

**REPORTS FROM THE SKIRMISH LINE****ISSUE 187**

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*Hercules and his companions search for the legendary latest issue of RFTSL*

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## EDITORIAL

So, that's Easter done and dusted, with all the chocolate eggs, hot cross buns and other goodies consumed along with any festive drinks you might have imbibed. And as we hurtle towards May here in the UK we can anticipate not just 2 but 3 Bank Holidays, with the extra one created for the forthcoming coronation.

Now I know that for some fellow skirmishers, this will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> such event they will have seen, but for many of us, it will be the first, and a historical one at that. The 1<sup>st</sup> male monarch to sit on the throne of the United Kingdom in over 70 years and we are promised a more modern style to the coronation service and all that goes with it to reflect how our society has changed since the last such event. I also know that the event is somewhat controversial to some of the population given its cost at a time of financial problems and some of the aspects of the royal family which stir up strong feelings one way or another, but it is part of our heritage, something which shows the rest of the world continuity and I believe something we should celebrate.

Speaking of celebrations, just as you receive this issue, your editors will be preparing to set off for the EXCEL Centre in London to run a Greek Myth demonstration game at **SALUTE** which celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> year as a wargame show and just like the coronation, it shows that whilst many things in the gaming world may have changed, at its heart the hobby is still about moving toy soldiers around a table top for fun.

Anyway, in this issue we have:

- A report on a clash between British and Italian forces in the early days of World War II
- An article and rules on 'Playing the game' with smugglers
- A report on yet another Robin Hood board game
- An article on board games about Dark Ages Britain
- Reviews of magazines and figures

And a whole lot more. So as we heads towards May, our three bank holidays and the Coronation, it's time to sit down, lift a glass or two in celebration and remember what Simon and Garfunkel wrote '*April, come she will, When streams are ripe and swelled with rain, You have the latest issue , so enjoy while you can.*'



*Some of our many readers await the latest issue whilst smugglers ride by*



## COMBAT REPORTS

### Gallabat November 1940 Refought by Gordon Herbert

The First Major British Offensive of WW2 – Day 1. As played by the Regulator and Pops March 2023. Reporter: Gordon 'Regulator' Herbert

Dawn 6<sup>th</sup> November 1940, Gallabat and Metemma on the Ethiopian-Sudanese border (again)



Brigadier Slim and his staff survey the battlefield.



The British forces move up to the starting lines.



The Italians are unaware of what awaits them.



The British wait for the artillery barrage and airstrikes to cease before advancing.





A medium tank leads the way after the light tank gets stuck.



Italian local Bande Irregulars are stalled by the SDF and friends.



Italian sortie.



The Battle for Gallabat Crossroads.



The Gharwal Rifles take Gallabat Fort after a stalwart defence by Askaris.



Italian wreckage at the crossroads.



The Italians fall back to Metemma and establish new lines.

Meanwhile Commonwealth Gloster Gladiators lose the air battle and Italian bombers rain bombs on the advancing British forces.





The Essex and Gharwalis charge the Italian positions.



The Essex Regiment storm into Metemma but the officers are shot down and heavy casualties are suffered.

The Italians also have heavy losses but the remaining Askari battalion is ensconced in Metemma fort, with Italian reinforcements arriving all the time



Brigadier Slim drives up to the front line to assess the situation and evaluates it as critical. It is late in the day and unhappily he orders his men to fall back to Gallabat.

For this unusual setting for a World War II game we used our homemade rules based on "Rapid Fire" for ranges and basic concepts but use D6 for results with cards for events such as air strikes, misfortune, etc inspired by the event cards from the "Beyond the Empire" rules.

The D6 based dice system is designed to keep it simple and is based loosely on Todd principles – here 1s always miss, 6s always hit and 2-5 have varying effects.

For the game we used an estimated 150 figures from a variety of sources, Airfix, W Britains, King and Country (special figs, tanks, lorries and cars), Del Prado, Thomas Gunn, Timpo and some unknown or unmarked tinsplate and plastic figures and vehicles all collected by Pops Herbert over the years.

We did, however, cheat a little. For example we used WW1 Middle East British figures to serve as their WW2 counterparts as they wore tropical cork helmets in this campaign. A couple of Germans were pressed into service as Italians, some pith helmet British colonial served as Italians, French Senegalese Tirailleurs as Askari, Ghurkas stood in for Gharwalis, and so on.

## Watch the wall, my darling - A tale of smugglers, revenue men, militia and locals set on the south coast of England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Brian Cameron

Five and twenty ponies,  
Trotting through the dark —  
Brandy for the Parson,  
'Baccy for the Clerk;  
Them that asks no questions isn't told a lie —  
Watch the wall, my darling,  
While the Gentlemen go by!

*Rudyard Kipling*

This game was inspired by the mention of smugglers during a holiday in the Isles of Scilly and catching an old British film about smuggling along the Sussex coast in the 18<sup>th</sup> century which starred Peter Cushing as Dr Syn. Dr Syn was the smuggler hero who featured in a number of novels by Russell Thorndyke.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century taxes were raised to very high levels to pay for Britain's wars and resulted in extensive smuggling of luxury goods such as brandy

and tobacco. The smugglers were pursued by the Customs & Excise men, the detested 'revenueurs' and clashes could be violent. Intervention by locals from a village or town, on the side of the smugglers, was not unknown. I've added an element, that of the local militia becoming involved, to add a little extra spice to the situation.

Smuggling took place on a large scale and was usually well organised. Agents would buy the goods on the continent and arrange for them to be at various points on the coast, usually in France or Belgium. Interestingly, suppliers would know that the goods were to be smuggled as they would be requested to supply them in packages suitable for a man to carry rather than in large loads which would be handled by crane. In many cases credit would be arranged for the transaction. Arrangements would then be made to ship the goods across to, usually, the south coast of England. The smuggling ships tended to be only lightly armed and thus easy meat if a revenue cutter caught up with them but some were sufficiently well armed that they could fight off the revenue ships.

All sorts of signals were used, eg lights, to indicate whether it was safe for ships to close to the shore and unload, some of which gave rise to oft-used phrases such as "the coast is clear". The really hard work started when the goods were landed and *tub-men* would carry the goods ashore to be loaded onto wagons or ponies. To protect them, *batsmen*, toughs armed with clubs and firearms, would be deployed. Parties of revenue men could find themselves outnumbered and might have to stand back but often would still attempt to intervene.

For the game I've assumed this is one of the smaller and less organised smuggling operations.

There are more smugglers than revenue men though some of the smugglers will need to carry loads. To assist the revenue men I've included a number of militia though, as you'll see from the militia's objectives and reactions, there is some friction between them. It was quite common for the locals to assist the smugglers so I've used a dice roll to see how many do so. Others will be 'watching the wall' so that they can truthfully claim to have seen nothing.

The game is written so that it can be played solo by following the reactions for each faction or as a multi-player by allowing the players more freedom. Either way, the factions need to try and achieve their objectives.

This is a game which employs small numbers of figures and my current enthusiasm for larger figures for 'skirmish' games has resulted in my using plastic 54mm figures but there are plenty of figures available, particularly in 28mm size. I tend to use a cinematic style for games like this so the characters are rated as 'Major', 'Minor' or Extras. Major and Minor characters can issue orders and I've provided a number of traits to make them less generic. The rules are as few and as simple as possible as per my usual style. For me too many rules, or complicated rules, just slow a game down and I think the essence of games such as this is that they should be fast moving.

Apart from the usual playing surface, figures or counters, ruler or tape and a number of d6, you'll need some playing cards, some method of indicating wounds and when firearms have been discharged and need to be reloaded; I use coloured polyfibre but counters will do.

**The Rules** - *"We think of them more as guidelines" Captain Barbosa*

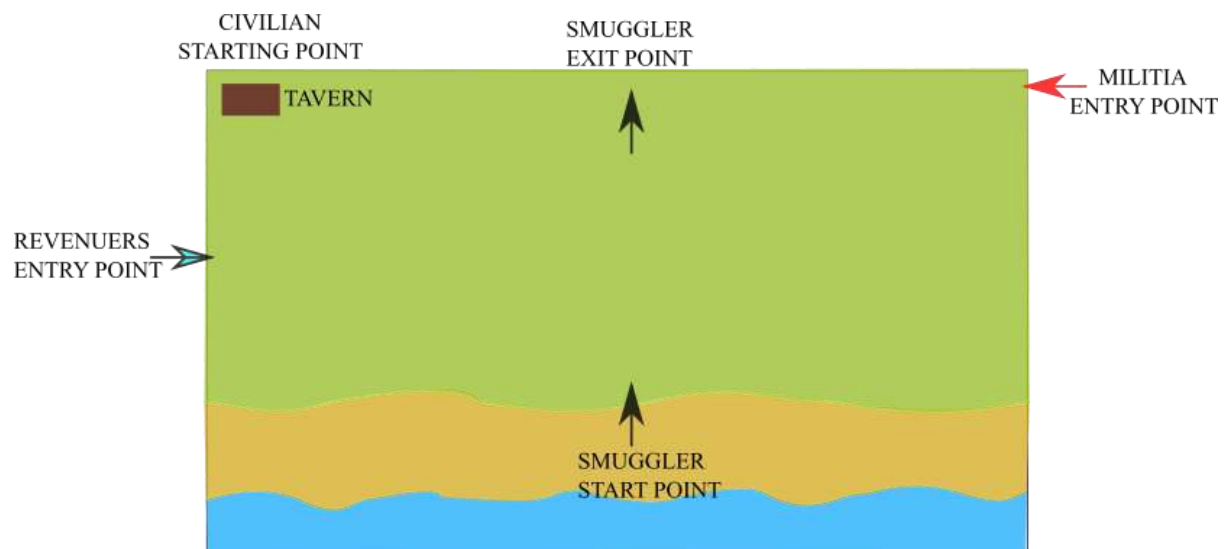
### The Setting



Bluff Cove, somewhere on the south coast of England. You'll not be surprised that smuggling mostly took place at night but to avoid lots of problems I've assumed that the clouds have unexpectedly cleared and it's a bright moonlit night. Visibility is assumed to be limited but I'm not using hidden figures, etc though ranges are pretty short to compensate.

***Revenue men in the foreground, civilians rush to aid the smugglers.***

The smugglers have just landed the contraband from a boat (which has just left unless you have a model you want to display on the edge of your table) when, by an amazing coincidence, the revenue men appear (there's not much of a game else). A building on one the corner of the table indicates the old Bull and Bush tavern, the starting point for any intervention by the villagers. The militia start at the opposite corner on the same table edge. See suggested map below.





Trees, rocks and bushes should be dotted about as desired. A cart, if one is available, at the exit point for the smugglers is useful so that the smugglers have something to load the contraband into. A couple of pack horse would substitute.

**Dramatis Personae** Major characters are noted in Bold and Minor characters in *Italic*.

The smugglers (and would-be pirates)	
<b>Captain Smudge</b> Trait: <b>A certain amount of luck</b>	Known as Smudge from his rather indistinct signature, the only thing standing between him and a glorious career as a pirate is the lack of a ship. So for now its smuggling.
<i>Sam</i> , the 'first mate'. Boots Enoch Pugwash Rummy Mort <i>Bill</i> Trait: A <b>twin</b> of Ben McGurk	<b>Their objectives are:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Escape with as much contraband as possible</li> <li>As many smugglers as possible should escape</li> </ul> <b>Additional reactions</b> to those in the 'Reaction' section (below): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will always drop any contraband and prepare to fight if an enemy figure is within 6" unless there is a friendly figure not carrying within 6" who can see that potential enemy.</li> </ul>
The local villagers:	
<i>Squire Worthy</i> Trait: <b>Protest</b> <i>Parson Roberts</i> Trait: <b>Blessed</b> <i>Bob Hogshead</i> Innkeeper of the Bull and Bush tavern Trait: <b>Strong</b> <i>Mary</i> , his wife Trait: <b>Handy with a frying pan</b> <i>Connie</i> , his daughter Trait: <b>Distracting</b> <i>Slops</i> , the cellar man Trait: <b>Surprisingly nimble</b> <i>Mr Scruple</i> Trait: a <b>Gentleman</b> <i>Bod</i> , an orphan. Trait: <b>Child</b>	<b>Their objectives are:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevent the revenueurs stopping the smugglers</li> <li>Make off with / ensure smugglers escape with as much contraband as possible</li> </ul> <b>Additional reactions</b> to those in the 'Reaction' section (below): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First turn, roll 1d6 and score 3+ for that figure to act in support of the smugglers</li> <li>May move to assist the smugglers (only)</li> <li>Will not attack the militia (they are local)</li> <li>Those that have a special trait will prioritize using it</li> <li>May not advance on any figure which is shooting at them</li> <li>If another civilian within 6" is being attacked, they will move to assist unless in hand-to-hand combat</li> <li>If fired on they will move (immediately) to any cover within 6". If there isn't any cover within 6", they will move 6" towards the nearest cover.</li> </ul>
<b>NOTE: though rated as minor characters for traits, they only take one hit.</b>	
The revenue men	
Chief Customs Officer <b>McGruff:</b> Traits: <b>Uncommonly vile</b> and <b>Always unexpected</b>	Hates smugglers, dislikes the locals and considers the militia worthless thieves. Suspects that Captain Dalrymple is in league with the smugglers.
His Deputy: <i>Isaiah Jenkins</i> . Snout Snuff <i>Ben</i> Trait: A <b>Twin</b> of Bill	<b>Their objectives are:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevent the smugglers escaping with any loot</li> <li>Kill/subdue as many smugglers as possible</li> </ul> <b>Additional reactions</b> to those in the 'Reaction' section (below): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Never act in aid of the thieving militia</li> </ul>



The Militia	
<p><b>Captain Sir Hugh Dalrymple: Trait:</b> <i>Men will follow him anywhere</i></p>	<p>The militia all live in the area and thus there is a certain amount of sympathy with the locals on the issue of tax and contraband. The captain would however go about his duty but finds himself hindered by that dreadful man, McGruff and his constant insults. Thus there is a tendency to provide a minimum of support to the revenueurs while still tackling the smugglers. And contraband can't just be left lying about...</p>
<p><i>Sergeant Grub</i></p>	<p><b>Their objectives are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent the smugglers escaping with any contraband</li> <li>• Take contraband into "safe possession"</li> <li>• Take no action which directly assists the revenueurs eg going to the aid of a revenueur who is in a fight</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional reactions</b> to those in the 'Reaction' section</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only act in aid of the revenueurs if one is attacked by a smuggler and within 3" (ie it would be difficult to claim the attack was unseen)</li> <li>• Never attack a local</li> </ul>
Pugh	
McGrew	
Cuthbert	
Dibble	

**The Turn Sequence:** This uses cards from an ordinary deck of playing cards with each faction allocated a suite:

Faction	Suite
Smugglers	Spades
Civilians	Clubs
Revenue men	Diamonds
Militia	Hearts

Take a card of the appropriate suite for each 3 figures in that faction and shuffle them into a deck. The rest of the cards are not used. It will likely be necessary to remove one or more cards when the number of civilians who take part has been determined in turn 1. Each turn, draw a card and activate 3 figures of the appropriate faction. Complete all actions and any morale tests then draw the next card. When all the cards have been drawn, shuffle the deck and start a new turn. Every time 3 figures of a faction are lost, remove a card from the deck at the end of the turn.

***The militia approaches as the fighting intensifies. The Revenue man, Jenkins, has callously thrown Connie to the ground! Parson Roberts is about to hinder the militia's attack.***



**Reaction:** This section is for the soloists and provides some general guidance as to how the Extras will act. Feel free to move Major and Minor Characters as you will.

- Smugglers continue with their task of getting the contraband to safety as a priority
- Revenuers and Militia will move towards the smugglers as a priority
- Locals will move to aid the smugglers as a priority
- Figures will normally move towards the nearest enemy (ie that's the one they can see in the dark)
- If two enemies are equidistant, dice for which they move to
- The strength of the enemy will always be considered – a figure on its own will not normally move towards superior numbers
- If able to fire, will do so; always fire at closest enemy figure
- If the figure is better armed (sword/dagger/bayonet v fists/improvised) or equal armed compared to a figure within 3" it will attack
- A figure which is worse armed will not usually attack; dice odds/evens whether they do so
- If they are unloaded, their priority is to reload unless an enemy is within 3" when they will move & attack if better armed. If worse armed they will move away from the enemy
- Major characters can give orders but they must be short and to the point, eg "Get them loads up to the cart", "Bob, Fred, with me", "Run for it lads". A dozen words should be the limit
- A figure wounded earlier in the turn cannot act later in the turn
- A wounded minor character will usually attempt to avoid combat with an enemy figure
- The militia privates will unusually only move as far as the officer or sergeant (they know their place.)

**Actions:** When activated a character may do **one** of the following:

Action	How it works			
<b>Move</b>	1d6 + 6" Over difficult ground -3" (eg sand, soft ground) Carrying contraband -3"			
<b>Shoot</b>	<b>Weapon</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Roll</b>	<b>To Wound / Kill</b>
	<b>Pistol</b>	6"	1d6	5 – 6
	<b>Musket</b>	12"	1d6	5 – 6
	Must be stationary to fire			
<b>Reload</b>	Must be stationary to do so			
<b>Move &amp; Attack with sword/ bayonet</b> Each figure rolls 1d6 and compares scores. +1 if opponent is disadvantaged ('fist /dagger / improvised')	<b>Score higher than opponent by</b>		<b>Higher scorer</b>	
	2+		Wound opponent Press opponent back 2"	
	1		Press opponent back 1"	
	A Tie		Re-roll	
<b>Move &amp; Attack with Fists / Improvised</b> Each figure rolls 1d6 and compares scores. -1 if disadvantaged (opponent is 'sword or bayonet')	<b>Score higher than opponent by</b>		<b>Higher scorer</b>	
	2+		Opponent knocked down and stunned	
	1		Opponent disadvantaged next roll. Press opponent back 1"	
	A Tie		Re-roll	
	Note: a figure with a loaded firearm who wins is considered to have discharged his weapon			
	<b>Note:</b> a women or child is considered to be thrown to the ground and stunned instead of wounded/killed.			



<b>Move and/or use a trait</b>	See Traits table below
<b>Make a special action</b>	eg leading on a horse, lift a load onto or off a cart, etc
<b>'Escort' a local</b>	To force a local to accompany a figure, score higher in a contested d6 roll. For the local to escape they need to score higher in a contested d6 roll
<b>Recover from stunned and get up</b>	Roll d6 and score 4+. Takes one turn if successful. If unsuccessful, try again next turn

A Wounded Major or Minor character can carry on as normal but is killed if it takes another wound. There are no deductions for a wound.

Extras are killed by one wound. Locals are always killed by one wound.

### Special Traits

Trait	Explanation	Use
<b><i>A certain amount of luck</i></b>	May re-roll one dice for himself or any of his smugglers	Once per turn
<b><i>Uncommonly vile</i></b>	If attacking or being attacked, roll 1d6. On a score of 4 - 6 the person is intimidated and subtracts 1 on the first round of combat	Once per turn Does not affect Smudge, Dalrymple or the Squire
<b><i>Always unexpected</i></b>	May deploy on the table edge up to 24" from the nominal starting point. May have one man with him.	Once per game
<b><i>Men will follow him anywhere</i></b>	Any men he is leading do not need to test for morale.	During the turn
<b><i>I must protest!</i></b>	If McGruff is within 3" of a smuggler, may protest to McGruff who cannot act this turn.	Once per game Not if McGruff has already acted
<b><i>Blessed</i></b>	If stood next to a smuggler, only McGruff can attack that smuggler. That smuggler cannot attack anyone adjacent to him.	Only protects a smuggler for one turn and once only but may protect other smugglers on succeeding turns.
<b><i>Twins</i></b>	Pledged their mother they would never raise a hand to one another.  Smugglers and Revenuers won't attack either, mistaking him for their own man unless they have been attacked by Bill / Ben.	Every turn
<b><i>Strong</i></b>	Does not count as disadvantaged	Every turn
<b><i>Handy with a frying pan</i></b>	Counts as sword / bayonet armed when striking	Every turn
<b><i>Distracting</i></b>	Opponent always counts as disadvantaged in combat	Every turn
<b><i>Surprisingly nimble</i></b>	For movement, rolls 2d6 and chooses the higher	Every turn
<b><i>A Gentleman</i></b>	Roll d6: 4 - 6 opponent is disadvantaged in combat as they touch their forelock.	Every turn Not Dalrymple, Smudge or McGruff

<b>Child</b>	Roll d6 and score 5 or 6 to trip opponent who is knocked down and stunned  Never killed: a wound is treated as a cuff round the ear and told "Be off wi' you" (delivered in a gruff voice). Retreats 6" directly away.	Every turn
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### Morale

- Major characters never need to test for morale.
- Minor characters only need to test for morale if they are wounded
- Other characters test for morale as relevant

<b>To test roll 1d6. Score 3+ to pass, 4+ if wounded</b>	<b>A failed result</b> applies this turn if not yet activated or next turn if already activated
<b>Test for morale when:</b>	<b>If failed:</b>
A figure is killed within 3"	Hesitate! Cannot move or attack
A major or minor character calls on you to charge	Hesitate! Cannot move or attack
An enemy attacks from hiding	Hesitate! Cannot move or attack
The major character in the figure's force is killed	Shock! Run 12" in the direction of least enemy. Will then continue till the table is exited.



*Down to the serious business of 'securing' the contraband*

### Useful sources

A really informative website is *Smugglers' Britain* which covers every aspect of smuggling operation:

<http://www.smuggling.co.uk>

<https://archive.org/details/DrSyn>



## The Return of Robin Hood – Playing with the other Mike by Mike Bell

Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the greenwood, here I am again with yet another Robin Hood game. Even as I write that sentence I realise that it is loaded with assumptions. The first is that your wonderful editors accepted the earlier submission, which reviewed *The Adventures of Robin Hood* and *Sherwood*. (Which we did, see RFTSL 186 Ed.)

Another possibility is that you receive your copy of Reports with delight – until your eye falls upon any contribution from my good self, at which point your heart sinks. “No!” I hear you cry. You continue, “I want proper toy soldier stuff, not yet more of this cardboard counter, teeny-tiny, unpainted miniatures with which you assail us.” Then you no doubt skip forward to the more fascinating items to you in the newsletter.



But let's get back to the joys of the greenwood and Robin Hood.

Some weeks ago I journeyed north to the mountains of Derbyshire to join The Other Mike in his lair. As usual, we worked liked beavers (or is the plural of beaver just beaver? – no matter) on a variety of pressing wargames issues. We looked at this and pondered on that. We moved boxes around. We even went as far as getting some stuff out of the garage. I know, I know, the labours of Hercules have nothing on us. We drank copious quantities of tea, some coffee and then rested. It had been a tough morning. Well, a semi-active twenty minutes at least.

As usual, I had brought a couple of games for us to salivate over, while taking a well-earned elevenses. One of those games was *The Adventures of Robin Hood* – no, not the *Adventures of Robin Hood* that I waxed lyrical about in a previous article.

This *Adventures of Robin Hood* is very pretty. That is always a good start. It also promised that we could be playing the game within ten minutes. Even better! I'd like to say that we whooped and hollered and sprang into action, but even the most dull-witted of you would realise that any such statement would be a lie. Tom opened one eye from his post-lunch doze on the sofa and said, “well if you set it up I'll play with it,” or something like that. I pondered on a witty response to that remark, delivered in the style of Frankie Howard or Kenneth Williams, but thought better of it. So off I scampered to the Blake dining room, in the style of an over-active terrier, and set up the game. Finally he joined me to begin the game.

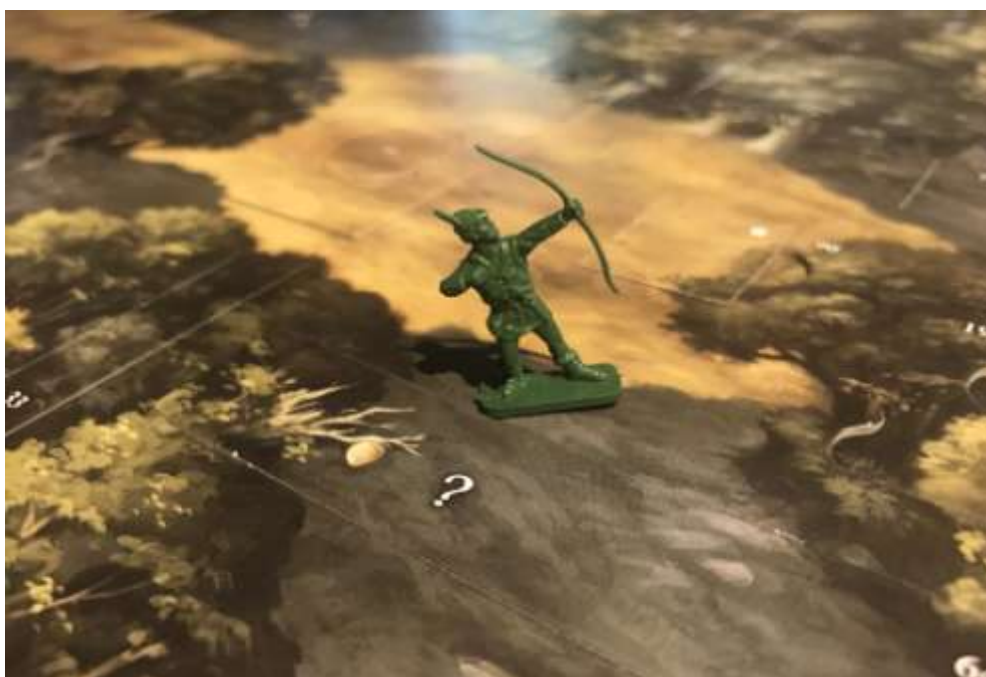
Now for a short digression. I know I always go off at a variety of tangents but for once this is justified. Those of you who are young things like myself, may recall that way back in the 1970s there was a period when Steve Jackson Role-Playing Games were all the rage. Jackson and his associates produced paperback books of role-playing games. You started at paragraph 1 and then had decisions



to make. Each decision took you to another paragraph and so you proceeded until the adventure came to a close. *The Adventures of Robin Hood* by Kosmos draws on that model of gaming, but with pretty boards and figures. I say figures, being a Euro game the characters are represented by what Euro-gamers refer to as 'meeples', wooden pieces cut out to resemble the silhouettes of human figures. I can't bear the things. They are too 'gamey' and not properly 'wargamey'. So I always replace such aberrations with miniatures. In this case the obvious choice was the Airfix Robin Hood figures from decades ago.

As a design, this game is very clever. You start with one of the four characters in a pre-determined location. In the basic game the four characters are Robin Hood – the tall willowy good-looking one with the longbow, Little John – the tall burly surly one with the quarterstaff, Alan a Dale, - the cheerful, singing one, and Maid Marion – the heroine. There is an expansion game that adds Friar Tuck and the Sheriff of Nottingham, but we did not get that far in our venture into the greenwood on this occasion.

In the first game Little John has been captured and is being held in Nottingham castle. Robin has to help him escape. Both then have to reach a safe place before the story moves to the next chapter. I placed an Airfix Little John in the castle and an Airfix Robin Hood in the greenwood. We sat down at the table and peered at the figures. We both put on our reading glasses and peered harder. We turned on the overhead spotlights and twisted them to shine onto the board. Having located our figures we agreed that a) they were very small indeed – being about 20mm, and b) we had no idea how we had ever painted such things when we were younger men. This reminiscence took another half an hour and yet more teas before we decided that we should actually try to play the game.



***Robin Lurks in the Greenwood***

The game box did not lie – you can play it within minutes and jolly good fun it is too. One player starts by reading the opening paragraphs from the adventure in the book. But then, instead of choosing one of several paragraphs, the players move their characters. And immediately one of the beautiful choices of the game become apparent. Combat is resolved by drawing pieces from a bag. The game starts with a given number of white pieces in the bag for the outlaws, and a given number for the sheriff's forces.

Movement is easy. Each character comes with three movement meeples, two short and one long. Move quickly by using the longer measurement meeple and the outlaw gains no resources. Move slowly across the board and an outlaw gains more white pieces that go into the bag, but move too slowly and you run out of time because each chapter is time-limited. In this case, John was going to be taken out and hanged.

Characters on the board can move to numbered locations. There are dozens of these locations on the board. On reaching a location, which is covered by an innocuous tile, the tile is flipped over to reveal another paragraph in the booklet, which is read aloud to give the players more information – or not. Think Advent Calendars, but with Robin Hood themes.





*Mike Blake ponders his next move- note the pretty gameboard*

As the game progresses, men at arms and travellers are activated at various locations. If outlaws are in the same zone as men at arms at the end of a turn they are captured and have to fight their way free. Combat is simple; draw three little blocks from the bag – any white block means the outlaw wins and is free. Slowly but surely more of the sheriff's forces are activated and add more purple blocks to the bag, thus shifting the odds in favour of the sheriff's forces. When Guy of Gisborne turns up half a dozen more purple blocks are added to the bag – Gisborne is one nasty character. A gamer of skill could keep track of the odds of drawing a white block versus a purple block, but that bloke ain't me!

There is no bookkeeping in the game. Anything that requires timekeeping, such as an outlaw or man-at-arms being out of action for a turn, is dealt with simply. An hourglass counter is placed on the relevant character and not removed until the end of the next turn.

If the outlaws are successful in duffing up men-at-arms and travellers then they gain hope points, and the hope tracker on the board is moved upwards. Conversely, if things go badly for the outlaws they lose hope points and the tracker is moved downwards. When it reaches zero all hope is lost and the end of the game looms. Depending upon the particular scenario and number of hour glass tokens are placed on the end of game indicator at the end of the hope track. One hourglass is removed per turn and when the final hourglass is removed the game is over. The outlaws can stave off the end of the game by carrying out actions that restore some hope – robbing the rich and duffing up sheriff's men being the usual ways to restore hope.

Travellers can be robbed to provide more resources for the outlaws, and possibly to provide intelligence. Other characters can just be questioned and may provide helpful information – or not. As our game progressed, we had to find our way to a secret place in the greenwood, known only to someone who spends time in the forest. So off we went to threaten the local blacksmith. Why? No idea. You are asking us to provide a rationale for our actions?? It was late in the afternoon – well, about 3 pm, and we needed tea and cake! The blacksmith told us in no uncertain terms to 'feok off' and then pointed out that we needed to talk to someone who really did spend time in the woods –

like the wood cutter! So after much apportioning of blame, we set off to 'talk to' (duff up) the woodcutter.



I should mention, if it has not become clear by now, that John had managed to escape from the castle by finding a convenient rope that had been left on the battlements, which allowed him to shimmy down to the ground and meet up with me – Brave Robin Hood – in the shadows of the castle walls. As John dropped to the ground there was a ferocious winnie behind him. Sorry, that should of course have been 'a ferocious whinny behind him'. A terrifying horse, not an outraged former girlfriend. Guy of Gisborne appears as the game progresses. And on this occasion he appeared just as John escaped from the castle. We managed to outrun Guy and escape into the forest, having duffed up a few men at arms on our way. When we return to the game at some point in the future we need to find the secret lair in the greenwood and plot the downfall of the sheriff and the return of the true king.

This game was a hoot. Tom read the extracts from the book that tell you, very roughly, what to do next. Tom threw himself into his role, delivering each narrative in a different style and tone. Apparently most of the characters in Robin

Hood stories were drunkards from Bristol! At one point Pauline called to us that all she could hear were bad impressions of pirates. We remonstrated! How dare she! It's a well-known fact that that medieval outlaws sound completely different from Brizzle pirates! Offended? I should say so! We had to stop for tea and cake at that point.

And as for that so-called simple combat system; just draw three cubes from the bag, any white wins. On two occasions Robin got his arse handed to him in a handbag as he (me) proved incapable of drawing a white cube, even though they were in the majority in the bag. Then he had to waste a precious turn fighting his way free of his captors.

This game is a great combination of role-playing, story-telling and skirmish gaming. There are two downsides. The wooden meeples should be used as fire kindling and replaced with decent figures. But even I must concede that we need to find miniatures that we can actually see! I love the old John Niblett Airfix sculpts but I may actually need miniatures I can see when playing – 30mm at the least. The other downside is that the numerous tiles that are embedded in the boards and are flipped over to reveal aspects of the story suffer from handling – and we only played one and a half games. Maybe it is just my fat fingers, but after just one paying some of the tiles were beginning to show wear. I probably shouldn't worry, given that the chances of us playing this game all the way through more than once are low. I did wonder about the replayability of the game, given that having had a go at a chapter of the story one knows what to expect, but reading the booklet that accompanies the game I see that there are at least two versions of each chapter.

We didn't get to the end of the second chapter, partly because we ran out of time and the dining table was required for its primary purpose. But it is easy to dive back into the game at the start of any chapter. I foresee us returning to this little gem.

When I got back home my better half feigned interest in my wargaming activities and asked what we had been doing. I explained that we had been playing a Robin Hood game; I just about managed to see my longbow, but Mike's Little John was so small that he could barely see it. I swear she sniggered as she walked away.

## MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

### A Full Magazine by your Editors



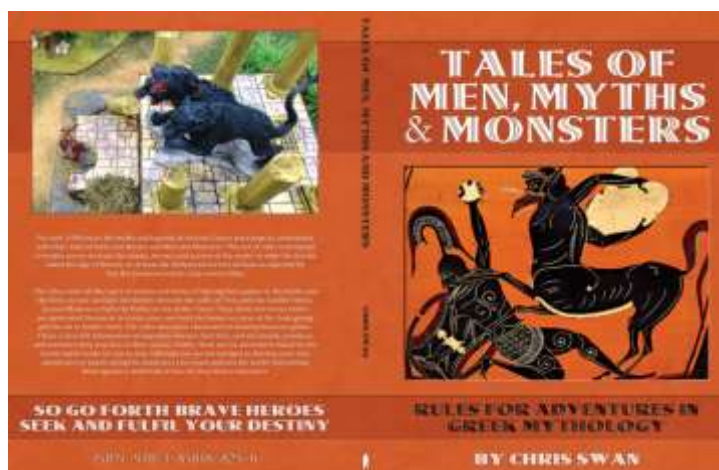
'*Wargames Illustrated*' for April 2023 comes with a free sprue of the epic scale ECW figures from Warlord games. Its main article is 'Game Changers' in which four wise old wargaming men give their answer to the question "What have been the game changing developments in our hobby over the last 50 years?" Other articles include Steel Chariots in the desert - armoured cars in the middle east in World War I, a look through the new *Outremer* expansion book for *Footsore's Barons' War* rules, a run through of the new epic scale Pike and Shot game, Russian partisans in World War II, Polish Winged Hussars and how to play a multi-player Billhook game plus the usual in-depth reviews of figures, products and books. **Price £5.99.**

'*Miniature Wargames*' 481 also has a free sprue, this time 28mm Wargames Atlantic Horse with an article by John Treadaway, the magazine's editor, on using *Army Painter Speed Paint* on them. Other articles include: WWII gaming a scenario featuring a Japanese armoured attack in Singapore; how to paint the latest Epic Scale Warlord plastics to the very highest standard; The Siege of Delhi an Indian Mutiny Scenario; some non-period specific advice on how to get your enemy to the fight; building (in the nicest possible way, you understand.) a bespoke Aeronef and reports on both the Hammerhead and Cavalier wargames shows. There are also the usual in-depth reviews of figures, products and books with a review of *Tales of Men Myths and Monsters* which are described as 'Highly Recommend' and with a plug for our forthcoming game at SALUTE.. **Price £5.99**



### Tales of Men, Myths and Monsters by Chris Swan – a Review by your Editors

Last issue we mentioned that *Tales of Men, Myths and Monsters* written by Chris Swan was about to be published by Caliver Books.



For those who did not attend TYWFEST where Ian became Zeus and ran two games where Heroes from the Greek Myths competed to win the 'Games of the Gods', *Tales of Men, Myths and Monsters* is a set of one on one skirmish rules designed to recreate the drama, heroics and actions of the myths in what the Greeks called the Age of Heroes or at least the Hollywood version of it, particularly as seen in the movies of Ray Harryhausen.



In these rules players get to be a hero from the Greek Myths or lead a group of characters on quests across the Greek World. They require no record keeping and are designed to be fun to play using mechanisms from Chris's other rule sets which are based on ideas for individual skirmishes that Chris, Mike Blake and Ian Colwill have been developing over several years. They use a pack of standard playing cards to activate the characters and monsters and D10s to determine the outcomes of their actions.

The main book runs to 136 pages and contains not only the rules with details on how players can create their own bands of heroes but also has profiles for most of the major heroes, demi-humans, beasts, creatures and monsters found in Greek Mythology. It also has a set of 6 ready-made quests or adventures for players to use, as well as 2 sets of encounter cards plus the QPS and character sheets.

A supplement pack – *Legends and Sagas* – will be released soon which lets players use *Tales of Men, Myths and Monsters* in any fantasy setting but has examples of creatures from the Arabian Nights/Tales of Sinbad the Sailor and European legends.



*A band of Heroes lands on the Isle of the Gods*

A Demo game of the rules will be run at SALUTE and a report on its outcome will, of course, be published in RFTSL in due course. The rules are available now from **Caliver Books: Price £21.50**

## REINFORCEMENTS

### New Releases by Mike Blake

#### Persians from Publius

I saw these on eBay. There are 8 Persians figures in 8 poses. These will complement their Greeks and Amazons (recently reviewed). They are available from "Toy Soldiers for all Ages" online shop which offers plastic and metal soldiers in various scales. <https://plastic-soldiers.com/product-category/plastic32/publius/>



## ADVANCE TO CONTACT

### Anglo Saxon Board Gaming: A New Mini Revival by Charley Elsdon Brooklyn, New York

As an old *Sharpe* fan, back in the days before I even knew what a streaming service was, I saw a few episodes of *The Last Kingdom*, that other TV series based on the novels of Bernard Cornwell, rebroadcast on my On Demand cable service over a couple of weekends. I enjoyed them very much; the series being somewhat similar to *Game of Thrones* and *Vikings*, two series I have since purchased and watched on disk. Recently I bought and watched the entire five seasons of TLK, and ordered the 13 book series of Cornwell's *The Saxon Series* (now aka *The Last Kingdoms series*); they just arrived in the mail.

By the way, the sequel two hour movie of TLK premiered on April 14 (Netflix). The star of the show noted in an interview that where the TV series wrapped up the “small story” of the characters, the film finishes the “big story”—the unification of the various Saxon Kingdoms into something called *England*. But wait—there' will be more to say about that property later on...

My three favorite board games with Vikings, which I still own, are **Blood Rage** (CMON, Eric M. Lang) on the mythical Ragnarok, **Fire and Axe** (Asmodee/The Ragnar Brothers; two English blokes) on the entire historical Viking world--see my game review on *Board Game Geek*--and **878 Vikings: Invasions of England** (Academy Games, David Kimmel) on Saxons vs. Vikings up and down the length and breadth of the proto-nation. I'd left the topic there for the last few years.

**Suddenly I now find myself backing not one, but two new board games coming out next Fall on Anglo Saxon England.** Now, I am interested in the subject, both as history and historical novelization. For example, one can discover the local history fact that Athelflaed, the Lady of Mercia, once captured Derby from the Danes--Derby being of course the home of the renowned Saint Michael of Botchness. And I too have ancestors from Northumbria like Mr. Cornwell—one was a saddle maker who invented the bicycle seat! But his family were the rulers of Bamburgh castle, the “Bebbanburg” of those times and in effect the Earls of northern Northumbria (“Ealdormen”).

As an old wargamer I backed the two new games, after doing considerable research on them. I'm purchasing them not just for the subject matter, but because they both look like they will be ingenious designs that will be fun to play, even while evoking the cut throat ethos of those times. You can check them out on [BoardGameGeek | Gaming Unplugged Since 2000](#) or on their crowd funder offerings pages as of this writing. Both cover the war among the major Anglo Saxon kingdoms of Northumbria, East Anglia, Mercia, and most of all Wessex, the last kingdom to hold out against the Norse invaders. But they do so in very different ways.

**BRETWALDA** (*Phalanx, Leo Soloviev; crowdfunded on Gamefound*) is a very interesting and beautiful 2-4 player board game where you helm one of the Anglo Saxon kingdoms. The *Danelag* expansion allows you to go up to 5 Players and/or play the Danes. This is a more conventional kingdom building framework, but has a number of new mechanisms for doing so, with very attractive period graphics and fine miniatures in the style of the old Lewis Chessman.



While very much a “Dudes On A Map” game, with each player moving a King, Ealdorman, Thegns, Coerls, and Ships, there are many cards which grant each kingdom different advantages, powers, and resources, and many choices on how to use them in a limited time frame with limited development spaces. Each individual king has a unique combination of



abilities as well; an unlucky player can get up to four of them killed off before he/she is eliminated from the game! You can build buildings to improve your holdings, collect money and food, take other actions to improve your position, and even influence where the Vikings will land and raid, which they do periodically; even without an active Viking player.

**THE LAST KINGDOM** (*Gamelyn Games, John D. Clair; crowdfunded on Kickstarter*) is more unconventional, and allows up to 18 Leaders and Heroes from the Cornwell series, represented by very nice miniatures, to vie for victory points during battles, by playing cards, careful strategy, and even changing sides from Saxon to Dane and back again or vice versa. Best of all, the special abilities of each character nicely mirrors their deeds in the show!



You can increase the standing of your Leader among the Danes and three of the Anglo Saxon kingdoms, to score points for the side that wins the battles, while occasionally switching sides to increase your point count and discomfort your competitors. Each leader/hero has unique powers, special cards, and access to a common action market giving you more options if you pay for them. The board state changes frequently and radically! Screen capture photos on the cards evoke the adventures of the different characters, and remind you who everyone is playing.

The game designer credits previous games *Blood Rage* for the card drafting and *The King is Dead* for side switching, which is available for all but King Alfred himself. The game is played out in a series of battles in two rounds; one in each of five board areas. The board start is constantly in flux as you change the number of armies (again, Lewis Chess style minis are used for these) in each, and move your Leaders and Heroes on the board. A character not chosen as a player leader may still appear with the lesser agency as a Hero in the game.

The Leaders, who have their own portrait style minis, drawn from Seasons 1-3, are Uhtred, King Alfred, Aelswith, Aethelflaed, Aethelwold, Odda, Brida, Guthrum, Ragnar, Eric & Siegfried. The Heroes, from the same seasons, are Leofric, Beocca, Hild, Finan, Sihtric, Skade, and Haestin.

The two game designs are so different that you can't really compare them, even though they are on the same historical subject. In **Bretwalda** you are representing the royal dynasty of a single kingdom, vying for supremacy by playing from the competitive perspective of that one state to become the High King of England. In **The Last Kingdom** you are playing the fortunes of a single individual, trying to slip in among the conflicts between Saxon and Dane to come out on top as the most influential ruler on the shifting sands of potential alliances and conflicts on the board.

Both designs look at an old period in new ways. **Bretwalda** is a more conventional multiplayer wargame. **The Last Kingdom** provides a less complex but very dynamic environment; it's a slippery slope where you are trying to ensure that those who come out on top favor you the most during a series of battles. Each evokes the dangerous early medieval conflicts through which your faction must thread successfully, which will be no easy task!

The prolific author Bernard Cornwell met his estranged father late in life and learned about the history of his family. His father's name was William Oughtred--aka "Uhtred"--the name of the series protagonist. Learning this, Mr. Cornwell set about bringing those times to life. Now two game designers are offering their versions in very exciting new board game adventures, where you can relive the era from the safe distance of the gaming table. It's going to be an exciting Fall when they are published!

## The Last Kingdom: Seven Kings Must Die by Ian Colwill

Over Easter I visited Northumbria and one of the main visits was to Bamburgh Castle. I had last visited in 2014 but the big difference this time was that all of the promotion for it linked it to Uhtred and the *Last Kingdom* series, building on the fact that Bebbanburg – the ancestral home of Uhtred and a focal point of many of the books – is the Saxon spelling of Bamburgh. [Homepage - Bamburgh Castle](#)



The other change was that inside the castle there was an exhibition of props and costumes from Netflix's *Last Kingdom* series.

The exhibition was illuminating in 2 ways. First off it provided a rationale for the way in which Saxons are depicted in the series. Essentially, to make them distinctive from the Danes, the Saxon armed forces are dressed more like Norman men at arms (as is the case in the *Vikings* series) and have strange rectangular wooden shields. The exhibition suggests that the shields are a link back to the Romans (clearly they have not looked at late Roman shields!) The other revelation was Uhtred's costume from the forthcoming Netflix film *Seven Kings must die* which was released on 14 April.



I have greatly enjoyed all 5 seasons of the Last Kingdom and all of Bernard Cornwell's Saxon series on which it is based. This film is based on the last book and the succession crisis that followed the death of Edward the Elder. It culminates in the Battle of Brunanburgh 937AD where King Athelstan did actually face a massive alliance of Kings from Scotland, Ireland, Shetland and the Orkneys. If you want the real history see <https://www.historyextra.com/period/anglo-saxon/seven-kings-must-die-movie-real-history/>

Given my reputation for always throwing out spoilers I will say no more other than I enjoyed the film and thought it was a fitting end to the series. Well worth watching and it stands alone, but if you have not watched the 5 series why not watch them and then finish off with the film – now that would be a binge and a half!

*Uhtred's costume, shield and sword 'Serpent's Breath'*



## A Despatch from La Fauquerie by Lesley Beilby-Tipping.

Well, another month has passed, and I expect some of you are preparing for your games at Salute. I hope the shows that you have attended this year have been successful.

The large number of Old West games continues to grow with yet another set of rules for the period, 'What A Cowboy'. It's from the Two Fat Lardies (TFL) publishers so should be great game following in the traditions of their previous sets.

I have started to build some Warlord Australian Militia for games set in the Solomon Islands. I will need to do more figures and perhaps a small tank, Stewart or similar.



I have continued to be busy continuing with my Wars of the Roses army. I have been painting some more Bill and Bows and have finished a unit of crossbows and a unit of blue Bill and Bows. I have also completed an artillery piece.



Along with making and painting the figures I have been getting to grips with the changes in *Hail Caesar 2*. The club wants to use this rule set and it does not look like now they will be published in French any time soon.

I am hoping to have another game next week. I also hope to get back to looking at the Battle of Tewksbury and the army for the Lancastrians in the coming month.







At the club meeting last month, we continued our Bolt Action campaign. We meet for the whole day on club days, so, we set up one table based on the Pegasus Bridge landings.

On this table we were able to set two games the first was the glider landings by the Airborne who deployed close to the bridge and the German forces were handicapped because of the poor troops in France. The gliders came in close to the bridges so we were able to get

onto the bridge and hold off the Germans. The second game the Paratroops were on the bridge and the Germans were trying to displace them off the bridge.



## The Battle of Maidstone – 1<sup>st</sup> June 1648 by Chris Swan

As many of you will know, I live in Kent. However, although Canterbury is often thought of as the County Town because it has the huge, historic cathedral and is the centre of the Anglican Church, in fact the County town is Maidstone. Historians believe that this is due to its more central location and the fact that it sits on the river Medway which in medieval times gave it access to the rural hinterland of the county and its abundance of agricultural produce as well as easy travel down river to the Thames Estuary with onwards access to either London or the continent.



17<sup>th</sup> Century Map of the Maidstone Area

Historically the town, which lies just 8 miles from my home in Gillingham, hasn't seen many major events. It was one of the main centres of the Peasants revolt in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, one of the Regicides who signed King Charles death warrant lived in the town and was its Mayor and Victorian palaeontologists uncovered the first Iguanodon remains nearby which explains the rather odd decision to place a dinosaur statue outside the town's main railway station. (It has two – don't ask!) However, it does have one real claim to fame; it was the site of one of the only major battles of the so called 2<sup>nd</sup> English Civil War.

### Background

The 1<sup>st</sup> Civil War, or perhaps the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of it, ended in 1646 in a Parliamentary victory and King Charles I effectively under house arrest but in negotiations with Parliament to be restored to the throne under yet to be agreed terms. Unknown to Parliament the King was also in negotiations with the Scots to 'loan' him an army in return for him suppressing other sects and reforming the English Church along the lines of Presbyterianism.

Meanwhile factionalism was rife with dissent between the army and parliament and when the more radical elements in Parliament tried to suppress Christmas celebrations in December 1647, riots broke out in London and Canterbury. In London, the Lord Mayor managed to intervene and restore calm but in Canterbury the rioters drove the mayor from the city leaving the county in a state of confusion. Then the King managed to escape and made his way to the Isle of White in the hope of fleeing to the continent. Unfortunately for him in April 1648 he was recaptured and placed under arrest at Carisbrooke Castle.

This led to riots in Kent and Essex which the Royalists harnessed to create a rebellion in the South East whilst a separate uprising took place in South Wales and the Scots threatened to invade England. By May 1648 Kentish Royalists had secured a number of key towns on behalf of the King, which included Dover, Gravesend, Rochester and Maidstone. On 26<sup>th</sup> May the Royalists gained took



taken control of Deptford and Dartford and the following day several ships from the Parliamentary fleet anchored at Dover declared allegiance to the King. This seaward threat to the artillery forts which guarded the Downs led to the surrender of the troops positioned there and the fall of Dover castle.

### Parliament Acts

In response to these multiple threats Parliament despatched the bulk of the army under Cromwell to crush the revolt in South Wales, whilst the remaining troops under General Fairfax were ordered to march north to counter the Scottish threat. However, worried that the Royalist forces in Kent might pose a danger to London, Parliament quickly changed its priorities and ordered Fairfax to deal with the uprising in Kent instead.

On 27<sup>th</sup> May, troops under Major General Skippon were mobilised to defend London with Colonel Barnstead's men securing the area around Southwark. Meanwhile Fairfax gathered a force estimated at around 4,000 to 6,000 men at Hounslow Heath (some sources give his force as over 8,000 which seems to be an overestimate given that the bulk of the army was with Cromwell) and then advanced towards Maidstone, reaching Blackheath by 30<sup>th</sup> May.

The Kentish Royalists now numbered around 10,000 men although they appear not to have been of the best quality as they were described as "*cavaliers, citizens, seamen and watermen*". On the 29<sup>th</sup> May they had declared the Earl of Norwich as their leader and he concentrated his force in and around Maidstone. Leaving around 3,000 men in the town where they built barricades around the town centre, Norwich based the bulk of his force totalling around 7,000 men at Penenden Heath, some way outside the main town area.

At four o'clock on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1684, Fairfax arrived on the outskirts of Maidstone having outflanked Norwich's force by making a diversionary feint towards Aylesford and then crossing the River



Medway at East Farleigh Bridge virtually unopposed.

Early skirmishes began on Penenden Heath, located strategically to launch an attack between the two defending Royalist forces around Aylesford and Maidstone although Norwich did not realise the significance of the attack until late afternoon.

### ***East Farleigh Bridge which has remained unchanged***

By 7pm Fairfax's men had secured the perimeter of the town with Fairfax planning to storm the barricaded town at first light. However, as Von Molke said '*No Plan Survives First Contact With the Enemy*' and later that evening an advance guard led by Colonel Hewson came under attack from a group of Royalists from the South side of the town. This quickly escalated as more and more parliamentary units were drawn into the fight and Fairfax decided it was now or never and launched an all out assault.

The resistance of the less well trained Royalist army took Fairfax by surprise. Rather than being the walkover he had convinced himself it would be, the battle was bloody and hard fought on both sides. George Thompson, a Parliamentary soldier, recounted the assault

*The fight began at 7 at night, about a mile from Maidstone and before we could beat them from hedge to hedge and get at the barricades it was past 9 o'clock. After we entered the town we*



*disputed every street and the enemy had 8 pieces of ordinance which they discharged about 20 times when our men came into the streets. And by God's mighty help and assistance we overcame them between 12 and 1, being every minute of the time firing upon them and they upon us*

All the combat seems to have been carried out on foot, attacking barricades with mounted troops is not a good idea, and inch by inch and street by street the Royalists were slowly driven back through the town, first up Gabriel's Hill (which is very steep- I know I've often walked up and down it!) and then along Week Street before reaching their last position in St Faith's Churchyard. Much of latter part of the battle was fought in torrential rain which rendered most of the firearms useless. Fairfax's men finally seized the town some time after midnight and Fairfax was said to be astonished when about a 1,000 Royalists emerged from inside St Faith's Chapel to offer their surrender.



***St Faith's Church much of which is as it was in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century***

The Royalist lost around 300 men with around 1.400 taken prisoner. The Parliamentarian forces lost around 80 men.

### Aftermath



*The Battle of Maidstone Memorial in Brenchley Gardens, Maidstone*

The prisoners were initially held captive in All Saints Church but were then allowed to return to their homes before Fairfax began the task of recapturing Dover Castle and the three forts on the edge of the Downs.

As for the Earl of Norwich, he retreated towards London together with around 3,000 men but on learning that the gates to the capital were closed to him and that the forces of Major General Skippon were ready to defend the city the bulk of his men deserted leaving him with around only 500 men.

With this force he crossed the Thames and entered Essex reaching his home town of Colchester on 13<sup>th</sup> June where his force was besieged. Norwich refused to surrender even after it was clear that the rebellion was lost and despite the town's citizens begging him to do so. He finally capitulated in late August after some ten weeks of deprivation and famine.

He was subsequently tried and condemned to death on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1649, but petitions for mercy were presented to Parliament and he was spared by the Speaker's casting vote. He then fled to join the exiled court of Charles II and at the Restoration was appointed captain of the king's guard. He died at Brentford on 6 January 1663.

As for the rest of the conflict Cromwell's forces quickly crushed the revolt in Wales and beat the Scots at Preston thus ending both the Royalist and Scottish threats. However, the real losers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Civil War were the King and Parliament. King Charles was seen as duplicitous and was subsequently tried and executed whilst the Army seized control of Parliament which it held to be responsible of the continuing disorder.

As Sir Winston Churchill so aptly wrote:

*'The story of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Civil War is short and simple. King, Lords and commons, landowners and merchants, the City and the countryside, Bishops and presbyters, the Scottish army, the Welsh people and the English Feet, all turned against the New Model Army. The Army beat the lot!'*

## ON THE WORKBENCH

### Pima 1923 by Mike Blake

I've been quite busy of late working on the EB Chintoy sets of Cops and Robbers and other figures from the Speira Western and Roaring Twenties ranges for a new series of games set in the Prohibition period in America - specifically in our mythical Pima County New Mexico - set around 1920s and 1930s. This was for a game at one of our Glory Daze meetings at my place but a stinking cold meant it was called off and had to be rescheduled. As well as the figures I have made some terrain, specifically a moonshiner's still, a diner, a scrapyard and a gas station garage. Still very much WIP are a motel and a Chinese quarter for Salt Flats City, the metropolis where some of the action is set.

The Chintoy sets are excellent as usual, full of character. I painted the first set straight from the box (see RFTSL 185), but have started on some conversions from a couple more boxes. The all female Hogan clan pictured (led by Ma centre) are Speira Western and Horror figures.





The buildings etc are made from Timpo and Britains building bits. I had some and picked up a few more from Steve Weston as job lots of pieces. This meant some imaginative use of what I had but fitted perfectly the slapdash buildings depicted in photos. Any old thing seemed to have been used to make and then patch the structures!

Onto the buildings went some enamel signs to set the tone and period. These came from various places (thanks Wayne and Chris S), some free off the internet and others 1/35th scale I bought and enlarged on a scanner then printed onto labels and stuck on card.

### The Diner

Some time ago I received a tram car kit (which at the time I was thinking of for the Mexican Revolution). But it has now been commandeered for the front of Ma's Diner.

This photo was the inspiration and the following photos show how it developed.



The Kit!







The Diner built with removable roof and next to it the shack behind the diner using the bits of buildings I scrounged. And below, modelling the interior.



*The Finished Product*

The Garage - from Inspiration to almost finished product.



## SWAP SHOP

Nothing submitted this month

## FUTURE EVENTS

Please let us know if anyone is planning to organise a game at any of the shows listed so we can share it with fellow skirmishers or if you have details of any other shows we have missed.

22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2023	<b>SALUTE</b> – Excel Centre , London	<b>Men, Myths and Monsters</b> 54mm Greek Myth Game - by your Editors to coincide with the release of the Rules by Caliver Books If anyone is intending to come and join the game please let Chris and Ian know so they can plan accordingly
13 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	<b>PLASTIC WARRIOR</b> – The Winning Post, Chertsey Rd, Whitton, Twickenham, TW2 6LS	Anyone Attending? - No Game but hopefully lots to buy
10 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	<b>Broadside</b> - Medway Park Sports Centre, Gillingham, Kent.	<b>Men, Myths and Monsters</b> 54mm Fantasy Game - by your Editors
15/16 <sup>th</sup> July 2023.	<b>Devizes</b>	Still unsure if we are going to get a table at this show?
11/12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2023	<b>Warfare 2023</b> Farnborough Exhibition Centre	<b>Anyone Attending?</b>

## THE LAST POST

So that's it for issue 187 – we hope you enjoyed it.

With this issue we are now entering our 4<sup>th</sup> year of editing this magazine – yes it surprised us too – we have published 1 issue per month for the last 3 years but we couldn't have done it without your support.

You'll have noticed that in this issue we have a couple of articles from members other than 'the usual crowd' for which we were very grateful. Work commitments delayed the fourth part of The English but hopefully Chris will get it to us for the next issue.

We are always happy to receive articles from any of our readers on whatever gaming related subject they care to write about. So, as ever, please continue to send us any articles you are working on or ideas you may have about RFTSL. As we have said before, without them we could not produce this illustrious magazine!

**With that in mind the deadline for articles for the next issue, 188, is Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and hopefully we will be able to publish it later that week.**

So until next time,

**Adios Compadres and "Keep Safe Out there!"**  
Chris "Doc" Swan and Ian "Kid" Colwill