



irregular

Winter Issue 2021

magazine

Boxer Rebellion

Blast from the Past
Legends of the High Seas

Blood & Valour

Vaesen RPG

80's The Best Decade?

Silver Bayonet

Plus; Editors' Challenge, News, Reviews and Much More



Cover Art; Kalhh

(<https://pixabay.com/users/kalhh-86169/>)

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Winter Issue 2021

Editorial

Jason Hubbard

Welcome back to another issue of Irregular Magazine. The pandemic is still on going, but here in the UK gaming clubs are now open again and folks are back gaming with each other, which is a positive step.

Christmas is just round the corner and we're all hoping for hobby goodies under the tree. Until then we have another issue for you all to enjoy.

It's been an interesting few months since the last issue, Games Workshop announced Dungeon Bowl was coming soon. Warlord Games announced Epic scale Napoleonic's, which just like Epic ACW will make starting Napoleonic's a little easier.

In this issue we'd tried to theme the magazine around Rogues, Villains and monsters, so we've included reviews of Warlord Atlantic's skeletons and Goblin's plastic miniatures, the Boxer Rebellion, plus Kobolds and Cobblestones rules to name a few of the articles for you to enjoy.

Over the Christmas period I plan to start recording some video unboxings to upload to YouTube plus record several more episodes of the podcast. As of next year, we'll only be publishing three issues of the magazine, so we have more time to record videos and podcasts on a more regular basis. This way we can do a lot more video reviews, unboxings and tutorials. The aim is to have a wide variety of content available for you to enjoy, alongside the magazine which has now been going 12 years, having started it in 2009. We feel it's now time to join the digital age and produce additional video and audio content to complement the magazine.

Well, that's all for now folks.... see you in 2022 and have a great Christmas and New Year

Jason

Tier One Entertainment announces expansion to Japan

Tier One Entertainment, the gaming and esports entertainment pioneer and leader in Southeast Asia, announced its first foray outside the region by expanding its footprint to Japan. The expansion is part of Tier One Entertainment's strategic move when it signed an investment deal with its investors, KAYAC, a Japan-based internet firm, and Warner Music Group, a global media company that has a strong market presence in Japan.



Along with its plans to discover the hottest up-and-coming local talents to sign and develop, Tier One Entertainment is debuting its first idol group in Japan to delight Japanese and global fans.

These four multi-talented individuals are set to re-define what it means to be an influencer and content creator who challenges the status quo. The idol group will be a new breed of Tier One talents who will elevate the level of content creation to new heights, delighting fans across the globe. The first member was announced by the company, with details shared by its Chief Executive Officer, Tryke Gutierrez, during the official launch livestream on October 8. Multi-talented model and cosplayer Harry "har_fie" Field will be the first member of "Project 4," the unofficial name of the idol group. The rest of the members will be revealed in a series of promotions that Tier One Entertainment will launch in the next couple of months.

With the company strategically positioned at the intersection of content creation, media properties, and esports, the launch of the new idol group comes along with its vision of bringing gaming to the mainstream.

"Japan is a country with a long history both in gaming and innovation in multimedia. With over 57% of its population being gamers, there's a big opportunity for us to grow our brand. Tier One is bringing our brand of entertainment to the Japanese gaming industry. Our goal is to gather a core team and build an initial roster of content creators that will elevate esports and video games in Japan in ways the country has never experienced before," Tryke Gutierrez, CEO & Co-founder, Tier One Entertainment, said.

"Japan has always been my second home and is a country that's really close to my heart. As gaming, esports, anime and toys become more and more part of a gamer's day-to-day life, I truly believe that Tier One has to set foot in Tokyo, the mecca of geek culture. This is an exciting time for us, and we can't wait to see what we can do in Japan and the esports and gaming space there for the years to come." He added.

"Through Tier One I was able to further share my passion for video games. Now with our Japan expansion, I get to work closely with another one of my great loves: Japanese culture. Not only are we signing new talents for the Japanese market, but we're also going to debut our idol group, which will be Tier One's greatest expression of cutting-edge style to date. That makes me very excited." - Alodia Gosiengfiao, Co-founder, Tier One Entertainment.

Moreover, the gaming and esports company also looks to find those who are willing to join its mission in bringing esports and gaming to the mainstream as it opens its office in Japan this year.

"We are thrilled that Tier One Entertainment is bringing the enormous momentum of the SEA gaming scene to Japan as its first foray outside its territory. Our collaboration will allow us to forge unique kinds of gaming entertainment to audiences in Japan and other key markets in Asia," Daisuke Yanasawa, Chief Executive Officer, KAYAC said.

Announcing the CHOAM & Richese Dune Expansion!



After much teasing, we are very excited to finally reveal the first look at the second expansion to be released for the classic Dune Boardgame, Dune: A Game of Conquest, Diplomacy & Betrayal adding both CHOAM and House Richese!

These are two NEW factions, who have their own special rules and abilities that you can use as two of the six player factions in a game! With BOTH expansions this brings Dune up to a grand total of 10 playable factions, bringing a staggering 210 possible combinations to a full 6-player game!

CHOAM

The Combine Honnete Ober Advancer Mercantiles, or CHOAM, controlled much of the economic affairs across the cosmos and had a keen interest in Arrakis above and beyond spice production. Because of its control of inter-planetary commerce, CHOAM was the largest single source of wealth in the Imperium.

Influence in CHOAM was a major focus of political maneuvering in the Imperium, both to maximize dividends and also to skim profits.



The leaders and bureaucrats of CHOAM were dedicated to controlling vital products that enriched the Great Houses... and CHOAM itself.

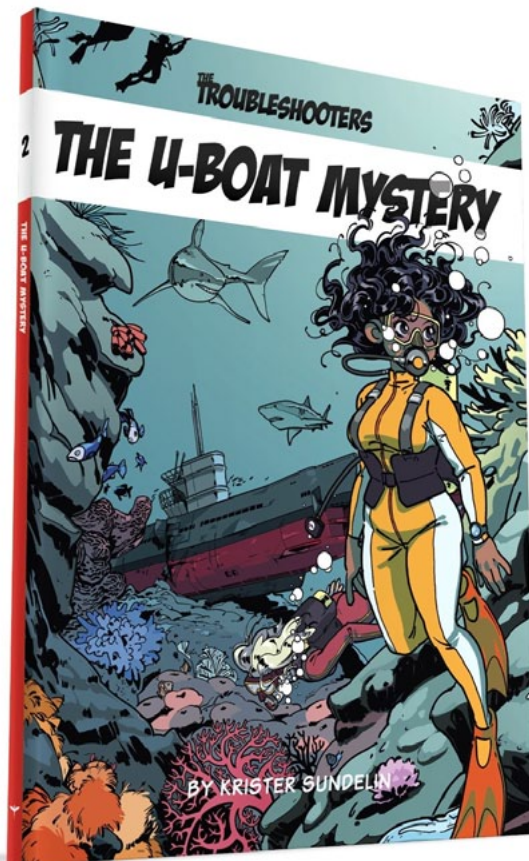
House Richese

House Richese, just like the Ixians, had a well-earned reputation for ingenuity, and created important technological inventions. But Count Ilban Richese suffered a number of business blunders that threatened to bankrupt their fortunes.

After being ousted from governing Arrakis, they were reduced to selling off important creations simply to raise enough funds to continue their efforts to compete.



The Troubleshooters RPG



The Troubleshooters, a brand-new action-adventure RPG of international mystery from the makers of KULT: Divinity Lost.

The game launches with core book, GM Screen, Dice and a host of accessories to enhance your play in both physical and PDF form on Modiphius.net, and to pre-order in physical form on Modiphius.US. Print books contain a code to claim a free PDF version.

There's a lot to cover so let's get started on this fantastic new RPG which is influenced by classic European adventures series like Tintin, Spirou et Fantasio, and Yoko Tsuno!

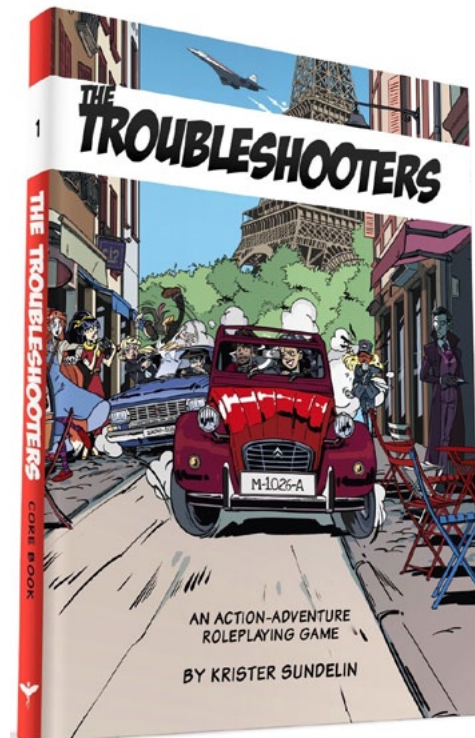
Core Rulebook

"Where in the world will your next adventure take you?"

Welcome to The Trouble-shooters, an action-adventure roleplaying game of international mystery. Set in the mid-1960s in a world with mysterious temples \\\

hidden in the jungles, valleys that time forgot, mad scientists, space stations, spies with super gadgets and villainous organizations scheming for world control, the characters live adventurous lives all over the world. No matter if it is a hunt for lost treasure,

helping someone to get their inheritance, stopping spies from stealing military secrets, or foiling The Octopus' evil plans for world domination, you just go on adventures!



Inspired by French and Belgian comics like Tintin, Spirou et Fantasio, Yoko Tsuno and others, The Troubleshooters takes you on exciting adventures around the globe.

With gorgeous art in the same style and intuitive and fast-paced rules, The Trouble-shooters sucks you in to explore exotic locations all over the world!

The U-Boat Mystery

A kidnapping. A map. A lost U-boat
There is something fishy going on in Paris. The kidnapping of journalist Pierre Martin seems to be connected to a marine expedition to the island kingdom Sitomeyang on the other side of the globe. Clues point to the mysterious organization The Octopus, whose tentacles reaches everywhere.

Only a band of intrepid trouble-shooters can find out how all of this is connected and solve the U-Boat Mystery.



An exciting adventure which takes you from Paris to a lost U-boat on the other side of the world!

Can the adventurers figure out who is behind the kidnapping, and find the secret of the lost U-boat from WW2?

The adventure is suitable for 3-5 players.
GM Screen

Hide your secrets from your players with the Director's Control Display. The bilingual Director's Control Display gives you access to the most vital information in the game, while hiding your secrets from the players.

Dice

Play The Trouble-shooters as it was meant to be played with these custom dice! This set of custom dice contains 7 six-sided dice and 2 ten-sided dice (one numbered 0-9 and one numbered with the tens 00 to 90).

Features:

Seven six-sided dice and two ten-sided dice in red with white faces.

Special designs on the six-sided dice makes it easy to read the results!

Passport International 5-pack

A set of five 32-page booklets to keep track of your Trouble-shooter's adventures and personal data, each with a different cover with an international theme. With plenty of space for notes and visa stamps – perfect for the globetrotting adventurer!



Features:

A GM screen with three portrait panels, with the most vital information on the inside – bilingual in French and English.

A gorgeous illustration by Ronja Melin, the illustrator of the game, on the outside.



Magic, Myth, and Might in a Box!



"The RuneQuest Starter Set was originally slated for a Summer 2021 release, but encountered delays out of our control due to the disruptions going on in global shipping. The last piece of the puzzle was getting copies to our UK fulfilment warehouse," said Chaosium vice president Michael O'Brien.

The long-awaited and eagerly anticipated RuneQuest Starter Set contains everything needed to play an epic roleplaying game of gods, cults, magic, family, and fantasy.

What is RuneQuest?

In RuneQuest, everyone uses spells and anyone can be a warrior. The gods provide powers to their mortal worshipers, and can intercede on their behalf. Each RuneQuest adventurer is unique, defined by their Runes, culture, and cult—all chosen by the player.

What is in the Starter Set?

The RuneQuest Starter Set contains books, dice, maps, and enough content to keep a group engaged and entertained for several roleplaying sessions. The box also includes 12 pregenerated character folios, giving each player a wide range of playstyles and backgrounds to choose from.

The RuneQuest Starter Set packs an unbelievable amount of Gloranthan gold into a single boxed set! We are so excited it's finally in release. It has been a long wait, but totally worth it!", said Chaosium creative director Jeff Richard.

Dovetail Games and Asmodee Entertainment announce CATAN is coming to Consoles



The Ultimate CATAN Video Game Experience for PlayStation and Xbox

Dovetail Games and Asmodee Entertainment are delighted to announce a partnership to bring CATAN to PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, Xbox One and Xbox Series X/S.

The island of Catan emerges on the screen for an immersive game experience like no other. Settlements grow up from fertile grain fields and cities nestle into the sides of majestic mountains. Barter for resources, place roads and settlements to claim single or multiplayer victory in the digital version of the world famous award-winning tabletop game.



The digital tabletop version of CATAN will bring the power and functionality of games consoles and combine that with the mechanics and themes of one of the world's greatest board games.

Jon Rissik, Dovetail CEO: "I have been a board game enthusiast and a committed CATAN player for many years, so it's a personal thrill for me to be able to bring this much-loved experience to the Xbox and PlayStation platforms. Creatively, we are working with the team at Nomad Games who bring a wealth of experience in crafting high-quality digital board game experiences. We can't wait to be able to bring the world of CATAN to life in a way that hasn't been seen before on a digital platform."



Benjamin Teuber, Managing Director of CATAN GmbH: "We are very excited that CATAN will be adapted for PlayStation and Xbox and are looking forward to working with Dovetail and their developers at Nomad on this version."

Andy Jones, Managing Director of Asmodee Entertainment: "Bringing CATAN to the two major console platforms was a top priority for us and to be working with Dovetail gives us huge confidence that this will be an amazing game for both CATAN aficionados and new players alike."



Editor's Challenge

WILL I FINALLY FINISH THE GREY ARMY

Jason Hubbard



It's been a short gap since the last issue, so I've not managed to get as many miniatures finished as normal. I did make a start on miniatures for the Sharpe's Adventures project by painting up some dismounted French Dragoons as Brigadier Loups men and I've also completed a handful of riflemen along with two Spanish guerillas.



I also managed to get some of my Lord of the Rings collection painted, which included Bilbo and Gollum. These were painted with a combination of washes, contrasts and normal paint which meant they were really quick to paint.



On the Bolt Action front all I managed to get painted was a small squad of US infantry (Perry Miniatures). I need to get more of these painted up in the next few months.



I also managed to get a section of Romans for SPQR painted which included a mounted commander. I made use of contrast paints on these and that sped up the painting process.



A couple of months ago I picked up a copy of the first issue of the new 40K partworks magazine, which came with two commander models, a Necron and a Space Marine. I painted up both in the last couple of weeks and managed to paint some freehand checkerboard on the Marine. I plan to use the Necron as a warbot for StarGrave and I may even build a crew around him.



I also painted a few fantasy miniatures which included a nice dwarf from Mantic and some of the skeletons from the Wargames Atlantic box. I managed to build some of the goblins by Wargame but as, yet I've not managed to paint them, so you'll have to wait until Spring 2022 to see those painted.



I haven't managed to get any terrain built and painted apart from a scratch built hill, which is included in this issue in a simple tutorial. It was pretty quick and easy to build, so I plan to make another over the Xmas period. I may even film it for YouTube.

Well that's all for this issue, it's a short and quick update and I hop, plan to get more of my grey army painted to show off in the Spring Issue of the magazine.



Boxer Rebellion 1900

The Boxer Rebellion occurred between 1900 and ended in September 1901. The rebellion was mainly contained to Northern China, and the most notable event of the rebellion was the siege of the International Legation in Beijing.

The uprising originally started as an attempt to destroy the Qing government and drive out western influence. Members of the Chinese government managed to persuade the leadership of the Boxer movement that their struggle wasn't against the Qing Dynasty but foreigners, and that they should focus their attacks on the foreigners.

The Boxers was a secret society known as the Righteous and Harmonious Fist. They were nick named the boxers by the west because of the martial art training members carried out. They carried out attacks on western targets that included businessmen, missionaries and Chinese who had converted to Christianity. They particularly target the Christian converts because they felt the converts were disregarding traditional Chinese ceremonies and family life. These attack against the converts and western folk were often very violent and brutal. Several churches and foreign owned residences were burnt down, with many Christian converts killed.



The Chinese government tried to distance itself from the rebellion, but the Empress Dowager was secretly encouraging the Boxer uprising. On June 18th she declared that all foreigners should be killed. As a result of this a German minister was murdered, along with further attacks against high profile westerners.

Some local governors started to recruit boxers into the local militia units. With many officials believing that the



Boxers would be impervious to western bullets because of the martial art training. Qing officials continued to encourage the uprising, even after western officials protested to the Empress. By May 1900 there were several bands of boxers roaming the countryside near Beijing causing all sorts of problems.

In June a relief force of 2,100 troops from several countries was sent from Tianjin to relieve those in Beijing.



The Empress ordered Imperial soldiers to blockade the relief force and forced them to return to Tianjin. Several foreign ministers and their families along with Chinese Christians were trapped in the International Legation and a Roman Catholic Church in Beijing.

Though the Empress had ordered all foreigners to be killed, several officials ignored the order. For instance, the Imperial Viceroy for the Central Yangtze River valley and Southern China ignored the orders and chose to suppress anti-foreign attacks. By doing this they helped to establish the myth that the rebellion wasn't being fueled by the Chinese government and the ruling Qing Dynasty.

On June 17th foreign powers managed to capture the

Dagu forts on the coast and were able to reestablish links from Tianjin to Beijing. This allowed them to assemble a force of 19,000 soldiers from a wide variety of countries that included, UK, USA and Japan. On August 4th, 1900, the international force captured Beijing and in turn relieved those besieged in the international legation.

On June 18th the Empress Dowager ordered that all foreigners should be killed, as a result of this the German Minister was killed. It also led to other foreign ministers and their families along with Chinese Christians to be being besieged in the legation quarters. At the same time several Catholic churches were also under siege.

An Imperial Viceroy of the Central Yangtze River valley and Southern China decided to ignore the order and started to suppress the anti-foreign attacks in the region. By doing this he helped the myth that the rebellion wasn't being fueled by the Chinese government.

In August an international force of 19,000 soldiers from various countries was assembled and moved towards Beijing.



On August 4th, 1900, the force finally captured Beijing and relieved those being besieged in the legation. Foreign troops then went on to loot the city and the Empress Dowager along with her entourage fled to Xian. A few of the Imperial Princes stayed and began negotiations with the foreign delegation.

The Boxer Rebellion is a good conflict for a skirmish campaign as there's several factions, which includes the Boxers, the Imperial Chinese and the foreign military. The Imperial Chinese "Qing" can be used to fight both the Boxers and the Foreigners.

You also have the opportunity to recreate the siege of the legation in Beijing or create a siege on a smaller scale in another part of China at a Church for instance. There are several miniatures available for this period that includes Wargames Foundry as well as new plastic Boxers coming from Wargames Atlantic.

China's War

Rousing the Dragon 1894-1949

Author: Phillip Jowett

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

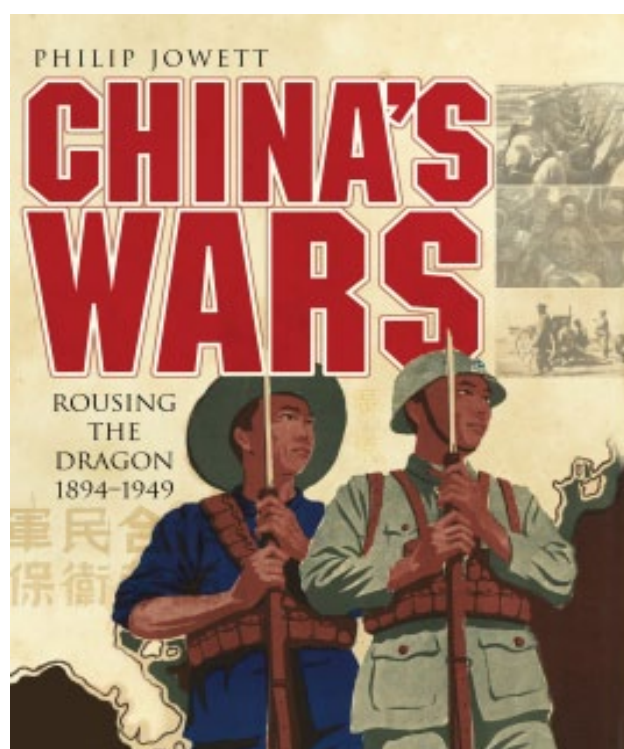
China is one of the great powers of the modern world. Yet in the late 19th century China was a ramshackle and isolated medieval empire upon whom the European colonial powers could impose their wishes at will. China's Wars describes the series of conflicts from 1894 to 1949 that forged modern China, from colonial clashes such as the Boxer Rebellion, through the chaotic years of warlord domination to the Japanese invasion, the Second World War and the bitter Civil War that followed.

This is a great overview of the chaotic period in China's history from the fall of the Qing Dynasty through to the rise of the Chinese Communist Party. In between those two historic events was a period of conflict and invasion by the Japanese. This isn't an in-depth look at the period, but it does provide a good overview and will work as a solid jumping off point for greater research.

The author has written an excellent narrative on this period. China was extremely turbulent and violent between the fall of the Qing and the eventual rise of the CCP. Philip expertly takes us from the Boxer Rebellion right through to the Chinese Civil War, at the end of the second world war and the defeat of the Japanese.

The author starts with a good introduction about the state of China and the Qing dynasty leading up to 1894 and its slow decline. The country was generally known as the 'Sick Man of Asia'. Chapter 1 looks at the Sino-Japanese war 1894-85, followed by the Boxer Rebellion. This chapter will take the reader all the way to 1911. Then chapter 2 looks at the beginning of revolution in China and the Warlord period. Chapter 4 covers the early conflict with Japan and the start of the conflict between the Nationalist and the Communist forces prior to the start of WW2. The following chapters investigate the Japanese invasion and the Civil war that followed at the end of WW2.

The book is well illustrated throughout with a plethora of period photographs, both colour and black and white, along maps and other illustrations.



This is an excellent book for wargamers who are considering recreating some of the events, battles and conflict from this period of China's history. It's potentially a great era for wargamers, especially the Warlord period, which included a wide variety of military equipment and troop quality.

Then on top of that you have the slow incursion of Japan, until the eventual all-out invasion in 1937. For historians I think this will be a good starting point, but further in-depth research will be required. Anyone with an interest in China will also find this a fascinating read and provide them a good insight in what made the China we know today.

Peking 1900

The Boxer Rebellion

Author: Peter Harrington

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

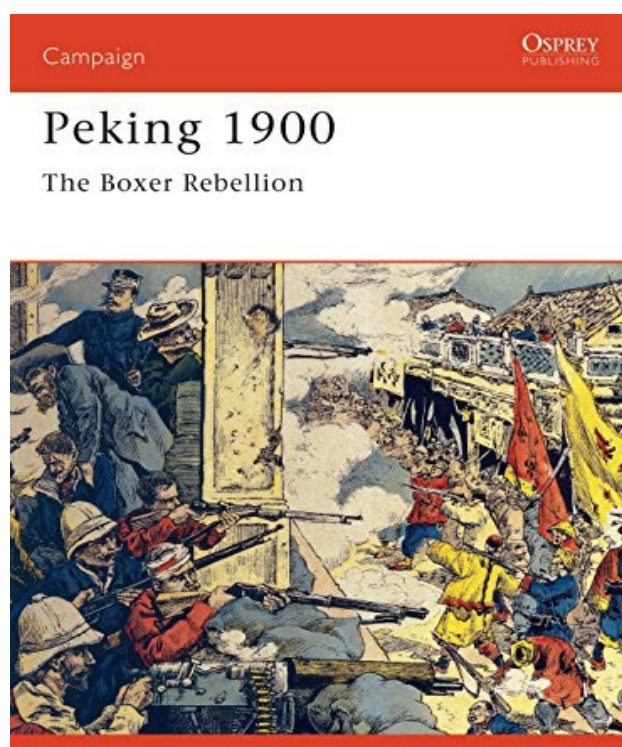
In 1900 a violent rebellion swept northern China - the Boxer Rebellion. The Boxers were a secret society who sought to rid their country of the pernicious influence of the foreign powers who had gradually acquired a stranglehold on China. With the connivance of the Imperial Court, they laid siege to the legation quarter of Peking. Trapped inside were an assortment of diplomats, civilians and a small number of troops. They were all Sir Claude Macdonald, the British Minister in Peking, had to defend against thousands of hostile Boxers and Imperial troops. It would now be a race against time. Could the rag-tag defenders hold out long enough for the gathering relief force to reach them? This book describes the desperate series of events as the multinational force rushed to their rescue.

The author has provided an excellent overview of the events surrounding the Boxer Rebellion that occurred in 1900, and in particular those in Peking (now known as Beijing). It provides a very good account of those who fought in this conflict but also of the many different nations who collaborated even when many actually distrusted motivations of each other.

This is a book from the Campaign Series, and as usual the quality is great. These books are a great source of information about a particular campaign from history. These are really good resources for wargamers because they provide a plethora of useful background material that any war gamer will find useful.

Peter provides a great deal of information in regard to the events leading up to the Boxer Rebellion which led to hostility towards foreigners in China, and how the Dowager Empress tried to take advantage of the situation. This is one of those conflicts that is generally forgotten by many, but it's a good one for wargamers, simply because of the many different factions involved in the conflict.

The boxers were a secret society who wanted to rid the country of foreign influence whom they believed were slowly strangling China. With the aid of the Imperial Court, they Boxers laid siege to the legation quarter and trapped inside an assortment of foreign troops and civilians.



It's a good book to get started with for anyone wanting to dive into this period of Asian history, especially with the events that followed the Rebellion in the years following. This was pretty much the starting point in regard to the fall of the Qing dynasty which eventually led to the rise of the Communist Party and modern China.

The book has given me a better understanding of the conflict and the events surrounding it. With Wargames Atlantic about to release plastic Boxers I plan to recreate some skirmishes from the revolution. This volume has given me enough background to do this.



Vaesen RPG ; Nordic Horror Roleplaying

In dark forests, beyond the mountains, by black lakes in hidden groves. At your doorstep. In the shadows, something stirs. Strange beings. Twisted creatures, lurking at the edge of vision. Watching. Waiting. Unseen by most, but not by you. You see them for what they really are. Vaesen.

Welcome to the Mythic North. A land where the myths are real. A cold reach covered by vast forests, its few cities lonely beacons of industry and enlightenment – a new civilization dawning. But in the countryside, the old ways still hold sway. There, people know what lurks in the dark. They know to fear it.



Vaesen is a Nordic gothic horror investigation role playing game set in 19th century Sweden published by Free League. The game based on the works of the acclaimed artist and author Johan Egerkrans and presents a dark Gothic setting steeped in Nordic folklore.

It uses the Year Zero game engine and is published as a hard back with 240 pages fully illustrated throughout. The book has a textured finish on the cover and uses a high-quality thick paper throughout which makes this a really outstanding good quality product. The book contains information for both players and game masters all in the one volume.

Players will take the role of investigators who must solve mysteries involving supernatural beings commonly known as Vaesen, who have been causing problems for the locals. It has a similar investigative feel that's been seen in other rpg's by Free League.

The setting for Vaesen is really interesting and the fact that it's set in 19th century Scandinavia drawing from the local myths and folklore is what makes this an intriguing game. You could with a little adjustment drop this game into another part of Europe or the rest of the world quite easily, making use of the folklore and myths of that part of the world.

There is a section that provides a historical background of the region to give you a guide to the major events that occurred in this period. This will give you an overview of the region within the context of history.

The book also contains a starter mystery to get you going and introduces the world of Vaesen to you. There is also a section on a local town, Upsalla where you'll start your first mystery and allow you to use it as a base for further scenarios. This part will provide the GM a lot of useful information that can be utilised in future mysteries, allowing the game master to build their own mysteries/scenarios set within the town of Upsalla.



Characters in the game have what's called the SIGHT which allows them to see the creatures from folklore. This is one of the reasons why they've become members of the Society for the Studies of Invisibles and Protection of Mankind, otherwise simply known as the Society. There is a plethora of background information regarding the Society which includes infighting within and the reason why it was dissolved several years previously. This is also covered in the mystery included within the book and helps to introduce the Society to the players.



There are 10 archetypes in the game that players can choose for their character. Though the book does suggest you don't have more than one of any type within your group, as each type has their own individual talents/skills. You also get to choose the age of your character, and this will affect things like attributes.

There are four attributes in the game: Physique (Strength), Precision (Coordination/motor skills), Logic (intelligence/problem solving) and Empathy (Charisma).

Rolling up a character was pretty easy and straight forward process. I managed to get a starting character done quite quickly and painlessly. So, I'm pretty sure you can sort out characters and start your first mystery on the in the one evening.

There aren't hit points in this game but what is called conditions for both your physical and mental state. The mental condition reminded me of Cthulhu in the fact that your character can lose their sanity from some of the Vaesen they encounter.





The best part of this game is the background and setting making use of the local folklore and myths. As I've said before it would be quite easy to drop this game in to another part of the world utilizing the folklore local to that part of the world. There are 23 Vaesen that have Scandinavian names which I assume are native to that part of the world, but many have similar names to creatures that are common to folklore elsewhere.



For instance, a vampire in Europe is similar to a vampire in Asia. This makes taking a mystery outside of Sweden quite easy. The creatures are a great part of this RPG, and most can't be vanquished or killed by sheer brute force alone, finding out how to get rid of them is part of the fun. This isn't a hack and slash style game but requires a lot of investigation through role play.



I'm looking forward to running a game that starts out in Sweden or Norway then moves somewhere else in Europe such as England or Scotland or even as far as Asia or Africa. This is a well-polished game based on the excellent Year Zero engine and is definitely worth grabbing a copy as I can see a lot of potential with the setting.



A Sensory History of Ancient Warfare

Reconstructing the Physical Experience of War in the Classical World

Author: Conor Whately

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

How can we attempt to understand the experience of those involved in ancient battles, sieges and campaigns? What was the visual impact of seeing the massed ranks of the enemy approaching or the sky darkened with their arrows? How did it feel to be trapped in the press of bodies as phalanxes clashed shield to shield? What of the taste of dust on the march or the smell of split blood and entrails? What of the rumble of approaching cavalry, the clash of iron weapons and the screams of the dying? The assault on all five senses which must have occurred is the subject of this innovative book.

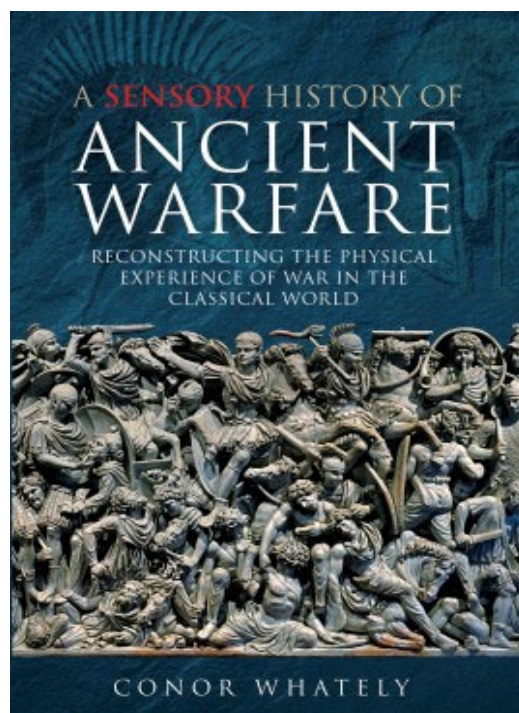
Sensory history is a new approach that attempts to understand the full spectrum of the experience of the participants in history. Conor Whately is the first to apply the discipline in a dedicated study of warfare in the classical world. He draws on literary, archaeological, reconstructive and comparative evidence to understand the human experience of the ancient battlefield in unprecedented depth.

As an ancient warfare gamer and history enthusiast I was intrigued by this book. It's an ambitious look at the subject matter and that piqued my interest. I served with the British army during the Gulf War 90-91 and so I was intrigued to discover if my experience would be similar to a soldier fighting thousands of years ago or were they completely different.

The author has researched the evidence we have available for what those battles and sieges from the ancient world would have looked like, how they sounded, tasted even, smelt and felt like to those who fought in them.

The author has research both literary and archaeological sources to give us a wide understanding of what those may have experienced on the battlefield. It's an interesting subject matter though I'm not sure we can really know what those who fought in ancient times really felt. Though if you spoke with modern soldiers, I suspect a lot of what those guys experienced would be similar.

It's an enjoyable read with some excellent case studies used by the author to explain the sensory experience of the warriors from that period.



The book does offer a different look at the subject of ancient warfare, focussing on the experience of the soldier during battle and in the aftermath. Usually, we're given the overview of a battle, time, dates, which units fought, who the personalities were, the geopolitical aspects of the period but never what it may of actually have been like to be a member of the rank and file.

I think this book will appeal to a number of readers, from war gamers, historians and reenactors. It's an interesting read and provides a new look at ancient warfare not really covered before. It won't appeal to everyone, but I do think it's worth picking up rather than dismissing out of hand.

VektoRace Formula 8

Players: 2-4

Publisher: Kaleidos Publishing

Duration: 45 minutes

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

Vektorace is a board-less car racing game. The game stimulates formula 8 motor racing with gear changes, boosts and tyre wear as you race around the track.

There is no board, but you create your own racetrack on any flat surface, with the corner octogons provided. The track can be any size and shape you want. This means the game will be different every time you play.

The gears will determine how far you can travel within your turn and must decide which gear you plan to use in your next turn, before your turn finishes.

The cars come unassembled in a reasonably thick card, so you'll have to build them prior to playing the game.

This is my only concern in regard to the game, how durable will these cars be? You also get in the box two sheets of the same cars.



This is because if you damage a car whilst trying to build it there is a replacement for it. My plan is to eventually replace them with plastic versions or toy cars.



This is a fast game, with the fun of over taking, boosting past your opponents along with having to sharply brake when entering corners. We were even deliberately bumping into each other like stock car racing.

This is an enjoyable game to play and is great to play with the family.

There were moments like I said previously where we were deliberately bumping into each other to try and





push them off course. It was quick to learn the rules, even though there are several elements to the game.

Initially the first couple of games were a little slow as we got to grips with the rules but eventually, we picked things up and the game got a lot quicker to play. All the tokens and game parts to use in Vektorace are made from thick durable card. The graphics are dynamic and bright which will appeal to younger players.

I think this game would work better if you planned a campaign of several races. This way players would gain points depending on their race finish.

Over the course of the campaign players would build up points much like a real motor racing season to be crowned champion.



I would say that you need to play this game with more than two players, or that if you're playing with just two then each player runs two cars.



Otherwise, it's a bit dull it works better with more players and cars. It has some great elements in the game like when is the best time to make use of your boost, too early and you may waste it, too late and you are not able to catch up and can't win.



Likewise choosing the right gears may greatly affect your car and position in the race. It is a great game to play and anyone who is a fan of motor racing will love playing this game.

Equally, it's an excellent fun little game to play with the kids.



American Artillery

From 1775 to the Present Day

Author: Michael Green

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

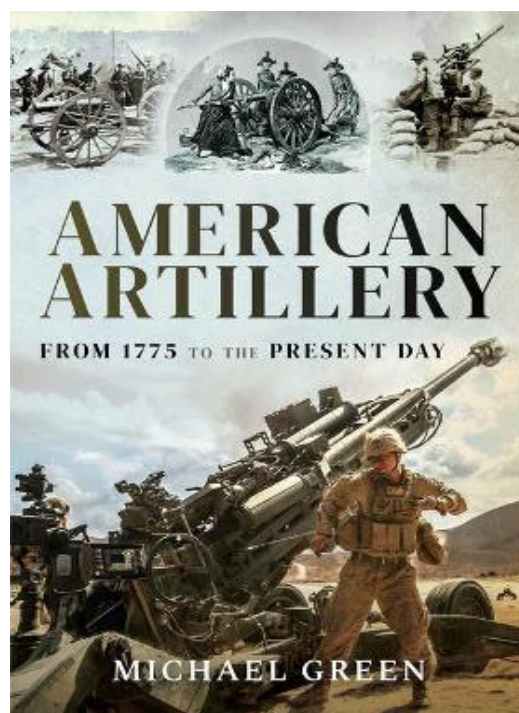
The first regiment of artillery in the American Continental Army was formed in 1775. During the American Civil War (1861-1865) artillery evolved from the employment of individual batteries to massed fire of grouped batteries. In 1907, the US Army Artillery Corps was reorganized into the Field Artillery and the Coast Artillery Corps. During the First World War (1914-1918), a lack of American-made weapons saw the adoption of foreign artillery pieces.

The Second World War demanded the introduction of many new field artillery pieces by the US Army. General Patton later commented, "I don't have to tell you who won the war, you know our artillery did." American artillery firepower also took a heavy toll of the enemy during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

During the Cold War American artillery continued to develop, embracing new weapons systems including tactical nuclear missiles which thankfully never had to be used. Conventional artillery proved highly effective during both Operation Desert Storm in 1991, and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. This superbly illustrated and authoritative work covers the full range of artillery weaponry which has been in service with US armed forces.

This is book if you ever wanted to know about the artillery utilised by US forces, the author has literally covered everything from cannons, rocket and missile launchers, munitions, and fire-direction equipment. It's a one stop shop book and as an ex-artillery soldier I found it a fascinating read.

The book is just shy of 300 pages and takes a chronological look at the history of artillery of the American military. The book opens with a chapter on the history, followed by the use of artillery before moving onto the main historical periods of it's use in the US military, starting with the US Civil War. The book is illustrated throughout and would be a great resource not just for historians but especially for modellers and war gamers. The book covers the major period/ conflicts the US fought in such as WW1/2, the cold war and more recent period post the cold war.



I was particularly interested in the post war conflicts, as I served on an M109 Self Propelled gun with the British army during the Gulf War 1990-91. It was interesting to see that the gun I served on had first seen action with the US military in the Vietnam conflict. The British have since replaced the M109 with the AS-90.

This is an impressive look at the history of US artillery from the early days right through to more recent conflicts. The book is worth picking up for the vast amount illustrations alone, add to the informative detail and it's a gem of a book. It's an easy-to-read book, and not bogged down with jargon that jars you away from the text. I would highly recommend this to anyone who plays games using US military especially those who indulge in Flames of War or Team Yankee.

WHY THE 1980'S WAS A GREAT DECADE TO GROW UP AS KID

JASON HUBBARD



I'm in the demographic known as Generation X, I spent my early years in the 70's but as I hit 10, we had the 1980's and looking back I've realized that this decade was a great period to grow into adulthood. The internet and social media hadn't been invented for the masses, but we did see several pop cultural revolutions, from the birth of console gaming, Hip Hop, New Romantics, last days of Punk, the growth of tabletop gaming, the BMX and much more.

As we left the 70's there was an explosive new music scene in the UK called Punk, this would greatly influence the music of the 80's, at the same time there was another anti-establishment music scene just growing in Brooklyn, New York that would also bring with it a new pop culture that's still with us today. Both were against convention at the time, and both were a radical approach to music that captured a new young audience, and both came with its own fashion scene. Hip Hop or as it was known at the time in Brooklyn as the Get Down, was originally an underground movement being driven by DJs such as Grandmaster Flash, but in 1979 the first Hip Hop/Rap song was released called Rapper's Delight and Hip Hop exploded onto the music scene.

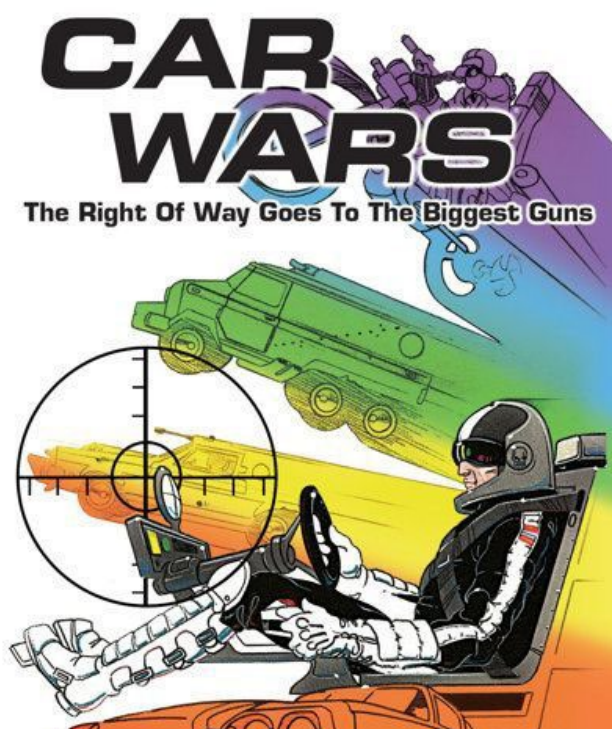
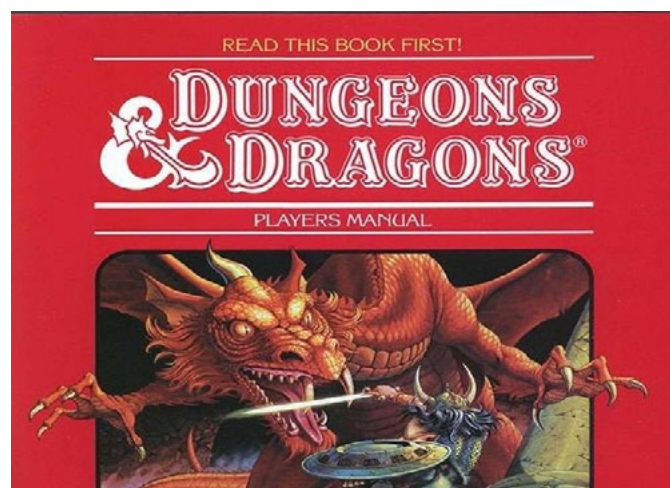
I discovered Hip Hop and the new dance craze Breakin that came with it at the age of 10/11 and up until then I only listened to the likes of Adam and the Ants from the New Romantics scene that had also recently emerged in the UK. Listening to Hip Hop for the first time and seeing people breakdance was exciting. I soon became hooked, learning new dance moves and scouring record shops for imported records by the likes of Melle Mel, Afrika Bambaataa and other US rap artists of the early 80's. The main target on these record hunts was the Electro albums on the Street Sounds label, these were compilations of these latest artists from the Hip Hop scene and living in Devon they were like gold dust.



Yet it wasn't just the new music scenes that made this decade a great one for youngsters like me. There was the explosion of computer and the early console gaming scene. These included ZX Spectrum, Commodore 64 and the Atari ST. Suddenly the games you could only normally play in an arcade were suddenly available to play in your home on the TV. I was exposed to the Spectrum as a teenager, games were loaded up using a cassette machine, and yes games were stored on cassettes. The graphics in comparison to today's games were extremely poor but those games provided endless hours of fun. I tended to play RPG games, that were like playing electronic versions of the multiple choice quest books, like Fighting Fantasy range by Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone.



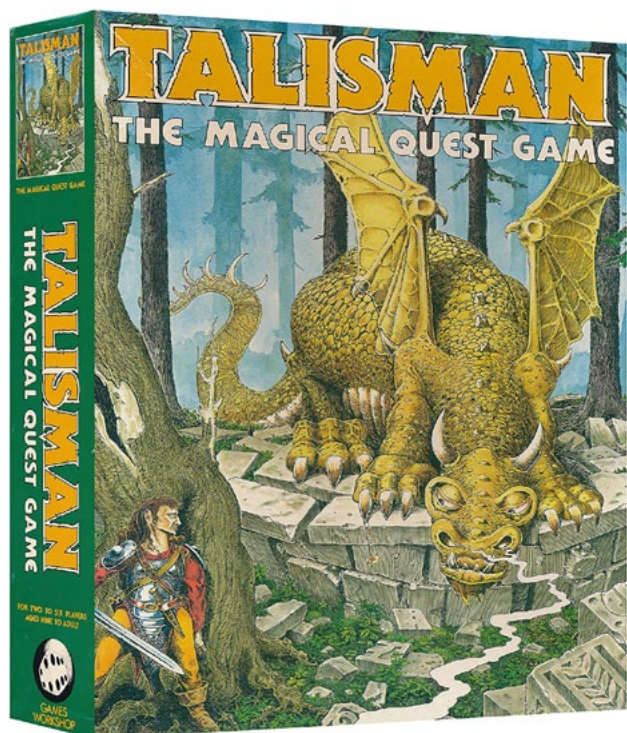
For me it wasn't the explosion of the console/PC gaming but tabletop. We moved around 83 to another part of the Southwest and I made some new friends who introduced me to the world of Dungeons & Dragons via the Basic D&D set. This was something completely alien and new to me. I was hooked immediately, from there I started playing Warhammer 1st Edition, then Blood Bowl came along. Once a month I trek across to the nearest city which was Exeter, where the two local independent game stores were on Fore Street, along with a great 2nd hand bookshop which always had plenty of Fantasy and Sc-fi books.



When I look back there seemed to be more magazines that catered for the tabletop hobby, which included White Dwarf, Adventurer, Dragon, Warlock and several others. I also remember being able to pick up local fanzines as well. These magazines didn't just cater to one particular company like many of today's publications do. They were also a great way of being able to see fantasy and sci-fi artwork, as most would carry a piece of art on the cover. It was also this period when Games Workshop started growing significantly and expanding stores around the UK. Eventually the two cities near me Exeter and Plymouth got GW stores, which opened up the world of GW far more. Though I still preferred going to the independent stores, as there was greater variety. Where I was exposed to a mass of Role-Playing Games such as Bushido and Paranoia bot of which for a while became my mainstay RPGs outside of D&D.



I was still playing Warhammer Fantasy, which had moved to 2nd edition not long after I had managed to purchase the white box set. My armies/warbands at the time contained a mix of miniatures from a plethora of manufacturers that included Citadel, Grenadier, Dixon and Essex miniatures. At this time all minis were metal and generally one piece.



When I first started painting, I used Humbrol Enamels which came in little metal pots and were quite nasty to use. This was because you needed white spirits to clean the brushes and were really designed for painting vehicles rather than figures. Then I discovered Citadel paint range when I first walked into a Games Workshop store in Exeter and picked up a set of basic paints. I don't think I got beyond the basic painting and the most advanced technique I used was dry brushing which a store assistant showed me. The enamels were quickly dumped, and I never looked back.

The 80's also saw a rise in the action movie genre with heroes played by the likes of Stallone, Schwarzenegger, Dolph Lundgren and several others. This also saw a rise in Sword and Sorcery films, such as the Conan the Barbarian, Krull, Beastmaster and Red Sonja. These influenced the tabletop games and more mainstream toy companies started producing fantasy board games.

Probably the biggest and most well known of these from this period is Heroquest. This became a legend amongst gamers, many people who still game today often remember this board game being their first



introduction to the hobby. I didn't own a copy of Heroquest but I did have Talisman and the one game I became obsessed with that wasn't a miniatures game as such, Car Wars. I'd managed to watch Mad Max and then spotted Car Wars at the local games store; the basic set was very cheap, and I snapped up a copy. I became obsessed with this game, and there were clones produced by Games Workshop at the time, the first was Battlecars and then they produced Dark Future but none of these could compare to Car Wars. Car Wars was simple to learn, reasonably priced, easy to store and a lot of fun to play.



Movies played a big part of growing up in the eighties, the second installment of the Star Wars franchise was released in 1980 and Return of the Jedi in 83. These all had a major influence on me, my friends and siblings but it wasn't just these films there were others such as Indiana Jones franchise was birthed in the 80's. Action movies were the go to films to watch featuring stars like Stallone, Chuck Norris and Van Damme.

It wasn't just films, but TV was epic during this decade, the likes of the A-Team, Airwolf, Knight Rider and many more US imports. Then there was a strange



Japanese TV series generally shown on a Saturday morning or afternoon called Monkey, based around the Chinese mythology. I remember fondly watching this every time it was on TV.

My brother preferred the plethora of cartoon series that were based on Toys such as Transformers, He-man and Thundercats. The only cartoon series I remember watching were Mysterious Cities of Gold and Battle of the Planets which was a US adaption of a Japanese Anime series. This was my first exposure to anime followed by the film Akira, up until Akira I thought cartoons were just for kids.



Akira changed that and showed you could have a serious story line and plot in a cartoon. I've never become a massive anime fan off the back of that, but I do like watching the odd film or series if the storyline sounds interesting, a recent series I watched on Netflix was Japan Sinking, which is now a live action series as well.

The 80's for me were a great decade to go from 9 to 18, it was the decade where I was introduced to some of music genres I enjoy, computer gaming, action and martial art movies, Star Wars and of course tabletop gaming.



At times the decade could be quite cheesy, but it was fun and didn't take itself too seriously. It was also the decade that introduced me to American Football and BMX racing. I look back and realize that many of our influences from that period came from the US. It's probably why I have slight affection for American culture.



These days I'm influenced from many areas of the world and not just the US like I was growing. Asia probably influences me the most and that's probably because it's completely different to the influences I was exposed to as a kid growing up.



Silver Bayonet

Author: Joseph A. McCullough

Publisher: Osprey Publishing

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

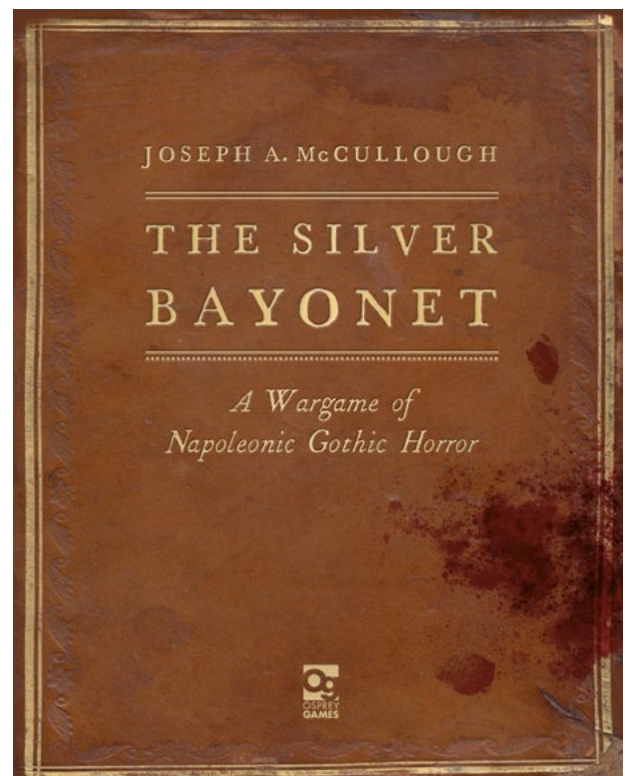
As the wars of Napoleon ravage Europe, chaos and fear reign and the darkness that once clung to the shadows has been emboldened. Supernatural creatures – vampires, werewolves, ghouls, and worse take advantage of the havoc, striking out at isolated farms, villages, and even military units.

Whether they are pursuing some master plan or simply reveling in their newfound freedom is unknown. Most people dismiss reports of these slaughters as the rantings of madmen or the lies of deserters, but a few know better...

Sliver Bayonet is a skirmish game of gothic horror set during the Napoleonic Period. A shadow war against the supernatural is running alongside the clashes between the European nations.

You'll field a warband of elite fighters with specialist skills to tackle those supernatural and mythic creatures. NorthStar Miniatures are producing a range of figures for the game, but you can utilize any other existing miniatures for Napoleonic Wargaming.

This game utilizes both dice and playing cards to play this skirmish system. There are initially 6 different nations to build a warband around, hopefully this will expand in the future and possibly expand outside of Europe to other parts of the world.



The nation you choose for your warband will determine which specialist types you can recruit into your band of warriors. Britain for instance has the largest choice of specialists to choose from. Each nation has its own specialists unique to them, as well as types that all nations can take.

Your warband will be quite small roughly between 4-11 miniatures, which will depend on the types of specialists you recruit. You get 100 points to spend which doesn't include the cost of your leader. The lowest costing specialist is a plain infantryman at 10 points which means you'll be able to take a squad of 10. Your warband can be a mixture of riflemen, swordsmen, occultists and supernatural creatures for instance.

The main way to play the game is just like any other war-game, and that's competitively against at least one other opponent.



Yet there are also rules provided to play this game in solo mode, much like the other author's games such as Frostgrave and Stargrave.

This is a great addition especially as we're currently going through a pandemic with periods of lockdown and social distancing, which means even while this is occurring you can get a game at home.

This isn't just a hack and shoot game, there are times where you'll need to look for clues and investigating as well as



engaging in combat. This makes for great narrative play rather than just two warbands/armies lining up on opposite sides of the table and duking it out.

Turns are broken down into three phases, the Initiative Phase where players decided who goes first which is then followed by the 2nd phase known as the Primary Player Phase. This is where the player will activate half of their unit/warband. This is then proceeded by the Monster phase where any creatures are activated and then a Secondary Player Phase occurs where the player will activate all their unit/warband. Once this is done the Primary player will activate their remaining members of the unit/warband. This does mean that who ever goes first will have a slight advantage as they can react to whatever the opposition and creatures have done, yet the opposition will activate everything in one go.

There are plenty of scenarios included in the core rule book, including 4 which have been designed with solo play in mind.

Game designer Joseph McCullough said, *"I'm, first and foremost, a fantasy wargamer, but I have always been drawn to the ornate and colorful uniforms of the Napoleonic period."*

This one of those games that could easily be a gateway into historical gaming for those who normally only ever play fantasy. As this game still contains fantasy creatures it may appeal as a first step towards historical. I think this game has a ton of potential specially when you start to think about expanding beyond the European theatre of war. Possible locations could include North and South America, such as the War of 1812, the early explorations of Africa or expansion out in Asia in places such as India or China. You could also go beyond 1815 which was the end of the Napoleonic period and go up to around 1840 because the technology of weapons hadn't changed much in the years from 1815 through to 1840.

I'm planning to play games set during the Napoleonic wars but also in Qing Dynasty China just before the first Opium war. I'm thinking of developing rules for Tomb raiding in China, battling vampires, ghouls and other strange underground creatures.



Sharpe's Assassin

Author: Bernard Cornwell

Publisher: Harper Collins

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

He's back. The rogue of the British Army has returned for another adventure

Lieutenant-Colonel Sharpe is a man with a reputation. Born in the gutter, raised a foundling, he joined the army twenty-one years ago, and it's been his home ever since. He's a loose cannon, but his unconventional methods make him a valuable weapon.

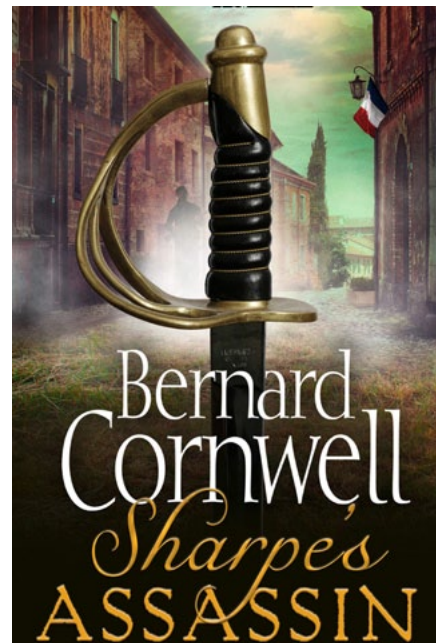
So when, the dust still settling after the Battle of Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington needs a favour, he turns to Sharpe. For Wellington knows that the end of one war is only the beginning of another. Napoleon's army may be defeated, but another enemy lies waiting in the shadows – a secretive group of fanatical revolutionaries hell-bent on revenge.

Sharpe is dispatched to a new battleground: the maze of Paris streets, where lines blur between friend and foe. And in search of a spy, he will have to defeat a lethal assassin determined to kill his target or die trying.

He's back, picking up the latest copy of Sharpe felt like meeting up with an old friend you haven't seen in a while. The story picks up at the end of Sharpe's Waterloo, and the burial of Daniel Hagman. The story takes Sharpe and Harper into the streets of Paris chasing down a French conspiracy to restart the war.

For fans of the book series, this is going to be another gem in the long running story of Sharpe and Harper. It's another great adventure story set within the world of the Napoleonic conflict, but instead of placing our two heroes on the battlefields, the author has dropped the pair in to the streets of Paris to eliminate a conspiratorial plot to kill the military leaders of the Allies. Which in turn will hopefully reignite the war in Europe.

There are now over 20 books in the series that follows Sharpe from the battlefields in India, through Spain into France and beyond.



This is a great addition to the series and will appeal to anyone who enjoys reading adventure books, with swashbuckling heroes and rogues. Sharpe is both a hero and a rogue, born in the gutter and has managed to raise himself through the ranks of the British army to the position of a Lt. Colonel.

Whenever I read the lines that were spoken by the two characters, they're always in the voices of the actors who played the two in the TV series. For those who are new to Sharpe there was a TV series based on the books produced in the 90's which is available on DVD, but episodes are regularly shown on UK Drama channel. There are also a couple of newer episodes set in India on Netflix.

This will make a great stocking filler present for anyone who is interested in the historical period or is a fan of military fiction. It can be read as a standalone, but I would suggest starting at the beginning of the book's series personally. It's a great read from Bernard Cornwell and hopefully we won't have to wait long for the next Sharpe and Harper adventure.

Britain at war with the Asante Nation 1823-1900

Author: Stephen Manning

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

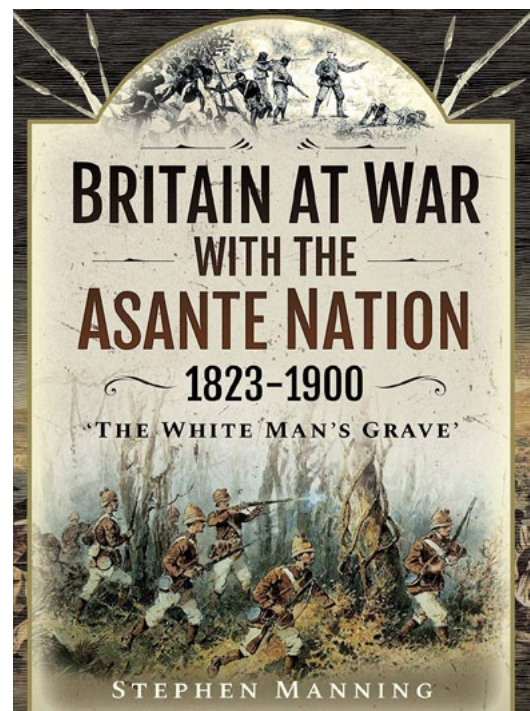
Britain fought three major wars, and two minor ones, with the Asante people of West Africa in the nineteenth century. Only the Sudanese and Zulu campaigns saw a greater loss of life, both for the British and the indigenous population. Like the Zulus, the Asante were a warrior nation who offered a tough adversary for the British regulars – they were respected for their martial skills and bravery. And yet these wars have rarely been written about and are little understood. That is why Stephen Manning's vivid, detailed new history of this neglected colonial conflict is of such value.

In the war of 1823-6 the British were defeated – the British governor's head was severed, and his skull was taken to the Asante king who made a cast of gold, and this trophy was paraded once a year during an Asante ceremony. The years 1873-4 witnessed the brilliance of Sir Garnet Wolseley in overcoming the logistical problems of sending a large British expedition deep into the jungle where it faced not only a formidable foe but a climate so unforgiving that the region became known as 'The White Man's Grave'. Finally, the 1900 campaign culminated in the epic siege of the British fort in Kumasi which must rank as one of the great Victorian escapades alongside the more famous sieges of Peking and Mafikeng.

The author's account, has been based on Asante as well as British sources, offering a fascinating view from both sides of one of the most remarkable and protracted conflicts of the colonial era.

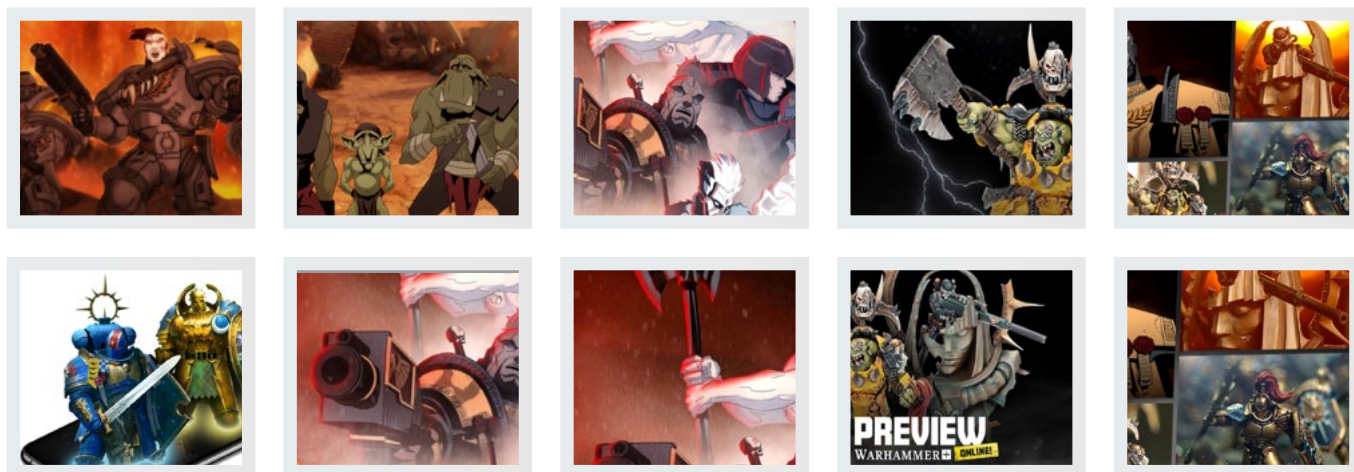
The area commanded by the Asante empire is now known as Ghana and was also regarded as the White Man's Grave. The Asante fought the British throughout the Victorian period and have been largely forgotten as one of the main foes of the colonial period. This book changes that view, and firmly places them where they should be at the forefront of people who were a formidable enemy of the British.

The author starts the book at the rise of the Asante, and how they came into contact with Europeans through slave trading. He goes on to describe the military, how they were formed, organization and how they were supplied. This will be of interest for wargamers considering recreating the Asante army.



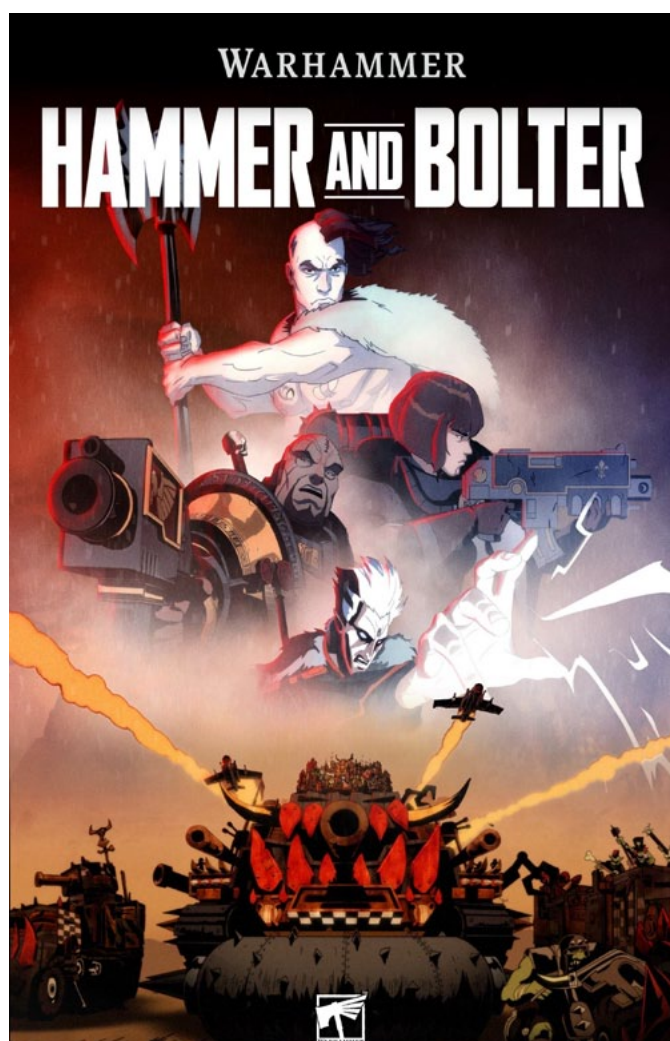
The book is illustrated throughout with photographs and maps which are useful in placing names of locations and battles. At just under 200 pages, it's quite a slim volume but it's packed with useful information. I would say this is great for a wargamer looking for some background information but for the historian it's more of a jumping off point. For instance, the war of 1823-6 is given just 30 pages which is probably just enough info for a war gamer I suspect most historians will want much more in-depth knowledge.

It's definitely worth picking up if the colonial period is your bag, and there's plenty in this for a wargamer to develop a great campaign fighting the Asante nation or vice versa. I think the historian will probably use this book as a starting point and for that purpose the author has included a great bibliography at the back.



Warhammer Plus

A review of the new streaming service



Games workshop launched their brand-new streaming service a few months ago. I decided to pay for a month-by-month subscription to see what all the fuss was about and is it really worth subscribing to.

My original plan was to pay for a month and write up a quick review, but then GW stated that if subscribers stayed until October they'd get a free £10 gift voucher, so I decided to stay a little longer as I kind of felt I was pretty much getting it for free. Now this also suggested to me that either GW wasn't getting enough people to subscribe, or they were seeing people cancel within the first month, which wasn't a good sign.

My initial thoughts of the service were, it's quite poor, there isn't much content to have launched a streaming service with. Now Games Workshop did state there would be new content every Wednesday, and so far, they have provided new items, but still I wasn't convinced.

They've fulfilled this statement as they have provided new content each week, but it's generally only been a couple or a few new videos, there's been more new reading material for the vault than actual streaming content.



I had difficulties initially getting the app set up and eventually would only work on my iPad and wouldn't work on my Android phone, which wasn't a massive issue, but it didn't look good because I wasn't the only person to suffer teething problems when they launched the service.

Personally, I feel the Vault is the best part of the service, and I'd happily just pay for this at a reduced cost. The vault contains a plethora of reading material which includes old copies of the White Dwarf and the complete set of Visions magazines, along with several background fluff books that were originally released as hard copies but minus any rules those books contained. This has been a very good part of the subscription and they've regularly updated it each week with several new items.

Another aspect of the subscription is the 40K app, which is great if you play 40K. For those who were previously subscribing to the app have had their subscription moved to Warhammer + and it's a bargain in comparison because for the same price they paid for just the app alone they're getting a whole lot more. There is supposedly an Age of Sigmar app on its way but as yet it's not appeared.



So, what do I think of the real reason for subscribing to Warhammer +, the animations and videos? They're well made, especially the painting tutorials I really liked these and learnt some new techniques. I have liked most of what I've watched on the service, the Lore videos are a great way to digest some of the background fluff in an easy manner.



I'm not a big fan of the battle report videos, but I've never enjoyed watching videos of people playing tabletop or video games, must be an age thing.

So, on the real reason why a lot of people will be parting with their cash for this service, the animations. I have to say I've enjoyed the Hammer and Bolter series, they've had some really good story lines, though I wasn't keen on the Ork episode as I did find the voices a little annoying and the storyline was for me a little dull.

The other animation currently on the service is the Angels of Death series, which I wasn't a fan of and it's not the plot or story, but I just wasn't keen on the animation style.

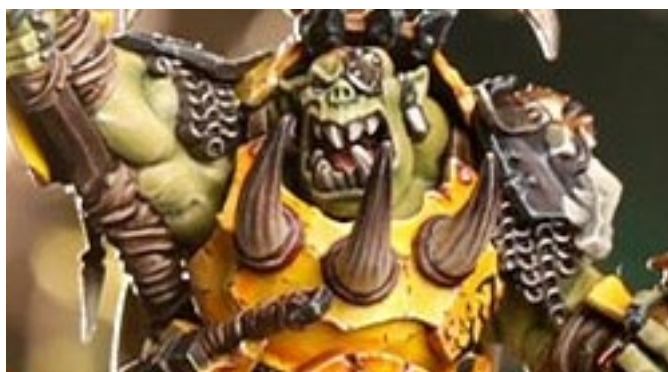




I just couldn't gel with the style of animation and so was put off by that. Other people will probably love the style and it's not a real criticism it just wasn't my cuppa of tea.

Overall, I wasn't impressed, and that's not because the quality of content is poor, it's not, there just isn't enough content and I mean video content. Yes, you get a ton of reading material in the Vault and access to the 40K app, but that isn't really why people have signed up to the service.

They're there for video and animation content which as yet isn't really enough, the fact you could probably watch all the video content in a day pretty much says it all. I think in a year's time there will be a plethora of content and it will be worth while subscribing, but at the moment I don't think there's enough. Currently I can say that only real hard core Games Workshop fans are probably going to sign up and until the content amount increases many will stay clear.



The quality is great, but the quantity is where the service is lacking. If you were a previous subscriber to the 40K app then the switch to Warhammer + is great because for the same price as you were paying for just the app before you're now getting a whole ton more content to engage with, and at some point, will also get access to an Age of Sigmar app, so it's a win, win for those hobbyists.

For me the Vault is the best part of the service at the moment, and it shouldn't be considering this is a streaming subscription. At the moment I'd rather just pay for the Vault at a cheaper price until a lot more video content is added.



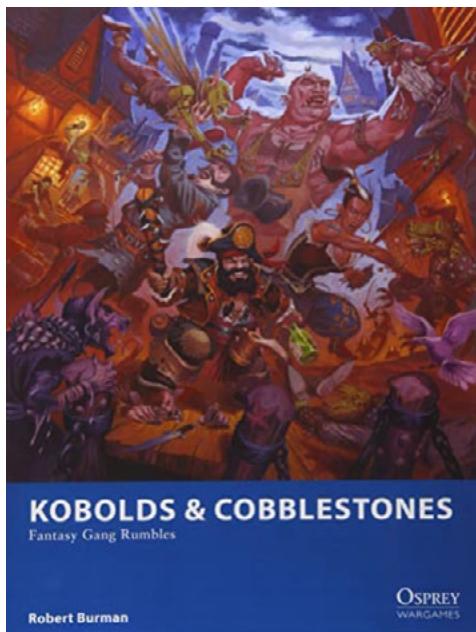
Kobolds and Cobblestones

Fantasy Gang Rumbles

Author: Robert Burman

Publisher: Osprey Wargames

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD



Kobolds & Cobblestones is a skirmish wargame for rumbles between gangs in the city of Ordinsport's seedy underbelly. Players hire gangs of criminals, thugs and enforcers from a number of classic Fantasy races and attempt to take control of the underworld and establish themselves as the city's kingpins. Playing card-based mechanics and a cunning bribery element keep players on their toes, as a one-sided battle can turn around in a flash.



This is a fantasy skirmish game with a slight difference instead fighting out on battlefields or ruined cities looking for treasure. In Kobolds and Cobblestones, you run a gang of petty criminals fighting in the back alleys and in the gutters against rival gangs.

The book is a 64-page softback and is illustrated throughout with artwork by Ralph Horsley, which perfectly reflects the game and setting. The book is well laid out and is easy to follow, making the rules quite simple to learn.

The setting for the game is a city called Ordinsport, where a plethora of races all live together. The city on the surface seems perfectly fine, but just scrape beneath that surface and it's a place of seedy shenanigans where crime bosses' rule and the thugs fight out it for supremacy. The aim of the game is for you to take over the seedy underworld by whatever means possible. There are also supposedly hidden in the city the spoils of a previous crime lord called Ja'kal waiting to be discovered.

The game uses a deck of playing cards rather than dice to determine actions, combat and movement. Movement is basically either the width or length of a playing card.





It took me some time to get use to using cards as I'm more experienced in playing games with dice. Once I got use to using cards the game flowed much better. I will say this not everyone is going to like this style of mechanic and that's fine.



The game also has an interesting campaign section which allows the recruiting of new gang members, gain money which can be used in game to bribe the enemy or encourage your own fighters. Money can also be stolen from the opposition during a game. The one aspect I didn't like was the amount of bookkeeping required off board so to speak.

Plus, the gaming area quickly get cluttered with tokens and other paraphernalia keeping track of everything.



There are 8 scenarios in the book, all of which include optional objectives that allows for more playability. Playing on a small gaming area it doesn't take long for your gang members to get into combat, which is great as there's nothing worse than spending a couple of turns just trying to move into range.



There is also a clever Critical Hit mechanic, where the number of cards from an 'aligned' card color used in your combat hand can trigger an escalating series of events and special interactions. The critical hit mechanic worked really well with the combat/magic rules.

When creating a gang, you don't have to stick to one particular race, you're encourage to mix it up so to speak. Which allows you to basically whatever miniatures you have to hand.



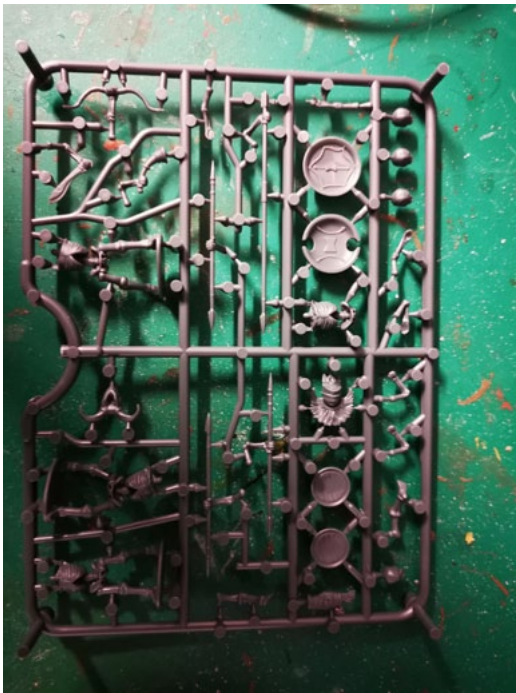
I quite liked this game even if it did take time getting use to the card mechanics instead of just rolling dice. This will put some people off playing the game and to be honest I was a little hesitant at first, but I ended up enjoying the game.

Other people I know couldn't get past the card mechanics and really didn't like them at all. I think these will be a bit of a marmite set of rules, some will love it whilst other will absolutely detest it.

Skeleton Warriors

Manufacturer: Wargames Atlantic
Scale: 28mm

The skeleton warrior's box has enough parts to create 32 multi-part plastic skeletons. This will allow you to build 8 bowman, 8 pikeman, 8 swordsmen or 24 spearmen, the



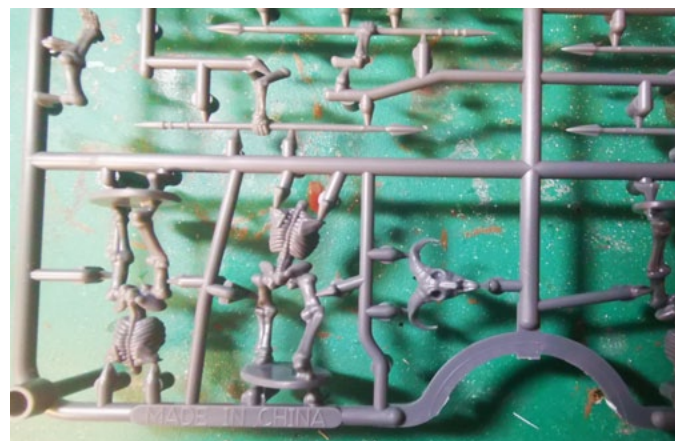
combinations are endless. This is a very versatile box for anyone looking to create an undead army. It's also compatible with the Mortal Gods expansion Mythic due to a number of parts with an Ancient Greek flavour.



REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD



On the sprue are three one-piece bodies and a body that is multi-part. I think the multi-part body is for making cavalry possibly. In the box are 8 frames/sprues and they're all identical, with several options. You have the ability to make a plethora of differing skeletons.



This box will only allow you to make 8 archers, so if you're looking to build a unit of archers then this isn't the set for you. It's primarily designed for building rank and file infantry.

This is a relatively easy kit to work with, though at times the arms can get a little fiddly but overall, it's not bad at all. As this is a multi-part set its quite easy to kit bash with other



kits to expand the box further.

The comes with a good selection of weapon options which is great for games such as Frostgrave or Mortal Gods; Mythic both of which I plan to use them for.



There is also plenty of head options including a very Greek helmeted head. This isn't a kit to make characters or leaders but for rank-and-file type troops.



This is a good set for getting some undead minions on the table for your heroes to fight against. They remind me of the skeletons from the movie Jason and the Argonauts.



It's definitely a box to pick up if you're looking for undead to use in fantasy settings or in a pseudo historic setting such as Ancient Greek myth. They would also work well for Silver Bayonet.



Hitler's War in Africa 1941-1942

The Road to Cairo

Author: David Mitchell-Green

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

Adolf Hitler's war in Africa arose from the urgent need to reinforce the Italian dictator, Benito Mussolini, whose 1940 invasion of Egypt had been soundly beaten. Of secondary importance to his ideological dream of conquering the Soviet Union, Germany's Führer rushed a small mechanised force into the unfamiliar North African theatre to stave off defeat and avert any political fallout.

This fresh account begins with the arrival of the largely unprepared German formations, soon to be stricken by disease and heavily reliant upon captured materiel, as they fought a bloody series of see-sawing battles across the Western Desert.

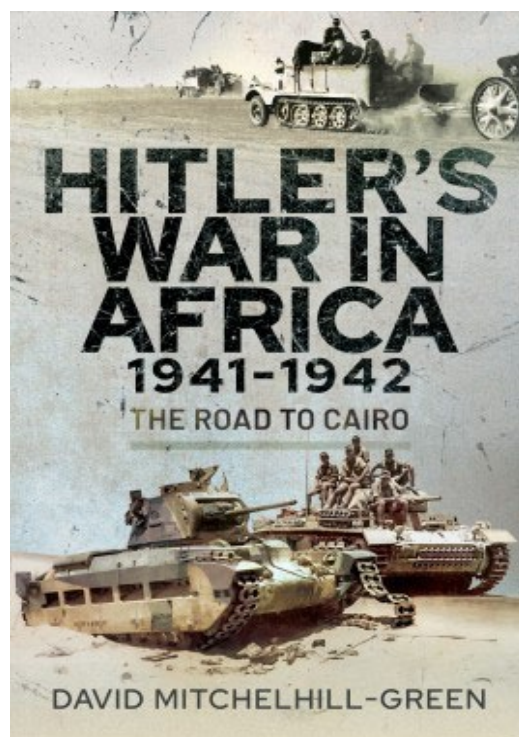
David Mitchell Hill-Green has gathered a wealth of personal narratives from both sides as he follows the brash exploits of General Erwin Rommel, intent on retaking Libya; the Nile firmly in his sights. Against this backdrop is the brutal human experience of war itself.

The author has managed to pack a wealth of information into this slim volume, even though it's only 176 pages, it's packed with well researched detail, maps, photographs, extensive notes and a bibliography. The author starts the book at the beginning of Germany's campaign in the desert until 1942 and the battle of El Alamein.

Originally Italy was only the only Axis force campaigning in North Africa, Germany didn't enter the theatre until requested to by Italy. At this point Germany was fighting on multiple fronts, this campaign helped to overextend Hitler's ambitions.

The author has provided a plethora of information in regard to the strategic position of North Africa and why it was important. He has also included quotes from service personnel which adds to the overall content. The book follows Rommel's attempt to retake Libya with the intention of driving all the way to the Nile.

This is an excellent book for those looking to learn more about the war in North Africa. It's a well-researched and written book that describes the campaign against the Allies.



It's a well-balanced piece of research and highlights that the campaign at times on both sides was unorganised and how those fighting could have improved. This will be a great resource for those gamers looking to recreate the North African Campaign on the tabletop. Historians will also benefit from this book and the bibliography included at the back will also be very helpful.

If you're looking for a book that provides highly detailed account of the North African campaign coupled with the brutality of war then this is definitely a book you should have on your shelf.

Red Panda

Players: 2-6

Publisher: Morning Games

Duration: 15-30 minutes

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

Push your luck card game. Get rid of all your cards or be the last player in the game to win. Players have in their hands super-skilled Red Panda shaolin monks. But they have to be careful, there can't be 3 identical Red Panda's on the table. The one player who puts the 3rd identical Red Panda down will get penalties. But luckily, if they manage to unite the 5 Red Panda magic techniques, they will be able to remove all their penalties.

Red Panda is a discard and press your luck card game. Players have in their hands super-skilled Red Panda shaolin monks. But they have to be careful, there can't be 3 identical Red Panda's on the table. The one player who puts the 3rd identical Red Panda down will get penalties. But luckily, if they manage to unite the 5 Red Panda magic techniques, they will be able to remove all their penalties.



Contents:

- 40 Kata Cards
- 1 Pagoda Tile
- 10 Meditation Cards
- 1 Invisibility Token
- 1 Rulebook
- 1 Zip Up Wallet

This is a discard and press your luck style of card game. The aim is to get rid of all your cards or be the last player standing. Players will have in their hand insanely skilled Red Panda Shaolin Monks, though they will need to be careful, as there can't be 3 identical cards on the table. The unfortunate player who places the third identical card will receive penalties. If you manage to unite all the skills of the Red Pandas, they will also be able to discard their penalties.

The artwork used on all the cards is bright, great looking cartoony images, that will appeal to younger players. This really is a game designed to be played by all of the family. It's a great game to introduce younger players to the world of tabletop games.



This game is really quick and easy to learn and it's a great fun game to play with the kids. What makes this even better is the size, it comes in a handy pocket fitting wallet, which means you can literally play this game anywhere.



Each player will receive 10 cards if 2-5 are playing, it's 8 cards each for a 6-player game. The Pagoda card is placed in the centre of the playing area, with the invisibility token placed on top. On a player's turn they have the option to play or pass. If you decide to play, you'll turn over the top card from your deck and place it next to the pagoda on the side that matches the colour of the card. The cards have special powers, which means you have actions to take.

The game comes in a great looking zipped wallet, and its small size means it's a great game to stuff in your bag or pocket. If you're going on a long-haul flight with stopovers in airports, then this game will be great to while away some of the time waiting for flights. The rule book is relatively small and easy to follow, there really isn't much to this game in that regard. Which makes it pretty easy to pick up and play.

It didn't take my mob long to learn and pick the game up. I think after one game everyone pretty much had the



hang of it. It's one of those games that isn't overly complex but it's really fun to play, especially when one of your opponent's ends up placing that third card down and receiving the penalties. It's definitely a game to pick up especially if you have younger players to keep occupied, and its size makes a great game to take on holiday.



I like simple small games I can take on holiday with us especially if it's a long-haul flight as they're a great way to pass the time stuck at an airport and this game meets those requirements. I'd defiantly say this should be one of those games you have if you've got kids. It was a lot of fun to play.



Blast from the Past: Legends of the High- Seas

Jason Hubbard

Legends of the High Seas is a tabletop miniatures game set in the Golden age of Piracy as players take control of brave Royal Navy Captains, brutal Pirates, or greedy Privateers who sailed the Caribbean Sea. The full-colour manual contains all the rules you need to gather your crew and set sail on the high seas, while a series of scenarios enables you to steal a * or hunt for buried treasure on your way to fame and fortune!

Hoist the Jolly Roger! - prepare to repel boarders!

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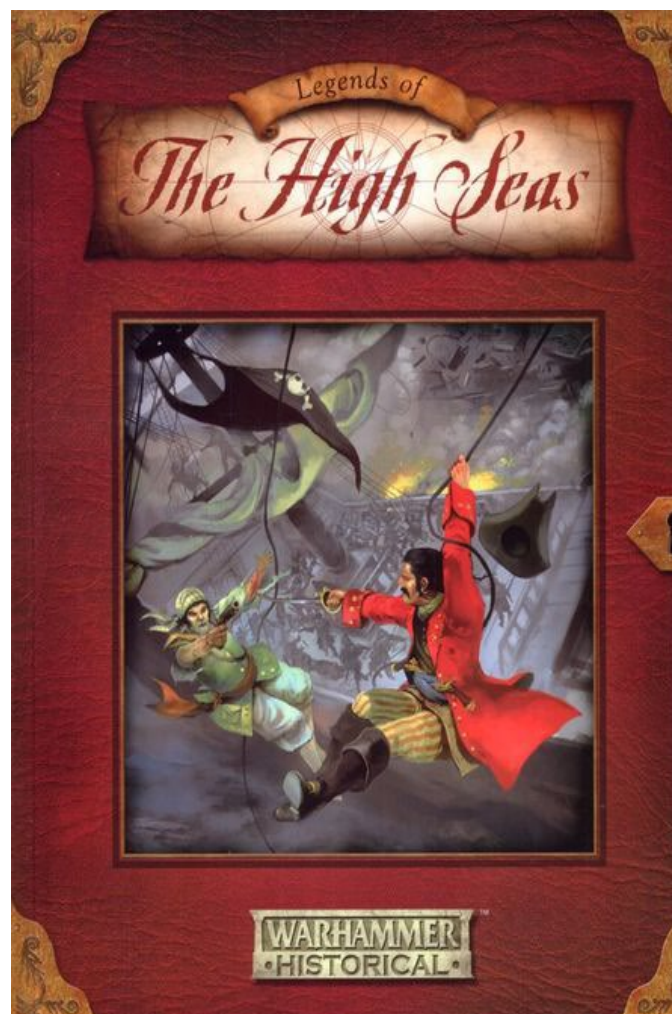
The full colour manual contains all the rules you need to gather your crew and set sail on the high seas! A series of scenarios enables you to steal a ship or hunt for buried treasure on your way to fame and fortune!

A full campaign system is also included to progress your crew's skill and reputation, along with a range of hired hands and real Legends of the High Seas such as Blackbeard himself!



Will your adventures bring you glory or a walk along the plank to a watery grave?

I still have my copy of this rule book and I personally think it's one of the better rules set that Warhammer Historical produced. It's a great set of rules that are easy to learn and play, it's pretty much still my go to rule set for playing pirates.



The rules are reasonably simple and easy to learn, they'll also be very familiar to anyone who has played other Games Workshop rule systems, especially Lord of the Rings. All models have the typical stats used in Games Workshop rule systems.

Movement is the usual standard 6", with the feature of zone control which prevents minis from pushing through your defence line. There are also rules for other forms of movement such as climbing, jumping and swinging from the yard arm so to speak. All of these are useful during boarding actions.

Firing is a very simple process, rolling equal or more than the figures firing statistic to hit. If the target is behind cover, then a saving roll is made. This is a standard way to resolve firing in GW's games.

The game also comes with a campaign element which is well written and quite extensive. You develop your lead character or captain, gaining additional skills and equipment, replenishing any crew losses and recruiting any additional specialist crew members when required. The book also contains profiles for some of the historically famous pirates from the golden age such as Blackbeard and you can use them in games. There are also ship to ship rules for boarding actions and these are quite comprehensive.

This was and is still a good set of narrative skirmish rules for the Golden Age of Piracy, which has some role-playing elements to the game. You don't need to start with a high model count as you build your crew as you progress in a campaign, and your average pirate is relatively cheap to replace if you lose one or two. It also means they're cheap to make additions to your crew.

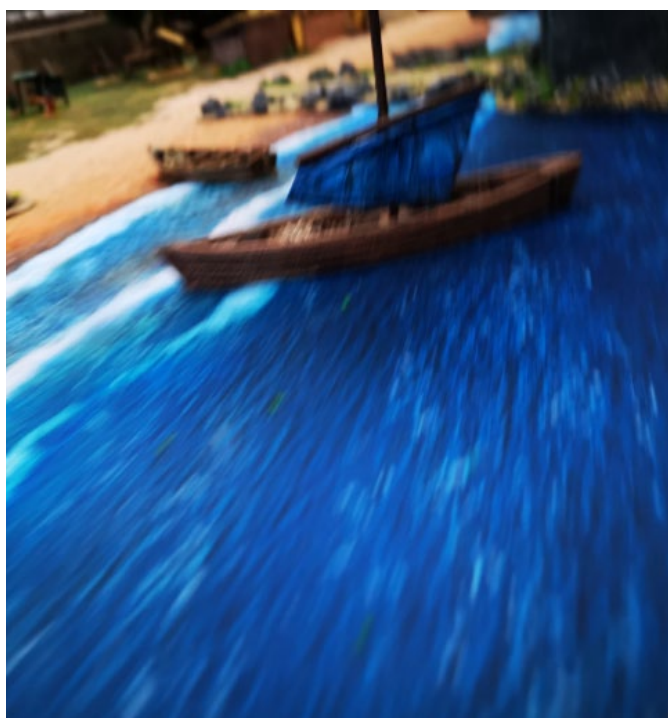


They are a fast-paced set of rules and are great for a narrative style of play. There are better rule sets designed so that you can play one off games with 20-30 models a side, which is where Legends of the High Seas start to fall down.

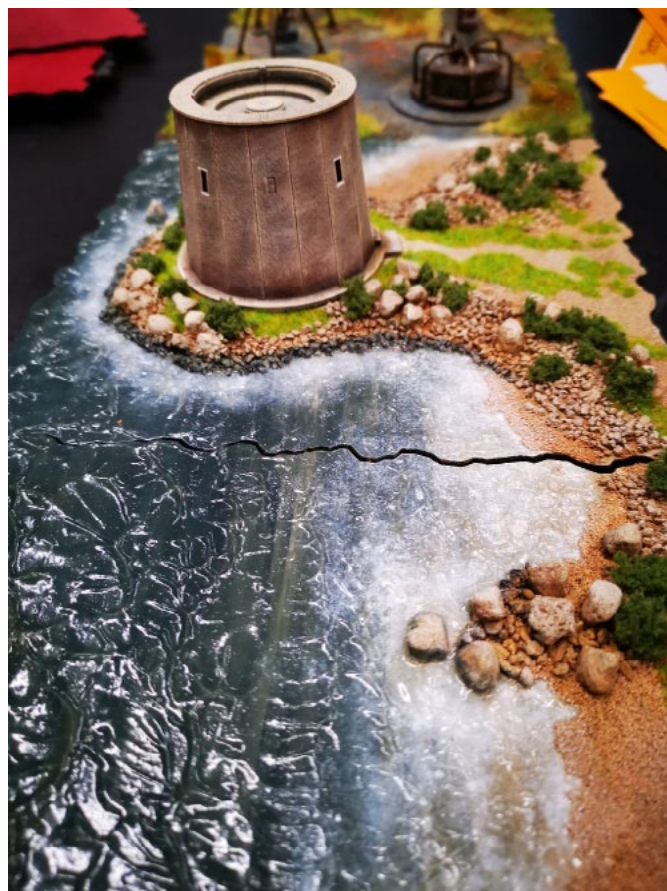




The book itself is well laid out, with some nice graphics and artwork, there are also plenty of photographs featuring miniatures, gaming terrain and ships to drool over. There is also a small section on the history of the Golden Age of Pirates, which covers the period when most of the legends existed such as Calico Jack, Blackbeard, Jack Rackham and Anne Bonny. There are also 12 scenarios provided to play through as well.



Luck plays a lot in this rule set, rather than fast strategic decision making. You basically get stuck into the action and rely on the luck of the dice gods hoping for the best. It provides a great fun game to play and it's why I still have my copy after all these years.



There are plenty of manufacturers in the marketplace that cater for the pirate age, that includes both miniatures and ships, which means you have plenty to choose from. I particularly like the range produced by Black Scorpion Miniatures; they also produce fantasy pirates if you don't want to play a game that's historical themed.

At 144 pages and set out in the same style as the popular Legends of the Old West with similar production values, this book also includes rules for ships and non-playing characters to further enhance your games and campaigns. It's definitely worth scouring eBay for a copy or keeping an eye out at the Bring and Buy sections at gaming shows. It's a really fun game to play.



Britain's Toy Soldiers

The history and Handbook 1983-2013

Author: James Opie

Publisher: Pen & Sword

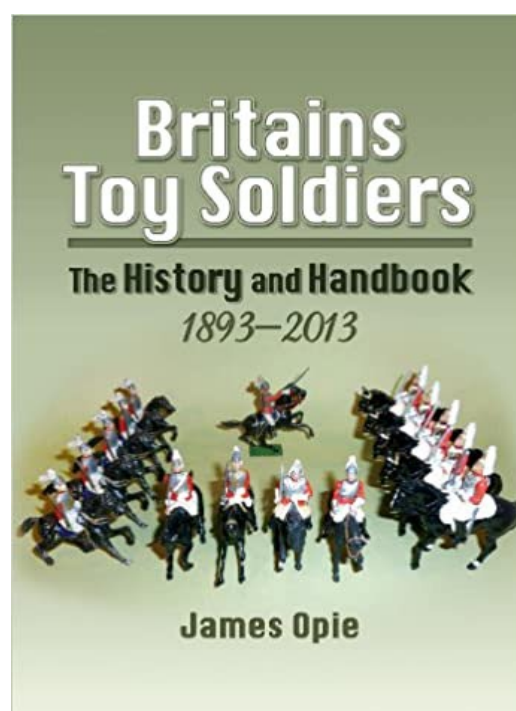
REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

This is the first full-colour history of the world-famous toy soldiers to chart the whole story of their development from Victorian table toy to 21st Century collectable. Prior to 1893 the family toy business of the Britain family was struggling as the toy industry was dominated by German manufacturers and importers. Then came the fateful decision first to import, then to design and manufacture, toy soldiers, an area the German firms were particularly strong in. Britain's Toy Soldiers were born and soon their boxes stamped with the slogan 'Best Quality English Make' were being eagerly opened by little boys across Britain and then around the world.

The rest, as they say is history and it is all captured here by James Opie, the world's leading expert on the subject, as he lovingly traces the varying fortunes of arguably the most famous British toy company. Illustrated with lavish colour photographs, many of them featuring items from the author's own collection, the book includes feature sections such as collectors' favorites and prices, high-value and famous sets, artistic highlights, quirks and mysteries. It is without doubt the most authoritative book on the subject and will be welcomed by the thousands of devoted collectors worldwide as well as many more with fond memories of childhood battles with these beautiful toys.

For me this was a nostalgia trip, as a kid I had Britain's toy soldiers whereas my brother collected and played with the farming toys. I was very much pulled to the military soldiers. I had WW2 both British and German infantry, the modern Para soldiers and the US Civil war troops. I suspect most boys had at some point some toy soldiers from the Britain's range, so this book will probably appeal to quite a few people out there.

The book is broken down into several chapters, which includes an introduction, seven chapters on the history of the Britain's range over the years and a chapter on collecting figures. At nearly 500 pages this is quite a hefty volume, and really appeal to collectors. The book also includes the 5000-word marketing report that Britain's commissioned the author to produce back in 1985.



Whilst I enjoyed the nostalgia reading around the periods of toys soldiers, I remembered having as a kid I couldn't really see myself having this on the bookshelf. It's a nice coffee table read for those who don't collect toy soldiers, but its real appeal is to those who collect or are just starting out in the hobby of collecting. There is a plethora of information which many collectors will find extremely useful, including the 1985 marketing report.

It's illustrated throughout with some great photographs of the soldiers Britain's have created over the years, and I did find these great to look at, but I wouldn't personally pick up a copy of the book for just that. This will make a great present for anyone who does collect, and I can see them enjoying this book. There's plenty of useful information and images for the avid collector.

Blood and Valor

Jason Hubbard

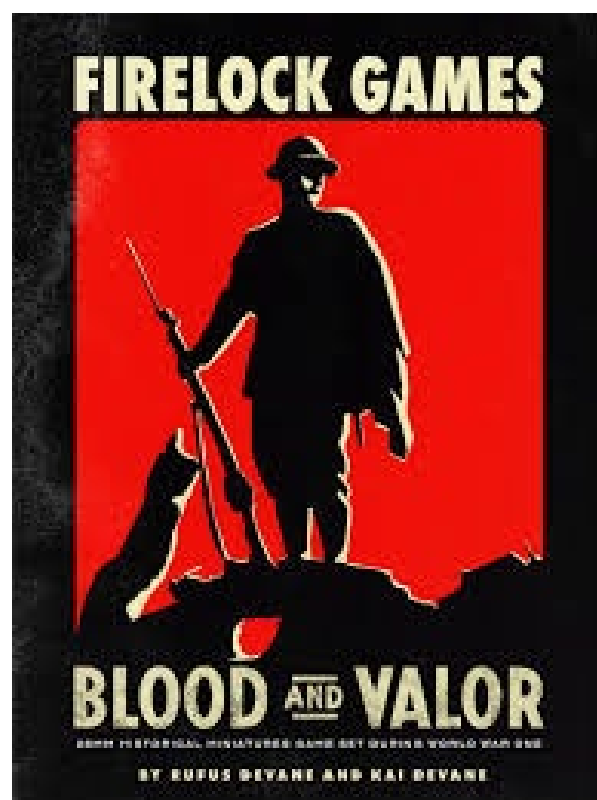


Blood and Valor is a skirmish game set during the First World War. Two or more players will try to gain intelligence from the enemy and defeat them on the battlefield. The game focuses on small unit actions such as trench raids, scouting missions and patrols. Players deploy custom forces representing a Nationality, determine a scenario, and layout terrain to recreate one of the historical battlefields of the Great War.

The rules are based on the mechanics for Blood and Plunder, but they've been tweaked here and there to make them more suitable for warfare during the Great War. The rule book provides stats for the British, US, Germans, French along with Belgium, the Ottomans and Australian forces. The core rule book is essentially set in the European theatre of conflict but there are force lists for fighting in the near East and East Africa.

Yet there is no stopping you taking the war to the Far East and fighting some of the battles occurred in part of the world, or if like me you plan to recreate the conflicts of the Warlord period in China, as most forces were still armed with equipment from the Great War. Firelock does have plan to release expansion books that will take the action beyond Europe.

One of the new differences between this and Blood and Plunder is the initiative system. With each new round players simultaneously and secretly will bid points to determine who will go first. Stronger forces



can increase the number of points a player can utilise in order to win, which will provide the player a better chance. Players will need to take this into consideration when they initially construct their force. This is an aspect I quite like as it gives you the feel of a unit commander having to make decisions in the middle of a battlefield. Quick decision making and hoping it's the right call.

Though most people's impression of the First World War is fighting in the trenches within Europe, there were other locations that the armies also fought. The rules aren't just designed to play on a battlefield of trenches, the rules allow for players to fight in a plethora of locations such as the Alps, the Gallipoli peninsula or the deserts of Africa and much more. This means you can recreate the battles from the campaign fought by Laurence of Arabia.

The main rules for basics such as movement, firing and melee combat are going to be fairly familiar to most wargamers. This system uses D10's, with each unit's firepower dependant on the weapons they're carrying. This is a fairly simple and straight forward system that most players should pick up quite quickly, especially the basics and get a game going really fast. There are also chapters/sections on more advanced rules that bring in artillery barrages, gas attacks and tanks.

Though I would just say that most scenarios/games will generally be played without the use of tanks.



The book also provides a number of scenarios for you to play through, such as trench raids and assaults on the enemy positions. It also includes a number or more interesting scenarios such as rescuing a downed pilot, a demolition raid and gathering intelligence on the enemy. There are guidelines provided for each scenario type such as table layout, troops involved and the victory conditions for each. Most games will last



roughly 6 turns, which make them pretty fast games to play which means they're ideal when time is of the essence.

At the back of the book there is a play sheet and a page of tokens you can copy for use in the game. Firelock also produce a range of token you can pick up which will be far sturdier than paper/card. The book is well laid out and illustrated throughout with images of miniatures and table layouts. The rules are presented in a very easy and clear manner which makes learning them far easier.



Players can start with a small number of miniatures and aren't restricted to fighting in the trenches of Europe, you fight your battles in Africa, Turkey or the Middle East. As I write this article Firelock have an





Players can start with a small number of miniatures and aren't restricted to fighting in the trenches of Europe, you fight your battles in Africa, Turkey or the Middle East. As I write this article Firelock have announced the first expansion book which is due to be released in the new year and will provide troop lists for the Far East, Russia and the Easter Uprising in Ireland.

Though I recommend layers possibly picking up some reference books for more in-depth historical knowledge.



The rules are easy and simple to pick up, which is what you want for a skirmish game. You really don't want a skirmish rules system to be overly complicated, as it's supposed to be a fun quick pick-up game. There are some really good features in the rules and the book provides a smattering of history which provides some context for you.



If you fancy playing out battles in the Great War or the early Interwar period, then these are a great set of rules just for that.

Firelock produce a range of miniatures to go alongside the rules, but you are restricted just to Firelock there are plenty of manufacturers producing miniatures in a variety of scales for WW1.

Wargames Terrain & Buildings

WW1 Trench Systems

Author: Douglas Hardy

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

Although it was a global conflict, for many WW1 is synonymous with the war in the trenches of the Western Front. For anyone wargaming these battles a good trench system is a must.

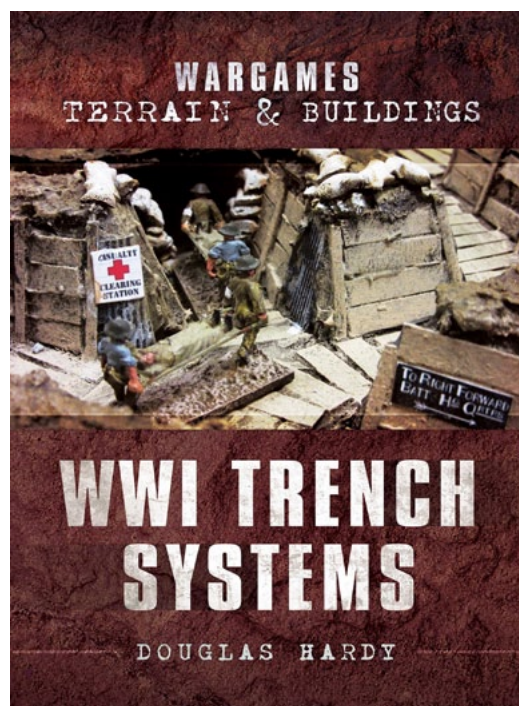
Douglas Hardy is a very experienced wargamer and terrain modeller and a member of the Western Front Association who has walked the battlefields many times. From the initial choice between stand-alone pieces on a mat or a fixed, bespoke layout, through to final detailing, he shares his experience, giving practical advice on building your own trench system.

He considers the differences between British, German and French trenches, which differed in design and construction, as well as developments in defences through the phases of the war. A trench system is not just the trench itself of course, but also the dugouts, barbed wire entanglements, sandbags, gun emplacements and pillboxes. Shell holes and shattered forests are also covered. Each element is explained in step-by-step detail, illustrated with numerous colour photos and there are also reference photos of real trenches.

Pen and Sword have published a series of books looking at wargame terrain and this is one of the latest in that series. This time it's taking a look at the Western Front of WW1 and building trench works. This is an ideal book to pick up if you're considering jumping into games such as Blood and Valour.

As usual with these books they're well written and contain a plethora of step-by-step high-quality images. The tutorials are very easy to follow, and Douglas looks at creating trench works with commercially made pieces and scratch building your own with bit and pieces found in your home.

The author has also provided a selection of photographs of restored trenches used during the Western Front in Europe. These are a great reference tool and will be of value for wargamers and modelers.



Most of the tutorials are made with 28mm scale in mind but the author does provide notes on creating them in 15mm and 20mm scales as well.

This is a great book, especially for those considering making trenches for the tabletop. Also, this book isn't just going to be useful for those looking to recreate battles from WW1, but it can be equally useful to anyone who wants to build trenches for any period post WW1 including the grimdark future.

If you're planning to pick up a copy of the WW1 rule system Blood and Valour, then I can highly recommend you grab a copy of this as well. It will also make a great present for anyone who plays Warhammer 40K, because trench works on the battlefields of the Grimdark are a must.

Goblin Warband

Manufacturer: Wargames Atlantic
Scale: 28mm

The goblin warband box is another in the Classic Fantasy series from Wargames Atlantic. This box will allow you to build 30 multi-part hard plastic goblins.



This box will also allow you to build some cavalry options when combined with the spider kit from Wargames Atlantic. I also think you could probably use them with wolves to make wolf riders.



REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD



The kit comes with six identical frames/sprues, but there are no bases in the box, which is true of all Wargames Atlantic kits, and this is my only complaint as I need to source bases separately.

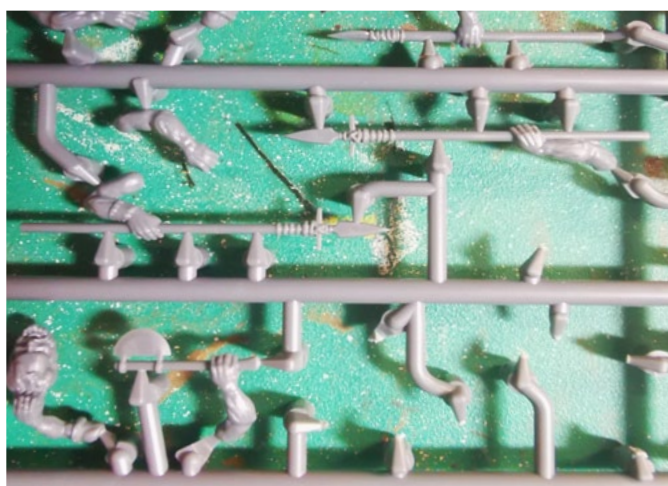


There are enough bodies on the sprue to make 5 miniatures, three of which are one piece and two which are multi-part and it's these two bodies that can be used to make cavalry. This will provide you with 12 possible cavalry miniatures if you decide to go down this path.

So, from this box you can build 18 infantry figures using the single piece models, and either an additional 12 infantry or cavalry.



The cavalry figures can be used as infantry with a wide leg stance, that does fit on a 25mm base.



The sprues have a good selection of heads with a wide variety of helmets, along with a couple of bare heads. There are plenty of weapon options that includes spears, bows, swords and hand axes.



This good mixture is ideal for skirmish games, as well as a rank-and-file game such as Kings of War.



They remind me of goblins from Lord of the Rings in style and look. They're a more grittier and violent looking goblin compared with the more comic book look of other manufacturers. These goblins definitely look like they're rip your face off no questions asked.



One aspect I wasn't keen on were the shields that come with this kit. I prefer a more bashed up looking shield and so will probably make use of the shields I have in my bit box.

I really like this kit and they were easy to build, I didn't encounter any issues when building them. There is plenty of good detail on the minis which have been well sculpted in regard to mould lines and flashing there was no flash and the mould lines were very minimal. Overall, they're a very clean kit in regard to those potential issues.

My aim is to make use of them in various fantasy games including Lord of the Rings. I may also make use of them in Silver Bayonet where possible. Overall this is a really good set of viscous nasty goblins.

BUILDING SIMPLE HILLS

BY JASON HUBBARD

Every gamer no matter what period or genre they play will at some point require one vital piece of terrain. A hill or several hills, as they're a universal piece of landscape that will work on any battlefield.

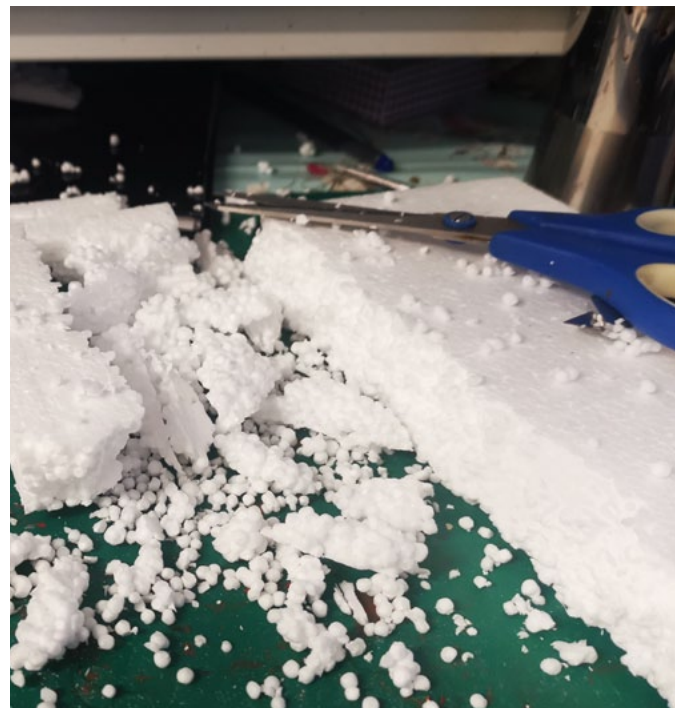
There several ways and material to make a hill, you can use insulation foam (blue), polystyrene packing material, cardboard or at a push paper mache. All have they're advantages and disadvantages.

For this tutorial I'm going to use polystyrene and the reason being is simply because I have some from a recent package that was delivered. The type I have are thick slabs which are ideal to start with.

So to start with I took a piece of the polystyrene and stuck it to an MDF base, in the case it was rectangular in shape. I suggest using an MDF base as it's unlikely to warp.

Next I roughly cut the shape I wanted with a very sharp craft knife. Remember to always cut away from you and make sure a cutting board is on the table or desk you're working at.

At this stage there will be a lot of mess working with this material, so before you go any further and once you're happy with the rough shape I suggest you hoover your work area.



Next we take some All Purpose Filler, this can be bought in most hardware or DIY stores. I picked up a tub from Home Bargains for under £3 in the DIY section.

You liberally coat the polystyrene in the filler, just basically slap it on and create a rough texture around the sides. This can be quite messy and you will need to let it dry for some time once complete before moving on to the next stage.



You can also add some small stone or pebbles on the top to act as rocks. I put PVA on the bottom of the stones I used and pushed them into the filler. I then pushed the filler up and around the stone to give the impression it was sunk into the ground.

I also used some texture paint to make it blend into the filler. Don't worry about colour at this stage as you're going to paint over the filler and texture paint.



So once this has dried you're going to cover it in PVA, just slap it all over. Then pour onto this your basing sand or material you're going to use to give it a rough ground like texture.



Now once this has dried we're going to paint the hill. First I started with a dark brown colour and just painted it all over, apart from the rocks.

Then as soon as the paint dried I started to use lighter browns to dry brush until I was happy with the result.



Then the final step once you're happy with the paint colour is to add the flock.

All you need to do is PVA the areas that you want the flock to cover and literally sprinkle or pour in on top.

Next is to add some tufts here and there to give it that final detailing.

There we have a very simple method to make a hill for the gaming table.



A Fistful of Kung Fu

Hong Kong Movie Wargame Rules

Author: Andrea Sfiligoi

Publisher: Osprey Wargames

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

A Fistful of Kung Fu brings the hyper-kinetic, bullet-spraying, demon-slaying, kung-fu-fighting action of Hong Kong movies and Asian cinema to the wargame's tabletop. In a modern world walking a precarious line between the advances of next-generation technology and the tradition and mysticism of ancient cultures, Kung Fu schools face off in no-holds-barred tournaments, corporations hire agents and spies to steal each other's secrets, overworked SWAT teams respond to gunfights between feuding Triad and Yakuza clans, and ancient artefacts are sought by hopping vampires, demon sorcerers and cyborgs alike.

Combining the gunfights of John Woo's *Hard Boiled*, the hand-to-hand combat of *Enter the Dragon*, the sheer mystical weirdness of *Big Trouble in Little China*, the wuxia action of *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, and everything in-between, *A Fistful of Kung Fu* is a skirmish wargame unlike any other.

This set of rules is based on the authors extremely successful fantasy rules set *A Song of Blades and Heroes*. Yet this isn't a cheap and lazy reskin of the rules, it's an adaption of the rule engine and reworked, which means it'll be familiar to those who have played SBH but it's not an exact copy.

These rules aren't designed to be tournament compatible as they're not really designed to be balanced. This means players should discuss their plans for gangs and heroes along with the narrative style they want to play beforehand. You need to remember that these are rules to recreate scenes of action movies, so a plucky hero takes on half a dozen thugs in a fist fight. So, the hero will be overpowered compared to the thugs.

These are a set of rules that have been designed to capture the feel of action movies and martial art films such as *Enter the Dragon*, *A Better Tomorrow* or *House of the Flying Daggers*.



Whilst the rules have been designed with Asian Kung fu movies in mind they'll work with any type of action film from pulp, superhero, war films and sci-fi. You could recreate anything from *Sharpe* TV series through to *Rambo* or a Jackie Chan film. There are rules for Gun-fu action as well, the stylistic art of fighting with guns that's seen in many modern films such as the *John Wick* movies.

The gaming table will require a lot of terrain and scatter items as these can be utilized by the players. Characters can be thrown through or into windows or hit with inanimate objects such as chairs. The aim of the game is to build and play through a narrative, it not just one gang against another and see who wins.

These are really easy set of rules to learn and pick up quickly. There are also plenty of miniatures in the marketplace produced by the likes of *Hasslefree* or *Northstar* that are perfectly suitable for this rule set. If you fancy recreating action movie scenes, then you can't go wrong with these. They're reasonably priced and miniature agnostic, meaning you're not confined to a particular set produced by one manufacturer.

Monty's pennant emerges after 80 years

Tank Museum

The pennant flown from General Bernard Montgomery's tank in north Africa has emerged after almost 80 years – and is to go on display at the Tank Museum in Dorset.

The piece of material was given in 1943 to a small boy who had become the mascot of the squadron tasked with protecting the great 'Spartan General'.

The lad's letters sent to his serving father were read to the men and brought them fond memories of home.

Michael Green was just eight years old when he was presented with the pennant and although his grandfather thought it ought to be in a museum he insisted on flying it from his new bicycle.

The yellow and black striped pennant had been flown by Montgomery during all the major conflicts the Eighth Army's fought in, including the Battle of El Alamein.

Back home the success of the north African campaign was a major boost to national morale.

After enemy forces surrendered in May 1943 Montgomery gave the pennant to the squadron who decided that their mascot ought to have it.

So it was flown back to the UK where Michael was presented with it in Oakham, Rutland, where he had been evacuated from London – and the handover drew a large crowd.

The pennant is now to go on display at the Tank Museum in Bovington along with other Montgomery items, including his iconic black beret and a recently donated letter written by him in the desert.



David Willey, curator at the museum, said: "We are so grateful to have received this donation from Michael's widow.

"As a small piece of history, it has a wonderful personal story attached to it.

"Michael's father William had been assigned as part of the troop protecting General Montgomery and received regular letters and drawings from his son.

"He shared these with the men who were amused and enchanted by them because they brought back memories of home. So, they decided that Michael should be their mascot.

"When the Eighth Army completed their victory in North Africa, Montgomery presented the pennant to the squadron.

"Monty was well aware of the importance of fame and his celebrity status which he was encouraged to exploit for a number of reasons.



"He knew that Rommel was a popular figure – even admired in the British press and he wanted the British public to know that they had successful generals too.

"So, he regularly donated gifts and possessions to soldiers, as pop stars and modern celebs give away things to fans.

"It was Montgomery's men who decided that Michael should have the memento, and everything was quickly arranged.

"Incredibly, a War Office official called Michael to tell him to expect something special and the presentation was made with great ceremony by the industrialist Sir Bernard Docker during Rutland's Wings-for-Victory week.



"Although his grandfather said it should be in a museum, Michael flew it from his bicycle for a number of years.

"Michael has now sadly passed away and the pennant has been gifted to us and visitors will be delighted to see it.

"Although we are a museum about tanks and have the finest collection in the world, it is often the human stories that get the best reaction, and this is a great one."

The British Army 1714-1783

An institutional history

Author: Stephen Conway

Publisher: Pen & Sword

REVIEW BY JASON HUBBARD

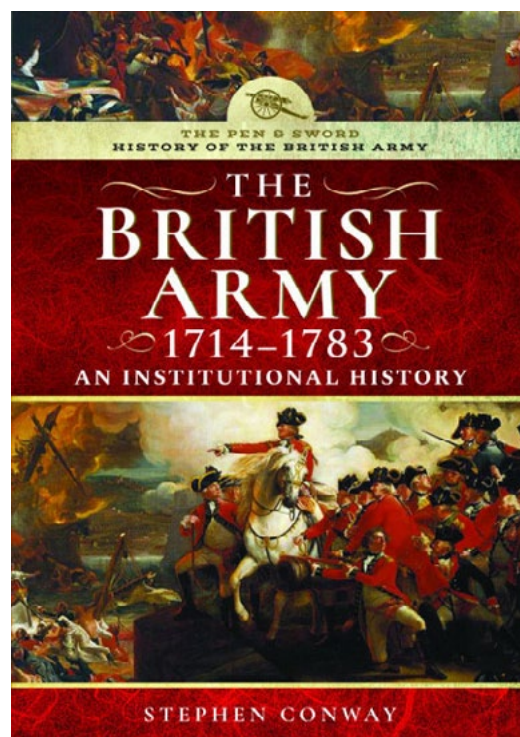
Much has been written about the British army's campaigns during the many wars it fought in the eighteenth century, but for over 150 years no one has attempted to produce a history of the army as an institution during this period. That is why Stephen Conway's perceptive and detailed study is so timely and important. Taking into account the latest scholarship, he considers the army's legal status, political control and administration, its system of recruitment, the relationships between officers and men, and the social and economic as well as constitutional interactions of the army with British and other societies.

Throughout the book a key theme is order and control. How did a small number of officers exercise authority over large numbers of common soldiers? Traditionally the answer has focused on the role of a draconian system of corporal and capital punishment – by extensive use of the lash and the rope. Yet no institution can function through fear alone and he shows that the obedience of its common soldiers had to be negotiated by their officers who were very aware of their men's sense of their entitlements, and their conception of military service as contractual.

By uncovering the mental world of both officers and common soldiers, Stephen Conway offers a very different view of how the British army operated between the Hanoverian succession and the end of the War of American Independence. His work will be fascinating reading for all students of British military history.

Prior to reading this book I really didn't know a lot about the British Army prior to the Napoleonic period, so I did find this a fascinating read. The author covers life as a British soldier from recruitment right through to retirement if they're lucky to survive that long. Stephen has researched the subject matter in great detail and provides a vivid picture of what life was like for those who served.

He presents us with an initial chapter on the political and social background before moving onto what life was like in military service, including the reasons why many chose to join the military.



He also looks at life after leaving the armed forces, which really hasn't changed much since then, it's a combination of not knowing and general hardship adjusting to life outside as a civilian. This is all supported through testimony from soldier's letters, memoirs and varying other documents.

Whilst this is a quite a slim volume on the subject coming in under 200 pages it is well researched and written. It's packed with detailed information that many will find useful and interesting especially wargamers who indulge in this period of history. This is more a social history of the British army than a military, it doesn't cover the conflicts and battles which soldiers fought in, it's more a look at how they lived within the institution of the military. This may not appeal to many but those who do decide to pick up a copy will find it an interesting read.



The Complete Guide to Surviving a Zombie Apocalypse

Tool Station

Between series like *The Walking Dead* and films like *Shaun of the Dead*, we've all imagined how we might go about trying to survive a zombie apocalypse at one point in our lives. Now, Toolstation has teamed up with Lewis Dartnell, author of *"The Knowledge: How to Rebuild our World after an Apocalypse"* to tell us once and for all how to make it out of an apocalypse alive.

In this survival guide, Dartnell talks us through the equipment you'll need, the survival steps you should take and the people you'll want around you as you fight to stay alive. Follow this guide and you should have the best possible chance of surviving a real-life zombie attack.



The Apocalypse Checklist

First things first, you need to assemble your tools. Life's about to get tough, so your clothing needs to be warm, hardwearing and protective.

Clothes

In a post-apocalyptic world, you're not going to be relaxing around in central-heated buildings anymore. You need workwear that's hardwearing and able to protect you from the elements.

1. Safety shoes. When you're on your feet all day, you want shoes that are not just hardy, but comfortable too. You also need to ensure you won't slip and break your ankle in a world without hospitals and are quick on your feet when you really need to get a move on!

2. Hardwearing work trousers.

3. A waterproof hooded jacket – also dark coloured clothing for hiding in the shadows when you're mobile at night.

4. Work gloves – for extra grip when you really need it.

5. Winter essentials – fleece beanie and neck warmer.

6. A tool backpack – keep your essential kit with you at all times, and some spare carrying capacity when you're out scavenging for supplies.



Personal Items

You'll also want to keep personal items like a head torch and versatile supplies like duct tape close at hand.

1. A head torch for hands-free exploring of the dark interiors of abandoned buildings for supplies.

2. Compact bolt cutters for gaining access to abandoned buildings to scavenge for supplies.

3. An axe. A useful tool for gaining access to abandoned buildings when you're foraging for key supplies. You'll also be using firewood an awful lot more now for cooking and keeping yourself warm. Keep your trusty axe close to hand!

4. Polypropylene rope has a thousand and one uses. Keep a good length with you in case you ever find yourself trapped up high.

5. Heavy-duty duct tape – still unbeatable for quick repairs and bodes to get you through to the next day.

6. Superglue – useful for repairing a broken vase but could even save your life in a post-apocalyptic world. Superglue can be used in emergencies to quickly close the lips of a wound before infection sets in.



Kitting Out Your Survival Set Of Wheels

Next, you need to kit out your apocalypse survival vehicle: a puncture repair kit, jerry can, and welder should be top of your checklist. Finish off by packing a few essentials to set up camp in your new settlement. Dartnell suggests that items like a generator, tarpaulin and flood lights will make all the difference.

1. An emergency puncture repair kit for getting out of a tight spot quickly.

2. A 20 litre jerry can – fill a couple of these to ensure you're never caught short of fuel.

3. A welder for modifying your survival jeep or truck.

Establishing Your Own Settlement

A portable generator will be enormously useful in the early days after the grid goes down for providing your own power. But generators are noisy and might attract unwanted attention, and they will also guzzle through what fuel you're able to scavenge that you might need to keep for the vehicles.

So, for longer-term sustainability of your settlement, you're going to need to generate your own renewable electricity. Scavenge for thin, sheet metal and use your tools to craft it into the blades of a wind turbine. You'll also find the chains and gears from scavenged bicycles useful here. The key component you need to convert the rotating power of your wind turbines into electricity is an alternator scavenged from under the bonnet of an abandoned car. Use this to recharge a bank of scavenged car batteries and you've got the makings of your own off-grid electrical network.

To run appliances off your bank of rechargeable 12V DC car batteries (i.e converting 12V DC battery output to 230V AC electricity like the Mains) you'll need a power inverter.



A properly equipped workshop will also be essential for maintaining and repairing everything for your community of survivors.

High efficiency LED flood lights will help secure the perimeter of your base.

And even simple items will help you survive, like a large flexible bucket and sheets of tarpaulin for collecting rainwater. Rainwater has been effectively distilled, and so is always safer to drink from than rivers or other ground water sources.



The Step-by-Step Guide to Survival

Once you've got your kit sorted, it's time to devise a survival plan. Dartnell has designed a seven-step plan which takes you from the initial aftermath through to building infrastructure geared towards thriving long-term.

From planning an escape route and modifying your vehicle to protecting your settlement and foraging for the essentials, Dartnell has thought of everything.



The Survival Team

Finally, Dartnell profiles some of the people you want in your survival team. As we know, teamwork makes the dream work— and never has that been truer than during an apocalypse. From obvious professions like doctors and nurses to people you might not have thought of such as electricians and metalworkers with crucial skills, everyone plays an important role as you face an imminent zombie attack!

To find out the science of surviving an apocalypse and how to reboot civilisation for yourself, read "The Knowledge: How To Rebuild Our World After An Apocalypse". And to get hold of everything else you might need, head to Toolstation.





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