

Test of A Simple Map-and-Marker System

By Jim Rohrer

September 17, 2020

For this system, obtain a road map for an area of interest. I used a map of Wisconsin found in my car. It is old, but that does not matter.

I also used the set of standard unit symbols that I found on the web (see appendix). First, paste the complete set of markers to a card. Double thickness of card would be better. Then cut them out. Select the units you want to use in your scenario. Mark some of the units with color to indicate they are the opposing army. I used a black marker to indicate some were the Black army and the rest were the White army.

On my map, 1" = approximately 13 miles so I assumed infantry could force-march 2" per day and cavalry could ride 4" per day. Travel is equally fast on all types of roads for these units so I assumed constant rates of movement all over the map.

Green areas are good cover and reduce hits by 50%.

Lakes and lake areas that are larger in diameter than a unit marker cannot be crossed. My markers are .75" on each side.

None of the rivers are large enough to limit movement.

Units may not cross the state lines.

Yellow areas (cities) that are larger in diameter than a unit marker offer good cover and 360-degree shooting. These include Milwaukee, Madison, Appleton, Green Bay, Wausau and Eau Claire. No flank attacks are possible against cities and hits are divided by two.

The Scenario

In this test play of the game tools, the scenario was loosely taken from my series of self-published novellas on the end times in Wisconsin (Rohrer 2014, 2016). Cataclysmic events started slowly but grew in intensity and scope until Wisconsin was isolated from whatever might be left of the rest of the world.

The Emperor of Illinois invaded Wisconsin, which was then under control of several regional warlords. The Empire was abandoning Illinois for reasons unknown. The mission objective for the imperial army was conquest. Their plan was to move from their base in Milwaukee both westward and northward, driving the warlords backwards and pacifying one area after another.

The plan for the warlords was to fight delaying actions from fortified positions in national forests and in a few cities (Madison, Green Bay and Eau Claire). The warlords will avoid engagement in open areas unless they have two-on-one. They prefer to defend from cover (cities or forests). Warlords plan to retreat from fortified areas if they lose 7 hit points.

Both armies supply themselves by commandeering food and shelter from civilians.

Order of Battle

The warlords have three cavalry battalions and three infantry battalions. The imperials have four cavalry and four infantry battalions. The Imperial army is led by the Emperor himself. The warlords have no single leader.

Infantry units get D6 hits. Cavalry get D6-2 hits. Imperial infantry units are highly disciplined and get +2 hit points. Warlord units are rabble and get D6-2 hits.

Flank and rear attacks, hits=D6 x 2.

Units can only engage if their markers are touching.

Units in a fortified area can be stacked. Hits will be scored against the top unit but units in the stack will be rotated after each round.

Cover reduces hits by 50%.

Refit rule: after 7 days out of combat, a unit is "refitted" and all hit points restored.

The Imperial forces move first. Each player moves in turn. Units may fire immediately when in contact with an enemy unit.

Victory Conditions

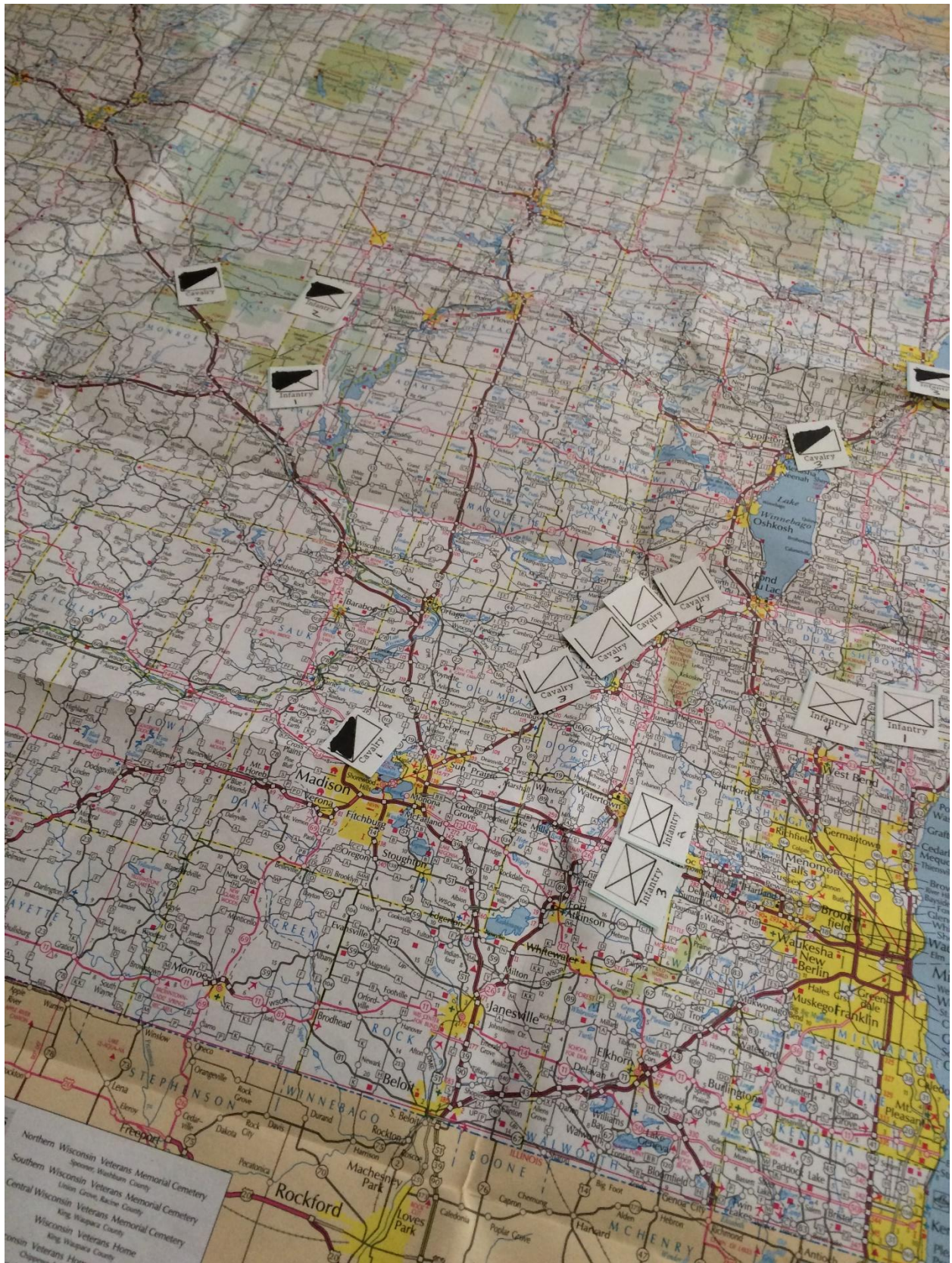
Each round is one day. The Empire plans to conquer the entire state before the game ends after 15 rounds. They have a much stronger army and should be able to do it. If they cannot conquer the state in 15 days, then they have not lost but they have not won either. It's an ego thing.

War Diary

May 1.

Imperials: 3rd and 4th infantry go west on I94 toward Madison. 1st and 4th infantry go north. 12th, 2nd, 3rd and 4th cavalry go NW, forming a line on US 151.

Warlords: no movement.



May 2.

Imperials: 3rd and 4th infantry reach Madison and engaged Warlord 1st cavalry. 5 hits. 1st and 4th cavalry swing around the lake region, heading for Appleton. 1st and 4th infantry continue north. 2nd and 3rd cavalry continue northwest. They reach the Dells.

Warlords: 1st cavalry retreats. It already has 5 hit points against it. They head due west and end up in Blue Lake.

May 3.

Imperials: 3rd and 4th infantry go west as far as Spring Green. 3rd and 2nd cavalry divide. 3rd cavalry goes west to Oakdale. 2nd cavalry goes north to Wisconsin Rapids. They had to circle the Dells because the lakes are impassible. 1st and 4th cavalry engage Warlord 3rd cavalry from the west. 4th infantry engages from the south. Six hits total. 1st Infantry goes north toward Green Bay.

Warlords: 1st cavalry retreats northwest toward La Crosse, ending in Coon Valley. 3rd cavalry retreats northeast from Appleton to Green Bay.

May 4.

Imperials: 3rd and 4th infantry turn north. 3rd cavalry attacks Warlord 1st infantry from one side while 2nd cavalry attacks them from the east. The pincer movements results in six total hits against Warlord 1st infantry. All four of the imperial units attack the two Warlord units in Green Bay. Nine hits are lodged against the Warlord 3rd infantry.

Warlords: 1st infantry retreats to the northwest.

1st cavalry attacks 3rd cavalry in the rear. Six hits.

2nd cavalry attacks 3rd cavalry in the flank. Four hits.

2nd infantry attacks 2nd cavalry in the flank. Six hits.

3rd infantry retreats north. 3rd cavalry retreats north with them.

May 5.

Imperials: 3rd cavalry and 2nd cavalry assault Warlord 1st cavalry on the flanks. Destroyed. 3rd cavalry retreats past Mauston. 2nd cavalry retreats to Wisconsin Rapids.

On the eastern front, 1st and 4th infantry pursue the Warlord units north. 1st and 4th cavalry position themselves to the west of the Warlord forces to prevent them from escaping into the national forest.

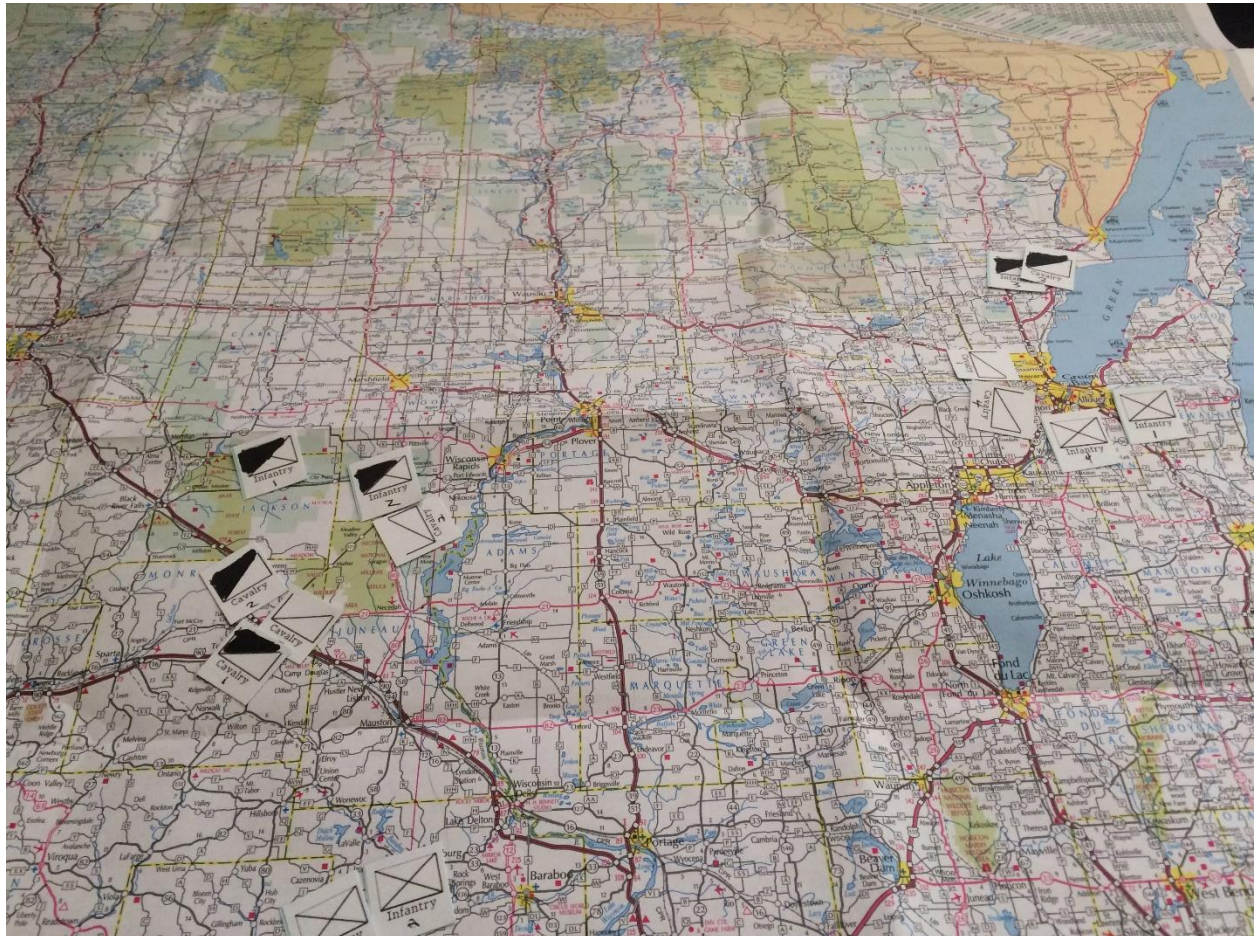
Warlords: 2nd cavalry retreats to Indian Mission in the forest. 1st and 2nd infantry form a stack with the 2nd cavalry. Units in the northeast are blocked from entering the forest so they proceed north on US 141 to Wausaukee.

May 6.

Imperials: 3rd and 4th infantry to northwest. 3rd cavalry goes west. 2nd cavalry does to Marshfield.

On the eastern front, 1st and 4th cavalry move north through the national forest while 1st and 4th infantry move north on US141. They are herding the Warlord forces toward Beecher in the northeast corner of the state.

Warlords: all units in the forest at Indian Mission move north to Rock Dam, still in the forest where they have good cover. Both units in the northeast move to Beecher. They are trapped.



May 7.

Imperials: 3rd cavalry moves northwest. They could strike at Rock Dam from the west. 2nd and 3rd infantry move to Indian Mission.

All four units in the north assault the damaged Warlord units in Beecher. Destroyed. I did not bother to roll the dice.

Warlords: all units retreat north to the Chequamegon National Forest.

May 8.

Imperials: 3rd cavalry moves north to Bloomer, shadowing the Warlords on the west. 2nd cavalry moves to Merrill, shadowing to the east. 2nd and 3rd infantry move north to Greenwood. All units on the eastern front go due west.

Warlords: all units retreat north to the Flambeau area.

May 9.

Imperials: 3rd cavalry moves north to Rice Lake. 2nd cavalry moves north to Tomahawk. 2nd and 3rd infantry moves north to Chequamegon Forest. Army of the northeast moves west to Oneida.

Warlords: all units retreat north to Moose.

May 10.

Imperials: 3rd cavalry moves north to Washburn. 2nd cavalry moves north. 2nd and 3rd infantry move north to Flambeaux. The army of the northeast moves west to Boulder Junction.

Warlords: all units retreat to Mason.

May 11.

Imperials: 3rd cavalry moves north to Lund. 2nd cavalry moves north to Iron Belt. 2nd and 3rd infantry move north through the forest. The army of the northeast almost reaches Iron Belt.

Warlords: all units enter the Bayfield area. This is a peninsula. They cannot be flanked. Frontage is only 20 miles so only two Imperial units may attack them at the same time.

May 12.

Imperials: all units move within striking distance.

Warlords: they wait for the attack. I am lifting the rabble penalty now. These units have no escape and will fight valiantly.

May 13-15

1st and 2nd infantry assault the Warlords. Warlords fire back. At this point, neither side has lost any units. Officially, the game is over. But, of course, I had to play it out.

May 16-21.

Imperial 1st and 2nd infantry are destroyed on May 17. 3rd and 4th infantry move up to the line. Both Warlord units on the front line are destroyed on May 18. This leaves only one cavalry unit. It is a fresh unit and survives until May 21.

After-Action Report

Using a state map for a game board was enjoyable because the place names were familiar. The surface area was about the right size for me. However, the print is small for some place names and this became an issue for me when the action moved to the northern most point in the state.

The flat markers were easy to move around and to see. However, the photos are not as clear we might like them to be. Also, the markers should be a bit heavier. The fold in the map would sometimes cause markers to slide a bit off their proper locations.

The war diary is optional but I found that I enjoyed writing it. However, it greatly lengthened the game. This battle was so long I had to take a short lunch break. While munching on my toast I realized that there was no rush. Short games are easier on my back, but with this game system I could take a break without worrying the cats would carry off the soldiers or the terrain.

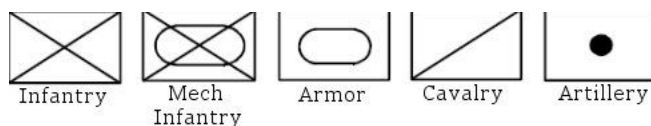
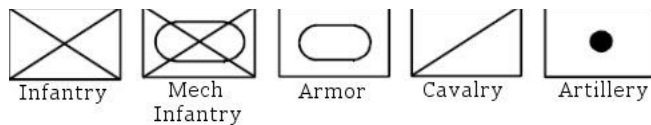
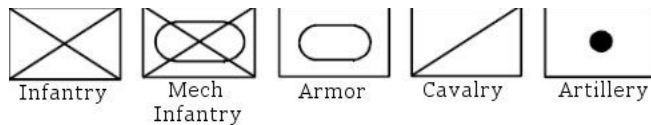
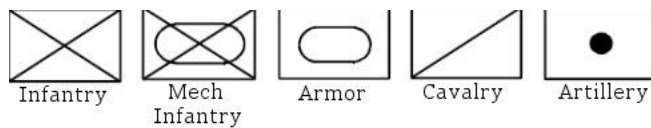
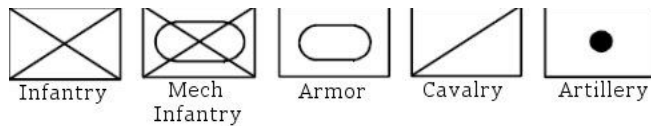
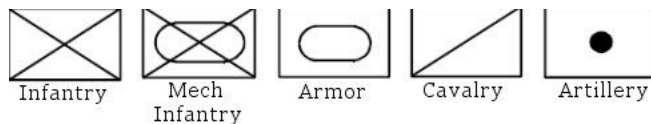
The Warlords followed their battle plan. At the outset, I did not anticipate them ending up in Bayfield, but in retrospect it is obvious that the retreat plan would lead them there. It was a strong position and greatly affected the outcome of the game.

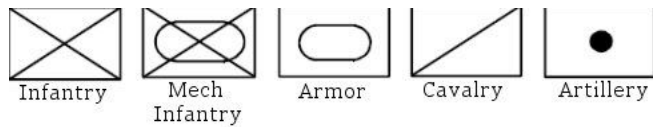
Should the balance of forces have been different? Should the unit types have been different? Should the victory conditions have been different? All of these factors can be manipulated to experimentally test how they affect game play and outcomes.

The main point of the exercise was to test the map-and-marker system, and I would say it worked well and could be fine with the minor adjustments mentioned above.

Conquest of the state by the Empire was inevitable. Their forces were too strong and too disciplined to resist indefinitely. The Empire established its version of Peace. However, according to my story, the Imperial victory was not the end of the apocalypse.

Appendix: Unit Markers





References

Rohrer JE (2014) [The Crowning of the Can King: An Apocalyptic Cozy \(The Alternative Future Series Book 1\)](#) Amazon.com.

Rohrer JE (2014) [A Pale Horse Cometh: An Apocalyptic Adventure \(The Alternative Future Series Book 2\)](#) Amazon.com

Rohrer JE (2014). [When the Heavens Fell: An Apocalyptic Adventure \(The Alternative Future Series Book 3\)](#) Amazon.com.

Rohrer JE (2014). [The Abomination: An Apocalyptic Adventure \(The Alternative Future Series Book 4\)](#) Amazon.com.

Rohrer JE. (2016) The End Times in Wisconsin. Lulu.com. <https://www.lulu.com/en/us/shop/je-rohrer/the-end-times-in-wisconsin/paperback/product-19kdgggq.html> (Note: this is an anthology that contains the four kindle novellas.)