

Wilderness War Session

Tim Smith, August 2018

At last - a full play-through of the renowned game! I had attempted one earlier, explicitly replicating the historical strategies, albeit with different details as different cards unfolded. I wound up in a situation that clearly demonstrated that the retreat loss rules-as-written were much too draconian, so I (1) wrote up the issue in the BGG forum & files using a whimsical, not to say snotty style, earning quick, informative responses, (2) adjusted my proposed rules mods (see [RetreatRuleMod \(TJS\)](#), also attached), and promised this here session report by way of penance for my first note.

As part of this project I have done some reading, prominent among the books having been *Empires Collide*, the Osprey compilation; Fowler's *Empires at War*, and an interesting in-depth academic treatment of Braddock and all the numerous Wiki pages as well that killer [Kronoscaf Seven Years War site](#).

1755 Campaign

Situation Assessment

Most 'Wilders' are more familiar with the map than I am, but here it is with initial dispositions and OB counts:

French Order of Battle: 33 CFs
7 commanders
15 regular combat factors (CFs)
7 *Marine* CFs
7 *Coueurs de Bois* (CdB) CFs
4 Indian CFs

Four theaters, each widely separated and supported by difficult lines of communication

British Order of Battle: 23 CFs
5 commanders
9 regular CFs
16 American (Provincial) CFs

The British (Anglo-Americans, in fact) won this war. Presuming that was not a fluke (it wasn't), an accurate model (game design) should bias it toward the British. Certainly the counter mix lends weight to that presumption. Yet some say the game is weighted toward the French...these folks, however, might be 'Grogards de Bois', if you will, exaggerating for contrarian effect. In any event it is clear that while the British must rely upon *Mass*, the French must master *Economy of Force*, always a more subtle *arte della Guerra*. The British side of my split personality in this solo game will remain within his mental comfort zone. My French side will face a steeper learning curve. Well, anyway -- enough maudlin self-reflection. Let us commence ops.

Spring-Summer 1755

As the French one has intelligence concerning the enemy's impending or at least eventual reinforcements but can readily see that the French enjoy at least temporary preponderance the in theater at the outset. Clearly this creates an opportunity for, and in fact demands, 'Yamamoto ops' -- running amok for six months or a year and then holding on for dear imperial life. So then: how to seize the initiative? Well, lessee:

French Cards							
Louisbourg Sqdns (3)	Stingy Provincial Assembly (2)	Courier Intercepted (3)	Lake Schooner (1)	British Regulars (3)	Cherokees (1)	Mohawks (1)	George Croghan (1)

Louisbourg is safe all this year if I play that card early. The Courier card creates an opportunity to steal a British card, potentially slowing the enemy's continental plans. The Stingy Assembly will weaken his force. All good, but it leaves precious little for much else, especially conventional operations.

As the Brit one knows reinforcements will arrive sooner or later, but the first thing that stands out is how exposed the Oswego post is. Of course, French Ft. St. Frederic at Crown Point also looks exposed, but it is one move away from strong reinforcements, and the French start with the initiative. So what do we have? --

British Cards							
Easton Treaty (2)	Acadians Expelled (2)	Amphib Landing (1)	Troop Transports (3)	Cherokees (1)	Diplomatic Revolution (3)	Ministerial Crisis (3)	Stingy Provincial Assembly (2)

Acadians permits reinforcement of Halifax while that Troop Transport is valuable for its 3, allowing naval movement, especially since we have no need yet for the replacements its 'event' text offers. And there we have Amphibious Landings! Acadians, Troop Transports and Amphibs -- it's a Francophobic trifecta! We'll load the fifes and drums on the gold and braid and take Louisbourg! Most of the other cards are valuable both for ops and for keeping them out of French hands, especially the Diplomatic and Provincial Assembly cards. Our Royal Ministers quaff their Guinness stout at the prospect (*'Oui, oui' sniggers the French side of my split personality, sipping from the Cabernet Sauv on the other side of the table from my beer.*)

Strategies

French: hold Louisbourg, the Hudson lakes and Ohio Forks. Probe British for weaknesses; exploit opportunities, especially wrt the exposed enemy salient at Oswego.

British: prepare offensives against Louisbourg, and, if possible, Hudson Lakes and Ohio Forks if circumstances permit.

Operations & Outcomes

The French played the Louisbourg card first, thwarting the Brits' great plans for mounting a grand 'conjunct operation' at the outset of the war (*I think that would have been the prudent move for the French even in face-face play with cards concealed.*) The French attempted several raids but achieved little and suffered losses. Shirley and Rigaud fought a meeting engagement at Ticonderoga. Rigaud forward-deployed from Montreal, with Ft. St. Frederic at Crown Point as a fallback position should the Anglo-Americans elect to attack. They did and won a narrow victory, seizing the position and earning a victory point (for both regular troops and defeating more than four total). Braddock advanced cautiously. Losses were light overall, especially for the Anglo-Americans, while both started settling in with fortification for a long war (Brits complete three: Ticonderoga, Gist's Station and Ft. William Henry at Hudson Carry North). The belligerents ended the inaugural spring season fairly evenly matched across the three main theaters (see pictures top of p. 2).

VPs: One British VP; VP total 0.

Summer Standoff, 1755



Canadian Maritimes

Ticonderoga & Crown Point

Ohio Forks

After-Action Assessments

French: Louisbourg, Hudson lakes and Ohio Forks are all holding but we're feeling encroaching pressure. The advance to Ticonderoga proved an error. It's not crippling but now American forces threaten the entire upper Richelieu River approach corridor. And the offensive against Oswego suffering costly delays.

Losses: 2 steps from 3-4 regulars; 1 CdB and 2 Indian steps.

British: We held three perfect cards aligned against Louisbourg and the French play the only card that could thwart us! Well, so be it. Steady as she goes. Offensive preparations against the upper Hudson Valley and Ohio Forks are proceeding well enough. Louisbourg remains out of reach this year, while Oswego is in increasing danger of complete isolation. Only good fortune (and perhaps the threats we posed elsewhere) saved the outpost from attack. With luck, Johnson might be able to mobilize the Iroquois during the rest of the year to counter French advances without forcing Shirley to divert American troops from the Hudson lakes.

Losses: 1 step from a 2-4 American.

Summer-Fall 1755

Resources

French Cards							
Amphib Landing (1)	Fieldworks (1)	Iroquois Alliance (2)	North Indian Alliance (2)	Amphib Landing (1)	Ambush (1)	Foul Weather (2)	Victories in Germany (3)

Two amphib landings in one hand, our hand – with the French navy still screening Louisbourg. Maybe these cards were shuffled by a good Papist hand? It looks like Louisbourg will be safe through 1756 as well (or until we reshuffle). Perhaps even more important, the Foul Weather card should shut down at least one advance while Ambush and Fieldworks cards should let us give others bloody noses, But since only Victories in Germany (2)(which can't be played as an event this year) and Iroquois (2) enable slow commanders to move, it looks like most of the offensive action this season will involve raiding.

British Cards							
West Indian Alliance (2)	North Indian Alliance (2)	British Colonial Politics (3)	William Pitt (3)	Francois Bigot (2)	Amphib Landing (1)	Campaign (3)	French Regulars (3)

William Pitt! In 1755! Great good fortune! The Campaign and French Regulars will allow us to motivate listless commanders while other cards should offer offensive opportunities as well.

Strategies

French: Maintain 1755 strategy. Seek opportunities to maneuver out of the growing stalemate on the NY river lakes and Ohio Valley while prying the British out of Oswego. Decide whether to withdraw Drucour and troops from Louisbourg, knowing that come 1757 it might prove difficult to move them back

British: With Louisbourg out of reach this year, focus efforts on achieving a victory near the NY river lakes and Ohio Forks while moving to protect Oswego. If convenient, move the force at Halifax to NYC or Alexandria.

Operations & Outcomes

The belligerents circled each other warily and girded loins for a long war. The French raised an Indian tribe at Caughnawaga (Iroquois Alliance; bad die roll). Francois Bigot forced forfeiture of the Foul Weather Card. The French and British both spurned Indian support to move conventional troops to threatened sectors, the French reinforcing Crown Point and Ohio Forks, the British sending Johnson and a Rhode Island regiment to Canajoharie. The French restored a regular 3-4 in Crown Point to full strength and reinforced Winooski, completing the fort there while Johnson advanced to Oneida Carry West (OCW) and completed a fort there. In order to keep Oswego's line of communication in jeopardy, two Indians raided the stockade at Oneida Carry East (OCE), failing while suffering two step losses. All of this made the Americans enthusiastic (that and the Brit Colonial Politics card). **William Pitt** becomes Prime Minister, and the Brit Regulars from the discard brought Wolfe and three 3-4 regulars to the New World (Big Apple, to be precise). Then, apparently having misunderstood the discard of the Foul



Weather card to have been a theft thereof, the Brits used the card illegitimately to advance the new Wolfe force to Albany.

Year's-End Assessments

French: We failed to exploit our early strategic advantage throughout 1755 and excellent tactical cards (Ambush, Fieldworks). Forward-area British forts made these cards useless in the attack during the later season, while our ignorance concerning potential British possession of like cards deterred us from risking conventional offensives.

Our costly failure to notice five units in Ft. Duquesne caused winter attrition. Two 1-4 *Marines* lost a step each, seriously weakening the fort for the coming season.

Losses: two *Marine* steps.

British: French strength and lack of British tactical combat cards forced a stalemate at the NY river lakes and Ohio Forks. Johnson's reinforcing move and French caution and inefficiency in card play protected Oswego while inducing the French to forfeit a fieldworks card. That last card they're holding could well be an Ambush card. Therefore, with Pitt in charge and the Americans uncharacteristically enthusiastic, we withheld our campaign card to enhance prospects for 1756.

Losses: none.

VPs: No VPs won; VP total remains 0.

1756 Campaign

Situation Assessment, 1756

1755 saw posturing and sparring in preparation for a long hard war. The lines are now drawn and initial forces arrayed. Time to march.

Spring-Summer 1756

Resources

French Cards								
Ambush (1) (<i>Held from last season.</i>)	Coehorns & Howitzers (1)	Quiberon Bay (3)	Campaign (3)	Royal Americans (3)	Bastions Re-paired (1)	Small Pox (3)	Call Out Militia (1)	British Regulars (3)

Great cards: Quiberon Bay denied to the British this year, Royal Americans as well and a British Regulars. Each offers us three activation/construction points, as does the Campaign card. And we have Ambush from before and Coehorns, as well as Bastion Repairs, all good for battles and sieges. And smallpox just in case the enemy decides to risk massing. We should be able to flex forces left and right and halt offensives.

British Cards									
Campaign (3) (<i>Held</i>)	British Regulars (3)	French Regulars (3)	Fieldworks (1)	Colonial Recruits (2)	Highlanders (1)	Block-houses (1)	North Indian Alliance (2)	Light Infantry (2)	Campaign (3)

Good cards. With Highlanders, Regulars, Colonial Recruits and Light Infantry, we'll be able to mount a substantial force build-up. The Light Infantry are especially welcome, since they can pre-empt Ambushes. We now have two Campaigns, which should help enable us to marshal forces for multi-axis approaches or simultaneous threats on widely separated axes.

Strategies

French: Hold the NY river lakes and Ohio Forks. Take Oswego before the Brits can reinforce. Think seriously about redeploying forces from Louisbourg...although 1757 (and the deck reshuffle) is not that far in the future.

British: Prepare offensives against NY river lakes and Ohio Forks while holding Oswego or at least, failing that, Oneida Carry West (OCW).

Operations & Outcomes

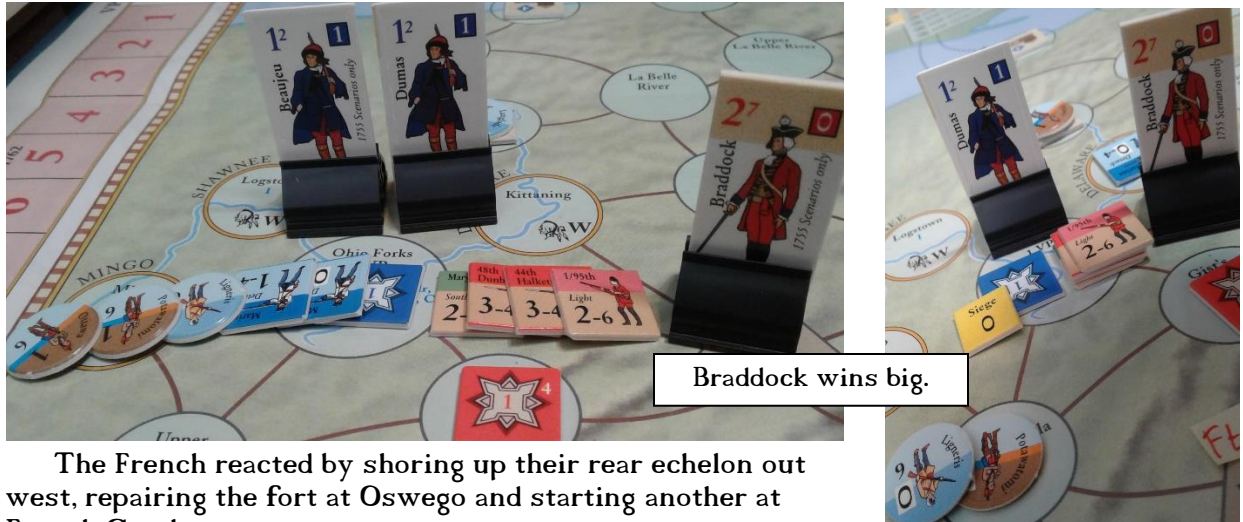
The French got off to an aggressive start, Villiers attacking Oswego, destroying the NY regiment (the British expending their Fieldworks card to no avail), and besieging the fort. The British brought a light infantry to Albany under Murray and detailed one regiment to Alexandria to reinforce Braddock. The French then assaulted Oswego twice, succeeding on the second try while suffering no losses (1 VP, bringing the total back to one for the French). At the same time the British advanced their light infantry to Ticonderoga and Gist's Station while a Royal American 3-4 advanced from Albany to OCW to reinforce Johnson.

The French then tidied lines in the west, moving a 3-4 regular from Montreal to Ft. Frontenac and withdrawing a depleted (0-4) *Marine* at Ft Duquesne to French Creek, from which a full strength *Marine* (1-4) moved forward as a replacement. The season's major events then got underway: simultaneous offensives at Crown Point (Ft. St. Frederic) and Ohio Forks (Ft. Duquesne).

Shirley attacked Crown Pt (7-8 odds --same column; no DRMs; light infantry preventing ambush). Neither side suffered troop losses although Rigaud died leading his men. Shirley retreated to Ticonderoga. Yet another VP for the French.



Braddock attacked Ft. Duquesne at 10-4 odds; again no DRMs or Ambush. Beaujeu spurned pre-emptive withdrawal. Braddock lost one American step but Beaujeu lost four and died. The French then *saute qui peut*: two depleted auxiliaries (one *Coureur* and one Indian) advancing to a raid jump-off point at Upper Monongahela while the last remaining *Marine* step (0-4) retreated to Kittaning. This VP for the Brits brought the total down to one for the French, while Ft. Duquesne was then taken under siege.



The French reacted by shoring up their rear echelon out west, repairing the fort at Oswego and starting another at French Creek.

Using yet another Campaign card, the British mount out yet again against Crown Point and Ohio Forks. Shirley was repulsed again at Crown Pt (losing 3 steps while inflicting losses of 2) and retreated yet again (one French VP for a total of 2). Colonial Recruits made good the American losses almost immediately (100% replacements, ironically), to the chagrin of the adversary.

Braddock advanced the siege level at Duquesne to one, impeded by French use of Coehorns. The French then Repair Bastions, reducing Duquesne's siege level back to zero, and then completed the fort at French Creek.

The British rounded out the season with Highland and Regular reinforcements, one 4-4 and three 3-4s arriving at NYC. When placing them the Brit wondered if he would have done better bringing them on at the outset of the season and moving them up. *(Worse, he did not notice until the end of the year 1756 that they arrived lead by officers and could have advanced under their own leadership in early spring -- ?!*%*!!)*

VPs: VP total 2 French.

After-Action Assessments

French: Another season of foregone hopes. The arrival of British light infantry negated the value of the tactical cards even for *defensive* purposes (British forts had already negated their offensive value). Relentless British pressure precluded re-allocation of units from Louisbourg. Successful seizure of Oswego does not begin to compensate for the impending loss of Ft. Duquesne and the loss of troops and leaders there and at Crown Point, where we cannot long sustain the current rate of losses. The costly stand at Duquesne might have been an error. It did not delay Braddock at all. Perhaps we should have emulated the French in 1758 and gotten out while the gettin' was good. *(Was this a case of over-reliance on conventional mass and failure to understand economy of force and well-timed staged withdrawal?)*

We're stretched very thin and desperately need reinforcements and new commanders. Cannot imagine how the season would have gone had the Brits brought their heavy regular reinforcements in early rather than, somewhat inexplicably, at the end.

Losses: 3 Regular steps; 3 *Marine* steps; 1 CdB step; 1 Indian step.

British: A slow but reasonably successful slog. Oswego is lost but Villier's position is tenuous, especially with Braddock poised to roll up the French line of communication from the Ohio to Lake Erie.

Shirley's head-butting has cost victory points but his losses were immediately made good while Rigaud's death will have to be made good from Quebec should the French entertain offensive pretensions down the Hudson.

The reinforcements at Albany and NYC should prove useful in the coming season. I elected to hold them in reserve rather than crowd the forward lines of advance prematurely (*also, as noted above, I thought I would have to bring commanders down to lead them up*).

A mistake, but it's not clear if it will cause longer-term delays.

Losses: 2x Regular steps; 4x American steps.

Summer-Fall 1756

Resources

(More clumpy distribution of cards. Here we see three Brit Provincials and three Militias in a single season. I need to talk to the numbskull who shuffled this deck!)

French Cards							
French Regulars, Cdrs (3)	Shirley Intriguers (2)	Brit Colonial Politics (3)	British Regulars (3)	Raise Brit Provincials (2)	Raise Brit Provincials (2)	Surrender (3)	Ambush (1)

Good cards. The arrival of reinforcements with Montcalm and his deputies could not have been better timed. And maybe we can send that insufferable Shirley packing. Of course, their Wolfe is at our door (well, in their lair, Albany), but it'll take him a turn to reach Ticonderoga and perhaps two to attack Crown Pt. Plus we have lots of 2s & 3s and another Ambush. Maybe this will help us hold off looming Anglo-American numerical superiority.

British Cards								
Campaign (3)	Raise Brit Provincials (2)	Rangers (1)	Vandreuil Intervenes (3)	Call Militia (1)	Call Militia (1)	Call Militia (1)	Indians Desert (2)	Massacre (1)

Middling cards. Some limited reinforcements, some militia. Another very useful campaign card. And Vandroul (*is he actually Dutch?*), lest Montcalm arrive from the battlefields of Germany.

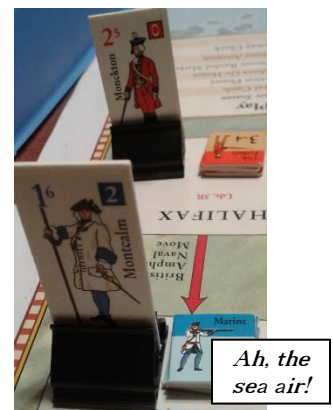
Strategies

French: Shore up defenses left, right and center. Bring Montcalm and deputies in at Quebec and move them forward pronto to Crown Pt. Further buttress defensive positions along Lac Champlain and the Alleghany River north of the post that looks likely to get renamed Ft. Pitt sometime soon.

British: With Louisbourg still out of reach, focus efforts on seizing Crown Pt. and reducing Ft. Duquesne while blocking any advance from Oswego against OCW.

Operations & Outcomes

The French moved quickly to bring the two eagerly-awaited 3-4 regulars, Montcalm, Levis & Bougainville into Quebec, timely reinforcements and replacements for Rigaud & Beaulieu. The British, 'Vandrouling' for revenge ever since that Louisbourg card that thwarted the invasion option in early '55, promptly banished the intruder to that Cape Breton garden spot, moving Drucour to Quebec (not a bad commander, actually). Giving as good they got, the French then banish Shipley to Faneuil Hall or thereabouts.



Realizing he should have played that Campaign card first, combining Wolfe and Shipley in a joint renewal of the campaign against Crown Pt., the Brit used it instead to send Wolfe and one 3-4 regular to reinforce Ti-conderoga while sending Braddock and one light and two 3-4 regulars in a surprise move away from the lines of circumvallation at Duquesne to attack Dumas and the solitary 0-4 *Marine* at Kittaning, who fail to avoid the fight. The depleted *Marines* were overrun, earning the Brits a VP (reducing the French to one VP) while incurring no Brit losses. Dumas retreated to Venango. Lurching forward in hot pursuit, Braddock fell upon the startled French defenders, who failed for the second time in a row to avoid battle. He eliminated one CdB and one Indian while reducing one 3-4 regular to 2-4 and suffering a step loss to one 3-4 regular. He earned another VP for the field victory and a third for destroying the stockade (1 Brit VP total). Dumas then staggered back to French Creek at the head of one 0-4 *Marine* remnant, the French position in the west now in a shambles.

Evidently in a state of some agitation, the Great and Powerful *Gouverneur-Generale* of Canada sent Dieskau and the two fresh 3-4 regulars from Quebec to Ft. Winooski. (*How Dieskau received these orders and not Drucour, for whom they were intended, has proven quite impossible to ascertain and has prompted furious consternation in the halls of the G&P Gouverneur-Generale, whose name at the time was, if we recall, Vandrool.*)

The relentless Braddock then risked over-extension in a gamble for early, complete victory in the West, making a bid to attack Dumas and seize the stone fort at French Creek, where he might find shelter against the impending winter. He used two valuable '2' cards (Indians Desert and, this one a bit costly, Raise Brit Provincials, to mount the pursuit and take the fort). Dumas avoided battle, retreating to Presque Isle, enabling Braddock to invest the place. He then tightened the siege (level 1) but could not mount an assault. (*A bit late, the Brit scanned his hand and sees nought but '1' cards left.*) Stymied, Braddock finds himself isolated and immobilized outside the walls, in Injun' country, up the Alleghany without a paddle, so to speak. His subordinate Dunbar is positioned similarly outside Duquesne. (*Come snow and ice, this is gonna hurt.*)

While this was unfolding, Dumas and his 0-4 *Marines* fell back to Niagara while the French made some minor adjustments at Crown Pt.

Then, on the 'central front', Wolfe, using a minor card, attacked Dieskau in Crown Point (Ft. St. Frederic) at 9-8 odds (+2 DRM). The French lost three regular steps, the Brits two provincial steps. Wolfe thereby earned a VP, bringing the Brits to two total for the moment, and invested Ft. St. Frederic. Dieskau retreated to Winooski with three depleted (2-4) regulars, adding to the regulars, CdB and Indians already there.

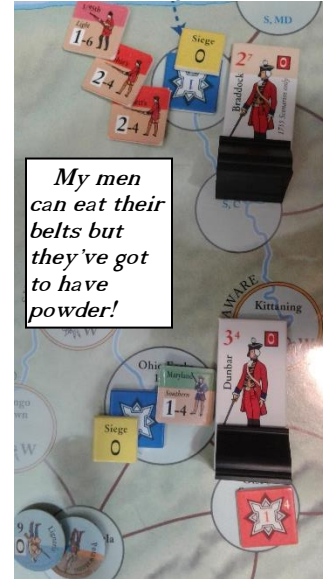
With Ft. Winooski the last stone bastion between Lac Champlain and Montreal, the French agonized over sending Dieskau to relieve Winooski or bring Montcalm by sea to Quebec. They settled on the former course. Attacking at 10-7 odds (again, Wolfe enjoying a +2 DRM – where is Drucour??), they both suffered and inflicted three step losses, Dieskau then falling back in good order. Wolfe thus added another VP (*he and Braddock are contending for 'ace' status here*). Three total VPs for the British.

Weakened, Wolfe expended a cheap card to march a 3-4 regular from Albany to Ticonderoga, wishing the unit could have made it all the way to Crown Pt.

Then, somewhat in desperation, Dieskau attacked yet again, this time at 7-7 odds, suffering three losses while inflicting two and then retreating yet again, moving the Brit VP total now to four. (*Okay, this was stupid. Having a surfeit of commanders, the French had half hoped the hail of lead might have included Wolfe in its rake. Should have used that '3' card to naval-move Montcalm west instead. Worse, at this point neither the French nor the Brit were aware that two senior British officers had slipped into New York city early in the year and just gone AWOL. And, oh btw, it was only at this point that the French actually recognized their Dieskau-for-Drucour substitution error. Sacre bleu!*)

Wolfe then tightened the siege of St. Frederic and assaulted, but to no avail, losing one step he took from his depleted light infantry (1 CF; his other units were depleted, 2-4, regulars), knowing that Dieskau retained substantial forces at Winooski while Rangers were coming his way soon.

The French withheld play of their Ambush card. Cold wind whipping, Wolfe entered winter quarters at Ticonderoga, where Rogers reported for duty with his Rangers in tow.



Winter Attrition: Stranded beyond support and sustenance in their very own western Valley Forge, Braddock lost one light and two regular steps; Dunbar, one provincial step – almost half their force.

Year's-End Assessments

French: Thus comes the end of another sanguinary year. Highly aggressive British operations have moved us to the edge of collapse in the west – although British over-reach has cost them losses so severe that Lake Erie is probably safe for the coming season and perhaps year.



However, Wolfe's 'Ulysses S. Grant-style' attritional grind hurts us worse than him. Even after foregoing the bounty of a strong hand of reinforcement cards, Wolfe retains reserves at NYC. If the force ratio does not improve, we might have to take a hard look at Louisbourg even with the renewed threat of attack on the maritime axis during the coming year. And of course we have to re-occupy Ft. St. Frederic, recall Montcalm and send Drucour forward.

Losses: Regulars: 6 steps; Marines: 3; CdB: 3; Indians: 2. Total CFs: 15

British: So near yet so far. We earned five VPs in a single season, but at a severe cost. Although Braddock has largely cleared the French out of the Ohio Valley, he still has to take Duquesne, while his costly losses will severely constrain options for placing Montreal and Quebec under multi-axis threat in the coming year. Such are the costs and risks of a 'maxi-max' strategy of over-reach, like Rommel in the desert. Wolfe achieved little at Crown Point but like Braddock, he did come close ('from the jaws of victory', as they say), although at the constant risk of his own life. We really need more commanders. (*This is when the Brit looked over the reinforcement cards again and found two of the King's officers in the bawdy houses with the buxom lasses of the Big Apples. We pulled Loudoun and Webb from their cups, so to speak, and sat them upright in NYC under the strictest instructions to sober up -- well, by spring anyway*).

(Oh, and the author's comedy of errors keeps piling up. Upon further examination of the rules and map, it appears Braddock was out of supply even in Kittaning, let alone Venango and French Creek. So all that advance and attempted siegery was impossible... Mon Dieu!!... Worse: I just triple checked, and with no fortification at Laurel Ridge South, it appears Braddock was out of supply all the way back at Gist's station, where he had managed somehow to erect a fort. I guess he decided Ft. Necessity was not necessary! Double irony: if you look at the photo, you'll see I have that fort labeled with a PostIt note.)

Losses: Regulars: 7 steps; Light: 3; Americans: 3. Total CFs: 16

VPs: British: 5 VPs for a total of 4.



December 1756. End of a hard, eventful year characterized by extensive effusion of blood – very useful for the British. (Sort of 1864 'predux'.)

Breaking news: Loudoun and Webb have been located and will raise their heads momentarily.

Wolfe bloodies Dieskau but Dieskau holds.

Valley Forge on the Alleghany – a theater now cleared of major French forces.

French commanders numerous, but Montcalm and Drucour must get into the fight.

French position on Lac Erie tenuous but holding.

Situation Assessment, End of 1756

So there we stand at the end of 1756. Losses had been light until this past season, when the reaper harvested the souls listed at right (counted in steps). The Anglo-Americans distributed their losses widely so that each step lost cost 1 combat factor (CF). The French lost about the same number of combat factors; some of their step losses eliminating depleted 2-4 regulars while others eliminated depleted 0-4 Marines.

French Losses	Anglo-Americans
Regulars: 7	Regulars: 7
Marines: 2	Light: 3
CdB: 3	Americans: 3
Indians: 1	
Total: 13	Total: 13

The Anglo-Americans are much better able to recoup these losses than the French. But how could they have been avoided without abandoning Louisbourg, Crown Point and the west and retreating all the way to the St. Lawrence and Lake Erie?

Questions for *Grognards*:

1. Opinions please: given the cards as they fell, how well did the British and French do?
2. Was the relentless Anglo-American attack a sound strategy?
3. Was the French inability to gain control over events a function of bad cards, British aggressiveness, or bad decisions?
4. Did either side miss any *grognard* gambits?
5. What recommendations would *WildWar* masters make for 1757?

Note on the 'Comedy' of Errors:

Victory goes to he who makes the fewest mistakes. Since I'm playing both sides, however, the balance of error stands fairly even (it's my first full play-through, but that's a lame excuse). It's difficult for you to help me evaluate the course of events when so many of these events result from doing the impossible or overlooking the obvious.

So — another **Question** for you:

The worst error having involved 'Erwin' Braddock mounting a siege after having outrun his supply lines, should I simply peel back the film in the west and rerun the campaign there according to the rules? I recorded each card play and each move (I've spared you all that; it's about ten pages in spreadsheet format). The illegitimate moves occurred in only two card activations; that's the point at which I could rerun the series. Or should we let his winter attrition losses serve as poetic penance?

Speaking of which, here's the disposition of forces as of early spring in the new year, counted in combat factors:

