

Musket & Pike

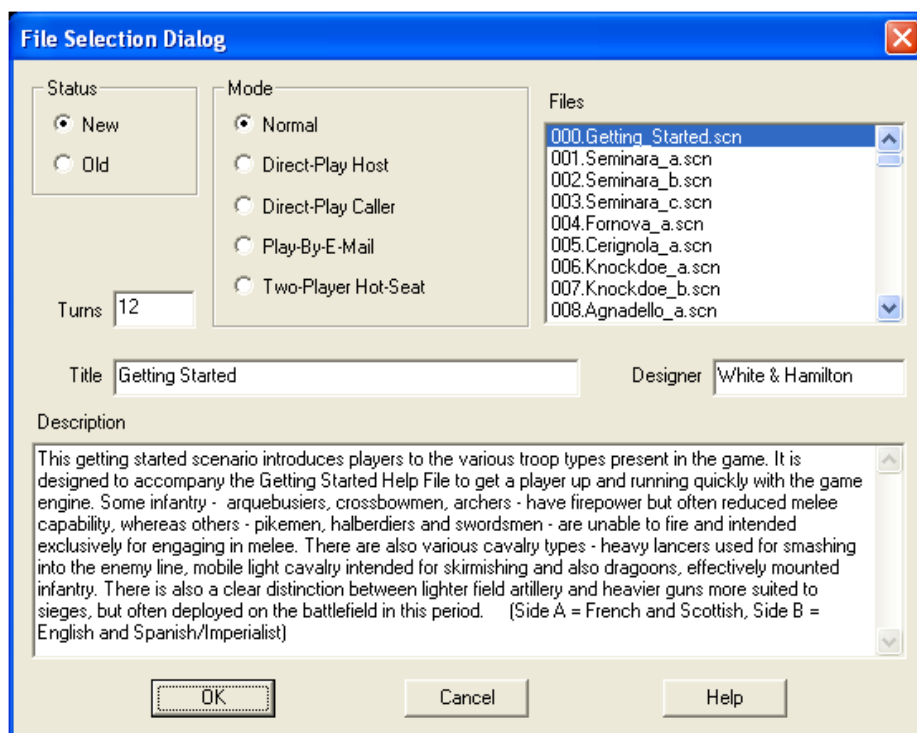
The Renaissance

Welcome to The Renaissance (REN), the first title in a new series called Musket & Pike (M&P) from John Tiller Software. This new series is similar to the Napoleonic games, but there are also many differences which presents an entirely different feel when playing. We'll review some of those differences in this document for those familiar with that series, but we will also go step by step for new gamers not so familiar. Naturally, before we can dig in we must be sure we are all on the same field, so we shall start with the basics. More advanced players will want to scroll down to page 6. If you wish to print this document it will result in approximately 8 pages of text and images.

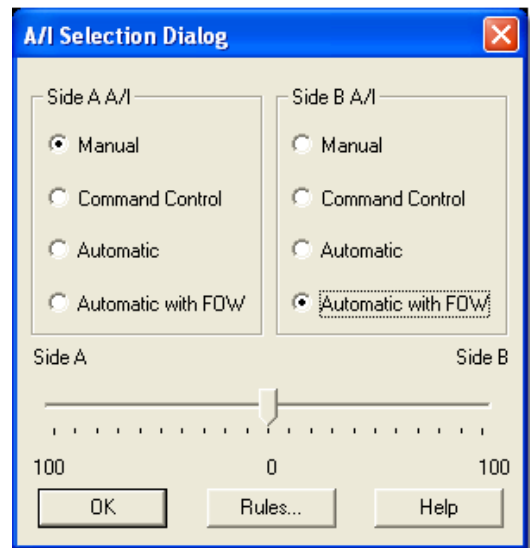
REN ships with documentation that will go into detail on the historical details of the time periods covered, the battles represented and also the weapons involved. Our intent here is to get you comfortable with how the game operates and generally how the units handle so you can progress into the main game and explore all the actions covered. Please note, this scenario is not necessarily designed with the intent for you to be able to “win” – rather it presents numerically balanced forces with a wide variety of armaments in order for you to be exposed to as many different things as possible up front – so you don't have any rude awakenings on the battlefield later.

The Basics

OK, so on we go...to begin please open the Main Program if it isn't already running, and use the File Selection Dialog to select the first scenario in the list, 000.Getting_Started.scn – notice that it is a 12 turn scenario and also go ahead and read the description. We will want to leave the “Mode” as Normal for this action as we plan on playing against the computer. In future battles though this will be the screen where you select to play by e-mail (PBEM), use the same computer to play someone else (Hot Seat) or get a game going over a LAN or the Internet (Direct-Play). Go ahead and click the OK button to continue.



On the next screen leave side A on Manual but change side B to Automatic with FOW. FOW stands for Fog Of War which essentially means the game engine is going to mask certain things from you to replicate what an actual commander on the field might see. So if a unit is on the other side of a hill you won't be able to see them. Likewise, you won't be able to see all the attributes of your enemy's forces like their fatigue level for example. You may wish to play without FOW later on, but the enjoyment level is much higher with it on. Also please note that there is a "Rules" button on this page which when clicked will take you to a new screen with many optional rules you can use when playing the game. These have varying effects on game play, some radical, others not so much. For our purposes now though we will leave this button alone, so go ahead and click OK to proceed.



We are now brought to the game map and we see our forces arrayed on the field. Before we start examining them we need to explore the game interface a bit which starts by acknowledging the turn box displayed in the center of the screen. You may left click on this and it will disappear or if you right-click it then it will display at the beginning of each turn them automatically go away. Now we have a series of menus running across the top of the screen which we will refer to as we go through this tutorial. Below that we have a series of buttons which are collectively called the Toolbar.

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By default we have the Hex Info Area along the left hand side of the screen. Personally I prefer it along the bottom, but you may place it on any of the four sides by going to the "Settings" menu, then "Hex Info Area" (HIA) and selecting your desired location. And of course the game map is the remainder of the screen. When you click on a hex that has units in it you'll see the HIA change to reflect what is selected. Inside this area we have the Unit boxes for the selected hex as well as the Terrain Info box. We'll get into a bit more detail on these later. Also please note at the very bottom of the screen is the Status bar, which reports various game conditions and messages.



So let's take a minute or two and move around the game. Let's start by looking at the Status bar, and we find out the current time, which side is the active one, the turn number as well as the weather conditions. For our beginning point here we see that it is Dawn, and we have a limited visibility of 4 hexes. So while we can see all our forces, because they are under our command, we can't see any enemy forces at this time as they are all further than 4 hexes from us, or behind obstructing terrain such as trees or hills.

Now let's select a unit starting with the cavalry unit at hex 27,9. We find that we have a 62 man squadron of Dragoons, we can see their facing, quality rating, fatigue level and amount of movement points they have available. We can also see in the Terrain box that it is a clear hex at 50 meters and this army has a total of 20 artillery ammunition points available to them at this time.



Taking it a step further right-click on the HIA and more information is displayed such as unit & weapon type, range of weapon, special attributes and the victory points the unit is worth. Also note that in the center of the terrain box is a number which represents the total strength of the unit on the left of the / mark and on the right is the threat value applied on that hex. Cavalry counts double so 62 men present results in the 124 value displayed. If there are terrain hex sides bordering this hex those attributes would also be shown here (such as a stream, hedge, etc.).

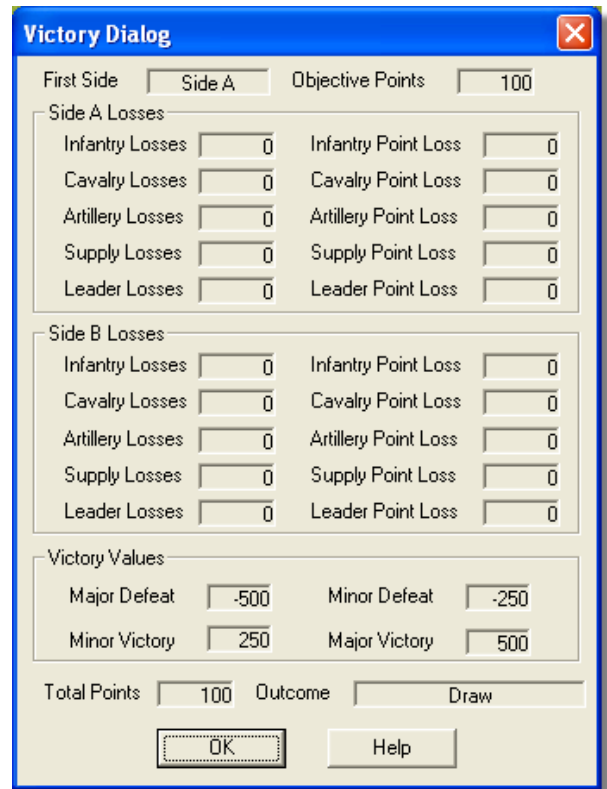
There are two views included with the game, 2D zoom in and 2D zoom out – you can move between these two by using the buttons on the toolbar or by going to the “View” menu and selecting the appropriate selection. You can also use the 1 & 2 keys on your keyboard to toggle this. See the main program help file for a complete list of “Hot Keys” that can be used to expedite game play.



Some of the other visual aids you can use are the Visible Hexes button, try it with our current hex selected...it will show you all the hexes this unit is able to see. You can also turn on map contours to help give you a more defined view of the elevation changes. You can highlight organizations, units low on ammo, spotted units or Disordered units to name a few. Many of these are accessible through the toolbar, but the complete list is located under the View menu. You can also display the names of various map features on the map by pressing the Shift key and holding it, and when released these names will disappear. If you wish them to remain during game play press both the Shift & Alt keys at the same time and they will stick until you press the Shift key again.

OK, well we have gone over some of the basics of the interface, at least enough to get you moving forward, so now its time to start manipulating our units a bit and see what we can do with our armies. Remember the Main Program help file (mpb.pdf) goes into detail of each and every menu and button in the game when you are ready to explore them all. Pulling from the initial description of the scenario we know that we have a mixed force of French and Scotts facing an English and Imperialist Spain force of relatively equal strength. We have one objective on the map represented by the French flag at hex 32,17 which we must defend while also eliminating as many of the enemy troops as we are able.

If we go to the “View” menu and select “Victory” a new window will open which will show not only the current victory conditions, but also what is required to win as well as a break down of the points acquired and lost by general categories. We see here that currently we have 100 points and need another 150 to get to the next victory level while our opponent needs to inflict 350 worth of points to get us down to the next level.



Let’s start out by moving our dragoon squadron we initially looked at. We know that we don’t have any enemy units within 4 hexes of us, as we can’t see any of them, but beyond that we don’t know where they would be. It’s a pretty safe bet they are to our front though – so let’s do a little scouting. With the hex 27,9 selected we can get this unit moving a number of ways. We can double-click the hex which will select him, and if other troops were in the hex they would also be selected. When we do this notice the background in the HIA becomes lighter, or highlighted for the active unit(s). Alternatively we could have selected just the unit we wanted in the HIA and then proceeded with our actions. This method is helpful when you have multiple units in a hex and you don’t want to move them all at once (or fire them all, etc.). So with our unit select right click in one of the forward hexes and move him towards the stream at 24,11.



Notice that with each hex moved the unit expends a certain number of movement points...many variables go into this, too many to cover here, but its worth noting that every move you make may not cost you the same amount of points, but every movement does cost you something. You can calculate what a hex will cost you to transverse by viewing the “Parameter Data Dialog” accessed by going to the “Help” menu and selecting it, or by pressing the F2 key. Another way to handle movement is to “drag-and-drop” your unit – so again you would select your unit(s) and then

while leaving your left mouse button depressed drag your pointer to the desired destination hex and release it, the unit(s) will then move. Be careful though, as they make take a path you don’t necessarily intend, so I find this method best reserved for open terrain with no obstacles to avoid or other units to stay away from. For example, if a cavalry unit moves through a hex containing a formed infantry unit they will both become disrupted, and that’s not something you want to cause.

Now go ahead and move some of your other units forward, possibly putting out a screen of cavalry to check for the advancing enemy. Take the unit at hex 25,7 – this is the “parent” unit of our other dragoons we have been working with – we can tell this because instead of :Squadron” being the second value displayed in the Unit info box it says “Strength 75%”, which means it has detached one squadron. Since we want to explore what is before us it will serve us better to have a wider coverage area, and that can most easily be done by many small units. So select this new unit and then press the “S” button on the tool bar and you will see that a new squadron is broken off, giving us another small



maneuver unit to explore with. Go ahead and break one more squadron off so we have a total of three separate units in that hex now. Go ahead and push the two detached squadrons forward to scout, and follow up with the remaining parent squadron a few hexes behind. Its important to leave that parent unit in a safer place to allow you to recombine your squadrons at a later time. Note that only some units may detach

squadrons or skirmishers, and of those some may only detach one group of skirmishers, depending on how the unit is rated.



Complete any other movements you wish of your forces, both Scottish & French. Your forces should work together in this task, but note you may not move troops from the different armies into the same hex. Until you learn more about your enemy's location I suggest you be conservative in your movements, really just exploring at this stage. Once you have completed your turn click the "Next Turn" button on your tool bar. Since this is a new game you will be prompted to save the game file, you may call it anything you wish, when done naming it click the Save button to continue. A window will be displayed indicating the computer is doing side B's turn, when it is completed the box will display for your turn.

In my game I had pushed some scouts out and the AI apparently didn't like that – so they charged one of my positions and routed my scouts! The command box displayed for me giving me a report of the checks the program did as well as the location my routed unit ran from. Seems the AI is ready for a fight!

Note that the Status bar shows time has progressed, but it is still dawn conditions. Depending on how aggressive you were with your movements, and likewise for the AI, you may or may not see some enemy troops at this point. Go ahead and continue your deployments and scouting activities, when ready advance to the next turn. Again, the AI will complete its turn and you will be prompted for your next one.



Ah, now we have a little better idea of what is before us. With the beginning of turn three we have Day conditions and visibility increases to 80 hexes. So all the enemy units within our line of sight (LOS) are displayed and we now have some information on which to base our deployments and plan of action. For this first play through of the scenario you may wish to consider forming a defensive line, positioning your troops so you get the most out of each weapon type, and waiting to see what the enemy will do. For example, it is beneficial to deploy your artillery on high ground, behind the front lines in order to take advantage of its greater range, but not be placed in danger by its reduced mobility and lack of defensive abilities. Cavalry can be placed on the wings to harass the enemy positions and make them spread their forces out. Infantry can be placed, depending on weapons, to defend the artillery positions, conduct ranged fire at your opponents, or be held in reserve to meet any advance they through at you with cold steel.

And remember that routed unit I mentioned? You will need to find a leader from his chain of command to stack in the same hex, preferably out of harms way, so that the unit can regain good order and eventually return to the battle. This may very well take several turns to accomplish based on several factors. See the User manual (user.pdf) for more details on this and other aspects of the game.

Take note also as you progress that there are various formations for your units to operate in. Column is for mobility, Line is for combat or defensive positions, and depending on the weapon type block can be both for offense and defense. Use the buttons on the tool bar along with the selected unit to deploy to the proper

formation to achieve your goals. You can see the Scenario Designers Notes (notes.pdf) file for more detailed notes on the various weapon types and suggested tactics for them.



As the armies close you will begin to be able to conduct ranged fire with some of your units that are equipped with bows, early firearms or artillery. To fire a unit you must select it like you are going to move it, but then you either depress the Move/Fire button on the far left of the toolbar to toggle into Fire mode, or you can press and hold the Ctrl key to do so.

You can then right-click on your desired target hex, and assuming you are facing in the proper direction and the target hex is within range your unit will fire.

If the destination hex has multiple targets in it you will get a dialog box to select which unit you wish to target. Leaders can not be specifically targeted, but are included in the calculations and stand a chance of suffering casualties if combat is conducted on their hex. Remember, you get the details of the weapon a unit is equipped with by right-clicking on the HIA when you have the hex selected.



As I advanced through my scenario the English made a hard push for the objective and were actually able to take it, but then I pushed them back with a counter attack. While this advance was going on the Imperialist approached on the other flank to challenge the Scots and distract the French.



Your game will vary based on the decisions you make, but at minimum you should have a brisk fight swirling around Duddo and its tower.

A final element we need to cover is melee – or close combat. To engage in melee you move your unit adjacent to an enemy unit and then attempt to enter the same hex. When you do so a melee will be initiated and once you are done committing forces to the melee you will need to click the “Resolve Melee” button on the tool bar. The melee will be conducted and if you win you will displace the defenders and take the hex. If you loose you will remain in your original hex(es), but note, the loser will generally suffer a steep penalty in the form of a high amount of fatigue gained. Careful study of weapon types is essential for successful melee in this game, as all weapons

are not meant for hand to hand combat. Since bayonets had not been invented yet, most units capable of firing tend to be poor in melee unless they also have a melee weapon. If you are like me you’ll probably learn the hard way, but a little preparation and study will go a long way.

Digging deeper, Advanced notes

Now that we have covered the basics of game play, all be it at a very high level and in quick fashion, we can now look at some of the more detailed aspects of the game and how it is different from the games in the Napoleonic series. Here’s is a listing of some of the changes players of that series will notice:

- Earthworks, trenches & abattis
- Indirect fire for many weapons
- Supply Sources

- Victory points for supply wagons
- OOB alterations where movement, point values, armor values, etc. can be controlled on a unit by unit basis.
- Armies can now have a 8 to 7 arrangement, with a max of 3 to 2 in any single OOB.
- Pike block (= modified square able to melee and attack)
- Artillery Setup
- Dragoon cavalry
- Artillery capture feature

Some of these changes were done within the game code, and hence are beyond the control of the player and/or scenario designer, but the vast majority of them are controlled through either the OOB or PDT files. Documentation is included with the game which gives details on the format of both of these files and is included at the end of the Notes.pdf file. For our purposes here though I'd like to examine some of these details.

In the OOB we have leaders, Infantry, Artillery & Cavalry. Leaders are the same, but all the others have expanded attributes. Looking at infantry for example we can now set an armored value, melee bonus value, movement point allowance, victory point allowance and special flags on a unit-by-unit basis. This provides the scenario designer with an exceptional amount of flexibility when designing an army's OOB. Now units who had superior performance can be modeled to reflect this not only in their movement and melee abilities but also being worth more points. The flags that can be assigned allow a unit to form block and allow or disallow the formation of line. Similar attributes may be assigned to cavalry and artillery units except they have no special flags that may be assigned.

In the PDT file we now have the ability to have different fire values for a weapon against "soft" & "hard" targets. We can also assign flags to weapons as needed providing a variety of characteristics:

- To flag a weapon as having "no bayonets" place "-" at the end of the weapon character, this will reduce the melee strength of that weapon to 1/3 normal value.
- To give artillery or infantry indirect fire capability, put a '+' after the weapon character.
- To flag a weapon as being "single use" place "*" at the end of the weapon character.
- To flag a weapon as needing "setup" place "!" at the end of the weapon character.
- To flag a weapon as "no defensive fire" place "@" at the end of the weapon character.

To the seasoned Napoleonic player the magnitude of these changes will be readily apparent. And we feel the wide variety of forces involved in the wars covered in this title warranted these changes. Combat in this game will be a challenge, and a lot of thought must be given to how you commit your armies and how you manage your supply train. This is certainly not Blitzkrieg, and it will take a while to get used to, but once you have we feel that it will be a very rewarding experience.

I mentioned earlier that I'd give you some more pointers on movement as well, and here they are.







There's a variety of ways to perform column movement which radically reduces the amount of clicking you need to do during normal "movement turns", but my favorite way is this: Select the first unit in the column, preferably with the highest ranking leader on top of the stack, then press and hold the "Alt" key and then Right-click on the hex you want to move to. This can be the next adjacent hex, or it can be one on the other side of the map. If the distance is long the units will move as far as they can with their existing action points.

And this works for a single regiment, or an entire army. Just make sure the highest ranking leader (Brigade, Division, Corps, etc. Commander) is on the top of the stack when you initiate the movement, so that

everyone will follow along. Also, remember the least common denominator...if you have a supply wagon or disordered unit in the middle of your column it will break the chain, and you will have to clean things up. So force management is important, as is Command & Control to keep your troops in good order.

You can also just click once on the hex at the beginning of a column (without selecting any units) and then use the Alt key and right click the destination and it will move all units after it...the only problem with this is command structure is ignored...so if you are moving along a road and another formation is on the side you can easily "pick up" that formation as you pass, and you may have to go back and correct some unit placements.

We admit that the use of the Side A vs Side B sides will be difficult to master, but with the vast array of forces involved there was really no other way to do it – as this title simply does not cover one army against another. In order to help you get used to the forces involved here is a chart of the available armies along with their flag used in the game on a colored base for the counters they use:

| | |
|--|--|
| France (Side A)  Scotland (Side A)  Dutch (Side A)  Swiss/Mercenary (Side A)  | Italian_States/Mercenary (Side A)  Portugal (Side A)  Ferrara (Side A)  Turks (Side A)  |
| Imperialist/Spain (Side B)  England (Side B)  Swiss (Side B)  Italian_States (Side B)  | Hungary (Side B)  Mamelukes or Persians (Side B)  Huguenots (Side B)  |

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When you feel like the challenge of a human opponent make sure and venture out on the web. This site will link you to a variety of pages that make up the on-line community:

<http://www.hist-sdc.com/hps/opponents.htm>