1418: BATTLES OF THE GREAT WAR (V.0.7)

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...using the 3945/Battle for 2mm Earth system (current version 0.3)...

by Rob Stening

This ruleset is based on a system I designed to facilitate variations for almost any period and combat style. However, it is not designed to play skirmishes (e.g., Samurai duels or Partisan guerilla warfare,) - rather it is designed for large battles up until the 21st century.

Simplicity is the key for wargames – the more concepts graspable within the initial reading and playing, the more ambitious games can become in a short amount of time. Having said that, some of the concepts here are unusual for miniature wargaming and so make a different, dynamic way of playing battles.

Command is something many games pay a lot of attention to (particularly Napoleonic) and others virtually none. I have devised a system that should take little time to learn and even less time to execute within games. Each command the player gives to a large unit will allow (or rather limit) what the sub-units are capable of doing (e.g. a battalion commanded to retreat cannot then advance). They are always assumed to have been passed on successfully as there are enough limitations on action imposed in the command itself.

Scale – I have designed this exclusively with **2mm** (1:900 with 1-for-1 representation) miniatures in mind. However **6mm** are also perfectly usable (approx 1-for-10 representation) – the "standard" base size is 2"x1" and as long as the bases are roughly this size then there should be no problems.

Terminology: unlike other draft documents for my wargames (http://3945.webs.com) I am going to attempt to write with consistent terminology!

Bound – the series of actions which make up a phase of the battle. Supposed to resemble between 3 and 7 minutes, but this will be determined by exactly what is happening on the battlefield (e.g. a firefight between trenches may simulate 2 minutes per bound, whereas giant manoeuvres pre-battle may represent 10 minutes per bound). **Rather than simulating figures** (numbers of quantity or time), **every action in game is relative to real-life effectiveness**. How this works in the executional should become apparent as you read the document and then test the game.

Unit – a very generic term I use when describing concepts, e.g. "...Arming is the value measuring one unit's relative quantity of weaponry and training..."

Model – figure, miniature, an individual infantryman on a base (see below). Will almost always be referred to in plural, because...

Base – is a piece of wood or plastic on which is mounted a group of *models*, normally 30, (will be less for commanders, cavalry, artillery, heavy weapons, and some specialist assault groups). Each base represents a *platoon*.

Platoon – for those who aren't familiar with military organisations, this information will be included in the rosters. Essentially a platoon is a single base of troops, a company is a small group of platoons, a battalion is a larger group of platoons, and upwards of that are Regiments (2-4 Btn's).

High Command – these are made by the Supreme Commander and given to Strategic Formations (usually a Battalion or a player/Regiment)

Low Command – a term for the planned movement and shooting of companies (made up of their platoons). Really a posh way of saying "what the player will get each company to actually do about the High Command".

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Setting up the Battlefield:
Personally I think this should be up to the player's discretion. Some people may like to draw maps, others like random charts. When placing troops, some again use maps, others do an I-go-you-go system. I will leave this to your choice for now, but here's how I would do it...

1) The table or floor is divided into "spaces" (12" squares or smaller, adjusted depending on your playing space). Between 8 and 24 squares is suitable depending on the size of your battle. The field should be at least 3 squares deep along the shortest side.

2) Each player (not team) takes it in turns to either determine the characteristic of the space **(Open or Rough or Impractical and/or Defensible or Fortification)** *place an item of terrain (forest, town, etc.) in a "space" (no more than one item per space). For static battles their should be a "no mans land" of simply Rough Terrain between the two sides.*

3) The players then roll a die to determine who gets which side of the table. Sides are taken horizontally for most games, however players may take the shorter table edges each if they wish for earlier, more mobile fighting).

4) Trench lines (1-2" deep and counting as either defensible or fortification for both sides) are then placed. This should result in an evenly placed battlefield where neither side has a significant disadvantage, but both players will probably place "interesting" combinations which will be key to the game.

Alternatively, one player could design the entire battlefield and the other player chooses which side to take. This is my favourite way as it is less adversarial and more likely to result in developed battlefields such as this...
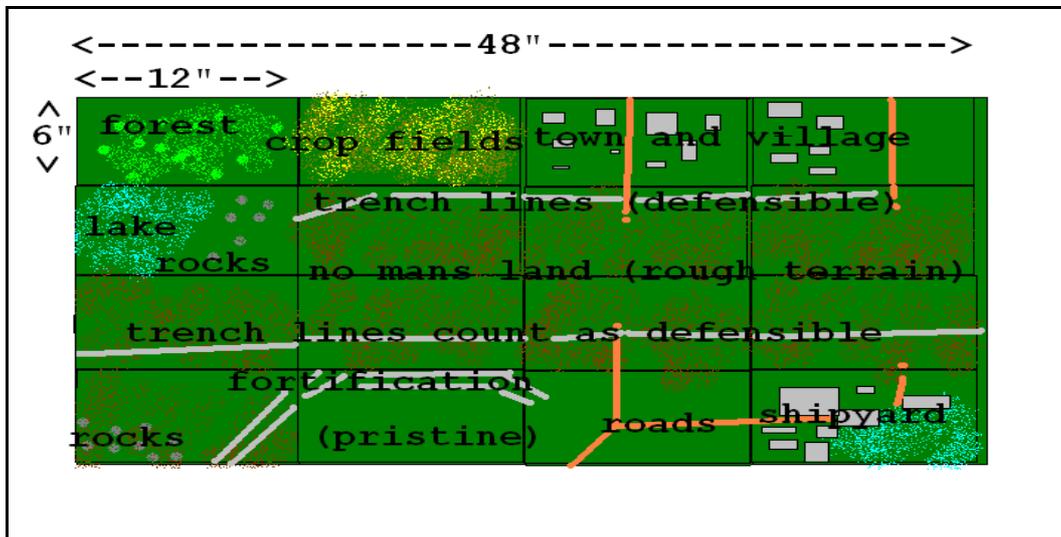
Taking turns?:
As stated on page one there are "bounds" which represent actions happening within under 10 minutes of each other. All actions are assumed to be roughly simultaneous, but their effectiveness is not.

Order of effectiveness:
This is a concept common in this series of games. Essentially the type and situation of the units involved in manoeuvres and combat determine how effectively their power can be brought to bear. To understand this and how it is incorporated in (in fact how it is a fundamental aspect of) the game, read on.

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Executing All Commands:
The supreme commander simply writes down the **High Command** for each Battalion (or each other commander, usually Battalion but can be Regimental if multiple human players). This is an example of one player's command sheet for the first 4 bounds:

Battalion	Bound 1	Bound 2	Bound 3	Bound 4
180/Btn 1	Advance	Hold	Hold	Assault
180/Btn 2	Advance	Advance	Hold	Hold
180/Btn 3	Advance	Advance	Advance	Hold
203/Btn 1	Advance	Hold	Hold	Hold
13 Cav/Sqn 1	Advance	Advance	Advance	Assault
80 Art/Btn 1	Hold	Hold	Hold	Hold
80 Art/Btn 2	Hold	Bombard B1	Bombard B2	Hold

Note how Artillery units are commanded to bombard an area (relating to a grid reference on the table).

Next **the Battalions** (or other players) will write their commands on their maps (see previous page) to **assign each company their appropriate Low Commands** or moves (as limited or determined by the High Command). (Again this phase could be time limited, especially in multi-player games.)

The High Command system:
The supreme commander (team captain or the only player) may (or rather must) give commands to Battalions (or in really big games Regiments) which limit the options for each companies commands. These commands are as follows:

ORDER →	ADVANCE	HOLD	ASSAULT	RETREAT
Dug in and safe	Stay put or move	Stay put only	Assault only	Retreat only
Dug in but under fire	Stay put only	Stay put only	Assault or stay put	Retreat or stay put
Not dug in but safe	Move only	Stay put or find cover	Assault only	Retreat only
Not dug in but under fire	Stay put or move	Stay put or find cover*	Assault or find cover	Retreat, cover or stay
may dig in but -1R during dig	*(May dig in)*	*(May dig in)*	*(May never dig in)*	*(May never dig in)*

The companies within the Battalion are then limited to performing only the actions above (e.g. no assaulting when commanded to retreat!)

The Low Command system:
This involves (unfortunately) having a map of the battlefield or a force roster. I personally wanted to avoid these but you only need a very basic one. It could be as simple as:
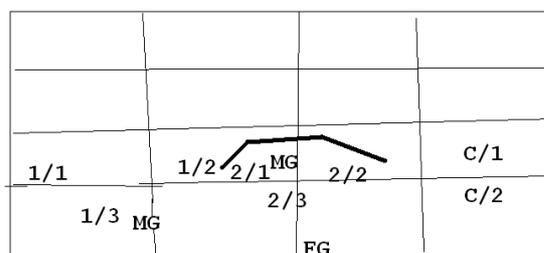
Low Commands are given to entire companies NOT to individual platoons.

This map has written 1/1 means 1st battalion, 1st company. 2/3 means 2nd battalion, 3rd company. C/1 means cavalry battalion, 1st company.

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The map relates to Low Commands in that the "commands" are drawing an arrow to indicate movement or shooting (or both). In other games I say to do this with markers – you can if you wish, but because of the nature of guns in the 20th century (if you are seen, you are dead) I think having the whole process as "anonymous" serves the strategy better.

Obviously there needs to be an element of trust here, or the players can show each other their finished commands on maps. Also consider a time limit for this step of the proceedings (1-2 minutes for a 3-battalion-each game). **Low Commands** for companies **are as simple as just arrows: move 'this' way** or **shoot at 'them'.**

Platoons in different situations:
If a company has some platoons in cover/dug in and some not, they may issue their single command to "company except"... this way for example most of a damaged company can get safe while the platoon already safe can just shoot back.

Units with no movement and no commands whatsoever (including platoons who are excluded from their company's commands, as above) may shoot at any enemies/must defend themselves. Shooting is not included in High Commands, only Low ones.

Order of everything and executing moves:
As mentioned earlier, the order in which units moves depends on how quickly they can effectively move or shoot.

Actual distances moved are as follows:

```
Slow infantry – 4cm
Medium infantry – 6cm
Fast infantry – 8cm
Slow cavalry – 8 cm
Medium cavalry – 12cm
Fast cavalry – 16cm

Moving from or in open terrain = (normal distance)
Moving from or in rough terrain = (-25% distance)
Moving from or in impractical terrain = (-75% distance)
Assaulting (after all terrain modifiers) = (+100% distance after modifiers)
Moving or assaulting on an intact road = (+25% distance after modifiers)
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Once commands are given, each unit moves or shoots depending on its type/characteristic, in the following order.

```
(#) Mark units who are moving this turn (those moving into better or worse
cover should be positioned half-way in between)
(1) Artillery and Heavy Weapons stationary throughout the whole game shoot,
those dug in before others.
(2) Artillery and Heavy Weapons stationary last turn but have moved before
shoot, those dug ins before others.
(3) Dug in infantry and any skirmishers shoot
(4) Infantry not dug in or assaulting shoot
(5) Movement is enacted with all foot bases (assaulting first, then normals,
then those who were dug in when started to move)
(6) Assaulting units _ now shoot
(7) Naval and railway artillery shots are worked out.
```

Executing shooting and combat:

First each platoon should be marked for which target they are shooting at:
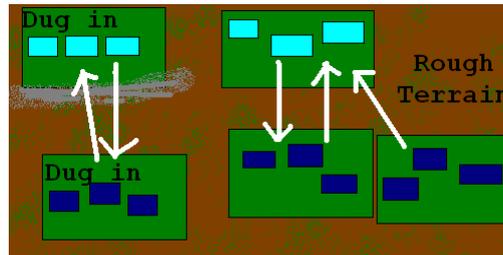
In the example above, the two Dark platoons on the right are shooting at the Light platoon on our right, and the two platoons on our left are shooting each other.

    Next ARMING and RESILIENCE should be established. Arming is dependent on a platoon or base's inherent Arming value. Resilience starts as a built-in value but is increased or decreased depending on their terrain, as shown on the second chart on this page.

    Arming is the number of dice a platoon rolls to try and beat their target's Resilience value. If the Resilience value is matched or beaten, then that target takes a "hit". One hit injures, two hits removes permanently.

    An injury does not just take away a 'hit point' but also reduces the platoon's immediate movement value (by HALF). This reduction stays for as long as the target platoon is under fire from the SAME shooter. If it remains under fire but from a different shooter, it rolls a recovery die. A recovery die is when a platoon must roll equal to or under its own Resilience value (a roll of 6 in this case always fails). If it succeeds in rolling <=R, then its movement is restored despite being under fire.

	SPEED	ARMING m\r	RESILIENCE	RANGE
Reserve inf	Medium Inf	2\1	3	300
Line/good inf	Medium Inf	2\1	4	300
Elite (rare) inf	Medium Inf	2\1	5	400
Skirmishers	Fast Inf	1\1	5	200
Command	Heavy Inf	1\1	as parent	100
Early HMGx1	Heavy Inf	1\3	as parent	800
Early mortar	Heavy Inf	1\2	as parent	1200
Melee cav	Fast Cav	3\0	3	0
Mixed cav	Fast Cav	3\1	3	50
Mtd Rifles	Medium Cav	2\1	3	300/100
Late HMG x1	Heavy Inf	1\4	as parent	1000
LMG squad	Medium Inf	1\2	as parent	400
1-2 SMG sqd	Medium Inf	2\2	as parent	150
1-2 Gren sqd	Medium Inf	3\2	as parent	150

Note the above table has only partial info. Refer to back page for complete info

Unit in the open; -2R
Unit in rough ground; -1R
Unit dug into open or rough ground +1R
Unit dug into defensible (small trenches, pits, craters, dugouts) +2R or +1 if moving or not dug in
Unit dug into fortification (good bunkers, large trenches and pits) +3R or +2 if moving or not dug in
If a unit moves at all in defences or fortification, then it is not dug in, even if it was dug in before movement
A unit moving from one type of terrain into another counts as being in whatever the weaker type was
(e.g. over the top of a +2 dug-in trench into the open -2 gives a -2... as would assaulting from the open into a trench)

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Ready mode/impossible shots:
When both players are making their Low Commands, they can choose to put units on "prepared" mode (a dotted arrow) indicating that if something comes that they can shoot at, they will- e.g., if the enemy are too well protected (needing 7's to hit) it is not worth shooting, however they will dedicate themselves to being *ready* to shoot (such as if the enemy leave their trench).

Melee combat:
After shooting and moving has been executed, units may well be in "base contact" (any contact which is more than just a corner). They automatically enter "close combat" or melee combat. Every unit has a Melee Arming value and this is what is used. Each base fights ONE other, attacking simultaneously (unless one cannot harm the other – see below). Fast cavalry strike before medium (before slow), then infantry strike, then Heavy Weapons (LMG, HMG, Mortar, Commanders).

Work out each pair of platoons fight and then casualties are removed. If there are still units in base contact following this phase then those pairs go into *Deathmatch* Mode.

Any units as 2nd rank fighters (see diagram below) can move forwards to take the place of the comrades just before deathmatch fighting.

Multiple combats:
Only one base can be in base contact with another. However "2nd rank fighters" can be added representing the weight of numbers on that side (both sides can do this). First rank casualties can be passed on to second rank fighters. (If the 1st platoon is injured the marker is placed on the 2nd rank platoon and the effect is on them!

Example:
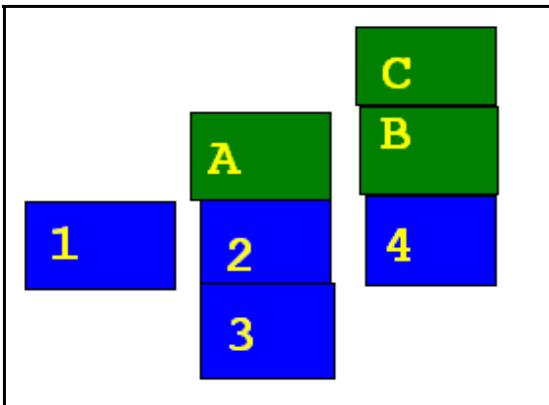
In this combat, (1) can do nothing. However, (A) will fight 2 whose casualties can be passed onto (3). (B) will fight (4) whilst being able to pass casualties on to (C).

Deathmatch weakness:
Once the platoons have fought first time, any still left in close combat go into Deathmatch Mode. Deduct 1R from each platoon and they fight again (striking simultaneously unless different speeds/types). If still survivors, then deduct 1R and fight again. Repeat until nobody is left touching (and yes **R1 can happen**)

Ending the bound:
Casualties are all removed as they happen – make sure you keep track of injured units (I place a red smoke marker for freshly injured) and also those who have sustained an injury but more than a bound ago – I.e. those that can move normally again but one more hit will finish them off (I use a black smoke marker).

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Artillery:
You may have noticed I didn't elaborate in the "High Commands" section when suffering to Artillery Bombardments (On-table guns can choose to direct fire instead [same time as bombardments]). They work as follows:

Supreme Commander commands an Artillery battalion (made up of Battery bases of 4-6 guns) to attack a grid reference on the table. This grid reference cannot be smaller than 6"x6" (otherwise fire would be too accurate). Place a bombardment circle (diameter 6", **if you print A4** size the diagram below is the correct size) and every platoon under the circle takes damage as allocated by the player (shown below the chart)
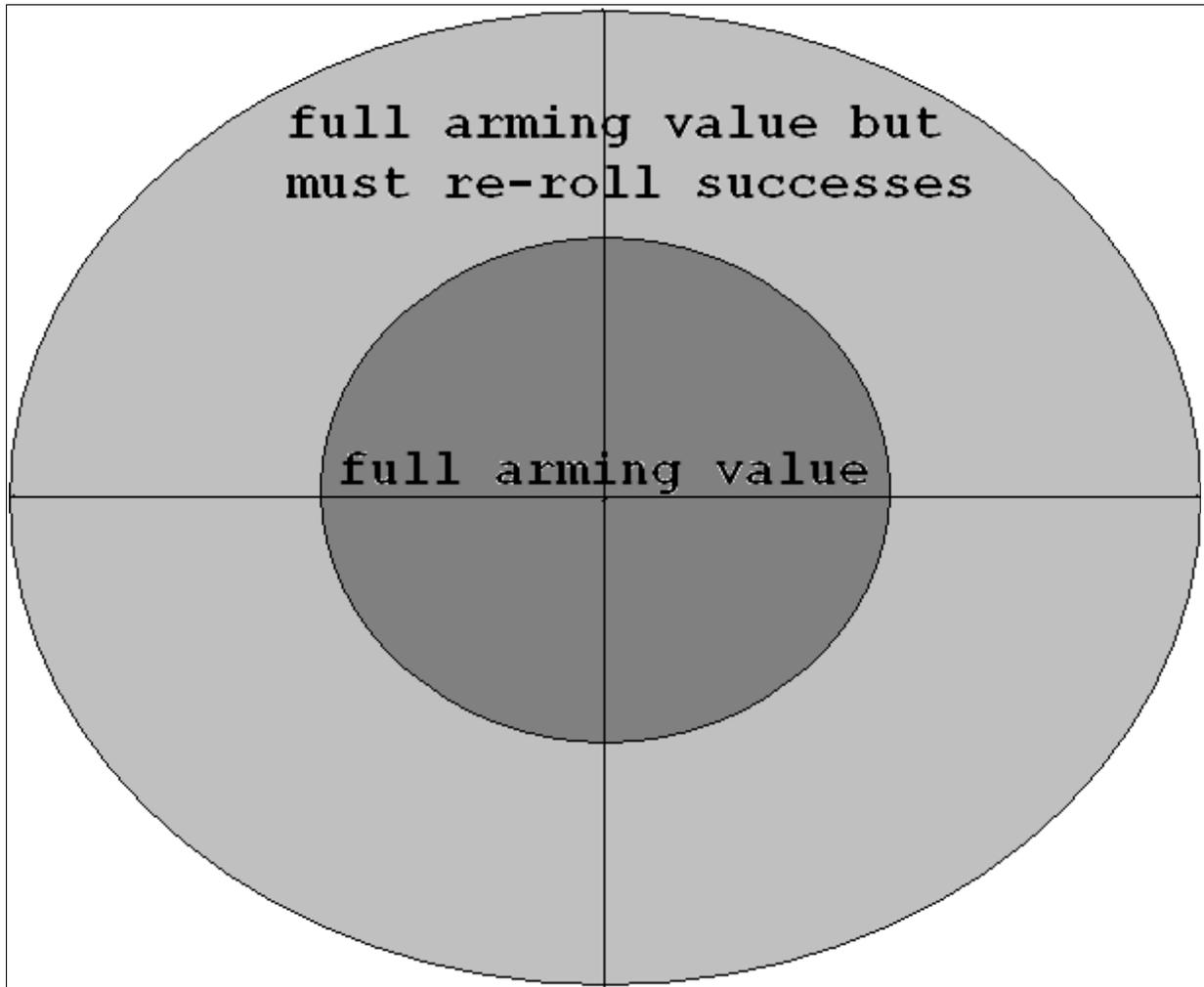
Player multiplies the Arming value of the Artillery Battalion (use the mean value if it is a mixed battalion) with the number of Batteries firing.

The total is the maximum number of 'Shots' the player can allocate across the circle. They can choose to lay up to half the shots on a single target or can distribute as far as one shot on every base (assuming the battalion has enough hits to distribute).

Shots allocated to targets within the circle are rolled as if the target were under normal attack, but if a shot(s) is chosen on a platoon more than half-way outside the inner circle, any successful shots must be re-rolled.

Example: Battalion of 4 batteries each with A\2. This makes 8 distributable shots. A single company lies under the template. Shots allocated to those lying in the outer circle have to be re-rolled if they successfully hit.

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Vehicles:
Vehicles may never dig in but *all infantry and heavy weapon rolls against them must be re-rolled* (field guns and artillery don't)

AFV's are based in platoons (2-6 vehicles, smaller numbers for heavier vehicles). This includes Tanks, Self-propelled Guns and Armoured Cars.

Armoured Fighting Vehicles:
Self-propelled artillery pieces work as normal artillery except do not have to spend a bound packing or unpacking (no matter their size). They also have the better Resilience value and re-roll rule. This makes them mobile.

Armoured cars work as normal cavalry except with the better Resilience value and the re-roll rule (making them usable as assault troops).

Tanks work as normal infantry except with a much better Resilience values and the re-roll rule (making them excellent assault troops)

Transport vehicles:
Those which are not motorized (i.e. horse-drawn) do not have to be represented – if you wish to then a simple horse-holder by a Battalion's command platoon will suffice.

Motorised and mechanised transport should be shown by cars or half-tracks mounted in platoons. You only need one platoon base per battalion and it should be kept by the command platoon. Companies are assumed to lose their special transport when they are destroyed and for battalion's the same story.

However vehicle transport platoons should be removed if the Battalion command platoon is destroyed and then the entire battalion loses its movement bonus.

Transport bonuses:
Horse-drawn transported units receive no bonus and move at their standard rate
Motorised transported units move at (+25%) (to a maximum total of 8cm)
Mechanised transported units move at (+50%) (to a maximum total of 12cm)

Note that only infantry battalions (including their Heavy Weapons) can be transported thus.

Guns and Heavy Weapons:
You'll notice I frequently refer to Heavy Weapons (and this is a term on the order of shooting chart). This means any Heavy Machine Gun, Mortars, and also Command Platoons (obviously they are not intended to fight and so cannot bring fire-power up as well as proper infantry units, also obviously they are not very good at fighting when they do start and this is reflected in their Arming value...)

Note also on the chart of characteristics that some weaponry has A#\#(+#). The "+" bonus is a number added to one of the die that they roll (or their only die if they have A1) **for shooting** (except Grenadiers who only get it in melee). This means that these special platoons are capable of harming R7, R8 and R9 troops making them essential when fighting fortifications or vehicles on the defensive.

Reference
- High commands given to Strategic Formations (normally Battalions)
- Low commands/planning moving and shooting
- Execute moving and shooting as shown in Order chart.
- Resolve melee fights until no platoons are left in base contact with an enemy.
- Start new bound.

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Characteristics of units:

	SPEED	ARMING m\r	RESILIENCE	RANGE
Reserve inf	Medium Inf	2\1	3	300
Line/good inf	Medium Inf	2\1	4	300
Elite (rare) inf	Medium Inf	2\1	5	400
Skirmishers	Fast Inf	1\1	5	200
Command	Slow Inf	1\1	as parent	100
Early HMGx1	Slow Inf	1\3(+1)	as parent	800
Early mortar	Slow Inf	1\2(+1)	as parent	1200
Melee cav	Fast Cav	3\0	3	0
Mixed cav	Fast Cav	3\1	3	50
Mtd Rifles	Medium Cav	2\1	3	300/100
Late HMG x1	Slow Inf	1\4(+1)	as parent	1000
LMG squad	Medium Inf	1\2	as parent	400
1-2 SMG sqd	Medium Inf	2\2	as parent	150
1-2 Gren sqd	Medium Inf	3(+1)\2	as parent	150
Mother tanks	Slow Inf	0\3(+2)	6	400
Medium/Whip	Fast Inf	0\1(+1)	5	200
7cm Field Gs	Slow Inf	0\2(+2)	4	2000
Lt Howtz's	Slow Inf	0\2(+2)	4	Unlimited
12cm Hwtz's	Slow Inf	0\1(+3)	4	Unlimited

Available Low Commands for companies following a High Command:

ORDER →	ADVANCE	HOLD	ASSAULT	RETREAT
Dug in and safe	Stay put or move	Stay put only	Assault only	Retreat only
Dug in but under fire	Stay put only	Stay put only	Assault or stay put	Retreat or stay put
Not dug in but safe	Move only	Stay put or find cover	Assault only	Retreat only
Not dug in but under fire	Stay put or move	Stay put or find cover*	Assault or find cover	Retreat, cover or stay
may dig in but -1R during dig		*(May dig in)*	*(May never dig in)*	*(May never dig in)*

Order of execution:

(#) Mark units who are moving this turn (those moving into better or worse cover should be positioned half-way in between)

(1) Artillery and Heavy Weapons stationary throughout the whole game shoot, those dug in before others.

(2) Artillery and Heavy Weapons stationary last turn but have moved before shoot, those dug ins before others.

(3) Dug in infantry and any skirmishers shoot

(4) Infantry not dug in or assaulting shoot

(5) Movement is enacted with all foot bases (assaulting first, then normals, then those who were dug in when started to move)

(6) Assaulting units _ now shoot

(7) Naval and railway artillery shots are worked out.

Cover and terrain:

Unit in the open; -2R

Unit in rough ground; -1R

Unit dug into open or rough ground +1R

Unit dug into defensible (small trenches, pits, craters, dugouts) +2R or +1 if moving or not dug in

Unit dug into fortification (good bunkers, large trenches and pits) +3R or +2 if moving or not dug in

If a unit moves at all in defences or fortification, then it is not dug in, even if it was dug in before movement

A unit moving from one type of terrain into another counts as being in whatever the weaker type was

(e.g. over the top of a +2 dug-in trench into the open -2 gives a -2... as would assaulting from the open into a trench)