



HMGS

HMGS-Midwest Newsletter

Fall 2020

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The President's Postings

SITREP From "Six Actual"

by Kevin Cabai
HMGS-MW President

It was only 6 months ago, when I thought that this had been a very challenging term of office. Since then, we have had multiple 15 day periods to flatten the curve, seesawing restrictions, and no end in sight.



The most traumatic incident has been losing my wife, Lorraine after 37 years. If you have ever been to Little Wars (or other Midwest cons), you would have met her handing out beverages, working registration, or with the vendors or the event desk. She even managed to play in more games than I ever could. Lor always had a smile, was quick to laugh and was happiest when helping others.

We would walk the convention halls together and almost everyone knew her. I never realized how much she completed me. I can take solace in the fact, that she had such a positive impact on countless other's lives.



I love her more than life itself.

Highlights

Within this newsletter, you will be able to get updates on our Autumn Wars convention. The Board has planned out countless permutations to arrive at our latest convention.

I could draw a parallel to Patton's 3rd Army Staff during his dash across France. Most of our planning was already out of date by the time it was issued. Nevertheless we are hoping to see you this October.

We are continuing to bring you a number of great gaming articles, along with updates by each of our Board Members. Please in particular take a look at the **Legacy** and **Gifting** programs.

Also in the newsletter is another “**Virtual Vendor Hall**”. With the changing requirements of **Autumn Wars**, many of vendors could not join us. Instead they have agreed to conduct a special sale in lieu of coming to the convention. Please see that section and support them as they continue to support HMGS-Midwest.

Administrative News

A Reminder: The Board has voted to postpone the 2021 election of Officers which was scheduled to take place between February 1, 2021 and March 31, 2021. With the cancellation of Little Wars 2020 the majority of attendees were not able to renew their membership. The formalized dates will be announced at the 2020 Annual Membership meeting to be held at Autumn Wars.

Remember to be safe and try to stay out of other people’s “Zones of Control”

president@hmgsmidwest.com

“Gamers in Need” Program

Thanks to HMGS-Midwest members Thomas Postema and Scott Siebold, we have the following unpainted miniatures available:

Ancients (25mm - manufacturer(s) unknown)

- Han Chinese
- Galatians
- Gauls
- Numidian
- Sassanid Persian
- Early Imperial Rome
- Middle Imperial Rome
- Late Imperial Rome
- Thracian

Ottoman Renaissance (25mm - Minifigs)

Napoleonic (25mm - Minifigs):

- British
- Allied

If you are interested in any of these figures, Contact **Jon Michal** at tnk321@ameritech.net.

Legacy Program

A special thank you to HMGS-Midwest members, Thomas Postema and Scott Siebold for their generous donations of unpainted miniatures and anime dvds!

Jon Michal: tnk321@ameritech.net. And, **CW Moellenkamp** for donations: cmoellen@asu.edu.

Miniatures Swap

by **Jon Michal**
HMGS-MW General Counsel

We all have minis we will never paint and painted minis we will never use again. We all are interested in new periods because of games we have played at **Little Wars** or at **Autumn Wars**. Send us a list of your wants and/or what you have to offer, along with your e-mail address or phone number. In each issue of the newsletter we will run your list. Send your information to: tnk321@ameritech.net, or call **Jon Michal** at (847) 823-1370.

HMGS Education Initiatives

by **Brandon Musler**
HMGS-MW Vice President of Outreach

Regrettably, due to the COVID-19 setback both the “**Education Initiative Program**” and the “**Pritzker Military Museum - Game Days**” are currently on hold until the pandemic subsides, and things return to normal, as is hoped.

Nevertheless, we are still focusing on these important and unique programs and the Board is moving ahead with planning and preparing to springboard these events once this impasse is behind us.

To remind our membership what the “**Education Initiative**” is all about, is to offer a unique means to start up local organized club venues in your respective areas on a sustainable and recurring basis to promote, educate, enhance and expand the historical gaming hobby and recruit more new participants, both old and new, into the hobby under a non-profit, and charitable umbrella, provided under the auspices of HMGS-Midwest!

We can procure the necessary grant monies to facilitate your organizers access to funds making it possible to provide the necessary gaming requirements that you and your group would not be able to afford on your own. Such things as gaming terrain, equipment, miniatures, gaming tables and material costs for the same, etc. could be arranged.

The advantage of a sponsor/club arrangement – so long as the gaming group is housed within a bona-fide school or library – is nobody will need to go through the process of registering your club with the state as a **(501c3)** tax exempt organization. That’s already been done. Thus, the grant can be made to the school or library housing the club...which in turn passes the funds on to the sponsor/organizer.

This would then be conducted under “not-for-profit” regulations allowing to operate and qualify for such funds – and we have the resources to make this happen.

It’s a golden opportunity in planning for it now under this lockdown to give your group the luxury of mobilizing, well in advance, for this incentive to be activated when the situation allows.

Tournament Development

by Tibor Ipavic
HMGS-MW Secretary



We're pushing forward much of the comprehensive tournament plans we spoke of in our Spring Newsletter towards next year's **'Little Wars 2021'**.

The global pandemic has caused **HMGS – Midwest's** planning committee having to rethink and plan for a lot of challenges into the near future.

My focus for this year has centered around the most viable games we can present for this year's 3rd Annual Autumn Wars 2020. We've secured the commitment and arranged for, the already popular tournaments, of **'Warlord's - Bolt Action'**, and the ever popular, **'Battlefront's Team Yankee'** games.

We were not having the space or means to also run a **'Flames of War'** tourney, but instead we have a brand-new tournament to offer in lieu – **'Fight In the Skies'** run by George Henion. Over 50 years many have enjoyed the **'Dawn Patrol'** This is the only event that has been run at EVERY Gencon, since the convention's inception. Now is your chance to be a part of gaming history

We've decided to position these tournaments for more prominence in terms of more desirable time slots to take place, not on Sunday, but rather

Saturday, instead. This should generate more appeal and, hence, draw larger participation. This is also designed to appeal to related vendors desiring increased traffic to vendors, who for the most part will co-exist in the gaming space.

We are working directly with **Warlord's** enthusiastic representative and supporter, **'Warlord Games', " Jon Russell – Event Commander**, who runs that tournament as he has so often in the past. We're glad to have him.

Look forward to generous prize support being provided by **'Battlefront'** and **'Games Plus'** for the **'Team Yankee'** tournament.

Another "thank you" goes out to **'Julio's Woodshop'** who has added some of his finely crafted products to our tournament prize support cache.

We anticipate a larger attendance for this newest of **HMGS-MW** run conventions, being the 3rd running and situated in a very picturesque venue where we hope to attract a larger Wisconsinite participation.

A big shout-out to our local hobby outlets, **'Grognard's'** and **'Games Plus'**, in donating gaming products for our attendees! We thank you.

We look forward to next spring and having a successful **'Little Wars 2021'** with even more tournaments to include several Sci-Fi gaming competitions!

The Board of Directors look forward for all you, stalwart gamers finally having a historical gaming convention to attend after such a long hiatus.

Contact: specforc12@aol.com

Membership updates

by Tom Kuczak
HMGS-MW-VP Membership

The membership update will be a short one as there have a few additions in membership. In the last newsletter we stated we made the decision to renew the membership of everyone who paid dues during **Little Wars 2019** and **Autumn Wars 2019**. All current memberships will remain active until the beginning of **Little Wars 2021**.

Due to the fact, that there has not been a formal HMGS event, we have not openly solicited new members. Regardless we have had several intrepid gamers join us in these austere times, thank you for your support.

I specifically want to publically thank all of those who preregistered for LW2020. Your tolerance and cooperation during the refund stage of convention was appreciated. A special heartfelt **"Thank you"** to the many that donated their fees to the organization, to help ease the financial burden.

We hope to see all of you, who are able, to attend **Autumn Wars 2021!**



2020 January through August Financial Performance

4

Year to Date results through August have, of course, been unusual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Key events during this fiscal year include:

- Little Wars (LW) canceled due to pandemic and stay at home order by Governor of Illinois
- Several members donated their LW badge fees to HMGS (very appreciated!)
- LW 2020 expenses above were largely for products that can be used for LW 2021
- A contract has been secured for hosting Little Wars 2021 at the Westin Lombard once again
- Facility Deposit at Pheasant Run (for original August, 2021 LW) was refunded to HMGS MW creating additional cash revenue during 2020
- Autumn Wars scheduled for October, 2020, at the Grand Geneva Resort; no vendor payments necessary until the event is in full swing to protect the financial structure of HMGS MW
- Successful insurance bid process reduced our annual insurance cost from \$1,900 per year to \$1,137
- Several donations have been received (thank you donors!) to help further our mission

Balance Sheet –

	3/31/2020	8/31/2020
Assets:		
Cash In Bank	\$37,425	\$35,298
Deposits - Future Conventions***	\$6,000	\$6,000
Total Assets	\$43,425	\$41,298
Liabilities:		
Refunds Owed	\$2,000	\$0
Total Liabilities	\$2,000	\$0
Net Assets	\$41,425	\$41,298

***** - At 8/31/20, the Little Wars 2020 deposit (\$2,000) for convention rental space was rolled into to the Little Wars 2021 deposit (\$4,000) with no financial loss to HMGS MIDWEST**

The financial position of HMGS Midwest is still strong with a reasonable reserve to compensate for any unexpected results at future Little Wars conventions as well as allowing the Society to take advantage of opportunities for promoting miniatures gaming in new and creative ways.

The HMGS Midwest Board will continue to be diligent in optimizing the use of Society funds to promote our hobby by seeking value in all areas. Cost saving options will continue to be researched and applied when beneficial. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult to pursue any major initiatives at this time due to the inherent uncertainty.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me (CW Moellenkamp, Treasurer) at treasurer@hmgsmidwest.com.

**Prepared by C.W. Moellenkamp
HMGS-MW Treasurer**

HMGS-Midwest Annual Membership Meeting 2020

As everyone knows, Little Wars had to be canceled in the spring. Among the great events we had lined up, included our Annual Membership Meeting. This is an open Board Meeting to all HMGS-Midwest members. It is your chance to meet with the Board of Directors and other members in person to ask questions and discuss issues that are germane to our organization.

The Board is very united in getting our member's voices heard. We need your input and feedback, on how HMGS can better serve you. To that end we have scheduled our annual meeting at Autumn Wars, Saturday October 9th, at 8:00 Am, in the Maplewood Hall (the game room)

Tentative Agenda:

*Secretary's Report *Membership Report *Gifting/Legacy Programs
*Financial Report *President's Report *Open Forum

If the need to cancel the con were to happen, we have a back-up date. The meeting will be held at Games Plus (101 West Prospect Ave. Mt. Prospect IL. It is scheduled for Sunday October 10th, at 6:00 PM. We are working on arrangements to include Skype or Zoom for the evening. If you cannot make the meeting and still want your voice heard, please send me an email at President@hmgs-midwest.com, and the board will review it.

Thank you for your patience in this tumultuous time,
Kevin Cabai

Air-Con 2020, October 3rd

The **ONLY** all air themed game convention in the USA. **SOCIALLY DISTANCED** game play is available for the 2020 event! Masks provided, 6ft seating, open air-negative pressure venting. New this year: GM run "Touch-less" table-top minis! Play classic games like MB Dogfight, *Dawn Patrol*, Hostile Aircraft, or 21st century games *Wings of War* and *Fires in the Sky*. Better than sitting in front of a screen!

A promotional poster for Air-Con 2020. The background is a blue sky with several biplanes flying. The text is arranged in a structured layout with various colors and fonts. At the top, 'AIR-CON 2020' is in large, bold, cyan letters. Below it, 'Socially Distanced Games' is in green and 'Free facemasks - your badge!' is in white. In the middle, 'Swag Bags for Attendees' is in yellow and 'Limited attendance so sign up EARLY' is in purple. At the bottom, the date and time 'OCTOBER 3RD 11AM - 7PM' are in large orange letters, followed by the location 'AT THE HARLEY-DAVIDSON MUSEUM' in orange. The bottom line includes 'MILWAUKEE, WI' in blue and 'SIGNUP: tabletop.events.com/air-con-20201' in white.

AIR-CON 2020

Socially Distanced Games Free facemasks - your badge!

Swag Bags for Attendees Limited attendance so sign up **EARLY**

OCTOBER 3RD 11AM - 7PM
AT THE HARLEY-DAVIDSON MUSEUM
MILWAUKEE, WI **SIGNUP:** tabletop.events.com/air-con-20201

Action from WWI to modern jets. Racing games as well as combat. You name it! If it flies or floats, we have it!

Dragon Direct Distributors sponsors this convention and we will provide free snacks (brunch) in the Can Room at 11:00 for game judges (and early arriving attendees)!



Preview

Friday-Sunday, October 9-11, 2020

Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva WI

Come join us for our fall convention and enjoy some great games in a relaxed atmosphere with good friends (or your gaming nemesis!). This year it is an open theme and we have over 30 historical miniature games scheduled. Please visit the Tabletop Events website more details.

<https://tabletop.events/conventions/autumn-wars-2020>

Weekend Badge: \$20

Friday-October 9th

- 4:30 PM Set up/Registration
- 7:00 PM Gaming begins

Saturday-October 10th

- 8:00 AM HMGS Midwest Membership Meeting/ Set up/Registration
- 9:00 AM Gaming begins

Sunday-October 11th

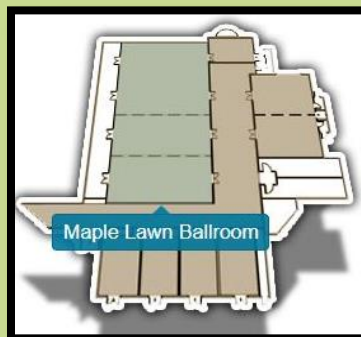
- 8:00 AM Registration
- 9:00 AM Gaming begins
- 5:00 PM Autumn Wars concludes



Grand Geneva Resort

7036 Grand Geneva Way, Lake Geneva, WI 53147 (262) 248-8811

The location is very nice, well-lit with carpeted floors. We will be located in the Maple Lawn Ballrooms. It already is a veteran of many miniatures games during Garycon. Unfortunately we were not able to establish a room block with the hotel.





Miniature Events

We have at this point 24 miniature events, not counting the multi-session tournaments. New submissions are coming in daily so please check TTE for updates. We will be accepting new game submissions up to September 30th.

Event Name	GM Names
Battle of Abu-Ageila - 1967 Arab Israeli War	Brendgol Majewski
Battle of Agordat: East Africa 1941	Chris Mikucki
Dawn Patrol	George Henion
Dawn Patrol	George Henion
Dawn Patrol	George Henion
Charlie Company	Alex Seiwlski
Gettysburg - the Second Day	Steve Fratt
Gettysburg - the Second Day	Steve Fratt
Gettysburg - the Second Day	Steve Fratt
Gettysburg - the Second Day	Steve Fratt
Hatfields & McCoys	James Harness
High Tide of the Turtle Ships: Naval Battle of Noryang 1598	Conrad Wiser
Kamikaze	Nick Klapper
North Sea Adventure	J Peter Aguilu
Rise of the Mori: Battle of Miyajima 1555	Conrad Wiser
Seven to One	J Peter Aguilu
Siege of Rivendell	Kevin Cabai
Sub Hunt	J Peter Aguilu
The relief of Tifaruin: The Rif Rebellion August 1923	Chris Mikucki
There's gold in that there town!	Jon Michal
There's gold in that there town!	Jon Michal
Tonkin Wars: Battle of Hoa Moc 2 March 1885	Chris Mikucki
Up the Yangtze without a Paddle: Battle of Caishi 1161	Conrad Wiser
With Friends Like These...	James Harness



Bolt Action Tournament

HMGS Midwest is proud to join the famous Jon Russell and Warlord to co-sponsor a Bolt Action Tournament. Get your 1000 point army ready for action and join the battle.

Bolt Action Game Schedule

Saturday-October 10th

- 8:30 AM Setup
- 9:00-11:30 AM- 1st Round
- 11:30-1:00 PM-Lunch Break
- 1:00-3:00 PM 2nd Round
- 3:00-3:30 PM Short Break
- 3:00-5:00 PM 3rd Round
- 5:15 Awards Ceremony



Tanker's Delight Tournament

HMGS Midwest is proud to join Darrell Hartsig, Brendgol Majewski and Games Plus to co-sponsor present a three session tournament. Build your 120 point forces with a MINIMUM of 90 pts (75%) tank teams with front armor 9 or higher. Any list valid on Team Yankee Forces meeting requirements allowed. Create your list on and email to grathian@yahoo.com using subject line "Autumn Wars List" for approval no later than midnight September 30. Mission selection be by a modified Battle Plans list, missions with "Deep Reserves" will be replaced by others.

<https://forces.team-yankee.com/>

Team Yankee Game Schedule

(120 points):

Saturday-October 10th

- 8:00 AM Setup
- 9:00-12:00 PM- Session 1
- 12:00-1:00 PM-Lunch Break 2:00
- 5:00 PM Session 2
- 5:00-6:00 PM Short Break
- 6:00-9:00 PM Session 3
- 9:30 Awards Ceremony



101 W. Prospect Ave, Mt Prospect, IL

847 577-9656



Vendors

This year we are grateful to have 9 vendors joining us. They will be co-located in the gaming hall with us. Their hours will vary, but they will be with us during the majority of the gaming hours. They have all taken a leap of faith to be here, so please show them your support.

	Badger Games LLC https://benjaminhecota.godaddysites.com/
	Caesar's 10th https://centurionsreview.com/
	GAME MATS & MORE https://gamematsandmore.myshopify.com/
	Dayton Painting Consortium http://www.dpcltdcom.org/
	I94 Enterprises https://i-94enterprises.com/
	Julio's Woodshop https://julioswoodshop.com/
	Nafziger Collection http://www.nafzigercollection.com/
	Warlord Games https://us-store.warlordgames.com/
	Watchful I Studio https://www.watchfulstudio.com/

WARLORD GAMES HISTORICAL VEHICLE COLLECTION



Type 91 So-Mo Armoured Car - £22.00 / \$35.00 | Corras Armata m13 £20.00 / \$32.00 | Daimler Dingo MkII Scout Car £15.00 / \$24.00
MS Scout GMC £21.00 / \$34.00 | Soviet IS-3 Heavy Tank £28.00 / \$45.00 | M48 Patton - £28.00 / \$41.00 |
Elefantpanzer V £28.00 / \$41.00

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Cadenced Marching or Not?

A History Cadenced Marching in “Modern Times”

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The following article that will also appear in Issue no. 3 of the Nosworthy Tactical Studies Newsletter.

In December 1732 during a two-week period while suffering from fever Maurice, Comte de Saxe, was inspired to pen a work, which finally published after his death as *Mes reveries*, would draw upon his already two-decade long martial career and explore all the improvements that could be made to the art of war as it then existed on the European battlefield. At the heart of his recommendations was a “secret” that De Saxe asserted in no uncertain terms was unknown to “almost all military men”, one that if commonly understood would revolutionize “tactics” which De Saxe construed to mean the process of “drawing up an army in order of battle.”



“Legio Aeterna Victrix”-Roman March

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VkeLkuFzPfM>

De Saxe fervently believed that the system of marching as then practiced was conspicuously deficient, and provided a poignant picture of the problems that were intrinsic to the simple act of marching:

“A battalion moving off its ground, not improperly conveys the idea of a machine, constructed upon no principle, which is ready to fall in pieces every moment, and which cannot be kept in motion without infinite difficulty.”

“Every man is suffered to consult his own ease and inclination, some march slow, and others fast.”

As a result, the troops “cannot be brought to keep one certain, regular pace, either quick or slow, as the commanding officer shall think proper, or the exigency of affairs require.” Whenever an officer ordered the men to speed up their pace, the front ranks would advance ahead widening the space between them and those to their rear. As they became aware of the problem these rear ranks would rush forward, creating an accordion effect and disordering the formation. Because of the variation in the men’s height, the length of the soldier’s steps varied and soon the men’s legs would become interlocked. In most cases, it was impossible to perform even a simple wheel without redressing the ranks in the process. The result was “a great deal of noise, confusion, and fatigue,” and it was “impossible to march a body of troops with expedition, without forsaking all manner of order and regularity.” The march had to be frequently stopped to dress the ranks which was especially dangerous when near the enemy.



“Le Pas Cadence des Sans-culottes”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3uuahoDwjg>

De Saxe’s solution, the “secret” he intimated, was to adopt the “military pace of the Romans,” that is, to march in cadence. Each man would set off with the same foot and advance exactly same distance with each step. Accompanying martial sounds regulated the tempo of the march. The advantages were multifold. The whole formation begun to march at the same time, greatly reducing the accordioning

effect. The men's feet did not mix together, and it became much easier to maintain a rank's alignment. It would no longer be necessary to stop and dress the ranks in the middle of each wheel and each manœuvre could be performed more quickly and with much less confusion.

De Saxe admitted this was a radical suggestion, one that would probably expose himself to ridicule <De Saxe, *Mes reveries*, 1759, pp. 20-24.>.



“The British Grenadiers”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IeVisCJ1B44>

Was De Saxe Right?

Armed with three centuries of hindsight and the digitalization and widespread availability of almost all published sixteenth and seventeenth western European military treatises, it is easy to see that young Maurice was clearly mistaken. By 1732, for slightly more than 200 years every now and again some military tactician called for the adoption of what amounted to “cadenced marching.” Not surprisingly Italian writers were the first Wars to recognize the importance of resurrecting many of the ancient Roman practices, such as systematic training and frequent martial exercise. Both Giovanni Battista della Valle <*Vallo libro continente appartinente a Capitanii retenere & fortificare una Citta con bastonioni* (1524), authored by Giovanni Battista Della Valle, a captain in the service of the Duke of Urbino.> and Niccolò Machiavelli <*Della arte della guerra* (The Art of War) published in 1519- 1520. WIKIPEDIA: “Niccolò Machiavelli” Entry.> believed that drums could play a more pragmatic role than simply setting a martial tone. As in the Roman army, Machiavelli recognized that the drum could be used to issue commands to signal the men to advance, fall back, or turn in a particular direction.

<Machiavelli, Niccolò The Works of the Famous Nicholas Machiavel, Citizen and Secretary Florence; London, 1695, p. 468.> Writing about the same time, Giovanni Battista Della Valle instructed his readers to have the infantrymen march in step, the tempo of which was regulated by the beat of the drum <Taylor, F.L [Frederick Lewis]; *The Art of Warfare in Italy 1494-1529*, Cambridge, 1921, p. 162. Citing Bk II, Chap. XV.>

What is this but “cadenced marching?”

Although it is uncertain how many of their readers followed this advice and subsequently had their infantrymen march in this fashion, it is clear that the idea once raised by the Italians was never clearly lost and, for example, was reiterated by several English authors writing in the end of that century and the beginning of the next. In 1591, for example, John Smyth suggested that infantrymen always set off with the right foot, <Fortescue, , Sir John William; *A History of the British Army*; 13 volumes, London, 1899-1930, 1899, vol. 1, p. 138.> Edwin Davies writing two decades later provides both further details and greater expectations:

“There is another war-like rule to be observed (that the Souldier being ready to march, and attending the word of Command) which may well bee compared to a dancer, for the one by hearing his musicke is prepared to treat the measure answerable to the tune, and the other by hearing the sound of the Drumme is ready to march forward, the first ranke to beginne, the second to follow, the third doe the like, and so all the rest from the foreward to the rearward keeping even pace and distance of ground.” <Davis, Edwin; *Military Directions, or The Art of Tryning*; London, 1618, pp. 21-22.>

This advice was not lost on Davis’ contemporaries. English military authors appear to be particularly fixated with the possibilities offered by this type of march. In his *Pallas Armata or Militairie Instructions*, which appeared in 1627, Sir Thomas Kellie insisted that the infantry regulate their march by the pace of the drum:

“I must advertise of one thing, that the Souldiers bee acquainted with the severall beates of the *Drumme*, and to understand when the *Drumme* beats a *Call*, or *Gathering*; a *March*, a *Troope*, a *Charge*, a *Retreate*, a *Releise*; and

according to *Drumme* beates, swift or slow, so to accommodate thair motion: as to march slowe or fast, to charge with greater or lesse violence, to retire with greater or lesse speede, and so foorth.” < Kellie, Thomas; *Pallas Armata*, Edinburgh, 1623, p. 22.>



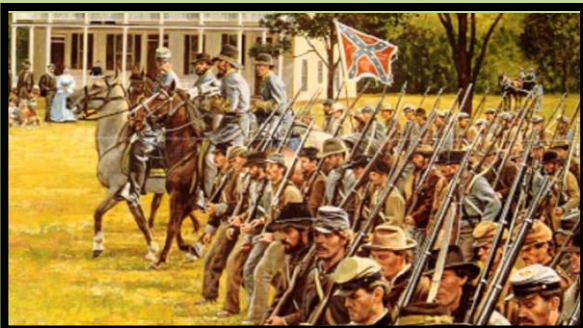
“When Johnny comes marching home again”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9uarq2_hQ8

The most compelling advice, which combined the regulated pace with matching drumbeats was provided by what Sir John Fortescue characterized as the “earliest” sixteenth century English military treatise. William Gerrard who had spent 14 years in Spanish service advised:

“Let him [the pikeman] march then with a good grace, holding up his head galantly, his pace full of gravitie and state and such as is fit for his person, and let his bodie be straight and as much upright as is possible, and that which most imports is that they have alwayes their eyes upon their companions which are in rancke with them, and before them, going just one with the other, & kéeping perfite distance without committing error in the least pace or step, *And everie pace and motion with one accord and consent, they ought to make at one instant time. And in this sort all the ranckes entyrelly to go, sometimes softly, sometimes fast, according to the stroke of the drum* [Italics mine]... going in their march, as I have said before, just, even, with a galant, stately, and sumptuous pace: for by doing so, they shalbe estéemed, honored, and commended by the lookers on, who shall take a wonderful delight to behold them march in that order < Garrard, William; *The Arte of Warre*, London, 1591 pp. 54-55; Fortescue, *British Army*, 1899, vol. 1, p. 137 provides a very modernized version of this passage.>”

Both Edwin Davies and Thomas Kellie had been heavily influenced by the Dutch military reforms under Maurits of Nassau and Willem Lodewijk and were prominent among the first generation of English apologists for the new method of fighting. It is highly likely about this most efficient method of marching was also taken from the Dutch.



“The Bonnie Blue Flag”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGi_joa8alvo

Unexpected Corroboration of De Saxe’s Claims

In *Mes reveries* Maurice is both completely clear and emphatic: the comte never saw or heard of cadenced marching being used in his time. However, given the above litany of calls to adopt the Roman variety of march just cited, it certainly appears that De Saxe was incorrect. Not only cadenced marching frequently had been called for, but based on these passages, one would assume that it had been also widely employed.

Nevertheless, this conclusion is difficult to reconcile with what is known about De Saxe’s early military career. The young Maurice certainly could never be accused of being some mere isolated provincial officer with little contact with or knowledge of the wider European stage. Although noticeably indifferent to the usual elements in a traditional aristocratic education, when it came to military issues the young Maurice proved conspicuously precocious. While still a young child, during the Great Northern War he accompanied his father, Frederic-Augustus II, and his Saxon forces to fight the Swedes. In 1708, still only 12 years old, served under the comte de Schulembourg, commander of the Saxon forces in the Netherlands, as an aide-major. When his father turned his attention back to his Swedish foes, Maurice was soon made a colonel of a Saxon cavalry regiment. Expanding his horizons even further he served under Peter the Great in 1711 before quickly returning to fight with his father and his Saxon forces the next year at the Battle of Gadebusch (Dec. 20, 1712).



“Gary Owen, song of the 7th US Calvary”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtLBWC AU7vc>

He entered Imperial Habsburg service in 1717 and participated in the campaigns against the Ottomans in Hungary. Several years later (1720) while visiting the French court, he was appointed *marechal de camp* by the Duc d'Orléans and took command of the Sparre regiment two years after that. <De Saxe, *Mes reveries*, 1759, pp. iii-iv; WIKIPEDIA, “Maurice de Saxe” entry.> Thus, by 1721 at the ripe old age of 25, he had become intimately familiar with no less than six different martial traditions, having served with the Saxon, Russian, Habsburg, and French, as well as fighting against the French, Swedes, and Turks. This is not to mention that in 1708 as part of the Allied army the Saxons fought alongside the Dutch and English and in 1712, with the Danish army. Since his father, in addition to being the Elector of Saxony, was also the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania it is natural to assume the De Saxe would also have had more than a little familiarity with military affairs in these two regions as well. <De Saxe, *Maurice (comte); Réveries, ouvrage posthume de Maurice Comte de Saxe*, 2 volumes bound in 1, Amsterdam and Leipzig, 1757.>. So, the young De Saxe had been exposed to the practices employed by most, if not all, of the major armies in Europe at the time.

Yet, when penning his own personal, speculative military theories, Maurice was adamant on this issue. Not only had he never encountered cadenced marching, he had never heard anyone speak of it. So, how does one reconcile what may be termed De Saxe’s extraordinary “ecumenical experience” with the repeated tactical to adopt the Roman system of marching that had been already proffered in a number military treatises?



“It’s a long way to Tipperary”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztwNogPha6I>

A possible explanation comes from an unexpected quarter. Given the series of admonitions by the likes of John Smyth, William Garrard, Edwin Davies, and Thomas Kellie, if asked where one would mostly likely find cadenced marching, “among the English/British infantry” would seem to be a logical answer. However, corroboration of Maurice’s observations is provided by a passage from what might be considered a near-infallible source, Humphrey Bland’s *A Treatise of Military Discipline*, first published in 1727, five years before the Comte de Saxe’s comments. With the return of Peace of Utrecht (April 1713 - February 1715), Lieutenant-colonel Humphrey Bland would eventually set out to pen what could be termed the “best practices” of the British infantry and cavalry during the recently concluded War of Spanish Succession.

The passage in question was Bland’s explanation how the British officers were to open the files, that is, increase the distance between the files. The overall method was basically the same as that used by all western European armies since Willem Lodewijk and Maurice of Nassau reintroduced the Hellenistic-style manoeuvres more than a hundred years before. The innovative difference lay in the details. Like De Saxe, Bland pointed out the varying height of the troops and the resulting inequality of each soldier’s pace was problematic. To avoid this difficulty, the men were to turn on the heel of the foot opposite the direction they were to march to open files. If they were to open to the right, for example, they would turn on the heel of the left foot. According to Bland, previously, the men had done the opposite, stepping forward as they turned. But this led to a ragged rank as they then moved forward to open the files, since the amount moved varied according to the soldier’s height. In the method offered by Bland, if the battalion was opening to the left, for example, the men along the first file stepped off with their

right feet, and as soon as they moved toward with their right foot a second time, the next file moved off with their right foot. Each successive file followed suit, one at a time, setting off the moment the file in front of it advanced a second time with their right feet. Bland continued:

“In doing of this, they are to take the short Steps and to move very slow, but with an equal Pace, lifting up and setting down of their right and left feet with one another, thus: All who are in Motion *must lift up and set down their right Feet together* [*Italics mine*], and do the same with their left.”



“Die Panzerlied”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJ3cPUNw7EA>

Bland’s next two paragraphs are the most illuminating. Bland acknowledged that this synchronicity would “appear so difficult that it will deter a great many from attempting it.” He assured his military readers, however, they if would at least put this method to the test, they will “find it much easier in the Execution than they imagined.” He anticipated that his critics would object that this system would appear to be too stiff and appear to “too much like Dancing.” He reassured his readers that with “Time and Practise” it would become so “easy and gentle” that it would become the preferred method by both men and officers. He closed this section with the rhetorical question, why should object to this cadence-like approach to marching for opening and closing ranks when “Evolutions are perform’d in exact Time, why is not the same Objection rais’d against them?” Answering his own question Bland concluded “Because we are accustomed to the one and not the other.”

The “evolution” was an earlier term for what by the mid-eighteenth century would become known as “manœuvres,” and would include doubling of ranks, doubling of files, the countermarch by rank, the countermarch by file, and turning (wheeling.) The men could be required to synchronize their marching steps in these procedures because they involved short distances and thus a small number of steps. When doubling by the rear half files, the men were required to count off 12 steps <Bland, 1727, p. 42.>. In the 1690 official version of doubling the ranks to the front, the men along the even numbered ranks advanced a mere 4 steps to complete the procedure. <England and Wales. Army; The Exercise of the Foot: with the Evolutions, According to the Words of Command. London, 1690, p. 152.>.

However, according to Bland, although the British infantry was employing cadenced like marching when performing the “evolutions,” it was not for anything else, not even opening and closing the files. And, if they were not employing it for this latter procedure, they certainly were not using this type of march while advancing either through the countryside or towards the enemy during the day of battle. <Bland, Humphrey (Colonel); A Treatise of Military Discipline, 1727; 2nd edition, London, 1727, pp. 12-13.>

This would explain why Maurice de Saxe had never encountered the Roman system of marching on the modern battlefield. It must be remembered most of “evolutions” were too complex to be attempted in the presence of the enemy and were only rarely encountered on the battlefield.



“Blood on the risers” (What a gory way to die)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nL4aCWD-p58>

Instances of Cadenced Marching

De Saxe was also in error when he opined that the Roman system had not been used in modern times. Cadenced marching already had been adopted by the infantry in at least the two German armies, that of Hesse-Kassel and Prussia for more than five years before Maurice feverishly set pen to paper. In 1720, the Hesse-Kassel Prince Maximilian Regiment, then in service of the Holy Roman Empire, was stationed in Italy where it soon learned from some of the local Italian troops how to “march in step.” This marching capability appears to have been first introduced by the three Vitelli brothers who controlled the Città di Castello in the Romagna district. As far back as 1496 their troops were taught “to keep step by the drumbeat” <Delbrück, , Hans; History of the Art of War; Volume 4, (translated by Walter J. Renfroe, Jr.), London, 1985, p. 17.>

Landgrafen Karl von Hessen-Hassel and his advisors were quick to appreciate the innovation and soon after the regiment’s return the practice was officially mandated for all Hesse-Kassel infantry. Recognizing Frederick William’s extreme interest in the minutia of military drill Herr von Kalckstein, then an officer in Hessian service, approached Prussian military authorities to explain the virtues of this “new” marching technique. Though initially unsuccessful, he eventually was able to convincingly demonstrate its advantages and these new techniques worked their way into the Prussian regulations of 1726 < Marching #1, USAMHI, Reference branch, dv, October 82, p. 2; citing Walter Transfeldt’s Wort und Brauch im deutschen Heer, 1942 edition, pp. 64- 65.>.

So it would appear that the introduction of popularization of cadenced marching had its “modern” origins in Italy was popularized in the eighteenth century by first the Hessians and then the Prussians, and was not the “brainchild” of the great Maurice de Saxe as has been often thought.

The French would also soon adopt cadenced marching during the short period of peace separating the Wars of Austrian Succession and the Seven Years’ War. There is one last observation that points to the lack of cadenced marching prior to these developments. When one scours the March 2, 1703 Exercise for the infantry and the Instructions for the Infantry of June 29, 1753 one finds absolutely no mention of either of a predefined distance of each pace or the frequency that each step is taken [17.]. The first mention of either occurs in the May 14, 1754 ordinance. The “small pace” was now one French foot in length; the ordinary and the double pace, both two feet. Both the small and ordinary pace were performed 60 times per minute while the double pace was 120 steps per minute. This is a highly significant development. Until the official adoption of cadenced marching it had been irrelevant to prescribe the size of the step and its tempo. [18.]. The introduction of the pre-defined pace (steps per minute) and the standardized length of each step only occurred with the introduction of cadenced marching.

A Final Comment about Cadenced Marching

It has been a long standing misconception among some military historians that for marching to be truly cadenced that it had to be accompanied by music whose rhythm regulated the rate of march. In his truly comprehensive Dictionnaire de l’armée de terre E.T. Bardet posited that in order for marching to be considered cadence it had to meet three criteria: 1) each man’s step was the same length “sole to sole”, that is, in English “toe to toe;” 2) all the men initiated each step simultaneously; and 3) all the men marched at exactly the same rate of steps minute. Bardet makes absolutely no mention of music being necessary [19.]. There is an even more compelling reason to conclude that music was not an essential precondition for cadenced marching. In his of the Seven Years’ War, Georg Friedrich von Tempelhoff noted by the time of the publication of his seminal work, the Prussians had discovered that music “destroyed the very end that it was intended to promote and had discontinued the practice of having the musicians play music while the men cadenced march!

Readers with additional information about cadenced marching are encouraged to contact the author at Brentnose1@gmail.com.

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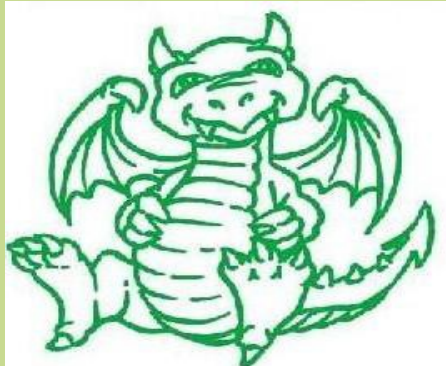
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The Battle That Started the American Civil War

Posted by C.W. Moellenkamp
HMGS-NW Treasurer

History is written by the victors. When I speak of THE battle that started the American Civil War in an HMGS article, you may think I am speaking of the First Battle of Bull Run or the Battle of Fort Sumter, or even the largely forgotten Battle of Philippi (look it up!). But I am actually speaking of the Election of 1860. How did this “battle” really start the war?

I have never been much of a politically interested person, yet I have usually enjoyed history – certain eras of history, that is. But I have always been fascinated in realizing that the role playing games and wargames I have enjoyed for so many years usually involve a healthy dose of political intrigue – even in fantasy and sci fi settings!

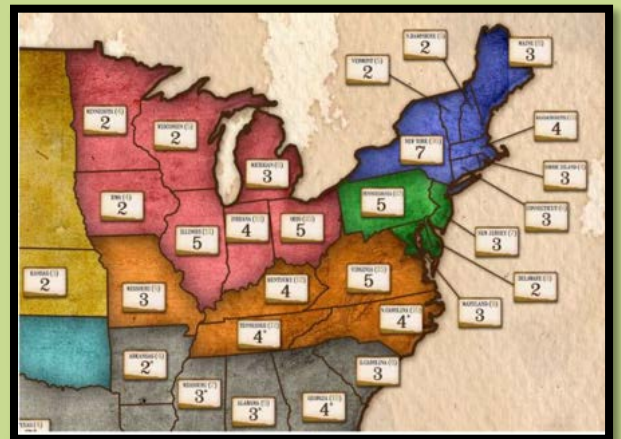
Through my interest in the American Civil War (ACW), I have continued to learn more and more about many of the forgotten or untaught details of the facts that led to the ACW, and the Election of 1860 provides a fascinating view of our American development. One of our goals at HMGS is to help us all experience history in ways that you cannot typically obtain or feel simply from reading a written history lesson. The emotions, the struggle, the fears experienced in games bring a new level of understanding that goes well beyond words on a page.

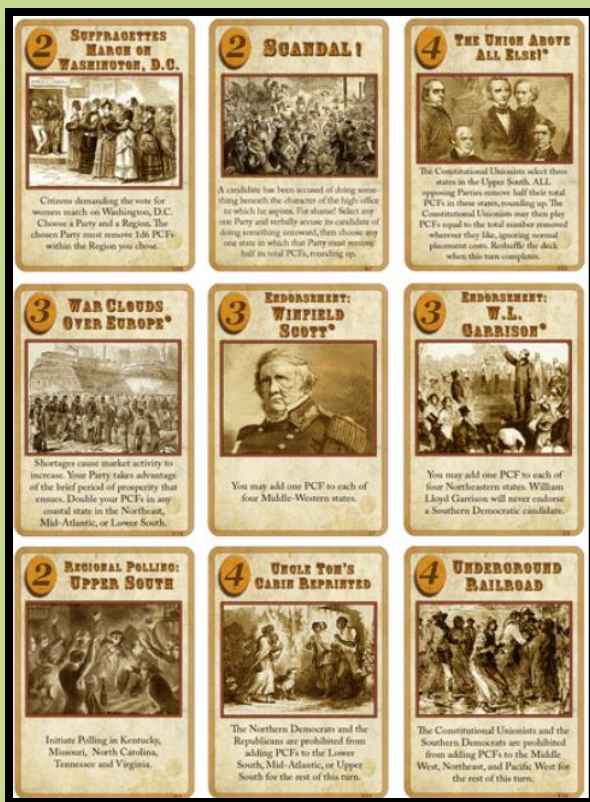


In 2012, Numbskull Games Kickstarted the boardgame *Divided Republic, The 1860 Presidential Campaign Game*. This game runs like a wargame, but rather than on the battlefield, the encounters take place in the political realm. I have enjoyed the strategy of this game at the same time as learning many new aspects of the election which I never fully understood or even heard of while studying it so many times in the past.

While 2 party electorate system is normal to us, largely created back in the 1780s, the election of 1860 actually pitted 4 major parties against one another: Constitutional Unionists, Northern Democrats, Republicans, and Southern Democrats. The candidates for

each party were Senator John Bell (Constitutional Unionists), Current VP John Breckenridge (Southern Democrats), Senator Stephen Douglas (Northern Democrats) and Former Congressman Abraham Lincoln (Republican). (Certainly interesting to think about with the backdrop of a contentious election coming up in November, 2020.) The country was expanding, but traveling this large expanse was of course difficult during this period. Political appearances and political influences are limited just like troops in any wargame. In *Divided Republic*, players get to decide (and struggle over) how to manage these “troops” across the board of the US to effect the outcome they desire.





Campaign cards drive the action while also providing unique insights to events that shaped the election and may cause you to change strategy at some point. Players have their troops in their stronghold states at the beginning of the game. On their turn, players will play a campaign card from their hand to improve their influence and political momentum. Each card can be used for one of 2 options – 1) increase your political influence by placing more troops in strategic areas, or 2) activate the effect of the card which might change their or another player's circumstances at a larger level. Due to the random dealing of these event cards, every game will be different illustrating the erratic mood of the country in this era. Players can even react to certain cards with a counterplay of another card creating new tensions in a matter of minutes. At specific points in the game, Regional Polling is conducted (i.e. a battle occurs!) and the winners may have enough troops to solidify State Control for the rest of the game, which may confound the strategies of other players immediately. While certainly different than military tactics in miniatures wargames, the maneuvering of the “influence troops” is

something I think most HMGS members would find similar, while also providing a refreshing twist.

Winning the election in 1860 required 152 Electoral Votes, however, with 4 active, major parties, this is incredibly difficult to achieve (even though Lincoln was able to do so winning 40% of the popular vote and 180 Electoral Votes.) So the matter may be ultimately decided simply by the number of states in which you have the most political influence (i.e. the House of Representatives chooses the winner with one vote per state as outlined in the 12th Amendment of the US Constitution.) How does all this change your strategy? Where do you deploy your “influence troops” and how do you reinforce them as the tides turn?

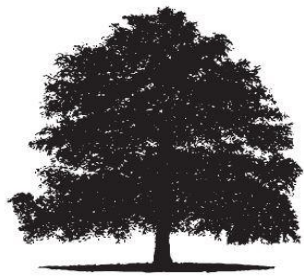


In the end, all players might actually lose the game. The country was truly on the brink of secession and that can occur in the game in a few different ways. And if this occurs, the country of course moves towards war and all players lose. The tension created by this knowledge is fantastic, but it can be frustrating for gamers if they only see this as a game to be won. In one game I played as the Republicans. On the final turn, it was clear that I had certainly lost until a final campaign card that I was able to play admitting Kansas as a free state forced a roll to see if South Carolina would secede. Secession required a roll of 6 on a 6 sided die and, of course, I rolled a 6, immediately negating the presumptive winner's victory – hey, if I can't win why should anyone else!

The overarching learning from this game is recognizing how difficult the situation was to resolve. It is gratifying to make even a little progress in this game when you understand this on your second or third play. You feel the struggle, which gives you a much different appreciation for the all but inevitable outbreak of the ACW. Battles can take many forms in our hobby, but we hope they all teach us something.

I am sure that all of us have been asked “why do you find pleasure in reliving battles of war?” I believe this game can be used to answer these types of questions in ways that go well beyond words.

Preserve the Union!



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Six Decisive Battles of the 18th Century European Wars for Hegemony

By Bob Fulton

Posted by Kevin Cabai
HMGS-NW President

Part 3- Third Silesian War (1756-1763)

Battle of the **Plains of Abraham** (13 September 1759)

Battle of **Quiberon Bay** (20 November 1759)

Battle of the Plains of Abraham, 13 Sept 1759

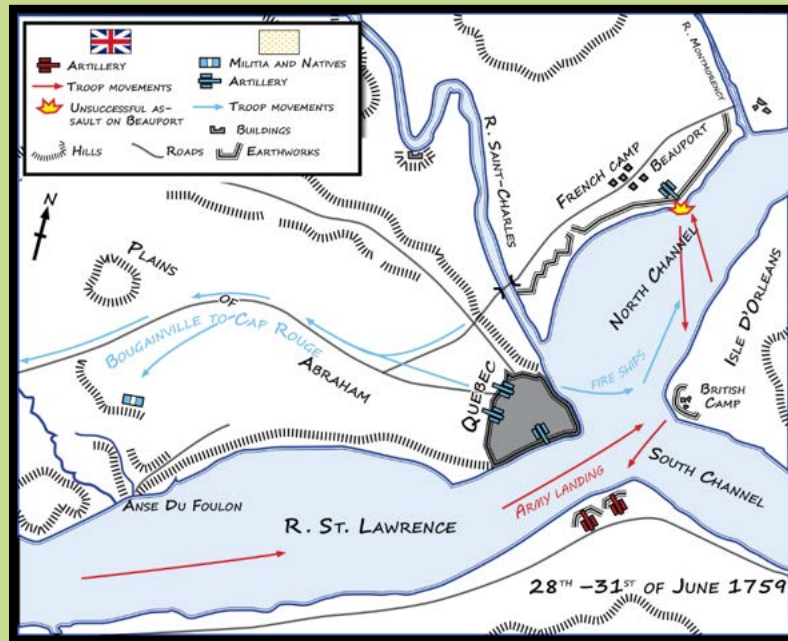


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The culmination of a three-month siege by the British, the battle lasted about an hour. British troops commanded by General James Wolfe successfully resisted the column advance of French troops and Canadian militia under General Louis-Joseph, Marquis de Montcalm, employing new tactics that proved extremely effective against standard military formations used in most large European conflicts. Both generals were mortally wounded during the battle.

Through the summer siege, illness spread through the British camps. In August, Wolfe himself was bedridden, causing already low morale to slump even further among the British troops.[20] With many men in camp hospitals, British fighting numbers were thinned, and Wolfe personally felt that a new attack was needed by the end of September, or Britain's opportunity would be lost.

After considering and rejecting a number of plans for landings on the north shore, a decision was made in late August by Wolfe and his brigadiers to land upriver of the city. If successful, such a landing would



force Montcalm to fight, as a British force on the north shore of the St. Lawrence would cut his supply lines to Montreal. Following the failed British assault on Montmorency, Montcalm altered his deployment, sending Bougainville and a column of approximately 1,500 regular troops, 200 cavalry, and a group of New French militia—some 3,000 men in all—upriver to Cap-Rouge to monitor the British ships upstream. He further strengthened his defenses of the Beauport shore following the abandonment of the British camp at Montmorency, which he regarded as preparations for a descent (amphibious attack) on Beauport. In spite of warnings from local commanders, he did not view an upstream landing as a serious possibility.

- Initial British landing
- Point Levis
- Unsuccessful attack on 31 August



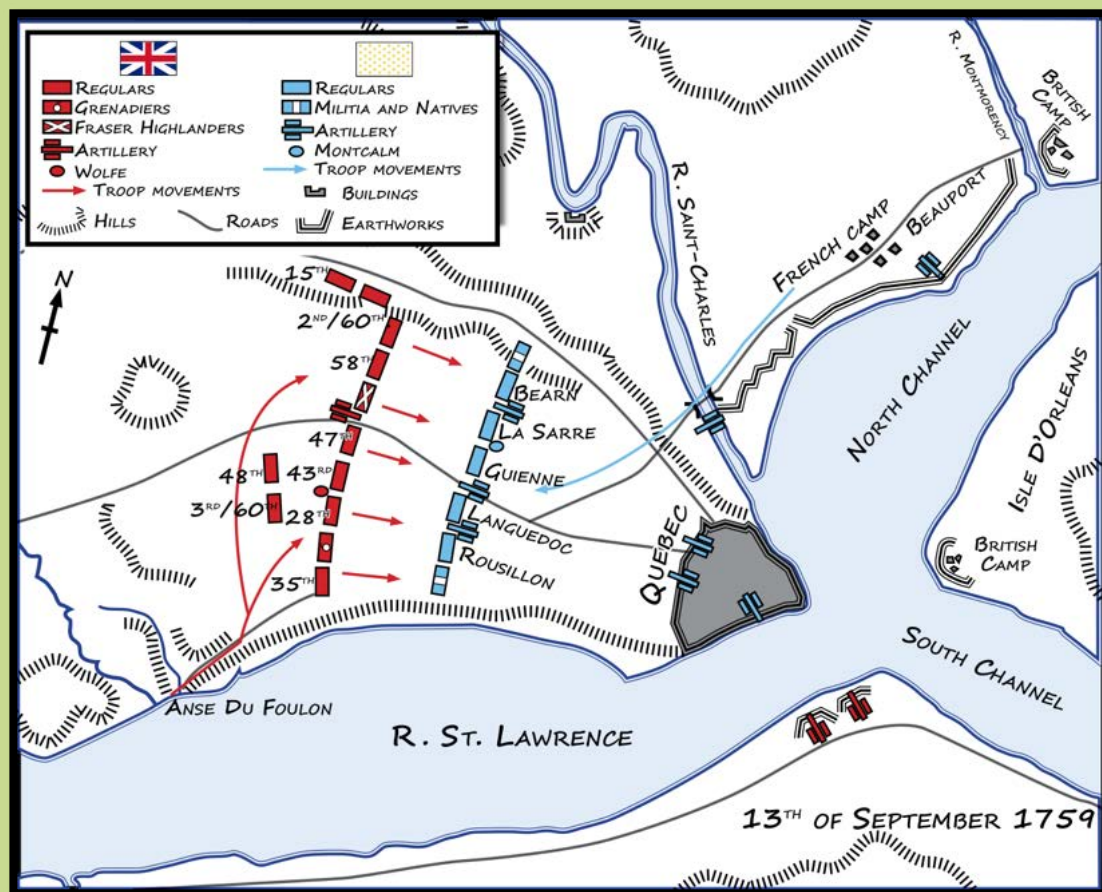
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Wolfe's plan of attack depended on secrecy and surprise. His plan required that a small party of men should land by night on the north shore, climb the tall cliff, seize a small road, and overpower the

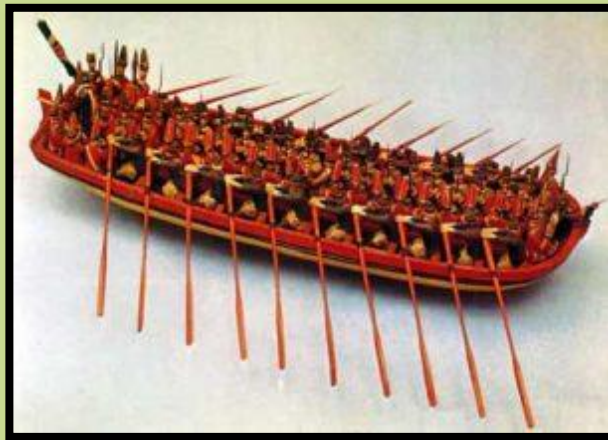
garrison that protected it, allowing the bulk of his army (5,000 men) to ascend the cliff by the small road and then deploy for battle on the plateau. Even if the first landing party succeeded in their mission and the army was able to follow, such a deployment would still leave his forces inside the French line of defense with no immediate retreat but the river. It is possible that Wolfe's decision to change the landing site was owing less to a desire for secrecy and more to his general disdain for his brigadiers (a feeling that was reciprocated); it is also possible that he was still suffering the effects of his illness and the opiates he used as painkillers.

Sentries did detect boats moving along the river that morning, but they were expecting a French supply convoy to pass that night—a plan that had been changed without Vergor being notified.[32] When the boats, loaded with the first wave of British troops, were challenged, a French-speaking officer, either a Captain Fraser or Captain Donald McDonald of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, was able to answer the challenge in excellent French, allaying suspicion.[33]

The boats, however, had drifted slightly off course: instead of landing at the base of the road, many soldiers found themselves at the base of a slope. A group of 24 volunteers led by Colonel William Howe with fixed bayonets were sent to clear the picket along the road, and climbed the slope, a manoeuvre that allowed them to come up behind Vergor's camp and capture it quickly. Wolfe followed an hour later when he could use an easy access road to climb to the plain. Thus, by the time the sun rose over the Plains of Abraham, Wolfe's army had a solid foothold at the top of the cliffs.



- Early morning ascent of embankment at Anse du Foulon
- Deployment, French advance, British volleys
- French Retreat



By Hoodinski - Own work, [1], British and French flag from Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=15246485>

Montcalm was taken aback to learn of the British deployment, and his response has been regarded as precipitate.[38] Though he might have awaited reinforcement by Bougainville's column (allowing simultaneous frontal and rear attacks on the British position) or avoided battle while he concentrated his forces, or even yielded the city to Wolfe, he instead elected to confront Wolfe's force directly. Had he waited, the British would have been entirely cut off—they had nowhere to go but back down the Foulon, and would have been under fire the entire way.[39] To an artillery officer named Montbelliard,

Montcalm explained his decision thus: "We cannot avoid action; the enemy is entrenching, he already has two pieces of cannon. If we give him time to establish himself, we shall never be able to attack him with the troops we have; 13,390 regular troops, Troupes de la Marine, and militia available in Quebec City and along the Beauport shore, as well as 200 cavalry, 200 artillery (including the guns of Quebec), 300 native warriors (including many Odawa under Charles de Langlade[41]), and 140 Acadian volunteers, but most of these troops did not participate in the action.



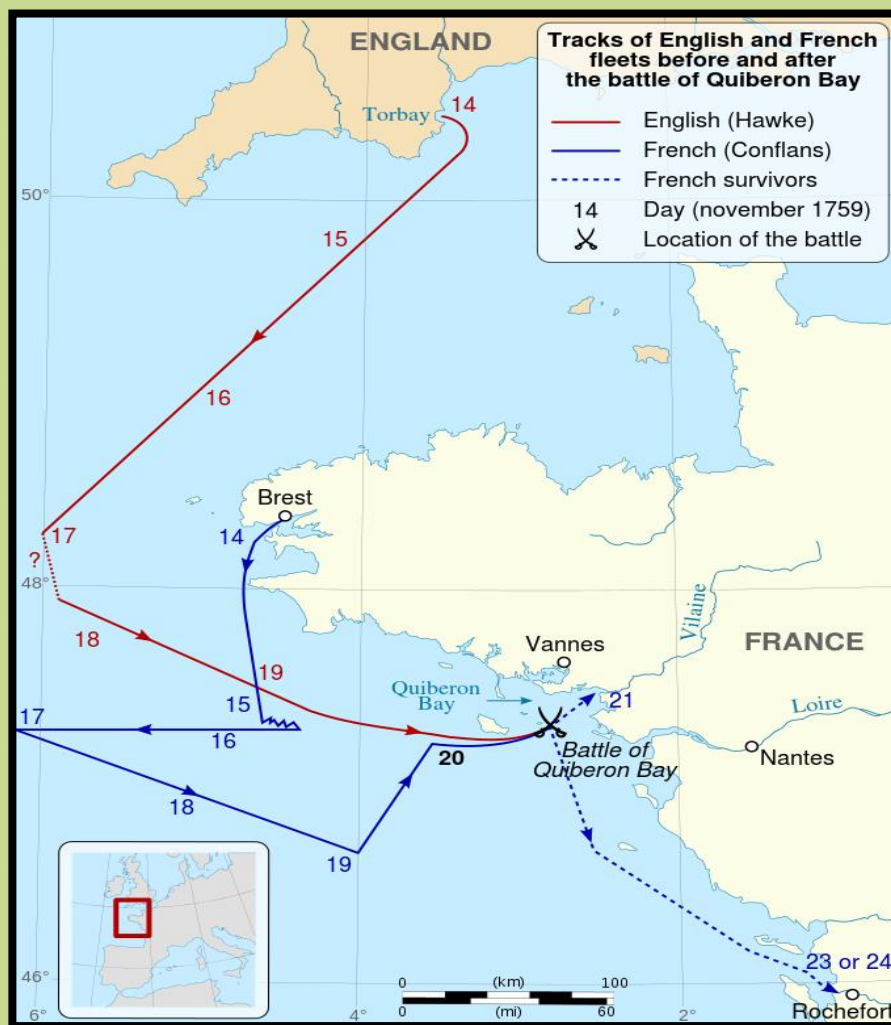
Battle of Quiberon Bay, 20 November 1759

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Wolfe had ordered his soldiers to charge their muskets with two balls each in preparation for the engagement.[48] Captain John Knox, serving with the 43rd Foot, wrote in his journal that as the French came within range, the regiments "gave them, with great calmness, as remarkable a close and heavy discharge as I ever saw." After the first volley, the British lines marched forward a few paces towards the shocked French force and fired a second general volley that shattered the attackers and sent them into retreat.

During 1759, the British, under Hawke, maintained a close blockade on the French coast in the vicinity of Brest. In that year the French had made plans to invade England and Scotland and had accumulated transports and troops around the Loire estuary. The defeat of the Mediterranean fleet at the Battle of Lagos in August made the invasion plans impossible, but Choiseul still contemplated a plan for Scotland, and so the fleet was ordered to escape the blockade and collect the transports assembled in the Gulf of Morbihan.

first week of November a westerly gale came up and, after three days, the ships of Hawke's blockade were forced to run for Torbay on the south coast of England. Robert Duff was left behind in Quiberon Bay, with a squadron of five 'fifties; easterly wind came on the 14th, Conflans slipped out. He was sighted by HMS Actaeon which had remained on station off Brest despite the storms, but which failed to rendezvous with Hawke.





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Having struggled with unfavourable winds, Conflans had slowed down on the night of the 19th in order to arrive at Quiberon at dawn. Pursued two small frigates but ran into Hawke's squadron; French broke off the pursuit but were still scattered as Hawke's fleet came into sight.[5] HMS Magnanime sighted the French at 8.30[4] and Hawke gave the signal for line abreast.

Conflans was faced with a choice, to fight in his current disadvantageous position in high seas and a "very violent" WNW wind, or take up a defensive position in Quiberon Bay and dare Hawke to come into the labyrinth of shoals and reefs.[6] About 9am Hawke gave the signal for general chase along with a new signal for the first 7 ships to form a line ahead and, in spite of the weather and the dangerous waters, set full sail. By 2.30 Conflans rounded Les Cardinaux, the rocks at the end of the Quiberon peninsula that give the battle its name in French. The first shots were heard as he did so, although Sir John Bentley in Warspite claimed that they were fired without his orders. However the British were starting to overtake the rear of the French fleet even as their van and centre made it to the safety of the bay.

Just before 4pm the battered Formidable surrendered to the Resolution, just as Hawke himself rounded The Cardinals. Meanwhile, Thésée lost her duel with HMS Torbay and foundered, Superbe capsized, and the badly damaged Héros struck her flag to Viscount Howe before running aground on the Four Shoal during the night.

Meanwhile, the wind shifted to the NW, further confusing Conflans' half-formed line as they tangled together in the face of Hawke's daring pursuit. Conflans tried unsuccessfully to resolve the muddle, but in the end decided to put to sea again. His flagship, Soleil Royal, headed for the entrance to the bay just as Hawke was coming in on Royal George. Hawke saw an opportunity to rake Soleil Royal, but Intrépide interposed herself and took the fire.[10] Meanwhile, Soleil Royal had fallen to leeward and was forced to run back and anchor off Croisic, away from the rest of the French fleet. By now it was about 5pm and darkness had fallen, so Hawke made the signal to anchor.



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Hitler's Bold Attack at Mortain

By David H. Lippman

Posted by Tibor Ipavic
HMGS-MW Secretary

Facing disaster after the American breakout from the Normandy beachhead, Hitler ordered a panzer attack against the Allies at Mortain.



For once, the ULTRA message came late. Normally, the decoding machines and hard-working British cryptographers at Bletchley Park had an abundance of German Army messages to go through, but in the first days in August 1944, the German panzer divisions had gone to radio silence, which suggested they were going to attack, but not in which direction.

Then the Germans gave away the game. On August 6, the 2nd Panzer Division broke radio silence and asked for night fighter support to back the attack that evening over an area from St. Clement to St. Hilaire and for more fighters later that day. A followup message said that the 2nd SS Panzer Division “Das Reich” would drive west at 8:30 pm toward Mortain and would need Luftwaffe bombers to suppress American artillery before them.

As soon as the message was decoded, Bletchley dispatched the warning to Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley, commanding the U.S. 12th Army Group, which would face this offensive in France. The result was twofold. By 4 am on August 7, Bradley and his senior commanders had a complete picture of the German counterattack, codenamed Operation Lüttich. Second, the full picture did not matter anyway. The defending Americans were already feeling the first impact of Adolf Hitler's latest blitzkrieg, the only one he would launch in Normandy. It was a misguided operation that was doomed to catastrophe.

Operation Lüttich was born in the military chaos of Germany's defeat in the American Operation Cobra, the breakout from the Normandy beachhead, in July and the political chaos of the botched German attempt on Hitler's life that same month. Hitler, suffering from serious physical injuries and mental trauma from a bomb going off near his feet, was facing disaster on both the battlefield and the diplomatic front. Soviet troops were driving into Poland and the Balkans. German puppet states were seeking a way out of the war. German domestic morale was sinking under heavy bombing and heavier casualties.



The commander of a PzKpfw. VI Tiger tank peers from the turret of his vehicle somewhere in northern France during the summer of 1944. This Tiger belongs to the 1st SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler, one of the Nazi armored divisions that participated in the attack at Mortain.

The latest blows had started coming with the Allied invasion of Normandy on June 6. British and Canadian troops defeated German panzers in attritional battles near Caen in the east, while American mechanized forces under the hard-driving Lt. Gen. George S. Patton blasted a hole through German lines at Coutances in the west and stormed down French roads, driving both west into Brittany and east toward Argentan to surround the German Seventh Army. If Patton from the south and the British from the north bagged the Seventh Army, the German defenses in France would collapse, and some of the toughest panzer divisions—nearly impossible to replace at this point—would be lost.

To prevent this, Hitler ordered his favorite response to an enemy offensive: a massive panzer counterattack to halt the American drive by cutting off its supply lines, making Patton vulnerable to isolation and destruction.

Hitler's plan was bold, calling for Seventh Army, under SS Lt. Gen. Paul Hausser, to hurl four panzer divisions, two of them elite SS outfits, and an SS panzergrenadier division at the thin center of the American line and drive on the road junction town of Avranches where Normandy met Brittany, cut all the roads, and strangle American supply lines. The plan was named "Lüttich" in honor of the German name for the Belgian city of Liege, which Kaiser Wilhelm II's men had captured 30 years ago almost to the very day, setting up an offensive that drove the French back to Paris.

The only problem in Hitler's grand theory came from the very generals he was assigning to carry out this mission. The German officers who attempted to assassinate Hitler and end the

war had barely missed their target—the Gestapo’s vengeance did not. More than 5,000 German officers, some as high as the rank of field marshal, were arrested and subjected to hideous show trials and ghastly torture.

Among those under the Gestapo’s eye was the top German commander in the West, Field Marshal Gunther von Kluge, known in the Army as “Clever Hans,” a play on his name as “clever” in German is “kluge.” He was suspected of promising the plotters to make use of his high rank and position to be the peace emissary to the British and Americans.

Nonetheless, Kluge was the man in charge and on the spot, and he would have to lead the assault. Problem was, Kluge did not have much to work with. The Seventh Army in particular was a disaster. Most German transport consisted of horse, bicycle, and foot. Most German panzer divisions had been ground down by ceaseless attrition from Allied fighter bombers and Allied tanks, losing 750 of the 1,400 committed to battle. The constant bombing had also wrecked German supply lines and morale. Weakened supply lines meant few replacements, and cooks, bakers, and other paper chasers were put in the front as infantry, failing miserably. Luftwaffe pilots taking to the sky found themselves jumped by vast numbers of British Supermarine Spitfire and U.S. North American P-51 Mustang fighters. Tension between the Nazi extremist (and better equipped) Waffen SS and the Wehrmacht was intense, even though both endured the same combat nightmares.

No matter. On July 31, Hitler ordered Deputy Chief of Staff General Walter Warlimont to go personally to Kluge’s headquarters at the Duke de la Rouchefoucauld’s palace at La Roche-Guyon in France and brief Kluge on the plan.

Acting as Hitler’s personal eyes and ears at Kluge’s headquarters, Warlimont arrived on August 2 to find that the situation was disintegrating. Kluge had planned a counterattack himself but nixed it because of Patton’s advance to the east, south of Mortain. The American 79th Infantry Division was headed for Laval, while the 90th Infantry was driving on Mayenne. East of the planned Mortain attack area, Lt. Gen. Courtney Hodges was advancing with his U.S. 1st Army, and VII Corps commander Lt. Gen. J. Lawton Collins ordered Maj. Gen. Clarence Huebner’s 1st Infantry Division to seize the city and a dominant feature above it called Hill 314. The hill was a tourist attraction for hikers, who enjoyed the outcroppings that led to an 18-mile view in all directions, as far as Avranches to the west. Reminded to seize the high ground, the laconic Huebner said, “Joe, I already have it.”

With that, Collins decided to replace the 1st Infantry, veterans of North Africa, Sicily, and D-Day, with the 30th Infantry Division, which would hold the area while the “Big Red One” headed for Mayenne.



Hitler's Operation Lüttich was a bold stroke to thwart the Allied advance in Normandy, but the attack met stubborn American resistance on the ground, accurate U.S. artillery fire, and Allied domination of the air.

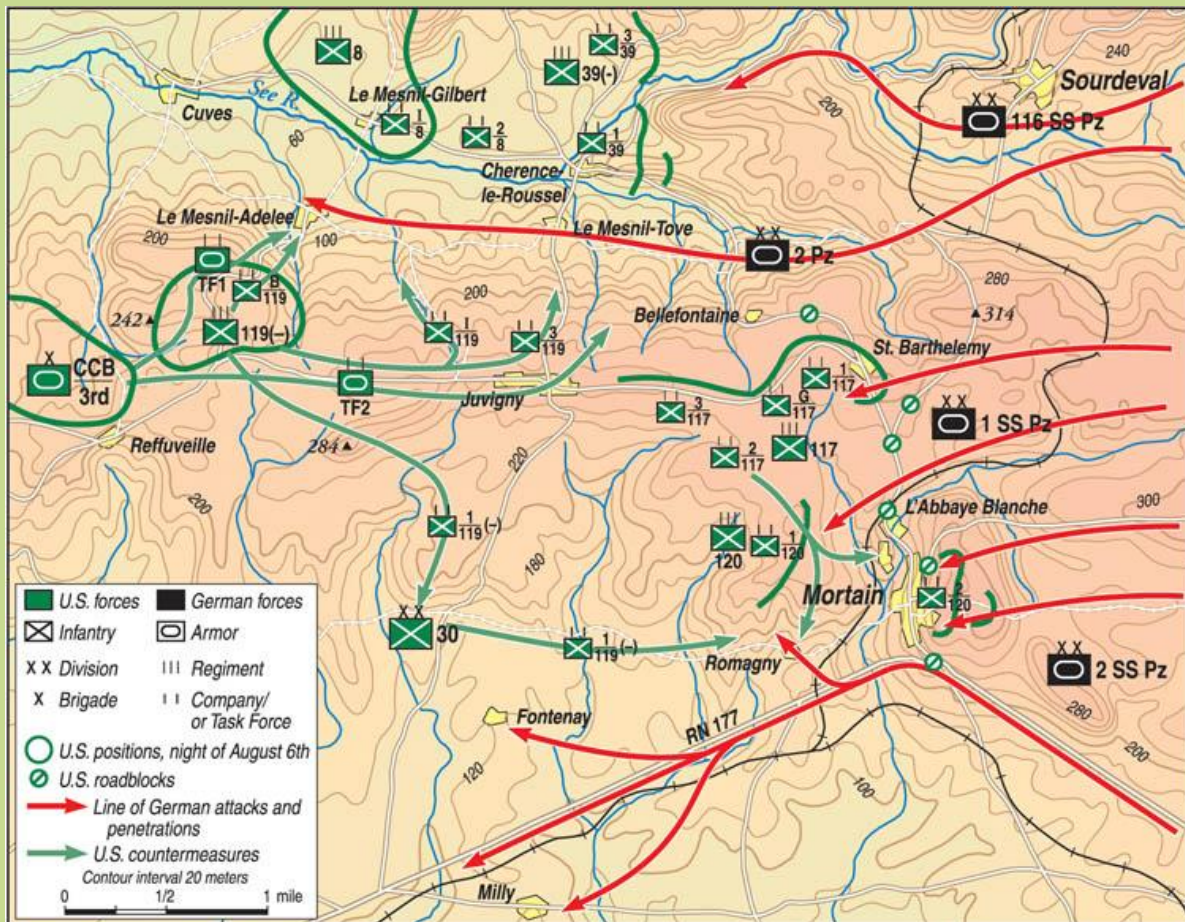
The 30th "Old Hickory" Infantry Division was a National Guard unit, its men drawn from North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Commanded by Maj. Gen. Leland Hobbs, the division's three regiments were descendants of Confederate battalions that had fought at Gettysburg and Cold Harbor. More importantly, the 30th had endured harsh fighting in the Cobra breakout, even being bombed by mistake by the U.S. Eighth Air Force.

Now, after watching a USO show with Edward G. Robinson, the Tennesseans and Carolinians began replacing the "Big Red One" in its positions east and north of Mortain, an unremarkable town of 1,300 people whose main point of interest was that it sat at the center of a spider's web of roads. The division's 117th Infantry Regiment took over defending the village of St. Barthélémy, a small town north of Mortain. The 120th took over Hill 314 and the other nearby crests, while the 119th was put in reserve. The 120th's commander, Colonel Hammond Birks, said to his aide-de-camp, "This town is 'wide-open.' The hotels are full. It should be an excellent place for a little rest and relaxation."

But an outgoing 1st Infantry officer warned Birks, "Hill 314 is the key to the whole area. In case of emergency this hill has to be held at all costs." Birks assigned that task to his 2nd Battalion under Lt. Col. Eads Hardaway, telling Hardaway, "If any trouble develops, it will be from that direction. Put roadblocks on all approaches to the 2nd Battalion position." The Americans did so but found other problems. The 1st Infantry Division's positions were poorly prepared. Some foxholes were only 18 inches deep. The phone net had to be rewired, and there was no time to deploy minefields.

Meanwhile, German troops and tanks converged on their lines of departure, doing so by night to avoid Allied fighter bombers. Even so, things went wrong. The XLVII Panzer Corps

commander General Hans von Funck disliked his SS boss, Hausser, and the two did not work well together. Nor did Funck get along with the 116th Panzer Division's commander, Lt. Gen. Gerhard Graf von Schwerin. The 2nd Panzer and 1st and 2nd SS Panzer Divisions fielded only 75 Mark IV tanks, 70 Mark V Panther tanks, and 32 self-propelled guns, combined.



As the battle for Mortain rages on, American soldiers of the 119th Regiment, 30th Infantry Division fire at the advancing Germans near Mortain on August 9, 1944.

The 2nd Panzer was assigned to the right, 2nd SS Panzer and 17th SS Panzergrenadier to the left, and 1st SS Panzer to the center. The 116th Panzer Division, on the extreme right, would join the attack as soon as it could. The 1st SS Panzer's move-up was delayed when a British Hawker Typhoon fighter bomber crashed into the leading tank in a narrow lane, holding up an entire column. It took the division all morning on the 6th to get sorted out.

Nonetheless, at 2 am on August 7, Lüttich got down to business in the dark and predawn fog with a German panzer assault in best blitzkrieg style against the 30th Infantry Division. To preserve surprise, the Germans did not precede the attack with an artillery barrage. The Germans planned to surround Mortain and cut it off, trapping the American 120th Infantry from behind. Using infiltration tactics in some places and SS ferocity in others, the attack went in. An SS battle group, Kampfgruppe Fick, attacked Hill 314 head-on, yelling "Heil Hitler" as

they charged under supporting machine-gun fire. G Company of the 120th answered back with furious fire, holding them off, but the Germans overran H Company's headquarters. More German troops attacked the 2nd Battalion of the 120th Regiment, forcing Birks to commit his reserve, C Company, to help hold Mortain and Hill 314. The 2nd/120th and one company of the 3rd/120th would ultimately defend the ground.

Meanwhile in Mortain, Hardaway set up his headquarters team to defend the HQ in the Hotel de la Poste. Even the radiomen had to abandon their sets and grab their rifles. Sergeant Robert Bondurant, manning the switchboard, told Birks about the crisis.

"Hold the town at all costs," Birks ordered. "Stay at your post." Bondurant did so.

As a misty dawn approached, the Germans started shelling Mortain. GIs in foxholes in the cemetery north of town saw blasts explode lids off crypts and topple headstones. C Company moved forward and battled SS men in the dark.



During their desperate defense of Hill 314 at Mortain, American soldiers use the cover of a hedgerow to displace. the soldiers of the 30th Division maintained control of the high ground and blunted Hitler's ill-conceived offensive.

The 2nd SS Panzer's drive was led by two Frenchmen whose sympathies were with Hitler. They headed toward a roadblock held by A/120th, where three GIs challenged the Frenchmen. The traitors explained that they were guiding a "lost" vehicle back to American lines. During the palaver, a German machine-gun crew worked its way into a field behind the fence. Once there, it opened fire, killing the Americans. The rest of the Americans killed the French traitors, but the damage had been done—German machine gunners opened up on the roadblock, and the tanks overran it, surging through A Company and heading for B Company.

The B/120th command team saw the Germans coming, and First Sergeant Reginald Maybe handed a bazooka to his company commander, Lieutenant Murray Pulver, who promptly crouched behind a stone wall and fired on a Mark IV from 10 yards away. The round hit the tank's turret, rocking it to a stop. The engine kept turning over, but the blast killed or wounded everyone in the tank. The SS did not give up, though. A dozen SS troopers charged up yelling, "Amerikaner Kamerad," calling upon them to surrender. Pulver fired his carbine at the attackers, and his men did the same, dropping most of the Germans to the ground. The Americans suffered no casualties, but Pulver figured he could not hold much longer and pulled back. He had gained time for B/120th to establish a new defensive line.

Through the fog, the German advance continued, now backed by artillery, including their Nebelwerfer rockets, known to Americans as “Screaming Mimi’s” for their terrifying sound. German tanks and infantry drove into Mortain itself. One group of SS men charged into a battery belonging to the 197th Field Artillery and drove off in a jeep with a radio, map, and coding machine. A panzer shot up trucks and cooked off ammunition before retiring, its crew fearful of American bazooka teams taking advantage of the fog to blast rounds into the sides of German tanks.

Gradually, the Germans took control of Mortain in heavy fighting, clearing the buildings of straggling Americans. In his HQ, 2/120th’s commander, Colonel Hardaway, warned Birks that he would have to temporarily shut down operations. SS men were inspecting wrecked American vehicles outside his building. SS men yanked wounded American soldiers out of damaged buildings and made the prisoners sit in the middle of a road—the GIs feared the SS men would massacre them as they had done to hundreds of French civilians in Oradour-sur-Glane. Sergeant Robert Bondurant, who manned his telephone switchboard to the last, recalled, “I thought they were going to shoot us. Instead they walked us back to an aid station. Wounded were lying around everywhere, both German and American.”

Meanwhile, much of the 2/120th was still holding on to Hill 214, not yet aware that they were being surrounded. They were facing attacks by a determined SS trooper armed with a flamethrower. One American killed the flamethrower man, but the Americans could not silence the enemy artillery. Worse, the Americans were short on supplies and ammunition, and supporting artillery could not find targets in the mist.

One of the last Americans to reach the hill’s summit was Captain Delmont Bym, leading H Company, the heavy weapons outfit. Bym was stunned by the sight of wounded men lying everywhere. “It was my first week of combat,” he said later. “I was kind of shocked to see injured men lying there in the open, being hit by shrapnel.”

With Hardaway and his command team gone, leadership of the 2nd/120th fell on Captain Reynold Erichson, who headed F Company. He moved quickly, rounding up about 40 stragglers and pulling all the companies into an all-round defensive position on the summit, fully aware that his 600 men were facing one of Germany’s top SS panzer divisions, which mustered at least 9,000 men.

Erichson was a 24-year-old peacetime Iowa farmer, and three of his four company commanders had never led companies in battle. However, Erichson had one trump card: two forward artillery observation officers (FOOs), the eyes of 30th Division’s heavy guns. From their hilltop observation posts, Lieutenant Robert Weiss and Lieutenant Charles Bartz had a grandstand view of the entire countryside as the fog burned off and a battery-powered radio to call down targets for the 230th Field Artillery Battalion’s guns.

Northwest of Mortain, the 1st/117th Infantry Regiment, under Lt. Col. Robert Frankland, faced the 2nd Panzer Division's tanks. The odds were against the 117th. A Company, for example, had a brand new lieutenant commanding it, and its 3rd Platoon had no officers. The company lacked bazookas and artillery support but did have 55 newly arrived replacements.



An officer of the American 30th Infantry Division communicates on a field telephone while a walkie talkie lies nearby. Lieutenants Robert Weiss and Charles Bartz were positioned to call in effective artillery fire against German troops assaulting Hill 314, a key element in the successful defense

Panzer Division's Panther tanks hit the 117th from three directions at St. Barthélémy, slamming into the 823rd Tank Destroyer's antitank and tank-destroyer guns. Lieutenant George Greene, brand new to the battalion, led the men, blasting open German tanks and firing off an entire clip of machine-gun ammunition to give his men a chance to escape the enemy. After vicious fighting, two German tanks drove within 250 yards of Birks' command post.

The 117th fought hard—their guns and bazookas taking down German infantry and tanks—but German advantages in trained men and heavy tanks soon told. A Company was wiped out in minutes with only one officer and 27 men escaping death or capture.

At midmorning the Germans attacked again, some in captured GI jackets to confuse the defenders, and finally drove the Americans out, but the Germans had lost six hours to the 117th.

All across the Mortain battlefield, it was the same story: harsh German attacks, heavy artillery and tank fire, and a determined American defense that slowed the advance, all under heavy fog, mostly from the River Sée.

But at 11 am, a new element entered the battle as the fog finally burned off, revealing the entire Normandy front under clear skies. The porcine but capable Lt. Gen. Heinrich von Luttwitz, commanding 2nd Panzer Division, ordered his support columns to take any available cover. On Hill 314, Weiss and Bartz grinned broadly at each other, seeing those "columns of enemy armor and foot troops streaming [toward us] from the east and northeast." The pair began calling down artillery fire on the Germans.

Soon they would get more. Bradley saw the seriousness and weight of the German counterattack and put in a request to Lt. Gen. Elwood “Pete” Quesada, the dashing commander of the U.S. Ninth Air Force, which owned the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt attack planes and P-51 fighters that had been carving up German movement for weeks. Quesada saw the opportunity immediately. In a superb example of Allied cooperation, he reached out to Air Vice Marshal Sir Harry Broadhurst, who commanded 10 squadrons of deadly Hawker Typhoon fighter bombers that could dive at 500 miles per hour and cut loose 60-pound rockets that turned even Tiger tanks into shreds of metal.

The two Allies worked out a plan: the RAF would shoot up vehicles in the Mortain area while American planes would fly missions behind German lines to attack Luftwaffe bases and intercept any German aircraft that dared to venture toward the battlefield.

Wing Commander Charles Green briefed the pilots, dressed in their shirt-sleeves, dark glasses, and silk scarves, while mechanics checked the Typhoons and warmed up the engines. “This is the moment we have all been waiting for, gentlemen,” he said. “The chance of getting at Panzer tanks out in the open. And, there are lots of the bastards.” Green pointed at the Mortain-Saint Barthélémy road on his big map and told his pilots to concentrate on the lead tanks and jam the highway. Flying time to the target was 15 minutes. The Typhoons would take off in pairs, attack individually, then head home and get rearmed and refueled for another strike. There would be a continuous cycle of Typhoons over the battlefield. Pilots were warned to watch for mid-air collisions.



A Hawker Typhoon of the Royal Air Force is armed with three-inch rockets prior to a mission against German armored assets in Normandy. Marauding Allied fighter bombers made German troop and tank movements particularly hazardous during daylight hours.

From their cockpits, 245 Squadron pilots looked down on wrecked towns and villages, blasted-open vehicles, and battle smoke from Hill 314. They had no trouble spotting the German columns. They were stretched out along a straight road. The 245 pilots swooped in parallel to the column in line astern at 4,000 feet, winged over, and swept down. German panzer gunners opened up with light flak and tracer, their only defense. Then 245 Squadron raked the tanks with 20mm cannon fire and launched their rockets, following their training

procedure of “diving point ... release point ... scram!” they ripped open tanks and thinner skinned vehicles with explosions, forcing them to a fiery halt and their crews to disperse into ditches, unable to advance.

Within an hour, 245 Squadron was back on the ground for refueling and rearming, then took off again. The pilots had quite a tale to tell. Their rocket attacks were pulverizing the German columns. New Zealander Desmond Scott reported, “As I sped to the head of this mile-long column, hundreds of German troops began spilling out into the road to sprint for the open fields and hedgerows. There was no escape. Typhoons were already attacking in deadly swoops at the other end of the column and within seconds the whole stretch of the road was bursting and blazing under streams of rocket and cannon fire. Ammunition wagons exploded like multicolored volcanoes. A large, long-barreled tank standing in a field just off the road was hit by rockets and overturned into a ditch. It was an awesome sight, plane smoke, burning rockets, and showers of colored tracer.”

The attacks created massive destruction, shocking the German troops under the bombardment. Warner Josupeit, a 1st SS Panzer Division machine gunner, said later, “The fighter bombers circled our tanks several times. Then one broke out of his circle, sought a target and fired. As the first pulled back into the circle of about 20 planes, a second pulled out and fired. So they continued until they had all fired. Then they left the terrible scene.



Gun camera footage from a strafing American fighter plane reveals the devastation wrought during an attack on a German column caught in the open on a road in Normandy. Allied aircraft dominated the skies during the critical days of Operation Lüttich.

“A new swarm appeared in their place and fired all their rockets. Black clouds of smoke from burning oil climbed into the sky everywhere we looked. They marked the dead Panzers. Finally, the Typhoons couldn’t find any more Panzers so they bore down on us and clawed us mercilessly. Their rockets fell with a terrible howl and burst into big pieces of shrapnel.”

The fear and destruction infected the higher German command level. The Seventh Army’s chief of staff reported, “The attack has bogged down since 1 pm because of heavy fighter-bomber operations and the failure of our air force. [Our high command] never attached enough importance to the air situation; that made the movements and the supply for the operations doubtful.”

The only ground pounders that saw any cheer in the situation were the Americans of the 30th Division, particularly those on Hill 314, who had box seats for the Typhoon attacks, some of them practically on top of their positions. Sergeant Wendell Westall of Illinois watched a Typhoon flash by and said to a pal, “Sure as hell, that one damned nearly parted my hair!”

The RAF’s hammering did not stop. German tank machine gunners ran out of ammunition. The U.S. Army Air Forces joined in the destruction as well, once they had finished massacring the Luftwaffe’s fighters.

As more Typhoons swooped down to attack, the Germans intensified their attacks, particularly on Hill 314. But if the ground defenses were thin and weak, their defending air and artillery cover—called in by Weiss and Bartz—slammed down on the Germans, keeping them off the hill. Worse, Hobbs and Bradley recognized the serious situation in Mortain and were sending reinforcements to relieve what was now being called “The Lost Battalion.”

As dusk settled over the battlefield, the last Typhoons headed west, leaving a scene of horror behind them: blazing tanks torn into grotesque shapes, their 88mm guns bent and twisted ... dead men lying in bizarre angles ... all under clouds of black smoke from the raging fires.



Soldiers of the German 2nd Panzer Division service their camouflaged antitank gun during Operation Lüttich.

Of the 70 German tanks that made the attack, 40 were destroyed, and some of those damaged were repaired, a tribute to the skill of German tank recovery teams.

So far, the 116th Panzer Division had not done well under American pressure. XLVII Panzer Corps commander Lt. Gen. von Funck, an SS man, blamed 116th’s commander, Lt. Gen. von Schwerin, a Wehrmacht officer, for the “Greyhound” Division’s sluggishness, and the two

yelled at each other. A furious von Funck demanded that Kluge and Hausser relieve von Schwerin of his command, which was done at 4 pm.

As dawn rose over La Roche-Guyon, Kluge's headquarters, the German field marshal studied situation maps and read reports that showed the immensity of the disaster facing him. Four of his crack panzer divisions committed to the Mortain offensive had suffered immense casualties and gained virtually no ground, stopped cold by Hill 314 and RAF Typhoons. To the north, the First Canadian Army had launched a massive night attack on Falaise with 600 tanks. To the south, Lt. Gen. George Patton's Third U.S. Army was still driving east toward Argentan, which meant Kluge's assault force at Mortain would be surrounded. But if Kluge cancelled the order, it could cost him his own life. The attack went on, buoyed by German tenacity and Hausser's high hopes.

It was a grim situation for the field marshal, but just as much for the determined defenders of Hill 314, who were enduring friendly and enemy bombing and shelling, as a few Luftwaffe bombers slipped through the American fighters, particularly night-attack planes. German tanks that had not been shot up showed their usual tenacity. At 5:07 pm on August 7, two German tanks came within 250 yards of Erichson's command post on the hill. Private Joe Shipley, a telephone switchboard operator who had never fired a bazooka in his life, grabbed one and knocked out one tank, which frightened off the other. An officer marveled, "He didn't even leave his seat."



On the night of August 7, 1944, during the German attack on Mortain, American artillery fires in support of the defenders of Hill 314.

On August 8, the Germans tried to storm Pulver's position of A/120th on Hill 285. His radio batteries were dead and his men low on food and water. He took a runner and headed for 1st Battalion's command post, going through a mortar barrage that shattered his teeth and wounded the runner behind the ear. Even so, both men reached the command post. The battalion commander was amazed—he thought Pulver's unit had been entirely wiped out. Pulver briefed his boss, retrieved the supplies, and headed back to his hill despite his shattered teeth

At Hill 314, the Germans tried to attack, despite continued RAF bombing, while the Americans drove east to relieve the defenders. By now, two American infantry divisions and

two armored divisions had joined the 30th in the battle. The defenders were running out of supplies, men, and patience. Lacking morphine, clean bandages, and doctors, all the medics could do was put the wounded in slit trenches. Weiss peered through binoculars, wondered when reinforcements would arrive, and saw “a platoon of those gray-green uniforms, assembled to the front for attack.”

The Lost Battalion’s survival depended on Weiss’s radio batteries—Bartz’s were dead—and Bartz looked to Weiss as “having the pale stamp of death on his face. I could not look him in the eyes or study his face for long.”

The Germans attacked, and Weiss called for artillery. “A pall of exploding shells and smoke covered the German infantry, blackening the area around them. Dust and debris shot skyward,” Weiss said. The attack was broken up, but the Germans brought in more tanks and infantry. Once again, American artillery stopped the attack.

After an hour and a half, the Germans tried a new tactic, bringing up their dreaded 88mm guns, which opened fire on the hill’s crags and promontories. Weiss saw German shells bursting “into hundreds or thousands of jagged, body-severing chunks and slivers ... [conveying] a brute power, unstoppable strength and deep malice. Big iron cut through the air, shattered boulders into sharp splinters, then bounced erratically over our heads. We crouched down behind the crags, on the face of the cliff to the rear, uncomfortably sheltered.”



General Gerhard Graf von Schwerin (left) commanded the German 116th “Greyhound” Division during Operation Lüttich. General Hans von Funck (center), commander of the German XLVII Panzer Corps, disliked Schwerin and accused him of dereliction of duty. American Lieutenant Robert Weiss (right) risked his life to provide accurate coordinates for artillery fire during Operation Lüttich.

Weiss kept calling down counterfire and sent a message from Erichson to Birks at the 120th: “Need radio batteries, medical supplies, food, and ammunition. Men holding their positions. Forward observers Lieutenants Bartz and Weiss doing splendid work. Enemy has been prevented from organizing armor and infantry to attack of overwhelming strength.” Weiss added, “Are we getting reinforcements?”

The Germans continued to attack Hill 314 on the night of August 8/9, to little avail, but exhausting the defenders. Weiss nearly lost track of how many fire missions he called in. "As each separate enemy onslaught crumbled, another took its place," he said. "They regrouped and returned, again and again." Weiss wondered why the Germans did not break through.

That was probably because of the determined defense as well as American artillery fire. Sergeant Luther Myers, manning his .30-caliber machine gun, saw German troops charging at him, hurling grenades. One rolled under Myers' machine gun and went off, jamming it. Tracer rounds flew all over the place, hitting members of his squad. Myers repaired his gun and fired several bursts at the enemy, who fled. "I could have got them all," he said later, "but it wasn't worth it, not with my own men crawling across my field of fire."

Weiss's radio was still working as dawn broke on August 9. Weiss set himself up in an observation post with a better view and a telephone line to his radioman, so that he could tell the radioman what was going on, and the radio expert could send a short message to 30th Division's artillery. Weiss called down fire on tanks, bicycle troops, infantry, half-tracks, and motorcycles.

But neither he nor anybody on the hill could cope with hunger. "Five of us shared some bits of chocolate and one K ration," Weiss said, "normally a single meal for one person."



An American soldier scrambles across a road in Normandy during the German attack on August 8. A Stuart light tank positioned on the road sits ready to open fire on the enemy position.

The 30th Division artillery commander, Brig. Gen. James Lewis, dispatched two Piper Cub planes loaded with radio batteries and medical supplies, ordering the pilots to drop 71 containers on the hill. One plane was shot down, and the other nearly was. Most of the supplies did not reach the hill. The Army Air Forces tried again with their more reliable C-47 transports, but most of the cargo landed in the German area. American artillerymen loaded their guns with large-caliber shells full of medical supplies and radio batteries and fired them at Hill 314, but the shells broke apart on impact, wrecking the cargo.

The only solution was to relieve the hill. Elements of the 2nd and 3rd Armored Divisions were given the task, with 3rd Armored's Task Force 3, under Lt. Col. Samuel Hogan, attacking behind the force's sole tank dozer, under Sergeant Emmett Tripp. "It seemed as if we initially surprised the Germans," Tripp said later. "We came across some infantry in the hedgerows and sunken roads, eliminating them fairly quickly. Then we came up against at least one Tiger tank, accompanied by Panthers and several Mark IVs." The men of the 2nd SS Panzer Division attacked the American column from behind and knocked out four tanks, stalling that attack.

Hogan summoned reinforcements, who came under fire. Shaken, they hid under an American M4 Sherman tank. The SS hurled a panzergrenadier battalion at Hogan's force, and the Americans hit them with phosphorous mortar shells. After night fell, the Luftwaffe's night attack planes showed up and bombed their own troops. Hogan found the sight "very enjoyable."

If the Germans could not attack much further due to the RAF bombing, they clearly knew how to hold ground once taken. But they were still determined to seize Hill 314. Atop the height, Weiss saw a convoy of trucks headed toward them, which unloaded more infantry. They formed into a skirmish line.

Weiss called for a fire mission with every battery he could get. In moments, six batteries of 105mm and another of 155mm artillery blasted the attackers. "The powerful impact of all these guns firing together scattered the enemy infantry and bruised them badly," Weiss said. The Germans hit back with their own artillery, which shook the ground beneath the defenders.

As the day wore on, Weiss and the other defenders saw German vehicles head east loaded with wounded. Then at 6 pm, two German soldiers, brandishing a white flag, walked up to the Americans and spoke to Lieutenant Elmer Rohmiller.

One of the Germans turned out to be an SS officer who was offering honorable terms of surrender. The Nazi admired the ferocity of the American stand, but their situation was hopeless. If the Americans listened to reason, the wounded men would be well cared for. If not, at 8 pm the Americans would be "blown to bits."

Rohmiller wanted to tell the Germans to go to hell but also figured he should run the request up his chain of command.

He blindfolded the pair and led them to Lieutenant Erichson and Lieutenant Ralph Kerley, who commanded E Company. When the SS officers reached the pair, the parlementaire saluted and said, "I have come to request your surrender ... and to offer you and your men safe escort off this hill. You realize, of course, that your position here is hopeless."

Some of the wounded GIs lying near the command post heard this and yelled, "Don't surrender!"

"As you hear," Erichson said, "my men are prepared to argue that one."

The German had the arrogance of the SS and said, "They are fools; you are not. As their commander, it is your duty..."

"I'm aware of my duty," Erichson cut in. "Do you have anything more to say?"

"Only this. If you do not surrender by 8 pm today, your battalion will be annihilated."

Erichson rejected the surrender demand. The Germans left. The Americans atop the hill awaited the German bombardment as the sun sank behind them. Weiss arranged for a ring of artillery fire against night attack. Eight pm came and went, but the Germans did not attack. Finally, in the middle of the night, the Americans heard the distinctive rumble of a German tank headed for one of their roadblocks, and the tank stopped 50 yards away from the crest of the ridge.

The German tank fired a few rounds over the Americans' heads, then the turret popped open and a helmeted German yelled out, "Surrender or die!"

Weiss stared over the ridge. American rifles were poised. Incredibly, one GI dropped his rifle, ran up the slope, and climbed onto the tank. No shots were fired. Nobody else surrendered. The tank trundled away with its lone captive.

Sunrise on August 10 found the Americans still holding Hill 314 and relief forces steadily driving toward them. The 35th "Black Hawk" Infantry Division, a National Guard outfit from Illinois and Missouri, pushed its way to within a mile of Hill 314 by the close of August 10. To the west, Americans had nearly recaptured St. Barthélémy, and other GIs were inching back into Mortain.



In the wake of an attack by British Hawker Typhoon fighter bombers on August 7, 1944, the bodies of dead German soldiers lie next to a damaged SdKfz 251 half-track that was disabled during the air raid.

Most importantly, Patton's Third Army and the Canadian II Corps were creating a giant encirclement around the German offensive. If it continued, the Germans would be caught in a giant bag. Bradley himself recognized the situation, saying to his guest, U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, "This is an opportunity that comes to a commander not more than once in a century. We're about to destroy an entire hostile army."

Even Hitler and Kluge began to recognize the situation. If Kluge could not prevent the jaws from closing, it would be an irreparable defeat. So far the Germans had lost about 60 percent

of their armor in Normandy and could not replace it. A gloomy Hitler reluctantly acceded to Kluge's request to withdraw from Mortain.

None of these high-level decisions impacted the defense of Hill 314. The Americans were still holding, relying on courage, rumors of relief, and the sight of German troops retreating. Even so, the Germans continued to subject the defenders to artillery and mortar fire. "We could see no end. Our radios had grown very weak. When they gave out, our principal means of defense would be lost," Weiss said.

But while the Germans kept shelling Hill 314, the Americans were driving on them from every direction. Three miles to the north, Lieutenant Donald Harrison, an ROTC Ohio State alumnus, told his Corporal Robert Baldrige to call down a fire mission on vehicles moving through an intersection just north of Hill 314. The second bracket of shells exploded the German vehicles and sent troops scattering, starting a slaughter that continued all day.

At his observation post, Weiss heard yet another rumble of tanks driving up the Bel Air Road toward the main American roadblock. Down at the roadblock Private Thomas Street was terrified, but his pal next to him started yelling, "They're coming to get us! They're coming to get us!" Street held his friend tightly to calm him down, but to Street it sounded like the Germans were heading east in retreat.

Street was right. As the sun rose on August 12, Weiss was awakened by his chief assistant, Sergeant John Corn. A haggard, filthy, bearded Weiss found the energy to climb out of his foxhole, walk 40 yards to the ridge, and start looking for targets. At that moment, a German shell exploded in Weiss's foxhole, killing two men and severely wounding Corn. By 9:45 Corn was dead. "Inside me hate, rage and grief ran together in a stream of violence. I wanted a power that I did not have. I wanted to smash a giant fist for tanks, trucks, troops that I saw now running away."

Down below, Weiss's wishes were being answered. The 35th Infantry was finally climbing up Hill 314 against typical German delaying action resistance: snipers, booby-traps, the occasional machine gun, German artillerymen firing off the last of their shells before retreating. Shortly before noon, Lieutenant Homer Kurtz led a party of scouts from G Company, 320th Infantry to the top and met with Lieutenant Ronal Woody. "A guy came up and asked for our company commander," Woody said later. "Hell, I had my insignia pinned inside my lapel and I looked like a ragamuffin." Woody told Kurtz that he was the company commander.

Kurtz straightened up and said, "We're relieving you, sir."

Woody smiled and said, "Alll-rrrrright!"

Down below, Street and his pals saw troops moving in and prepared to fire until they realized the troops were American. Street shook hands with his rescuers and finally looked around at the devastated hill. They also saw an even more impressive sight: ambulances, trucks full of K rations, and press photographers. Street's outfit, F Company, had suffered nearly 100 percent casualties—only eight men had escaped death, wounds, or captivity.

Weiss was not relieved until early afternoon. He and his two surviving men were too weary to be overjoyed. They packed up their radios and equipment and climbed into their jeep, which had miraculously survived the entire battle. "I flopped into my seat, exhausted, all strength and

emotion wrung out. We drove somberly back to B Battery, each of us wrapped in his own thoughts. We had lost something, left it behind on the hill,” he said later.

He was right. Of the 700 men who had fought on Hill 314, only 357 were able to walk off. The rest were dead, wounded, and captured. The 30th Division as a whole had suffered 1,800 casualties. But the Germans had suffered thousands more, along with losing larger numbers of irreplaceable vehicles. American wreck recovery teams hauled off more than 100 abandoned German tanks. The great offensive designed to cut off the American advance was now instead a mousetrap, and all the Germans could do was struggle to extricate their trapped men. Looking down at 40 wrecked German vehicles, Birks said, “It was the best sight I had seen in the war.”

There were a lot of great achievements in the battle. The Lost Battalion received a Presidential Unit Citation for its stand, all chances of German victory in Normandy were lost, and Anglo-American cooperation was at its absolute best.

There were loose ends, of course. At Rastenberg in East Prussia, Warlimont briefed Hitler on the failure of Operation Lüttich. Hitler listened quietly for an hour then said, “Kluge did it deliberately. He did it to prove that it was impossible to carry out my orders.” Kluge would commit suicide four days later.

Another loose end was on Hill 314. Associated Press reporter William Smith White was saying that when the SS officer asked Kerley to surrender, the American had snarled, “I will surrender when every one of our bullets has been fired and every one our bayonets is sticking in a German belly,” and duly reported that.

An astonished Birks congratulated Kerley on the stand and asked him if he had really said that.

Kerley cleared his throat and said, “No, sir. I was not quite so dramatic. What I really said was short, to the point, and very unprintable.”

“That’s telling him,” Birks responded.

Author David Lippman is a frequent contributor to WWII History. He has written on a number of topics and has maintained a website detailing the daily events of the war.

**Happy Wargaming and remember this military maxim . . .
. . . “Do not base your plan of actions on what the enemy would do.
Base your actions on what the enemy could do!”**

Look for the HMGS sponsored events at:



March 25 - 28, 2021



March 25 - 28, 2021



May 27 - 30, 2021



August 5-8, 2021



October 22 - 24, 2021



October 21-24, 2021

GAMING THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR

by JON MICHAL
HMGS-MW GENERAL COUNSEL

My interest in gaming has always been in periods prior to World War II. Because of ranges involved, WW II games became more of a die rolling contest than anything. Since everyone that has gamed with me knows I only roll low numbers, I never found the period interesting. I am a big fan of variety, and the type of troops that fought the Russian Civil War game me plenty of options.

I first played a RCW game at Historicon a number of years ago, and really enjoyed the period and rules set.

RULES

The rules used in the game at Historicon were “*Red Actions!*”, produced by gamers under “**The Perfect Captain**” banner. With a color printer, you can print the rules and charts, as well as unit cards and officer chits. They have also published rules for the “ancients” period through the American War of Independence. The best thing is that all the rules, charts, cards, and chits are free!



<http://perfectcaptain.50megs.com/redactions.html>

The Russian Civil War, started in the aftermath of World War I through 1923), featured many different types of units. You have the beginning of armored warfare, with armored cars and tanks, powerful but risky to use as they can breakdown or bog down.

You still have cavalry, as well as different types and nationalities of infantry. You also fight with mortars, short range artillery (need direct line of sight in most cases), machine guns, and the “tchanka”, a machine gun mounted on a wagon!

The major players are the Red faction, the Bolsheviks, the White faction, and the Imperialists. Each side has units with pluses and minuses based upon their respective sides. You also can use troops from Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, China, Persia, Turkey, Austria-Hungary, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, The Ukraine, Belarus, as well the United Kingdom and the USA, depending upon the theatre of operation you choose.

The **Perfect Captain** website is still operational, but not active. Supporting sites are **Pygmy Wars**, where you can get additional unit cards and officer chits, and links to other sites.

<http://pygmywars.com/>

With these rules you can also fight the Russo-Polish War of 1919-1920.

Additional rules sets, which contain rules or supplements, which I have not tried, are *Forward Comrades*, *Red and White*, *Over the Top*, *Red Cavalry*, *Marsch!*, *Barrage*, *October Revolt*, *Kaiserbish*, and *Principles of War*.

FIGURES

Figures are available for the Russian Civil War in 15mm, 20mm, and 25mm. You can also use late war World War I figures. In the 15mm range, Peter Pig has quite an extensive range, followed by Minifigs and Mark Copplestone Figures. In 25mm, you have Eureka and Studio Siberia Miniatures which can fill your needs. You can also use figures from earlier periods, as I have done with Cossacks. As long as they have a sword and rifle...



RESEARCH

Besides the internet, Osprey Publishing has several volumes dealing with the Russian Civil War. The books cover the infantry factions as well as armor. Lastly, The Miniature Page is always a useful source of information.

So, if you are looking for a period with a lot of different troop options, you cannot go wrong gaming the Russian Civil War!

Little Wars 2021
April 29th-May 2nd
Lombard Westin, Lombard, IL



Well believe it or not, it is that time again. Where we start planning for Little Wars 2021. We will be hosting once again at the Westin Lombard, and we do have a room block. Right now we scheduled to occupy the same footprint we had in 2019, and with the same set up. Please stay tuned for announcements to start directly after Autumn Wars.

There is no doubt that COVID 19, will affect our convention, as to how severely we do not know. As of right now under Illinois guidelines we cannot hold the con. However like the last 7 months everything is subject to change. The Board will ensure we are ready when the time comes. Hope to see you there.

Schedule:

Thursday-April 29th

- 4:00 PM Set up/Registration
- 6:00 PM Gaming begins

Friday- April 30th

- 8:00 AM Registration
- 9:00 AM Gaming begins

Saturday-May 1st

- 8:00 AM Registration
- 9:00 AM Gaming begins
- 9:00 PM Raffle Drawing

Sunday- May 2nd

- 8:00 AM HMGS Midwest Membership Meeting/Registration
- 9:00 AM Gaming begins
- 5:00 PM Little Wars concludes

Proposed Events:

- 4 Days of gaming
- 120+ miniature games
- Tournaments
- Vendors (~30)
- Flea Market
- Wounded Warrior Raffle
- Paint n Take
- Living History
- SWAG bags
- Painting Contest
- Living History Displays
- Treasure Hunt
- Best Theme/Table Prizes
- LW 2021 Merchandise
- Annual Membership Meeting
- Registration via Tabletop Events



HMGS-Midwest Game Night



The HMGS-Midwest Miniatures wargaming group meets the 2nd Friday of every month at Games Plus in Mount Prospect. We play a variety of periods - ACW, WWII, Ancients (we even had a caveman game once), and we play air, land and sea battles.



The games generally run from 7 PM to around 11 PM. No reservation is necessary - just show up and we'll find a spot for you. However, if you'd like to be on our email list so that you know which games are running, just send an email to craigborri@gmail.com. I send out an email a couple weeks in advance to let people know what's scheduled.



We're always looking for new judges, so if you have a game you want to run or playtest for a convention just drop me a line and I'll schedule it.

Also, the store gives a 10% discount on HMGS night to members. Just show your membership card.

Contact Craig Borri - craigborri@gmail.com.

We are legion!

A membership in HMGS-Midwest gives reciprocal benefits in all the HMGS Chapters



(East) <https://www.hmgs.org>



<https://www.hmgsgl.org/>

HMGS MIDSOUTH CHAPTER

<https://hmgs-midsouth.org/>



<http://hmgs-south.com/index.html>



<http://www.hmgspsw.org/>



<http://www.nhmgscitadel.com/>



<http://www.hahmgs.org/>

Volunteer Opportunities Available

HMGS-Midwest has over 400 members. More than a couple are very talented, insightful people, who good ideas to share and the skills to execute. And we'd like to get you involved!

In what you ask?

We'd like to hear some of that from you. We'd like your ideas, insights, and plans. And we'd like your help in making them happen.

We've got a couple of things on the ideas list already that could use your contributions:

Newsletter Contributors

We're looking for articles that you'd enjoy reading yourself, because you're a wargamer, and you know what wargamers like.

From product and convention reviews to 'how-to's' for figure conversions and terrain building.

Contact
bod@hmgsmidwest.com
to get the rundown on submission deadlines, article lengths, and the like.

Convention Volunteers (On-site)

Was there ever a time that you attended a convention and said: "Wow, they really have too many volunteers, I get my questions answered too quickly, the lines move too fast, and it is too easy to find someone when I need help!"? No, probably not.

HMGS-Midwest has been very fortunate in benefiting from a dedicated group of volunteers, but we can't expect them to do this year after year, forever. It is even rumored that after 6, 8, or 10 years of volunteering... some can feel 'burnt out'! Someday, at least some of them will want to go back to wargame again! So, we are working to build a volunteer pool, and we'd like you

to be in it. We're interested in people who have varying levels of experience but a strong desire to help and contribute to:

Registration Support
Information Support
Game Judge Support
Vendor Support
Flea Market Support
Event Support

We are especially looking for members with a background in customer service or event management, and those with strong organizational skills.

Contact
bod@hmgsmidwest.com to find out specifics!

Convention Volunteers (Prep)

Well before a convention begins, there are many tasks required to be done, from the filling of SWAG bags, to the preparation of mailings. Many of these tasks are not terribly difficult, or terribly exciting, but they are terribly necessary. We're still months away from these jobs ramping up, but... plan early, plan often... If you'd be willing to help when the need arises:

Contact
bod@hmgsmidwest.com and we'll be in touch as we near Little Wars 2021.

Advertising & Marketing

We all know how hard it can be to get the word out about the stuff we're doing, and so, we'd like your help.

The Board of Directors is actively working on a marketing and promotion plan, and we're going to need not only contribution of ideas, but also assistance in execution to pull it off.

If you'd be willing to contribute your talents, we'd feel lucky to hear about them.

Contact
bod@hmgsmidwest.com to find out what we're doing, what you could be doing, and how we can do it together.

Artistic Contributors

From time to time, HMGS-Midwest will have a need for artwork, from iconography for promotional items, to more long lasting and more elaborate pieces.

If you're an artist, if you're an artistically inclined individual, if you're interested in contributing, we'd love to see what you can do.

Please send a sample image of your work (500x500 pixels, 72 dpi, PNG, JPEG, PDF, or GIF) to bod@hmgsmidwest.com.

Professional Services

HMGS-Midwest is incorporated in the state of Illinois and as such as subject to Illinois state law. If you are a professional in areas related to financial, asset, and policy auditing, such as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), and licensed in the state of Illinois, who would like to give back to the regional wargaming community, please contact
bod@hmgsmidwest.com.

