



Colorado Military Historians

Newsletter

XLVIII, No. 8

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Site of Historicon 2022: Lancaster County Convention Center and Marriott.

News and Views

*Message from CMH Secretary
Eric Elder*

This month I would like to thank John Mumby, John Owen, John Brown and Don Cygan for their articles found in this newsletter.



The biggest news in our hobby this time of year is the Historicon convention. From the sounds of things, it appears the convention was a great success. I watched several videos showing the convention and there seemed to be plenty of quality games. I was able to spot a bunch of our members in action. Don has posted 21 photos from his trip to Historicon in our Facebook group.



Historicon 2022

A Historicon First Timer Impression

*Article By CMH Member
Don Cygan*



Sunflower, fresh fish, rookie, green – however you want to describe me, I have never been to a giant gaming convention before, and I had heard Historicon was the ultimate wargaming Mecca in North America. I just had to make the pilgrimage!

The event was held July 20-24th at the Lancaster, Pennsylvania Convention Center and Marriot Hotel in Penn Square. First off, what a venue! My understanding is this is a rather new venue for Historicon and what a great choice. Lancaster is full of history to begin with (the hotel was designed a few years ago to encompass the remains of the home of Thaddeus Stevens, Civil War-era congressman and noted abolitionist). The surrounding downtown area is full of historical markers and buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries.

The hotel was massive, comfortable (great AC, considering the 99-degree heat outside), and registration for this HMGS event was painless and quick. The volunteers did a fine job of directing

attendees to events and patiently answering questions (“When does the Team Yankee tourney start again?”)

Upon entering the convention center, I was flabbergasted. Five levels of ballrooms full of gaming tables and vendors. Eight or more ballrooms with events ranging from ancients, medieval, pike and shotte, Napoleonic, World Wars, modern, Old West, gangsters, sci-fi and fantasy. My head was spinning, and I honestly felt overwhelmed (and filled up several gigs on my phone camera of pictures) trying to take in all the eye candy. Especially the vendors arena.

CMH was well-represented at Historicon: Larry Armin, Larry Irons, David Manley, John Mumby, Greg Skelly, Doug Wildfong, Scott Holder. Todd Pressley (previous member) ran several awesome painting workshops. (If I missed anyone else from our club who attended, I am truly sorry).

There were games galore and since I really wanted to take in the whole experience, I only played two games as a walk-in. One was a marvelous 6mm Antietam game run by the renowned Dr. Steven Fratt, using his own ruleset. Another was a marvelous variation of “Check Your Six!” on the bombing campaign over the Third Reich called “Hells Angels.” Both were great fun.

As for the vendors room – I was in heaven. For anyone who complains that our local cons no longer feature historical miniature suppliers, well, that is not the case with Historicon. Just to name a few vendors with some marvelous wares: Gaddis Gaming, The Miniature Building Authority, Battlefield Terrain Concepts, TimeCast, NextGen, Age of Glory, and Badger Games. Some of the most beautifully sculpted 28mm figures I saw were from Sash and Saber Castings, whose Napoleonic and ACW figures were works of art. The vendors were rounded out by Decision Games, Winged Hussar and Nafziger publications, and Belle and Blade videos.

The theme for the convention this year was “World in Conflict: Italy,” but to be quite honest, I saw very few games that followed the theme. The War College, run by Paul Westermeyer, featured speakers each day. Subjects here ranged from designing game rules to the history of animals in warfare.

There would be way too many games to detail here. Since I decided to move around a lot and take photos, I thought I would mention a sample that I am sure won awards -- and in my opinion -- were some of the most unique!

--A 54mm Walls of Troy game played on the floor using Triumph! rules.

--A game of “What a Tanker” played with 1/35th scale Sherman tanks dueling a German Panther tank in the Normandy bocage.

--Steve Fratt’s Antietam game, with 6mm figures giving us the ability to play on a massive table in a more strategic over tactical manner.

--A massive, 40-foot-long table was the setting for a three-day modern micro armor game titled “The Encirclement of Kiev, 2022.”

--Tourneys for Team Yankee, DBA, etc.

--There were some great Pulp, Western, Pirate, and Gangster games, too. One of the most interesting was a scenario straight out of “Escape from New York” where a president had to escape roving assassin gangs in a Third world country.

If you have never been, and wish to attend a future Historicon, my biggest suggestion is to bring lots of money. I dropped a lot (not just on food and drink) but on purchases in the vendor’s hall and the flea market called “Wally’s Basement,” where I walked away with some great deals. As far as I was concerned, it was well worth it, since it’s harder for me to really see the quality of orders over the internet. All told, Historicon was a wonderful experience for this first-timer. I hope to attend again in the future, or perhaps some other large convention. I highly recommend making this pilgrimage (at least once in your life) to this wargame Mecca.



July

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
David Manley	28mm	4 Ground	Naval	Pier & furniture
David Manley	28mm	H & Dangerous	Viking	ADLG – camp
DAVID NEWPORT	28mm	Wargames Atlantic	Ancients	Persians

Winner in **RED**



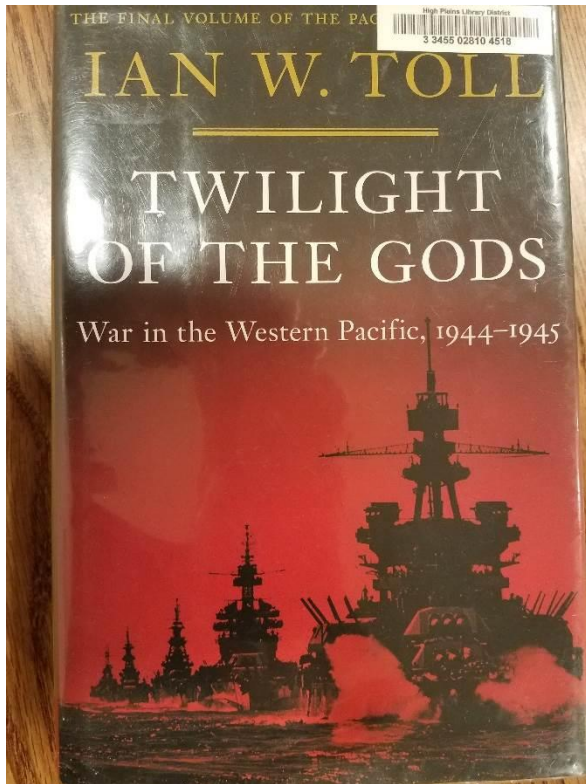
TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

WAR IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC 1944-1945

BY IAN W. TOLL

Book Review by CMH Member

John Owen



This is the 3rd volume of Toll's trilogy on the conflict. While the subject matter will be generally familiar to those interested in the topic, the work is more comprehensive, and yes, exhaustive than previous treatments. Included are representative individual accounts of many engagements, as well as tidbits and anecdotes relating to same. Documentation is also voluminous, as attested by 66 pages of notes. One area that could stand improvement are maps, which were sporadic, small scale, and often not ideally collocated with the pertinent text. A more detailed companion map set would be beneficial.

To a much larger extent, the author explores the decisions and personalities of the various high-level commanders impacting the outcomes. His critique of Mac Arthur's functioning and manipulation seem to be on the mark, including the myriad of political machinations surrounding the general. Neither did he spare Halsey regarding his badly faltering performance in the final year of the war. Conversely, due credit is given to the relatively unsung victory architects such as Nimitz and

Kenney. The role of the Commander in Chief, FDR, in shaping Pacific strategy is not neglected.

One example of the thoroughness of coverage is the author's tracing of the origin and development of the use of kamikaze suicide aircraft as part of Japan's strategy in the closing year of the war. Myths and misconceptions regarding employment of this tactic are dissected and explained, as well as evolving U.S. measures to combat them. Citations from novice pilots recruited for kamikaze operations provide a Japanese perspective as well.

Considerable analysis of the two major typhoons which beset the U.S. 3rd Fleet are provided, and the various players in these disasters that allowed them to occur. Arguably, these inflicted as much damage on the fleet as a full-scale kamikaze assault. Only the fact the U.S. Navy had sufficient ships to take up the slack permitted operations to continue unimpeded to a large extent. Admiral Halsey's dissembling may have narrowly saved his command of the 3rd Fleet but brought him little credit from those who knew the true state of affairs. Only his early war performance (and the Navy's reluctance to air its dirty laundry) prevented the imposition of deserved disciplinary action.

There was no mention whether the author is fluent in Japanese, but Japanese documents and peculiar phrases in that language are referenced extensively. This applies to letters, reports, and diaries of Japanese general officers and government personnel, as well as civilians. Ground combat in the island campaigns is covered as well, albeit not in the same detail; works by other writers dealing with Iwo Jima

and Okinawa, for instance, can supply more in-depth material. There seems to be little to criticize in the conclusions rendered, one exception being Okinawa, where there might have been some mention of General Buckner's failure to seriously consider a landing in the rear of the Japanese defenses. One can only conjecture how many additional U.S. casualties this rejection caused.

The author goes into considerable detail of the operation of the Japanese constitution and how this impacted politics and thus the onset and conduct of the war. Interrogated at the end of the conflict, senior Japanese politicians and commanders admitted the assumptions on which they based rationale for attacking the United States were almost universally faulty. Toll concludes that by the end of the Marianas campaign, Japan had zero chance to prevail, yet the unwillingness to acknowledge this and the continued dominance of the military hard-liners sacrificed nearly 2 million additional citizens, military and civilian, by the time of surrender.

For those readers eager for unavailable details and in-depth examination of the personalities, strategy, and campaigns of the Pacific War, this series is highly recommended.



USS Franklin listing after damage from Japanese bombs, March 19 1945.

Historic Location of the Month

Stevens-Smith House and Cistern Lancaster, PA

Behind the Steves-Smith House attached to the Lancaster Convention Center (location of Historicon 2022) there was unearthed a cistern that is believed to be an emergency hiding location for slaves travelling the Underground Railway.



Gods of Egypt: Set Upsets Horus

Star Gate Edfu Remains Unharmd in 10 July Hot HOTT Scenario

Game After Action Report

By John Brown

In our previous two newsletters we set up the climactic Hot HOTT battle between Horus and Set, weaving together myth, memory, and the significance of the Star Gate Edfu to early human history. At our July monthly meeting the dramatic collision occurred, with Horus moving south and Set north along the west bank of the Nile. Their objective was the temple complex of Edfu, wedged into bluffs facing the river, and the fortified Star Gate Edfu in the desert west of that. Defying time-honored protocols, Horus and Set were competing to seize it from its small Inter-Galactic Confederation custodial staff.

Horus dominated with respect to aeriels, artillery, and magic. Many of his troops were mummies enjoying an additional inning due to Isis' and Osiris' Recombinant DNA Technology. Set's troops were more diverse in origin (Ceratopsians, Crocodilians, Desert Dwellers, Ethiopians, and Sea Peoples) but more mundane in their capabilities. Spears, swords, bows, and riders were their forte, abetted by a few aeriels and behemoths. Horus manifested himself in the battle as an Aerial Hero. Set presented himself as a Behemoth: a Triceratops later transformed in Egyptian lore to the more familiar Hippopotamus.



Above we see Horus' slavish henchmen, Les Stuart, Richard Kasten, and Doug Rains, arraying their forces for battle. Jim Rairdon, another Horus devotee, is missing from the photo. Dick Fickes, Cal Pearson, Greg Rold, and John Brown led the noble forces fighting for Set. To the left of the photo is the fortified Stargate Edfu. It is separated by a leafy oasis from the temple complex of Edfu, which is wedged into a string of bluffs overlooking the Nile River off the photo to the right.

The next photo, below, provides a broader view of the contested ground looking west from the banks of the Nile. Nearest is the river port, connected by road to the temple complex. Beyond the Temple Complex one sees the Oasis and then the Star Gate. Bluffs (tan) run north to south through the Temple Complex, and dappled sand dunes are north and south of the Star Gate. The banks of the Nile feature marshy terrain, some of which is connected to the river by short water ways. The contending forces are arrayed for battle. Note Horus and his accompanying Hawkmen positioned behind the lines near the upper right corner of the board.



As the battle began, Set and his accompanying Triceratine Behemoths surged forward on their army's right, flanked by Pterosaurs to cover the marshes. To their left advanced the Sea People and the Crocodilians with Heavy Spear forward and Chariots and Knights to the rear. The mounted troops were ready to burst through and devastate targets of opportunity. In the photo below we note Set has made contact and is bowling back his immediate adversaries. Meanwhile Horus and his companions, using their extraordinary mobility, have shifted from one end of the board to the other to face Set.



The battle raged through the Temple Complex and Oasis as well, although the terrain here delayed coming to grips. The photo below depicts the height of the action, with Horus' bowmen pushing through the Temple Complex and his Mummy assault troops pushing through the Oasis. Queen Aso's Ethiopians met them in both places while Set's Desert Dwellers and Horus' rightmost command fenced around the perimeter of the Star Gate. Horus' elephants stymied the Desert Dweller advance, but these shifted some of their forces to turn into the flank of the Mummies in the Oasis. This proved devastating.



While the situation was unravelling for Horus' forces in the Oasis, the lines collided in the center and east. Set's Crocodilian Raptor Riders pushed through their supporting pikemen to severely punish Egyptian spearmen holding Horus' center. Horus himself took on Set, precipitating a brawl that lasted several turns. Horus and Set were an even match for each other, but the Triceratine Cavalry alongside Set were more formidable than the Hawkmen accompanying Horus. Horus skillfully exploited the ability of his aerals to avoid unwanted engagement until a combat result left Horus and Set engaged on the ground whereas the Hawkmen were still aloft. The Triceratines brushed under the Hawkmen to surround Horus, and he went down in a blaze of glory. The photo below was taken close to the end.



Horus' forces were now in a bad way. Their leader would be unavailable until Isis gathered his pieces and reconstructed him using Recombinant DNA Technology, much as she had earlier done with Osiris. Of five commands in Horus' host, three had reached the point of demoralization. On the plus side for Horus, both armies had been so preoccupied with each other neither had been able to mount a serious assault on the Star Gate – the ultimate prize. The Inter-Galactic Confederation custodial staff remained in control of it, and by this time had help on the way. The opportunity for an entrepreneurial coup had passed. The Confederation was again in position to adjudicate the planetary traffic in Celestial Ethereum Hydrate, and

it favored multiple suppliers rather than a single supplier monopoly. The warring factions would just have to learn to get along. So much for Darwinian Capitalism!

Hopefully you have enjoyed this series of articles, underscoring the ability of HOTT to deliver an expansive yet fun and quick moving multi-player fantasy scenario. The game mechanics are simple, yet the scenario can be as elaborate as one cares to make it. CMH's Hot HOTT is a July event, paired with a Cold HOTT in January. The last Cold HOTT was a battle over Santa's Workshop, and we may well see that frigid terrain contested again in January 2023. If you are interested in participating, please contact Jim Rairdon or John Brown.



July

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
DAVID MANLEY	28mm	Blood & Plunder	Escort, Raid & Breakthrough
David Newport	28mm	Status Red Chicken	Stalingrad

Winner in **RED**



Historicon Reflections

Convention Report

By John Mumby

I am on the LittleWarsTV video about Historicon ([Link to video](#)). Just before the Kontos (rules name) game where the 12 year old in front of me was beating me in the game, I am in the Salerno game at the far edge of the table next to a gamer from Belgium!! The Hastings game with the woods that I was told I could not go into (my reputation proceeds me) I was with Billy (William to the rest of the world) winning the battle. Here is my record of the games this year:

I was with the Seljuk Turks barely beating the Byzantines. The 12 year old was giving me a tough time.

At Mortimer's Cross (Wars of the Roses), the Lancastrian general, Jasper Tudor, died so Edward won. I was on the Yorkist side.

At the battle of Antietam, Dr. Fratt played Confederates while the rest of us were Union. We were pushing the Rebs back. Dr. Fratt continued the game where it had left off for the other 4 games he was hosting. I read the history, so the Union won.

In my "fun" game, I was a Polynesian who along with 3 other five man groups, had landed on the west coast of Mexico. We met some unfriendly Aztecs and thrashed them a little to claim a victory.

In the Salerno game, my Belgium friend and I were the British force. Our intelligence sent naval forces with us to bombard the Germans. The American landing beach did not bring any naval forces. We got a big chuckle out of that and giggled as we decided not to shell the Germans in front of their breach. This game continued like the ACW game was. At the end of our game, the British had 3 victory points, the American had 4, but the Germans had 8.

Mollwitz 1740, was my next game. My one group of Prussian cavalry held off the two groups of Austrians long enough for the Prussian infantry to win the game for the absent Frederick soon to be the Great.

Hastings was next.

I played in the largest steamship with no monitors battle in South America. Paraguay launched a surprise attack on Brazil in 1865 in the Triple Alliance War. My Paraguayan ships damaged the lead Brazilian ship to win the battle.

If you watch LittleWarsTV, Miles ran the Kontos game, Josh and Miles ran the Salerno game, and Tom ran the battle of Riachuelo naval game. None of the rules have been published, so I might be helping them along with proofreading and playtesting.

I had a great time but missed Terry. I plan on going again next year.

2022 Conventions

<i>Date</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>
August		
4-7	Gen-Con	Indianapolis, IN
19-21	Histori-KC Fest	Overland Park, KS
19-21	Nashcon	Nashville, TN
25-28	Tacticon	Aurora, CO
September		
1-4	Hurricon	Orlando, FL
October		
7-8	Advance the Colors	Springfield, OH
November		
4-6	Rock-Con	Rockford, IL
4-6	Fall-In	Lancaster, PA
?	Midwest GameFest	Kansas City, MO
10-13	MillenniumCon	Rolling Rock, TX



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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