

Wargaming the Glorious Revolution 1688(and slightly beyond) **By Barry Hilton**

Background

A much misunderstood and propagandised period of British history, the so-called Glorious Revolution is the term used to describe the transfer of the throne from the House of Stuart to William of Orange. This significant event immediately preceded the British Kingdoms' involvement in the War of the League of Augsburg (War of the Grand Alliance), something which the new King was very keen to establish as it supported his own long running fight with Louis XIV's France.

The 'invasion' itself was largely bloodless with only a few skirmishes taking place between the English army of James II and William's continental force which had come to secure the throne for their Prince. Initially much of the English army looked as if it would stay loyal to the Stuart King (if only he'd do something!). But as time passed and he remained indecisive, whole scale desertion took place and he eventually fled to Ireland. Ok so that's the potted history bit out of the way!

Unfortunately from a wargaming perspective this period produced no set piece battles or notable actions. It does however offer almost endless wargaming 'what ifs'. We have probably enjoyed more games set in this 'bolt -on' period to the War of the LoA than the main event itself.

So, What do they offer that's different? Well, that's what this article is about.

The battles combine some of the quirkiness which I think characterises the English Civil War as a period such as amateur generalship, a high degree of uncertainty with regard to troop reliability and quality in action and last but not least, fun. These scenarios which follow also have a high potential for umpire interference which is how they were designed.

I have chosen two scenarios from the 20 or so we have created. Both we have played and enjoyed. One is loosely based on factual events, the other stretches the imagination and craves the serious historian's indulgence but hey, this is a hobby right?

If you've got Grand Alliance, Spanish Succession, Jacobite Rebellion Scots or at a pinch certain ECW types, they'll fit. Everyone can be included on some strong or tenuous historical pretext. French (Bourbon & Huguenot), English, Irish, Welsh and Scots (Jacobites, Williamites and Militia), Dutch, Danes, Germans and probably any other European types you can think of!

Scenario format and rules

Each scenario is laid out in the same way. It gives a background to the action, Orders of battle for each side, objectives for the commanders, special rules on troop types if applicable, umpire notes (if needed), an idea of the outcome when we played it and finally, a battle map for deployment.

The Rules

Use either 1644 or WHC Marlburian with all previous amendments published in WI articles written by LoA. The morale grades listed after each unit in the scenario orbats refer to their classifications under each of these rule sets respectively. Alternatively, use any horse and musket set you are familiar with.

Scenario 1 “ To die for the Stuarts!”

This scenario is based on historical fact. On the disintegration of the English Stuart Army following William of Orange's landing , one particular regiment under the Catholic Earl of Dumbarton, mutinied and marched north for Scotland refusing to fight for the foreign Prince. As they made the long trek for home they were eventually caught and surrounded by Williamite troops in the north of England. Without a fight, the regiment was `persuaded' to come over to King William's army with many of the loyal Jacobite officers and men being allowed to take their leave unmolested. This regiment with an already proud lineage stretching back almost half a century to the 30 Years War, was to march and fight on through another three centuries of service in the British army as the Royal Scots. I reckon King William should have paid a handsome bonus to the smooth talking officers and politicians who negotiated that little transaction!

Anyway, that's where history stops and the wargaming `what if' begins. We decided that the pursuing Williamite forces catch up with Dumbarton's force near Newark and that the Scots take up a defensive position in derelict English Civil War fortifications near the town.

What follows is an action in which seasoned European veterans attempt to subdue but not destroy a hostile but potentially valuable body of troops who if properly officered (in the political sense) will add to the strength of the new King's army.

Will the experienced Dutch officers and their new English comrades in arms persuade the rebels to lay down their arms and join King William or will Dumbarton's loyal officer corps persuade their men to die for the Stuarts in a glorious last stand?

Each side contains a core of seasoned veterans. The Jacobite army also includes enthusiastic amateurs represented by local militia companies who have banded together to defend the cause of the true King. There are men with split allegiances on both sides also. In the Jacobite army, around 600 veterans from the 2,000 strong Scots Dutch Brigade. These men have been in the pay of Holland for years but are subjects of King James and have therefore deserted their paymaster to support their King. On the other side are their former comrades in arms who have chosen to remain in William's service. In the Williamite force are Englishmen and Scots who until recently, served alongside the men of Dumbarton's and bled with them at Sedgemoor three years previous. How will these troops behave in such a situation?

Confused? You will be!

The Game Objectives

The Williamite Commander

He must outmanoeuvre and capture the enemy force with minimal loss to both sides. They will provide valuable recruits for King William's war with France if the bloodletting is kept to a minimum. Losses of more than 25% to your own forces or 35% to the enemy will be considered a failure. A bonus will be the capture of Dumbarton himself.

The Jacobite Commander

Beating the enemy and continuing toward Scotland is the ultimate goal. This may encourage the English and Scots on the other side to return to the cause of King James. Survival in your current position whilst inflicting over 30% losses on the enemy is a partial success. Surrender is not an option.

The Forces.

The Army loyal to King James II (under the Earl of Dumbarton)

The Foot

Earl of Dumbarton's Regiment -2 weak battalions (Scots)	Veteran/Elite
Piercy Kirke's Regiment (English) -1 weak battalion	Trained/Drilled
Soldiers from the Scots/Dutch Brigade - 1 battalion	Veteran/Elite*
Loyal Militia companies – 1 battalion	Raw

5 Picked companies of commanded musketeers from the remnants of King James's Royal Army (All of 1 stand of 6 musketeers)	Trained/Drilled
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The Horse

2 squadrons of mixed troops from the remnants of The Royal Army of King James	Trained /Drilled
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The Williamite Army under Count Schomberg

The Foot

7 battalions of Dutch, Danish, Germans or Huguenots	Trained/Drilled
1 battalion of Dutch	Veteran/Guards
1 battalion of Scots/Dutch Brigade	Veteran/Elite*
2 battalions of English deserters from King James' Army	Trained Drilled*
1 battalion of European dismounted dragoons	Trained/ Drilled

5 squadrons of Dutch/Danish/Germans	Trained/ Drilled
2 squadrons of English deserters from King James' Army	Trained/Drilled*

2 light guns	Trained/Drilled
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Note all Foot should carry a proportion of Pikemen except Danish, Huguenots, commanded musketeers and dismounted dragoons.

All units marked * will test when first under fire, in combat or facing former friends within firing/charge distance. Use 1 x D6 and consult below:

SCORE

1. Desert to the other side and have their morale downgraded by one class
2. Have their morale downgraded by one class, take minus factor on fire and will not melee.
3. Refuse to advance or fire and surrender if attacked unless visited by the C in C.
4. Fight as normal
5. Flee the field and fight for no King!
6. Raise a cheer for their King and charge the nearest enemy if Horse or advance against any former comrades in arms if Foot.

Umpire Notes

No special umpire notes are needed for this scenario.

Our result.

We've fought this one twice. First time the Williamites made heavy weather of the attack until in a moment of madness, the player in command of the Jacobites marched his entire two battalion veteran regiment out of the earthwork fortification (which had protected them for the whole game without loss and looked unassailable) and into a cauldron of fire. Within one turn all other Jacobite units had fled or sought terms.

Second time was a bloodbath with heavy casualties particularly amongst the European infantry. Animosity amongst Williamite / Jacobite English saw Kirke's Regiment ridden down and put to the sword by Oxford's Blues and other heavy hand to hand combat between former comrades in arms. The heroes of the hour – Dumbarton's were surrounded and captured without a casualty! The overall result was a win for neither side as the Jacobites were caught and the Williamites inflicted and sustained unacceptably high losses. The scenario is tight and makes for a good game with plenty of opportunity for role-play between the generals. The hedges making great cover for the commanded shot and causing all sorts of problems for formed infantry and horse.

Scenario 2 The Battle of Nantwich 1689

This scenario is based on the presumption that Bonnie Dundee not only won at Killiecrankie, July 27th 1689 (which he did) but that he lived to tell the tale (which he didn't). He drives the remnants of Mackay's army out of Scotland and crushes Williamite resistance amongst the population of the cities. During a period of consolidation a sizeable force of Irish Jacobites is landed on the west coast of Scotland under Patrick Sarsfield and a French fleet runs the blockade to deposit a small but well trained brigade of infantry at Leith. Rebellion which is of course contagious, breaks out all over England and King William enters a crisis period in which his largely continental army comes to be viewed more as foreign invaders than as liberators from absolutism. As the English Jacobites begin to emerge, many volunteer units and loyal regiments flock to the Stuart standard. These enthusiastic but untrained bodies form the bulk of the English contingent.

Dundee marches south into England with his Highland army and on the way gathers many of these new volunteers as well as linking up with Sarsfield's Irish and the French brigade. In the early autumn they besiege the town of Nantwich in Cheshire. German mercenaries loyal to William garrison the town. The wily old Marshal, Schomberg is detached from firefighting local insurrection in the Home Counties to deal with the Jacobite army and destroy the challenge to King William's power. He marches north at the head of a well trained and balanced but numerically inferior Williamite army, to destroy the Jacobite rabble and raise the siege of Nantwich.

The Game Objectives

In this scenario the objective for each side is simply to win the battle and render the opposing army incapable of further campaigning.

The Forces.

The Army loyal to King James II under the combined control of Dundee(Scots), Sarsfield (Irish and English) and Brissac(French)

The Foot

Scots

Earl of Dumbarton's Regiment -1 battalions (Scots)	Veteran/Elite
Clans (7 units of approximate half battalion strength)	Raw/Raw

Irish

2 Battalions	Trained/Drilled
4 Battalions	Raw/Raw

English

6 Militia & Volunteer Battalions	Raw/Raw
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French

4 Battalions	Trained/Drilled
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Horse

Dundee's Lifeguard (1 sqdn)	Trained/Drilled
Sarsfield's Regiment (2 sqdns)	Trained/Drilled
Composite Royal cavalry (2 sqdns)	Trained/Drilled
Scots Volunteer Horse (1 sqdn)	Raw/Raw

2 Light batteries	Trained/Drilled
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The Williamite Army under Count Schomberg

The Foot

12 battalions of Dutch, Danish Germans, Huguenots English or Scots	Trained/Drilled
1 battalion of Dutch	Veteran/Guards
2 light guns	Trained/Drilled

Horse

10 sqdns of Dutch, Danish or English Horse	Trained/Drilled
6 sqdns of Dutch or English Dragoons	Trained/Drilled

2 positional batteries of artillery	Trained/Drilled
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Notes on troop types used.

- ❖ All foot except Danish, Huguenots, Grenadiers, Dragoons and Highlanders should have a proportion of pikes.
- ❖ Half of the Irish and English Jacobite militia should contain 50% pikemen
- ❖ All regular Jacobite cavalry and the English Williamite Horse (not Dragoons) kill on 4,5,6 on a D6 1st round of melee against other horse or 3,4,5,6 against Foot if WHC rules are used. If 1644 increase the HC factor to 4
- ❖ All Highlanders and Irish Jacobite foot get +6 melee bonus in first round of melee(normal is +4) or if following up(WHC) or HC Factor of 4 if using 1644
- ❖ Highlanders move at 6" normal move, 8" charge move.
- ❖ Highlanders test to charge when under artillery fire. 1st round 6 on D6 = charge nearest enemy, 2nd round 5,6 etc.
- ❖ Highlanders have only 1 round of musketry or can withhold and add an extra +2 to 1st round melee(WHC) or HC 5 if 1644
- ❖ French Bourbon troops will not melee unless there is no other option.
- ❖ French Bourbon v Huguenots add +2 to 1st melee round(WHC) , HC value 4 if 1644
- ❖ Usual deductions for mounted dragoons in combat as per (WHC)

Umpire notes

This scenario allows for serious miscommunication through the triumvirate of Jacobite leaders. A courier system should be used to facilitate their correspondence. If the Jacobites lose the French should be offered terms but any other prisoners can be disposed of as Rebels.

Our result

This is a relatively large-scale action and proved a very enjoyable game. The Jacobites were uncoordinated from the start and manoeuvred their left wing forward whilst moving their right back. This was disastrous and totally disorganised them. Whilst the French looked on from their positions around St David's church the Irish and English foot were shot to pieces by well disciplined Dutch and Danish Regiments. On the Jacobite right the clans had an ephemeral glimpse of victory as the enemy line temporarily buckled. Alas the timely arrival of massive formations of Dutch Horse swept them away with the meagre Jacobite Horse unable to do anything to stem the flow. It all sounds a bit one sided but in fact the Jacobites had every chance of victory, simply failing to co-ordinate their disparate commands. The Bourbon French hardly engaged and through the Umpire were able to negotiate favourable terms whilst the clans, English Jacobites and Irish were largely butchered in the rout. Of the 30 Jacobite/French units less than 8 retired intact. Williamite losses were less than 1 third of the enemy's.

Conclusion

These two scenarios are the tip of a very enjoyable iceberg. Marginal twisting of historical situations allowed many elements of a very intriguing period in British history to provide excellent wargaming. The maps and orbats are deliberately non prescriptive. We played about with the facts so any other gamers wishing to experiment should also have this flexibility.