

1976-1986
10

Anniversary

FIRE & MOVEMENT
The Forum of Conflict Simulation

Steve Newberg recently got in touch with Rodger MacGowan and Dr. Friedrich Helfferich, the first two editors of *Fire & Movement*, and asked them about their days with the magazine. Here, then, is the "behind the scenes" look at the birth and growth of the magazine.



Fire & →
Movement

The Forum of Simulation Warfare

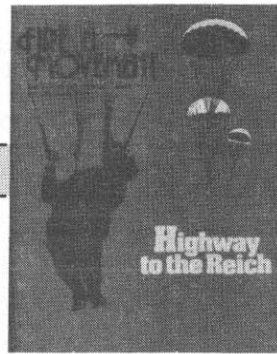
FIRE & →
MOVEMENT

THE FORUM OF CONFLICT SIMULATION

**FIRE &
MOVEMENT**

F&M's First Decade

by Rodger B. MacGowan
and Friedrich G. Helfferich
as told to Stephen M. Newberg



1. Founding of the magazine (1975-76):

I had started playing back in the early 1960's when I was living in Oceanside, California (near the USMC base of Camp Pendleton) during my high school days. As a student at UCLA in the late 60's, I had stayed in touch with my old high school friends, but most of us had stopped playing wargames. I think the Vietnam War had something to do with it (girls also had a major impact). The result was a number of years of no wargaming and little discussion of the subject in game terms.

So, when I resumed playing in the early 70's a number of my old playing partners did as well. Since we were spread from city to city we began writing to each other about our gaming experiences. This correspondence resulted in me starting to detail the games I was playing in a "Battle Report" type format. This included "Sketch Maps" and an "Operational Analysis" of the play of the game (all key items later when I started to design F&M).

As my game reports became more popular with my growing readership I decided to expand the concept. I decided to start my own magazine — this became **ARQUEBUS** and with it the seed that would become **F&M** was planted. **ARQUEBUS** had game reviews, battle

reports, news on the hobby, feedback analysis from the readers, all the things that **F&M** would later become known for. I also found myself becoming more and more interested in the publication. I was spending more time on **ARQUEBUS** than playing wargames. Then, a good friend wrote and said, "Rodger, I look forward to reading **ARQUEBUS** more than I do **S&T** — why don't you consider going professional with it?" I had never seriously considered it before. As I began to, I felt a special excitement, a real drive to make **ARQUEBUS** something that thousands of gamers could enjoy. I decided to give it a try.

The biggest problem was money. I had none. This dream of starting my own magazine would prove to be a very hard nut to crack, but background in advertising and magazine production (from the early 70's in Hollywood) would prove to be invaluable.

I began by preparing a Profile on the magazine I had in mind. This was an outline/blueprint of what the magazine would contain — departments; articles; direction; market; size; format; etc. I also began doing my homework on publishers in the field. I prepared a list of names and addresses and sent each a basic proposal for publishing my new magazine.

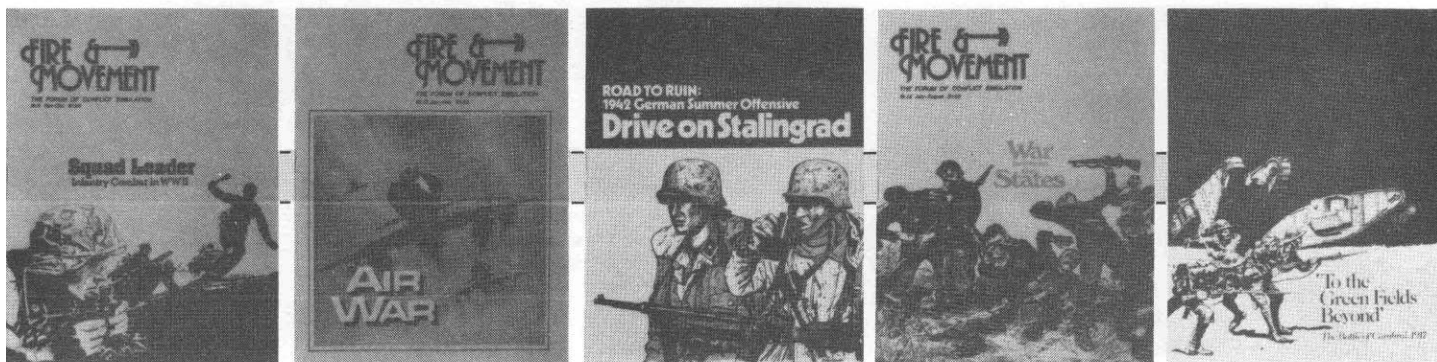
Then the roof fell in on me. One of my major graphic accounts folded. The impact was incredible. I was just getting by before, now my back was against the wall. I had to find some new accounts or close my graphic studio and look for a salary position again. I was under more

stress than ever before in my life. And then the letter came — they were interested in my magazine and they wanted to meet and discuss it.

I was split down the middle — my desire to see my dream of a new magazine vs. the reality of making a living for my wife and me. I had to find some new accounts. Did I really have time for starting something so fragile as a hobby magazine while looking for work? Clearly I couldn't expect to make money on this new magazine at the start. The decision should have been easy — put the magazine on the shelf. Maybe I could come back to it later. First things first...

But I had nothing to lose by meeting with this "interested" party, so we set up a meeting. The publisher was Baron Publishing Company. I had imagined Baron to be a small, but modern office with the look of a newsroom — like in "All the President's Men." Don't ask me why I thought that, but I was wrong. Would you believe a quonset hut set back from a side street and right next to a small commercial airport with planes coming in for a landing every few minutes?

I met the publisher, Jim Steuard, and his wife Sue — she was the press operator. Baron's office was small and filled to the brim with drafting tables, a large light table, and a big wood desk with stacks and stacks of papers, manuscripts, books, photos, and tons of "stuff". They also had in the corner of the room a small typesetter and boxes of materials from back issues. In the backroom was a



printing press which was flanked by row upon row of filing cabinets filled with a large archive of photos of tanks and AFVs. And in what used to be an attached garage was now box after box of magazines and more stuff.

The meeting went well. They were very interested, but indicated that they had no real experience in the board wargaming field. They looked at my Profile for the new magazine. After we discussed some of the particulars of the project, we got around to workload. Who would actually do the work in terms of making the magazine. Baron was already at capacity, so I would have to do all the production work, but they would handle the printing and the distributions of the magazine. My job was to present them with a "camera ready" magazine on a regular schedule. But what was to be our schedule? At this first meeting, I opted for a monthly publication, Baron wanted to go quarterly. I felt that with all the new games coming out at that time we needed to come out fairly often to stay on top of the situation — we would later compromise on a bi-monthly publication.

Late at night when most everyone was asleep and the city was quiet I worked on organizing the magazine. I began by writing letters, many letters, to a list of hobby writers, designers and game companies. I knew that my magazine would either make it or fold depending on the quality of the writing. Without recognized names we would be fighting too many battles — we needed, in short, instant recognition. The first to reply was Mark Saha. Mark had been writing for **THE GENERAL** and **MOVES** magazines (AH and SPI). I respected his writing and only dreamed of having his help. As fate would have it, Mark called me one evening in reply to my letter. His reaction at first was guarded, but as I explained my plan of action for the magazine he responded by saying we should meet soon at his place.

I brought all my notes, designs, outlines, profiles and concepts for the magazine. I also brought copies of **ARQUEBUS** so Mark might get some idea of what I had in mind. To say that Mark was helpful is a major

understatement. Mark would prove to be one of the few people whose contribution to the magazine was key to its very existence. In retrospect I would not want to imagine this project without Mark — he helped in so many different ways. At our first meeting we "hit it off" instantly. We spoke the same language. Mark knew many of the "hobby professionals". He volunteered to write them on my behalf or introduce me and my new project. He saw in my magazine a challenge. He also saw that my idea of an independent, professional magazine was needed.

With Mark breaking the ice for me in the business I started to get more and more inquiries from hobby professionals. I also had my good friends from **ARQUEBUS** who would contribute — Ray Lowe and Warren Williams. Their help would also prove to be critical in those early days and as the magazine picked up steam they were always there to help and contribute.

It was busy, crazy, hectic, puzzling, and very exciting. In the midst of this frantic world I felt in control — this was part true and part self-illusion. With all the activity I was seeing the trees but missing the forest. This I would later regret — my ignorance of business and copyright laws would cost me dearly later. But in those early days I was caught up in a cloud of excitement and adventure. My dream was coming true. Tomorrow would take care of itself — I was twenty-seven and had plenty of time.

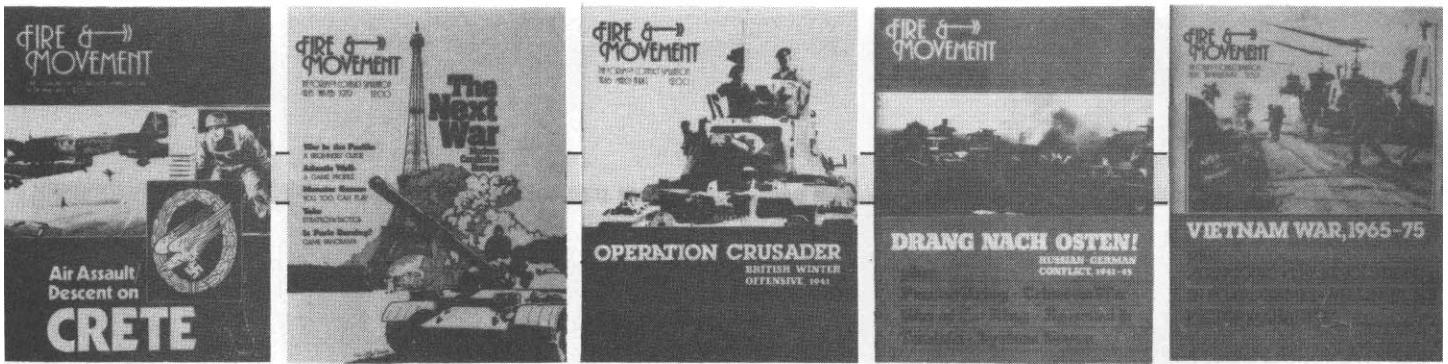
The first issue was beginning to take shape. Mark Saha had been playtesting **Tobruk** for Avalon Hill and he knew the game would be released soon. We decided to "steal a march" on everyone else. Our first issue would feature **Tobruk**, a new AH tactical, tank warfare game from the oldest and biggest game company. Mark put together an excellent in-depth report on the game. But since **Tobruk** was still in playtest we didn't want to give out any false information on the game and we decided to send a copy of Mark's review to the game's developer Randy Reed. This simple concern for accuracy in our reporting would prove to be one of the keys to our success. Randy's response was quick and quite detailed. At

first we thought we would have to start all over again with the review. Mark and I then came to the same conclusion — we'll print everything! Mark's review in turn being reviewed by the game's developer. This of course became standard practice for our future reviews and with time many other game magazines followed our lead. I then sent the review to the designer to get his views on the article. Hal Hock, the designer of **Tobruk**, sent his response. We now had a true multi-view analysis from the reviewer, developer, and the designer. It was unique and proved to be very popular. The final word would be with the readers and we were already looking forward to our first feedback cards.

But while all this was going on, I also began on issue two. We needed number two in some state of preparation as issue one was beginning production. Since the 73 Arab-Israeli War was relatively new and SPI was releasing **Golan** and **Chinese Farm** in their quadrigame series, I decided to try to capitalize on this tie in with current events. Warren Williams took on the project and began reading everything he could lay his hands on about the 73 War — at the time there wasn't much.

Back and forth I went to Baron each week burning up the gas and mileage trying to bang out all the details. We needed to get started on some sort of marketing and advertising. This "secret project" needed to be revealed and promoted. In short, we needed subscribers and retailers. Baron said that retail wise we were OK — we would simply use their existing retailers (the ones that carried AFV-G2). It sounded good. We concentrated then on subscribers. We needed to put some ads together and design some flyers for direct mail advertising. We needed an ad budget. We needed a name!

I had been keeping a list of potential names for the magazine. It kept growing, but I couldn't make up my mind. Nothing sounded right. We knew **ARQUEBUS** was not going to make it — it was put in moth balls. From time to time we would review the list and I asked for contributions, but still no firm decision. I knew one thing for sure, I didn't want



anything that sounded like or was similar to such current magazine titles as **JAGDPANTHER, PANZERFAUST**, etc. I wanted something more in keeping with military history and strategy. **STRATEGY & TACTICS** was the biggest wargame magazine around and S&T was an excellent logo. I started to work-up names with two words in them, then three words and so on. Nothing worked and time was running short. I decided to think about other matters and return to the problem later. And later it was, while getting some material together for an article, I was thumbing through a book on basic military tactics and I came across a chapter heading, "Fire & Movement". This was a standard U.S. Army term. I liked it. **F&M** was born. Others objected, but I insisted on the title. This was a personal decision, pure and simple.

I started work immediately on designing the logo and getting the ads and flyers together. Time was critical. We were not going to have a Christmas issue so we began thinking about 1976 and trying to figure when the best time would be to release issue #1. We agreed on the Spring, around April or May, that should give us enough time. **Tobruk** would be the feature article, but we needed more. I was writing letters every day to signed on writers and people being referred to me as potential writers. I was handling it all and busy as I could be. Advertising, marketing, design, layout, logo design, correspondence, editing, public relations, coordination, paste-up, meetings, memos, illustrations, storyboards, planning outlines, etc. I felt like the guy on the old "Ed Sullivan" TV show who used to balance spinning plates on a stick and kept adding more and more and making sure that none fell and broke — I loved it!

I had taken a temporary job and was just getting by (just!), but I could not afford to buy the type of materials and equipment that could help reduce my workload. My typewriter was old and beat-up. My art equipment was for doing illustration work, not for paste-up and layout. **F&M** started in poverty. The trips out to Baron were costing me gasoline money I didn't have. The phone bill was a

shock for me every month. The first issue was still in production and promised for the Spring; and I was living on bare essentials. Life at home was getting harder and harder. Something had to give...

As the Spring approached and issue #1 was nearly completed I met with Baron on a variety of matters one night. As usual we went on for hours going over details and problem areas. We had to work out prices for companies advertising in the magazine; prices for subscriptions and unit costs; and on and on. I then asked about the cost for issue #1 and putting it on the presses. I had done my part, I had delivered the first issue camera ready (after many problems and difficulties proofing typeset copy). But Baron said that they didn't have the money for the paper. I would have to come up with money for the first issuers paperstock. I was crushed. I was just getting by. I drove home that night in disbelief. Was the magazine going to die like this, before it had a chance to live?

I called a meeting. The situation was clear, but none of us were rich. Mark Saha was a screenwriter and in between assignments; Warren Williams was married with kids and just getting by as a teacher; and I barely broke even each month. I had a few hundred dollars between me and the poor house; so did Mark and Warren. Everything was on the line now. We rolled the die and pooled our money on the future of **FIRE & MOVEMENT** magazine. We bought the paper. There was no going back.

In retrospect, I see this as one of the most important moments in the life of **F&M**. When you're that committed to a project it truly is a labor of love.

//. *The Beginning of FIRE & MOVEMENT (1976-77):*

The first major crisis was behind us. **F&M** #1 was finally on the presses. Springtime was here and things looked

better. I continued working on a million details and keeping issue #2 on course and getting the ball rolling for #3. I was openly confident, but I was also in the dark. I knew how very fragile **F&M** was.

It was another busy day with so many details to take care of on the magazine and the phone was ringing again. It was Jim Dunnigan, President of SPI, calling from New York and asking if I could set-up a speaking engagement for him in Los Angeles for the following month. I had never spoken to him before (or written for that matter). Why me? He had been told about **F&M** and since he was coming out to Los Angeles on business (computers for SPI) he thought he'd meet some of the West Coast gamers.

During Jim's visit he and I were talking about writers and I told him about our success to date, but I still felt we needed more writers. He mentioned a writer who had just written an excellent article for SPI and said that I should contact him. Jim had remembered that this writer was from the L.A. area, but he couldn't remember his name, only the article he wrote on **Oil War**. The article was in the new issue of **MOVES** magazine and the writer's name was Richard DeBaun. I called inforamtion but they had no listing. I checked phone book after phone book with no success. Then weeks later, while cleaning out my office I came across an old phone book and just for the hell of it I looked up Richard's name — there it was. I called and was given a new number up in the Ventura area (halfway up the coast to Santa Barbara). I called Richard and we set up a meeting at UCLA, he sounded most interested in **F&M**.

We first met about a week later. Richard told me about his work as an aspiring screenwriter. He said that one of his dreams had been to start his own wargame magazine and **F&M** would be a great opportunity. Richard clearly was very enthusiastic. I knew from our first meeting that Richard would be important to **F&M**. As time went by I made Richard my Assistant Editor. His efforts were tremendous and his contributions always enhanced **F&M**. Richard would prove to be one of the few key people who helped



to shape F&M into a real winner.

The presses were running on issue #1 and I went out to Baron during the process to check progress and to take care of details. We were about to have our premiere and I was afraid not enough people would even know. You see, our advertising budget was \$50. We would have to find our audience the hard way — with time and word of mouth (could we hold on long enough was the question running through my mind). Around this time I received a letter from Don Greenwood (Editor of the **GENERAL** and new products manager for AH). Don was asking if I'd be interested in doing some artwork for AH. At the time I didn't think much about it. It sounded like fun and since I'd been doing primarily science fiction illustrations for the last few years it sounded like a real nice change of pace. Don explained that the pay was low, but he would give me creative freedom. I said yes — the game he needed cover art for was **The Russian Campaign**.

And then it happened... as I was getting issue #1 off the presses; pushing myself on getting #2 ready; watching over articles for #3; starting on the cover for my first boxgame TRC; and looking for work, the phone rang. It was the director of one of the local TV production centers I had applied to. Now, months later, he called and asked when I could start. I now had a job. A job I really wanted. A new challenge and opportunity in the field I had long desired.

F&M #1 was printed. I held that first issue in my hands and it was a very special feeling. **F&M** was now a reality — I now wanted to make the magazine a success and all my efforts were directed towards that effort. It started as my dream. It was now shared by the entire **F&M** staff. I wasn't going to let them down. As I had told Mark Saha many months ago, I wasn't starting this magazine so that it might come and go as many other gaming magazines had done — I was in it for the long run.

The reaction to issue #1 first came in from the hobby professionals, as I had shipped out dozens of copies through first class and air mail at my own expense.

The letters and phone calls were all positive. Everyone was interested in helping and contributing. It was like moving into a new neighborhood and being welcomed by the community — it felt good.

Around this time I received a wonderful gift from a new friend, Redmond Simonsen (Art Director, SPI). Redmond had taken his sample copy of F&M #1 and went through it page by page and noted mistakes I made and offered suggestions for improving the look and layout of the magazine. Since I was all alone in producing the magazine, and had no experienced person to turn to for help and advice, his ideas and suggestions were like water in the desert to me. I employed his ideas, combined with my own, in F&M #2.

As I tried to stay on top of things with the actual production of the magazine, I also tried to develop the overall "look" at the same time. The "Designer's & Developer's Notes" coup had proven to be a great success. But I felt we needed more. We needed something else to cause players to read and subscribe to **F&M**. What developed from this was the **F&M "Sketch Map"** — a reduced, black and white reproduction of the actual game map prepared specially for F&M. The easy approach to this would have been to have photographs of the maps we needed. But due to our limited budget, we were forced to use uncoated paper which did not reproduce photographs clearly. Black & white "line-art" was therefore necessary, so I began drawing the actual game maps to scale and added all the appropriate designations and markings. The maps were clear, clean and very accurate, plus they could be xeroxed by the reader and used as a player's aid. The **Golan/Chincsc Farm** feature in issue #2 were the first such maps and the response was fantastic. Although each one took many hours to do, the pay off with the readers was worth the effort. What was happening was that I was adding to my already heavy workload for the sake of progress. The "Sketch-Map" became a regular feature.

Around this time I received an article

from Jack Greene which was written by Mike McGuire for the now defunct **CONFLICT** magazine. Jack thought it important and worth consideration and since he had worked with Dana Lombardy on **CONFLICT**, he passed it on to us. After reading it I knew that if we printed this attack on the hobby in **F&M**, we would shake up a hornets nest. I decided to talk with Mark Saha and get his feelings on the article. Mark read it as I sat in silence considering the consequences of printing it. Mark said that he didn't agree with McGuire's points, but he respected his right to say them. For me it was my first major editorial crisis as I pondered the pros and cons of printing such highly charged material in F&M. I slated the piece for issue #3. The article, when published, brought in such a barrage of letters that everything else paled by comparison. Some claimed that I ran it to create a controversy and increase magazine sales. Later I would be accused of "censorship" in **F&M**. All I could do was reflect and smile knowingly. I had never censored anything as Editor of **F&M**. Being the man in the crossfire was never dull.

The "Wargamer as Nigger" article by Mike McGuire not only impacted on our mail, it scuttled the ratings on issue #3 including the feature on GDW's SSN and SPI's Sixth Fleet (also written by Mike McGuire).

We learned a few lessons with all of this, but we paid a price as well. The fallout from #3 led to Mike McGuire leaving the magazine. **F&M** had its first casualty.

It was clear from the reader remarks and the gaming industries cries of "foul play" that **FIRE & MOVEMENT'S** "honeymoon" was over. Issue #3 became a course correction for us and helped in our trek towards becoming the #1 rated magazine in the hobby.

///. *The Building Years (1977-79):*

Richard DeBaun was now helping me



with editing the magazine. He would clean-up the articles we decided on for publication. This allowed me more time to work on administrative and other production duties. Around this time we decided on the feature for issue #4. We had just heard about a new series of games SPI was planning called "Power Politics" and the first was to be **The Russian Civil War**. Richard and I agreed that this multi-player game would be interesting to cover. He volunteered to write the feature and I got the line to SPI to ask for play test copies. I hit the ground running and shaped an in-depth study on the game and historical period quite rapidly. We found that with the right coordination and organization we could put together a feature on a new game with speed and accuracy. This would become another major part of the profile of **F&M** in the early days — we were timely.

However, the delays and the technical problems continued. I kept trying to find ways to keep the snafus from hurting us. The answer was more and more work that I had to do. The two or three trips per week to Baron at night after a full day at the TV studio were taking their toll. I worked on the weekends pasting-up each issue and making corrections; writing letters to staff and game companies trying to keep things flowing; planning new features and new departments in the magazine; drawing "sketch maps" and illustrations for the magazine; preparing covers for new game designs; etc.

In retrospect the problem was simple; there was no money. The many hats I had to wear should have been passed around, but we could not pay anyone. There was no way to delegate the work since special skills were required and nobody else was willing to work for free. The writers were almost working for free as it was.

Issue #4 on **The Russian Civil War** didn't exactly do what we had hoped. The ratings were respectable, but not exciting. Something was missing. We never did a multi-player-political game as a feature again. But #4 did have a bonus for us. Mark Saha took a copy up with him to

Tom Oleson's in Santa Barbara one weekend and Tom was most impressed. Tom joined the staff and immediately submitting articles. Our staff was beginning to look like a who's who of wargaming.

Richard DeBaun had just finished his feature review for #5 on **The Russian Campaign** and dropped it by. It was not a positive review. I immediately sent Richard's review to TAHGC for Developer's Notes. The response from Baltimore was heated. The battle lines were being drawn. We had a new controversy, and as with **F&M #3**, it was unintentional. The Avalon Hill Game Company responded on numerous fronts including inserting a number code of rebuttals into the text of the review. Thus, to run the review I had to insert the number code and have a separate area to print those coded responses. This not only broke up the flow of the review but could confuse the readers. I didn't like the situation. Of course, I didn't mind printing a rebuttal, but not at the expense of the review. If I didn't run the rebuttal as sent we'd be charged with tampering or changing the remarks. I decided to run it just as sent, but I was determined never to allow this method of response again in **F&M**.

Richard's review was attacked on many fronts, just as Mike McGuire had been in #3, but the result in terms of feedback results were different. Instead of going down the results were going up. Clearing the readers appreciated our attempt to show both sides of the matter.

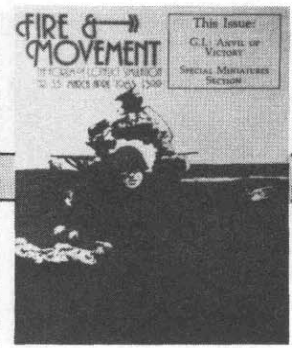
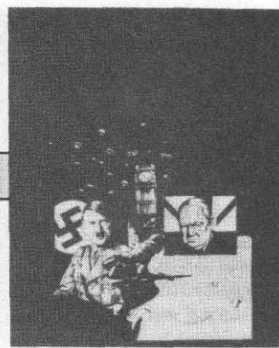
Issue #5 also marked another important event in the history of **F&M**. While preparing the issue I had received a very interesting article from Tom Oleson which was written by a gaming friend of his. Tom thought we might consider it for **F&M** as a reprint. I wasn't interested in reprinting articles from other publications, but I gave it a quick read and was very impressed. The publication was **BARBAROSSA**, a newsletter for players of an amateur-designed, gigantic multi-player postal East Front game by that name, and the article was a panoramic look at numerous games on the Easter Front in WWII entitled "Barbarossa's

Brothers". The author was Friedrich Helfferich.

I wrote Fred, who was living in Houston at the time, to see about reprinting the article. What developed was a friendship and mutual respect from the very beginning. Fred's cooperativeness to contribute was amazing. We immediately started talking about Fred doing a major piece for the magazine and he chose the new GDW "Europa" game **Narvik**. Before I knew it he was sending me updates on the article's progress. As fate would have it, Fred would become one of the key people in the life of **F&M**. His efforts would advance us in the building years and his strength would keep the magazine alive in the rough years to come.

Work was running very smoothly on issue #6 as Mark Saha was putting the finishing touches on an excellent review of SPI's **War In Europe** monster game. I wanted to become even more timely and so, fool that I was, I began work on a review of SPI's brand new **Wellington's Victory**, but I still felt we were falling behind. Our average reviews were around four to six magazine pages and the features ran as long as twenty pages. What about short reviews? — quick, concise thumbnail reviews. What about two or three reviews per page? I went through my files and found appropriate length reviews; edited a few; wrote a couple and started a new section of **F&M** — "Players' Notes". It was an experiment in issue #6, it proved to be one of the most popular departments in **F&M**'s history and continues to rate very highly today.

Issue #7's feature was a story in itself. There was a great deal of excitement about SPI's soon to be released monster game on Operation Market Garden. "A Bridge Too Far" was a bestselling book and the interest in the subject was high (there were also stories about a major motion picture going into production based on the book). I thought it would be great to be the first magazine in the hobby to feature the game, so I contacted SPI and asked for review copies just as soon as possible. SPI was totally



cooperative, as always.

I then got in touch with all the local staff members of **F&M**, in the Los Angeles area, to see who would be interested in a marathon playthrough of **Highway To The Reich**. And so one Saturday afternoon we all met. I had already set-up the maps and charts and placed the counters in their starting positions. Each guy was assigned a unit to be in charge of. The battle began and each player kept notes on the action in his sector, while Mark Saha observed everything from an objective, strategic perspective. After the game, each player wrote up his thoughts and ideas on the game with a mini-battle report on the scenario. I edited them all together and added Mark's overall analysis — "presto,"

an **F&M** feature on a game that had just come out. Our reputation for being timely and in front of the competition was being firmly established.

This method continued to serve us well while I was editor and able to coordinate and direct things in Los Angeles. The highpoint of this system was probably Ray Lowe's superb feature for #9 on **Squad Leader**. We totally beat the competition on this game and with the game's subsequent fame this only reflected well on **F&M**. Feedback cards were now coming in stating that readers wouldn't buy a new game without reading a review on it first in **F&M**. We were there, where I wanted us to be all along; the readers were counting on us.

But behind the scenes much was going wrong. I never said anything in print, but the storm clouds had been forming throughout 1977 and 1978.

Even now there is much I will not say about this period. It would serve no real purpose after all this time. I didn't want to leave, but I had no choice.

Nothing was more important to me at this time than keeping **F&M** alive. I had to find a successor. Someone who could be strong and keep the magazine on course.

I called Fred. He said yes and I breathed a sigh of relief. I promised him all the help I could. I wasn't going to leave one thing undone in making the transition

NEW FROM SIMULATIONS CANADA

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT THOSE OTHER GAMES ARE MISSING?
THE SPARK JUST ISN'T THERE.
PERHAPS WHILE DOING THE PRETTY PICTURES,
THEY FORGOT THE INNOVATION, REALISM, & ACCURACY.
WE DIDN'T.

OUR NEWEST COMPUTER GAME:

OPERATION OVERLORD, The Invasion of Europe, 6 June through 28 August, 1944.

World War II was nearly 5 years old. But since the summer of 1940 all had been fairly quiet on continental Europe. The Axis had been kicked out of North Africa and the Italian campaign had ground to a stalemated halt. Hitler's attention, and most of the prime fighting forces of Germany, were tied down in Russia. The time for the Allies to open the second front had finally come. **OPERATION OVERLORD** is an upper operational/lower strategic level look at the first 11 weeks of the re-entry into Fortress Europa. The Allies may land historically or secretly pick from the other potential landing zones. The Axis may freely deploy its defence forces or use the historical positions. And then only decisive decisions in the face of limited intelligence and raw combat power will decide the day. Situation maps and marker sets for both players are included. The computer will play either side. Design by S.St.John, art by J.Kula. Disk for Apple II or IBMPC systems.

OUR NEWEST BOARD GAME:

LINE OF BATTLE, Tactical Capital Ship Combat, 1914 through 1924.

Lord Fisher started it all when, in December of 1905, he approved the laying of the keel of Dreadnought, the first of a type of line of battle ship that would make everything built before it obsolete and whose concept would dominate the big gun ships of major navies for the next 40 years. By the eve of the Great War full fleets of these vessels faced each other across the narrow European seas ready to fight for domination of the open ocean. **LINE OF BATTLE** is the first part of a two part game system designed to cover the concept of all the big gun ship. Its integrated combat system depicts shell strengths, immune zones, armour placement, gun ranges, and angle of shot without resort to complicated calculations. Detailed rules on movement, command, and other vital factors complete the game. Unit counters are included to cover every European, American, & Japanese dreadnought of the period. Design by S.Newberg, art by J.Kula.

COMPUTER GAMES FOR THE APPLE II(+), COMMODORE(•) & IBMPC(+)

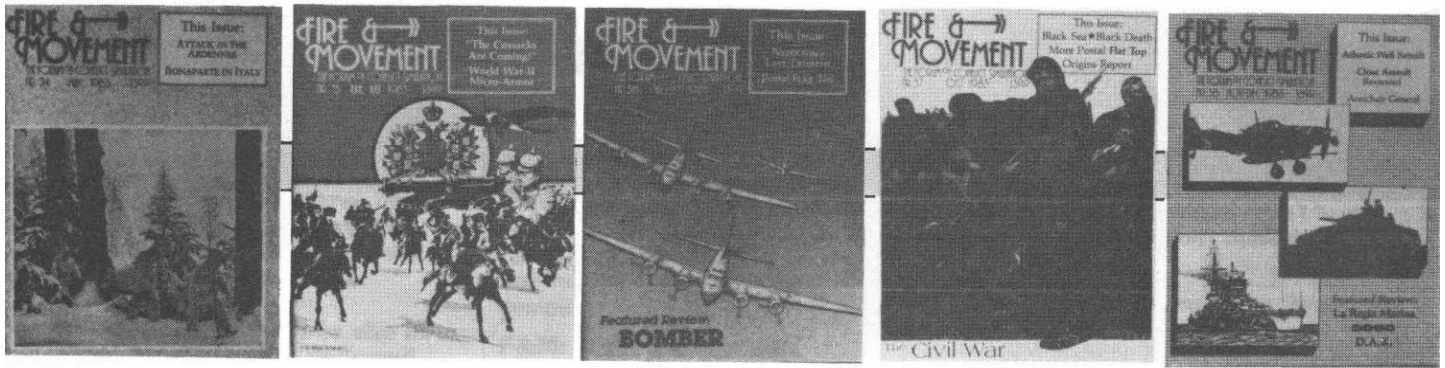
GOLAN FRONT, the Arab/Israeli War in the North, 1973 †•
BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC, Naval Combat Against the Axis †•
SIEG IN AFRIKA, Rommel in the Desert, 1940-1943 †•
SEVENTH FLEET, Modern Naval Combat in the Pacific †•

FIFTH ESKADRA, Operational Modern Naval Combat †•
FALL GELB, The Conquest of France, Spring 1940 †•
GREY SEAS, GREY SKIES, Tactical Modern Naval Combat †•

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NOTE: Purchasers outside Canada should send payment in U.S.funds (meaning Americans can just write a cheque). Canadians must add 25% for Federal Manufacturers Sales Tax & shipping. Nova Scotia residents must add an extra 10% of the total for Provincial Tax. Orders from locations outside the United States and Canada must add \$3.00 per game to cover extra shipping & handling.

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as smooth and complete as possible. But Fred had one paramount concern that I could not answer: Who would produce the magazine? Who would replace me as Art Director and do all the type specing, layout, paste-up, corrections, illustrations, maps, advertising placement, and magazine design?

I tried to find someone, but no one would do so much work for such a small amount of money. I knew Fred could handle the editorial end but that was only half the job. Plus Fred lived in Houston and would need someone to contact in L.A. on a regular basis to watch over progress and trouble shoot.

Under conditions that I greatly disliked, but for the sake of Fred and F&M, I

agreed to stay on as Art Director. I couldn't make the clean break I wanted.

Issues #13 - 18 marked this period in F&M's history, with Fred as Editor and me as Art Director. Working to show Fred the ropes with the first couple issues was enjoyable, but the production trenches and the endless problems continued to take their toll on me.

I tried to help direct Fred at first, but before long he was feeling quite confident and he took the helm. F&M was in good hands.

IV. Fred Helfferich; At The Helm

(1979-84):

For me, F&M was "love at first sight." My first issue was, I believe, that with the feature on **Tobruk**. It was a **gamer's** magazine, written by the gamer for the gamer, something not in existence at that time — not the tedious and long-winded "best plans" (often full of holes) and analyses of **THE GENERAL** or the usually term paper-level historical articles by amateur or resident historians in S&T, the two only serious competitors at that time. I also was impressed by the graphic impact of the pages — such as a long gun muzzle protruding out of a picture well across the page — not just a few illustrations frozen encyclopedia-style into the text.

SIMULATIONS CANADA

AFTER A YEAR OR TWO OF RESEARCH,
DEVELOPMENT, PLAYTESTING, ARGUMENTS, AND (FINALLY)
PRODUCTION ON A PROJECT,
WE AT SIMCAN RELAX . . . BY PLAYING THE GAME.
WHEN YOU GO WITH SIMCAN YOU GET MORE THAN A PRETTY BOX.

COMPUTER GAMES FOR THE APPLE II(†), COMMODORE(•) & IBMPC(★)

GOLAN FRONT, the Arab/Israeli War in the North, 1973 †•
BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC, Naval Combat Against the Axis †★
SIEG IN AFRIKA, Rommel in the Desert, 1940-1943 †•
OPERATION OVERLORD, The Invasion of Europe, 1944 †★

FIFTH ESKADRA, Operational Modern Naval Combat †•
FALL GELB, The Conquest of France, Spring 1940 †•
GREY SEAS, GREY SKIES, Tactical Modern Naval Combat †•
SEVENTH FLEET, Modern Naval Combat in the Pacific †•

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D.A.K., The Axis in North Africa, 1940-1943
LA REGIA MARINA, The Mediterranean, 1940-1943
DIVINE WIND, Japan in the Pacific, 1941-1945

SCHNELLBOOTE, Tactical Small Craft Combat, 1939-1945
KRIEGSMARINE, Tactical Naval Combat Against the Axis
ORTONA, The Advance Through Italy, Dec. 1943
ASSAULT ON TOBRUK, Rommel Triumphant, 20 June 1942

BATTLESHIP, Capital Ship Combat, 1925-1945 (avail. Nov.'86)

LINE OF BATTLE, Capital Ship Combat, 1914-1924
THE WILDERNESS, Lee Meets Grant, 5-6 May, 1864
MAN OF WAR, Naval Combat in the Age of Sail
ROCKETS RED GLARE, The War of 1812 in North America

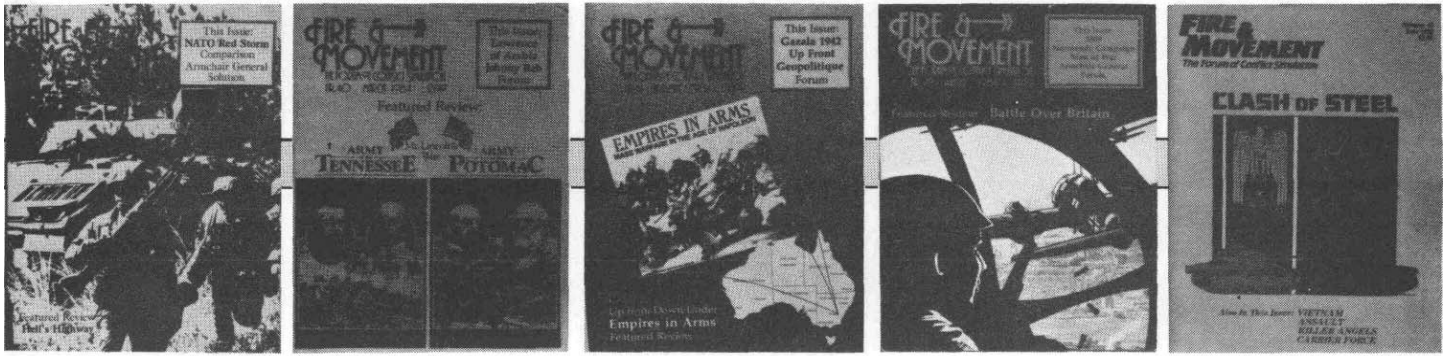
POWER & RESOLUTION, The English Civil War
THE ONE WORLD, The Aztecs, 1426-1501
WITH FIRE & SWORD, The Thirty Years War, 1618-1648
SCOURGE OF GOD, The Campaigns of the Mongolians

NORSEMEN! Viking Kingdoms of the North Sea, 900-1050
JIHADI! The Rise of Islam, 632-732 AD
HANNIBAL, The Italian Campaign, 218-206 BC
WARRING STATES, The Unification of China, 231-221 BC

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With **F&M** long my favorite, I was delighted to take over from Rodger when the time came. My first goal in editing **F&M** was to keep it in Rodger's image, a gamer's magazine, fun to look at, and written so that you might want to curl up with it in front of the fireplace (as Mark Saha so aptly put it one time). Nevertheless, in some minor respects I soon began to steer in slightly different directions.

I started into **F&M** editing with the maxim: "If it's good enough for **TIME** Magazine, it's good enough for **F&M**" (and **only** if). That meant more exacting standards than in the past — and a declaration of war against "alphabet soup" and "techspeak" and the like (from CRT, TEC, and TSS to soak-off and game turn indicator movement interphase) that were at that time overgrowing hobby writing like weeds. It also meant I had to break my vow never to change a word in an article submitted to me! (I had written much and come to hate editors for their arbitrariness and compulsive tinkering — now I became one myself.)

As a military history buff of long standing I also began to insist on sound historical analysis and critique of historical games, something that our hobby had handled rather loosely to that time. This meant among other things to assign reviews to authors with good knowledge of the topic.

Along similar lines, I felt a review of a historical game should leave the reader with the impression that he "had been there," should give him an impression of how it must have felt to have fought in that battle or campaign. As long as Rodger was still with **F&M**, I worked with him as much as possible to provide illustrations to that end. Perhaps our best effort in this respect was the coverage of the Crete games in one of the first issues under my editorship.

Seen in retrospect: At the time I took over as editor of **F&M**, wargaming was a small, select hobby, largely populated by highly educated professionals. Our surveys had shown an average age of well over thirty — even in those childhood

years of the hobby — and a preponderance of academic professions; lawyers, doctors, teachers, historians, engineers, physicists, mathematicians. Strangely, many of the games played by this intellectual elite came from a bunch of kids: SPI's "barefoot designers." No wonder so many of the early games were just fun affairs with not much effort having gone into sound historical research, logical arrangement of rules, and good style of presentation. This was at odds with the more serious attitude and expectations of the elite consumer. At that time, the hobby might well have evolved toward **Risk**, losing the serious, historically interested adult and becoming just an adolescent pastime. That it eventually produced serious, scientific simulations such as **Fire In The East** is a credit to the dedication and hard work of a few outstanding and mature designers. I believe **F&M** also contributed much with its relentless, public fight for historical validity, thoroughness, quality of systems, and just plain good presentation.

Rodger had introduced the basic feature of giving the designer or publisher space for comment or rebuttal with every major review — an innovative and excellent device for providing balanced coverage. I went beyond that by letting the designer or publisher see every major review in time to correct any misinterpretations or errors in fact. Also, later, I instituted the rule that every major review had to include a detailed example of play — an excellent device to ensure that the reviewer had correctly absorbed the game system and to give the reader a proper idea of the flow of play.

While Rodger's main contributions — apart, of course, from founding the magazine in the first place and getting the original group of contributors together! — had been in visual effect and composition, I tried to give **F&M** its own character in text and make-up. This included such format matters as the brief "capsules" preceding all reviews, the descriptive headings (often tongue-in-cheek) over all reviews and Players' Notes, the "Out of the Wrapper" section of games received, the all-fools'-day contributions, and the

editorial comment in "Firing Line," which soon became the magazine's most highly rated feature.

I also found from the start that I always had more good material than **F&M's** publications schedule (typically five issues per year) permitted to print. This made me insist on tight, concise articles and reviewing. I would say that most articles during my tenure, except those by veteran writers familiar with my idiosyncrasies, appeared at about two thirds of the length at which they had been submitted (close to one half of them completely rewritten by me, most of the rest heavily edited). Even so, I still found myself "subsidizing" other magazines that began to crop up by referring authors of good articles to them. I would be remiss not to acknowledge the patience and kindness with which my authors suffered through my slaughter of their reviews, even having an occasional word of appreciation for my editing — a courtesy I had never accorded those who had edited my writing.

Another quite minor point in which my philosophy differed from Rodger's was (and is) my belief in the profound disinterest players have in hobby personalities. As a reflection, I printed few interviews, and those only if the person interviewed was for some reason in the center of attention at just that time. Moreover, I deviated from Rodger's formula of having a standard list of questions, but attempted to direct each interview individually at what had made that person headline material.

In one point I failed: To my constant regret, **F&M** never regained the visual impact of its printed page that it had in its first few issues under Rodger.

It was heartening to see **F&M** win the Charles Roberts Award for Best Professional Magazine on Games in 1979, just as I had taken over as editor, and to continue doing so until 1984, my last year at the helm.

At first, not least thanks to Redger's help, everything ran quite well, by 1981, however, Baron Publishing found it more



and more difficult to maintain an acceptable publications schedule and began looking for a possible buyer. My first idea was to try to get Rodger interested in a joint venture, but the difficulties in providing for production and distributions loomed too large. On a hunch I called Steve Jackson, who promptly picked up the ball. So, without any change in format, style, and editorship, **F&M** continued under a new publisher.

Things under SJ Games were off to a good start, with issues appearing like clockwork, graphics and paper quality improving, and page numbers increasing. Unfortunately, this did not last. Steve's success with a quite different type of games, such as **Car Wars** and **Illuminati**, let **F&M** become a misfit in his product line. Production frequency and quality began to suffer and Steve started to shop for a buyer, informing me that he was doing so.

I was not surprised, therefore, to receive a call from Alan Emrich in December 1984 that he had acquired **F&M**, but was disappointed to hear of his decision to work with a new editor. **F&M** had become part of my life. But I had long learned that a time will come to "let one's children go."

As fate would have it, Alan Emrich changed his mind half a year later and asked me to take over again as editor. By then, I had taken on too many other commitments. Yet, I was sorely tempted by the opportunity to work again with Rodger, who was planned to be in overall charge of the magazine. When this came to naught, I declined, though with a heavy heart. It was a pleasure to see Jay Selover take over, with whom I felt sure **F&M** would be in good hands.

V. *F&M Comes Home to L.A. (1984-86):*

The phone was ringing again, (it was the Fall of 1984 and I was in the middle of

a million projects) it was Alan Emrich. We had met that Spring at the HIA Show in Anaheim. I had read Alan's reviews in **CAMPAIGNS** and **THE GENERAL** and knew through Tom Oleson that Alan was an excellent player. When he called, it was to discuss the purchase of **F&M** from the Steve Jackson Game Company. We set up a meeting at one of my favorite restaurants in Westwood.

Our first meeting was very nice. Alan and I agreed on a number of things that needed to be done in terms of improving **F&M**. Alan then asked if I'd be interested in taking control of **F&M** again. My mind raced back to the early years of **F&M**. I didn't *realize* how serious Alan was. His quest to purchase the magazine sounded organized and the potential was there, but could I return as before? I had so many pending projects on my mind I couldn't decide at that time. I was preparing to leave for Tokyo and I had so much to finish up on first before leaving. I told Alan I would get back to him concerning the offer.

Due to my schedule and my trip to Japan, I was not available when Alan closed the deal with the SJ Company for **F&M**. As fate would have it we didn't talk again until after certain key staff appointments had been made.

Alan called me to update me on the news and asked if I would be interested in helping during the transition. Having been involved in so many transitions in **F&M**'s life I felt it was my duty. I accepted the post of Special Advisor to the Publisher. I began by preparing an in-depth Report on the History of **F&M**. This detailed everything that could be of use in determining what had been successful and what had failed within the pages of **F&M**. With this information the new Editor could make informed decisions on article mix, direction and have a clear idea of what kind of reaction to expect from the readership.

I set-up a series of meetings at my studio in Santa Monica with the new **F&M** staff. Much was discussed and my intention was to advise and consult, not direct. The new Art Director, Vince

DeNardo, had many new ideas about layout and design for **F&M**. This led to a number of things, including redesigning the interior of **F&M** and updating the **F&M** logo.

Time was passing by. **F&M** was not being printed. As advisor, I could only remind Alan that something had to be done. The readers would begin to think **F&M** had died in the sale from Texas to L.A. Time continued to slip by. It was the summer of '85 before the first issue of the "new **F&M**" was on the presses. For the first time since 1978 **F&M** lost the Charles Roberts Award.

Around the time of **Origins '85**, Alan informed us that something had to be done. Changes were needed to get **F&M** on track. He asked again if I would come back to run things. This time I was ready to give his offer serious consideration.

We looked at various alternatives, but the answer was clear. We could not afford to take **F&M** where I wanted to take it at this time. The talks were concluded. Yet, I felt a strong obligation to help at this critical time. I told Alan and Gary Smith that I would prepare a list of names of people I felt could take on the job as Editor of **F&M**. I wrote a brief analysis of each person.

After Fred Helfferich had declined to take over again without me, we agreed on Jay Selover. I had first met Jay when our mutual friend, Ray Lowe (from the **ARQUEBUS** days) introduced us in 1982. We were getting together to play a game at Ray's home in the San Fernando Valley. Life is funny. Jay and I hit it off immediately and spent much of our game playing time talking about **F&M** and writing for magazines. Fate stepped in again as years later Jay would take the post that started on an old kitchen table in a broken down apartment in Westwood Village when Gerald Ford was President and Saigon was falling to the Communists — 10 years ago.

