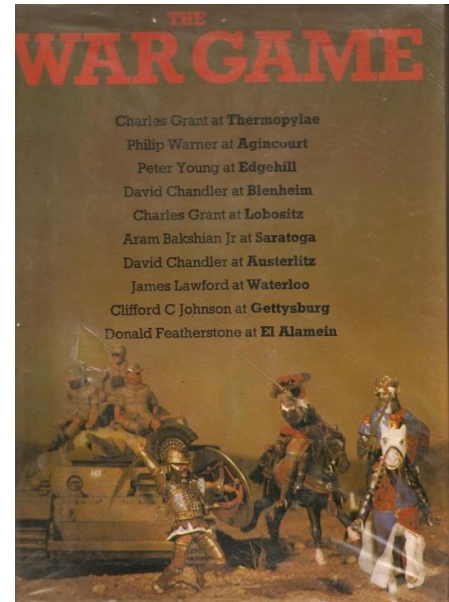


'The War Game'
General editor Peter Young, DSO MC MA FSA FR HistS FRGS
Review by Jonathan Aird

This is a very unusual volume of a large format hardback which looks with a wargamer's eye at 10 significant battles through history. Each battle is described in some detail to give the wargamer enough history and enough of the Order Of Battle to allow for a table top recreation. In some ways, it is reminiscent of the various battle notes books produced by Donald Featherstone. In this book, however, a number of authors have been employed who have a level of expertise in the historical period and the battles being discussed.

The full list of the battles, and the chapter authors, is as follows:

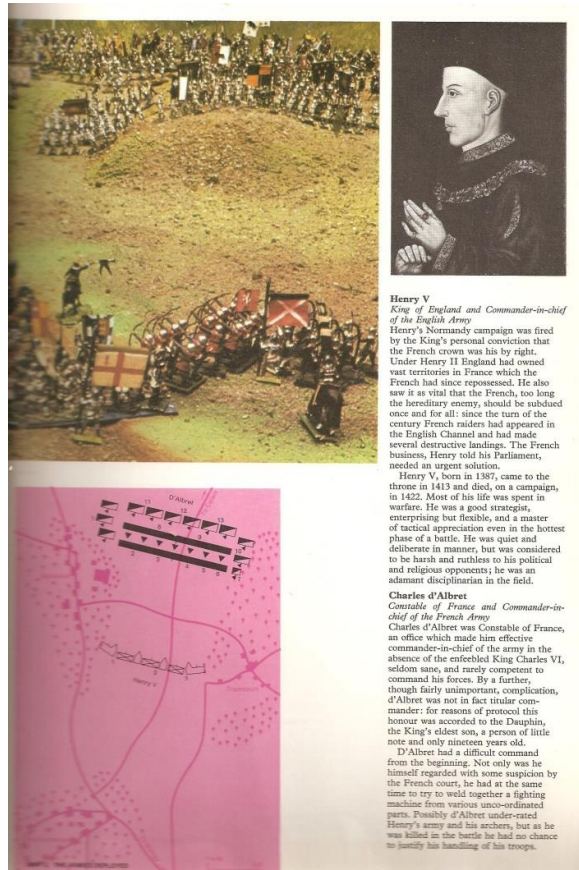
- Thermopylae by Charles Grant
- Agincourt by Philip Warner
- Edgehill by Peter Young
- Blenheim by David Chandler
- Lobositz by Charles Grant
- Saratoga by Aram Bakshian jr
- Austerlitz by David Chandler
- Waterloo by James Lawford
- Gettysburg by Clifford C. Johnson
- El Alamein by Donald Featherstone



The focus of the book is, then, predominantly on the horse and musket period, which is probably a good reflection of the most popular conflicts to play as wargames at the time of writing. All the chapters are well illustrated, with photographs of weapons, maps, reproductions of paintings and contemporary drawings. There are also several model soldier representations in each chapter of either as dioramas or wargames in progress. Some of these latter, the Napoleonic battles in particular, are impressive all these years later but, sadly, others of the Gettysburg wargame for example are very much as one might imagine a wargame would look in those distant years of yore. They are still attractive in their own way, but they are very much of period pieces and are based on a more functional approach to wargaming than one driven mainly by aesthetics.

Quite peculiarly there is the briefest of summaries of what a wargame is tacked on at the end of the book, amounting to just over a page of text, with another page covering magazines, figure suppliers and interesting museums to visit. This feels like nothing more than an afterthought.

This is a book which is not without nostalgic charm and the battles described could all be refought using the information provided as a guide. Some of the points are open to question of as new research has revealed different aspects of the battles of and probably many people would want to do more research (or use the extra detail provided by an Osprey Campaign book). It's the kind of book that's only really worth getting if it can be got cheaply of it's no longer in print but copies are available on Amazon (UK) for £3-£40.



The ever popular battle of Agincourt

Cassel, London. Published 1972

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