

# BRAVE LITTLE BELGIUM



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the weeks following the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, a complex web of interlocking treaties led to powers both great and small taking sides in the Great War. Belgium, however, declared its neutrality. German war plans against France called for an invasion through Belgium, and they demanded free passage. When the Belgians refused, the Germans invaded. Belgium's small army was outnumbered nearly four-to-one, and even with the eventual assistance of French and British troops, most of the country was occupied by the Germans for the duration of the war. But the Belgian Army would continue to fight, and a small northwestern corner of Belgium remained stubbornly free. Belgium's tenacity against such impossible odds was lauded, earning it the nickname "Brave Little Belgium", while stories of German atrocities inflamed anti-German sentiment.

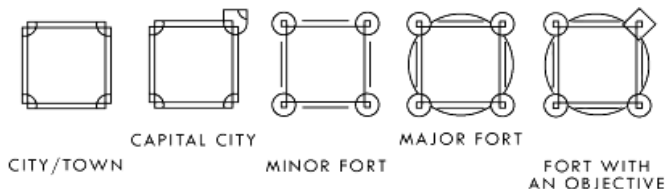
*Brave Little Belgium* recreates the German invasion of neutral Belgium. One player, called the German Player, controls the German forces; their goal is to achieve victory in less time than their historical counterpart while minimizing atrocities. The opposing player is the Entente Player, controlling the Belgians, French, and British; their goal is to delay and deny German victory.

The game takes place over the course of August 4 through August 27, 1914; each turn represents three days.

## 2.0 COMPONENTS

The game is played with one mapsheet, 88 counters, these rules, and eight dice.

### 2.1 MAP



The map depicts the areas over which the campaign was fought. The map is made up of Boxes which are connected by Movement Lines. There are three types of Boxes: Cities, Minor Forts, and Major Forts.

❏ *Cities* have no inherent defensive value. The capital cities of Belgium and Luxembourg (the cities of Brussels and Luxembourg, respectively) are specified by color/icon but have no special game function; they are solely provided for historical interest.

❏ *Minor Forts* have a two-step counter representing inherent defenses. Both Minor Forts happen to be in France. A second connected box is present to hold forces conducting a Siege.

❏ *Major Forts* have a four-step counter representing inherent defenses. All three Major Forts happen to be in Belgium. Two of these - Namur and Liege - must be destroyed by the German Player in order to achieve victory. Like Minor Forts, a second box is present to hold besieging forces.

There are two types of Movement Lines: Easy Lines and Difficult Lines.

❏ *Easy Lines* are straight and cost only 1 Movement Point to cross.

❏ *Difficult Lines* are squiggly and cost 2 Movement Points to cross.

The **Victory Line** (diamonds) is not a Movement Line, but a special barrier which the German Player is endeavoring to cross with an Infantry unit (not Cavalry).

The map is home to various tracks and boxes:

❏ The *Turn Track* is used to track the current Game Turn, and indicates the arrival of certain chits.

❏ The *Pulled Chits* box holds Chits pulled during this turn, except for Turn End Chits, which are placed in the *Turn End* boxes.

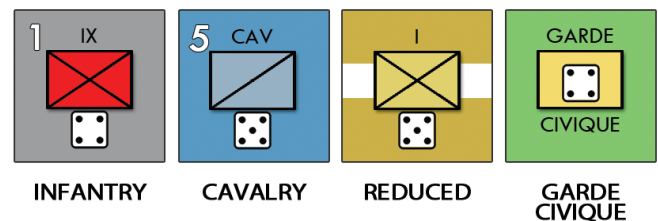
❏ The *Atrocities Track* is used to track German Atrocities.

❏ A *Battle Board* is used when resolving combat.

❏ The *Garde Civique Setup Chart* is used during set-up.

### 2.2 COMBAT UNITS

Most of the counters represent *Combat Units*. Each Unit's counter indicates certain pieces of information about it:



*Unit Type:* Units fall into three types:

❏ Infantry have a Movement Factor of 2.

❏ Cavalry have a Movement Factor of 4.

❏ Garde Civique cannot move.

*Nationality:* A Unit's Nationality is indicated by the background color of the counter.

❏ Gray: German.

❏ Green: Belgian.

❏ Blue: French.

❏ Tan: British.

*Army:* The Army to which the Unit belongs (for French and German Units only). The color of the Unit Type symbol also indicates to which Army the Unit belongs.

*Unit Identification:* The Corps to which the Unit belongs.

*Combat Factor:* The minimum number on which the Unit scores a hit, represented by the number of pips on the die symbol.

❏ British Units add one to the die roll when all stacked together and at full strength.

❏ The die symbol is placed within the Unit Symbol for Garde Civique as a reminder that they do not move and can only roll in defense (cannot attack).

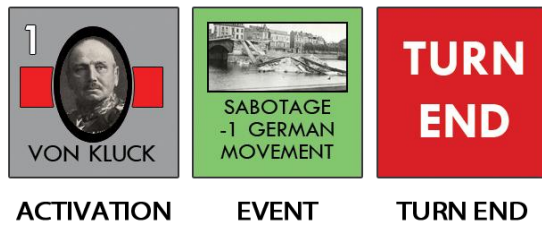
Many Units have two steps of strength, and are flipped from their full-strength side to their reduced-strength side (white stripe) when they first suffer a loss.

### 2.3 MARKERS & CHITS



Besides Combat Units, the game uses a handful of markers and chits. Markers are used to track game information or statuses:

- ✚ Fort Markers are used to indicate the progress of a siege.
- ✚ The Game Turn Marker and Atrocities Marker are used on their respective tracks.
- ✚ The Combat Marker is used to indicate the Box in which Combat is taking place.



Chits are pulled from an opaque container over the course of the game.

- ✚ *Activation Chits* are used to activate Combat Units belonging to that Army.
- ✚ *Event Chits* may result in a special Event taking place.
- ✚ *Turn End Chits* dictate the tempo of the Game Turn, ending the turn when all three have been drawn.

## 3.0 SET-UP

Place the map on the table. Place the markers as follows:

- ✚ Game Turn Marker on August 4-6 of the Turn Track.
- ✚ Atrocity Marker on the "0" space of the Atrocities Track.
- ✚ Each Fort's Fort Marker in its Box at full strength.
- ✚ Combat Marker near the Battle Board.

Place the following Chits on the following spaces of the Turn Track:

- ✚ French 5th Army (Lanrezac): August 7-9
- ✚ French 4th Army (de Cary): August 10-12
- ✚ German 4th Army (Albrecht): August 10-12
- ✚ British Expeditionary Force (J. French): August 13-15

Place all remaining Chits (Activation Chits, Events, Turn End) into an opaque container (an upturned *pickelhaube* is preferred, but a coffee cup will do in a pinch). This container is called the Chit Cup.

### 3.1 DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES (HISTORICAL)

#### German Order of Battle

Sort the German Combat Units by Army and place those Combat Units as follows:

- ✚ 1st Army: Aachen
- ✚ 2nd Army: Eupen
- ✚ 3rd Army: Malmedy
- ✚ 4th Army: Trier

#### Entente Order of Battle

Sort the Entente Combat Units by Nationality and Army. Place the Belgian Units as follows:

- ✚ 1st, 2nd Infantry: Louvain
- ✚ 3rd Infantry, 14th Infantry Brigade: Liege
- ✚ 4th Infantry, 15th Infantry Brigade: Namur
- ✚ 5th Infantry: Diest
- ✚ 6th Infantry: Tienen
- ✚ Cavalry: Hasselt

Place the French and British Armies as follows:

- ✚ 4th French Army: Mezieres
- ✚ 5th French Army: Hirson
- ✚ British Expeditionary Force: Le Cateau

#### Garde Civique

Randomize the twelve Garde Civique face-down (showing their "?" side). For each, roll two dice and check the Garde Civique Setup Chart (first die, row, second, column). Place the counter in the indicated Box (if "None", put it in the game box). Do not examine the counters. Two Garde Civique may be placed in the same Box, but if the roll would place a third, re-roll.

### 3.2 VARIANTS & OPTIONS

These options favor the Entente Player and can be used with the agreement of both players.

**Alternative Garde Civique Set-Up:** The Entente Player can instead place the Garde Civique deliberately rather than by die roll. The counters are still randomized face-down and cannot be examined. They may only be placed in the boxes listed in the Garde Civique Set-Up Chart. When using this method, the Entente Player cannot place more than one Garde Civique within a given box.

**Free Set-Up:** Using this set-up, the Belgian forces (only) do not necessarily start in their historical positions. After placing the French and British Armies, and rolling for Garde Civique counters, the Entente Player may then place their Belgian Infantry and Cavalry Units pursuant to the following restrictions:

- ✚ No more than two Units may be placed in a single Box.
- ✚ Units may only be placed within Belgium, but cannot be placed in any Cities South of Namur (for example, Florennes, Dinant, Marche, etc), nor in the City of Verviers.
- ✚ This set-up option cannot be combined with the Alternative Garde Civique Set-Up.

**German Handicap:** Before starting the game, have the German Player roll one die and halve the amount, rounding fractions up: place the Atrocities Marker on the space of its track that corresponds to that result. For example, rolling a "3" or a "4" would place the Marker on the "2" space of the Atrocities Track.

## 4.0 TURN SEQUENCE

The game begins with a Special German Cavalry Phase, in which all German Cavalry Units are activated for Movement and then Combat, simulating the initial German movement in the days leading up to the period the game covers. After that, the game takes place over a number of Game Turns, with each Game Turn consisting of the following phases, always performed in the following order:

1. Chit Pull Phase - steps repeated until third Turn End Chit is drawn
  - a. Army Activation
    - i. Movement
    - ii. Combat
2. Additional German Activation Phase
  - a. Atrocities Check
  - b. Army Activation
    - i. Movement
    - ii. Combat
3. Clean Up Phase

### 4.1 CHIT PULL PHASE

One player (it doesn't matter who; roll if you like) blindly draws the first chit from the Chit Cup and resolves it according to the rules in section 5. Players alternate drawing chits until the third Turn End Chit is drawn, which ends the Chit Pull Phase.

### 4.2 ADDITIONAL GERMAN ACTIVATION PHASE

If the German Player has not activated all of their Armies by the time the Chit Pull Phase has ended, they may activate those Armies at this time. The German Player announces which Armies that were not Activated during the Chit Pull Phase they wish to Activate. After announcing these Armies, but before carrying out the Activation, they roll one die for each Army.

If the roll is four or higher, an *Atrocity* is committed; move the Atrocities Marker one space forward. Note that because a separate roll is made for each Army, it is possible to commit multiple Atrocities in a single turn. If this moves the Atrocities Marker to the "5" space of its track, the game immediately ends in an Entente Victory (9.0).

After rolling for Atrocities, assuming the game did not end, carry out the Army Activations. Note that Armies that commit Atrocities are still able to be Activated normally.

### 4.3 CLEAN-UP PHASE

Advance the Game Turn Marker to the next space on the Turn Track; if there is an Activation Chit on that space, place it into the Chit Cup. Place all chits drawn during the turn into the Chit Cup.




## 5.0 DRAWING CHITS

Chits are drawn one at a time and resolved completely before drawing the next. What happens with the chit depends on the type of chit that is drawn.



### 5.1 EVENTS

If an Event Chit is drawn, place it in the Pulled Chits box. It does not immediately activate. At any time prior to the Movement step of an Army Activation, or prior to the resolution of a Combat during an Army's Combat Step, the appropriate player may select the chit from the Pulled Chits box, flipping it face-down to indicate it has been used - each Event can only be used once per Turn. The effect of the Event Chit depends on the event.

#### German Events

-  **Zeppelin:** For one Combat, all German Units add +1 to their die rolls.
-  **Forced March:** For all moving Units this Activation, all German Units add +1 to their Movement Factor.
-  **Big Bertha:** For one Siege Combat, automatically deal one Hit to the Fort. If a Fort is activated, allows for return fire (see 8.2).

#### Entente Events

-  **Sabotage:** During a German Activation, all German Units subtract -1 from their Movement Factor.
-  **Forced March:** For all moving Units this Activation, all Entente Units add +1 to their Movement Factor.

### 5.2 ARMY ACTIVATION

If an Army's Activation Chit is drawn, then any and all Combat Units belonging to that Army may be Activated. The Activation is resolved in two steps: Movement (6.0) followed by Combat (7.0-8.0). All Movement is resolved, then all Combats.

#### Forts



When a French Army's Activation Chit is drawn, French Forts that are under siege may be Activated instead of or in addition to the Army. When the Belgian Army's Activation Chit is drawn, Belgian Forts under siege may likewise be Activated instead of or in addition to the Army. Activating a Fort has certain benefits which are explained in more detail in 8.2. A Fort may be Activated once per game turn.

### 5.3 TURN END CHITS

If a Turn End Chit is drawn, it is placed in one of the Turn End boxes. When all three Turn End Chits have been drawn, the Chit Pull Phase is concluded.

## 6.0 MOVEMENT

Units that belong to the Activated Army may move from Box to Box along Movement Lines, expending Movement Points (MP) as they do so:

-  Easy Lines cost 1 MP.
-  Difficult Lines cost 2 MP.

The number of Movement Points that a Unit can expend in an Activation is determined by their Movement Factor:

- ♣ Infantry have a Movement Factor of 2.
- ♣ Cavalry have a Movement Factor of 4.
- ♣ Guard Civique may not move.

Note that Events may reduce or increase the Movement Factors of Activated Units.

### 6.1 STACKING

Multiple Units can occupy the same Box ("stack"). Up to eight Units per side may stack in the same City. For Forts, the stacking limit for the side friendly to those Forts is reduced by the number of steps that Fort possesses when at full-strength (i.e., a Minor Fort has two Steps and so may hold six friendly Units, while a Major Fort has four Steps and may hold four friendly Units). The Fort does not reduce the stacking limit for enemy Units, and the reduction for friendly Units is *always* equal to its number of Steps at full-strength (regardless if the Fort is reduced or destroyed).

French and Belgian Units may stack together, but British Units may not stack with French or Belgian Units. Units may pass through a Box at its stacking limit, but may not end their movement there if it would cause it to be overstacked.

### 6.2 ENEMY OCCUPIED BOXES

If a Unit enters a Box which contains Enemy Units, the moving Unit ceases Movement immediately; Combat will occur during the Combat step.

If a German Unit enters a Box which only contains a face-down Garde Civique unit, the Garde Civique counter is flipped face-up to see if it arises in defense. If the Garde Civique counter does *not* have a Combat Factor, remove it from the map; the German Unit may continue moving if they have Movement Points remaining. If the Garde Civique counter *does* have a Combat Factor, the German Unit must stay and fight. Exception: German Cavalry may in this case decide whether to stay and fight or to retreat back to the Box from which it moved (ending its movement).

## 7.0 COMBAT

If during an Army's Activation any Boxes contain Units belonging to both sides, Combat occurs. This section of the rules covers Combat in City Boxes; for Combat in Forts, see also Siege Combat, 8.0.

Activated Units belong to the Attacker, and non-activated Units belong to the Defender.

Resolve the Combats one at a time in any order of the active player's choosing. For each Combat, remove all involved Units to the Battle Board, and place the Combat Marker in the Box they previously occupied, then perform the following steps, in this order:

1. Group Units
2. Calculate Die Roll Modifiers
3. Roll Dice
4. Apply Losses
5. Retreat & Advance

### 7.1 GROUP UNITS

Group the Units for each side by Combat Factor: place all the sixes together, all the fives, and all the fours. You will be rolling one die for each Unit, but because Units have differing Combat Factors that affect their ability to score hits, you will be rolling for each group as a group.

### 7.2 CALCULATE DIE ROLL MODIFIERS

The selection of an Event Chit might give one side or the other a +1 die roll modifier to its combat dice (adding one to the die result). Additionally, the British forces get a +1 to each Unit's die if (a) all three Units are stacked together and (b) all Units are full-strength.

### 7.3 ROLL DICE

- ♣ For each Unit with a Combat Factor of "6", roll one die, scoring a hit on a modified "6" or greater.
- ♣ For each Unit with a Combat Factor of "5", roll one die, scoring a hit on a modified "5" or greater.
- ♣ For each Unit with a Combat Factor of "4", roll one die, scoring a hit on a modified "4" or greater.

Keep a running tally of the number of hits you score. Both sides roll and score hits "simultaneously".

### 7.4 APPLY LOSSES

For each hit you score, your opponent's Units suffer a step-loss. A step-loss is resolved either by flipping a full-strength two-step Unit to its reduced (striped) side, or Eliminating a reduced-strength or one-step Unit (removing it from play). The owning player determines how all losses are allocated for their side.

### 7.5 RETREAT & ADVANCE

Battles last only one "round". After applying losses, the side that suffered the greatest number of hits must Retreat (if tied, the Attacker Retreats):

- ♣ Retreating Attackers must return to the Box from which they Attacked.
- ♣ Retreating Defenders must move all Units away from the Box. Germans must move toward Germany, while French and British must move toward France. Belgians have no additional requirement.
- ♣ If one side takes fewer hits but is completely Eliminated, the other side does not have to Retreat.
- ♣ If the only viable avenue of Retreat is occupied by the Enemy, each Retreating Unit suffers one Loss and then must move into a further Box. If that Box is also Enemy-Occupied, Eliminate the Retreating Units. Undestroyed Enemy Forts constitute an Enemy-Occupied Box even if no Combat Units are present. For Retreating Defenders, the Box from which the Attacker moved constitutes an Enemy-Occupied Box.
- ♣ If the Retreating Unit(s) would cause a Box to become overstacked (holding in excess of eight friendly Units), a number of friendly Units that were in that Box must be *displaced* - Retreating one Box themselves, pursuant to all the points above - until there is enough "room" for the new Units.

An *Advance* is possible in very specific circumstances:

- ✘ The Attacker wins the battle, AND
- ✘ had 5+ times more Units than the defender, AND
- ✘ the Defender's Units were all Eliminated in Battle, AND
- ✘ the Attacker did not sustain any losses.

If all these conditions are met, the Attacker may *advance* into one additional space regardless of Movement Factors:

- ✘ The Attacker must keep all of the victorious Units together in a single stack.
- ✘ If they Advance into a Box containing Enemy Units, they initiate a new Combat, which is resolved immediately.
- ✘ However, that Attacking stack may *not* Advance a second time, even if after resolving the Combat they meet the criteria.

## 8.0 SIEGE COMBAT

When a German Unit(s) enters a Fort Box containing a Fort Marker that has not yet been destroyed, the Fort must be *besieged*. The German Unit(s) are placed on the secondary Siege space, and the Combat in that Box is resolved as Siege Combat.

### 8.1 SIEGE COMBAT DIFFERENCES

Siege Combat differs from standard combat in the following particulars:

- ✘ The Fort Marker represents the Fort's defenses and attached garrison. The Fort Marker is oriented so that the counter edge facing the "top" of the mapsheet for the Entente Player displays its current number of Steps (dots). Each time the Fort Marker takes a Hit, the counter is rotated clockwise (from four dots to three, three to two, two to one). Fort Markers only take Hits if there are no Entente Units remaining in the Box, or after all such Entente Units have been Eliminated. (Exception: if the "Big Bertha" Event Chit is used, one hit is dealt to the Fort *automatically*, regardless of how many defending Units remain.)
- ✘ The Fort has a combat rating (5), and rolls one die for each Step it currently possesses, scoring a Hit against the Germans on rolls of "5" or greater.
- ✘ If forced to Retreat per 7.5, Germans must Retreat. Entente Units have the option to either Retreat normally or to stay in place to defend the Fort.
- ✘ It is possible on an Entente activation to bring in additional Units even while the Fort is under siege. Remember however that the friendly stacking limit in Forts is always reduced by the number of Steps the Fort has at full-strength.
- ✘ Only Activated Units may Attack even if other friendly Units are present.
- ✘ Activated Entente Units that begin or move into a Fort Box that is under siege may attack the besieging forces.
- ✘ When the Fort is down to its last Step and suffers a Hit, the counter is flipped over to its "Destroyed" side. Treat the Box as a City Box for the rest of the game.

### 8.2 ACTIVATING FORTS

If the drawn Entente Activation Chit is of the same nationality as defending Units in a Fort under siege, or if the Chit matches the nationality of the Fort (Belgian for Major Forts, French for Minor Forts), then the Fort may be Activated in one of the following two ways:

**Activate all Units and the Fort.** All Units that would be Activated normally are Activated. All Activated Units in the Fort, and the Fort itself, are Activated for Combat only, with both the Entente and the German sides rolling dice.

**Activate the Fort Alone.** Instead of Activating any Units, only the Fort is Activated for Combat only. This represents the Fort's artillery firing at the besieging forces. The Germans do **not** get to roll dice **unless** they select the "Big Bertha" Event Chit. In addition to firing back, the Germans **do** get the Big Bertha automatic Hit Bonus.

Note that you can also opt to simply Activate the Units in the Fort normally for Movement and Combat when their chit is drawn, but in those cases the Fort does not activate. Activated Units can leave the Fort.

Each Fort may only be Activated once per Game Turn.

## 9.0 GAME END & VICTORY

The German Player's objective is to complete all of the following:

- ✘ Destroy the Major Fort of Liege
- ✘ Destroy the Major Fort of Namur
- ✘ Occupy a City on the other side of the Victory Line with an Infantry Unit. (Cavalry may cross the line, but do not count for Victory purposes.)

Whether or not and when these objectives are achieved determines the winner of the game:

- ✘ If the German Player has achieved all three objectives at any time during the **August 19 - 21** Turn, the game is a **German Victory**. (Achieving this before that Turn does not win them the game - they have to hold that occupied City until the August 19 - 21 Turn.)
- ✘ If the German Player has achieved all three objectives at any time during the **August 22 - 24** or **August 25 - 27** Turn, the game is a **draw**.
- ✘ If the German Player fails to achieve all three objectives before the end of the Chit Pull Phase of the **August 25 - 27** Turn, the game is an **Entente Victory**.

If the German Player commits five atrocities, the game ends immediately in an **Entente Victory**.

## CREDITS

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*RYAN: Thank you to my wonderful wife, Amy, and my son, Dominic, for all of their love and encouragement. Also, I would like to thank my Social Studies teachers, Sandra Sutherland and Michael Cavey, for teaching me to love history.*

*DAVE: I dedicate this game to my parents, who not only supported my early love of games but also encouraged my interest in history; and to my wife and best friend, Cathy, and my two daughters, Carina and Mariana -- you are the loves of my life and I am forever grateful for your love and support.*

# SET-UP DIAGRAM

