

Complete Blood and Horse Droppings



Big Battle Rules
for
the Hundred Years War
and
Wars of the Roses

By
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‘Blood and Horse Droppings’ and ‘A Hundred Years of Blood and Horse Droppings’

Big battle rules for the Wars of the Roses and the Hundred Years War, developed by Rob Jones, based on The Warre Game 1632 by Steve Jones, and A Coat of Steel, by the Perfect Captain. With additional playtesting and suggestions from Phil Jones and Mark Bretherton.

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

I am a medieval historian, and have spent an awful lot of time thinking about medieval warfare and medieval combatants: how armies were structured, how they were commanded, and how they fought... and thought.

I am also a wargamer, and one who has been constantly frustrated that none of the medieval games I have played match up to my conclusions as a historian. These rules are a response to that disconnect and are very much based on my personal conceptions of medieval battle.

So, what are the underlying assumptions that shape the game?

- 1) **Medieval armies were not organised according to role.** You are likely to find a mixture of weapons and armour serving together because they were raised together. This is particularly true of English indentured retainers after around 1350, where men-at-arms and archers were raised in single companies. I do not see the archers, ‘billmen’, and ‘knights’ being split off to fight in distinct units.
- 2) **Medieval armies were poorly drilled and had little low-level command and control.** Short campaigns meant that the individual units within an army had little time to work on drill and cooperation, whilst a lack of formal ranks and files, and what we might term NCOs*, made complex drill maneuvers almost impossible. (* I do not see *vintners* and *centenars* - men in charge of twenty or a hundred others - as NCOs in the modern sense. At best they were of higher social standing and were obeyed because of this, rather than because of any greater military experience).
- 3) **Medieval commanders were expected to be in the front line.** Few medieval commanders were able to sit back and command from afar and, even if they did, they had no dedicated staff officers to convey their orders, and the sub-commanders they were giving those orders to were themselves right on the front line.
- 4) **Armies and their constituent units fell apart from disorder long before they were cut to pieces.** A force is more likely to break than to be cut to pieces. Casualties had little impact on their fighting ability until they were almost reduced to naught.
- 5) **Medieval battles are tactically boring.** With limited maneuver and poor command and control, medieval battles tend to be wind-’em-up-and-let-’em-go affairs. This makes for poor wargames. These rules focus on the interesting bits: the commanders’ characters, and the detail of the melee.

UNIT TYPES - WARS OF THE ROSES

Company Types	Move	Dice for Shooting or Melee and Ranges	Notes (NOTE: In melee the Company is at Bonus against any Company type below it in the list)
Retinues	3"	2 Shooting dice, 4 dice in melee <i>Range</i> 0-4" <i>short (bonus)</i> 4-12" <i>normal</i> 12- 24" <i>long (ignore 1st BF)</i> 24"-36" <i>Extreme range (½ n° WD & ignore 1st BF)</i>	
Commission of Array	3"	2 Shooting dice, 3 dice in melee <i>Range</i> 0-4" <i>short (bonus)</i> 4-12" <i>normal</i> 12- 24" <i>long (ignore 1st BF)</i> 24"-36" <i>Extreme range (½ n° WD & ignore 1st BF)</i>	
Continental mercenaries	4"	2 Shooting dice, 4 dice in melee <i>Range</i> 0- 6" <i>short (bonus)</i> 6-18" <i>normal</i> 18-24" <i>long (ignore 1st BF)</i>	After Shooting, Company is unloaded. Takes one Action to Reload
Spears	3"	1 Shooting dice, 3 dice in melee <i>Range</i> 0- 4" <i>short (bonus)</i> 4-12" <i>normal</i> 12-24" <i>long (ignore 1st BF)</i>	+1 Dice in melee if second Company of Spears is contiguous behind.
Men-at-Arms (Cav)	6"	3 dice in melee	Ignore 1 st Casualty in Shooting or Melee Bonus for lances in the FIRST charge if against MEN-AT-ARMS or SCURROURS
Scurrours (Cav)	6"	2 dice in melee	
Irish	4"	2 Shooting dice, 3 dice in melee <i>Range</i> 0-4" <i>normal</i> 4-8" <i>long (ignore 1st BF)</i>	May enter rough terrain (woodland, etc) without taking a UT to avoid a Black Flag
Gonnes	2" until fired, then no move	3 Shooting dice as per range <i>Range</i> 0-8" 3 Dice (Bonus) 8-12" 2 Dice 12-24" 1 Dice	Once fired, may not move, but may swivel 45'. Once fired is unloaded. Takes TWO Actions to Reload No melee dice No pushbacks from Black Flags In melee crew rout on contact, gonnes become Linear terrain.

All troops are organised into Companies of a specific type. All Companies have the same frontage and depth (Gonne Companies can be deeper to accommodate crew). We suggest the ratio of frontage to depth be 3:2, and with 28mm we use a frontage of 150mm by 100mm. The number of figures within a Company does not matter, but they should reflect the type of Company they represent.

Retinues

These are the standing troops of a particular nobleman, including the nobleman himself. Predominantly archers, with a mix of men armed with polearms, and fully armoured men-at-arms.

Commission of Array

These are troops raised in every country and town by Royal warrant (even if the man raising them is not king!) Less experienced than the noble retinues, archers still predominate, but there are fewer men in full harness, making them less effective in close combat.

Continental Mercenaries

These are Companies of men brought over from France or Burgundy by either faction. They are dominated by either crossbows or handgunners, with a smaller number of men armed with melee weapons. Their weapons pack a heftier punch at shorter ranges than the English archers.*

Spears

These are Companies representing Scots, northern English, north Welsh, and potentially the German 'pike' (as they are often called, but not equating to the pikes of the sixteenth and seventeenth century) seen at Stoke Field, all of whom seem to have fielded long spears with a small number of archers (or, in the case of Germans, handgunners and crossbowmen).

Men-at-Arms

One of only two mounted Companies. These are predominantly fully harnessed men-at-arms with lances and hand weapons.

Scurours

The second form of mounted Company. Although these might be 'specialist' light horse (such as the prickers drawn from the northern Marches), more often than not they are the retinue company of a nobleman fighting mounted, potentially in lighter armour, tasked with scouting and pursuing broken enemies.

Irish

Companies of Irish soldiers, comprising light-armed kerns, with a mixture of missile weapons, and a smaller number of Gallowglas - men in full mail with melee weapons. They are more able to deal with bad terrain than English Companies, but their missile weapons - predominantly darts and javelins - have less range, whilst their lack of armour makes them more vulnerable in combat.

Gonnes

Blackpowder artillery. A mixture of types, once it is on the field it is impossible to move, and in this period was usually protected by man-made or natural defences. Gonne Companies can also represent handgunners behind pavises (as the Burgundians deployed at the 2nd battle of St. Albans).

**Some gamers may be surprised that there are no units of skirmishing handguns or crossbows here. There is very little evidence for this common wargaming unit. The continental system for organising troops - the Ordinance Companies of France and Burgundy - envisaged mixed units of men-at-arms, bills, and missile troops providing mutual support, much as the archers and men-at-arms of English Companies did, and it seems that the Companies of foreign mercenaries that brought such weapons across were, if anything, less mobile than the English Companies.*

UNIT TYPES FOR THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR

Company Types	Move	Dice for Shooting or Melee and Ranges	Notes (NOTE: In melee the Company is at Bonus against any Company type below it in the list)
Dismounted Men-at-Arms	3"	No Shooting dice, 4 dice in melee	Ignore 1 st Casualty in Shooting or Melee
Herce	3"	2 Shooting dice, 3 dice in melee <i>Range</i> 0-4" short (count bonus) 4-12" normal 12- 24" long (ignore 1 st BF) 24"-36" Extreme range (½ n°WD & ignore 1st BF)	On a successful UT, may launch 'arrow storm' - double number of shooting dice (after modifiers) but take two Actions to Reload
Spears	3"	No Shooting dice, 3 dice in melee	Spears in Good Order (i.e. carrying no Black Flags) negate an enemy's extra dice and bonus for charging If equipped with pavises, ignore the first casualty from shooting combat
Men-at-Arms (Cav)	6"	No Shooting dice, 3 dice in melee	Bonus for lances in FIRST charge if against MOUNTED Ignore 1 st Casualty in Shooting or Melee
Serjans/hobelars (Cav)	6"	No Shooting dice, 2 dice in melee	
Bows	3"	2 Shooting dice, 2 dice in melee <i>Range</i> 0-4" short (count bonus) 4-12" normal 12- 24" long (ignore 1 st BF) 24"-36" Extreme range (½ n°WD & ignore 1st BF)	English Bow Companies may, on a successful UT, launch 'arrow storm' - double number of shooting dice (after modifiers) but take two Actions to Reload
Crossbows	3"	2 Shooting dice, 2 dice in melee <i>Range</i> 0- 6" short (count bonus) 6-18" normal 18-24" long (ignore 1 st BF)	After Shooting, Company is unloaded. Takes one Action to Reload If equipped with pavises, ignore the first casualty from shooting combat
Gonnes	no move	Shooting dice as per range <i>Range</i> 0-8" 3 Dice (count bonus) 8-12" 2 Dice 12-24" 1 Dice	May not move or pivot Once fired is unloaded Takes TWO Actions to reload No melee dice No pushbacks from Black Flags In Melee crew rout on contact, gonnes become linear obstacle

UNIT TYPES FOR HUNDRED YEARS WAR

All troops are organised into Companies of a specific type. All Companies have the same footprint. We suggest the ratio of frontage to depth be 3:2, and with 28mm figures use a frontage of 150mm by 100mm. Gonne Companies have a 150mm frontage but can be deeper to accommodate crew, and bidowers are deployed in bases 50mm by 50mm. The number of figures within a Company does not matter, but they should reflect the type of Company they represent.

Companies have a Casualty Rating (CR), representing how much damage they can take before being destroyed. Normally this is 5, but a smaller (or 'weaker') Company might be given a rating of 4, whilst a larger (or 'stronger') Company might have a rating of 6. This should be determined before the game begins, either randomly or according to a scenario.

Dismounted Men-at-Arms

These are units of men-at-arms fighting on foot. They have no shooting ability, but their armour, *élan*, and fighting ability put them ahead of any others in melee.

Herce

After around 1350 English armies were raised by indenture, with nobles being contracted to provide a certain number of men-at-arms and archers, who would muster and serve together. It is these companies which, I believe, are what commentators referred to as forming up like a *herce* (or harrow), with men-at-arms interspersed in some way amongst the archers as a combined unit. Scottish and Welsh allies of the French are most likely to form Herce Companies.

Spears

These include the urban militias of France and the Low Countries, the spearmen raised by English armies in Wales in the early years of the war, and the Scottish schiltrons. The continental urban militias may carry pavises, large shields which offer greater protection against missile weapons.

Men-at-Arms

Mounted men-at-arms. The cream of chivalric combat, often impetuous, but vulnerable if infantry stood its ground.

Serjans/hobelars

The second form of mounted Company. Less well-equipped than the men-at-arms, but at this period still used in the charge.

Bows

Archers were the dominant element in English armies through most of the period. In the early war they were raised as individual companies. Eventually, this system was supplanted by the retained companies, of combined men-at-arms and archers (represented by the *Herce* formation described above). French armies might have companies of Bows, alongside the Crossbows and Spears, as part of the rather generic *gens de traite* that were raised in support of the men-at-arms.

Crossbows

Large bodies of crossbowmen, either Genoese, or French urban militias, routinely used in advance of the men-at-arms in French armies. They may work with pavisiers, or carry pavises themselves, which offer greater protection against missile weapons.

Gonnes

Blackpowder artillery. A mixture of types, once it is on the field it is impossible to move, and in this period was usually protected by man-made or natural defences.

Players may choose to field Companies from the Wars of the Roses list if it suits their sense of history (for example, a player fighting Richard II's Irish campaign might field Irish Companies against Herce Companies).

WARDS, COMPANIES AND CAPTAINS

All Companies are commanded by a Captain, normally (but not always) a named nobleman with a character all of his own, which will impact how his Company will behave on the field.

All Companies are then organised into one of three or four Wards. Each Ward is commanded by the highest-ranking Captain within it (determined by their social position - see below). A Ward may be made up of a mixture of Companies.

Companies **must** attempt to remain within 3" of at least one other Company within their Ward.

The highest-ranking Captain in the entire army is the Army Commander. Note that this rank offers little additional benefit in battle, but can have a major impact on morale if he is captured or killed.

BLACK FLAGS (BF)

These are caused by melee, shooting, or attempting to perform complex or risky Actions (for example withdrawing in the face of the enemy, or crossing terrain).

BFs received by the defender in melee cause PUSH-BACKS (except for Gonne Companies):

Units immediately **retire** one move per BF inflicted in that round of melee, *directly away from and facing the threat*.

Attacking Companies that pick up Black Flags in a melee *are not* pushed back

If Terrain or enemy Companies block the Push-back, the unit stops and suffers a **Casualty**.

Units Pushed Back into a friendly Company cause a BF on the Friendly Company and push it back too. Gonnies also receive a BF, but always stay put, the friendly retiring unit moves beyond them.

ON RECEIPT of the 3rd BF the Unit ROUTS – play out any Push-Backs due and then remove from the Game. If in a campaign, roll for the Company Captain's fate.

Units in FORTIFICATIONS Ignore the first BF from any cause.

FATE (Coins)

Fate is represented by coins that can be won by the Ward Commanders of an army as a result of Shooting or Melee. They are held by that Ward Commander and may be spent by him in advance of a dice roll to moderate **ANY** Initiative rolls, Activation rolls, Universal Tests, or rolls for Charge Distance, for Companies in his Ward, by +1 per Fate coin.

Fate Coins held by the Army Commander may be spent in the same way for ANY Company in the Army.

THE UNIVERSAL TEST (UT)

This is used to resolve the possibility of certain actions. It can also be used to resolve disputed events. TO PASS: ROLL a 4+ on the appropriate dice, Subject to Modifiers (**N.B. an unmodified 1 is always a fail!!**)

Tests are rolled on the Captain's Quality Dice:

OLD SOLDIER – UT on a D10

PRACTICED – UT on a D8

AMATEUR – UT on D6

Fate coins may be spent at the rate of +1 per coin. They must be spent before the roll is taken. Each Black Flag (BF) carried by a company modifies the roll by -1 per Flag.

TURN SEQUENCE

THE TURN CLOCK

The game is divided into eight Turns, named for the medieval 'Hours' of the day:

- **Matins** (before dawn) - In this turn forces are deployed, and any players with the ability to place 'artifices' or 'bushments' may do so.
- **Lauds** (daybreak) - The first regular turn.
- **Prime** (6:00 a.m.) - The second regular turn.
- **Terce** (9:00 a.m.) - The third regular turn.
- **Sext** (noon) - The fourth regular turn.
- **None** (3:00 p.m.) - The fifth regular turn.
- **Vespers** (sunset) - The sixth and last regular turn.
- **Compline** (evening) - Either player (or, indeed, both) may attempt to pass a UT (using their Army Commander's Quality Dice) to extend the game by one more turn. Their opponent may choose to oppose the roll, in which case the latter needs to roll equal to or higher on their own Army Commander's Quality Dice).

Once the Vespers turn (or Compline if a player has been successful in extending the game) has been completed both sides will withdraw from the field.

DEPLOYMENT

Whilst players may deploy their forces as they see fit, it is suggested that they either deploy according to a scenario or One Ward at a time, rolling on the Quality Dice of the Army Commanders to see who deploys their vanguard first (traditionally on the right, and commanded by the noblest Captain), then the main ward (in the middle, by the next most noble), thirdly, the rear ward (to the left of their line, commanded by the third most noble Captain) and, finally (if anyone has one) the fourth reserve ward.

Players must remember that all Companies within a Ward must be within 3" of another Company within their Ward.

It will become obvious that this does not leave much scope for sneaky tactics (although some Captains may have the ability to set ambushes or 'bushments') but medieval battles tend not to see combatants being sneaky.

INITIATIVE ROLLS

Each turn starts by deciding who begins the turn. This is done by making an opposed roll using each Army Commanders' Quality Dice, modified by any Fate coins and traits.

Winners choose a Ward and attempt to activate any or all companies in that Ward. The second player then chooses a Ward and vice versa until all Wards have been selected.

If there are an uneven number of Wards (i.e. one army has more Wards than the other) then the player with fewer Wards gets a 'pass card' for each Ward they are short. This may be played instead of selecting a Ward. If a Ward is lost in play, a 'pass card' is issued to make up for the deficiency.

Alternatively, players may have a token for each Ward, and these are drawn randomly. Again, if there are an uneven number of Wards then a 'pass' token can be added.

ACTIVATING COMPANIES

All Companies are in the command of a Ward Commander (who is himself embedded within a Company). Once nominated he attempts to activate every Company, one at a time. His own Company will activate automatically (unless his traits make it otherwise).

After passing a Universal Test using the Ward Commander's Quality Dice, the Company gets three Phases in which to perform Actions within the turn. These are fully resolved before the next Company is activated.

If an Activation roll fails, that Company and **all** other Companies within the Ward not yet activated (including the Ward Commander's own) get ONE PHASE only to perform Actions that turn.

Actions that can be taken by a Company are one of the following:

ACTIONS that take One PHASE

- MOVE as per the Company's Standard rate
- CHARGE into contact in a straight line plus a Bonus Distance roll (1D6ins), fight a round of MELEE and any follow-up combats
- If already locked in combat, fight a round of MELEE and any follow-up combats
- SHOOT
- RELOAD if Handguns / Crossbows.
- RALLY off BLACK FLAGS (BF)

Actions that take Two PHASES

- LOAD GONNES
- RELOAD Companies that have launched an 'Arrowstorm'
- Make an ABOUT FACE (this is a complete 180°, *not* an opportunity to re-order facing in any direction. Gonnes may not perform this action).

Note, if a Company only has one Phase available to it, it may not perform an Action that costs two Phases, nor may it start such an Action with the intention of completing it next turn.

Compulsory Actions

A Company may perform any Action or combination of Actions it wishes, *except* in the following circumstances:

- A Company holding an Interrupt marker (see below) must remove that marker as its first Action.
- A Company currently engaged in melee must fight. It may only voluntarily break off from combat by using the 'Stand off Apace' Tactical Choice.
- A Company that is more than 3" from another Company in its Ward, and does not have an enemy Company within Interrupt range (see below) must use its Actions to return to within 3" of another Company in its Ward.

INTERRUPTIONS

A Company may try to *Interrupt* an enemy Company's Action. To do this the Company may not already hold an Interrupt marker, and must be in line of sight and within 8" (Gonnes Interrupt range is 24") of the enemy Company.

The Interruption attempt must be declared BEFORE the other player performs their Action.

(As an optional rule, you may determine that the Interrupt must be declared BEFORE the other player determines what Action they are going to perform).

This is an OPPOSED ROLL. Both players take a UT using the Company's Command Dice. The Interrupter must pass AND also score higher than his opponent. The Active player may defeat the Interruption by EQUALLING OR BEATING the enemy score.

Only one Company may attempt to Interrupt at a time. If a Company FAILS to Interrupt it may not attempt to Interrupt the same Company again that turn.

Successful Interruptors take a ONE PHASE ACTION. They then take an Interrupt marker which *must* be removed as the first action of the Company's next active turn. Note, the compulsory action to remove the marker MAY NOT be interrupted by the enemy ('you cannot Interrupt an Interrupt').

EXAMPLE OF PLAY - ACTIVATION AND INTERRUPTION

ACTIVATION



The Lancastrian player has the initiative and chooses to activate Jasper Tudor's ward, comprising four Companies.

Jasper's own Company (1) activates automatically and performs its three actions, advancing three times.

The player then chooses the next Company, Butler's (2), to activate, needing a 4 or better on a D8 (Jasper being a Practiced commander).

His second Company succeeds and also advances three times, but his third Company (3) rolls a 3, and so it, and the fourth Company (4), which had not yet been activated, only perform a single action each, in this instance advance a single move of 3".

INTERRUPTION



The Yorkists (on the right) activate a company, and advance against Tudor's ward (left).

At 8 ½" distant, they can do one full move before they come within the 8" Interrupt range of Jasper's Company.

Before they begin their second action the Lancastrian player attempts to Interrupt by rolling 4+ on Jasper's D8 Quality Dice, and beating the roll of his opponent (who, being a Practiced Captain also, rolls a D8 too). Jasper succeeds.



Jasper collects an Interrupt marker (the trumpeter) and elects to perform a Shoot action. After completing the Action (in this case having no effect) the Yorkists may complete their second action, and, if they wish, perform a third.

MOVEMENT

Companies may move forwards up to their full move as a single-Phase Action (as indicated in the 'unit type' tables). Movement is straight forwards, or in echelon up to half the width of the Company's frontage.

Any change of face is done by a wheel from the outside corner.

Foot Companies (not Mounted or Gonne) may attempt to move STRAIGHT back (no wheels or echelon) up to their *full move* in a single Action but must pass a UT to avoid receiving a BF.

Mounted Companies may attempt to move STRAIGHT back a *half move* in a single Action but must pass a UT to avoid gaining a BF.

Hundred Years War Gonne Companies may neither move nor pivot. Gonne Companies in the Wars of the Roses (which tended to be lighter and have better carriages) may not be moved once deployed, except to pivot in place.

TERRAIN EFFECTS

Upon reaching LINEAR or AREA terrain, Companies must stop, immediately ending their Action.

On crossing LINEAR terrain the Company must pass a UT to avoid receiving a BF.

On entering AREA terrain the Company must pass a UT to avoid receiving a BF.

ROUGH terrain - is a piece of AREA terrain that hinders movement and combat. Whilst moving through the AREA terrain the Company is slowed to half speed. They are also at a disadvantage in melee. Irish or Bidower Companies moving and fighting in ROUGH terrain are unaffected by it.

INTERPENETRATION

Companies may pass through friendly Companies, so long as they are aligned, and the active Company can clear the footprint of the stationary Company within its Turn. BOTH units must pass a UT to avoid gaining a BF.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY - MOVEMENT AND INTERPENETRATION

MOVEMENT



Jasper's Company approaches a woodland, which counts as AREA terrain. Although he should move 3" per Action, the wood is only 2" away and so his first Action ends at the edge of the wood.

For his second Action he moves into the wood (a full move of 3") and makes a Quality check for his Company, to avoid disorder.

He rolls a 1, so picks up a Black Flag.

If the woodland had been deemed ROUGH terrain (perhaps for the density of its undergrowth) Jasper's Company would only have moved 1 1/2" in that second Action, as well as having to test to avoid disorder.



INTERPENETRATION



The rearmost Company wishes to pass through the Company to its front.

It moves up to be immediately behind for one Action, and spends two more Actions moving through (because the unit depth requires two Actions' worth of move to clear it).

Both the Active Company and the Company being moved through have to take a Universal Test to avoid picking up a Black Flag (in this instance, the stationary Company fails that test).



SHOOTING AND MELEE

Companies that Shoot or engage in melee combat do so using 'Warre Dice' (WD), a D6 marked up with symbols. An ordinary D6 could also be used.

1. KNIGHT Causes a casualty if the target is a Mounted Company
2. ARCHER - Causes a casualty if the target is a Foot Company
3. GONNE - Causes a casualty if the target is a Gonne Company
4. BONUS (crossed swords) - this causes a Casualty on any Unit if bonus conditions apply in shooting. In Melee the Bonus result may cause a casualty or a Black Flag, or be negated depending on the Tactical Choices of the Companies involved.
5. WHEEL OF FATE - This gives the Ward Commander a FATE coin (see above) which he can use in the game to improve dice rolls.
6. BLACK FLAG (BF) - this puts the unit into Disorder and (if defending in melee) causes them to immediately fall back ONE standard Move Distance PER BLACK FLAG received in that round - directly away from the threat (so, for example, a Retinue Company will move 3", An Irish or Bidower Company 4" and a Company of Scurrours 6"). Companies of Gonnies may not be pushed back.

Casualties

All Companies have a Casualty Rating (CR) of 4, 5, or 6 at the start of the battle. When the unit's CR reaches '0' it is destroyed and removed from the table immediately. This may cause other Companies to Falter (see below).

Shooting

Companies may shoot, at the ranges indicated in the table above, as a single action. The target must be within range and lie within the corridor of fire delineated by the frontage of the Company (i.e. straight ahead, the width of the Company's base). If more than one target is in this corridor then the priority is the closest enemy. If two targets are equidistant then that with the greater amount of its footprint in the corridor of fire takes priority. If this cannot be determined then the shooting player chooses.

No Company may move and shoot within the same Phase.

Herce, Bow, Retinue, and Commission of Array Companies may shoot over friendly Companies so long as the intervening Company is at long range or greater of BOTH the shooter and the target.

Shooters may shoot into an existing melee but score alternate Casualties or Black Flags to both sides, striking their own side first.

All shooters get an extra dice in their first shooting action.

Shooters count Bonus at short range, or when shooting into the flank or rear of an enemy Company.

Any time TWO casualties are caused in a single round of shooting you must roll for the fate of the Captain in charge of that Company.

MELEE

CHARGING into Contact

This is AUTOMATIC if the unit has taken no casualties and holds no Black Flags. Otherwise (or if the Captain's traits mean otherwise) a Company that wishes to charge must pass a UT.

Companies that fail that test perform no further Actions in that Turn.

Charges must be made in a straight line. Companies may not echelon into contact.

To complete a charge a Company may move an additional 1D6" beyond its normal move. A Ward or Army Commander may spend FATE coins, adding an additional inch per FATE spent.

If the Company fails to contact its target it must pass a UT to avoid gaining a BF. Charging Companies benefit from ONE EXTRA WD in MELEE and cause Casualties on BONUS. (NB: this is negated if the target Company is Spears who are carrying no Black Flags)

FOLLOW-UP

ANY Charging Mounted Company, or Foot Company charging other Foot Companies, inflicting push-backs on the enemy may follow up once and MELEE a second time for free using the same Tactical Choice combination, and counting BONUS (but **not** with the extra charge WD) unless the Tactical Choices matrix says otherwise.

BONUS in MELEE

- Against those below them in the unit type tables on pages 2 and 4).
- Anyone attacking a FLANK or REAR.
- Anyone attacking a Company (other than an Irish Company) in ROUGH terrain
- All Companies CHARGING or FOLLOWING UP (see above).
- MEN-AT-ARMS in their FIRST charge if the target is Mounted. (N.B. if a Company's first charge is against foot then the lance bonus is ignored, and lost for the remainder of the game).

NOTE the Tactical Choices of the attacker and Defender may override the counting of bonus.

MELEE FRONTAGE ALIGNMENT

When chargers hit an enemy on a corner, fight the melee in situ. ALIGNMENT happens after the round of combat has been resolved (but before follow up combats are fought out. There are two possible outcomes:

- Chargers inflict BFs - at this point the defenders are made to conform to the charger's front and then perform their pushback(s) directly away from the attackers.
- Chargers inflict NO BFs - at this point the attackers must re-align to the defender's frontage.

Sometimes there will not be space for Companies to be aligned as described, in which case players should bring the units as close as possible into the appropriate alignment.

CHARGING into an existing melee

It is possible to add a Company into an existing melee if the company is able to contact the enemy, but they **must** always test to Charge.

Chargers automatically receive a BF themselves, and score alternate BFs to both sides, the first of each being applied to the enemy Company

A Company in combat with multiple enemy Companies, which successfully pushes back one of the engaged Companies, will NOT follow up but remains engaged with the other Company, being turned to face that threat if possible.

COMBAT

The aim of the combat mechanism - a combination of that for *The Warre Game: 1632*, using the icon-based Warre Dice (WD), and the tactical matrix developed for *A Coat of Steel* - is to give extra choice and granularity to players, offsetting the fewer tactical choices in terms of manoeuvre and deployment afforded by the poor command and control and inflexibility of medieval armies.

The Process

1. **Charge into contact** – If a Company is in GOOD ORDER and has NO CASUALTIES, then it will charge home automatically. Otherwise (or if the Captain's traits require it), it must pass a UT.

If the target Company is outside of a normal move, then the Company must make up the distance on a D6 (adding FATE if its Ward/Army Commander wishes). If the result is insufficient to reach the target the Company must still complete the move, and must pass a UT to avoid gaining a BF.

2. **The number of combat dice is determined.** The various modifiers (i.e. the addition and loss of Bonus) are applied, resulting in a total number of WD at (or not at) Bonus.
3. **The two players secretly select their Tactical Choice card from the appropriate (Attacker or Defender) deck.** Note that some Tactical Choices are not available in the first round after contact is made.
4. **The players reveal their choices, pairing up the cards and reading across both cards from top to bottom.** The outcomes determined by the Tactical Choices *always* take precedence (BONUS results, for example, must be ignored if the Tactical Choices determine it, even if the combat modifiers suggest the Attacker should count Bonus).
5. The attacking player rolls the Warre Dice, and the results are applied, as are any post-combat elements laid out in the Tactical Choices.
6. If required, the Companies are realigned so their frontages match. Which is aligned to which is determined by the causing of BF (see above).
7. Follow-Up combats are fought *using the same Tactical Choice cards*.
8. Disengaging from the melee can only happen as a melee outcome. Generally, this will be because a player selects the 'Stand Off Apace' tactic but might also be a result of a mounted Company falling back in the face of an infantry attack.

DESCRIPTION OF TACTICAL CHOICES

There are six Tactical Choices, four of which are available throughout, and two of which may only be selected once melee has been joined.

The Tactical Choices are designed to give, broadly speaking, a fair representation of the ways in which a Company might choose to go into combat. It is a touch cinematic, but full of flavour.

NOTE – Although the ‘defender’ (non-active player) chooses tactics too, it should be remembered that they are still the passive element in the combat. That player should remember that the tactic chosen can only mitigate the effects of combat, they cannot (for the most part) cancel them out entirely. If you are engaged in melee it is still going to hurt.

Equally, for the attacker, there is a risk to committing to combat. Depending on the combination of Tactical Choices you may take a Casualty or a Black Flag yourself. Your opponent may be able to break contact, but you may be able to prevent this if you are prepared to hazard your Company’s cohesion, the lives of the men in your Company, or your own.

The Tactics

I’ll Put Myself to the Hazard – (may not be used if the Captain is TIMOROUS or Unnamed). The Captain of the Company forces his way into the front line and, risking his own life, takes a lead in the fray. Will his efforts tip the balance? Will he fall beneath the enemy’s blades?

With One More Push – The Captain of the Company calls for a redoubled effort in order to break the enemy. Will his men follow his lead, surging forward to redouble their attack? Or will it lead to confusion and disorder in their own ranks?

Thrust Home Lads – The Company makes a steady and considered attack on the enemy, sparring with bill and blade. Will this be enough to whittle the enemy down? Will the foe prove more aggressive, driving the company back, or will they hang back and thereby take the sting out of the assault?

Gather to the Standards – Gathering around the Captain and his banner, the Company chooses good order over aggression. Will the foe allow them to reorder their ranks, or will they choose to be aggressive and cause yet more confusion?

Daggers Drawn – (may not be used in the first round of melee following the initial charge to contact) - The Company presses the enemy close, heedless of their own losses. It is a vicious fight, with daggers at the enemy’s throat and hamstrings, giving them no respite. Will it be enough to break the enemy? Will they prove equally determined? What cost the victory?

Stand Off Apace – (may not be used in the first round of melee following the initial charge to contact) - The Company attempts to break contact with the enemy, disengaging from the melee. Will their opponent allow them space, or will they be aggressive and hound their retreat, or even thwart the attempt?

Printing The Tactical Choice Cards

To print and use the cards below, print the pages in colour, full page, both sides, and flipped on the short edge. Then split the page down the middle.

DEFENDER



ATTACKER



"I'LL PUT MYSELF TO THE HAZARD"

May not be used by a Timorous or unnamed Captain

Pre-Combat:

Add 1WD for the Captain (or 2WD if Puissant)

Bonus counts as a

On a Black Flag the defender

The Attacker will

Post-Combat:

Roll 1 WD for Captain's fate

If the Captain killed/wounded/discomfited, any follow up combat is fought without his dice,
and at no further risk to Captain

"I'LL PUT MYSELF TO THE HAZARD"

May not be used by a Timorous or unnamed Captain

Pre-Combat:

Casualty

ignores the first BF (or 1st 2 BF if Captain Puissant) and

Falls back

Follow Up & Fight again

Post-Combat:

Roll 1 WD for Captain's fate

If the Captain killed/wounded/discomfited, any follow up combat is fought without his dice,
and at no further risk to Captain

DEFENDER



ATTACKER



"WITH ONE MORE PUSH"

Pre-Combat:

Pass a UT to force re-roll of any or all WD. Fail and gain a BF.
(If both sides select this tactic, highest UT success wins)

Bonus counts as a

On a Black Flag the defender

The Attacker will

Post-Combat:

"WITH ONE MORE PUSH"

Pre-Combat:

Pass a UT to allow re-roll of any or all WD. Fail and gain a BF.
(If both sides select this tactic, highest UT success wins)

Casualty

Does not fall back

Follow Up & Fight again

Post-Combat:

DEFENDER



ATTACKER



"GATHER TO THE STANDARDS"

Pre-Combat:

Pass a UT to clear 1 BF

Do not count Bonus.

On a Black Flag the defender

The Attacker will not

Post-Combat:

"GATHER TO THE STANDARDS"

Pre-Combat:

Pass a UT to clear 1 BF

Black Flag

Falls back

Follow Up & Fight again

Post-Combat:

DEFENDER



ATTACKER



"THRUST HOME"

Pre-Combat:

Bonus counts as a

On a Black Flag the defender

The Attacker will

Post-Combat:

"THRUST HOME"

Pre-Combat:

Casualty

Falls back

Follow Up & Fight again

Post-Combat:

DEFENDER



ATTACKER



"STAND OFF A PACE"

Pre-Combat:

Bonus counts as a

On a Black Flag the defender

The Attacker will not
But will fall back 1 Action's move

Post-Combat:

"STAND OFF A PACE"

Pre-Combat:

On a successful UT, the Company falls back 1 move. The Attacker then treats the combat as a follow up (so no charge bonus, and no further follow up combat).

Black Flag

Falls back

Follow Up. They will not Fight again

Post-Combat:

DEFENDER



ATTACKER



"WITH DAGGERS DRAWN"

CANNOT BE PLAYED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING A CHARGE INTO CONTACT

Pre-Combat:

Bonus counts as a

On a Black Flag the defender

The Attacker will

and causes 1 Casualty on the Attacker

Post-Combat:

Company receives a Casualty (but not after Follow Up Combat)

"WITH DAGGERS DRAWN"

CANNOT BE PLAYED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING A CHARGE INTO CONTACT

Pre-Combat:

Black Flag

will not Fall Back

But causes 1 Casualty on the Attacker

Follow Up & Fight again

Post-Combat:

Company receives a Casualty (but not after Follow Up Combat)

EXAMPLE OF PLAY - SHOOTING AND COMBAT

The Yorkist Commission of Array Company (right) is approaching the Lancastrian (under Butler) Retinue Company (right).



The Lancastrian side is within Interrupt range, and so tries, but fails, to Interrupt the Yorkist's first Action. As they may not attempt to Interrupt again, the Yorkist Company may now use their three Phases without fear of Interruption.

They advance as their first Action and then Shoot for their second.

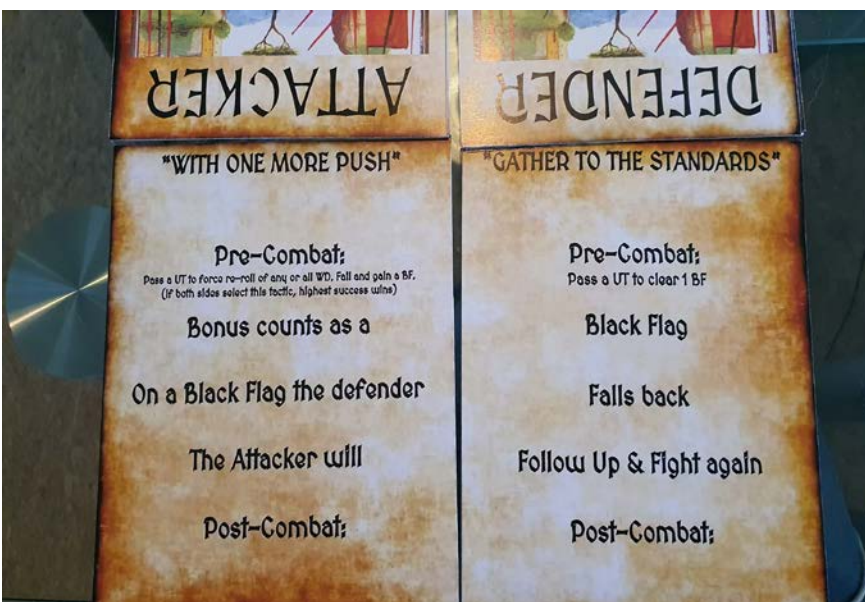
They roll three Warre Dice (as this is their first time of shooting), and score a Gonne, a Black Flag, and an Archer. The Gonne result counts for nothing, but the Black Flag puts one Disorder marker on Butler's Company, whilst the Archer subtracts one strength point.



For their third Action, the Commission Company decides to charge. They are not carrying Black Flags or Casualties and were within the 6" 'Command' distance of their Ward commander at the start of their activation, so the charge is automatic.

They are 7" from their target. As their normal move is 3", they need a roll of 4 or better on a D6 to cover the remaining distance. They get a 5 and charge home.

The Commission Company gets 3 Warre Dice in combat, plus an extra Dice for charging. They will also count Bonus results for the same reason.



The two sides select their Tactics, The Attacker goes for 'With One More Push' which (if they pass a UT) will allow them to re-roll any Warre Dice, whilst the Lancastrian Defenders select 'Gather to the Standards' in the hope that they can rally off their Black Flag before the combat is fought.

The Lancastrians roll a Universal Test to rally off that Black Flag and succeed! The disorder is removed before the Yorkists have a chance to capitalise on their shooting.

The Yorkist attackers now roll their Warre Dice, scoring a Black Flag, an Archer, a Bonus and a Coin. The Yorkist player passes his UT (avoiding a Black Flag), but decides not to re-roll any of the dice, and so his Ward Comander gets the Coin, and the Lancastrians lose another strength point and collect two Black Flags.

This result also pushes the Lancastrians back 6" (3" per Black Flag). The Yorkists, as per their tactical choice, follow up and a second round of melee is fought within the Action, using the same tactics.





Again, the Lancastrians roll to remove one of their two Black Flags and are successful, so they enter the combat with only one point of Disorder.

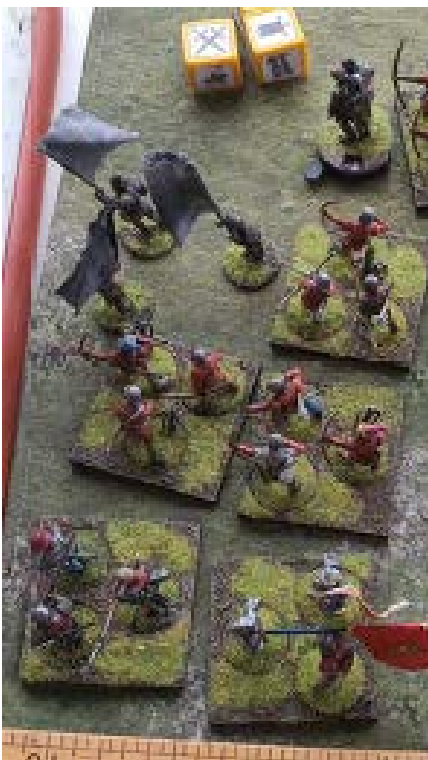
Because they are following up the melee rather than charging the Yorkist Company only throws 3 dice this time, but still counts Bonus results.

They roll a Coin and two Bonus results.

As a result of the players' Tactical Choices, the Bonus result counts as a Black Flag (in others it counts as a Casualty, or may not count at all). Now carrying three Black Flags, the Lancastrians should break.

However, the Yorkist player makes a mistake as, having again passed his UT, he chooses to re-roll all three dice, potentially losing his victory!

Fortunately for him, the result of the re-roll is an Archer, A Black Flag, and a Bonus, so he still scores two Black Flags on his opponent.



The Lancastrians now carry three Black Flags, and so the Company is pushed back 6" (3" for each of the Black Flags scored in this combat), breaks, and is removed from the table.

As this was itself a follow-up attack the victorious Yorkists will not follow up again.

The Lancastrians will now have to roll a Warre Dice to determine the fate of Butler.

The other Companies in the same Ward as Butler will have to make a Faltering check because of the loss of a Company (see below).

As the melee was the Yorkist Company's third action, they have finished their turn, and the player moves on to another Company within that Ward.

RISK TO CAPTAINS

Named Captains are at risk of death through their choice of melee tactic or if their Company suffers TWO shooting casualties in a single Phase. To determine their fate roll 1 WD:

- **Bonus** - no effect
- **Fate** – If the casualties come from shooting, the Captain takes a flesh wound, but his fortitude earns him a FATE coin. If they come from melee, he is CAPTURED.
- **Foot** –the Captain is DISCOMFITED. He and his Company remain stationary until the end of his turn. The Company automatically FAILS its next Activation.
- **Black Flag** – The Captain loses his nerve momentarily and his Company must take a Faltering check
- **Gonne** - no effect unless HIT caused by Gonne, when the Captain is KILLED.
- **Horse** –the Captain is KILLED and removed from play. All Fate Coins he holds are also lost.

FALTERING

Some battlefield events were enough to cause a Company, a Ward or a whole army to falter in its resolve for the fight

If one of the following occurs then *all* units involved must pass a UT to avoid falling back, away from the enemy a full THREE movement actions (e.g. 9" for Retinues, 18" for horse) **and** picking up 1 BF.

Uncommitted, Trimmer, or Treacherous Captains lose –1 from their Dice. **Committed, Tenacious, or Loyal** Captains gain +1 to their dice.

- Loss of an Army Commander – ALL COMPANIES TEST
- Loss of a monarch or heir – ALL COMPANIES TEST
- Loss of a Ward Commander – ALL within WARD TEST
- Destruction or Rout of a Company – ALL within WARD TEST
- A Company changes sides – ALL within WARD TEST
- Captain receives a Black Flag from a 'risk to captains' test - OWN COMPANY TESTS

If more than one of these events occurs concurrently then only one test is made, but for the most grievous loss (for example, if a Company commanded by an heir is destroyed, and the heir is killed as a result, then the player would test once, but for every Company in the army.)

COMPANIES WITHOUT A NAMED CAPTAIN

It is possible that a Company will be formed without a named Captain in command, or that it may find that its named Captain has been killed or captured. In this case, an unnamed Captain will take charge; a man of little social consequence unnamed by the chroniclers and heralds (note that this is the fate of most captains of gonne, men of no nobility but great arcane knowledge). In this case, the Company activates on a D6 and may not use the 'I'll put myself to the hazard' tactic in melee.

CAPTAINS' ATTRIBUTES

Where a named Captain leads a Company, they will all have a Rank, an Experience level, and the potential for Traits. These can be assigned according to the background of the historical individual, or they may be applied randomly, using a D6 (the roll required is indicated in the descriptions below).

RANK

Medieval command was based upon social standing. Those higher in the social hierarchy were destined to lead, and thought to have an inherent superiority. A player may not choose to sideline a less-than-competent nobleman in favour of an unnamed captain. Noblemen, no matter how unpractised, timorous, or downright treacherous demand and must be given their due honours.

Rank determines who is put in command of any given army or Ward. The highest-ranking nobleman will command the army and the vanguard (traditionally on the right of the army), the next most senior commands the main ward (in the centre), and the third most senior the rearward (traditionally on the left). A reserve ward may be formed, commanded by any noble, or the Army Commander.

There are four general ranks for the Named Captains in the game.

- 1 - Of the Blood Royal
- 2, 3 - Baronial - Barons and Earls
- 4, 5 - Lordly - Lesser nobles and bannerets
- 6 - Knightly - Commoners with military experience,

EXPERIENCE

This determines the Command dice of the Captain, the basis for all UTs.

- 1 - OLD SOLDIER – UT on a D10
- 2,3,4 - PRACTICED – UT on a D8
- 5, 6 - AMATEUR – UT on D6

TRAITS

The following traits add character to the Captains of your Companies, and reflect the impact that the Captains had on the outcome of battle.

- **AUDACIOUS:** Once per game the Captain can automatically Interrupt his opponent *without* having to win the opposed UT, nor taking an Interrupt marker.
- **TENACIOUS** – The Captain's Company ignores the 1st BF in Melee and is +1 to the UT against Faltering.
- **IMPETUOUS** – +1 to the Company's Activation Roll, and to the INITIATIVE roll if the Captain is the Army Commander.
In melee, the Captain must pass a UT or be compelled to use the 'I'll Put Myself to the Hazard' Tactical Choice.
- **CAUTIOUS** - This Captain is wary of taking risks. If his Company carries one or more BFs his first Action must be to attempt to Rally.
If holding BFs when in melee, he must pass a UT or be compelled to select the 'Rally to the Standards' tactical choice.
- **TREACHEROUS** – -1 to the Company's ACTIVATION Roll, to the UT against Faltering, and to the INITIATIVE roll if the Captain is the Army Commander. Must always pass a UT to charge into combat. If the test is failed, then roll again. If this too is a failure, then the Captain and his Company change sides, and immediately come under the opposition player's control.

- **TRIMMER** – The Captain's loyalty is questionable. -1 to the Company's ACTIVATION Roll, to the UT against Faltering, and to the INITIATIVE roll if the Captain is the Army Commander. Must always pass a UT to charge into combat. If the test is failed, then roll again. If this too is a failure, then the Captain and his Company withdraw from the field (they will about-face and then march from the field at the normal rate).
- **TIMOROUS** - The Captain is shy of war and combat. He must always test to charge, may not use the 'I'll Put Myself to the Hazard' tactic, and suffers -1 when taking a Faltering Check.
- **ARTIFICES** – The player may place stakes, pits, or nets across the front of the Ward of which this Captain is a part. D3+1 such Artifices may be placed, with a footprint equal to that of a Company. Artifices count as ROUGH Terrain.
- **BUSHMENTS** – The Captain's Company may be placed in concealing terrain, up to halfway across the table.
- **RAISED FROM THE DUST** - In spite of his rank, his peers see this Captain as a parvenu and upstart. -1 to his activation rolls, and to the Initiative roll if he is in command of the army.
- **PUISSANT** - The Captain's martial skill is unsurpassed. If the 'Put Myself to the Hazard' tactic is chosen in attack this Captain rolls 2 WD, rather than just 1 as for other named Captains. In defence he cancels 2 Black Flag results, rather than just 1.
- **INSPIRING** - The Captain has the ability to inspire men to great feats, and they will follow him unquestioningly. +1 to the Company's Activation Roll, and -1 to the Company's Faltering check.
- **CHIVALROUS** - The Captain is the prime example of chivalrous conduct. When his opponent takes a 'Risk to Commanders' test as a result of melee he re-rolls a HORSE (i.e. killed) result. If that result is anything other than another HORSE (when he is killed) then he is captured.
- **MERCILESS** - The Captain is known for his bloodthirsty cruelty. When his opponent takes a 'Risk to Commanders' test as a result of melee he re-rolls a FATE (i.e. captured) result. If that result is anything other than another FATE (when he is captured) then he is killed.
- **CAPTAIN OF ARCHERS** - A soldier with great experience in directing and commanding archers. If he is in command of a Retinue, Commission of Array, Herce, or Archer Company, that Company may, once per game, automatically launch an 'Arrowstorm' without the need to pass a UT.