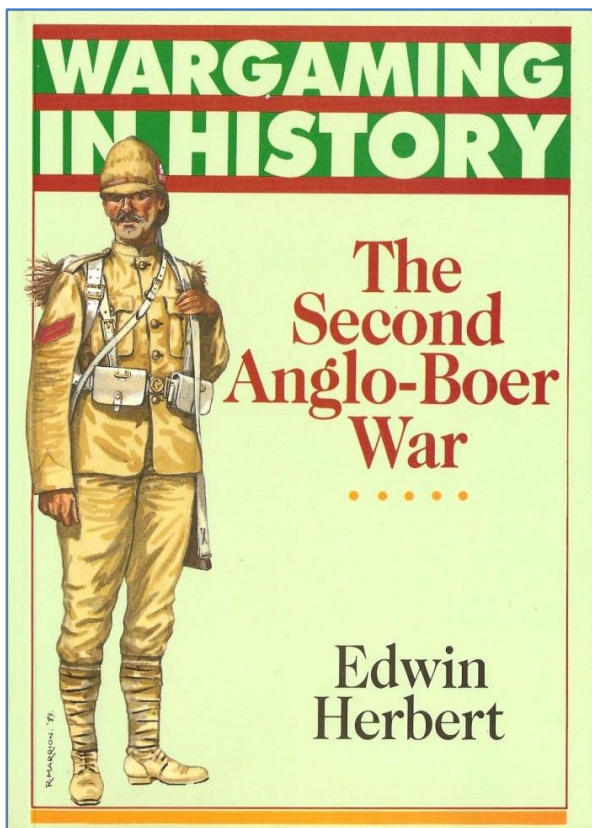


'The Second Anglo-Boer War'

By Edwin Herbert

Review by Jonathan Aird

This book is one of the small volumes in the 'Wargaming in History' series produced by Argus Books as a follow-on to their successful introduction to wargaming series. This is that extreme rarity of the wargame book devoted solely to colonial wargames, now as then, a minority interest amongst the wargaming fraternity.



A brief introduction sets the scene of the Second Boer war, touching on the outcomes of the First Boer War and the general political and social scene that will form a backdrop to the wargames. The book is then divided up into 11 chapters of varying length (some are just a couple of pages) as follows:

Chapter 1: Organisation and Field Tactics of covers the organisation of both sides, including details on foreign volunteer units that supported the Boers -- who seemingly were more tenacious in combat. As they were supplied with equipment on arrival they would not have greatly differed in appearance from the 'home grown' commandos. Details of typical tactic are covered of such as the standard British advance in column. There is plenty of detail on how troop types, such as infantry, mounted infantry and cavalry, differed in the field, and hints on how to represent these differences in a wargame.

Chapter 2: Special Features Of The War -- covers all the "colour" that makes this an attractive wargaming proposition, despite the somewhat grim history that is covered. Significant weaponry, differences in tactics between commandos and block houses, brutal dum-dum rounds and those truly magical words "armoured trains."

Chapter 3: British uniforms of gone is the colour of earlier colonial campaigns of the gamer will need to invest heavily in khaki paint. Khaki jackets, khaki trowsers, or if the highlanders didn't end up with a khaki kilt cover. Some variation is offered by naval detachment gunners (straw hats, otherwise khaki) and the City Imperial volunteers of who wore olive drab. It's best to know these things!

Chapter 4: What the Boers Wore of a variety of dark civilian clothing is the order of the day. Where uniforms existed they were mostly of you've guessed it of khaki. Boer artillerymen at least had the decency to dress in bright blue jackets. Another useful summary for the figure painter.

Chapter 5: The Generals -- in a very short chapter, Herbert is quite dismissive of most of the British generals, and praises the majority of the Boer commanders. How to translate these different capabilities into wargames is touched on.

Chapter 6: The Weapons ó this is a very useful summary of the side arms and larger artillery pieces used by both sides, with ranges and rates of fire and other useful data.

Chapter 7: The third force -- another short chapter about the role of native Africans in the conflict. Both sides used large numbers of locals, either in support roles or to a lesser extent as combatants.

Chapter 8: Casualties and their effect on morale ó a most interesting chapter which does throw up some intriguing problems for the wargamer trying to simulate a typical action. The plain facts are presented that neither side took many casualties ó a British regiment would be out of action with 20% casualties (killed and wounded), the Boers would cut and run at 5% or less. This will be something of a challenge to represent in a game ó most players expect to see plenty of figures removed from play, and to have regular regiments soldier on until at least 50% casualties. Very interesting information coupled with some detailed statistics.

Chapter 9: Wargames figures and rules ó as the reader might anticipate, this section is quite dated. Many of the figures quoted and photographed are no longer available; many others have joined their ranks. There is a detailed comparison of rule sets ó some of which are still available commercially, others will require a bit of second-hand searching. A set in *Miniature Wargames* Issue 57 is mentioned ó this is quite telling : there just weren't all that many sets of rules to pick among.

Chapter 10: Three Scenarios ó this is an excellent section offering good details on setting up and fighting a full battle, a strategic game and a skirmish battle. In short ó something for everyone.

Chapter 11: The cost of the war ó a very short overview of the total losses to both sides. Long enough to throw up some of the horrors of this period, such as the large numbers who died of disease in the British concentration camps.

Although the book is heavily illustrated, it is the reproductions of period material that stand out ó the additional modern photographs have not reproduced well in black and white, and in many cases are somewhat uninspiring ó this is a real lost opportunity.

However, all in all this is an excellent volume which packs in a surprising amount of information give its small size. All the facts and data are tied to a wargamer's perspective, which is excellent as well. Overall ó if this is a period of any interest, then this book acts as a very useful wargames primer. This book remains out of print, but second-hand copies are not expensive ó Amazon currently has them from £5.50 (around \$8).

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9 WARGAMES FIGURES AND RULES

There are many good British and Boer wargames figures available on the market these days. As addresses and ranges supplied change from time to time, specific details are not given here. The latest information can be found in reviews and advertisements in the hobby press or by visiting wargames conventions.

At 15mm scale, excellent ranges are produced by Miniature Figurines Limited (Minifigs) of Southampton and Peter Laing of Hereford. Laing's World War I Australian cavalryman makes a good colonial horseman, and he also produces a CIV cavalryman as well as more usual types. Minifigs has a wide range of Boer War figures, including ox-drawn wagons.

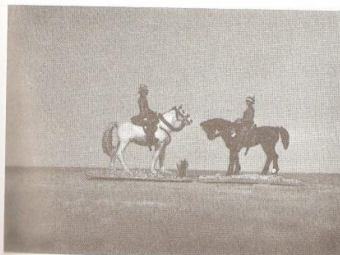
Jacklex figures sold by the Model Shop in Harrow give sufficient variety in 20mm scale to build up balanced forces of all arms: there are six Boers on foot, including a horse-minder; two mounted Boers; British infantry, Highlanders, troopers and lancers; and 20 equipment items, including a horse-drawn supply wagon, a 4.7-inch naval gun and an eight ox team with limber and crew, and a Boer voortrekker wagon complete with three walking settlers (a man, a woman and a girl). Also in this scale, Airfix Confederates can be combined with ESCI types such as the Zulu War British, if you prefer plastics to metal figures and do not mind a little work in converting figures.

Good ranges in 25mm scale are those of Falcon Miniatures, Lyzard's Grin and Ral Partha, all United States suppliers. The Falcon series includes a Boer command group, three Boers on foot, two mounted Boers and an artilleryman. Ral Partha has sets of Boers advancing on foot, Boers firing on foot, mounted Boers and a Boer artillery crew and mounted officer, while the British figures include useful mounted irregulars. The animation of these figures is excellent, the Boers looking delightfully scruffy. Lyzard's Grin specialise in equipment items, including a Maxim Nordenfeldt 75mm gun, a 12-pdr gun and ox and mule wagons. In the UK, Tradition of Shepherd Street, London, do a limited range of British (line infantry and lancers) and Boers (three Boers on foot and one mounted).

In 30mm scale Tradition also supply figures from the moulds made by Edward Surén. The Boers and British are beautiful



Boer commandant with two kripvreterers (Surén 30mm figures).



Stadden and Surén officers confer.