

**Battle of Mons (2)**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> August, 1914**  
**(Battle for the Canal)**

*A Rapid Fire 1914 Scenario V1.0*  
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**Background**

As part of its stand against von Kluck's German First Army at Mons on 23 August 1914, elements of Smith-Dorrien's II Corps stood and fought at the Conde Canal west of Mons. As the German juggernaut bore down the BEF's infantry met it with rapid fire as its engineers desperately tried to blow the canal bridges.

**British order of battle**

1st Bn Royal Scots Fusiliers (40 figs elite test @ 20) - initial  
1st Bn Northumberland Fusiliers - B, C and MG Coys only (20 figs elite test @ 10) - initial  
1st Bn Royal West Kents (40 figs elite test @ 20) - initial  
2nd Duke of Wellington's - B and MG Coys only (12 figs elite test @ 6) - initial  
Sections from 17 and 57 Field Coys RE (8 figs elite/specialists) - initial  
120 Field Bty RFA (1 x 18pdr with 4 crew and limber + 2 gunners with wagon) - initial

**German order of battle**

I, II and III Bns 20th Inf Regt (each 40 figs regular test @ 20) with Regt CO + 2 figs - enter Turn 1  
I, II and III Bns 12th Inf Regt (each 40 figs regular test @ 20) with Regt CO + 2 figs - enter Turn 2  
6 batteries (field) - off board

**Scenario**

The game lasts 12 moves per side starting with German Turn 1. British troops including the engineers start concealed in built up areas or hasty entrenchments and in reserve fire mode. British artillery starts unlimbered and in reserve fire mode.

The British positions are along the south side of the canal. The Royal Scots are in and around Jemappes, the Northumberlands in and around Mariette and the Kents in and around St Ghislain. 120 Battery is in St Ghislain and the Dukes are east of St Ghislain. The engineers are in 4 teams of 2 figures at each bridge. All built up areas start undamaged.

Each German battalion must enter and stay in close order (except while fording the canal) until the battalion incurs more than 10% casualties (ie more than 4 figures). The 20th Regt enters along the northern edge of the table between Ghlin and Baradour and the 12th Regt between Baradour and the St Ghislain Road. The northern edge of the table is treated as the German lines and the southern edge as the British lines.

There are no artillery observers on table. To simulate the random nature of the German bombardment, at the start of each German turn, 6 position markers (one for each battery) are placed anywhere on the table of the German player's choosing. As each battery is selected to fire, the centre of the template is placed over its marker. A d10 is then rolled to determine the actual target square (10 = any square nominated by the German player) and the position marker is removed. Once the target square is determined an IDF marker is placed in it and IDF is resolved. After each battery fires, its IDF marker is removed. The same procedure is then followed in subsequent turns. If a bridge sustains 4 casualties "worth" of damage from IDF it is destroyed.

The canal is a linear obstacle. Troops do not receive the close order movement bonus when crossing the canal. Vehicles cannot ford the canal.

The 4 bridges across the canal are wired for demolition. To simulate the serious difficulties the engineers operated under due to poor communications and equipment the following procedures apply. During each British turn, a d6 is rolled by each team having at least 1 figure in contact with its assigned bridge. On an evens roll the order to blow the bridge is received. Once the order is received a further d6 is rolled and on a roll of 4 or more the charges explode and the bridge is destroyed. In the next turn a -1 modifier applies and in the following turn a -2 modifier so that after a third attempt, the chance to blow the bridge is lost.

### **Victory conditions**

The German objective is to push beyond the line of Boussu to Cuesmes (the "Boussu line") by the end of the day. The British objective is to delay the Germans as long as possible.

In addition to casualty points, the British receive 25 points for each German Turn that the Germans do not have at least 40 figures (in a non-routed unit) beyond the Boussu line and 15 points for each bridge destroyed. The Germans receive 150 points if at the end of the game they have at least 40 figures (in a non routed unit) beyond the Boussu line. To claim victory, a side must have 300 points with a margin of not less than 50 points. Any other result is a draw.

### **Bibliography**

"Mons 1914 The BEF's Tactical Triumph" - David Lomas (Osprey Campaign Series No. 49) 1997.

"Mons 1914" - Jack Horsfall & Nigel Cave (Pen & Sword Books Ltd's Battleground Europe Series) 2000.

# Scenario Map

This map translates to a 7'6" X 6' table using an approximate scale of 12" = 500 m or 1" = 42 m

