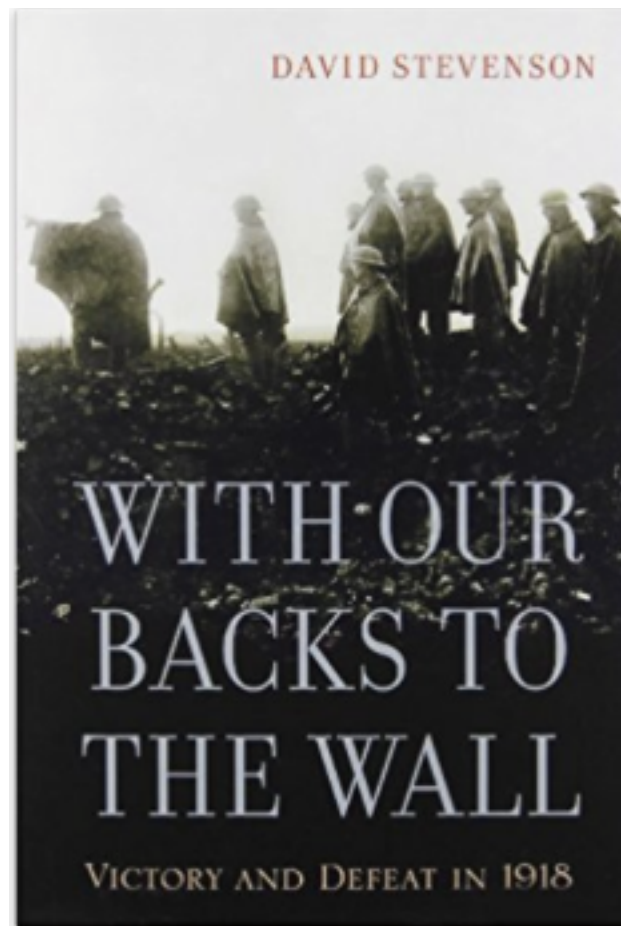


COLORADO MILITARY HISTORIANS

NEWSLETTER

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BOOK REVIEW: *With Our Backs to the Wall*, by David Stevenson, Harvard University Press, 2011. Reviewed by John F. Owen

As the year 2018 begins, to call this work timely is a massive understatement, as we mark the 100th anniversary of the final chapter of World War I. This volume focuses on the full range of WWI events in the year 1918, although the author also provides sufficient background for understanding them. Separate chapters deal with the military events as well as economic, political, technology, manpower, logistics, finance, and home fronts. If a reader seeks very detailed statistics on each of the subjects, this is the work to consult (Stevenson's background in economics and international history are featured here). Some of the categories can border on the mundane, e.g., monthly quantity of oats consumed by each army's horses, or monthly GDP by country, but one can easily skip those of less interest.

Stevenson traces how generally, the Central Powers failed to measure up in all the above categories (certain exceptions notwithstanding), and that the substantive exhaustion of all the belligerents (save the United States) in every category, made the Armistice the best option for both sides. He argues that the results of the Versailles Treaty were not inevitable, though U.S. refusal to ratify coupled with British and French failure to enforce its provisions were salient factors in the demise of the Weimar Republic and rise of its successor regime.

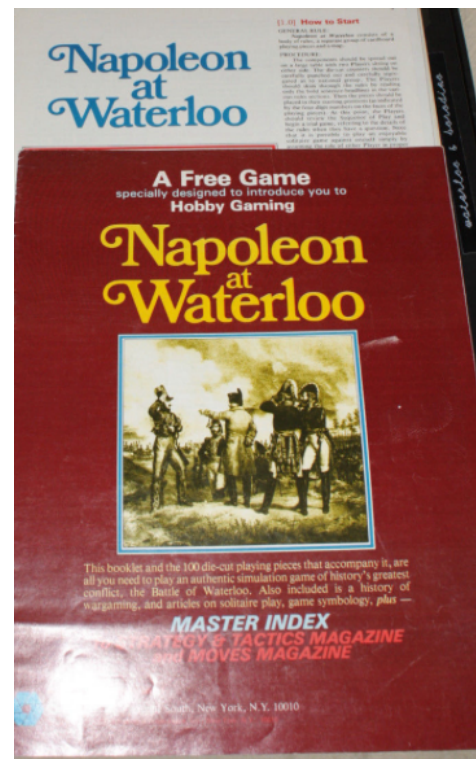
The reader should be warned that based on his British background, the author seems to award the lion's share of the credit for Germany's 1918 reverses to the British Expeditionary Force – their disgraceful near collapse in the German spring offensive notwithstanding. He tacitly implies that using recently arrived American ground troops as “fillers” for depleted British and French formations – as proposed by Haig - would have proved more efficacious. Stevenson takes some pains to minimize the contribution of Pershing's U.S. armies to final Allied victory, though he at least recognizes the decisive financial, logistical, and manufacturing support America rendered Britain and France, as well as Italy. This line of contention offers a very contrasting view from John Mosier's *Myth of the Great War* (Harper, Collins, 2001), which arguably would be a valuable companion piece.

OF MEN AND ARMS I SPEAK

As I suggested last month it would be good for the club to hear from its members about their favorite boardgames. We could also expand this discussion to include online games, video games, and historical miniature rules that are favorites. For this month, John Mumby presents his boardgames.

OF MEN AND ARMS I SPEAK by John Mumby

I can remember buying Gettysburg by Avalon Hill from Uncle Hank's Toys located in Westminster in 1960. Over the years I bought several more Avalon Hill games including Napoleon at Waterloo. Several times Napoleon marched onto the Gettysburg map to battle Meade or Lee. Later, my cousin taught me chess and Go. I had a chess club for almost 20 years at Zion Lutheran School in Brighton. The last few years I introduced Go, Chinese Chess, Shogi (Japanese Chess), and Chaturanga (ancient Indian Chess where 4 can play). My dry cleaner store owner taught me Korean chess (well, 2 games ;), and I taught him Chinese chess. For a year or so, we played at a local Starbuck's inside a Barnes and Noble Bookstore. I have played Terry's Struggle of Empires and the King's Table (seen in the TV show Vikings). If I had my choice, I'd rather play a miniature game ;)



News from the Western Front, January 1918: By Jeff Lambert

The Royal Flying Corps took advantage of their new-found local air superiority in the Arras sector to engage in aerial mapping of the German lines. The advantage has been lost, however, with the arrival at the Front of a number of new German pilots. Their training and leadership must be very good, as their aircraft are slightly inferior to the best the British have to offer, but they have been successful at turning back the British reconnaissance efforts.

Lt. Stuart (RFC) was sent over the front with his observer in a Bristol F2b to photograph the German lines. He had been promised fighter escort, which duly arrived in the nick of time and linked up with him just as a swarm of German scouts climbed up to his altitude to intercept! Three Albatros DVa's were piloted by Lt. Skelly (no relation to the recently deceased Ace), Lt. Marston, and Lt. Gowen. They were joined by Lt. Castelletto flying a Fokker triplane. The British fighters were led by Lt. Forte, who like Lt. Irons was flying an RAF SE5a; Lt. Lambert flew a SPAD 13. Using all of their speed, the three British pilots moved to engage. Castelletto's triplane flew aggressively at Stuart's two-seater, while Lambert dashed in to cut him off. Ignoring the danger, Castelletto fixated on his target but paid the price when Lambert shot him out of the sky with a long, well-aimed burst from his twin Vickers! Gowen's tracers found Lambert's SPAD in return, and Lambert dove away from the fight to assess the damage, both guns jammed and fabric tearing away from the upper wing. One gun was jammed beyond repair, but Lambert cleared the other and, ignoring the flapping fabric from his wing, climbed back into the fight.

Irons took a bullet from one of Skelly's Spandaus in the shoulder, and struggled to maintain consciousness. He dove for the trenches and safety under the cover of Forte and Lambert. Irons brought his SE5a into a good landing, but only if a good landing is defined as one the pilot survives! Meanwhile, another Fokker triplane arrived to join the fight. Forte and Lambert were reinforced by another SE5a (Irons II) and the whirling dogfight continued. Stuart struggled mightily to carry out his mission, but the Germans kept his observer busy manning the twin Lewis guns in the Scarff ring rather than taking photographs. At last, both sides ran low on fuel and all turned for home, the Germans claiming the day in spite of their loss (1 Fokker) by having forced the British to return another day to complete their mission!

Word has reached the Western Allies that the Bolshevik government is in negotiations with Germany. If Russia withdraws from the war, as seems likely, it could mean a million reinforcements for the Germans on the Western Front! Only time will tell whether the Americans will arrive in strength enough to prevent a disaster. Meanwhile, the Germans are attempting to address the inferiority of their equipment by holding trials at Adlershof, with the best aircraft chosen to carry on the fight for 1918. Look for the winners to begin appearing in early Spring.

Here is the leader board as of January 20, 1918:

SKELLY 1442 exp. pts. 512 (adj.) 18-1/2 victories
LAMBERT 765 384 4-1/2
FORTE 731 482 7-1/2
HUNT 706 628 8
IRONS 691 400 5
WHARRIER 450 435 3
MANLEY 396 213 4
MARTINEZ 335 243 1-1/2
CAVER-BOYD 263 88 3-1/2
MARSTON 257 154* 0
BEAUGARIN 232 149 1
CROWN 180 63 0
FRAKES 178 59 2-1/2
STUART 135 54 0
CASTELLETTO 125 42 1/2
GOWEN 100 100 1
WAITE 56 56 1
HOLMES 45 45 0
HERSCH 38 13 0
WEBER 36 36 0
VELTRE 33 33 0



CMH BOARD ACTION FOR DUES INCREASE

At the January 2018 CMH meeting the CMH board put forward a proposal for a dues increase. This was found to be necessary to ensure at least another year of rental at the Baker Recreation Center. After discussion those in attendance voted unanimously for the following increases.

2018

Full Year Dues \$45 with an increase to \$50 in 2019.

Half year (new members joining in June) \$30

Family (One adult and any offspring) \$45

Student (16 to 22 years) \$25

A further item was those who payed at the January meeting would be given amnesty and pay \$40.

Thank you to our membership for voting for the board's proposal.

HEXACON 2018 A Brief report from Terry Shockey

Hexicon 2018 was held January 19-21 2018 at the Ramada Plaza Denver North at I-25 and 120th Ave. Nate Forte, John Mumby and I presented miniatures games. The vast majority of games were boardgames but also role playing games and train games. The facility was very workable for the miniatures thanks to the help of Nikki Ebright who coordinated the table assignments.

Shiny Garden is the non-profit behind this convention as well as two other local conventions, Myths and Legends and WhimseyCon. Their stated goal is to bring diversity to the convention scene. That diversity includes both ethnicity issues and game genres. As Nikki stated to me the hope is that boardgamers, role-players, and miniatures gamers will come together and create a cross-gaming interest for those attending the conventions that Shiny Garden runs. Although this was the first attempt with Hexagon and the cross-gaming was very minimal there was interest by boardgamers in our miniatures events that bode well for future encounters.

Hexacon 2019 is scheduled for January 18-20 2019. Hopefully we can present even more games and garner some players from the other gaming spheres. For more information on Hexacon 2019 see www.HexaConDenver.org



UNIT OF THE MONTH (Not Sponsored)

Member Name	Scale	Manufacturer	Era	Unit
Eric Elder	28mm	1898 Miniatures	SAW	Filipinos & Americans
Terry Shockey	25mm	Knuckleduster	Western	Smithies Barn



GAME OF THE MONTH

Total Escape Games Sponsor



Member Name	Scale	Era	Rules	Description
Nate Forte	Cards	WWII	Up Front Avalon Hill	City Fight
David Newport*	15mm	Colonial	Homegrown	Rorke's Drift
John Owens	Boardgame	WWII	SPI	Battle for Germany
Greg Skelly	28mm	WWII	Roll Call	Battle of the Bulge

***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 2	FNF	TEG	7PM
February 9	FNF	TBD	7PM
February 11	MM	Baker Rec Center	12 - 5 PM
February 16	FNF	TBD	7PM
February 23	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.

OTHER EVENTS:

Ghenghis Con	February 11-14	Denver CO
Cold Wars	March 16-18	Lancaster PA
Adepticon	March 22-25	Schaumburg IL

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 \$45.00 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: \$45.00
Half year Adult Membership: \$30.00
(For NEW members who join after June 30)
Family Membership: \$45.00 (one Adult and any number of offspring)
Student Membership: \$25.00 (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.

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