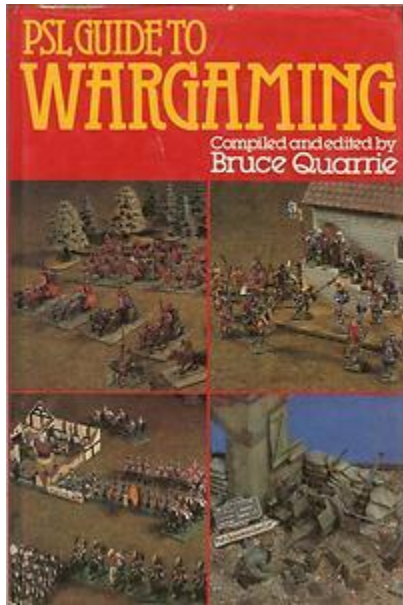


‘PSL Guide to Wargaming’

Compiled and edited by Bruce Quarrie

Review by Paul Le Long

This book is as much a guide to the history of warfare as it is a guide to wargaming. It is also an all-star parade of wargaming luminaries. Bruce Quarrie is editor and author of the chapters on ‘Napoleonic warfare’ (he has pedigree on the subject with his “Napoleon’s Campaigns in Miniature”) and “Armoured Warfare 1939-45” (he has a lot of pedigree on this subject too). The chapter on Ancient warfare is by Phil Barker, Medieval warfare is by Ian Heath, Renaissance warfare is by George Gush, Stuart Asquith takes care of 18th century warfare and WWI. Terry Wise writes the chapter on the ACW and Franco-Prussian War and Ted Herbert covers Colonial warfare. The chapter on the Crimean War is by the only author I’ve never heard of – Dan Fosten. So, just about every chapter is written by a wargamer who has several books to his name and often an expert on the period they review here. As I said, this is an all-star parade and a collection of writers with unrivalled experience.



The introduction (by Quarrie) covers the history of the hobby, the usual “what is wargaming?” followed by scales, painting, unit frontages, simultaneous movement, figure ratios, wargames tables, random factors (like dice), how to transfer battles to the tabletop, morale and gamesmanship (or the spirit of the game). All good advice for the novice but I suspect nothing new to anyone reading this review.

Each of the “period” chapters includes the same sort of content – let’s take the chapter on 18th century warfare (by Asquith) as an example: There’s an overview of the period, a quick potted history of the wars and campaigns of the period, organisation of the armies, a discussion of the weapons and the tactics.

At the end of each chapter, the editor presents a one-page discussion of the rules for the period – brief advice really on what to focus on in order to make the period feel right.

The chapter on Ancients (Barker) is the longest and most detailed. It includes seven pages of rules. The rules in some later chapters are extensions of the ones in this chapter. The rules in the Colonial warfare and WWI chapters are different – a set of skirmish rules. The armoured warfare rules are also (as you’d expect) different, but still pretty stripped down.

Some of the chapters are extremely short and therefore quite basic but for the most part they contain a lot of interesting and useful information. Experienced wargamers like those I suspect will be reading this review probably won't learn anything new but the novice could do worse, even now, than pick up this book. And anyway it has an indefinable charm, written as it is by some of the biggest names in the hobby.

Details:

- **Hardcover:** 152 pages
- **Publisher:** Patrick Stevens Ltd (1980)
- **ISBN:** 0850594138

This is currently selling for £7.49 on Amazon.