

# Prime Your Pan!

(A series of discussions, ideas and wheezes for the "novice" historian/wargamer or military enthusiast of the "black powder" era)

**Peter Lawson, UK**

## 2. "Stupid and Oafish"\*

Armed with my brief from the Editor to boldly go forth (".... split a few infinitives and debunk some myths...") I was struck with the realisation that there were, indeed, many myths and other pieces of largely irrelevant hogwash arising from any given discussion of the Russian forces of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. What is even more surprising is that most of our latter-day doyens (Captain George Nafziger, USNR, being one) have already done more than their fair share of myth debunking in diverse notable works (see Bibliography). The majority of these literary efforts are readily available from central libraries and the more discerning book shops upon request, so why the continued existence of these bloomers?

The answer must be that they resolve an argument - simply and finally - by deftly "pigeonholing" a counter argument (after some less than subtle bashing to make it fit). As social animals, we are guilty of this sin at least once every day, but, as historians, this activity should be a definite "no-no". With secondary and tertiary sources at our fingertips (and thank God for that says I ... primary sources are essential of course, but let's leave the translation to the experts) surely we can make an adequate stab at getting some basic facts into proper perspective .....

We begin this short series with a look at the Russian Jägers and their early development from 1752 through to 1815. The colourfully descriptive heading above\* is a "Lift" from the oft quoted (especially by the wargames fraternity) General Sir Robert Wilson who campaigned with the Russians. This sweeping generalisation is put forward as a summation of ALL Russian troops of the period; regrettably, Wilson is misquoted in this and many other instances. He had nothing but admiration for his "foreign" companions, (See Bibliography below), the derogatory description refers to the OFFICER corps of the later period. (Wilson himself was not immune from the disease of imprecise "hip firing"....).

The acquisition of a "light" infantry arm (1752)

With the various Wars of Succession involving most of Europe's duchies, principalities and nations (culminating in the truly global Seven Years War) in the middle of the eighteenth century, the military might of Imperial Russia was realised on more than one occasion; Peter the Great inherited an embryonic, "modernised" army cadre from his father, Tsar ALEXIS (1645-1676). With the assistance of one of the great mercenary commanders of history - the Jacobite, General Patrick Gordon - Tsar Peter continued the modernisation policy and forged a thoroughly competent standing army that would gradually develop by example over the succeeding decades. (Granted, Peter had many setbacks - especially in the latter part of his reign - and his dreams of Imperial

expansionism were somewhat curtailed but, militarily, his greatest asset was his eye for a damned good idea ripe for the copying by the Russian Army!)

After Tsar Peter's death in 1725, successive Imperial benefactors of the army were influenced by the "great captains" of Europe (with the noted exception of Tsar Paul I (1796-1801) who was obsessed with every aspect of Frederick the Great's Army; this manic obsession had a detrimental effect on the Russian Army's development as its Tsar forced it to take a retrograde step of thirty years or more just as it was about to enter the Revolutionary Wars - but then, Tsar Paul was, reputedly, quite mad).

Developing "new military concepts was of interest to the Imperial throne throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century (the joint policies of expansionism and absolutism required enforcement by an efficient army, when this was not possible, the years were politically turbulent, even by Russian standards). Ideas from the Austrian/Prussian/British armies were gradually adopted and adapted to the Russian style of warfare, and war this decidedly was (aside from the well documented European "Lace Wars", Imperial Russia engaged in intense border conflicts with the Turks, Tartars and other "ethnic" peoples for nigh on FOUR centuries; campaign experience at any level was not hard to come by throughout the eighteenth century, but the actions were not "native bashing" turkey shoots. (We will touch on Marshal Suvarov's early career later on).

In 1752, two regiments of Pandours were raised for Russian service, a direct copy of the Austrian variety of irregular "light" troops (some of them armed with hunting rifles), so adept at all aspects of guerrilla warfare, particularly "dawn and dusk" sniping from high ground. These mainly Croatian soldiers suffered from a lack of discipline (a common problem shared with their Austrian cousins) but were capable of operating on their own initiative on the perimeter of the battlefield as well as taking an active place in the main line of battle. It could be argued that the Russians were merely responding to a European trend, but time and money was not spared to train the Pandours accordingly. Their uniforms were distinctively along Austrian lines; it is reasonable to assume that a "fad" would not attract such attention to detail.

(Note: in respect of training, the Imperial edicts acted in the stead of formal army regulations per se; each Colonel was responsible for the training, equipment and commissariat of his men. The regiment was the principal administrative centre - this state of affairs was to exist until Tsar Alexander's commanders introduced a divisional/corps system based on the French model - thus, if the CO was "on his toes", then a suitable level of performance in the field could be maintained. There is nothing to suggest that the Pandours were organised any differently).

It is interesting to note that the Pandours in Russian service were not, apparently, required to do a great deal of road-watching, other reconnaissance duties, mounting baggage/artillery park guards and line of communication (LOC) escorts unless the terrain - being particularly adverse - warranted it. The Russian Army was unique in its ability to draw upon vast numbers of its renowned "irregular" Cossacks (far from being a disorganised horde of bloodthirsty fanatics, the Cossack sotnias were subject to strict military discipline and were brigaded in the line of battle at all times;



even the wild and woolly Bashkirs took their place under divisional command as late as 1814) with adequate notice. This "naturally light cavalry" formed the eyes and ears of any given Russian army in the field, hampered only by the closely wooded and hilly geography of the "cockpit" of northwestern Europe. Competent generals faced with this problem supported their infantry with formed bodies of Cossacks in nearby defiles or valleys, ready to exploit a disordered force. (The role of the Cossacks and Bashkirs will be dealt with in greater detail later in this series).

The Pandours in Russian service met with only limited success and were possibly retained during the Seven Years War simply because Russia's Austrian allies chose to do likewise with their Pandours. As a "nuisance factor", their usage was frowned upon by Russia's allies as well as her enemies; deliberately drawing a bead on the officers of an enemy picquet as they were preparing breakfast or retiring abed was definitely not on. Although many atrocities were committed by several armies throughout the Seven Years War (especially in the American theatre), the "age of chivalry" was kept alive by the officer corps of the major nations. The Pandours' unorthodox style of combat was considered more suited to a less scrupulous theatre (the Turkish/Tartar frontier wars) and although their tactics closely resembled those of the almost legendary corps of light troops in the service of France, Prussia and Britain/Hanover - the Pandours would have been considered too opportunistic and unruly to be put on a par with the Hanoverian or Prussian Jägers, for example. (Any Russian soldier could be dismissed as "semi-barbarian" by his European adversaries right up to the close of the Crimean War ...)

Trained to fight (and manoeuvre) in close order, they were, of course, more suited to operating in teams of two pairs under loose supervision from a local officer who was placed adjacent to the firing line in order for the formed supports - preferably concealed in dead ground or "useful vegetation" - to be fed into the line as required: this concept of harassing fire - although crude in its execution - was a direct adoption of the Prussian principles of true skirmish tactics practised by the Prussian Jäger corps, and would exist in a greatly refined form until the demise of the Imperial dynasties in 1917.

The basic idea was not to attempt to frontally engage a formed enemy line, (the "business end" of a formed brigade line of the Seven Years War was a place for a corresponding line facing it) but to attempt to position the detachment on a flank or in terrain that would disorder the enemy line (such as a wood or a pivotal hamlet/village). From this position, a galling fire could be laid down into the flank of the advancing enemy line. However, if the enemy force had deployed its own light troops to skirt the flank of the line as it advanced, the resulting fire fight would be light troops versus light troops, the object then being to "pin" the respective enemy in position.

It should be borne in mind that - generally speaking the armies of the Seven Years War were compact, "professional" forces. Commanding generals would not needlessly squander a useful resource that had the ability to move and fight on its own initiative through disordering terrain. As a result, the many corps of light troops (and the Legions of "mixed" foot and horse) would be invariably spared from the line of battle

**IN AUSTRALIA**  
Eureka Miniatures  
The Military Bookroom  
1410 Malvern Road  
Glen Iris - Victoria 3144

## Irregular Miniatures Ltd

69a Acomb Road, Holgate, York,  
N. Yorks. YO2 4EP  
Tel. (0904) 790597  
Postage Rate 12 1/2%  
50p on orders less than £2.00

**IN FRANCE**  
"REMARK"  
9 RUE THIMONIER,  
75009  
PARIS

15mm Catalogue + sample 50p  
25mm Catalogue + sample £1.10

6+2mm Catalogue £1.20  
(includes postage and Sample)

<p><b>New Rules</b> Dirtside II DBM DBM Army Lists Book 1 DBM Army Lists Book 2 Hordes of the Things Dirtside I Stargrunt Full Thrust Ramases to Constantine Blenheim to Balaclava Athara to Amiens The Necromancers Bane The Necromancers Spell Book The Necromancer Besieged Renaissance to Restoration Sally Forth Alamo to Appomattox Onwards to Richmond Warring Empires Newcastle Ancient System Newcastle Fantastic Fantasy Chocks Away! Mechanised warfare rules Full Thrust 2nd Edition Stargrunt weapons manual The Irregular Miniatures Incredibly fast The Irregular Miniatures Rule Box The Irregular Miniatures Rule Box The Irregular Miniatures Rule Box The Irregular Miniatures Rule Box Pack of four dice for use with Rule Boxes (please state which period)</p>	<p>(Sci-Fi) (Ancients)  (Fantasy) 6mm Sci-Fi 25mm Sci-Fi Sci-Fi Starfleets 6/2mm Ancient 6/2mm Horse and Musket 6/2mm Late Colonial/WWI 6mm Fantasy Companion for above Companion for above 6/2/15mm Renaissance Companion plus scenarios for above 6/2mm ACW 6/2mm ACW Campaign rules 6/2mm ACW to Russo-Japanese 6/2mm Ancients 6/2mm Fantasy Supplement WWI Aerial Combat plus Campaign 1935 to present day Sci-fi starfleets 25mm Sci-fi 6/2mm Napoleonic 6/2mm Napoleonic 6/2mm Ancients 6/2mm Franco-Prussian to WWI 6/2mm Renaissance to Malburian</p>	<p>£8.95 £4.75 £4.75 £4.75 £4.75 £3.25 £4.25 £1.95 £1.95 £2.40 £1.95 £2.40 £1.95 £2.25 £2.70 £2.25 £2.40 £1.95 £1.95 £2.50 £1.50 £3.50 £2.50 £5.95 £1.95 50p £2.40 £2.40 £2.40 £2.40 £1.00</p>
--	---	--

**DICE**  
Average, D4, D6, D8, D10, D12 and D20 cost 25p each in a variety of colours.  
5mm size D6 (ideal as damage markers) cost 5p each. D100 cost £3.60 each.

**PAINTING SET**  
10 basic colours and two brushes. Please state acrylic or enamel. Price £8.00

**6mm NAPOLEONIC BATTLEPACKS** - using The Irregular Miniatures Rule Box.  
Choose any two of the following armies:- French, British, Prussian, Austrian, Russian, Price £16 + £2.00 p+p  
Bavarian, Brunswick, Spanish.  
**2mm NAPOLEONIC BATTLEPACKS** - using The Irregular Miniatures Rule Box.  
Choose any two of the following armies:- French, British, Prussian, Austrian, Russian, Price £6 + 75p p+p  
Bavarian, Brunswick, Spanish.  
**6mm AMERICAN CIVIL WAR BATTLEPACK** using Alamo to Appomattox Rules. Forces are Union and Confederate. Price £20 + £2.50 p+p  
**2mm AMERICAN CIVIL WAR BATTLEPACK** using Alamo to Appomattox Rules. Forces are Union and Confederate. Price £14.50 + £1.80 p+p  
**6mm BATTLE OF NEWMARKET SCENARIO** using Alamo to Appomattox and Onwards to Richmond Rules. Battlepack comprises realistic order of battle in this ACW encounter. Price £19 + £2.37 p+p  
**2mm BATTLE OF NEWMARKET SCENARIO** using Alamo to Appomattox and Onwards to Richmond Rules. Battlepack comprises realistic order of battle in this ACW encounter. Price £8.50 + £1.06 p+p

# Southsea Models

69 Albert Road,  
Southsea,  
Portsmouth,  
Hants PO5 2SG  
Tel: 0705 733208

## STAR WARS

<p>1 Yoda 2 Luke on Dagobath 3 Luke on Tatooine 4 R2D2 5 C-3PO 6 Leia on Endor 7 Han on Hoth 8 Vader on Death Star 9 Darth Vader 10 General Veers 11 Rebel Soldier (pistol) 12 Rebel Scout (bins) 13 Stormtrooper - outstretched pistol 14 Stormtrooper - walking firing gun 15 Stormtrooper - firing gun left 16 Stormtrooper - kneeling gun (relaxed) 17 Stormtrooper - kneeling firing gun 18 Stormtrooper - running 19 Stormtrooper - walking left 20 Stormtrooper - Tatooine 21 Stormtrooper - big gun (rest) 22 Stormtrooper - fire left 23 Stormtrooper - big gun (firing) 24 Stormtrooper - gun lowered 25 Stormtrooper - firing pistol 26 Stormtrooper - gun resting middle 27 Death Star trooper 28 Death Star gunner 29 Snowtrooper 30 Hoth rebel 31 Jawa 32 Leia on Bespin</p>	<p>33 Zarda 34 X-Wing Pilot 35 Probe droid 36 Imperial droid 37 Obi Wan Kenobi 38 Mon Calamari 39 The Emperor 40 Admiral Ackbar 41 Quarren 42 Greedo 43 Bolsh 44 Gamorrean guard axe level 45 Gamorrean guard axe high 46 Bossk 47 Bobba Fett 48 IG88 49 Garindan 50 Wee Quay 51 Tusken Raider 52 Ren Gar 53 Lando in armour 54 Nikto 55 Ithorian 56 Kerry 57 Muftak 58 Sivvak 59 Female rebel merc 60 Tie Fighter pilot 61 Labria 62 Hem Dazon 63 Bib Fortuna 64 Ephant Mon 65 Death Star officer</p>
--	--

**STAR WARS**  
Limited supply of 25mm metal figurines.  
All figures 90p each (min order size £10.00) allow 10% P&P  
Send two 24p stamps for listing. Major credit cards accepted



and off operating with the army's advance guard or securing a flank (as described above.)

The Russian army as a whole performed well during the Seven Years War (with resounding victories at Zullichau and Kunersdorf, leaving Frederick the Great contemplating abdication with the Prussian army so demoralised at the close of 1759) but the Pandours received no particular citation in this period, popular opinion once again being swayed by the actions of the Cossacks (especially at Kunersdorf, although this victory was more accurately an astute use of "combined arms" in very difficult ground).

As mentioned above, however, there can be no doubt that the Pandours - although relishing their "irregular" status did receive adequate close order musketry drill (along Prussian procedures) with the regular line infantry. It has long been held that the Russian infantryman's "traditional" weapon was the bayonet, although the statutory Regulations of 1731 and 1754 make no mention of a need for a proficiency with cold steel, detailing instead a given acceptable level of close order musketry. (This is a contentious issue which will receive further attention below).

In October 1760, a battalion of Prussian Foot Jägers (all rifle-armed) were surprised in open ground outside Spandau by a body of Cossacks and all but annihilated. This action in itself probably did little to influence future considerations of light/irregular troops and their place in battle, but it is a salutary comment that little is known of Russian light troops (and their role in the ongoing Russo-Turkish wars) until 1765. It is sufficient to say that the two regiments of Pandours raised in 1752 were undoubtedly Russia's first steps towards that illusive (and often confusing) domain of the "skirmishing" foot soldier.

### **The Potemkin "years of innovation" (1786-1796)**

Catherine the Great (1762-1796) was a woman of singular purpose from the mould of Peter the Great; a fervent believer in exerting Imperial authority by latent strength (shades of "speak softly and carry a big stick"!), military innovation received her support if it delivered the goods on the battlefield, and Catherine's expansionist policies ensured that there would be a good many of those. (Of greater importance to the future success of the Imperial Russian army was the fact that Catherine's reign would see the rise of field commanders such as Rumyantsov, Dolgoruky, Potemkin, Suvarov and Kutuzov).

In 1765 - in parallel with the majority of the European nations- the Russian army incorporated a cadre of sixty "Jägers" into most of the infantry regiments. These "schutzen" (sharpshooters) were designated as Jägers, (but by no means were all of the cadres rifle armed), but it should be noted that the recruits were selected from mother Russia's "Inspection" areas (as opposed to the ethnic fringes of the Empire). Tactics were firmly based on the Prussian doctrine, many of the recruits being former gamekeepers from the great estates in central Russia; as before the object was to peel off from the regiment and engage the flanks of the advancing enemy. If threatened, the Jägers were instructed to evade away (preferably back to the main body).

(The recruitment of keepers is often treated with contempt by not a few self-penned historians; they seem to equate a

naturally acquired knowledge of field craft with the exploits of 'Rambo-esque' superheroes. To close this digression: the returns for the Russian Second Army in December 1812 clearly lists a detachment of "Gamekeeper Skirmishers" - 217 in number - in the Order of Battle).

Unlike other European states who had adopted light troops simply because the trend was the norm (and who also had standing armies languishing in peacetime obscurity), the Russian Jäger "companies" got bloody in many battles against the Turks and the odd Cossack rebellion. This "hands-on" experience obviously honed the basic skills of the skirmisher against an unorthodox, "extended order" foe. The Jägers were decidedly not in the line just for show.

Prince Grigori Alexandrovich Potemkin (1739 - 1791) became the Empress Catherine's favourite soldier after he conducted a series of brilliant campaigns in the Russo-Turkish War of 1768 - 1774 (although all of the generals named above were also present and excelled). With the full support of the throne, Potemkin was able to realise his dream of total modernisation for the Russian army. Spawned from his imagination and his experiences in the field, the results could have been disastrous; in actuality, his administrative achievements became the blueprint for innovation for decades to come. The year 1786 was, indeed, a watershed for the Russian army.

In respect of the light infantry (for this is what the light troops had become under Potemkin's guidance), the original cadres of Jägers were completely expanded into fully composite battalions trained to operate in tandem with their line brethren. Even the Imperial Guard received fully fledged Jäger (or "Chasseur") units, their clothing and equipment of such a revolutionary design (loose fitting and "rifle" green, with the equipment ergonomically positioned about the body for maximum comfort) that would not be seen again until well into the next century.

Each Jäger regiment (theoretically) now possessed two battalions in the field, with a supportive cadre (of company strength) at the depot training the new recruits. Each battalion had an integral "schutzen" cadre - all of whom were rifle armed. (This fundamental organisation would remain in effect until 30th April 1802, when a third battalion was introduced to each regiment).

The "schutzen" assigned Jägers were now armed with Russian made rifles (the arsenals were at Tula and Sestrovetsk) and "firing line" tactics (still very much along Prussian theories) were given precedence over close order manoeuvres and musketry. Also the campaign experience was still readily available (although peace was eventually signed with the Ottoman Empire in 1792) for Jäger officers to develop their skills. Potemkin himself had a great affinity with the skirmish ideology and encouraged initiative and foresight. After forty years, the Jäger soldier had acquired that sought-after "elite" status, and carried that sense of élan with him into the next era (just as his main adversary - the French flaqueur/voltigeur/tirailleur/chasseur - would do).

As Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces during the Turkish Wars of 1787 - 1791, however, the Grand Fleet foundered in a storm and the great innovator was ostracised by the Empress, and with the accession of Tsar Paul I in 1796 the age of enlightenment for the Russian army ceased overnight.



## The return to Frederickian ways (1796)

As mentioned previously, Tsar Paul was, at best, a simpleton, and, at worst, a dangerous psychotic who worshipped the principles and ideas of Frederick the Great. The return to automaton-like drills of the Prussian Guard of a prior generation was imposed upon the entire army before long (and out with the bathwater went Potemkin uniforms, for good measure); any attempt to deviate from the methodical, linear evolutions was severely censured by the Tsar. His love for the draconian, ponderous manoeuvres was matched only by his hatred of everything associated with his mother, the Empress Catherine, after a peculiar twist of fate (the result of another of Tsar Paul's flights of fancy concerning Malta) Imperial Russia found itself involved in the war against France, sending armies to the Netherlands (see Geert van Uythoven's fascinating series elsewhere in this journal) north Italy and Switzerland.

## The Suvarov "Bayonet" (1799)

General Alexander Suvarov - undoubtedly the most able field commander of the Revolutionary period - had learnt his trade the hard way, participating in many gruelling campaigns. Having lived and fought in a thoroughly practical manner against an enemy that gave no quarter, spending his brief sabbaticals to endorse the innovations of Potemkin and his peers, Tsar Paul's imbecilic conservatism must have rankled the unshakeable old warrior.

"The Military Code Concerning the Field Service of Infantry" - published in 1796 - and the "Tactical Rules for Military Evolutions" - released in the following year - were ridiculously outmoded codes of practice (instigated and sponsored by the Tsar himself), favouring the platoon column as the basic manoeuvre element followed by an excruciatingly slow progression into a three rank line, whereupon the troops would commence rolling volleys by platoon. (In both these publications, the Jäger regiments and their schutzen were awarded little significance; there would be no official attempt to address the role of the light infantryman specifically until 1818, apart from a paper entitled "Principles for the Operations of Tirailleurs" which was produced solely for the use by the Imperial Guard. From this moment onwards - and throughout the Napoleonic Wars - the Russian Jäger would differ from the line Musketeer only by his enhanced élan, his esprit de corps and his uniform).

Suvarov's response to the code of 1796 was succinct. He considered it "a rat-eaten parchment found in the corner of an old castle". Only the Turkish frontier - sufficiently far away from Imperial scrutiny - kept alive the spirit of reform.

It was in this atmosphere of decay and mistrust that Suvarov's Corps commenced operations in north Italy; with the Empress Catherine's policy of "splendid isolation" from the machinations of Revolutionary France, Suvarov and his "ring" of enlightened generals were becoming aware that the Republican armies were changing the very motion of battlecraft with their crude fluidity and offensive action. The composition of the armies were changing swiftly also; the carefully nurtured "professional" forces were now encountering a tide of humanity carried away on a crest of national fervour. Suvarov and his contemporaries had encountered this "terrible swiftness" many times before during the Turkish Wars and had adapted their commands accordingly. Suvarov's



★★★ NEW RELEASES ★★★★★ NEW RELEASES ★★★

IN 1815 NAPOLEON, THE LEADER OF THE FIRST EMPIRE, TOOK ON WELLINGTON ACROSS THE FIELD OF WATERLOO. AS WE ALL KNOW HE LOST - BUT - IF HE HAD USED THESE NEW 1993 DESIGNED 15mm FRENCH NAPOLEONIC WAR-GAMES FIGURES PERHAPS THE BATTLE MIGHT HAVE HAD A DIFFERENT ENDING - D'ACCORD?

### NF - FRENCH - 1815

- 1NF Old Guard Grenadier Advancing
- 2NF Old Guard Grenadier March Attack
- 3NF Old Guard Grenadier Firing
- 4NF Old Guard Chasseur Advancing
- 5NF Old Guard Chasseur March Attack
- 6NF Old Guard Chasseur Firing
- 7NF Old Guard Grenadier Command
- 8NF Line Grenadier Advancing
- 9NF Line Grenadier March Attack
- 10NF Line Grenadier Firing
- 11NF Line Fusilier Advancing
- 12NF Line Fusilier March Attack
- 13NF Line Fusilier Firing
- 14NF Line Voltigeurs Advancing
- 15NF Line Voltigeurs Standing Firing
- 16NF Line Voltigeurs Kneeling Firing
- 17NF Line Infantry Command
- 18NF Old Guard Chasseur Command
- 19NF Light Infantry Command
- 51NF Line Foot Artillerymen
- 52NF Line Horse Artillerymen
- 53NF Guard Foot Artillerymen
- 54NF Guard Horse Artillerymen

- 1NFC Grenadiers a Cheval de la Garde
- 2NFC Empress Dragoons
- 3NFC Chasseurs a Cheval de la Garde
- 4NFC Mamelukes
- 5NFC Polish Lancers de la Garde
- 6NFC Dragoons
- 7NFC Cuirassiers
- 8NFC Carabiniers
- 9NFC Chasseurs a Cheval
- 10NFC Hussars (Bell Top)
- 11NFC Line Lancers
- 12NFC Hussars (Cylindrical)
- 51NFC Grenadier a Cheval de la Garde Command
- 52NFC Empress Dragoon Command
- 53NFC Chasseur a Cheval de la Garde Command
- 54NFC Mameluke Command
- 55NFC Polish Lancer de la Garde Command
- 56NFC Dragoon Command
- 57NFC Cuirassier Command
- 58NFC Carabinier Command
- 59NFC Chasseur a Cheval Command
- 60NFC Hussar Command
- 61NFC Line Lancer Command
- 62NFC Hussar (Cylindrical Shako) Command
- 91NFC Old Guard Mounted Colonels
- 92NFC Line Infantry Mounted Colonels

PACK SERIES 5 at £1.00 CONTAIN 8 INFANTRY OR 4 CAVALRY OR 6 ARTILLERYMEN OR 3 GUNS OR 3 CAVALRY COMMAND 6 INFANTRY COMMAND

P&P - 15% on orders £20 (Min 50p) 10% on orders over £20 (UK) and OVERSEAS 30% of order value

## MINIATURE FIGURINES LIMITED

1/5 Graham Road  
Southampton SO2 0AX

Catalogues	UK	Rest
Minifigs	£2.50	£3.50
Partha	£3.75	£5.00

Telephone & Fax  
(0703) 220855



now famous phrase: "a mass attack with the bayonet is favourable" has given rise to the distortion over the years that the Russian soldier was incapable of using any other weapon other than the bayonet, thus the bayonet was "the traditional weapon of the Russian". I would suggest that this is nonsense.

General Peter Bagration's equally famous maxim (reputedly uttered in 1812): "the cannonball is a foolish virgin and the bayonet a wise virgin", and General Kutuzov's "we shall have to exploit the particular prowess of the Russians in bayonet attacks" (noted prior to Austerlitz) have also muddled the waters of this debate, implying the Russian soldier was totally dependent on his ability to impale.

It is my belief that Suvarov - and his student Kutuzov - were advocating a return to the tactical liquidity of the Turkish Wars (we can certainly discount the outlandish premise that these highly experienced realists merely wished to see their beloved soldiers defeat enemy infantry in melee; much has been written about "the point of contact" that should not complicate the issue here) whereby an aggressively offensive advance with "attacking columns" of close order infantry (double columns of platoons, or a single column of "divisions") was utilised. Great emphasis was still placed upon a rapid deployment to three-rank line in order to give fire (there are instances of Russian units repelling enemy cavalry by this method without the necessity of forming a square - an acceptable response to a threat from a body of horse in the Seven Years War). In 1810, General Barclay de Tolly (another administrator with vision who coaxed Tsar Alexander towards reform in the teeth of opposition from the toadies of overthrown Tsar Paul - and especially Paul's favourite, Alexei Arakcheev) made pains to stress the importance of target practice for the recruit (of all the major powers, Russia was virtually alone in training her soldiers to "acquire" a target; the Jägers, naturally, received rather more stringent application than the Musketeers). In 1811, de Tolly published the "Instructions for Target Practice" and the "Code of Infantry Service", missives which attempted to redress the slippage of the early 1800's, but there can be little doubt that the Russian Musketeer was trained to discharge his piece from the three-rank line (and was called upon to do so under battle field conditions) and the Jäger likewise, but to a higher degree.

### The three levies of 1812

Suvarov would have marvelled at the magnitude of the army that took the field in 1805 - 1807; the expansion and development that occurred between 1811 - 1814 was unprecedented in Russian military history. There were three "annual" recruitment levies in 1812 that led Kutuzov to state; "teach them to turn and to march as a front in platoons and in sections. Do not look for any kind of beauty, or burden the men with anything which might detract from the essentials of the business".

Understandably, with the Russian Empire at the brink in 1812, training was bound to be little more than rudimentary as the levy was rushed to the front with the minimum of equipment. The total lack of standardisation in firearms (it is reported that 28 versions of longarm - most of dubious quality and serviced with equally abysmal powder - were on the books just prior to the invasion) did little to ease the situation,

but de Tolly's reforms were far-reaching enough to have an effect on even the rawest of recruits.

But what of the Jäger regiments? Some sixty thousand British muskets were known to have been distributed to "men of distinction" and NCO's at this time; we can only surmise that the majority of these weapons would have found their way into the Jägers. What of the schutzen cadres? As established by Potemkin, they, too, may have received quantities of less "ambiguous" weapons (such as the Baker rifle) to identify their elite status. Were they a match for the French Voltigeurs? This is one instance where a generalisation will not suffice. Given that the administrative head of the regiment was still its commanding officer (who was ultimately responsible for the regiment's training, equipment, pay, medical services et al - long after de Tolly's forceful efforts to "centralise" a corps and divisional structure of French lines in 1810 - 1811), the yardstick of a unit's effectiveness in the field was its officers.

To take us back to the heading of this article, Wilson was a confirmed Russophile and requires additional substantiation in other areas, but his comments concerning the officer classes are well supported: they were a "hit or miss" bunch, and no mistake (Kutuzov was still striving to boot out the occasional "plunger" in 1812, throwbacks to the excesses of Tsar Paul I.) so it is safe to assume that the performance of the Russian skirmisher was prone to vagaries. For many, it appears that Borodino was an "off-day", but with so many combatants in the field, this view was difficult to quantify. What, I feel, is without doubt is that (indifferent or not) the Russian Jäger received adequate training in order for him to do his job. He could certainly shoot (as could all of the infantry that were musket armed), and assuming that his officers were of average ability and intelligence, he would be able to "trade off" to an enemy skirmisher if required. Adjectives such as "stupid, dull-witted, slovenly, drunken, illiterate" applied to the majority of the conscript armies - Britain included - at this time; these prejudiced views should be filed in a wastepaper basket.

### Wargamers' Notes 1993

I have possessed a small Russian Army (in 6mm) for a number of years, but I must admit that I have had but three or four opportunities to field it. My long-term wargaming (and family) friends and I regularly play Corps-level actions (our refights of Jena/Auerstadt "on-site" at the anniversary of the campaign were most enjoyable) and on the occasions where my Russian army has been fielded (not always with myself in command), Jäger battalions do deploy skirmish "strips" along with the best of them!

I have "played" Russian several times in 15mm, however, at a lower resolution, I would suggest:

- i) Skirmishers can deploy as normal - no restrictions - and adjudicate prior to the "off" those armed with rifles (20-30% looks about right).
- ii) Morale should be as high as the French at all times;
- iii) Effectiveness could be slightly less than the French;
- iv) As a formed body, their ability to give fire should only be lower than anyone else deployed in three ranks from 1812 onwards;
- v) Command and Control factors could be significantly less.

*Above all..... let them shoot !*



## For further reading

### Secondary Sources

Zwegintzov, W.	L'armée Russe Paris, 1973*
De Jongh, F.	L'armée Russe Paris, 1895 *
Gayda, M., Krijitsky, A.	L'armée Russe sous le Tsar Alexandre 1er de 1805 a 1815 Paris 1955*
Duffy, C.	Russia's Military Way to the West 1985
Duffy, C.	Austerlitz London 1977
Duffy, C.	Borodino and the War of 1812 London 1972
Nafziger, G.	The Russian Army 1800-1815 Ontario, 1983
Brett-James, A.	1812 London 1966

Brett-James, A.

Europe Against Napoleon  
London 1970

### Memoirs

Marbot, Baron M. de	Memoirs of Baron de Marbot (2 vols., translated by John Butler) London 1892
Brett-James, A. (Ed.)	General Wilson's Journal London 1964
Primers and other useful material	
Haythornthwaite, P.	The Russian Army of the Napoleonic Wars (1): Infantry 1799-1814
Hofschroer, P.	Osprey Men at Arms SERIES 185 Infantry Skirmishing in the Napoleonic Wars / Napoleonic Skirmishing in Practice (Published in the April/May 1985 issues of Miniature Wargames magazine) * Only French text edition available

## Under Review, New Book Releases

In this issue we take a look at three new releases for the enthusiast from three different publishers. I am pleased to say that each is of exceptional value to and although two are limited editions they are well worth sacrificing those extra pennies to get your copy now.

### Napoleonic Uniforms

Author: John R. Elting, published by Macmillan Publishing of New York, Distributed in the U.K. by Greenhill Books, Telephone: 081 458 6314. Two volumes at £150.00 per set. Limited edition of 300 sets in the UK, a total 2500 sets world wide many of which have found their way into the American library system.

If you are reeling at £150.00 price tag, keep in mind that this has to be what will become one of the most sought after Napoleonic Uniform books of the century and reeks of quality. Can you afford not to be one of the 300 hundred lucky owners? I think not. The hot news is that there are probably only 100 copies left unsold in the UK and this is despite the fact that the official publication date is 30th September 1993. Yes, I know that this sounds like an advert, but this book has made a lasting impression on me. The total 864 pages (overall dimensions 11" x 8.25" - slightly smaller than First Empire) contain 916 full colour plates taken from water colours commissioned by Elting from the renowned artist Herbert Knötel (1893-1963). Knötel, working from many works contemporary to the period, produced this series in a style to reflect how the uniforms looked, not what the regulations stated they should look like. Elting constructively comments in the text that accompanies each plate, and I like the way that he has made use of newly discovered material to correct errors that Knötel made but, could not have known about. 793 of the plates are devoted to La Grande Armée, the remainder cover the Royal Army pre-Revolution and 1814-1830, Revolutionary armies and the Army of Egypt (this section is particularly eye opening). The various Tirailleurs de Po, Corse etc, are covered in excellent detail as is the oft missed subject of the Young Guard Cavalry Squadrons. It's a serious must have/sell a child/marry a rich widow/book. Highly recommended.

### Cavalry in the Waterloo Campaign

Author: General Sir Evelyn Wood, V.C., facsimile of 2nd Edition first published in 1895, published by Worley Publications, Telephone: 091 469 2414. Price £18.00.

Evelyn Wood, 1834 - 1919, hero of the Crimean War (13th Light Dragoons), erstwhile 17th Lancer officer (during the Indian Mutiny where he gained his VC), campaigned against the Ashantee, fought through the Kafir, Transvaal and Zulu Wars and finally raised the Egyptian Army 1882 of which he became Commander in Chief. Regarded by many Victorians as the first soldier of the empire.

Well I think that qualifies this long dead war hero to know something of

this subject. And it shows! The books title is somewhat misleading as the actions of infantry and artillery are covered in considerable detail where they had an influence on Cavalry operations. Its all here, detailed accounts of squares, being ridden down, standing firm, cavalry charging, routing, retiring, - the account of the 42nd forming square at Quatre Bras is fascinating, did you know that the prime cause for the heavy losses incurred by the Allies to the French Cavalry was caused by firstly the Brunswick Lancers failing to stand before French Chasseurs à Cheval, and secondly by the Brunswick Hussars sent to 'plug the gap' retiring through the British lines? Maybe you did, but the anecdotes that illustrate and accompany this incident rarely turn up in studies of this campaign. Perhaps, the appeal of this book, is that as a 'high flyer' Wood would have been subject to the tales of daring-do from his fellow officers old enough to have served in 1815 and many of these 'forgotten' exploits found their way into the book. Do not be mislead into thinking that only the British Cavalry are covered, this book is what it says, Cavalry in the Waterloo Campaign. 220 pages of enjoyable and informative history. Recommended.

### The Leipzig Campaign of 1813

Author: Colonel F.N. Maude, C.B. (Royal Engineers) first published in 1908, facsimile limited edition of 250 now published by Ken Trotman Ltd. Telephone: 0223 211030. Price £29.50.

'Maude's 13' is a much sought after account of Napoleon's last German campaign, (at least by me!), written at a time when the British Empire was winding itself up for a major European conflict, the prowess and tenacity of the 'Prussian' against 'superior' opponents is forcefully pointed out. That aside, however, this is one of the easier books to read on this subject. Maude carefully and logically explained how the various political and strategical events following the 1812 campaign enabled the Allies to take the field in 1813 (bearing in mind that the Russian's couldn't, the Austrian's wouldn't and the Prussian's were undecided!). The easy flow is maintained by the use of brigade and divisional descriptions of battles, (no pornography of violence here!) This does not detract from the battle accounts and does simplify the understanding of what went on and where and which brigade did it. The orders of battles reflect this, being of the format - 1st Division, Morand, 4 brigades, 16 battalion 8,000 men, and so forth. More than sufficient. Students of the campaign will also benefit from the very precise start locations of the various formations. I have only one query with the book, Maude states that Bertrand's IV Corps was made up of French "cohorts", Italian and Neapolitan Infantry and, wait for it....., an Algerian Battalion! Whilst answering many questions, Maude's '13 has now left with a really irritating trivial one! (Who were they?). Well worth the money and no doubt this edition will become as scarce as the original very quickly.