



POLEMOS

War of the Spanish Succession

Chosen Men, well

Disposed

Chris Grice



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Introduction

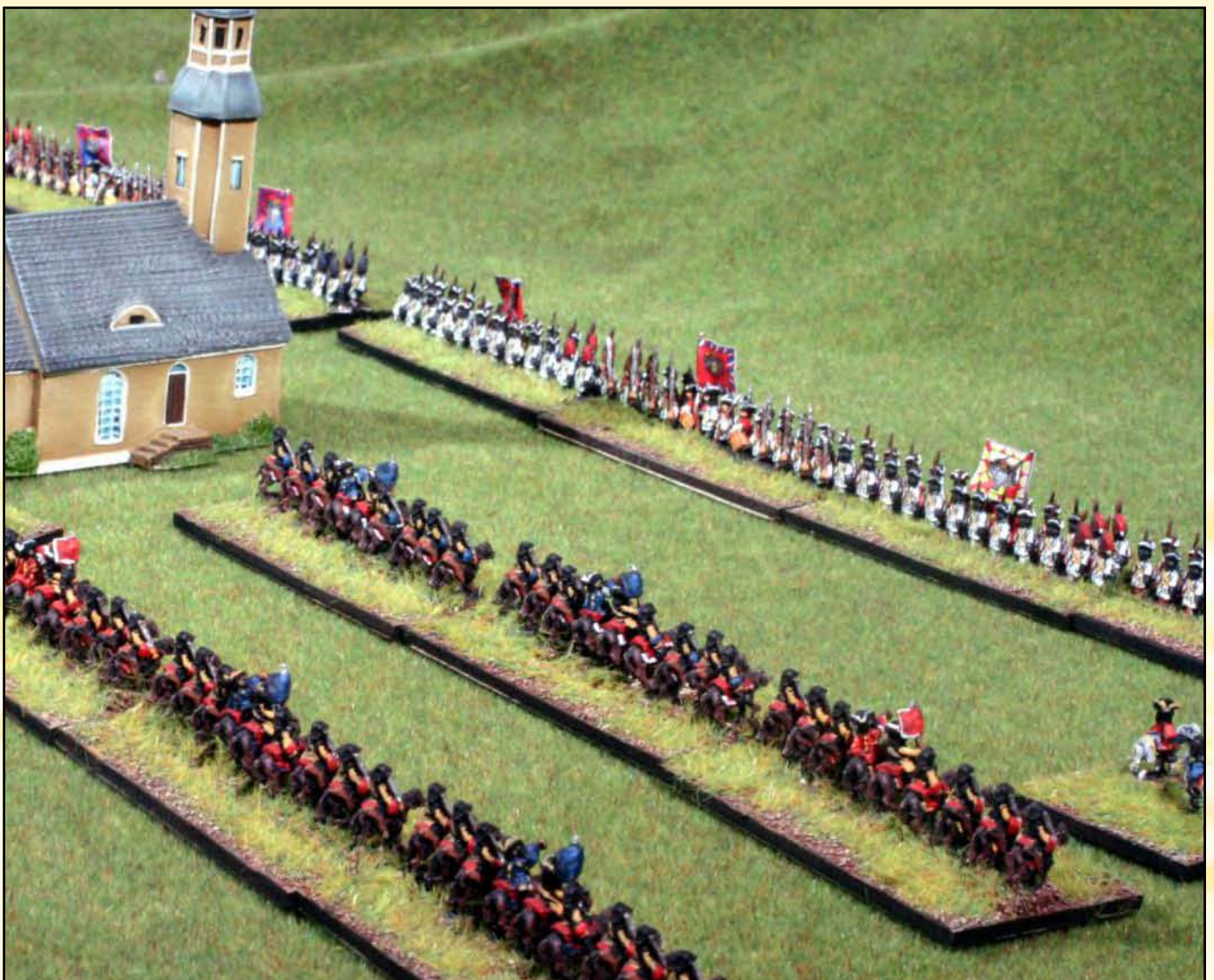
*“They are all chosen men, well disposed, well commanded, and the best inclined in the world.”
Marshal Villeroi at the Battle of Chiari, 1701.
(from *The Military History of Prince Eugene of Savoy 1736*)*

Welcome to **Chosen men, well disposed**, a set of wargames rules which enable you to fight battles set during the War of Spanish Succession 1701-1714.

The aim of this ruleset is to enable the player to recreate the small to medium sized battles of the War of Spanish Succession, or crucial parts of the major battles. Use Chosen men, well disposed (CMWD) you can, if you wish replay General Webb’s action at Wynendael or perhaps the attack of the Allied left column on the village of Blenheim.

The aim of the rules is to allow you to fight actions of this size to a finish in three to four hours while retaining the feel of warfare in this period and giving you some tactical control over your troops.

As usual, thanks to everyone for their help, especially to all the patient playtesters for their help, remarks, suggestions, and comments and to my wife, Pauline, for taking most of the photographs despite my confusing instructions as to what I was trying to depict.



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Scales and basing

To begin....

A typical starter army for this period would be one of about twenty bases, usually half infantry and half cavalry, (see the next section for what constitutes a base), plus a handful of generals and two or three guns. This represents a force of about 7,000 men. Two such opposing armies will have plenty of room to fight on a table measuring 5ft by 3ft.

Manoeuvring troops during this period was a stately affair, even – dare I say it – slow. Cadenced marching had yet to be invented, so troops have to stop to dress ranks at frequent intervals, and changing formation was complicated and difficult. Victory in CMWD will go to the player who can plan and execute his moves to bring the greatest firepower to bear at close range, or massed ranks of cavalry to the charge.

A few tips regarding CMWD:

1. Take particular care over your initial deployment, especially if you are marching on to the table in defile (march column.) You defile on to the left of the field and move to the right to deploy. You will get it wrong the first time and find yourself cursing that badly placed wood or the cavalry that is trying to occupy the same ground as your infantry. Remember that the deployment of armies on the field often took as long or longer than the battle they were about to fight and mistakes made here can be very costly and difficult to correct.
2. Keep in mind what each base represents – a number of actual units covering quite a large area. There is some room for manoeuvre on the base itself, and some empty space too, including a bit of ground directly in front of the troops. The base is not occupied by a solid block of soldiers.
3. We don't give a timescale for the game turns for one simple reason – they don't work. Battles in this, as in most other periods of history, tend to include a lot of standing about punctuated by flurries of violent activity. When the violent activity can often also be conducted at a snail's pace, it is best not to be too dogmatic about how long a game turn is. Remember, our aim is to recreate the feel of the period, not conduct a time and motion study in miniature.

THE BASICS

Scales and basing

The basic movement unit in Polemos is the **base**. A number of wargames figures mounted permanently on a single base of a given size and moved as a group. The actual number and position of the figures on the base is unimportant, as it is assumed that the officers know their business well enough to adopt the most suitable formation for any given circumstance, so players can arrange the figures according to their individual taste.



It is not vital to the rules that the specified base sizes are adhered to. So long as both armies use the same sized bases and the 2:1 ratio of base width to base depth is maintained, the rules will still work.

The suggested principal base size for 6mm to 15mm figures is 60mm x 30mm, and for larger castings 80mm x 40mm. In fact the rules will work with any size bases provided that both sides are organised consistently.

The bases illustrated in the rules are mounted on bases measuring 60mm x 30mm or 30mm x 30mm.

Troop Types

All distances are given in base widths (BW) and base depths (BD).

- A base of infantry in CMWD represents between 300 and 500 men. This generally represents a battalion in most armies of the period. Some armies tended to field larger battalions and these will be represented by two bases.
- A base of cavalry in CMWD represents 200 to 300 men. This represents two to three squadrons. A cavalry base is assumed to include quite a bit of empty space to allow for manoeuvring and to enable friendly troops to pass through each other.
- An artillery base represents two or three guns.

Base sizes

- A standard base width for infantry or cavalry represents about 100 yards.
- A standard base depth represents about 50 yards
- Artillery bases are 50 yards square.
- A baggage base represents an area from 50 to 100 yards by 50 yards.
- Some dragoons dismounted to fight on foot. Where desired, this should be depicted by having duplicate bases of standard size, one having mounted figures and the other dismounted. An extra small base of unmounted horses can be added when the dismounted base is used.

In all cases, the area represented by the base is not all necessarily occupied by the troops. It represents a 'zone of control' and includes room for manoeuvre, intervals between subunits, close musket range and space for the officers to promenade, avoiding close contact with the men.

In all cases, the abbreviation BW refers to the width of a standard base representing about 100 yards, whilst BD refers to a standard base depth representing about 50 yards.

TROOP TYPES

The Foot



The basic infantry type is the musketeer, formed in close order and armed with a firelock musket and socket bayonet.

There were many variants of infantry musket drill used in the War of Spanish Succession, often at the whim of individual colonels. They can be boiled down to two main 'schools':

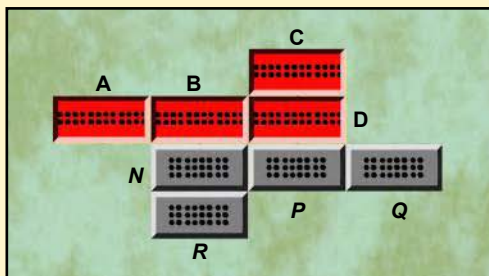
The **A Prest school** favoured the offensive. In theory, troops using this system would advance to close range and discharge their muskets at the enemy, usually by ranks, before rushing in to close with the bayonet. The enemy, also in theory, would not wait to receive the rush of cold steel but, softened up by the musketry, would take to their heels. In fact, troops using the a prest system were more likely to continue to fire than to try to charge into contact.

The **Dutch school** placed less emphasis on the bayonet. Troops using this system would try to make the enemy waver by the use of fire tactics alone. Volleys were usually delivered by platoons in a strict order, allowing the fire to ripple down the length of the unit and maintaining a constant fire as platoons reloaded while their comrades were firing. This system was first practised by the Dutch and British infantry, although others took it up in time; some French infantry, for example, used the Dutch system at Oudenarde in 1708, though it was by no means universal in that army even at the end of the war.

Ranged Combat

Example

The firing side's bases are ABCD. The defenders are NPQR.



Base A may support base B when it fires at base N. Base Q may support base P when fired at by base D. Neither base C or base R counts as supporting their comrades.

Fire effect

Defender's total is higher or scores equal	No effect
Firer score higher by 1 or 2	Defender recoils 1BD
Firer score higher by 3 or 4	Defender recoils shaken 1BD
Firer score higher by 5 or more	Defender breaks

Cavalry test to charge

To order cavalry to charge requires the same TPs as a normal move (e.g. 2 TPs if initiating a charge with a brigade from stationary, 1TP if continuing a move, etc) but the cavalry do not move until the charge test is taken.

Charge test is taken per base, and the attacking player can choose in which order the bases take the test.

Procedure

Both sides roll 1D6. The cavalry factor is 3, plus the D6 roll, plus or minus any relevant modifiers. The target takes their factor from the table below, plus the D6, plus or minus any relevant modifiers.

Cavalry charge factor	Defence factor			
	Cavalry	Infantry	Dismounted dragoons	Artillery
3	3	4	2	2

Modifiers

Plus One

- If Veterans.
- A base in same brigade has successfully passed charge test this game turn.

Plus Two

- Testing to charge enemy flank or rear.

Minus One

- If Raw.
For each shaken level.
- If testing to charge infantry with two secure flanks.
- If Cavalry facing heavier cavalry (e.g. dragoons facing horse).

Plus any terrain modifiers.

Charge test effect

Testers lose.	Refuse to charge. Remain stationary this game turn.
No difference or testers win by 1 or 2.	Testers charge. If target is cavalry, these will counter-charge. The opposing bases will meet halfway between their starting positions and angle. Other troop types will stand to receive charge.
Testers win by 3 or 4.	Testers charge. Target receives attack stationary and is shaken.
Testers win by 5 or more.	Target breaks before contact.

A charge must be carried out in a straight line; there can be no wheeling during the charge. Opposing bases do not have to conform to each other.

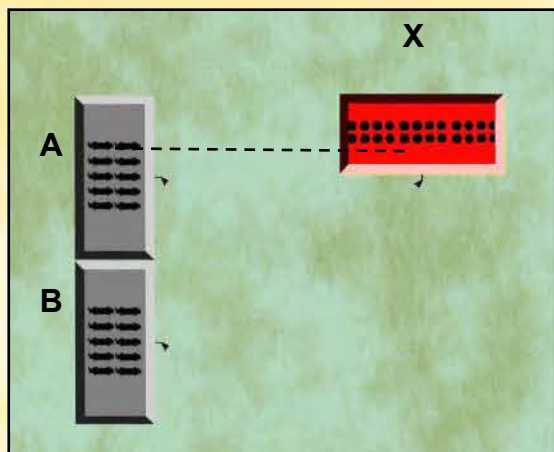
A cavalry brigade of the same division as the charger, immediately behind and within 1BW, may advance the same distance as the charger or countercharge.

When a cavalry base launches a successful charge, any supporting cavalry base may move alongside them. The opposing sides stop moving as soon as contact is made.

Flank Attacks

Flank attacks

In order to carry out a flank attack, the charging base must begin its move with at least part of its front behind a line projected out from the front edge of the target's base.



Cavalry base B can carry out a flank attack on infantry base X, base A cannot.

If a defender breaks before contact, the chargers continue their move to the end.

If a base being charged in flank gets a 'countercharge' result, it will turn to face the chargers but will not charge.

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Firing during charges

Some cavalry are trained to fire their pistols during the charge.

If the cavalry charge will cover 1BD or more before making contact with the enemy, both charger and target may fire. (i.e. if a charge is countercharged by cavalry and the opposing bases start from 1BW or more apart, either or both sides may fire before contact.)

Cavalry charging, countercharging or being charged may fire pistols at 1BD range before hand to hand combat takes place.

Infantry or artillery standing to receive a charge from their front may fire at close range before the cavalry make contact, so long as the chargers must move 1BD or more to make contact. Infantry or artillery charged from the flank may not fire.

Shaken levels inflicted by this firing do not affect the charge test result but are taken into account during hand to hand combat.

If cavalry receive a recoil result whilst charging infantry or artillery, they will move back to their starting point without making contact.

Cavalry receiving a recoil result while charging or countercharging other cavalry will deduct 1BD from their move distance but may still charge to contact, deducting 1 point from their hand to hand combat factor.

If both sides recoil, they will not contact each other and will move back to their starting positions.



Risk to Generals

Risk to Generals

Each time a base with which a general is in contact is fired upon or involved in combat, roll 2D6.

- +1 if lethargic general;
- 1 if vigorous general.
- 2 if the general is in contact with a base which breaks.

If the result is 3 or less, the general may have been hit.

(Note: it is not permissible to fire upon a general whose base is not in contact with other troops. Yes, I know it happened, but it is not the act of a gentleman and I won't have it.)

If hit, roll a further 1D6

- 1) An aide close by is neatly decapitated, allowing the general to strike a phlegmatic pose. (Good subject for an engraving or a set of lurid playing cards.)
- 2) General's horse is killed. No movement in next game turn while an aide gallantly provides a new mount.
- 3) A spent bullet knocks the general over causing nothing but a bruise. No movement in next game turn as general dramatically strips off

coat and waistcoat to prove to the men nearby that he is not wearing concealed armour.

- 4) A slight wound. No movement next game turn as general heroically refuses to leave the field but has to have the wound dressed.
- 5) A severe wound. General is found a chair as he insists on carrying on. No movement or orders given in next game turn until he passes out from loss of blood and a successor is appointed.
- 6) General is killed instantly. No orders given for two game turns until his successor is found and informed of his new responsibilities.

Also, if a general's base is contacted by enemy troops, either as a result of friendly troops he was with having broken or simply by him being in the way, roll 1 D6.

If a Vigorous general rolls 1, he is captured.

If an Active general rolls 1 or 2, he is captured.

If a Lethargic general rolls 1,2 or 3, he is captured.

If he eludes capture, move him immediately to the nearest friendly troops.

If a general is lost, a successor is appointed after one game turn if severely wounded, two game turns if killed or captured.

Roll on the random table in 'Ranks and grades of general' above to find the ability of the new general.



Example of Combat

Example of Combat

Dramatis personae

- Brigadier *Norbert Bennington's* Brigade, comprising 2 battalions of trained British infantry, each 2 bases strong. Dutch school. (AB and CD)
- Brigadier *Wolverton Spriggs's* Brigade comprising 9 squadrons (3 bases) trained British horse. (F, G and H)
- Brigadier the *Comte d'Hautfront's* Brigade comprising 4 battalions trained French infantry. A prest school. (P,Q,R and S)
- Brigadier *Malheureux's* Brigade comprising 9 squadrons (3 bases) trained French horse. (X,Y and Z)



First game turn.

Tempo player moves.

The British get the Tempo. They have been advancing steadily on the stationary French for the last three game turns. Bennington's infantry brigade receives 1TP and moves forward 1BW, Spriggs' cavalry receives 1TP and advances 2BW. Bennington is now within 1BW of d'Hautfront and may fire if he wishes to. He decides to wait until his men can see the whites of the enemy's eyes.

Non-tempo player moves.

D'Hautfront now takes his opportunity; he is given 2TPs by his divisional commander, sufficient to initiate a move. The brigade advances to point blank range. The opposing bases are now in contact.

Malheureux also receives 2TP, but his Brigade is in an awkward position. It could charge, but this has to be in a straight line from their present position so they would only catch the two bases on the left of Spriggs' Brigade. Malheureux decides to wheel instead, to face the approaching British.

Example of Combat



Non-tempo player combat

The French infantry fires. D'Hautfront can choose the order in which this takes place and decides to fire in order from his right.

Battalion P fires at ½ battalion A:

- P has a fire factor of 3, (a prest at point blank range) +1 (first time firing), +1 (a prest advancing to fire) + a die roll of 3 = **8**.
- A has a defence factor of 3 and a die roll of 2 = **5**

The difference is 3. Consulting the Fire Effect table – A recoils 1BD shaken.

Battalion Q fires at ½ battalion B:

- Q has a factor of 3 (point blank), +1 (first time firing), +1 (a prest advancing), + a die roll of 2 = **7**.
- B has a defence of 3 and rolls 3 = total **6**.

The difference is 1. Consulting the Fire Effect table – B recoils 1BD.

Battalion R fires at ½ battalion C:

- R has a factor of 3, +1 (first time firing), +1 (a prest advancing) + a die roll of 1 = **6**.
- C has a defence of 3 and rolls a 5 = a total of **8**.

His total is higher than that of the firer, result: No effect.

Battalion S fires at ½ battalion D:

- S has a factor of 3, +1 (first time firing), +1 (a prest advancing) + a die roll of 5 = a total of **10**.
- D has a defence of 3 and rolls a 2 = total **5**.

The difference is a huge 5. D immediately breaks and is moved back 2BW. Next turn the base will be removed.

Example of Combat

Outcome moves

Bennington must now check the morale of his brigade.

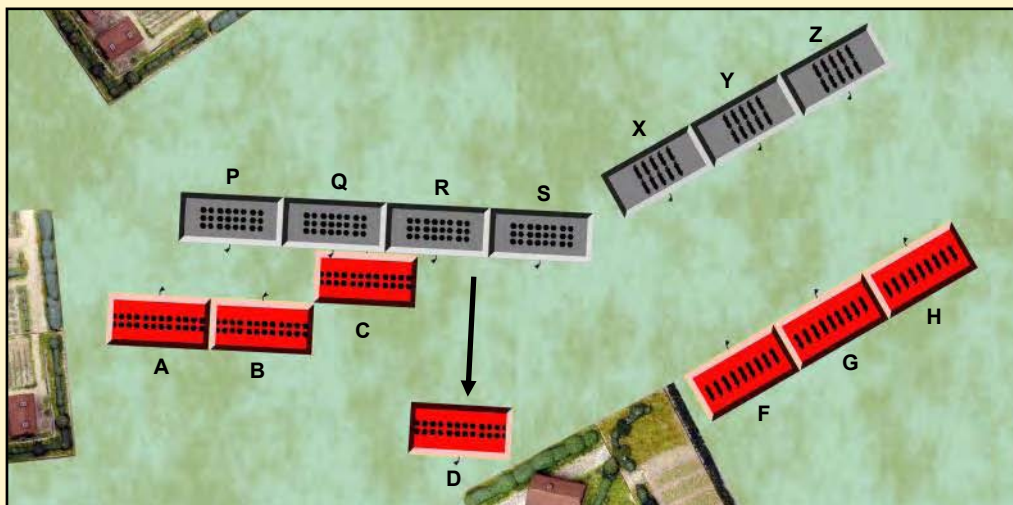
He adds:

- 2 points for base D, which has broken
- 1 point for A which is shaken, a total of 3.

He rolls a 2, which is fortunate; this results in a -1 from the total, a final result of 2.

If the morale test had resulted in a score exceeding the number of bases in the brigade, the whole brigade would have become spent and would take no further part in the battle.

So far, the British have taken a bit of a drubbing. Hopefully the cavalry will be able to redress the balance.



Second game turn.

Tempo player moves

This time the French have won the Tempo and will move first. However, due to the critical nature of the fighting in other parts of the battlefield, only 1TP is available for this part of the action. A difficult decision is needed – does the player give the 1TP to d’Hautfront, to enable him to follow up the recoiling British infantry or does he give it to the cavalry?

Foolishly, perhaps, he declines to capitalise on the infantry’s success and instead orders his cavalry to charge.

Tempo player combat

Before the cavalry charge is resolved, the infantry firing is carried out. Again, d’Hautfront may choose the order in which his battalions fire.

He chooses to fire R first.

- R has a fire factor of 3 at point blank range, +1 for being supported by S. He rolls 3, at total of 7.
- C has a defence factor of 3 and rolls 3 = a total of 6.

A difference of 1, which consulting the Fire Effect table forces C to recoil 1BD.

Next, d’Hautfront fires battalion P.

- Fire factor is 1 at close range. He rolls 4 making a total of 5.
- A has a defence factor of 3, -1 as he is shaken, and rolls 2 = a total of 4.

A therefore recoils 1BD.

Example of Combat

Battalion Q fires.

- Fire factor 1. He rolls 3 = a total of **4**.
- B's defence is 3. He rolls 6 = a total of **9**.

The defender's score is higher than that of the firer, therefore no effect.

The British infantry is being forced back, but d'Hautfront curses the lost opportunity, missed by his not being allowed to advance battalions P and Q. If he had been allowed, their fire would have been at point blank, a factor of 3, plus an extra +1 for A prest troops advancing – a starting point of 4 rather than a miserable 2 could have been decisive.

Now it is Malheureux's turn. He gives the order to charge first to his right hand base, Regiment X, followed by Y and Z.

X must test to charge F

- He has a charge factor of 3, plus a die roll of 2, a total of **5**.
- F, in response, has a defence factor of 3, plus a die roll. He rolls 4, a total of **7**.

This exceeds X's paltry 5 and the French regiment refuses to charge. Both X and F remain stationary.

Now Y tests to charge G

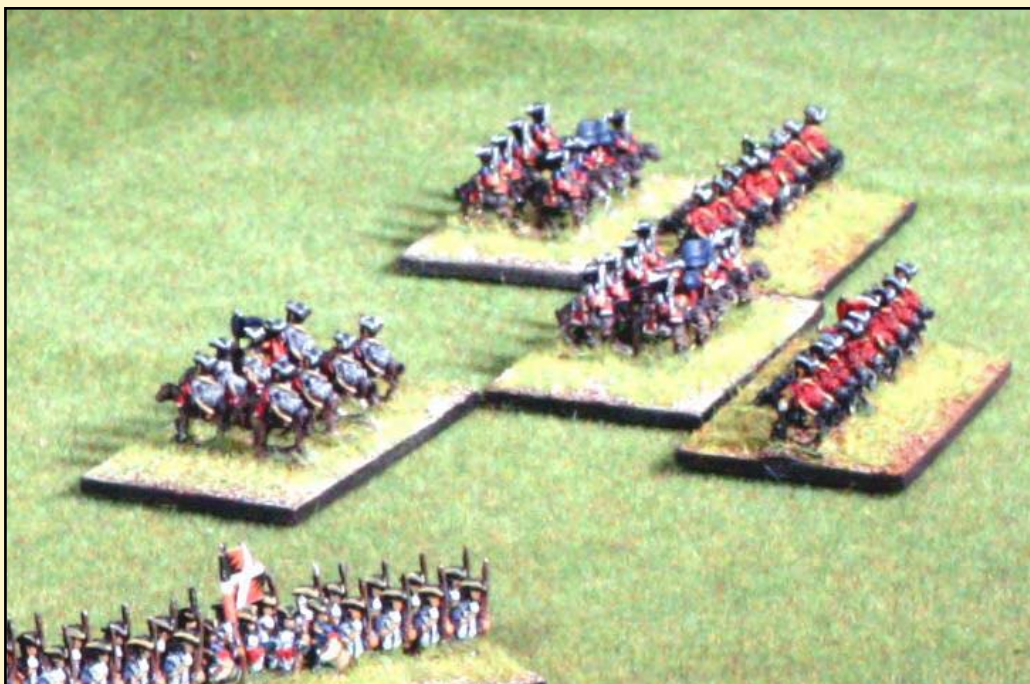
- He has a factor of 3 and rolls 4, a total of **7**.
- G also has 3 and also rolls 4 giving a total of **7**.

The scores are equal, consulting the Charge Test effect table shows that Y charges and G is able to countercharge. The two bases meet midway between their starting positions.

Z tests to charge H

- He has a factor of 3, +1 as another base in the brigade, Y, has passed a charge test this turn. He rolls a die and scores 3 for a total of **7**.
- H has a defence factor of 3; he rolls a die and scores 2 = a total of **5**.

The difference is 2 meaning that Z charges and H countercharges. The two meet midway between their starting points.



Example of Combat

The French cavalry discharges its pistols during the charge. The British, as is usual custom in that army, disdain to use their pistols and charge straight in with cold steel.

Y fires

- The factor is 0, as the firing takes place at 1BD - Long pistol range – plus a die roll. He rolls 3 = a total of **3**.
- G's defence factor is 2, +1 as he is countercharging. He also rolls a 3 = a total of **6**.

G's result exceeds Y's total, so there is no effect.

Z fires.

Again the factor is 0 plus a die roll. He rolls 5 = a total of **5**.
H's defence is 2, +1 for countercharging. He rolls a 1, so the total is **4**.

The difference between the two scores is 1. Consulting the Fire effect table means that H recoils 1BD. The fire has effectively slowed H down, but the two sides were only 2BW apart when the charge commenced and so still have sufficient movement to allow the two opposing bases to charge home.

Had the pistol fire caused the British cavalry to become shaken, this would have taken effect during the hand-to-hand combat to come.

Now two of the French cavalry bases have charged home and their British opponents have successfully countercharged, we move on to decide the outcome of the hand-to-hand combat.

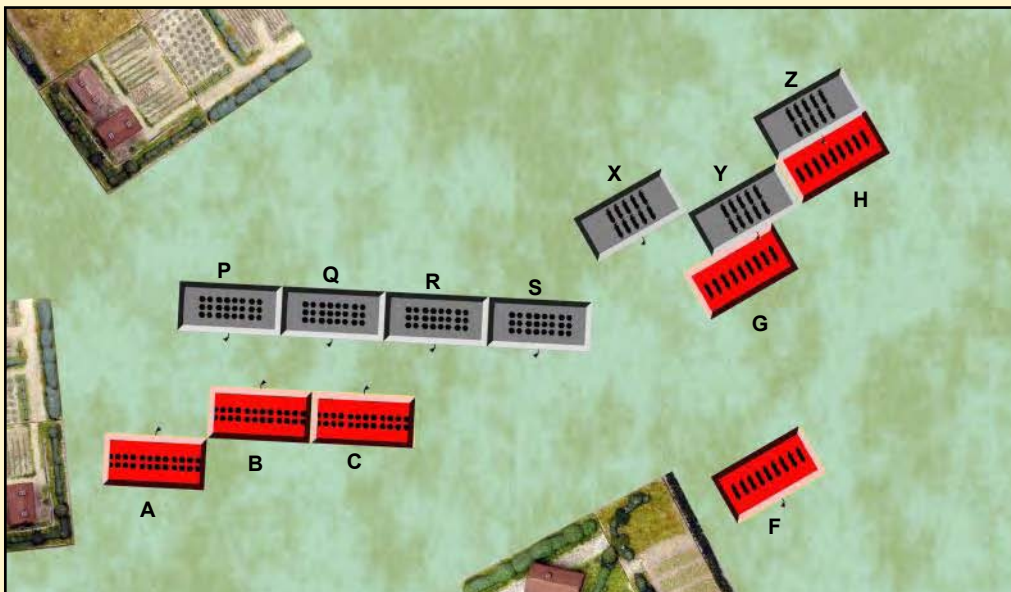
Hand to hand combat

- Y rolls a die, scoring 3, +2 for charging, -1 for having fired during the charge = total **4**.#
- G rolls a 3, +2 for charging = total **5**.

The difference is 1. There is no result. The combat will continue into the next combat round.

- Z rolls a 2, +2 for charging, -1 for having fired = total **3**.
- H rolls a 5, +2 for charging, -1 for being slowed (recoiled) by fire during the charge = total **6**.

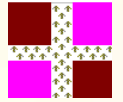
The British base wins by 3. Z is forced to recoil 1BD, H follows up, remaining in contact.



Army Generators



FRENCH



Cavalry Division

Roll 1D6 to establish number of brigades.

1,2	2 brigades.
3,4,5	3 brigades.
6	4 brigades.

Roll a 1D6 per brigade to establish number of regiments/bases.

1,	2 bases.
2-5	3 bases.
6	4 bases.

Roll a second D6 per brigade to establish types of cavalry.

1	Dragoons.
2-6	Horse.

Roll a third D6 per brigade to establish troop quality.

Dragoons	1,2	Raw
	3,4,5	Trained.
	6	Veteran
Horse	1	Raw
	2,3,4	Trained
	5,6	Veteran

Infantry Division

Roll a 1D6 to establish number of brigades.

1	2 brigades.
2-5	3 brigades.
6	4 brigades.

Roll 1D6 per brigade to establish number of battalions/bases

1	2 bases
2-5	3 bases
6	4 bases



Roll a second D6 per brigade to establish troop quality.

1,2	Raw
3,4,5	Trained
6	Veteran

All infantry use the *a prest* system.

Reserve Division

Roll 1D6 to establish type of division.

1-4	Cavalry.
4,5	Infantry.

Roll for composition of cavalry and infantry divisions as above.