

That would be enough

This has been issue 192 of *To Win Just Once*, published 15th March 2019. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2019

Deadlines

Orders for *Watercress* and *Star Trader* start-ups to Mike by 29th March 2019.

Orders for *LPBS* and *Wits & Wagers*, plus any other contributions to Pevans by 29th March.

(Next deadlines are: 26th April/3rd May, 31st May/7th June, 5th/12th July)

Waiting lists

En Garde! new players are always welcome in *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*. You will need the rules to *En Garde!* in order to play: www.engarde.co.uk

Railway Rivals – the latest game is nearing an end, Martin Jennings, Rob Pinkerton, Anthony Gilbert, Jonathan Palfrey and Christian Bien are up for the next one, any more? (Working copy and rules provided).

Star Trader – Time for a new game! Anthony Gilbert, Przemek Orwat and Pevans are already waiting and there's room for plenty more. Rules provided.

Online games

Agricola (at www.boiteajeux.net): Pevans, Martin Abrahams, Mark Cowper

Brass (at brass.orderofthehammer.com):

Innovation (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans, Martin Abrahams

Keyflower (at www.boardgamearena.com): Pevans, Brad Martin, Al Tabor

Pax Porfiriana (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

Rajas of the Ganges (at www.yucata.de): Pevans

Through the Ages (at www.boardgaming-online.com):

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 192 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 23) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Photos were taken by Pevans (except where noted), who played with Photoshop.

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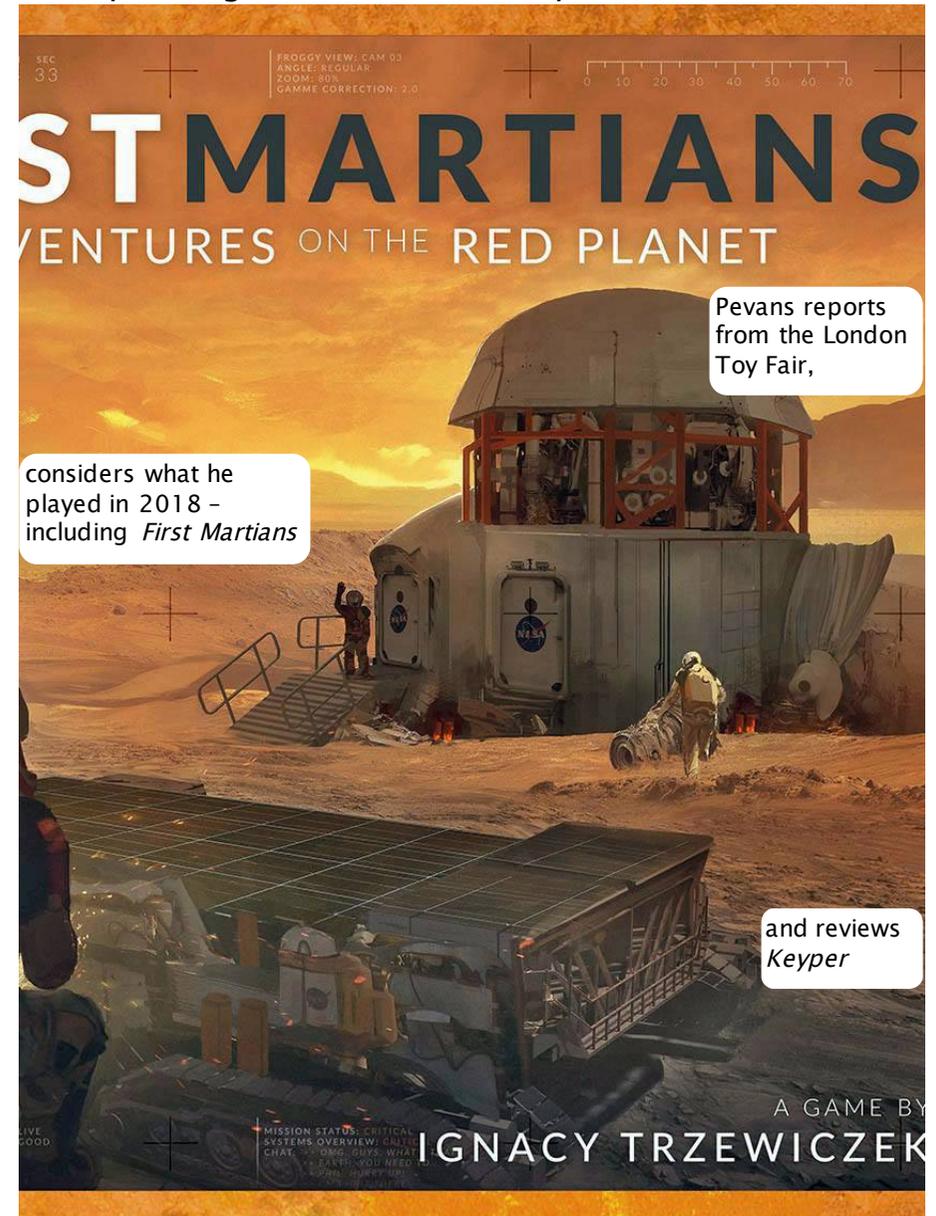
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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



Pevans reports from the London Toy Fair,

considers what he played in 2018 – including *First Martians*

and reviews Keyper

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Chatter

I seem to have lost a large chunk of February to a persistent, though intermittent bug of some sort. It kept laying me low a couple of days at a time. I couldn't even get a handle on what it was – just running a temperature and generally feeling rotten. Anyway, that rather got in the way of my February work commitments, which in turn delayed starting on *TWJO*. Which is by way of being a long-winded explanation of why this issue is a ~~few days~~ week late.

St David's Day (1st March) was greeted by lots of golden daffodils around here – not quite a host, but certainly plenty of them. Except in our garden, where the daffodils flower a bit later. Our first was out on 6th March, though. It's definitely an early Spring.

And Wales are flying in this year's Six Nations Championship – it all depends on the big showdown next weekend. This will split our household: one Welshman versus one (Northern) Irishwoman. With the horrible possibility that England may win after all.

New *Star Trader* game

Mike will run this as a Corporation game with the standard map (six star systems, up to 8 players). That is, players will each have one of the 11 Corporations detailed in section 24.4 of the rules. All have their own starting position and selection of victory conditions, which makes for much more varied play. Mike continues:

"For the pre-game turn, each player should chose and send me a list of Corporations in order of preference. I will allocate first choices, choosing randomly between multiple players picking the same option, and then look at second and later choices. Victory conditions can be chosen after Corporations are allocated, and returned with first turns orders (except for Monogram, you don't have a choice)."

Contact Mike or me if you'd like to see the rules or to join the game (Anthony Gilbert, Przemek Orwat and Pevans are already lined up). There's also a PDF of the rules on my website (www.pevans.co.uk/StarTrader50.pdf) along with an empty map (www.pevans.co.uk/StarTraderbasemap.jpg).

Online stats

February's website stats show that the PDF versions of *TWJO* 191 were downloaded 204 times in the month (this issue was published on 31st Jan). The PDFs of *TWJO* 190 attracted 134 downloads in Feb, making 275 in its two months of publication. Issue 189 achieved 277 since publication – adding just 12 further downloads in February.

Letters

Mark Cowper is first up with some book recommendations.

I have just read *The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle* by Stuart Turton and it was amazing, very clever. After being bought up on Agatha Christies, I can highly recommend it if you like to use your "Little Grey Cells". The other books I would recommend are the four Bartimaeus books and Lockwood & Co books by Jonathan Stroud.

Mark moves on to games.

I can also recommend *Kami-sama* by AJ Lambeth. Just got my Kickstarter copy before Xmas and we are enjoying it as 3-4 player, not so good as a 2-player as it has a random 3rd player mechanism that can seem to pick on one of the players (a random card draw mechanism). Clever game, beautifully produced.

Also managed a 5-player game of *Rising Sun* by CMON Games yesterday. Really excellent and an unexpected win for the Dragonfly clan. Another sumptuously produced Kickstarter.

Hmm, I'm detecting a Japanese connection here. I'll certainly keep my eye open for a chance to play them.

Olympia in January

Pevans reports on the 2019 London Toy Fair

One of the reasons I enjoy visiting the Toy Fair is that it's very different from other events I attend. It's a trade show, so it's all about business. However, here the business is toys, so middle-aged men (though the proportion of women has grown over the years) in suits are earnestly promoting Barbie's new outfits. Board games are only a small part of what's on show, so I don't spend all that long at the show.

This year I visited on the first day, rather than my traditional afternoon of the last day, and Olympia was noticeably busier. It was also press day, so there were even some TV cameras in attendance – at one point I was all but run over by a young woman (who maybe I should have recognised) trying out a scooter for the benefit of her camera crew.

Anyway, my starting point was the Greenhouse section, the Toy Fair's 'incubator' – small stands intended for first-timers. There are usually a few games inventors here showing off their prized creations. The first I came across was Nigel Roper, whose game is *Thieves*, produced by his imprint, Merlin Games (www.merlingames.co.uk).

Thieves is essentially a two-player abstract, though there is a story to it: the players are competing to steal a dragon's gold and escape from its lair. Thus, the central pawn is gold and the object of the players' endeavours. The board is a grid of coloured squares: the black spaces are impassable, while the white ones are always open. In amongst them are coloured squares and players can use two of these each turn, according to the colour/s they've rolled on the pair of special dice. The effect is of corridors with doors that open and close.

Players' aim is to grab or steal the gold pawn and then get it off the board. They have four pawns each and can use these

to block their opponent as well as carrying the gold – they can even pass it from one pawn to another. To win, you must get the gold to your exit corner with a wingman and then roll the right colour. *Thieves* is a good-looking package, but it's so not my kind of game.

My next encounter was with the enthusiastic Aubrey Britton, showing off *Risk & Rewards*, a more traditional board game from Risk & Rewards Board Games (riskandrewards.co.uk). This reminded me of Snakes and Ladders crossed with a trivia game. The aim is to get from the bottom to the top of the board. To do this, you roll a die, move your dobber and then answer a question or perform a forfeit, depending on the square you've landed on and the card drawn.

The twist is that the success of what you're required to do depends on the other players and what they think. This may work well in a family setting, but I suspect a bunch of gamers would just refuse to co-operate – or negotiate deals. *Risk & Rewards* is a simple family game, but not one I fancy playing.

Then I came across Jacqui Gahan and VAP (it stands for Virtual And Physical) Games (www.facebook.com/vapgames) with *Hashtag Trumps*. This is a clever idea that makes a game of social media hashtags (a subject I know nothing about, but could still play the game). Each player chooses one of the hashtags on their



Thieves on display

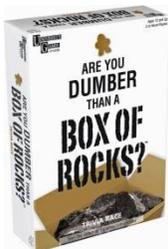


Risk & Rewards on display

card and then everybody checks their choice on their “preferred social media photo app”. Otherwise known as Instagram, I suspect.

The first player chooses whether everybody is going for most or least and the player whose hashtag meets that criterion wins the round and collects all the cards used. The game ends when one player either has all the cards (winner!) or no cards (loser!). This is simple entertaining fun and I can see it being a hoot to play – in a bar, probably, with your phone, definitely.

Away from the Greenhouse area, it was largely the usual publishers with the typical mixture of party games and licensed ‘products’ with the occasional more interesting item. Flying the flag for hobby games, as usual, was distributor Asmodee UK (www.asmodee.co.uk), formerly Esdevium Games. However, even they emphasise their family-friendly and mass market games for this audience. Joining in this year was fellow distributor Coiledspring (coiledspring.co.uk), where *Decrypto*, *Forbidden Sky* and *The Mind* were amongst the games on display. It was also good to see Dutch publisher Jumbo (www.jumbo.eu) showing off some of their games for once (their stand is usually just jigsaw puzzles).



I had to stop at Paul Lamond Games where a large placard asked “Are you dumber than a box of rocks?” (Well, as I can speak and rocks can’t, the answer’s clearly no, but that’s just me being picky over the use of “dumb”.) However, this is actually the title of the game they were demonstrating. (It’s published by University Games – www.universitygames.com – who had their own stand at the Toy Fair as well.)



Demoing *Vault of Dragons*

This is a neat (or possibly silly) take on trivia games. The questions are all multiple choice with three possible answers: 0, 1 or 2. So, you answer the question. Then another player shakes the box, containing two flat pebbles with a ‘1’ on one side. Thus, the pebbles will also come up with a sum of 0, 1 or 2. (Gamers will have spotted that the rocks are going to say ‘1’ 50% of the time.) The question is: who can get more questions right: you or the rocks?

It’s very silly, but also highly entertaining – especially when someone is beaten by the ~~die~~ rocks. The demo person reported that humans were ahead 11:5. Two questions: is this a game? And why not have the numbers in different colours so the ‘rocks’ can give four different answers with a 25% chance of each? But then, I’m not a game designer.

I found Battlefront Miniatures (www.flamesofwar.com) tucked away in a rather gloomy corner. Apart from producing the *Flames of War* wargame (for which

various new models were on display), they also represent Gale Force Nine (www.gf9.com), publishers of some very atmospheric games (*Firefly* for a start). Their new game was *Vault of Dragons*, which is nominally a *D&D* game.

The setting is the mean streets of Waterdeep (familiar from such games as *Lords of Waterdeep*), where players run a gang hunting clues to the location of a huge vault of treasure. The finale is, of course, an assault on the vault itself. My first thought was that this was ‘just’ a dungeon bash, but it appears to be more of a preparing-to-bash game and looks intriguing.

Also on display were some prototype miniatures for Gale Force Nine’s forthcoming *Aliens* game. This will be a co-operative game of Marines versus Aliens (see movie for details). I know who my money’s on.

Up on the balcony I found Red Knight Toy Group, a new, Northern Ireland-based distributor (redknighttoygroup.com). They may be new, but they’ve picked up the Brain Games range, so the highly successful *Ice Cool* was the centrepiece of their display. (I was able to point out the *Game of Thrones* references in Brain’s entertaining *Game of Trains*.) Other publishers include Gutter Games, whose *Gutterhead* is billed as “the fiendish filthy adult” party game. Oh dear.

That was my lot from this year’s Toy Fair. I wonder what will turn up next year? Toy Fair is organised by the British Toy and Hobby Association (www.btha.co.uk) and there’s more information on the website: www.toyfair.co.uk



The view from the balcony of Olympia’s main hall

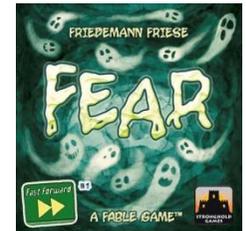
What happened in 2018?

Pevans considers what he played

Last year, for the first time, I used BoardGameGeek to log the games I played (face-to-face only – not all the games I’ve played online). The figures provide some interesting insights. To start with, I’ve played 116 different games 201 times in the year. Wow! Almost four games a week is a lot more than I thought and that’s also more than two different games each week.

I’ve noticed American BGGers providing ‘Five and Dime’ lists – that is, the games they played five and ten times during the year. Applying this to my list reveals no dimes whatsoever. Unless I’m allowed to count the whole ‘*Commands & Colors*’ family, which comes to 14 plays. These include four each for *Battle Cry* and *Battlelore* – I must have been on a retro kick.

Looking at the games I’ve played most, I’m not surprised that they are mainly fillers. These come out to occupy the odd half-hour or so. Top of these is *Fear*, the first of Friedemann Friese’s “Fast Forward” series, with nine plays. With this game, what counts as a ‘play’ is open to interpretation. That number could easily be 90 ‘hands’ or ‘games’, but nine separate occasions is what this records. See my review of the first three “Fast Forward” games in *TWJO* 181 for more about this one.



Second is *Heckmeck am Bratwurmeck* which I’ve played seven times, though this is a bit more than a filler. It’s a classic Reiner Knizia design, a clever variation on push-your-luck dice rolling, where the aim is to collect the most worms (no, really) on the numbered domino-shaped tiles (which add a nice tactile element). *Hamsterrolle* is also at seven, which is amusing because all these plays were one occasion: Christmas with the in-laws. It’s a dexterity game that my nephews have great fun with. Players start with a set of wooden blocks of various sizes and each turn have to put one into the wooden hoop, which will occasionally roll



Heckmeck... in play – that 24 is still available, but Stephen can only use 1s or 3s on the remaining three dice or he loses the 21 tile

across the table. First to get rid of all their blocks wins, but you have to pick up any that fall out on your turn.

What I regard as the classic filler, *Love Letter*, was played six times – though some of these games were incomplete (that’s what happens with fillers). The first proper heavyweight game to appear is *John Company* with six plays. I suspect the first half of these were learning experiences. I certainly felt it took me some time to get to grips with this game. I really must include my review in *TWJO*.

For this issue, though, I’ll add my review of *Keyper*, which appears on my list next, at five plays in 2018. This is Richard Breese’s 2017 title, re-visiting some of the ideas from other recent games of his while adding some unique twists (literally, in the case of the folding boards).



Playing *In or Out* – the box is a useful card shoe

Five plays is the number for *In or Out*, which was the other game that I (only) played with the in-laws at Christmas. This is a clever take on trivia games. It has a card shoe, which is a neat touch. From this you draw the 12 cards that make up a category – Beatles songs is the first one. Written on each card is something (a song title, in this case) that may or may not fit this category.

In turn, players take a card and say whether it’s in the category or out of it, flipping it over to find the answer. Get it right and you take a green chip. The wrong answer gets you a red chip. Once all the cards have been claimed, red and green chips cancel out and whoever has the most green chips gets a gold one. First to five gold chips wins the game.

The question setters have done a good job of finding obscure answers. It certainly went down well with my lot, hence why it was played five times. However, it does have the usual problem with trivia games: the smart arse (hi!) wins. In this case, it seems the smart arse probably wins, which is better than always winning.

The first co-operative game on the list is *First Martians*. I appear to have played this five times across the year, which is more than I thought I had. This probably includes one or two solitaire games as I was learning the rules. This is a real edge-of-the-seat game as anything going wrong can spell disaster for the astronauts on Mars (that is, the players). Of course, things do go wrong all the time and the game becomes a scramble to keep enough equipment operational. I really like the way the game looks with arrays of translucent green (and red)



It’s not looking good for the Union forces in this game of *Battle Cry*

cubes set into the boards representing the equipment banks and some neat Mars rover models. Now I have a hankering to play it again...

I’ve already mentioned the two ‘*Commands & Colors*’ games that I played four times each. *Battle Cry* is the first of Richard Borg’s series of simple wargames and covers the American Civil War. I dug out my copy of the first edition and was pleased that it still stands up against the more recent titles, though it’s definitely simpler. *Battlelore* came out some years later and is the Hundred Years War with added fantasy elements (which work well). This got played as I’d acquired a copy secondhand and felt it needed to be exercised. So to speak.

The latest of the “Fast Forward” series, *Fortune*, is also on four plays. I covered this one in *TWJO* 190. There are half a dozen games that I’ve played three times in 2018, a longer list of those I’ve played twice and an even longer list (80) of the games I’ve only played once. I’m pleased that *Civilization* appears in that last section. I feel I should play it once a year. The same applies to *Tales of the Arabian Nights*, which is not on the list. Oops! I had better unearth it sharpish.

May I Join You?

Keyper reviewed by Pevans

As the name suggests, this is part of the Key... series of games from Richard Breese, published by his imprint, R&D Games (and Huch! in Germany). It’s a typically complex game, so I will skim over some of the detail of game play to keep this review to a manageable size. It’s played over four rounds (the seasons of the year) with the bulk of points scored only at the end – though players will have been collecting things that score points all the way through the game.

The playing area is made up of square boards (as many as there are players), each with a 4 x 4 grid of action spaces. The main thing players do during the game is place one of their meeples (or ‘keyples’ as the rules have it) on a square

and take the corresponding action. Before taking the action, however, one of the other players may join in. The next in playing order gets the chance first and then round the table until someone takes it or everyone passes. The advantage of joining in, for both players, is that they get the results of the action twice. Hence, this is not something players pass up lightly.

In order to join in, the second player must add a keyple of the same colour (or a wild, white one). This is one reason someone might not join an action – they don't have the appropriate colour available. This also explains why each player starts with a bunch of keyples not in their own colour, but in a selection of colours: two white and six others. There's one final wrinkle: most of the action spaces have a coloured border (there's also a small icon that goes with each colour, which is helpful). Players get the action again, if they play keyples of the same colour as the border (or white, of course). So that's a total of three somethings for placing one piece. Of course, such efficiency doesn't last, as we'll see.

As well as a multi-coloured set of keyples, each player starts with their own board. This has spaces for buildings (divided into 'farm' and 'village' sections), a small scoring track and some storage spaces. They also get a standard starting set of building tiles. These show the cost to build them and what they do. Some buildings are worth victory points, some get points for other things (such as the number of buildings in your 'village') and some have actions. These last can only be used by the owner – no joining here. Finally, each player has a differently-shaped meeple (a 'keyper') in their player colour. These have a specific use, which I'll keep until later.

So, players take a keyple, place it on an action space and do something (1-3 times). The most obvious action lets them take one type of raw material (wooden



My player board in winter, showing my buildings (with livestock), fairs (light green) and resources plus some left-over starting buildings and a pending fair

cubes), as shown on the space. Another is to take a sheaf of wheat (yellow wooden models), which can be used as a wild material in the right circumstances. Or to take animals – there are actually eight different types of animal, each with its own wooden model in a specific colour. And then, later in the game, there are gems (oddly-shaped clear plastic pieces) to collect, too.

Other actions let players convert raw materials (cubes) to finished goods (octagonal 'barrels') in the same colour and to construct buildings – using some combination of cubes and/or barrels (as shown on the tile). Players can also draft new – and more powerful – building tiles from the current selection (this is one of the few actions that does not have a coloured border, so at best you can get two new tiles in an action).

The problem, especially when you sit down to play the game for the first times, is why you'd want to do any of this. Well, as I've mentioned, some buildings score points. To get the points, first you need the building tiles, then the materials to construct them and finally whatever the building scores for (horses, say – if you've built a stable). Even then, there are many options at the start of the game.

This is where the 'Fair' tiles come in handy. Each player starts with a random Fair for Spring, Summer and Autumn. These are worth points if the owner holds specific items (materials, animals) at the end of the end of the appropriate round. These immediately give you some focus when starting the game. If you score for having a horse and a stone at the end of Spring (the first round), then you know you'd like to collect these during the round. And build a stable for your horse.

The effects go on, too. Having built a stable, it's worth collecting more horses to maximise what you'll score with it. You've got a piece of stone, too, so what can you usefully build with it? Ideally, something that will help you towards achieving your Summer fair. Winter fairs are slightly different. They start in the bag with the building tiles and are drafted the same way. They also have the option of being scored in Summer, Autumn or Winter and are worth more or less points, depending on which side you score (the more valuable side generally means you need gems as well as the items shown on the other side).

I mentioned earlier that each player has a 'keyper' piece in their own colour. At some point in the round, players will place this to claim ownership of one of the central boards. What this means is that, at the end of the round, that player will get the keyples from that board. These, plus any from their personal board, form the set of keyples they have available for the next round. Oh that's clever. For a start, it's extremely unlikely that you'll have one of each colour – because of the joining mechanism, pairs are frequent. Second, it means some players may start the next round with more than eight keyples. And that means that someone will have fewer. (Though that's not necessarily a bad thing, as we'll see.)

The round doesn't finish until all players have played all their keyples and keyper. However, anyone who's run out of keyples before the others is not left



Winter boards in *Keyper* with the building market above and a heap of resources below

twiddling their thumbs. When it's their turn, they can lay down the keyples on one action space on their board and take the action again. Okay, you're limited to the actions that have already been used (another thing to consider when deciding which board to claim), but there should be some useful ones there.

You should also note that any player with more than eight keyples does not get to use them all to take actions – they're still limited to eight. Each extra keyple will produce a cube or animal, depending on its colour, so it's useful to have extras (especially as it gives you some choice over which keyples you use in a round), but doesn't unbalance the game.

The other thing that happens at the end of each round is that the central boards are re-set for the next season. They may look like simple squares of cardboard, but each can be folded and refolded to

provide several different configurations. The key item is the season symbol on the large keyper space, which shows which season/s each configuration can be used for. Each player gets to set the board they took at the end of the round, so there is some (limited) scope to decide what actions you want available next round.

Okay, what have I missed out? Well, I'd probably better mention the ships (the Keyflower and so on). These are double-size tiles that can be placed on a board (one per). They are used either to turn items (horses and/or stone, say) into points – the only time points are scored during the game – or to pick up extra items (horses and/or stone only in this example). A different selection of the ships is available each round, so you can't count on getting the one you want.

The game ends after the fourth round, Winter. Players finally score up for their buildings and fairs. Note that nothing else is worth points. Unless you have a building that scores points for it. Thus, holding four horses is worth nothing

unless you have a stable, which scores points for them (and more points if it's been upgraded). Oh yes, the Upgrade action: taken to upgrade buildings at a standard cost (a raw material for farm buildings, a finished good for village ones). And the player with most points wins.

Yes, there is a lot to think about all the way through this game. Which is why the Fairs are useful to give you a direction. And a way of scoring points – collecting Winter fairs, especially if you can get some synergy from them, is one strategy. Another is getting buildings that score for gems and then collecting them. There are plenty of options, but they do revolve around the buildings you have.

The first time I played *Keyper*, I was blown away by it. I appreciated the clever mechanisms, enjoyed the challenge and had great fun playing. But... my subsequent games have not reprised that experience. I still appreciate the clever way it's all been put together and how it's cunningly balanced. However, I've spent much of the game feeling frustrated. I think it's the engine-builder in me: I can't get the game to come out 'right'. And this is true even when I win. I often feel I'm doing well when playing a game and only find out how badly I've done at the end. With *Keyper*, I feel that I'm struggling all the time... and then win!

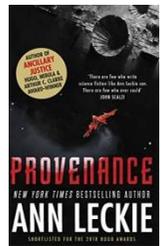
Anyway, I would certainly recommend that you try the game, if only to see how everything works together. It gets 7/10 on my highly subjective scale and I anticipate I will be playing it, occasionally, for a while yet.

Keyper was designed by Richard Breese and is published by R&D Games and HUCH!. It is a strategy board game for 2–4 players (I've played three and four player-games and it worked well in both cases), aged 14+, and takes 90–120 minutes to play (3–4 hours in my experience). This review was first published in *Gamers Alliance Report* for Summer 2018: www.gamersalliance.com

Reading Matter

Having really enjoyed Ann Leckie's "Ancillary" trilogy (see *TWJO* 155 and 157 for my thoughts on the first two books), I made a point of picking up *Provenance*, her 2017 novel. While this is set in the same (far future?) universe as the previous three, there's no direct connection to them. Even the empire of the Radch, central to the earlier books, is tangential to this story.

Instead, we learn more about some of the other societies, human and alien, in Leckie's vision of the galaxy. In particular, the elaborate social and political structure of the planet Hwae. The story centres on Ingray Aughskold, adopted daughter of Netano Aughskold, a powerful political figure on Hwae. Over-shadowed by her brother, Ingray is trying a bold and risky move to prove her worth and be named as her mother's heir. This will bring her the Netano name and position in due course.



You will not be surprised to learn that Ingray's scheme does not go to plan. Right from the first page of the book things are going awry. However, she proves to be more resourceful than she thinks, even when enigmatic aliens, the Geck, get involved, much to the consternation of everybody else. She also seems to make friends easily: people she's met even once go out of their way to help her.

Through Ingray's manoeuvrings as she tries to get her scheme back on track, we learn about the intriguing set-up on Hwae and this society's relationships with the other human planets. However, apart from the galactic setting and aliens, this could easily be a 'literary' novel about an ambitious young woman, whose trials lead her to 'find herself'. After the invention Leckie showed in the "Ancillary" novels, I found this rather disappointing.

Games Events

There doesn't seem to be much happening, board games-wise, in March. However, Raiders of the Games Cupboard XLVI is scheduled for Saturday 23rd March at the Waterside Community Centre in Burton-on-Trent – see www.raidersofthegamescupboard.co.uk

And April brings us Tringcon: Saturday 6th April at Marsworth Millennium Hall (near Tring). This has limited spaces, so do check with the organisers rather than just turning up – www.tringcon.org

This box concentrates on events I expect to attend.

Swiggers: games club that meets every Wednesday evening, upstairs at The Shipwright's Arms, 88 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TF (next to London Bridge station). For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers

Games Games Games Days: from noon(-ish) on the second Saturday each month – now at the Leon in Spitalfields Market (London E1 6DW). It's brightly lit, has big tables and they don't mind us stopping all afternoon. Closest stations are Liverpool Street (Tube and rail) and Shoreditch High Street (Overground).

UK Games Expo: 31st May – 2nd June 2019 at the NEC (Halls and Hilton Metropole). This is a public event that showcases games of all sorts with a huge trade hall plus demonstration and participation games and guests. For gamers there are lots of tournaments and open gaming. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: the board games event of the year. 24th-27th October 2019, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.merz-verlag-en.com

MidCon: early November 2019 at the Hallmark Hotel in Derby. **MidCon** is a friendly board games convention in a decent hotel. Expect mostly open gaming plus a few organised events, including a bring 'n' buy and quiz. See www.midcon.org.uk.

For more extensive information on UK board games events, try The Queen's Lane Advertiser at www.boardgamers.org.uk/qla.php

Pevans's Wits & Wagers

Round 3 bets and payoff

Question 3 was what year Pevans graduated from university. The answer is 1978. Mark Cowper makes a perfectly logical argument why the answer is 1977. He's close ... but wrong.

Player	Answer	Bet on	Stake	Score	Total
Brick Amundsen	1976	1981	10	-10	70
Alex Bardy	1988	1981	10	-10	50
Bob Blanchett				0	80
Colin Bruce	1982	1978	5	10	70
Pete Card				0	80
Mark Cowper	1981	1977	10	-10	50
Mike Dommett	1979	1978	10	20	130
Alex Everard	1979			0	70
Anthony Gilbert	1977	1978	10	20	80
Bruno Giordan				0	70
Andrew Kendall	1967	1980	10	-10	88
Nik Luker	1979	1979	10	-10	50
Tim Macaire	1980			0	64
Graeme Morris	1977	1977	10	-10	60
Jonathan Palfrey				0	70
Rob Pinkerton	1978	1982	5	5	75
Alan Tabor	1977	1978	10	20	140
Dean Talbot				0	100
Gerald Udowiczenko				0	73
Pam Udowiczenko				0	80
Everybody else					80

Having offered another incorrect answer, Mike Dommett bets on the right one again. Rob Pinkerton picked up the bonus for the right answer, but then bet on something else. And Al Tabor retains his lead, betting on the right answer again.

Round 4 answers

The question is: what length (in millimetres) do I trim my beard to?

Odds	Answer	Given by
4:1	> 24	Alex Bardy* (30), Mark Cowper† (500)
3:1	24	Brick Amundsen
2:1	15	Alan Tabor
1:1	9	Rob Pinkerton
2:1	6	Andrew Kendall*
3:1	5	Anthony Gilbert
4:1	4	Colin Bruce, Mike Dommett*
5:1	Less than these	Nik Luker*, Graeme Morris"

Round 4 bets

Mesdames, messieurs: faites vos jeux! Anybody and everybody can now bet on what they think is the correct answer above (staking up to 10 points), regardless of whether they gave an answer or not – nor does anybody have to bet on their own answer. Get it right and your bet pays out at the indicated odds (there's a 10-point bonus for anyone who gave the right answer).

Round 5 question

I pre-date the era of GCSEs, but how many 'O' levels did I pass?

Bets on round 4 answers and answers for the round 5 question to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF, UK or TWJO@pevans.co.uk by Friday 29th March 2019

What's this all about?

This is our latest game that's open to all readers and is based on Dominic Crapuchettes's *Wits & Wagers* (published by North Star Games and used here with their permission). This is one of the very few trivia games that I give house room to because it's not just about being the biggest know-it-all.

Each round a question is posed that has a number as its answer. Players' answers are sorted and given different odds. The middle number gets odds of 1:1, those either side of it 2:1, then 3:1 and 4:1 with the final category being 5:1 that the answer is smaller than anything else.

* These guys have met me at least once – Mike's known me since before I had a beard

† "I think P Evans follows the ZZ Top look and his picture is photoshopped"

Players now bet on one (or two, in the last round) answer, staking up to 10 each round – except the last where they can go all-in – from their funds (80 to start with) – default bet is 10. The correct answer pays out at its stated odds with a 10 bonus for those who gave the correct answer in the first place (whether or not they bet on it). After seven rounds, the player with the most money wins.

As you can see, the game has plenty of scope for tactics and the winner is not necessarily the smarty-pants.

Now, the issue with running a trivia game in this medium is that everybody has time to look up (well, Google) the answers. So the questions for this game will be trivia about yours truly. The people with an advantage here are those who've known me for donkey's years (hi Mike, hi Pete), so I'll flag their answers.

I'll put the answers into (up to) seven bands, with the median answer at 1:1. If there are more than three answers higher than this, the remainder will be in the top 4:1 band. Anything lower than the lowest 4:1 band will go into the "smaller than anything else" 5:1 band.

Subscribing to TWJO

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If you want to play in any (or all) of the games in *TWJO*, you have two options. You can subscribe to the paper edition, which includes playing in the games. Or you can take the PDF edition and pay the "games only" subscription.

The table on the right shows the costs for the paper edition, including postage.

Paper edition	UK	Europe	World
10-issue (1 year) subscription	£27.00	£36.00	£43.00

The second table on the right shows the games only subscription (including VAT, where applicable).

Games only	UK & EU	Else-where
10-turn (1 year) subscription	£6.00	£5.00

To subscribe, send your name, address and payment to *To Win Just Once*, 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF, UK or TWJO@pevans.co.uk. You can pay by bank transfer (contact me for the company's bank account details), by UK cheque (payable to Margam Evans Ltd) or by PayPal to TWJO@pevans.co.uk. You can subscribe online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO, where you can pay by credit card (via Paypal or Amazon) or Paypal account.

Watercress (*Railway Rivals* game 13 - RR2344LH)

Turn 9

This turn's races

Race results				Scores						
				BASH	MDCR	SLOUGH	TIS	GREAT	SWIFT	
15	12	Brighton	34	Petersfield / B Waltham				10		20
16	14	Horsham / Reigate	23	Midhurst / Haslemere		0-5		20-2		10+7
17	35	Portsmouth	22	Arundel / Chichester		10+3 +2		0-2		20-3
18	43	Newbury / Andover	63	London	5		5		20	
19	42	Reading	56	Woking / Leatherhead	15+4	0+4	15-9+2	0-4	0-4+7	
20	65	London	51	Slough / Virginia Water	20	0			10	
21	S6	SHOPPING	15	Pulborough / Cranleigh	0+2	15-2		0	15	0
TOTAL					46	27	13	22	48	54

JR = Joint Run; ERP = Exchange of Running Powers

Builds and points

**BASINGSTOKE ASSOCIATED
STEEL HIGHWAY** (BASH), Bob
Blanchett - Black
Builds: None
Points: 120.5 +46 = **166.5**

**MISSED, DELAYED AND
CANCELLED RAILS** (MDCR),
Mike Dyer - Blue
Builds: None
Points: 105.5 +27 = **132.5**

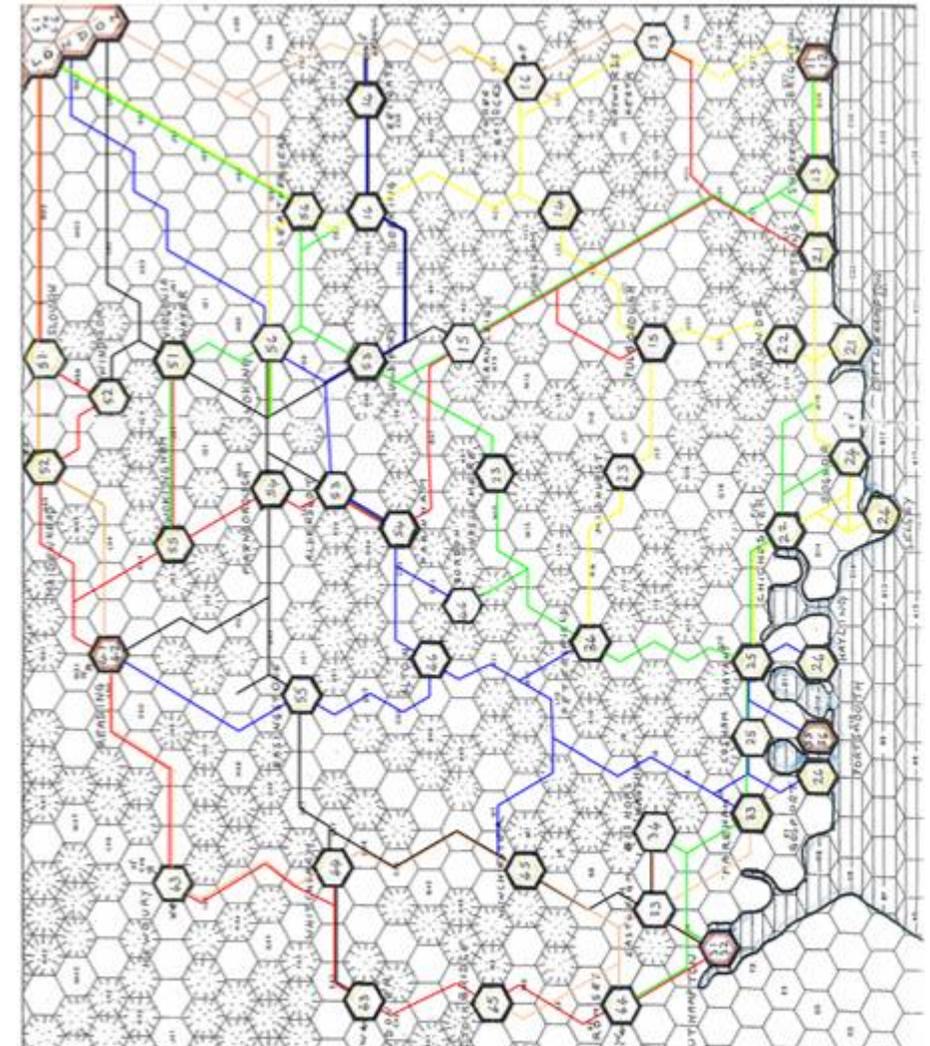
**SLOW LOCOMOTIVES ONLY
USED GENTLY ON HILLS**
(SLOUGH), Brad Martin - Orange
Builds: None
Points: 109 +13 = **122**

TIGER IN SMOKE (TIS), Jonathan
Palfrey - Green
Builds: None
Points: 175.5 +22 = **197.5**

**GRAND RAIL EAST ATLANTIC
TRUNKLINE** (GREAT), Rob
Pinkerton - Red
Builds: None
Points: -42.5 +48 = **5.5**

**SLOW WAGON IN FAST
TRAFFIC** (SWIFT), Gerald
Udowiczenko - Yellow
Builds: None
Points: 166.5 +54 = **220.5**

Map - Turn 9



GM Notes

SWIFT takes the lead over from TIS at the halfway stage, but - apart from GREAT - all could have chances.

Players can enter up to five races (plus any held over from a previous turn).

All companies may carry out joint runs and exchange of running powers with other companies should they wish, though it pays to start negotiations for these soon after the adjudication is sent out.

After the races, you may build up to 6 build points. **Remember: known junctions and parallel builds are deducted from these points.**

Next turn's races

Race	From		To	
22	51	NORTH	25	Havant/Cosham
23	12	Brighton	23	Midhurst/Haslemere
24	14	Horsham/Reigate	32	Southampton
25	26	Hayling/Gosport	41	Reading
26	35	Portsmouth	62	London
27	51	Slough/Virginia Water	43	Newbury/Andover
28	54	Farnborough/Farnham	63	London

Orders to Mike Dommert, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommert@yahoo.co.uk
by Friday, 29th March 2019

Online Games

TWJO readers are welcome to join in the various online board games we're playing. Let me know what games you'd like to play and I'll add you in.

Brass games 72 and 73 (at brass.orderofthehammer.com) were the first with our new regular, Joe Rakstad, but your esteemed editor won both of them. Game 74 is well under way.

Game 20 of *Through the Ages: a New Story of Civilization* (at boardgaming-online.com) was close again, but this time victory was mine. Game 21 has started, along with a three-player pacifist game – who wants to make a fourth?

Our latest game of *Pax Porfiriana* (at yucata.de) is stuck in a Depression, new players (for a new game) are welcome.

Al Tabor is interested in playing *Keyflower* (at BoardGameArena.com), but we need another player or two. Let me have your ID and I'll invite you into a game.

We're down to three players for *Agricola* (at www.BoiteAJeux.net), so there's room for at least one more. Let me know if that's you.

Rajas of the Ganges (at BoardGameArena.com) is a game I thoroughly enjoy. Who'd like to give it a go? Drop me a line and I'll set up a game.

Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses

Being a correspondence game of *En Garde!* run by Pevans since April 1986 and now published as part of *To Win Just Once*.

New players are always welcome. If you'd like to play, you'll need to subscribe to *TWJO* (see page). You will also need (access to) a copy of the published rules to *En Garde!* (see www.engarde.co.uk).

Orders for April 1671 to
Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive,
UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF, UK or
lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk
by Friday 29th March 2019



March 1671 (325)

March opens with a distinct lack of duels. Neither Chris Knight nor Felix Anton Gauchepied'er is prepared to settle their affair of honour, while Antoine Robert Guillaume Herville and Augustin Fourier's encounter is held over for a month.

Huh! What is it good for?

This takes us straight to this month's trial. In stark contrast to the last trials, those attending are met by a most bleak and foreboding Court. Gone are the bright and colourful flowers, the pastries and the wall hangings, replaced by a most sinister and darkened ambiance befitting proceedings against one accused of being Lucifer's henchman. Black curtains, large tallow candles, crimson tapestries depicting hellish scenes and three large canvasses adorn the Court, two portraying late Commissioners Sheikh Yadik Al-Abowt and Maurice Fluff-Bunny and the third, a vivid painting of War, 2nd Horseman of the Apocalypse.

Gone, too, is the pink, fur-lined, seat used by Commissioner Gauchepied'er in December. In its place stands a white throne made of bones with the battered and dented helmet of the late Captain von Bismarch placed atop it. Seated in it is a sour-faced Felix Anton Gauchepied'er engaged in muted conversation with his Chief Executioner, the burly Achmed 'The Axe' Al-Headsoff. As the Court rises for the Minister of State, Viscount d'Eauneurts, the Commissioner barely raises an eyebrow and his disdain for the nemesis he calls Dunkie is clear for all to see.

In turn, Eauneurts is taken aback by the new décor. Frowning at Gauchepied'er, he remarks "This is a court of law, Commissioner, not a Halloween party!"

Following embarrassed coughs and looks from court officials the Commissioner finally gets to his feet and addresses the Court: “People of France, There can be no doubt that the Country faces a most terrible threat, the greatest it has ever encountered.” He pauses for a moment, taking time to look into the faces of those within the room. “Standing before us is a fiend of thorough evil, a demon of the Abyss in human form and a creature focused upon the utter destruction of our society. Let not this mortal guise dupe you, nor any protestations of innocence or falsehood...” he pointedly turns towards Minister of State d’Eauneurts, “...sway you from seeing the true nature of this devil thing here.” He throws an outstretched arm towards the defendant.

“This creature must be removed at once, its trail of chaos, terror and insidious corruption ended once and for all! At this juncture I also bring to the attention of the Court,” Felix reaches into the cleavage of his dress and pulls out a white envelope, “This sealed letter which I shall no doubt be making reference to before the day is out: remember it well.”

Sounds of a neighing horse interrupt the speech and the stamping of hooves and curses of gruff male voices can be heard from close outside. “Ah, it sounds like the first witness or, rather, piece of evidence has arrived!” cries Gauchepied’er. “Achmed, the door if you please.” All eyes turn to the court door as the Arab flings it open to reveal a rearing, snorting red-coloured horse, clothed with a black saddle and the initials UXB in tainted silver lettering adorning the leather.

“This beast was found in the stables of the defendant,” asserts the CPS. “It is an untameable mount to any other than its rider. All others who seek to gain its back are struck with a vile curse and it is loyal only to the monster it serves. Of course the defendant, in its human guise, will seek to deny ever seeing it before, knowing of it, etc, etc, but listen to none of that rubbish. I say it is clear evidence and any who doubt that are either fools or in league with Lucifer themselves!” The Commissioner fixes a steely glare at several individuals within the public gallery, quickly forcing them to gulp and nervously nod in agreement. Percy Urbain Fanci-Free stands to applaud the Commissioner and is quickly followed by several other anxious-looking members of the public.

“Next, we have a key witness for the Prosecution,” continues Gauchepied’er. “A man of outstanding intellect and spiritual insight into many of the world’s mysteries of the occult. An individual who has served the Public Safety Ministry well in the past and now holds the post of Chief Demon Hunter: none other than the renowned Davide L’Icke. Monsieur, please take the stand.”

Into the Court comes a bedraggled, wild-eyed, small man dressed in a motley collection of furs and with an unkempt beard, harbouring the remains of various cheeses and chutneys. Clutched in his hands is a large wooden cross and he continually mutters to himself, casting fearful looks at both Commissioner Gauchepied’er and everyone else in the room.

“My dear fellow, pray tell the Court your findings against the accused and why there should be no outcome other than GUILTY and immediate execution... come now, remember what you found out...”

Barely raising his eyes, L’Icke spurts out, “Yes, it’s him.” He giggles nervously. “And when I checked the charts, yes, the charts,” he emits more giggling and gibberish. “It clearly shows he is the Devil himself... that was it, wasn’t it?” He glances towards Gauchepied’er for seeming reassurance, “Oh yes, and Kill him. He must be killed... right away... today...”

“Yes, except I believe you meant to say he is WAR, the Second Horseman of the Apocalypse, one that serves the Devil... remember... the Second Horseman...”

“Yes, mistress, that’s what I meant... he he he.”

The Commissioner directly addresses the Minister of State, “I intend to impose little more upon the Court’s time, the strength of evidence against the accused being the accused Horseman, War, is already too damning, but I feel that one last witness needs to speak as this concerns the separate charge of Murder. Call Sheikh Al-Abowt!”

For the third time the door to the Court opens to reveal two CPS agents carrying a life-size mannequin of the late Commissioner, Sheikh Yadik Al-Abowt. They take it to the witness bench and seat it to face the audience. “Marquis, can you tell the Court of your experience with the accused and reveal his callous murder of a Government Minister?” asks Felix.

He then walks across to the mannequin, crouches beside it and, through pursed lips, affecting an Arabian accent, responds, “That infidel pig killed me, Sheikh Yadik Al-Abowt, a man destined for greatness and glory, just as I was about to claim my all. I was a Marquis, the Commissioner of Public Safety, a Military Leader then all was snatched away because of that b’stard Beauregard. Under the guise of a duel I was tricked into attending, my Seconds recently lost due to military campaigning and despite my attempts to surrender he murdered me. GUILTY... GUILTY!” the voice shrieks hysterically and a worried looking Achmed intervenes, guiding his boss back to his throne as the agents hastily remove the mannequin.

After a few moments regaining his composure Commissioner Gauchepied’er rises again to deliver his closing address. “Minister d’Eauneurts, you have heard and seen the evidence against the accused, you know the terrible danger facing France, you have the power to act! I call upon you to uphold the findings of my Office, to convict and condemn and allow me, as Commissioner of Public Safety, to execute the sentence.”

First, however, the court insists on hearing from the accused, Field Marshal Uther Xavier-Beauregard. [Insert learned disputation here]

“On a personal note,” concludes Beauregard, “I have already dealt permanently with one CPS who imagined himself greater than France. One more will not cause me any distress.” He murmurs to the clerk of the court and passes him a fat purse and a note which that worthy passes in turn to Commissioner Gauchepied’er. The note reads simply ‘You are impertinent’.

The courtroom falls silent until an usher coughs loudly, drawing the attention of the Minister of State back to the proceedings with something of a start. “Oh, have they finished?” asks Viscount d’Eauneurts. “Excellent! Count Beauregard, I apologise for subjecting you to this charade, but I’m sure you understand that the formalities must be observed, no matter how bizarre the circumstances may be. The Court finds that Count Uther-Xavier-Beauregard has no case to answer, on the basis that the charges brought against him are obvious figments of the diseased imagination of a pox-addled brain. It is patently obvious to the whole of Paris, Baron Gauchepied’er, that you are quite mad and totally unsuited to hold government office of any kind (though it appears that no-one has yet found the courage to say so). Indeed, it is a complete mystery to me how any of the charges you have ever brought could possibly have been given any credence whatsoever. I knew that I would come to rue the day you replaced me as Commissioner and this is but the latest of a number of occasions when this has been so.”

“Before calling an end to these sorry proceedings,” he continues, “I wish the following entered into the Court Record:

“Commissioner Gauchepied’er, I charge you that your mind is so far away with the fairies (in more ways than one, probably) that you are unable to perform your duties as Commissioner any longer. I further charge you that the best way you could serve His Majesty at this juncture is to resign your appointment as Commissioner and seek urgent medical help regarding the obvious imbalance of the noxious humours with which your addled brain is overflowing. Failing that, I would urge you to volunteer the battalion of the Cardinal’s Guard which is under your command (and which you have been using as your personal bodyguard in a most irregular fashion of late) for the front in hopes that the rigours of combat might shock your addled consciousness back to reality. Failing THAT, I would strongly urge your commanding officer, Brigadier Alain de Frocked, to do Paris a service and rid her of your noxious and embarrassing presence by volunteering your battalion for service at the front. This Court is now adjourned.”

As the Minister rises, Felix stands to speak. “Viscount d’Eauneurts, before we all depart today there is just one other small matter I need to raise. You will recall, no doubt, my reference to this letter at the commencement of proceedings. Allow me to appraise you of its contents.” Felix opens the envelope and removes a solitary sheet of paper which he then lifts into the air to reveal the words ‘Arrest Warrant – Viscount d’Eauneurts’.

“You see, Dunkie, I had no doubt as to your decision today and you know why? Because you are none other than Pestilence, First Horseman of the Apocalypse and comrade of the demon you set free today. Well your time has come and I shall have you back in this Court to face justice. I shall win, darling. I shall control all. I... I... shall be a Goddess... ooooh.”

However, Minister Euauneurts has simply ignored Gauchepied’er and retired to his chambers, escorted by a detachment of the King’s Musketeers.

Absolutely nothing

There is other business in Paris this month. Minister Eauneurts is involved again. He appoints someone called Jacques de Loot as Minister of Justice, leaving the rest of Paris asking, “Who?”

Captain Luc Azzat, commander of the King’s Escort, uses his position to lean on the Crown Prince’s Aide, persuading him to resign. No sooner has the man vacated his position than Azzat calls in more favours to be appointed in his place.

Swindelle d’Masses uses his own influence to remove the Brigadier of Horse Guards. Despite qualifying for the post, Masses makes no move to take it.

On the other hand, Bastian de LaGarde is keen to be Brigade Major of the Guards. He may not have much pull, but it’s just enough to guarantee the job.

In the King’s Musketeers, Captain Greg de Bécqueur calls in his favours in an effort to get rid of the regiment’s current Adjutant. However, the object of his attentions has an unlikely ally: Major Felix Anton Gauchepied’er of the Cardina’s Guard supports the KM Regimental Adjutant, who remains in post.

Hugh Jass uses his influence to make sure he gains entry to the 13th Fusiliers. He is prepared to buy the rank of Major, which would give him acting command of the regiment. However, his standing in society is not adequate for the position and he has to make do with a Captaincy.

After borrowing as much as he can manage, Henri DuShite does make it to Major. He is signed up for the Royal Marines by Colonel Robert d’Lancier. He promptly volunteers his new command, first battalion, for active service: “Let’s see what you’re made of,” he growls at his troops. It turns out that the whole regiment is going, thanks to Colonel Lancier, who makes sure to pay off his loans before leaving Paris.

There’s less inspiring news for Bendroit de Tres, though: his application to the Picardy Musketeers is ignored by Colonel Georges Dueppre. His loan is approved, however. While Colonel Dueppre takes out a massive loan of his own.

Now the positions in regiments have been sorted out, various commanders volunteer their men. Brigadier-General Amant d’Au is commander of the Royal Foot Guards and takes them into action. Accompanying him are Lieutenant-

Colonel Jean Jeanie, who's packed his kitbag in anticipation, Major Beau Reese Jean Seine, who hasn't, and Captain Luc Azzat, who complains that the Crown Prince is expecting him at the Fleur de Lys.

The Dragoon Guards follow their commander, Bdr-General Etienne Brule, into action as well. This mobilises the surprised Lt-Colonel Jean Ettonique, the astonished Major Henri Dubois, the flabbergasted Major Percy Urbain Fanci-Free ("I'm supposed to be training at the Bastille," he complains) and the startled Captain Paul d'Udderjuan.

Colonel Frele d'Acier forsakes his Ministerial responsibilities to lead Archduke Leopold's Cuirassiers into actions.

Colonel Arthur 'Dekka' Dent orders just second and third battalions of the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons to accompany him to the front, carefully leaving first battalion, under Lt-Colonel Georges Hommemince, in Paris.

Only one battalion of the Cardinal's Guard is going into action, led by regimental commander Bdr-Gen Alan de Frocked. He gives command of the other two battalions to Major Felix Anton Gauchepied'er, who has plans for them.

Not to be out-done, Generals Bernard de Lur-Saluces and Sebastian de la Creme provide their services to the Royal North Highlanders, each taking command of a battalion in the elite regiment. Brigadier-General Charles Louis Desappear just volunteers for a Frontier regiment.

Except a party...

Minister of State Duncan d'Eauneurts has two problems with his party at the beginning of March. First, he announced it a month early, so it's not clear if everybody's remembered about it. Second, all the volunteering has taken many potential Toadies out of Paris. Still, Bastian de LaGarde is around and he comes along, bringing Cath de Thousands with him. So, too is Florent Sans de Machine, who attends with Charlotte de Gaulle. The five of them manage a bit of a party, while the other visitors to the Fleur keep out of their way. These are Leonard de Hofstadt, who has Frances Forrin on his arm, Pierre le Sang with Guinevere d'Arthur, Terence Cuckpowder (fresh from distributing cash to worthy Parisians), accompanied by Leia Orgasma, and Uther Xavier-Beauregard, celebrating his innocence with Henrietta Carrotte. Pierre takes the opportunity to attend on the Crown Prince, busy quaffing at his usual table, and hand over some cash for some pieces of paper.

Bothwell's is where Swindelle d'Masses takes Lucy Fur for a drink to begin March. Georges Hommemince is in Hunter's, celebrating that he's in Paris with Angelina di Griz. The only person at the Blue Gables is Ben e'Volence and he's outside. He's expecting to Toady to Paul d'Udderjuan and clearly hasn't heard that Paul's at the front. Augustin Fourier, accompanied by Josephine Buonaparte, goes to the Frog & Peach and hits the gaming tables. He places a

100-crown bet and watches the croupier take his money away. He shrugs his shoulders and places another bet. He loses this one, too. A third wager brings him a win, but he's out of pocket overall. Marie Antoinette is to be found in Red Phillips, on the arm of Hugh Jass.

There are no organised events in the second week and noticeably fewer visitors to Paris's clubs. In the Fleur are just Chopine Camus, taking a break from his sabre practice to take Sheila Kiwi for a drink, Pierre le Sang and Guinevere and Uther plus Henrietta. Georges and Angelina re-visit Hunter's where Florent and Charlotte also appear. Having re-scheduled his loans, Chris Knight rolls up, too, and accepts a little Toadying from Padamus Da Grim, who's been busy reorganising his debts as well. Ben is stuck outside Blue Gables and Hugh and Marie are in Red Phillips again. The big news going round Paris, however, is the absence of the Cardinal's Guard. Rumour has it that the two battalions left in Paris have marched south as Felix has business in Marseille. This provokes many ribald suggestions as to what his business there might be.

It gets even sparser in week three. In the Fleur are Pierre and Guinevere, Uther and Henrietta. Except that members of the King's Escort turn with a reminder for Uther. It's a pretty heavy-handed reminder as it consists of dragging him out of the club all the way to the Louvre. Padamus continues to Toady to Chris at Hunter's, where Florent and Charlotte are also in attendance. Hugh and Marie visit Red Phillips once more. Ben goes elsewhere and, this time, he gets lucky.

The big event of March is Greg de Bécqueur's Easter celebrations in Hunter's during week 4. Greg has Jenny on his arm to receive his guests. In alphabetical order, they start with Augustin Fourier, who brings Josephine. Bendoit de Tres attends on his own. Balzac Slapdash escorts Mary Huana. Georges Dueppre shows off a new conquest, Deb Estaround, though he won her a couple of weeks earlier. In the meantime he's been discovering that he can't re-join Blue Gables yet. Georges Hommemince accompanies Angelina. Hercule D'Engin is on his own, muttering darkly about the bailiffs who recently came calling. Hugh Jass and Marie are next. Last is Padamus Da Grim, on his own once again. It is a good-humoured affair, with no sign of regimental rivalries.

Chris Knight is in Hunter's again, staying clear of the party, but without his guest. Florent and Charlotte are there as well. Apart from the crowd in Hunter's, Pierre and Guinevere and Uther and Henrietta are in the Fleur and that's that.

Two Parisians spend the whole month practising with their rapiers. They are Jacques de Gain and Jean d'Ice (left in Paris by his CO), who share the title of iron man this month. Pierre Cardigan spends his first week in the Bawdyhouses, where his empty pockets attract the frustrated attentions of the footpads, and then puts in three weeks with his sabre. His cutlass commands Gaz Moutarde's attention for three weeks before he visits his lady. Partygoer Balzac Slapdash and party-holder Greg de Bécqueur practise rapier for the three weeks before.

Chopine Camus fits three weeks of sabre practice around his visit to his club. The other three-weekers all did this in the first week before heading for the gyms: Bastian de LaGarde (rapier), Leonard de Hofstadt (rapier), Swindelle d'Masses (sabre) and Terence Cuckpowder (sabre). Practising for two weeks are Augustin Fourier (sabre), Bendroit de Tres (rapier) and Duncan d'Éauneurts (rapier).

Hercule D'Engin is a frequent visitor to the Bawdyhouses. He's there twice this month, once for female company, both times for a drink. Chris Knight and Padamus Da Grim visit at the start of the month and both indulge. Duncan d'Éauneurts hits "The Cucumber Patch" in week two and Bendroit de Tres is the final visitor, getting his oats before the big party.

The missing battalions of the Cardinal's Guard return to Paris at the end of the month, looking dusty and footsore. The story quickly spreads that they spent a fruitless two weeks searching galleys in port at Marseille for Private Maurice d'Ancer, whose name is quickly recalled as a deserter from the King's Musketeers sentenced a few months ago. Nobody knows what Felix's interest is in the man, but the assumption is that it's something carnal.

...and the loot

The spring weather allows more military action than the preceding months and the French forces have found a Spanish outpost to lay siege to. The month is spent digging siege works, positioning artillery and chasing off any other Spanish troops in the area. The Royal Foot Guards are in attendance in their bright, shiny uniforms. Colonel Amant d'Au is brevetted to Brigadier-General as he marshals his men along their stretch of the ramparts. Major Beau Reese Jean Seine shows huge bravery in leading his men right up to the enemy positions to taunt them. He makes a point of collecting everything that's thrown at him and pockets a thousand crowns when he sells it all off – his commanding officer (Au) gets a further 600 crowns. There's also a Mention in Despatches for Seine ("Very brave"). However, nothing comes the way of Lieutenant-Colonel Jean Jeanie or Captain Luc Azzat.

As there's only one battalion of the Cardinal's Guard in action, they man a short section of the earthworks. This doesn't stop CO Alan de Frocked earning over 500 Crowns and being Mentioned ("Where did that come from?").

The Dragoon Guards look rather confused at the idea of a siege. However, there are still Mentions in Despatches for their commander, Etienne Brule, Lt-Colonel Jean Ettonique and Major Percy Urbain Fanci-Free. Having his name once more in the Despatches brings Ettonique the title of Count. Nothing for Major Henri Dubois or Captain Paul d'Udderjuan, though.

Colonel Frele d'Acier leads the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers to see off a Spanish supply column that arrives soon after the French troops. His reward is the best part of a thousand crowns worth of loot. Well, it was a supply column.

Despite being on land, the Royal Marines do well, too, stopping an attempted sortie and taking plenty of prisoners and booty. Colonel Robert d'Lancier is brevetted to Bdr-Gen and gains 1,600 crowns worth of the share-out. Major Henri DuShite is brevetted to Lt-Colonel and his take comes to a hundred crowns more than his CO.

The Princess Louisa Light Dragoons take on a Spanish cavalry patrol. They win the fight, but it's at a high cost as their commander, Colonel Arthur 'Dekka' Dent, falls to the enemy sabres. RIP.

Volunteer Charles Louis Desapear is attached to Frontier regiment 1, where he is able to join in the looting. Nearly 1,500 Crowns comes his way.

Taking command of battalions of the Royal North Highland Border Regiment is good news for Generals Bernard de Lur-Saluces and Sebastian de la Creme. Both receive Mentions in Despatches and both take 1,500 crowns of plunder. Only Lur-Saluces receives a new title, however: he becomes a Marquis. ❖

Press

Announcements

Public Safety Ministry
Announcement
People of Paris,

Commissioner Gauchepied'er has instigated the arrest of the demon masquerading as Viscount d'Eaunerts and all True Patriots are called upon to give evidence against it next month.

Stand by your Commissioner, stand up against the Legions of Lucifer.

The Prosecution shall be calling for the ultimate penalty against Pestilence, First Horseman of the Apocalypse.

† Baroness Gauchpied'er
Commissioner of Public Safety

RM's will remain at the front for April 1671. † RdL

Aide to Minister of War required, apply Cuckpowder.

To 1st Battalion CG.

I will be taking the battalion to the Front in May 1671, be prepared accordingly. † Lt.Col D'Ice

Social

Gentlemen of SL 7 or above and their ladies are invited to celebrate the Triumph of Justice – a Masque and Play – to be performed in the Place Vendôme and thence by sedan chair and carriage to my Club – Bothwell's – for drinks and refreshments. The entertainment will take place Weeks 2-4 in April and your costs will be paid.

† Bastian de LaGarde,
Soldier of France, Friend To Truth

Greg de Bécqueur invites all gentlemen and their ladies to celebrate the coming of spring in his club in the first week of April. Cocktails and canapés on me.

Party for all SL 13 or above week 3 April, costs will be met.

† Terence Cuckpowder

Brigadier-General Viscount Duncan d'Euaneurts, His Majesty's Minister of State, OC the King's Musketeers, to The Dignitaries and Denizens of Paris, Greetings!

Gentlemen,

You are hereby cordially invited to attend a two-week discussion regarding the wisest course of action to take in the wake of the manifestation of the profound lunacy to which the Commissioner of Public Safety has become subject.

I have hired rooms at the Fleur de Lys for this purpose for the first two weeks of April, refreshments being provided at my own expense. Your ladies are more than welcome to attend the event (though they will obviously play no part in the discussions themselves).

Your Servant,

† Viscount d'Euaneurts

[DdE throwing a party at the Fleur in the first two weeks of April for all SL 18+. Ladies welcome, all costs paid.]

Jacques As Memorial Stakes

His Highness the Dauphin is pleased to sponsor the second annual horse race in memory of the late Minister Jacques As. This is scheduled for week 4 of April and, as the Crown Prince is feeling flush at the moment, the prize fund will be 5,000 crowns. Those taking part in the race are welcome to Toady to His Highness afterwards with their ladies.

Military Missives

Paris has become a nest of vipers, schemers and scribes, and no place for a soldier of honour. Therefore I shall take the 2nd and 3rd squadrons of the PLLD to the front and to the cleansing fires of battle.

“Look after the men in my absence, Major”
† AdF

Personal

As fashion is trending towards the unmissed, Tristram de Gaye, is extremely fashionable.

To the Commissioner of Public Safety I received some spam in a scroll purporting to be from your office.

I dislike the English way of preparing an alleged meat substance, and am sure that it was nothing to do with yourself. I threw it out for the dogs to eat, but they wouldn't touch it. Then someone in a Cardinal's Guard uniform walked by and snaffled it – I didn't recognise him.

I remain Your, † T Cuckpowder

The Ongoing Trials and tribulations of Percy Urbain-Fanci-Free

Dear Reader, a surprise development this month. After we had seen off another batch of yellow coats, passing a battalion of the Cardinal's Guard heading rapidly in the wrong direction (obviously they had their map upside down or a maybe it was the rumours of an annual Altar/Choir boys parade back in the town?), I had the lads cut them up into small

squares and we made a killing at the Flanders market place, selling them as yellow dusters to the townswomen. 500 crowns worth! Bonanza. No sign of choir boys or the Cardinal's Guard anywhere on the streets – very odd!. Anyway, I was just packing up the stall when a courier arrived with a scented letter ordering me to the Bastille when we return and to enter through the back door with the codename “Le Furet” – most mysterious. I hope this is not a trap, but I am not scared of dirty dark holes, so, in for a penny, in for a Crown and, now we are back in Paris, the horses watered, the injured bandaged up and the sabres cleaned and sparkling, off I go. Curiosity killed Le Chat, but not the brave Le Furet!

GH is optimistic if he expects to have drinks with Arthur at any time in the near future.

† La parapluie vert

TO THE ESTEEMED PATRONS OF HECTOR'S HOUSE OF PAIN

Please be advised that the waiting list regards our latest attraction, ‘The Gimp’, is growing ever longer. Gentlemen of specialised tastes are now urged to book two weeks in advance should they require his unique services.
† Hector

Poetry Corner

(All signed poetry submissions gain their author at least 1SP)

April showers
Bring forth flowers
And Greg is feeling arty;
He'll take those blooms
To fill the rooms
And decorate his party.

† Greg de Bécqueur

The Cardinal's Guards are so vain,
They strut round the courtyard again
And again so they might
Catch the very best light,
But run back inside should it rain.

† Le Salame Disparu

Points Arising

Next deadline is 29th March

Despite the late appearance of this issue, I have not extended the deadline as I have commitments later in April.

Thanks to Jason and Paul for the trial report – additional material from Pete and Mark. I have edited this for grammar.

The Jacques As Memorial Stakes will take place in week 4 of April. This is a horse race sponsored by Prinny in

memory of the late Minister of State. The prize pot will be 5,000 Crowns this year. Newer players may want to check the Horse Race rules in the LPBS house rules. Older ones may want to too. And me.

Etienne Brule's time as Chancellor of the Exchequer ends next month. Anyone wishing to apply for the appointment should do so with their April orders – though Minister of State Duncan d'Euaneurts decides who gets the job.

The Greasy Pole

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
UXB	Count Uther Xavier-Beauregard	26	79	Rich	Fld Marshal	/Min w/o Port	16	Henrietta	Flr	4	Pete Card
PIS	Viscount Pierre le Sang	25	56	Rich	General/2nd Army	Commandr	7	Guinevere	Flr	4	Bill Howell
EB	Marquis Etienne Brule	25	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	DG/Chancellor	3		Flr	4	James McReynolds
AdA	Count Amant d'Au	25	F	Fithy	B.Bdr-General	RFG/Min w/o Port	11		Flr	5	David Brister
PC	Count Pierre Cardigan	24	54	Rich	General/Min w/o Port		9		Flr	5	Matt Shepherd
DdE	Viscount Duncan d'Euaneurts	24	45	Rich	B.Bdr-General	KM/State Min.	8		Flr	5	Paul Lydiatte
FdA	Count Frele d'Acier	24	F	Withy	Colonel	ALC/Min w/o Port	18		Flr	3	Peter Farrell
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	23	43	Fithy	B.General/1st Army	Commandr	24		Flr	6	Ben Brown
SdIC	Marquis Sebastian de la Creme	23	F	Withy	General/Min w/o Port		4		Flr	5	Alan Percival
BRJS	Marquis Beau Reese Jean Seine	22	F	Withy	Major RFG/Min w/o Port		5		Flr	3	Bill Hay
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	21	F	Rich	Lt.Colonel	RFG	26		Flr	3	Andrew Kendall
CC	Marquis Chopine Camus	19	54	Withy	B.Lt-General/Insp.	Gen.Cav	9	Sheila	Flr	4	Stewart Macintyre
TC	Marquis Terence Cuckpowder	19	49	Withy	B.Lt-General/War	Minister	6	Leia	Flr	4	Mike Dormett
LdH	Sir Leonard de Hofstadt	18	42	Comfy	B.Lt-General/1st Div	Commandr	5	Frances	Flr	5	Neil Packer
JE	Count Jean Ettonique	17	F	Rich	Lt.Colonel	DG/Min w/o Port	17		Both	5	Tony Hinton-West
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	16	31	Withy	Bdr-General		4		Both	2	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
AdF	Sir Alan de Frocked	16	F	Withy	B.Bdr-General	CG/1st Army	QMG	3	Both	2	Charles Burrows
SdM	Sir Swindelle d'Masses	16	+53	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	QOC/Min w/o Port	6	Lucy	Both	4	Craig Pearson
JdI	Sir Jean d'Ice	15	25	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	CG/FMshl's Aide	6		Both	3	Tym Norris
FAG	Baron Felix A Gauchepped'er	14	20	Comfy	Major	CG/CPS	8		Flr	4	Jason Fazackarley
BdLS	Marquis Bernard de Lur-Saluces	14	F	Rich	B.General		11		Both	3	Rob Pinkerton
BdLG	Bastian de LaGarde	13	39	Comfy	Major RFG/Gds	Brigade Maj.	4	Cath	Both	1	Jerry Spencer
HD	Baron Henri Dubois	13	F	Comfy	Major	DG	3		Both	3	Wayne Little
CLD	Charles Louis Desapear	13	F	Withy	Bdr-General		3		Both	4	Martin Jennings
LA	Luc Azzat	12	F	OK	Captain	RFG/C.Prnce Aide	3		Both	2	Tim Maccaire

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
PUFF	Sir Percy Urbain Fanci-Free	11	F	OK	Major	DG	7		Hunt	2	Mark Cowper
CK	Sir Chris Knight	11	+38	OK	Lt.Colonel	CPC	10		Hunt	2	Paul Wilson
FsdM	Florent Sans de Machine	10	29	Comfy	Major	KM	3	Charlotte	Hunt	4	Nik Luker
GH	Georges Hommence	10	17	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	PLLD	6	Angelina	Hunt	1	Cameron Wood
ADD	Arthur 'Dekka' Dent	10	RIP								Graeme Morris
RdL	Robert d'Lancier	10	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	RM/2nd Div	Adjutant	7	Hunt	4	Steven Malecek
GdB	Greg de Becqueur	9	19	Poor	Captain	GDMD/GDMD Regt. Adj.	6	Jenny	Hunt	5	Anthony Gilbert
X3		9	RIP								Charles Popp
PdU	Paul d'Udderjuan	9	F	Comfy	Captain	DG	3			3	Bruno Giordan
GD	Georges Dueppre	8	14	OK	Colonel	PM	6	Deb		3	Mark Nightingale
XM	Xavier Money	8	13	Withy	B.Bdr-General	GDMD	5		BG	3	Pam Udowiczzenko
PDG	Padamus Da Grim	7	15	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	GDMD	8		F&P	2	Graeme Wilson
BS	Balzac Slapdash	7	11	Comfy			9	Mary	BG	4	Matthew Wale
AF	Augustin Fourier	6	+20	OK	Major	GDMD	2	Josephine	F&P	3	Brick Amundsen
X1		5	0	OK			5			2	Gerald Udowiczzenko
HDS	Henri DuShite	5	F	Comfy	B.Lt.Colonel	RM	5			4	Dave Marsden
BeV	Ben e'Volence	4	14	Poor			5		RP	3	Ash Casey
HDE	Hercule D'Engin	4	11	Poor			2			2	Gerry Sutcliff
BdT	Bendroite de Tres	4	9	Poor			2			5	Olaf Schmidt
ARGH	Antoine Robert G Herville	4	3	Poor	Captain	PM	5			2	Bob Blanchett
HJ	Hugh Jass	4	+25	Poor	Captain	13F	3	Marie	RP	3	Ray Vahey
BO	Boul Ogne	2	F	Comfy	Subaltern		2			4	Dean Talbot

An F under SPs means that the character was at the Front, RIP means that he died.

+ against SL means it went up this month, - means it went down.

Cash: Poor = <500, OK = 500-1500, Comfy = 1500-5000, Withy = 5000-10000, Rich = 10000-25000, Fithy = 25000+

Last seen is the lady the character was last seen with in public.

EC is Endurance Class: 1 = <60, 2 = 60-90, 3 = 91-120, 4 = 121-159, 5 = 160-200, 6 = 201+