and too subtly on decisions taken in uncertain circumstances' was unjust.

The text above your remarks was that of the talk given by Peter at the recent Napoleonic Fair, and was, inevitably, a brief summary of his argument and the evidence in support thereof, without the maps and facsimile documents which he presented on an OHP. To follow and criticize his conclusions one has really to read his book, which I have

reviewed elsewhere, and then weigh the evidence carefully in one's own mind. It is not appropriate to dismiss his theory completely, as you would appear to have done, on such slight acquaintance with its details. He may not have proved his case beyond reasonable doubt, but he has made a good case that should be answered by reasoned argument, referring to evidence, not just by a cheap jibe about 'armchair historians'.

Actually, how can anyone writing about the Waterloo Campaign - or any historical event of which they can have no personal experience - be other than an 'armchair historian' in the sense in which I presume you use the term? 'Game of War' showed that the experience in the Second World War, or subsequent campaigns, of high ranking British Army officers was not necessarily helpful when operating within the constraints of the weapon and communication technology of earlier periods. Paddy Griffith, on the other hand, who has, to my knowledge, never heard a shot fired in anger, has by close analysis of contemporary descriptions - 'musing long and subtly!' - caused us to reject the long-held view propounded by Sir Charles Oman, and subsequently repeated in numerous books, that British infantry defeated French columns by volleys of musketry (See 'Forward Into Battle: Fighting Tactics from Waterloo to the Near Future', The Crowood Press, 1990, pp. 12-49).

It is true that every age tends to reinterpret history in its own terms, so it is, perhaps, no surprise that Peter's book should appear at a time when the public has lost any faith it may once have had that public figures are other than 'economical with the truth'; when an official denial is regarded almost as an admission that the opposite is in fact the case; and when almost anything from the assassination of J.F. Kennedy to government knowledge of extra-terrestrials can be the subject of a 'conspiracy theory'. The book reflects its era, just as the Reverend George Gleig's eulogies of the 'Great Duke' did the attitudes of Victoria's reign. But that does not mean it should be dismissed out of hand.

I still find the idea a bit hard to swallow, and I think Arthur has identified the cause of my unease: I am PISSED OFF with conspiracy theorists. I have always countered such theorists with the Cockup Thoery of Life - if it can go wrong it will. Maybe I am basing it on my paltry attempts to influence the world and have a poor data base to work from, but I always thought that simple plans work best.

I must read this book, I saw it come in the Library recently.

I do want to apologise for my intemperate remarks. We are all armchair historians and it is dangerous to throw stones in glass houses.

If anybody else wishes to pursue the actual detail of Peter Hofschoer's assertion I will keep a slot open in the next issue, but after that I think I will draw it to a close in Mil Mud although I will be available for debate via e-mail.

Date	Venue	Game	Author	Blurb
May Sat 30th	Riggindale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW2 • French Revolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trevor and Mukul • Brian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I've had conflicting descriptions from the two people named as to the nature of this... • Don't lose your head
Jul Sun 5th	Bedford Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A King for Bohemia</i> • <i>The Colonels Campaign</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brian</i> • <i>John R</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further Megagame preparation • Time to get back into uniform!
11 July MM	Eardley School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Congress of Vienna</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian Cameron 	A hard-nosed political game set around the final stages of the Napoleonic Wars.
Aug Sun 2nd	Richmond Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLWG Annual Picnic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nick Luft. 	
Sep Sat 5th	Riggindale.			
19 Sep MM	Eardley School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A King For Bohemia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian Cameron 	A new game about the exceptionally complex period of religious wars of the 17th Century - known as the 30 Years War.
Oct 2nd - 4th	Eardley?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference. 		
17 Oct MM	Eardley School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish Ulcer II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bernie Ganley 	A re-run of the popular and successful game about the war in the Iberian Peninsular.
Nov Sun 1st	Bedford Park			
14 Nov MM	Eardley School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BERSERKER! 00101 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Wallman 	The Starship Marines one more don their armour to fight the enemies of Humankind in the unforgiving vacuum of space. SF tactical gaming - with figures!
Dec Sat 19th	Riggindale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xmas Quiz. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pickles and Dave Nilsson 	
The Pending Tray.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flushing the Wolf • Suez • Battle of Britain 3 • What is to be Done? • B3.1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mukul • Terry • Dave Boundy • Neil • Pickles 	

Games Organiser: - Dave Nilsson (01737) 645067