

Quick 'n' Dirty Guides #4

Multi use of your Grand Alliance units

Background

The period 1685-1714 includes the conflicts: Sedgemoor Rebellion, Glorious Revolution, The First Jacobite War, War of the League of Augsburg (aka War of the Grand Alliance, aka Nine Years War) and the War of the Spanish Succession. Uniforms were developing rapidly but the individual characteristics and cuts so predominant in future years had not yet taken root. This means that troops in many armies wore much the same style and colour of clothing. Main distinctions were through the unit's standards and to an extent some smaller subtle differences such as ribbon colours on shoulders, hose or hats. In the main, this offers a huge opportunity to field various armies from the root of a single collection. With some small extra effort an English Rebel Army of 1685 can become a Jacobite Irish Army, a Williamite Irish Army or a Dutch or French Militia force. Similarly a Swiss Guard battalion can transform into an English Guards Regiment, a Dutch Infantry battalion, a Saxon, Hannoverian or even Russian battalion. This Quick n' Dirty Guide offers several practical alternatives for the gamer who wants to max out on the minimum of effort.

Main aspects of clothing to check.

The 'long coat' and its cuff colour offers the main opportunity for flexibility. As the predominant feature on any soldier of the period this is what you'll notice most. The subordinate features are waistcoat, breeches and hose colours. Although some may consider these hugely significant my suggestion is that they are not. Firstly poor quality would guarantee that the men wore what they could get their hands on and not what was prescribed. Re issue of kit was at the Colonel's personal expense and these men were notoriously corrupt and mean. Uniforms were often replaced every two or three years whilst probably not robust enough to last three months in the field.

The other predominant clothing feature was headwear. For infantry it was almost universally a black felt hat. Sometimes this carried coloured lace on the rim most commonly in white or yellow but occasionally in other colours such as red or blue. An ultra safe bet is to leave the hat without lace thus opening up numerous options. Buttons were often of brass or pewter but are a minor detail which should not be a cause for undue concern. Finally there is the ubiquitous neckcloth which could be in various colours with white being by far safest (universal) followed by black which is also suitably neutral.

Typical examples of multi use infantry units

Uniform Colour	English Army	French Army	Dutch Army	Other Armies
Red Coat with Blue cuffs	1 st Guards 2 nd Guards	Swiss Guards Montroux(Italian)	Muralt(Swiss) Torsay	Jacobite Guards
Red Coat with Green cuffs	Kirke's Lambs(2 nd)	Montcashel(Irish)		Coseritz(Hannover)
Red Coat with white cuffs	Dumbarton's(1 st)		Ramsay's(Scots) Tollemache(English)	Grand Prior(Irish)
Grey Coat with red cuffs		Orleans	Wijnbergen	Jyske(Danish) Aragon(Spanish)
Grey Coat with blue cuffs		Le Dauphin Flandre	Von Bulow Friesheim	Sjaellandske(Danish) Toledo(Spanish)
Blue coat with red cuffs	Earl of Bath's	Garde Francaises Greder(Swiss)	Garde te Voet Hornes-Kassel	Semenovski(Russian) Kronprinz (Prussian)
Red coat with yellow cuffs	Trelawney's(4 th) Hasting's	Clare(Irish)	Lochmann(Swiss) Balfour(Scots)	Queen's(Danish) various Saxons Butyrski(Russian)
Blue coat with Yellow cuffs		Furstemberg(German)	Lowenhaupt(Swedes)	Erbprinz(Brunswick) Various Swedish
Mix of greys/browns and earth colours	Any recruits or militia	Any recruits or militia	Any recruits or militia	Any recruits or militia

Standards

The single biggest distinguishing feature of armies in this period is the individual nature of their battle standards. They add a huge extra dimension to a wargames unit particularly if you oversize them in the way I prefer. Three alternatives are open to gamers in this regard if you wish to put your units to 'multi use'.

1. In my opinion the least desirable: Give the units very plain colour standards without devices ie All White (the most typical colonel's colour) or all Red or all Yellow. You can simply name the unit whatever you wish although some of these colours will NOT fit certain armies for example the French.
2. Prepare various alternative standards and swap them every time you field a different unit. This need not be as messy as it originally sounds. Choose your Ensigns carefully ie figures which have a 'closed hand'(perhaps drilled by you) and through which a pole can be passed and will not fall out. Make the pole longer than it might be to ensure a counterweight or make it very long and drill a small post hole in the base into which it can be secured. NO GLUE is required with this method. You may wish to vary your figure choice (although a wide enough selection are available to provide variety even in this first option) and so glue may be required. In this case each change will need a re-glue or paint touch up.
3. Have a separate command 'stand' which has the alternative unit standards permanently fixed. This is obviously the most work but once done, is done forever. These need not all be done at the same time but offer a nice 'energiser' to revisiting the period if you have been away for a while. I prefer this method over the other two.

Some references on this site

Gallery Sections:

Wof LoA:various

Real Deal: Blenheim 1704-2004

Other references:

Ospreys:93,118,203,267

From Pike to Shot 1685- 1720. Charles S. Grant. WRG Publication

Any titles by Alan Sapherson on the period



This unit could easily be used for the following purposes:

- Gardes Francaises
- Dutch Guards
- Earl of Bath's(Eng)
- Kronprinz (Prussian)
- Jonkoping (Swedish)
- Greder (Swiss)



This unit could easily be used for the following purposes:

- Covenanters 1679
- Sedgemoor Rebels
- English County Militia
- Jacobite Irish 1690
- Williamite Irish 1690
- French Militia/Recruit
- Dutch Militia/Recruit
- Mercenary regiment



This unit could easily be used for the following purposes:

- Regt Orlean(French)
- Regt Jyske(Danish)
- Regt ...(Dutch)
- Regt (English)
- Regt Aragon(Spanish)