Indian Longhouse
News and Views
Message from CMH Secretary
Eric Elder

This month we have articles from Tim Parker and Doug Wildfong. Tim shares a General d’Armee battle report. Doug provided us a Musket and Tomahawks v.2 rules after-action-report.

Club activity continues online on Friday nights. Like a lot of gamers, I look forward to in person gaming. Till then our projects continue. A project I have been working on is 1:2400 Age of Sail. Specifically, Russians vs Swedes 1780s.

My work in progress. Ship wakes are next.
As the Corona virus continues to disrupt gaming, Dave Manley and Tim Parker played an 1812 French versus Russian Napoleonic battle using General d’Armee (GdA) rules.

The rules are based on infantry brigades and battalions, cavalry brigades and squadrons with a great flavor for the Napoleonic era. A lot rides on the brigade initiative and its capabilities to obey orders and the use of Aide de Camps to carry out or reinforce the orders. Because of the better French command structure, the French will always have one ADC, but for the rest there is still a die roll involved and roughly 1/3 of the rolls fail on each side.

Skirmishers are based on the brigade units and capabilities with French generally getting an extra stand per brigade than the Russians. Armies can reinforce their skirmish line with legere’ or Jaegers.

The Russians have large artillery batteries which give them a subtle advantage in longevity and close-range fire.

For our battle we only used those two variables and the forces were equal: 4 infantry brigades of four battalions and 2 Cavalry Brigades of three regiments/4 squadrons each.

No guards, elites, or heavy cav. Just line and battle cavalry.

The battlefield was fairly open with a scattering of buildings and hills.

Dave and I alternated placing brigades and then rolled for orders and initiative. With favorable die rolls throughout the battle, Dave held the initiative until the final turn (very historical).
Initial movement after deployments:

Nothing special happened as we both advanced, except the Russian left infantry went hesitant which was probably favorable as the French cavalry advanced aggressively on their left.

Both forces advanced and positioned skirmishers and artillery. On the Russian right the cavalry brigades HA emptied saddles on both sides. Ultimately the French cavalry pulled back to reduce their casualties and get back into command control of the CIC. Resulting turns saw both Cavalry on that flank hesitate and essentially do nothing the rest of the game.

Both forces advanced with the Russians trying to force the right in front of the village while the French had a balanced attack with a cavalry brigade trying to force the Russian left.
Russian artillery and some skirmish fire on their left, coupled with the French cavalry being hesitant "even with a Command order" to attack gave the Russians a chance to launch some attacks with their cavalry. This was ineffective from a point of really hurting the French, but it stopped the French right infantry brigade at the crossroads while driving off the French Skirmishers.
Dave continued to push the center with his French and Dutch brigades and finally got into position to launch an "infantry assault" attack. This allowed more than one battalion to assault at the same time. At the same time the Russians launched another cavalry attack against the French line infantry hoping to catch them before they could reform from the last attack. This was the only turn the Russians had the initiative and were able to turn some units to assist against the attack.
The cavalry attack by the Russians was ineffective again but left two infantry battalions unformed and out of position to support the center infantry brigade attack. The French had successfully fought off two cavalry charges and this would take time for the Russian cavalry and the French line infantry to reorganize.

The French infantry attack in the center saw three battalions (two in column and one in line) charge two Russian battalions in line. Supporting artillery fire and one line volley caused one of the columns to retire before closing. The other two French crashed in and the ensuing melee saw only one casualty each although the French had an advantage. In GdA you have a charge sequence that compares quality, casualties, formation, etc. before the melee with an apposed roll to see who has advantage. Having supporting battalions allows you to reroll a die for a possible better result.

Because the results were a tie, a second melee occurred with both units becoming unformed, but now the supporting units pile into the melee. This gave us both a lot of dice to roll. Dave’s French dice failed him and the Russians got a very lucky roll, out killing the French by five, resulting in a French rout of the two charging battalions. Both sides had nine dice needing fives and sixes to cause a casualty; the Russian success was 7 of 9 while the French was 2 of 9; say la vi.

A subsequent brigade test roll because of the rout was a ‘1’ which results in a "Sauve Qui Peut! " result and the loss of the brigade. Since three of the four brigades were either routing or in skirmish formation, they all disperse, and the brigades supporting artillery withdrew and went low on ammo. It left only one battalion on the table and a large hole in the French center, and thus it was the end of the battle.
A French victory was so close, but the defense of the Russians and rout of the French center brigade turned the tide and was a death blow for the French. With the rout, the Dutch brigade was now facing two Russian brigades and artillery. Being outnumbered on their left, it was best for the French to withdraw and come back another day. The failure of the French cavalry on the right flank to push their attack dramatically hindered the French attack but did result in pinning one Russian infantry brigade.

Generally, the game played very well and had some interesting twists. It certainly has a good Napoleonic feel for Division size actions. National characteristics were minimized in our game, which allowed us to better learn the game.

Nothing prevents players from adding some flavor to a game and of course it also has a points system for elites, veterans, etc.
Historic Location of the Month

Napoleon Hill
Aleksotas, Lithuania

On the night of June 23, 1812, Napoleon ordered three pontoon bridges to be built across the Nieman river. The following morning, the men began to cross and enter Russian territory. Thus, began Napoleon’s campaign into Russia.

View towards Niemen river and Russian territory from Napoleon Hill, where Napoleon supposedly directed the crossing.

View of the hill from the Russian side of the river. The hill was probably mostly open ground in 1812.
Raid on Punxsutawney
After-Action Report by CMH Member
Doug Wildfong

Another game of Musket & Tomahawk 2. We figured out we were doing something wrong, which I will address at the end. Geoff McHarg ran the British, Dave Franklin ran the French/Indians. This was a fictional scenario, but “historical” flavor was based on the following:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Washington_in_the_French_and_Indian_War

Background
The objective of the British Forbes Expedition was the capture of the French Fort Duquesne. The force under Brigadier John Forbes included a large number of provincials, including a sizable contingent from Virginia under the command of Colonel George Washington.

The Expedition began at the end of June 1758, and made slow but steady progress – until Forbes fell ill in the middle of August, when he entrusted the advance to his second-in-command Lieutenant Colonel Henry Bouquet. As Bouquet’s was an actual British Army commission, he was thus senior to Colonel Washington – much to Washington’s chagrin.

On September 9th, Bouquet sent Major Grant of the 77th Regiment of Foot (Montgomery’s Highlanders) to reconnoiter Fort Duquesne, to capture a few prisoners, and to strike some blow against the French. Grant departed with a force consisting of men picked from among the 77th, the 60th (Royal American) Regiment of Foot and provincial troops that included a detachment of Washington’s Virginians under Major Andrew Lewis. Washington had personally promoted Lewis to major in September of 1755.

Grant’s sortie ended with disaster on September 15th. Survivors who made it back reported that in addition to capturing Major Grant, the French had also captured Virginians Major Lewis and Captain Thomas Bullitt. The French held on to Grant, but to appease and reward them, Lewis and Bullitt were handed over to their Punxsutawney Indian allies, who were taken to Chief Philmikraken’s village.

Knowing that his officers faced slavery at best, and more likely slow torture and death, Washington appraised the Indians would be drunk from celebrating, and demanded he be allowed to lead a raid on the Punxsutawney village to rescue his officers. Bouquet acquiesced, with the proviso that Washington also capture a few squaws and/or youngsters, most desirably Chief Philmikraken’s wife Wah-Wah-Tukina, who could be used as leverage/ransom to force the Indians, if not to the peace table, to at least sit out the further exertions against Fort Duquesne.

The Punxsutawney Indians, under Chief Philmikraken and his wife Wah-Wah-Tukina, were indeed celebrating their success since capturing Major Lewis and Captain Bullitt and were thus lax about sending out scouts. The commandant of Fort Duquesne, Colonel François-Marie Le Marchand de Lignery became aware of a British raid to rescue the Indian’s prisoners, and dispatched a host under Chef d'escadrons Matthieu Geoffrei de Grahcm to aid/reinforce the Punxsutawney.

Chef d'escadrons de Grahcm is a vainglorious, self-infatuated and petulant officer from the Fitz-James Heavy Cavalry Regiment, who is quite dissatisfied with his posting to North America – that of the second aide-de-camp to the Marquis de Montcalm. That toady Louis Antoine de Bougainville being the first aide-de-camp – and he only from a dragoon regiment! de Bougainville might have demonstrated an outstanding talent for mathematics, studied law and became a lawyer at the parliament, but how can that
compare to de Graham’s study and knowledge of Rational Mechanics, following in the path of Sir Isaac Newton’s Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica ("Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy"), and de Graham’s expertise in the new field that, at least according to him, he invented: Physics Pugnae (“Combat Physics”? Being a true cavalryman, de Graham insists on wearing his full heavy cavalry uniform whenever possible, including the cuirass. He is unpopular with the troops on account of his attitude and arrogance (and if you did not catch it, Graham is McHarg spelled backwards). Below is famous, or infamous, Chef d'escadrons Matthieu Geoffrei de Graham.
Below, the village of Punxsutawney Pennsylvania. Punxsutawney is a Shawnee wigwam village just north of Mahoning Creek. Swarms of gnats plagued the site, and the clouds of biting gnats would eventually drive the Indians away. The Indians called the insects ponkies (living dust and ashes) and called their village Ponkis Utenink (land of the ponkies), from which the name Punxsutawney evolved. Apparently, there were also a significant number of ground hogs in the area…

All the Indians were indeed asleep (Shaken) except a unit of Young Warriors. They were in the woods east of the village – the eastern most Hidden Marker (deer) – on watch. The other deer were decoys. Washington’s (Geoff’s) plan was to have Captain Andrew Gardiner and his two units of British Rangers work around to the north of the village, while Captain Spuds MacKenzie and his unit from the 77th came in from the east on the road. Washington and his two units of Virginia Provisionals (Light Troops [Scouts]) would also come in from the east, north of the road.
Below, Washington has stirred up a hornet’s nest. The Rangers are coming down from the north, the Highlanders have crossed the stream and formed line, while the Virginians come up on their right flank. The Indians might have been asleep, but they woke up fast (I underestimated how easy it would be for them to Rally from Shaken). It appears one of the Rangers has taken a couple of losses, and the Highlanders have already taken four casualties, but have just unleashed a volley putting one of the Indian units to Flight.
By this time (at least Turn 3), Chef d'escadrons de Graham and his force has arrived from Fort Duquesne to the west. In the image below, the Compagnies Franches de la Marines are visible in the top left, while there is a line unit on the road off screen. The Provisionals have moved in front of the Highlanders and put the Young Warriors to Flight, but while one of the Rangers routed, the other has just charged into the long house. They took a shot from the Vigilant Chief Philmikraken, who had backed into the structure (on top of it on the right) which missed, then a unit of Wah-Wah-Tukina’s “civilians” charged the Rangers. Two “civilians” were killed, two were captured, and one was put to Flight. The two figures in blue coats are the prisoners.

The unit of Indians that was just below the longhouse counterattacked the Rangers, routing them and rescuing the two “civilian” captives. Captain Gardiner charged in, in an effort to retake the captives, but was killed.
Washington’s force has just been too battered. Washington himself, and one of his provisional units, have had enough for the moment (as a result of being at > 50% losses, and the British Morale card being played). At this point we called the game.
It was a fun game – probably more so for me, as Geoff’s Rangers were a little timid (there were a couple of turns where a set of his cards, most notably his Irregular cards for his Rangers, were apparently in the deck after all three clock cards, and thus they were barely able to go anywhere or do anything).

Other than that, there was more activity in each turn, as I figured out before the game, we had been doing something wrong. We had been playing that when you played a card of the other guy’s, it was like a “discard”. You got a Command Point chit, but the card was basically burned. That was wrong. When you play a card of the other guy’s, the card is played – ie. if it is a Troop card, those troop types get an action. So, your units are much more likely to get most of their actions in a turn (baring the bad luck situation of their cards being after all three clock cards).

One other change I determined from the first version of Musket & Tomahawks: it is clear that a Forward Boys! card gives Elite units and Officers an action, and the Officers can give their action to a unit of the same troop type within 6”. In this version of the rules, Elite units and Officers get an action AND Officers can give an action to a unit of the same troop type within 6”.
Colorado Military Historians, Inc.

Colorado Military Historians (CMH) is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote historical wargaming and the study of military history. Founded in 1965, CMH meets monthly on the second Sunday of the month, except in May when the meeting is deferred to the third Sunday. The meeting starts at noon at the Baker Recreation Center, 6751 Irving Street (just a few blocks west of Federal Blvd), Denver, Colorado. The club also hosts gaming at least one Friday night a month, called “Friday Night Fights” (FNF) at 7:00 p.m. Friday meetings will be held at a future determined location. See website for latest information.

CMH maintains ties with numerous local, regional and national groups to help promote the hobby. CMH is governed by member-elected officers serving on the Board of Directors (executive board). Terms of office are one year, with elections held at the May meeting. New members are accepted after attending three CMH functions and a vote of the membership. Dues are $50.00 per year, payable in January. Members wishing to receive a snail-mailed newsletter subscription must pay an additional fee of $15.00 per year. Authors retain ownership of articles and graphics published. CMH reserves the right to edit or reject submissions to the newsletter.

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CMH Newsletter

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