

MISSION BOSTON

Written and illustrated by John Aegard.
Intended for use with v2.1 of The Regiment
by Paul Riddle and John Harper.

INTRODUCTION

Mission Boston is a World War II paratrooper sandbox scenario. It is based on the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment's drop into Normandy during D-Day.

In real life, the 508th was scattered across the French countryside and (initially) achieved little while suffering heavy casualties. This scenario offers no opportunity to change this outcome.

Thanks to a careless C-47 crew, the player characters will be dropped a dozen miles away from the planned DZ, deep behind enemy lines. Their primary objectives -- to seize and hold two bridges across the Douve River -- will almost certainly be unachievable. To get to their LZ they'll have to go overland for a dozen miles through an alerted German army. Their secondary objective -- to secure landing zones for assault gliders -- are likely irrelevant. What happens next?

NOTES

While this scenario is inspired by real events, a great deal of it is fictional. The German formations, the village of Beaufontaine, and the named American paratroopers are all fictional.

You will find a vast amount of useful play advice if you google up Paul Riddle's Operation Market Garden actual play reports.

This scenario owes everything to Studs Terkel's "The Good War." That book taught me that the fighting man rarely knows shit about what's really going on, what's going to happen next, and why. The goal for this scenario is to create military play that is closer to Turkel than to Stephen Ambrose.

This is version 0.1 of this document. It was released on June 1st, 2013.

STARTING THE GAME

Have the players make their characters. They are playing a single stick of 15 parachute infantrymen from 3rd Platoon, C Company, 1st Battalion, 508th PIR. Fill out the roster of the stick with the names provided. The stick must initially contain a Sergeant and may optionally contain a PC Officer, who is the 3rd Platoon commander.

As this scenario is about a squad of soldiers improvising in a hostile environment, we don't want any NPOs to be able to pull rank. If no player has chosen a Sergeant or an Officer, then the NPC Sergeant Marvins will have jumped last, at too low an altitude, and his chute didn't open in time to save him.

Read the following:

When the green light goes on you fling yourself through the jump door and into space. The jerk when your chute opens nearly snaps you in half, cutting short your "DIABLO!" battle-cry. Just seconds later you hit the ground, hard.

This jump was fucked. The plane was too low and too fast. You're lucky to be alive.

You're lying in a damp field that smells of goat shit. There is no moon. The only light comes from the play of a spotlight on the clouds. As you lie there, a nearby flak cannon thunders, throwing green and red tracers after your plane. Engines throttled up and roaring, it has already vanished into the safety of the clouds.

The one blessing of jumping low is that everyone is close by. Using your toy cricket clickers, your stick musters. Everyone's okay, except for Merle Misney, who broke his leg bad...

--READ THE FOLLOWING ONLY IF THERE IS NO PC WITH A RANK OF SERGEANT OR HIGHER--

...and Sergeant Marvins, who is missing.

THE VILLAGE OF BEAUFONTAINE

Beaufontaine is a tiny apple-and-cheese village located midway between Bricquebec and Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte. It is a typical Norman farm community, its countryside partitioned by impenetrable hedgerows.

The town has working telephones, although long-distance calls are difficult to complete due to the sabotage of the Resistance. There is no electrical power in town except for the generators that power the flak searchlight. The inhabitants make due with candles and kerosene lanterns.

Tonight, the ceiling is about 250'. Areas along the river are somewhat foggy. There's a light rain.

The cross-hatched green boundaries on the map are the famed hedgerows of Normandy, 6-8' tall embankments topped with near-impenetrable vegetation.

When you move through a hedgerow, roll +OP. On a hit, you're through, no problem. On a miss, you lose time, supplies, or you walk into a problem.

THE GERMAN FORCES

There are parts of two German units in the Beaufontaine area.

The 862nd Luftwaffe Light Flak Battalion has stationed a quad-2cm Flakvierling atop the tallest hill in town, east of the square. The gun's position gives Major Pommer an excuse to visit his mistress in the area.

The other unit is the sad-sack 202nd Panzer Reinforcement Battalion, a collection of second-line soldiers equipped with vehicles captured in 1940. Its skeletal HQ company is stationed in Beaufontaine's post office. Two of its attached infantry platoons are billeted here, as is one of its tank platoons. For simplicity, the infantry squads' starting points are marked on the map with the numbers 1 through 6. These forces are under the overall command of a Major Konstantin Seidemann, with Oberleutnants Eitel Kressmann and Maximilian Munzel leading the platoons.

TIMELINE

Keep careful track of time during the scenario so that programmed events can trigger. Note that the Germans will rally towards gunfire.

- 0200 - Flak unit alerted. Spotlights lit.
- 0205 - Flak opens fire.
- 0210 - PCs drop and muster. Observant PCs will note that this is ahead of schedule by nearly twenty minutes. Continued flak fire, planes droning overhead in the clouds.
- 0215 - Germans sound parachutist alarm, ring church bells. German infantry begin to muster at runway.
- 0220 - Stick is assembled at starting point, marked (508) on the map.
- 0230 - German 2nd Platoon (squads 4-6) have mustered at runway. Flak ceases fire.
- 0230 - Train goes past, heading south, whistling through the crossings.
- 0235 - German Squad 4 moves out for the north-south road. German Squad 5 spreads itself along the east-west road. German Squad 6 mounts up on a 5-ton truck for rapid deployment.
- 0245 - C-47 crashes at point (47) on the map. No survivors. German Squad 5 abandons its road post and enters the hedgerows to examine the crash site.
- 0300 - German Squad 5 arrives at crash site.
- 0300 - German Squad 4 is fully deployed, very thinly spread along north-south road, watching for men to emerge.
- 0430 - 1d6-4 gliders show up. In the absence of a prepared landing site, they'll land on the runway. One glider has a jeep, the other a 155mm howitzer, plus assorted supplies.
- 0600 - Curfew is lifted. French ladies sneak out to try to get parachute silk.

KEY TO THE MAP OF BEAUFONTAINE

\$ - Bank

- Barn with horses

1 ... 6 - Starting point for German infantry squads.

35 - 3 x S-35 light tanks of 202nd Panzer Reinforcement Battalion, which the troops have been using as tractors to haul anti-glider logs. These are fully fueled, loaded, and ready for action, although at night they are more assets to be guarded than weapons to deploy. There will be four sentries guarding them at all times. Treat them as armored cars.

47 - burning C-47 wreck (after 0245)

508 - muster point for the stick, starting point of the scenario.

A - The house of Mme. de Vries, the mistress of Major Gert Pommer of Luftwaffe 862nd Flak Battalion. The 2cm gun is located here because it provides Pommer an excuse to visit Mmme. de Vries.

B - Small boat and dock

B1 - Abandoned and unservicable Char B1 medium tank.

C - Cider or cheese house

D - Dirt road leading to more farms

E - Old, sturdy stone barn that has become the battalion depot. There is about 500 gallons of gasoline here, ammunition for tanks & personal weapons, medicine, spare parts, trucks of several models, and the battalion's two 90mm mortars. There are also two large trucks here. This area is guarded by German 1st Squad with 1 x MG42.

F - Luftwaffe 862nd Flak Battalion has sited a 4-barreled 2cm Flakvierling and a spotlight in a wood-walled dugout atop this hill. These weapons are served by 10 crew, commanded by a corporal. They are armed with pistols and submachine guns. There is a large supply of 2cm ammunition stacked in the dugout. The spotlight is powered by a nearby diesel generator that is in poor repair.

G - Goats

H - Small hangar containing one servicable FE.156 Storch aircraft. This is Major Pommer's personal plane. This is an oddly substantial perk for a mere major.

HQ - Operational HQ of 202nd Panzer Reinforcement Battalion, in old post office.

I - Glider obstacles; upended logs buried to a depth of several feet. They are not booby-trapped.

J - Church of St Pierre des Monts du Matin with 60' steeple and bell.

K - Bakery.

L - Switchboard, manned by two clerks of 200th PRB.

M - Cows.

N - Rectory, occupied by Père Mario Gossard.

O - Apple or pear orchard.

P - Paved road.

Q - Maison Faurie, an elegant brick pension fronted with ivy. 202nd Panzer Replacement Battalion commanders and staff billet here. 2 staff cars parked out front.

R - A packed-dirt runway, 800' long, conspicuously lacking glider obstacles on Major Pommer's orders.

S - German crossroads checkpoint, sandbagged. Infantry squad present here, with 1 x MG42, 1 x MP40, 2 x Kar98, 1 x pistol. Motorcycle w/ sidecar parked nearby.

T - Tank garage, with 1 x KzPkw-II torn down for repair. Was once civilian garage.

U - Charcouterie de Henri Fortin.

V - Sophie Beauchemin, Veterinarian.

W - Flooded to a depth of 1-2'.

X - Crossroads. Town sign is here. Signs also indicate 8km north to Bricquebec and 7km south to Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte

Y - Body of Sergeant Marvins, if he was aboard the plane.

Z - M. Marc-Andre Roberge, dentist and apothecary. Drunk and insomniac, can only sleep with pharmaceutical aid.

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All other buildings are residences. Roll 1d6:

1 - house is abandoned

2 - occupants want to celebrate with wine and Calvados!

3 - occupants, terrified, are sheltering in place.

4 - occupants want to join in on the fight!

5 - occupants are serious and helpful.

6 - occupants are German troops, this is a German billet.

508TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT

The troopers of the 508th have splendid morale and have been exhaustively trained, but they are still largely green. This is the 508th's first drop. Thus, the 508th has the Trouble: Green drawback.

Each trooper drops with nearly 100lbs of gear -- some of it carried on their person, and some of it lugged in a duffel bag that dangles beneath them as they drop. This gives the 508th the Well-Armed advantage, allowing them to spend 1 Gear to get a +1d volume of fire, but note that in order to earn the bonus they have to be humping the gear with them, it can't just magically appear!

ROSTER, 1ST SQUAD, 3RD PLATOON, C-COMPANY, 1-508

SGT MARVINS, STANLEY	DUTTON, MONT.
CPL FINCH, JOHN	JOHNSVILLE, KENT.
CPL SPERLING, HUGO	BISMARCK, N.D. / CLAYVILLE, SOUTH AFRICA
PFC ALBA, IGNACIO	EL PASO, TEX.
PFC BURNEY, WAYNE	MURFREESBORO, TENN.
PVT COSTELLO, MARK	BROOKLYN, N.Y.
PVT DAMPIER, RENNY	WEST, TEX.
PFC MISNEY, MERLE	HARRISBURG, PENN.
PVT NEACE, HAROLD	BOSTON, MASS.
PVT OLSEN, PETER	DULUTH, MINN.
PVT OVERSTREET, MILES	ROXBURY, CONN.
PFC QUARLES, DANNY	TALAHASSEE, FLOR.
PVT REYES, ERNIE	BEND, ORE. / NATAL, ARGENTINA.
PVT UPSTEAD, WALLACE	MOBILE, ALA.
PFC WARFIELD, LAWRENCE	SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

ORDERS FOR THE DAY 6/6/1944

1. LZ is directly southwest of Sainte-Mère-Église.
2. CLEAR and SECURE glider landing zones.
3. LIGHT glider signal lanterns at secured landing zones at exactly 0430.
4. SEIZE and HOLD Douve River bridges at Chef-du-Pont and la Fiere. BE ADVISED that the Douve River is running high and the surrounding lowlands are largely flooded.
5. DESTROY communications infrastructure.
6. DESTROY other targets of opportunity.
7. DO NOT TAKE prisoners.
8. PASSWORD: "FLASH". COUNTERSIGN: "THUNDER".

