



# Colorado Military Historians

Newsletter

XLIX, No. 12

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Battle of the Catalaunian Plains, 451AD.

# News and Views

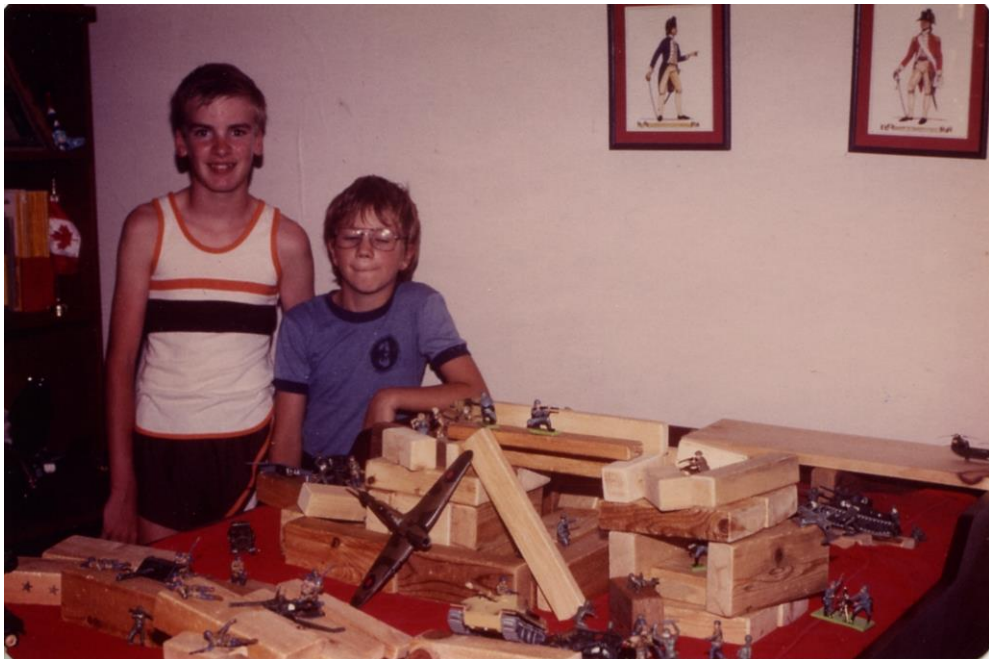
*Message from CMH Secretary  
Eric Elder*

Thanks to Larry Irons and John Brown for their articles this month. Sounds like a good Hun-Roman battle will be fought at our December 10 monthly meeting. Also, a good Medieval tournament was held at Veterans Wars.

Last month we had our annual Veterans Wars convention. Thanks to Deborah for being the coordinator. There was a good selection of games to choose from and lots of hobby swap on Sunday morning. Saturday attendance was lower than expected. I counted 22 in the morning, then 18 in the afternoon. As a result, not all games were run. I had to pop out early on Sunday but could see that the games were going well. We had about 28 people attend Sunday.

November 29, we had a club Board meeting. The highlighted discussions were the low Veterans Wars Saturday attendance, upcoming club costs, and current finances. We also approved the 2024 lease for the Baker facility. The cost did not change from 2023. The Board meeting minutes can be found in our Groups.io minutes folder.

While going through a stack of photos on one of my shelves I stumbled on a photo I thought was lost. It was a photo from when I was 11. A precursor to me getting into this hobby called Historical Wargaming. I had fun with my friend Joachim playing with my toy soldiers and wood blocks. Joachim actually went into the Canadian military, and I went into the wargaming hobby. In the photo below, you might see the advantage of a captains bed.





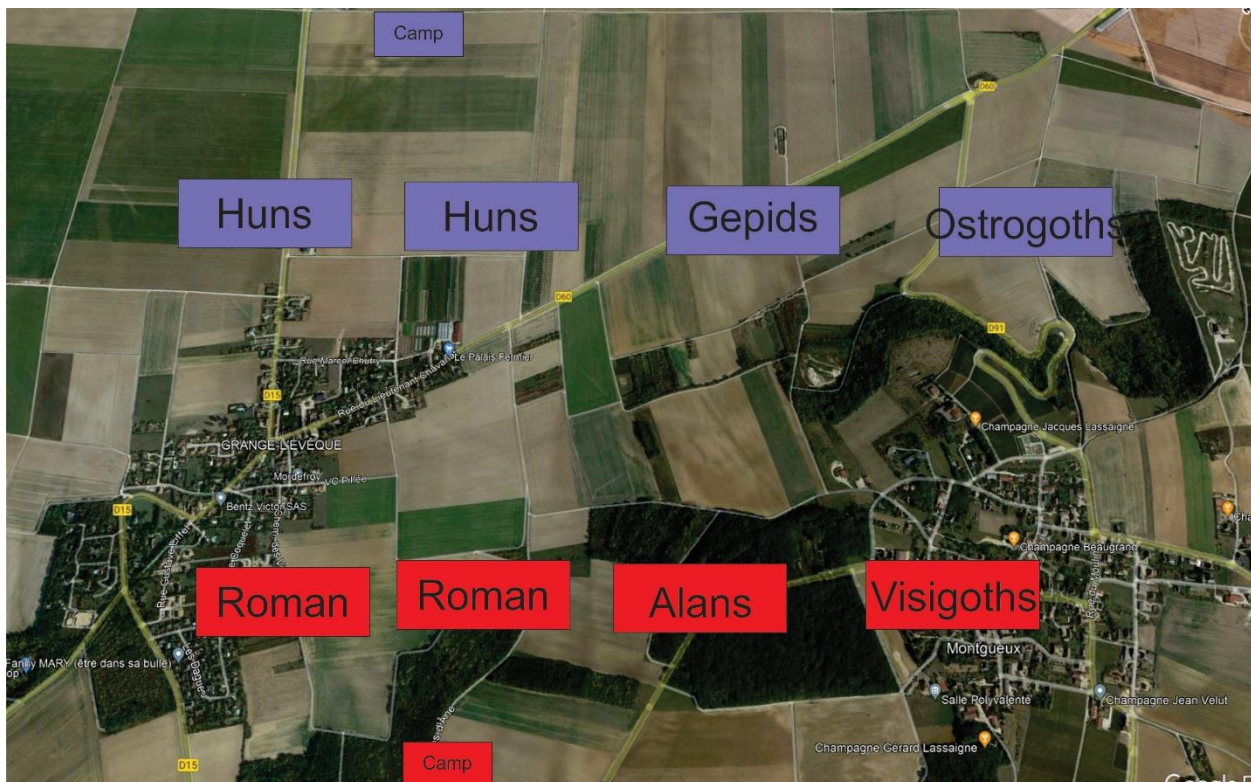
# Battle of the Catalaunian Plains

Article By CMH Member

Larry Irons

## Introduction

The Battle of the Catalaunian Plains took place on June 20, 451 A.D. between a coalition of Romans, led by Flavius Aetius, and Visigothic forces, led by King Theodoric I, against the Huns and their vassals, commanded by King Attila.



Catalaunian Plain - North to the upper left corner

The Western Roman Imperial forces consisted of Romans, Visigoths, Alans, Franks, Burgundians, Saxons, Armoricans, and Olibrones (Roman Veterans). The Hunnic forces consisted of Huns, Goths, Gepids, Franks, Burgundians, Rugii, Sciri, Thuringii, and Herulii.

The chief Roman commanders were Flavius Aetius, King Theodoric I, King Sangiban (Alan), Thorismund (son of Theodoric), Merovech (Frank). The chief Hunnic commanders were King Attila, Valamir (Goth), Thiudimer (Goth), Videmir (Goth), King Ardaric (Gepids), Childeric (Frank), and Laudarius.

The battle took place west of Tricassae (Troyes, France) in Gaul near the Sequana (Seine) River. In map above the village to the right is Montgueux, which Simon MacDowall believes is very near the site of the battle.

## **The Battle**

Attila led an army of Huns, Gepids, Ostrogoths and other Germanic tribes into Roman Gaul in the late spring of 451 A.D. for the purpose of plunder. The Hunnic force reached Aurelianum (Orleans) but found that the city was prepared for siege and that the Roman and Visigothic forces were only a few days away and in larger numbers than anticipated. The terrain was not as well suited for Hunnic horse archers and Attila decided to fall back with the plundered loot to more suitable terrain. The Hunnic force used the Roman road from Aurelianum to Chalons-sur-Marne.

Aetius collected his forces for a few days and then pursued the Huns. Southwest of Tricassae the Huns deployed a delaying force in the hilly country. The Romans approached the area along two routes with the Visigoths engaging the Hunnic delaying force. Aetius could see the Hunnic camp in the Seine River valley from the heights of the hills and ordered his forces to deploy.

As the delaying force reported to Attila that the Romans were deploying, Attila ordered his forces to leave the camp and deploy for battle. At this point the Battle of the Catalaunian Fields begins.

## **The Game**

We will refight this battle with L'Arte De La Guerre (ADLG) wargame rules with each side having 300 points, and 4 corps, 2 of which will be allied corps. The figure scale will be 25mm and the table size will be 8-ft by 5-ft.

## **Previous Battle**

The Battle of Chalons in 274 A.D. was fought between the Roman Emperor Aurelian and Gallic Emperor Tetricus I. This was fought in the same general region but farther to the northeast.

## **Bibliography**

MacDowall, Simon, 2015, "Catalaunian Fields AD 451, Rome's last great battle", Osprey Publishing.  
Schultheis, Evan Michael, 2019, "The Battle of the Catalaunian Fields AD 451", Pen & Sword.  
Wikipedia.org, 2023, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_the\\_Catalaunian\\_Plains](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Catalaunian_Plains)

# November

## Unit of the Month

Sponsored by Hobbytown Westminster

Each month, at the monthly meeting, CMH members bring their latest painted figures and models to the meeting to display their latest efforts.

CMH Member	Scale	Manufacturer	Era	Unit
Jim Rairdon	28mm	Essex	Medieval	Heavy Infantry
Jim Rairdon	28mm	Games Workshop	Fantasy	Scouts
Jim Rairdon	28mm	Alternative Armies	Fantasy	Lord Ruza on Great Wyvern
Larry Irons	15mm	Essex	Medieval	Landsknechts
Larry Irons	15mm	Essex	Medieval	Crossbowmen
<b>JEFF LAMBERT</b>	15mm	Battlefront	WWII	German Halftracks
Tom Dye	28mm	Knuckleduster	Wild West	Cowboys/Saloon Parts
Tom Dye	28mm	Perry-Warlord	WWII	US / Japanese

Winner in **RED**





# Veterans Wars 2023





# CMH goes Medieval

*Article By CMH Member*

*John Brown*

We held our now customary Fall Le'Art de la Guerre (ADLG) Tournament on November 12 during our Veterans Wars convention. Larry Irons was again the host and specified the Late Middle Ages (1300 - 1500 A.D.) as the tournament theme. He did not restrict the geographical scope, which led to some interesting matchups. Given its pageantry, heraldry, and colorfulness, this is an understandably popular era among miniature collectors. The tournament was certainly a sight to see!

Six armies showed up on the field of battle. Two were Scandinavian (one Danish-Norwegian from 1361 AD and one Kalmar Union from 1488 AD), one was German from 1452 AD, one Hussite from 1420 AD, one Palaiologan Byzantine (1330-1384 AD), and one from the Delhi Sultanate in 1366. Knights and impact cavalry were plentiful, of course, but most armies featured balanced arms that encouraged combined arms tactics. Each army had a respectable missile capability, and some had war wagons.



Knights



War Wagons

We got in a single round this meeting and hope to get in further rounds with these armies on dates to come. The bloodiest slugfest pit Richard Kasten's Palaiologans against Larry's Kalmar Union. There was tricky asymmetry here because Larry opted for a block of pikes flanked by blocks of knights, relatively expensive troops, whereas Richard chose far more light and medium units. Larry had 19 units on the mat and Richard 25. Larry's units were, on average, more lethal but he had to worry about his flanks and each loss to him counted for more. The two sides hammered each other remorselessly and their losses ticked up. Both armies came to the very edge of breaking; the Palaiologans broke first.



The Kalmar Union and Palaiologans Close

An asymmetry of a different sort characterized the match of Pat Harvey's Delhi Sultanate against Greg Rold's Medieval Scandinavians. Both sides had 22 units, but the Sultanate had armored elephants and swarms of bow-armed cavalry (heavy and light) while the Scandinavians had heavier and more reliable infantry. The Scandinavians had a contingent of knights they strained to keep away from the elephants. They also tried to minimize their exposure to a heavy bombard the Sultanate also deployed. Fighting ebbed and flowed as each side maneuvered to use its own troops to the best advantage while avoiding the strengths of the enemy. Ultimately the Scandinavians edged the Sultanate out.



Scandinavians versus the Delhi Sultanate

Jim Rairdon's Hussites surprised us all by deploying an astonishing eight war wagons, reinforced by obstacles and halberdiers, across their entire front. Flanked by a river and deep woods, this Maginot Line had but one corner, where the heavy unit deployment zone gave out. The Hussites covered from there to the edge of the mat with light troops. John Brown's German knights were helpless against such an obstacle and his own war wagons were outnumbered and outgunned. He maneuvered his pikes and heavy infantry against the exposed corner, weathering heavy fire to close. Skirmishers offered some protection, but losses were severe until he finally took out two war wagons and cracked the defenses. His knights began squeezing through the gap, but the battle was still undecided when time ran out.



Perplexed, John Brown contemplates Jim Rairdon's Hussite Maginot Line



ADLG once again showed itself to be a wonderful game: exciting, fast moving, and realistically representing the character and capabilities of various arms. The matchups this time pitted very different armies against each other, and each battle was a classic in its own way. It is a great choice for comparing tactical systems or for recreating historical battles. At the December 10 meeting we will in fact shift to an historical battle, the Catalaunian Fields in 451 AD. Larry Irons is hosting an eight (or so) player recreation in 28mm. It will be splendid to play in or see!



Another Look at the Hussite Line



Medium and Light Cavalry Skirmish

# November

## Game of the Month

Sponsored by Hobbytown Westminster



Each month CMH members host games at the monthly meeting. This award is for the effort put out by the host.

CMH Member	Scale	Rules	Description
Larry Irons	15mm	ADLG	Late Medieval Theme
<b>DAN GURULE</b>	28mm	Viva Villa!	Mexican Revolution (1914)
John Owen	1:2400	Homegrown	Hunt the Goeben

**Winner in RED**





# Historic Location of the Month

## *San Pietro, Italy*

December 1943 saw a major engagement in WWII around the town of San Pietro Infine, south of Monte Cassino. Fighting in this area resulted in the destruction and abandonment of the town. The town was rebuilt beside the ruins after the war.



# 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 \$60.00 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.

One year Adult Membership: \$60.00  
Half year Adult Membership: \$30.00  
(For NEW members who join after June 30)  
Family Membership: \$60.00 (one Adult and any number of offspring)  
Student Membership: \$30.00 (16 to 22 years old)  
Children: free (younger than 16 accompanied by member)

## Club Links:

Web Site: <https://cmhweb.org/>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cmhgamers/>  
Groups.io Group: <https://groups.io/g/cmhweb>  
Discord: <https://discord.gg/DAP2Gn>

## CMH Newsletter

The CMH Newsletter is a monthly newsletter published by the Colorado Military Historians. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of all CMH members.

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