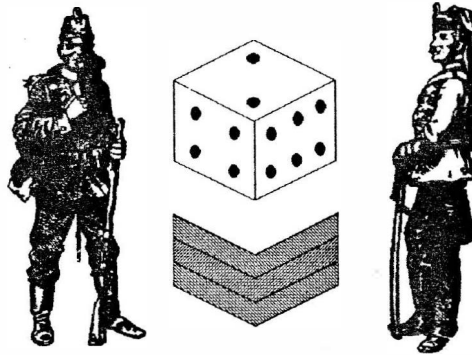


Rank and File



November 1994

Journal of the Tunbridge Wells Wargames Society

Issue 94/5

The Society

Tunbridge Wells Wargames Society meets every Thursday evening and each first Sunday in the month at St. Thomas Church Hall in Vale Road, Southborough, near Tunbridge Wells. Access is from the London Road (A26) turning down Doric Avenue by the Weavers Restaurant and Q8 Garage, then the first right.

The Sunday meeting normally has a lot of traditional wargaming with model soldiers going on. The Thursday meeting usually has smaller games such as DBA, Hordes of the Things, skirmish games etc., though there are also traditional wargames as well.

STOP PRESS

Please Note the January Meeting
will be postponed
by one week to
8th JANUARY 1995

Membership

Your 1994 membership is running out. Renewal of Membership will start at the December meeting.

A list of members will usually be delivered with the magazine if there are any changes. Phone numbers and addresses change, and I think it is easiest to give a copy to members when this happens. This way you can also keep up with new members. You must be a member to enjoy the benefits of the discounts offered by companies on the list.

Sunday Catering

At Sunday meetings tea and coffee making supplies will be available, and the kettle will be filled and heated up, however it is up to individuals to make their own tea or coffee, as at Thursday meetings.

Magazine delivery

Each new magazine will be available at the Sunday meeting after publication, and also to the Thursday meetings for about two weeks. After that, anyone who has not yet received a magazine will receive it by post. After all, if you are a member and have been unable for various reasons to get to a meeting, you are still entitled to the mag.

Dates for your diary

6 November 1994 **Committee Elections**

13 November 1994 **Central London Games
Convention (Chelsea Town Hall)**

4 December 1994 **AGM, Painting Competition**

1 January 1995 (subject to confirmation)

5 February 1995

26 February **Cavalier TWWS Club Open Day**

Other events planned by the committee are:

A Hordes of the Things 1 day tournament

One day naval battle Jutland.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact the Editor.

Advertisements

Advertisements will normally run indefinitely, or until removal is requested. If you have an advert you would like putting in the "Rank and File" regularly, please drop me a line.

Rules for Sale

Naval Pre-Dreadnought rules for sale: "**Perfidious Albion**"

Contact John Hurst or Andrew Finch. £ 4.00.

Also "**Into the Laserzone**" SF Ground Rules 4th Edition being prepared at present

Contact Andrew Finch, Chris Avery, or Alan Butler. £ 4.00.

Printing Service

If you have any need for any small printing jobs, such as quick play sheets or rules extracts to make your game go more easily, or have a need for more game counters, then contact Andrew Finch for a quote.

Game damage and wreckage markers can also be produced if specifications are provided.

These can be produced in B&W or colour, as required.

Editorial

This issue seems to be the WW2 Arnhem commemoration game Special issue, with plenty of material from all sides on the game we played at the Hall, on the 50th Anniversary.

This game caused me to sit back and think somewhat. It was the first WW2 game I had played since the early

1970's, when I moved to Germany to work. At that time I found it difficult to enjoy a WW2 game after having lived with people who had been "on the other side". Many will recall that around that time I sold all my WW2 stuff, some of which I saw back in action again in this Arnhem game.

Time has moved on, and we are commemorating the 50th anniversary of events from a particularly tragic era of human history. There is much debate in the media about whether we should commemorate events from the War, with many clearly preferring us to forget the past.

On that Sunday evening after I had got home from the game I sat watching the services from Holland, and shed a tear for the thinning ranks of the few survivors of the events who were themselves remembering friends long dead, and thought, "NO we should never forget what these men did to free Europe for us." Even if we just remember their acts as part of our hobby, then so be it. But while we play our game, we should remember that these men were doing it for real, and think of them as well.

I believe that as a Society we should in future dedicate our Open Day towards supporting the Service benevolent funds. We should consider making a donation of the receipts to specific funds, and/or make a separate collection on the day. We and our visitors will be having a good day out, but we should also spare a thought for those who cannot be there.

This suggestion should be put to the Club at the AGM to vote on. The AGM will take place at 14.00 on the 1st Sunday in December. Games will start at 15.00 at the latest. The election results will be made known and the new committee "enthroned". If there are any motions for debate at the Open Day these should be advised to the current Secretary before the meeting.

Messages from the Committee

Committee Elections

Remember that the elections take place at the November meeting. The committee in its entirety is up for re-election, so if you wish to stand for any of the jobs, they are these:

Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor of Rank & File, Membership Secretary, "Quartermaster".

Club Terrain and Supplies - Pop Enterprises

The Club recently discussed whether or not to purchase some new buildings of the medieval half timbered type, produced by Pop Enterprises. The outcome of the debate was that we would not do so as we have enough buildings. However, we also agreed that we would make a club order of buildings from this firm, which would give us a discount. They are very good quality houses, inns, etc., made of balsa which has been treated to make it extremely stable. They seem difficult to damage anyway.

If you are interested in making a purchase, you should contact Alan Butler, who has a sample and the list.

Club Policy on Attendance at other shows

There has been a long debate whether club members who are putting on displays by TWWS at other shows should get some form of financial support for work done to make the display, or travel to/from the venue. There has been in the past no clear policy on this, though the view was always not to support.

The Committee is also aware that our Society gets mildly criticised by other clubs who go to shows and put on Demo or participation games, for not doing so. In 1993 a number of us supported the Eastbourne club, and we repeated this in 1994. In 1995 some of us have plans to support both Salute and SELWG with Demo/participation games.

After a long discussion the Committee has agreed that we shall in future give some financial support attendance at other shows if we are putting on demos etc. providing the Committee is approached in advance and gives its approval. The amount of support provided will be determined by the Committee on a case by case basis.

Club Supplies

The new post of Quartermaster has been introduced to ensure that supplies of vital tea and coffee (and biscuits if you behave) are kept in stock. Andrew Finch has kindly volunteered to administer this post, which obviously has some other functions as well, such as obtaining club tapes, dice etc.

If there is any sort of club equipment you feel we need, then please let him know and he will seek approval from the committee.

Club Discounts

by Andrew Finch

I know that some of you have rumbled about receiving catalogues from companies offering products you might not want. Bear in mind that these companies have offered us a discount, so if you ask to be removed from their lists, please do so with some tact.

On the other hand, if you want to enjoy discounts from other manufacturers of figures YOU DO WANT, then when you see them at a show, ask if they do club discounts, and if they say YES, get their details, let me know, and I will write to them officially for TWWS. New traders offering discounts will be advertised in the Rank and File.

Military Vehicle Rally, Whitbread Hop Farm, Beltring, 23/24 July 1994

by Tim Freeman

The rally this year marks my 7th visit and the 12th occasion that the Invicta Military Vehicle Preservation Society have been to the Hop Farm. It is billed as Europe's premier military vehicle display and I think it lives up to this. For the WW2 wargamer it represents a unique opportunity to see some of the vehicles you use on the wargames table. This year's display marked the 50th anniversary of D-Day and dozens of Jeeps, 2½ ton 6x6, weapons carriers were shown along with British and Commonwealth-made Bedfords, Austins, Morris and CMPs. There was also a fine display of military ambulances. The highlights of the day were for me the tanks. This year there were the following moving around the arena. Sherman with cast hull (either an M4A1 or Canadian-made Grizzly; Sherman 76mm gun variant; M7 Priest; 2 Czech OT10 APCs. This is a Czech made variant of the SdKfz 251/c. One OT10 was a standard version and looked really good repainted in sand/green/brown but the other OT10 had been converted to look exactly like an SdKfz 251/1c and looked really impressive. Both were crewed by re enactors dressed as Waffen-SS infantry. The same group also had a 1 ton unarmoured tractor and PaK 40 anti-tank gun, and RSO tractor (bought from a farmer in Norway), a Goliath demolition vehicle and trailer plus BMW motorcycles, Kettenrads, VW cars and Schwimmwagen, all restored and painted.

There were two Russian tanks on show, a T34/85 and a PT76 plus a selection of surplus British Army vehicles like FV432, tracked Rapier, Scorpion etc. The Hetzer was not at this year's show which was a shame as this is one of the best preserved vehicles I've seen. It seems a shame to me that those collectors with Allied vehicles do not bother with looking the part like the "Germans" do. It really spoils the effect when somebody has spent literally thousands on restoring a Sherman or M16 ½-track with quad .5 cal. MGs and then drives around the arena with his family in the back. It can't be the shortage of appropriate uniforms as there is a massive collectors' market on site. The market sells everything from ex-army socks to de-activated Vickers machine-guns. The rally is held every year, usually mid-July and is well worth a visit. I'm looking forward to 1995 already.

Rapid Fire!

W.W.II rules by Colin Rumford and Richard Marsh

Published by Stratagem Publications Ltd, 18 Lovers Lane, Newark, Notts. at £9.95

Review by Alan Butler

Introduction: This volume offers in 78 soft back A4 pages of very playable W.W.II rules for 20mm. Refreshingly, the rules are very simple, and the basic playsheet is just 2 sides of A4. There are also points values, classifications and typical wargames unit organisations. There are 8 internal pages of mouth-watering colour pictures of games in progress, showing the Grimsby Wargames Society figures and terrain. These are similar to the pictures that have appeared in Wargames Illustrated over recent years. Most of the rest of the book, some 33 pages, is devoted to scenarios of the lesser known but fascinating battles of the 1940-42 period, and are clear and very well presented.

The rules: The main body of the rules are presented on just 2 sides of A4, with about 20 pages of explanations and examples. The rule mechanisms will be familiar to TWWS members, as they are based on Bish Iwaszko's concepts, but elegantly distilled, which should enable the players to concentrate on tactics. The gun v armour tables, for example, have been reduced to one 5x5 table with dice roll modifiers. The scales used mean that a typical infantry company consists of just 8 figures and possibly a transport vehicle, with an armoured company consisting of 3 AFVs. An advantage of this scale is that you can 'dabble' by collecting a few figures and vehicles and still have a good game, or pool several people's collections for a larger game at, say, brigade level.

The rules are not complex, to encourage fast play, but there are some interesting ideas. Observation is a good example, where infantry and support weapons in cover are difficult to locate. Indirect HE fire is handled in a rather abstract manner, which does away with the need for burst circles. Small arms fire does not differentiate different weapons in the firing factor, but does include a factor for the morale grade.

Summary: Highly recommended.

The Scenarios: To give some of the flavour of these scenarios, they briefly described below.

Hondeghem, 1940: British troops with 18pdrs and searchlights defend a village against Germans equipped with Pz I and 38ts and infantry in lorries.

Gallabat, 1940: British and Indian infantry attack an Italian held fort in East Africa supported by A13 and Vickers MkIV tanks.

Corinth Canal Bridge, 1941: German Paratroops fight for control of a bridge against Greek and British units in Greece.

Assault on Vaagso, 1941: British Commando raid on a German held Norwegian town, defended by garrison troops, sailors and a labour battalion.

Charge at Chebotarevsky, 1942: Elite Italian cavalry confront Soviet infantry.

Raid on Barce, 1942: LRDG with 20 figures raid an airfield defended by some 73 Italians.

Landing at Safi, 1942: American seaborne assault on the town of Safi in North Africa which is held by Vichy French, Foreign Legion and Moroccan Tirailleurs.

Fall of Hong Kong, 1941: A mini-campaign in which Canadian, Indian and British troops, well supported by Lanchester armoured cars, a gunboat and 4.5" Howitzers, defend against a Japanese Infantry Division.

The Gush 1930 - 1945 Wargame Rules

by George Gush

I should like to attempt to reply to Russell Hanson's comments on my rules in the September 1994 issue.

1) Russell asks why one should have to throw for deviation on smoke, given that smoke shell is the same as HE which doesn't require a deviation dice.

Firstly, deviation of HE is represented by a fire area within which targets may or may not get hit - taken care of by dicing on the Area Fire Table. This doesn't apply to smoke, so without deviation dice it would be more accurate than HE.

Secondly, wargames rules have to take account of the actual situation of wargames players as well as the hypothetical situation represented on the miniature battlefield. If there was no deviation for smoke, we all know that wargamers would minutely adjust smoke rounds so that they blinded the enemy tank here but stopped just 20mm short of the view of their own side's observer two inches away, and so on. Would this increase realism ?

2) This point about the actual players rather than the model simulation helps to answer two other points of Russell's.

He asks why you can only correct indirect observed fire in one direction per move - a limitation which wouldn't exist in reality. Well, I think that the players get far too good a view of the battlefield, and don't suffer from any of the communications problems so prevalent in the period. Thus it seems to me that the process of directing indirect fire is rather too easy and accurate anyway, and this is an attempt to make it slightly less so, without introducing lots of rules about whether messages are received and so on.

Russell also says the deviation for unobserved fire is too large and erratic, and rightly points out that mortars were used to "search" reverse slopes, and that when doing so their shells would fall into quite a limited area. However, in real life, commanders would not know if any enemy were there, and would have to search every inch of every slope to be sure of hitting any targets. How different in a wargame ! The player, towering over the battlefield, can see which slopes conceal enemy and just where those enemy are. If a large and erratic deviation were not imposed, who can doubt that he would only shell the areas where the "unseen" enemy were, and that with uncanny accuracy ?

There may well be better ways of preventing this (e.g.: defining which slopes a player can "search" - only if within x inches ahead of his advancing troops or whatever, and/or limiting the effects of unobserved fire), but I took what seemed the simplest - the rules are 30 pages long as it is !

3) Russell suggests that British artillery be allowed to have one observer direct several batteries. I think this is right and hope to incorporate it in a later version (see below), though some restrictions would have to be imposed to prevent this being possible in a fluid situation where some batteries were perhaps advancing close to the front.

Having more or less run out of copies, I hope soon to take advantage of several years of play-testing and produce a new edition of the rules. These won't be radically different, but are likely to have a number of changes, including the following:

- a) Cutting down the effects of burning buildings and vehicles, which Malcolm Dove in particular has often pointed out, are too obstructive at the moment.
- b) Writing-in the system of dicing to remove damage markers which we have tried out in several one-day games.
- c) Adjusting morale to make it rather more "shakeable".
- d) Possibly making pinned figures dice to recover, in a similar way to damaged vehicles. In both cases we are dealing with "suppression", and one rule could cover both. This would also make troop quality more important, since they need a lower throw to recover than average, and so on, and this in turn helps in historical situations where the weapons advantages were cancelled out by better training and morale (e.g.: France 1940).

I would like to thank Russell for taking the time and trouble to write his comments, and I hope others who have criticisms and suggestions will do so too. This will not only give the Editor extra material for the magazine (*here here*), but would also help me with the revision of the rules.

Arnhem - Allied Triumph - Bongo routs the Hun and the High Command

by Eustace Fink-Nottle

Daily Bore Special Correspondent

Hartenstein Hotel, Monday

Now that the sound of battle has faded from the lamp-post ferns and plushy dikes of Holland and the pursuit of the Hun is well on the way to the Austrian house painter's vaunted fatherland and our boys are preparing to come home for Christmas, I can write more fully of the recent shindig.

First let me pay tribute to some special heroes whose deeds, amongst so much courage, shine forth with a particular lustre. Step forward my cousin, 'Bongo' Fink-Nottle, bluff-jawed, steely eyed commander of 105 Para. (105th Tunbridge Wells Parachute Battalion) who took command of the Parachute Brigade dropped north of the Arnhem Bridge when more senior officers drove off in jeeps and were never seen again. Rumours that 'Bongo' deliberately directed them towards the Hun tanks are obviously an invention of Dr. Goebbels' propaganda machine and 'Bongo' emphatically denies that his was the huddled figure seen stuffing potatoes into the jeeps' exhaust pipes.

Then there was Henry, the Para.-hound, mascot of 105th Para., proudly wearing his regimental waistcoat, whose amusing antics and indifference to the enemy fire brought tears to the eyes of many a grizzled paratrooper. Finally, I pay tribute to the carrier pigeons Myrtle and Daphne, who braved the Hun flak to carry my battlefield despatches straight to London. It was unfortunate that one of Daphne's messages appeared to have been disfigured by bird lime, leading to her court-martial and reduction in rank to Carrier Pigeon Second Class (CP II).

'Bongo's' first battle was with the High Command. With brilliant initiative he had liberated two light tanks of the early Desert War from a museum and was preparing to load them onto gliders to rush the Arnhem Bridge. The High Command made him leave them behind. A party of Long Desert Group in a heavy armed jeep had come all the way from the desert to volunteer for the same purpose and were similarly spurned. Next the High Command reduced his establishment of anti-tank guns. 105 Para. normally has two six pounders, and two seventeen pounders had been mobilised to form a brigade reserve. One six pounder per battalion and one seventeen pounder per brigade is laughingly inadequate. The High Command seemed unable to comprehend that establishments are laid down to give a force balance, without which it can rapidly degenerate into just a collection of individuals.

Having been shown the brigade area on the map, 'Bongo' made an instant appreciation of the situation and sent a battalion commanded by Colonel Frank along the lower road to reinforce Colonel Stewart's battalion at the bridge. That left him with 105 Para. and a fourth battalion. None of the battalions apart from 105 Para. appeared to have names or numbers. That sort of thing is very bad for morale as it does nothing for esprit de corps. Perhaps they were newly raised units.

'Bongo' decided that 105 Para. should also make a dash for the bridge, along the higher road on the left flank of Colonel Frank's battalion. The fourth battalion was deployed to hold a perimeter protecting the flank and rear of the brigade, to keep the Hun as far away as possible. Once again 'Bongo' was obstructed by the High Command who objected to this battalion digging slit trenches without which his men, lying on the open hearth, would have been massacred. Which has lead 'Bongo' to the conclusion, taken together with the earlier incidents, that the High Command was deliberately trying to set him up to create a 'Glorious Defeat' for the Arnhem force and thereby fabricate a legend like that of the Light Brigade at Balaclava.

'Bongo' was not standing for any of that kind of nonsense. He entrenched this battalion as shown on the attached map and covered its front with the limited amount of barbed wire allocated to him. He at least managed to thwart the High Command by having the correct establishment in 105 Para. of two MMGs and two 3" mortars instead of their hare-brained scheme to have just one of each. These he allotted to the perimeter defence together with two of the 2" mortars and a number of man-pack flame-throwers. They made the difference.

As the battle opened 105 Para. came under heavy flanking fire from four Hun tanks which approached from the North. As the few available anti-tank guns had been deployed to support the fourth battalion, a disaster was at hand. But the quick thinking 'Bongo' called for mortar smoke, and a smoke screen was put down which quickly reduced the effectiveness of the Hun fire and seems to have bluffed and confused the tanks which showed a marked reluctance to advance through it. But 105 Para. could make little progress towards the bridge as Hun infantry had also shown up from the north. However, by holding their position that covered the flank of Colonel Frank's battalion which entered the town and deployed west of the bridge, knocking out Hun tanks on the bridge with their six pounder. Colonel Stewart's battalion held against all that the Hun could fling at them east of the bridge.

The fourth battalion perimeter was assailed by Hun tanks and infantry from the west, and more infantry from the north. Fortunately one of the two Airborne Light Batteries (75mm Howitzers) was able to put down accurate fire on a Hun 105 battery and a self-propelled battery which sought to come into action in the open to the west. Both were destroyed. Had they survived 'Bongo's' position would have been perilous indeed. The Hun still had superiority in heavy mortars. The second Airborne Light Battery, directed by an OP in the tower of Oosterbeek church, fired effectively on the far end of the bridge beyond which Polish parachute troops were seen descending. the Poles were said to be on our side. Obviously they had not heard that 'The Allies' were planning to hand Poland over to Russia after the war, otherwise they would presumably have been fighting alongside the Hun to keep out the Red Army.

The Hun pressed his infantry and tank attacks on the perimeter, which he eventually breached, but not without suffering heavy loss from small arms and mortar fire. All the Hun tanks were eventually knocked out, one by a rocket firing Typhoon which struck in the nick of time as the tank poked its ugly Teutonic nose gingerly through our smoke screen. But now the tanks of XXX Corps were seen approaching the south side of the Arnhem Bridge. Relief was at hand. By this time the surviving Hun infantry had entered the edge of the Hartenstein wood. But they were a spent force, under fire from the guns of the Airborne Light batteries firing over open sights. Reinforcements from 105 Para. were beginning to counter-attack. A forward movement by Hun infantry in the north came too late.

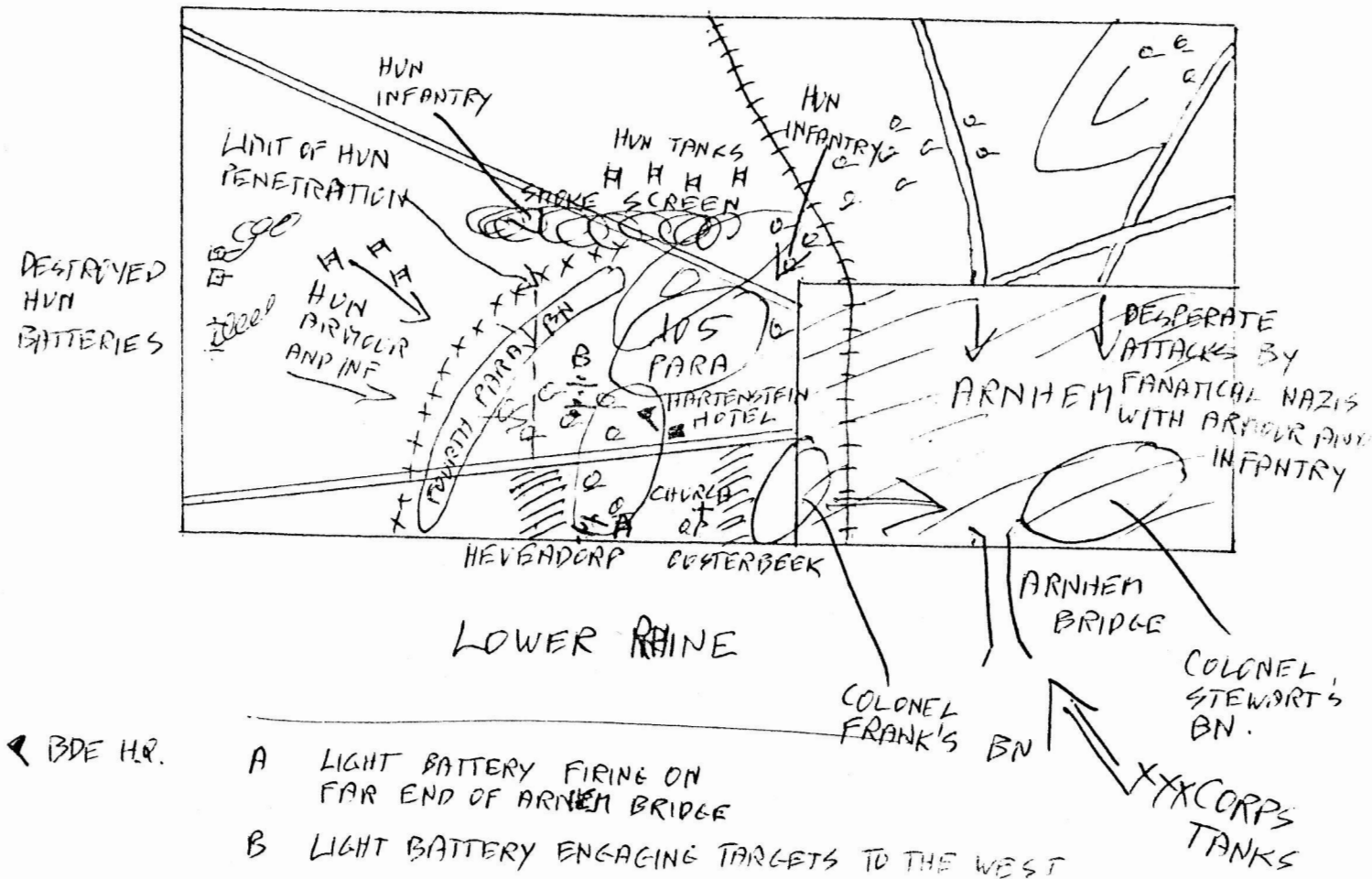
'Bongo' had the situation in hand, by the narrowest of margins, and set out in his command jeep, proudly flying the 105 Para. battle flag which had waved defiantly over the Hartenstein Hotel throughout the battle, accompanied by the Para.-hound and a kilted piper, to greet the relief column.

I am happy to report that the Hartenstein Hotel, contrary to reports from irresponsible persons, suffered little damage at the hands of the Hun. The brigade staff liberated the wine cellar and discovered a supply of Claret of quite a passable vintage. So I raise my glass in salute to our gallant boys. Look out Hitler, we're on our way, and Henry the Para.-hound is grinding his teeth.

ARNHEM: HOW IT WAS

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EUSTACE FINK-NUTTLE N

SKETCH MAP: NOT TO SCALE



German P.O.W. Reveals Scandal

by Algernon St. Vitus-ffrange

Accredited Correspondent to Cornpasture's Journal and Pigfancier's Gazette

Behind the British Lines, Sunday

It was with luck that I managed to track down General-Oberst Adolf Graf Gloßbäb von Nigling, who had been captured after the end of the engagement. His version of the events was illuminating, and I reveal all, the British Public have the right to know.

In the early morning of the engagement, I spent much time with my orderly, who had polished my uniform and leather greatcoat specially, in order to dazzle the enemy. After all, we had access to their messages as they had very foolishly been discussing their plan of action in their planes on the way. Regrettably our glorious OKW had neglected to provide us with sufficient flak to shoot them all down on their way over.

It was my orderly who reported that he had spied some very odd characters lurking in the underbrush near my command car. I can only surmise that these were some more of those Gestapo fellows, on the look out for more Generals to shoot after the failed attempt on the Bohemian Corporal. I feel that

someone must have been trying to implicate me, as there had been a number of black Mercedes cars following my formation since our return to the front. It was always very amusing to see the way they panicked when one of those Tommy fighters strafed formations while we were on the march. I am sure that Onkel Heinrich must be running short of men by now. As soon as battle was joined, there was no sign of the fellows any more.

Anyway to the point, we had surrounded these paratroops in the grounds of the Hartenstein Hotel, and were merrily shelling them every so often from an OP we established very early in the day on the edge of the woods. Early in the engagement a Tommy rushed forward in a jeep, or was it on a motorcycle, no matter, straight into the sights of my men. When we examined the body for documents we found a note which I have given to this reporter for reproduction. It is clearly the work of a madman to send forward men with messages like this one.

Our panzers edged forwards with some care, as our Abwehr agents in the War Office London had informed us that the Tommies would be using flamethrowers and Bazookas. Suffice it to say that the main British force seemed not to have the stomach for the attack on the end of the bridge, and spent their time marching and

countermarching behind the hotel. At one point, I believe that I saw some sort of rabid wolfhound being taken for what the British term "walkies".

There has been some comment made by this British Officer "Bongo" that they found some Claret in the Hartenstein. Rest assured that the wine will have had its effect by the time these words are read, and the gentlemen will be spending some time with the Herr Doktors, thanks to the added body given to the wine with some liquorice powder. They say that it gives you a good run for your money.

I must say that I was very surprised at the amount of equipment that these paratroops seemed to be able to bring down. All these anti-tank guns and howitzers, it was very strange that they had so much ammunition, readily to hand.

I fear that my colleagues from the K&S von Tettau had a difficult day of it, but they deployed in the open, and then did not rush forwards to attack the Tommies. That some of the troops labelled themselves SS surprises me. I had heard that Heini's boys were brave and resourceful. No matter, the deed is done and it is over. Spindler on the other hand had a very difficult task in the town itself. He had to contend with some very brave men, who fought well, and I salute them. In the end, failure further south meant that the enemy armour broke through. I had to send him one of my tanks, and hope he has not reported this to O&W, as they get so cross if the book-keeping is messed up.

In the town there was some trouble with a sniper who kept pouring lead at Spindler's men pinned down for a very long time. I believe that they must have been given some sort of drug, that they carried on fighting in the condition they were in. We poured artillery fire onto them all day, but they never gave up.

In the end, the weight of numbers was too great, and we had to surrender to avoid further loss of life. I was taken to see this "Bongo" person who had so tormented us and he launched into a tirade about shelling a hospital. I felt that I had to ask why it was that a hospital was set up in the open ground, when they could have perfectly well used the hotel, with a suitable flag on the roof. It was then that we heard that the British Offiziere had been wining and dining in the hotel during the battle. I suppose they

£ BONGO TO FROSTY
ADVISE NUMBER OF
SIZE NINE BOOTS
IN 'A' COY - URGENTLY
REQUIRED FOR W.V SURVEY

did not want to get a bit of blood on their mess kit. I then asked why he had located his mortar teams in the middle of the hospital. He had to expect us to fire counter-battery fire, what of his wounded men? I then also pointed out that by placing a smoke screen round the area, we could not actually see that there was a hospital there. At this point the conversation became rather strained, and several other British Offiziere from I think their XXX Korps were beginning to ask what this was all about, and I was rushed off to the cage.

That makes for interesting reading, don't you think. I sought an interview with Bongo Fink-Nottle to go over some of these points about hospitals, Hotel Hartenstein, smokescreens, and hounds, but he seems to have been taken away by the RAMC for psychiatric examination. I understand that he is being held in the Agnes Wibley Sunset Home for the Military Deranged in Jaywick.

Arnhem - The War Game

Shortcomings of the Rules - Suggested Remedy

by Russell Hanson

I must be just one of the innumerable people who are in the eternal debt of George Gush for providing us with his splendid Wargames Rules 1930 - 1945 which have given us so much pleasure for many years.

The object of historical wargaming is, of course, as John Tunstall wrote, "to recreate the tactical abilities and weapon capabilities of armies of a chosen period." Not for us historical wargamers the pure speculation of the science fiction people. Who can really say if the death ray will actually work in the twenty third century, or whether, when it comes to the point, Zak the Emperor of Blot will have the stomach to face the Little Green Men armed with Exterminators, and won't just burst into tears ?

The historical wargamer is in touch with reality because he knows what happened in history. He knows that the steady British line, sheltered from artillery on a reverse slope and not harassed by skirmishers because of his own skirmishing screen, when the time came invariably shattered the French column. I remember as a schoolboy seeing my first infantry fire power demonstration in Australia during the forties. The volume of concentrated fire produced by a well trained platoon armed with bolt action rifles, Bren light machine guns and 'Tommy' guns was absolutely devastating at close range to any infantry not in cover and attempting to advance over open ground. Even more so than in the Napoleonic Wars, thanks to the development of the capability of infantry weapons, such an attack must be suicidal. The British Army discovered that in the Boer War, the Germans at Mons, and various inexperienced troops at Gallipoli, on the Western Front and many other places since.

It follows that historical war games rules should produce a game which reflects the tactics and weapon capabilities in as realistic a manner as possible without slowing the action down with too much complicated detail. The Gush Rules, on the whole, achieve this. Otherwise they would hardly be in widespread use. But I have long felt that they do not give sufficient weight to the firepower of the period. We have all seen photographs of German 88s with a dozen rings round the barrel for all the tanks they have knocked out. But in our wargames how many 88s manage to knock out more than two or three tanks before being overrun ?

I give two instances from my experience at Arnhem. German infantry attacking an entrenched perimeter stood in the open within close range of a Bren and a rifleman and calmly proceeded to spend a move demolishing barbed wire. Most survived and went on to overrun the trench. Now one knows that in practice such a thing would not happen. The fire of the Bren was sustained by the No 2 (the other half of the Bren Group) collecting magazines carried by the rest of the section and acting as loader. It could thus produce sustained fire which would have slaughtered such presumptuous infantry.

In the second instance I was myself guilty of pure gamesmanship (shame !) Having ascertained that a German tank had fired its machine guns in its own turn, in my turn a man with a flame thrower advanced calmly towards it and set it on fire. Now one knows that nobody except a raving lunatic (or perhaps a Jap, which comes to much the same thing) would advance across open ground waving a flame-thrower at a tank. Something was wrong. The Rules were distorting the tactics and weapon capabilities of the period.

Indeed the tactics are further distorted by players taking advantage of the limitations imposed by the Rules on defensive firepower by advancing a single man or tank to soak up the defensive fire. In reality they would have been picked off one by one (it takes only a second to reload a bolt action rifle) and whoever sent them on such a

To remedy these defects I suggest the Gush Rules be amended as follows:

2. Playing turns

(ii) Moves take place in the following sequence:

(b) Side A moves all men/weapons and vehicles to the furthest distance desired, but stopping within half a move stick of any enemy with whom physical contact is to be made.

(d) Side A may shoot with all surviving weapons that have moved.

(f) The same sequence is repeated in Side B's turn.

(ii) Casualties/damage occurring at any stage of the above sequence have immediate effect.

(iii) Firing does not prevent hand to hand combat.

So will it work ? All I ask is that people try it and see. I shall be trying it and using it in any future games of the period that I organise. I believe it will enhance the reality of our games by giving a closer simulation of the historical reality, which is what historical wargames set out to achieve.

I realise that there may be a cost. Troops, long sunk in bad habits will need to be retrained. But if commanders mutter under their breaths FIRE AND MOVEMENT - NO MOVEMENT WITHOUT FIRE SUPPORT they should not go far wrong. Field-Marshal Ballsaker will be available to give pep talks to any recalcitrant officers.

I am sure that this article will provoke a debate about these points. As George said before constructive comments about the rules are always useful. From our rule writing we know that it is not always easy to get exact results. The problem which we ALWAYS forget is that they can see everything, and know everything. It is not as if they are his equals. It is as if they are off the juicy ones.

There are solutions which are not as good as the ones I have given. I certainly don't want a game which boggs down into arguments about who has fired and when.

One comment I would add is never measure from gun barrels. You should always measure really from the centre of the front to centre of the front, regardless of aspect. This gives some indication of relative movement of vehicles. It overcomes the problem of turretless vehicles, or those out of scale, where an extra quarter inch on the barrel means the difference between short and medium range.