



COLORADO MILITARY HISTORIANS

NEWSLETTER

XVIII, No. 2

February 2017

AERIAL BOMBING WWI



STRATEGIC BOMBING IN THE GREAT WAR, Part 1

By Jeff Lambert

Many of the horrors we have come to associate with the Second World War were foreshadowed by the early efforts of both sides in the First World War, none more so than the expansion of warfare into the “vertical”, or war in the air. Aerial reconnaissance was not an unexpected development, and was important in the pre-war plans of all the major combatants. What was new in warfare was the extension of war from the front line into the rear areas of the enemy, strategic war directed against the nation-state: Not just “Commerce War” through blockades and raiding, but war directed against the enemy population and economy far behind the front lines and miles from any army or coastline. The aeroplane was not thought of as a weapon, its conception being originally as that of a scout or vedette, providing information about enemy intentions and advance warning of the enemy's movements and dispositions. This soon changed, however, as each side sought a means to deny the advantages of aerial reconnaissance to the other, and soon a full-fledged war for air superiority developed. Almost simultaneously, the idea occurred that the aeroplane provided a unique opportunity to attack the enemy's rear areas by dropping explosives. The first bombs dropped from an aeroplane were in 1911 in Turkey, in one of its conflicts with Greece, but it was Western Europe where the idea grew into the terror it is known for today.

The first raids on the Western Front were by German airships, dropping bombs on Liege and other targets in Belgium. The Germans also began planning an aeroplane detachment to bomb the English Channel ports, using the cover-name “Ostend Carrier Pigeon Detachment”. Several raids by “Taubes” took place in August 1914, frail primitive craft though they were, dropping bombs on Paris along with notes demanding French surrender. Little damage was done, but the psychological effect was perhaps more important. It was this effect on morale which German Admiral von Tirpitz cited in his letter to the Kaiser, who approved air raids against England in January 1915. He forbade raids against London at first, however, for fear of hurting his relatives in the Royal Family. In the meantime, raids by one or two aeroplanes took place against the Channel ports, the first confirmed raid being December 21, 1914. But the aeroplanes were too small, too slow, with too short of a range and too unreliable to be effective in the bombing role, so the task was deferred for the time being to the dirigible “airships”. Meanwhile, the Royal Naval Air Service was launching raids against Zeppelin sheds in Cologne and Dusseldorf, destroying one airship with light bombs and attacking the Zeppelin factories in Friedrichshafen and Ludwigshafen. The first air raid by planes launched from ships (seaplane tenders) was the Cuxhaven raid on December 25, 1914 against Zeppelin sheds in northern Germany.

German Zeppelin raids on England began in January 1915. Targets were mainly naval and military installations in East Anglia, but the morale effect was exactly as von Tirpitz had expected. Civilian casualties and damages led to some wild speculations, even including rumors of a secret airship base in the Lake District.

The Kaiser soon approved raids against London, as long as they were East of Charing Cross and therefore directed at the docks and well away from Buckingham Palace. Weather and navigation problems combined to keep most of the raids ineffective, and a

slight success by the RNAS in intercepting and destroying two Zeppelins led to their being re-based out of Belgium and farther out of reach in the Netherlands and northern Germany. Raids continued through the spring, but by summer the Germans re-deployed most of their airships to the Eastern and Balkan Fronts and the British people enjoyed a brief respite. New classes of Zeppelins were put into service, with greater range and altitude, and by August 1915 the raids resumed.

British defenses were split between the Navy (RNAS) and the Army (RFC). Zeppelins were engaged by ships and the RNAS in the Channel, and by the RFC once they crossed the coast. Heavy AA guns were the greatest danger to the Zeppelins, but this was easily defeated by higher altitude. Effective ammunition eluded the pilots of intercepting aircraft, so much that there were rumors of German defenses such as a layer of inert gas surrounding the Zeppelins. The little success the British had against the Zeppelins had come from the use of bombs, so that is what the War Office officially encouraged.

Eventually, a mixture of explosive and incendiary bullets was found to have the greatest effectiveness. By February 1916, ten Home Defense squadrons had been organized, relying mainly on BE2's which, though outclassed on the Western Front, provided a steady and reliable gun platform against the Zeppelins. Nevertheless, Zeppelin losses were far more likely to result from accident or mechanical failure than anything the British threw against them.

Throughout 1916, Zeppelin raids continued. Losses and the ineffectiveness of the raids, culminating in the shooting down of SL 11, a German army airship, resulted in the final loss of interest in Zeppelins on the army's part in September 1916. The army felt that Zeppelins were too large, too slow, susceptible to bad weather, anti-aircraft fire and incendiary bullets. Of 125 airships used in the raids, more than half were lost over the course of the war, including a 40 per cent attrition rate in crews, the highest of any branch in the German military. Despite these facts, the navy continued its raids on through the war, but poor weather limited the number of raids, and this combined with higher altitudes and the concomitant stronger winds resulted in even less efficiency.

The winter of 1917 saw very few raids, until May when Operation Turkenkreuz began. In March, the Ostend Carrier Pigeon Detachment was equipped with Gotha G.IV bombers and by May 25, they were ready. Twenty-three Gothas took off, two turned back by mechanical problems and the rest diverted to other targets because of cloud cover, but 95 British subjects were killed and 195 wounded, mostly in Folkestone, for the loss of 1 Gotha shot down when intercepted by 9 RNAS Sopwith Pups as they neared Belgium.

GAMING CONVENTIONS FOR 2017

Thanks to Bill Daniel for assembling this list of gaming conventions around the country. This is not an exhaustive list but a good sample of available cons.

Gaming con for 2017

Date	Name	Origination	Location
Feb 10-12	Owlcon	RICE Univ	Houston,TX
Feb 16-19	Ghengis Con	DGA?	Denver, Co
March 10-11	Twistercon	TC	Oklahoma City,OK
March 16-19	Cold Wars	HMGS	Lancaster,PA
March 23-26 th	Adepticon	AC	Chicago, IL
April 2017	Conclave of Gamers	CG	Denver,Co
April 13 th -16 th	Star Wars Experience	LF	Orlando,FL
April 22 th	Salute	South London Warlords	London,UK
April 28-30 th	Little wars	HMGS Midwest	Chicago, IL
May 4-7 th	Recon	HMGS South	Kissimmeel. FI
May 26-28 th	4 th Ann. Warlord Game day	Warlord	Midwest city, OK
May 26-28 th	Williamsburg Muster	HRG	Williamsburg, VA
June 2017	Nashcon	HMGS Midsouth	Nashville, TN
June 14 – 18	Origins 2017	Gama	Columbus,OH
July 12-16 th	Historicon	HMGS	Fredricksberg,VA
Aug 11-12 th	Maneuvercon	TC	Tulsa,OK
August 17 - 20, 2017	Gencon 50	WOC	Columbus, OH
Sept 2017	Recruits	OSG	Lee's Summit , MO
Sept 28- Oct 1 st	Hurricon	HMGS South	Kissimmeel. FI
Oct 2017	Southern Front	TSS	Raleigh,NC
OCT 2017	Tacticon	DGA?	Co Springs, Co
Oct 2017	B-con	B-con	Denver,Co
Nov 2017	Colonial Barricks	SGt 3	New Orleans,LA
NOV 2-5 th	Fallin	HMGS	Lancaster,PA

UNIT OF THE MONTH (Not Sponsored)

Member Name	Scale	Manufacturer	Era	Unit
Larry Irons	15mm	Essex	Ancients	Indian Bowmen & Spearmen
Jeff Lambert	1/144	Shapeways	WWI	Sopwith "Pup" & Siemens-Schuckert D.1
David Newport	15mm	Battlefront	WWI	Germans with ATV
Jordan Newport	15mm	Battlefront	WWII	Flames of War Finns
Jim Rairdon	15mm	Legend Heroics & 15mm@UK	Ancients	Hussite cavalry, light cavalry, War Wagons, Mongal stone thrower, Greek artillery and peltasts, HOTTs Elf Spear



GAME OF THE MONTH

Total Escape Games Sponsor



Member Name	Scale	Era	Rules	Description
Larry Irons	15mm	Ancients	DBMM2	Seleucids vs Ancient Mauryan Indians
Dave Manley*	28mm	AWI	Sharps Practice 2	Baker Creek 1778
David Newport	28mm	Ancients	Legion vs Horde	Rome vs Gaul
Terry Shockey	6mm	FPW	Bloody Big Battles	Battle of Spicheran 1870

*Denotes this month's winner

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



CMH February Scheduled Events

This table shows what events are scheduled for CMH. Next months Friday Night Fights (FNF) and the monthly meeting (MM) are listed. It is recommended to schedule your game for future meetings and will appear on this page.

Date	Meeting	Location	Start Time
February 3	FNF	TBD	7PM
February 10	FNF	TBD	7PM
February 12	MM@#	Baker Rec Center	12PM
February 17	FNF	TBD	7PM
February 24	FNF	TBD	7PM

TEG - Total Escape Games
6831 W. 120th Ave.
Suite C

Broomfield CO 80020 www.totalescapegames.com

FNF (TBD) may or may not occur due to a lack of a scheduled host/location.

@ John Brown will be hosting a BBDBA games at the February meeting.

John Mumby will be hosting The Battle of Trautenau 1866. It is the only battle the Austrians won in the north against the Prussians. He can take 4 players.

UPCOMING EVENTS

GENGHISCON: February 16-19 at Radisson Southeast Aurora CO If you wish information or to submit a game go to coloradogaming.net

HMGS COLD WARS: March 16-19 at the Lancaster Host Resort & Conference Center, Lancaster PA

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

At the December meeting the membership voted to increase the dues for 2017 from \$35 to \$40. In the December newsletter, Larry Irons laid out the need to increase both dues and membership. We are one of the oldest wargaming clubs in the country. We need you and friends or relatives who would enjoy gaming with us to join and then invite others they know. Our future depends on you.

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 it is deferred to the third Sunday. The meeting starts at noon at the Baker Recreational Center, 6751 Irving Street (just a few blocks west of Federal Blvd), Denver CO. The club also hosts gaming at least one Friday night a month, called "Friday Night Fights" (FNF) at 7 PM. FNF will be held at several various locations. See previous schedule or view the website for latest information.

CMH maintains ties with numbers local, regional and national groups to help promote the hobby. CMH is governed by member-elected officers who serve on the Board of Directors (executive board). Terms 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 \$40.00 per year, payable in January. Members wishing to receive a snail-mail 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: \$40.00
Half year Adult Membership: \$25.00
(For NEW members who join after June 30)
Family Membership: \$40.00 (one Adult and any number of offspring)
Student Membership: \$20.00 (16 to 22 years old)



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.

Mailing Address:
Terry Shockey
13160 Garfield Dr.
Thornton CO 80241-2106

email: tshockey8981@msn.com
Web Site: www.cmhweb.org

Editor/Layout: Terry Shockey

Next Issue: February 2017

2016/2017 CMH Board Members

President:
Nate Forte
natforteg1@gmail.com

Vice-President:
Jim Rairdon
rairdon8071@comcast.net

Secretary:
Terry Shockey
(See above)

Treasurer:
Larry Irons
303-883-2146

Historian:
Doug Wildfong
303-374-9776
dwwild84@gmail.com