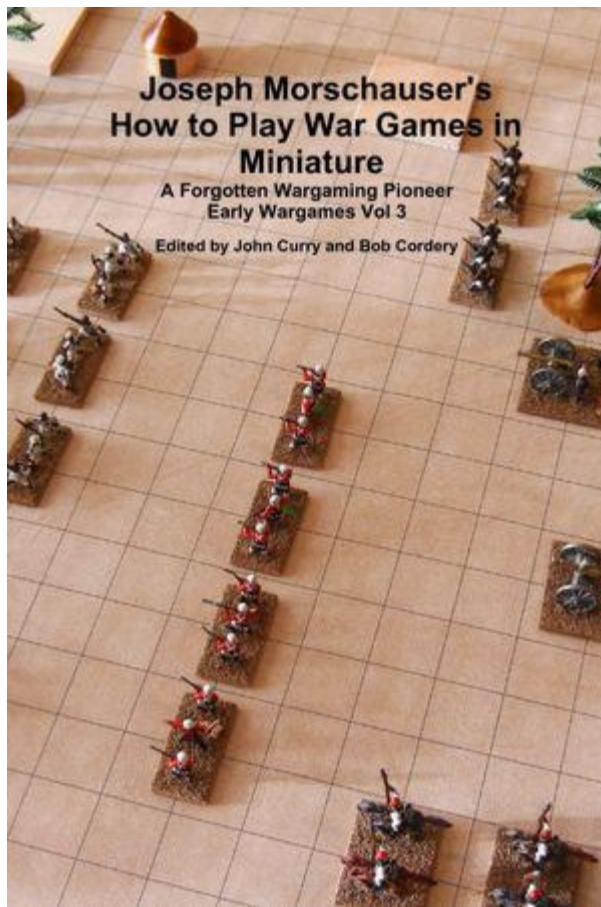


# How to Play War Games in Miniature

by Joseph Morschauser

Review by Paul Le Long

Joe Morschauser's *How to Play War Games in Miniature* was first published in 1962. Now it has been reissued as part of John Curry's "History of Wargaming" project. The subtitle of the new edition says it all: "A Forgotten Pioneer." Morschauser's book actually slightly pre-dated Featherstone's *War Games*, which has gone on to be regarded as a seminal work, while Morschauser's book has been largely forgotten.



That's a great pity because it is an excellent little book. While writers like Featherstone and Grant went on to become the wargaming mainstream, Morschauser remained in the shadows, though he arguably influenced more modern ideas of gaming like DBA, HOTT and Armati. So, although this is a very old book, it feels strange to put it in the "classic" category because it is in many ways very modern. The new edition has a very interesting introduction by Bob Cordery that discusses the book's place in the history of the hobby.

There are various general chapters on wargames, choosing figures, choosing a period to play, advice on writing your own rules and so on. The main thing though is the author's own rules and approach to wargaming. Alone among his published contemporaries, Morschauser advocated basing figures in units rather than individually, not removing individual figures as casualties and playing on a gridded surface. This was innovative in 1962 and foreshadowed the approach of later gamers like Wesenraft, Cordery and Griffith.

The book presents some basic generic rules followed by more specialised rules for the "Shock" period (ancient and medieval), the "Musket" period and the "Modern" period. Each set is extremely simple covering just 5-7 pages. To give you an idea, an infantry unit is represented by a base of four figures, cavalry is a base of two mounted figures. Bases, not figures, move and fight. A unit has a melee power number and you roll against that number in an opposed die roll with the enemy unit, the loser is generally removed from play. A typical "shock" army would comprise 10 units of light infantry, five units of heavy infantry, 10 units of heavy cavalry, five units of light cavalry and five units of light missile infantry. A bit like DBA – but decades before DBA was written.



To be honest, the rules are so simple that you could make up something similar very easily yourself. But that's not the point; this book is a must-read for anyone interested in the history of the hobby.

Details:

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