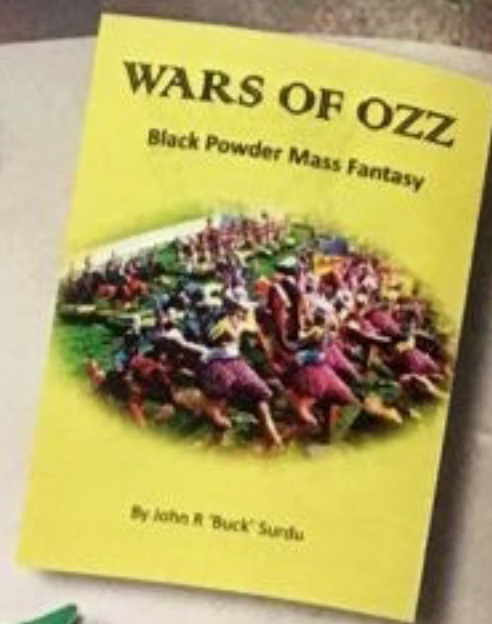


# DESIGNER'S NOTES:

# WARS of OZZ



Chris Abbey of Sally 4th takes us to Ozz, charting the journey that he and a couple of other devoted Munchkins took in making their new game, based on L. Frank Baum's world.

*Wars of Ozz* is one of the wildest projects I have ever collaborated on, either within or outside of the games industry. It all started, as many fine stories do, with a call from my good friend Buck Surdu. Buck and I have worked together on several projects, such as *Combat Patrol* and *Albedo*, but this time he was more excited than usual, and the details were more mysterious. Was I interested? Interested in what? "A secret project, a major figure manufacturer, a fantasy mass-battle game."

## OH MY!

It was Buck - so I took the chance. It was later it was revealed that the project was *Wars of Ozz* and the figure manufacturer was Old Glory, headed up by Russ Dunaway. I was a little unsure at first - *The Wizard of Oz* is a nostalgic film that warms the heart of all of a certain age - a family favourite watched on a Christmas or Boxing Day afternoon - but a wargame?

My research revealed the more recent film, Disney's 2013 offering, *Oz the Great and Powerful*, and that led me to the 1900 book, one of a series from L. Frank Baum. Turns out there are few richer, more documented fantasy backdrops than Oz. Baum wrote 14 books himself, along with many short stories, and plays; there are an additional forty-plus books written by subsequent authors too.

I was swept into Munchkin Country quicker than Dorothy in a cyclone!

## WHAT IS WARS OF OZZ?

*Wars of Ozz* is a mass, black powder, fantasy battle system that uses 28mm miniatures, mounted on two-inch-square bases to build regiments. Those regiments are typically represented by five bases; each containing four infantry, two cavalry, two large creatures, or one huge creature.

From the start we designed it to support solo, two-player and team play. I think that's a reflection of the Transatlantic collaboration as well as the times we live in. In the UK the popular gaming format is two players at a local club, or in someone's house. In the US it is large, multi-player games at conventions that feature more prominently - a reflection of the greater distances and lower population density. The game was developed in 2020 and with a global pandemic making get-togethers impossible, we made the early decision to include a meaningful solo wargaming system with an 'intelligent' system driven opponent too.

## AND THE EPONYMOUS LOCATION?

Russ took Baum's world as the starting point in creating our own 'Ozz' - a post-apocalyptic Earth. After the last Madness Bomb fell in the Last Great War, the survivors mutated and chaos reigned, at least until the Wizard arrived several hundred years later. This gave us the latitude to include any of the characters, creatures, factions, or events that featured in the rich literary backdrop, but in most cases, these are an inspirational starting point for our portrayal of Ozz.



Above: Colonel Sourdough.

## WHAT ARMIES AND FACTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO COLLECT?

Our initial release introduces the four main factions who live in Ozz and they will probably be familiar to all who have heard of 'The Yellow Brick Road'. Each of these factions have a very distinctive look and, most importantly, behave and react very differently in the game.

Buck has done a great job with faction characterisation in the rules. Each has its own set of characters and units to select from; these are each defined by their abilities: Marksmanship, Melee, Resolve and Elan. What makes *Wars of Ozz* unique is that each faction has its own reaction tables to define how a unit will behave when fired upon, charged, ordered to close after fighting a melee, or when trying to rally. A unit of Winkie Infantry will be far more likely to charge the firer, for example, where Munchkin infantry are more likely to return fire.

## FACTIONS

### THE MUNCHKIN

The Munchkin are a diminutive, shy and elusive people, settled in the Western lands of Ozz and noted for their clever and industrious nature. Work is their joy and they go about it with good cheer; even their soldiers march cheerfully into battle, happy to fulfil the task for which they have been trained.

The great wizard, Zoraster, created the Munchkin Army and transformed it from local amateur militias to an efficient,

well-organised, well-supplied national army. They have regular and militia infantry, heavy and light cavalry (mounted on small ponies), artillery and a balloon corps.

### KEY TRAITS

The Munchkin are the best shots in Ozz. This is reflected in their high marksmanship attribute and the likelihood that they will stand and return fire when they are shot at or charged.

Munchkin Army.



### THE QUADLINGS

Quadlings are a large-framed nation of farmers and frontiersman, ruled over by the benevolent Glenda the Good, their Queen Regent. Glenda, having recognised the Quadlings as an independent-minded people, created the Quadling Army based on citizens militia.

Every Quadling who has come of age is required to train with the militia and keep their musket and uniform in good repair.

### KEY TRAITS

A Quadling Army is based around large numbers of militia infantry with the occasional unit of elite, regular cavalry mounted on ferocious giant boars. Glenda can command the Great Eagles of the mountains; a Quadling army can field a unit of Eagle Riders flown by specially trained Munchkins in their service.



Quadling Army