

That would be enough

This has been issue 207 of *To Win Just Once*, published 31st August 2020. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2020

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* and *Star Trader* to Mike by 11th September 2020.

Orders for *LPBS* and *Trophy Hunter* plus any other contributions to Pevans by 18th September 2020.

(Remaining 2020 deadlines are 11th/18th Sept, 16th/23rd Oct, 20th/27th Nov)

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.engage.co.uk

Railway Rivals – Christian Bien, Mark Cowper, Rob Pinkerton, Anthony Gilbert, Jonathan Palfrey, Gerald Udowiczenko and Bob Blanchett are awaiting the next one, anyone else? (Working map and rules provided).

Star Trader – Time for a new game: Joel Halpern, Anthony Gilbert and Pevans are in. Rules provided.

Online games

Agricola (at www.boiteajeux.net): Pevans, Brad Martin

Brass (at brass.orderofthehammer.com):

Keyflower (at www.boardgamearena.com):

Pax Porfiriana, (at www.yucata.de): Pevans, Brad Martin

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

Snowdonia (at yucata.de): Pevans, Mike Reeves, Brad Martin

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

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 207 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 22) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as are the illustrations on pages 23, 24, 28, 29 and 33. The drawing on page 27 is by Nik Luker, but the artist for the one on page 31 is lost in the mists of time. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Pevans took the photos and played with Photoshop.

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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



Issue 207: September 2020

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| ID | Name | SL | SPs | Cash | Rank | Regiment/Appointment | MA | Last seen | Club | EC | Player |
|-----|----------------------|----|-----|-------|------------|----------------------|----|-----------|------|----|--------------------|
| CdP | Camille de Polignac | 10 | F | Comfy | Captain | RFG/Bdr's Aide (Jdl) | 4 | | Hunt | 4 | James McReynolds |
| TIH | Tarquin le Hatter | 9 | F | OK | Major | KM | 2 | | | 5 | Jason Fazackarley |
| JF | Jerome Fortmayne | 9 | F | OK | Captain | CG | 4 | | | 6 | Bill Howell |
| HDE | Hercule D'Engin | 9 | F | Comfy | Lt.Colonel | 53F/2 F Brigade Maj. | 2 | | F&P | 2 | Gery Sutcliff |
| BdB | Bakar di Brieza | 9 | F | OK | Captain | KM | 1 | | BG | 4 | Tony Hinton-West |
| NdB | Norman de Bastille | 9 | F | OK | Lt.Colonel | QOC | 1 | | HGds | 4 | Mark Williams |
| BS | Balzac Slapdash | 8 | 12 | Comfy | | | 9 | Alison | BG | 4 | Matthew Wale |
| RS | Rick Shaw | 8 | F | OK | Major | ALC/Hvy Brigade Maj. | 2 | | BG | 6 | Charles Burrows |
| IED | Ivor Edward Defrane | 8 | RIP | | | | | | | | Graeme Wilson |
| ZUT | Zavier Ulric Turenne | 7 | F | Poor | Colonel | PM | 4 | | F&P | 1 | Bob Blanchett |
| PdT | Pierre de Terre | 7 | F | Poor | Captain | QOC | 6 | | F&P | 2 | Paul Murphy |
| JIT | Justin Thyme | 7 | F | Comfy | Major | QOC | 6 | | F&P | 2 | Gerald Udowiczenko |
| PFL | Phillipe F'Loppe | 7 | F | Poor | B:Major | DG | 3 | | F&P | 4 | Phil Urquhart |
| LK | Lars Kristmass | 6 | 0 | Comfy | | | 4 | | F&P | 3 | Martin Jennings |
| PGR | Petit-Garson Riche | 6 | F | Comfy | Subaltern | QOC | 1 | | F&P | 2 | Mark Cowper |
| AC | Alex Craitmant | 6 | F | Poor | Captain | PLLD | 1 | | RP | 4 | Toby Nightingale |
| EJ | Edouard Jogue | 5 | RIP | | | | | | | | Nik Luker |
| RdM | Rob d'Masses | 5 | F | OK | Subaltern | CPC | 4 | | RP | 6 | Craig Pearson |
| LR | Louis Renault | 5 | F | OK | Lt.Colonel | PM | 1 | | RP | 4 | Roy Bleasdale |
| SLH | Stephen LaHesse | 5 | RIP | | | | | | | | Sebastian Emde |
| LV | Lascar Vivrebras | 4 | F | Poor | Subaltern | PM | 4 | | RP | 4 | Olaf Schmidt |
| JH | Jacques Hatt | 4 | F | Poor | Captain | GDM | 3 | | RP | 3 | Joel Halpern |
| CdL | Cyrano de Lancet | 4 | F | Poor | Subaltern | PM | 1 | | RP | 4 | Rik Stewart |
| HJ | Hugh Jass | 3 | RIP | | | | | | | | Ray Vahey |
| GC | Gilles Colbert | 3 | RIP | | | | | | | | Mark Nightingale |

An F under SPs means that the character was at the Front, RIP that he died. Ret that he retired.
 + 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, Flthy = 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+

The Greasy Pole

| ID | Name | SL | SPs | Cash | Rank | Regiment/Appointment | MA | Last seen | Club | EC | Player |
|------|--------------------------------|----|-----|-------|------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|------|----|--------------------|
| UXB | Count Uther Xavier-Beauregard | 28 | F | Comfy | General/2nd Army | Commdr | 20 | | Flr | 4 | Pete Card |
| BRJS | Viscount Beau Reese Jean Seine | 25 | F | Comfy | Colonel RFG/War | Minister | 9 | | Flr | 3 | Bill Hay |
| DdE | Count Duncan d'Eauneurts | 25 | F | Comfy | B.Bdr-General | KM/State Min. | 8 | | Flr | 5 | Paul Lydiate |
| PC | Count Pierre Cardigan | 24 | F | Withy | Lt.Colonel | ALC | 10 | | Flr | 5 | Matt Shepherd |
| JdG | Count Jacques de Gain | 23 | F | Flthy | General/1st Army | Commdr | 24 | | Flr | 6 | Ben Brown |
| JJ | Count Jean Jeanie | 22 | F | Flthy | Bdr-General/Gds | Brigadier | 29 | | Flr | 3 | Andrew Kendall |
| LdH | Marquis Leonard de Hofstadt | 22 | F | Comfy | General/3rd Army | Commdr | 7 | | Flr | 5 | Neil Packer |
| TC | Viscount Terence Cuckpowder | 21 | 46 | Withy | B.Lt-General/Min | w/o Port | 6 | | Flr | 5 | Mike Dommett |
| BdLS | Marquis Bern'd de Lur-Saluces | 19 | 50 | Rich | Lt-General/Insp. | Gen.Cav | 14 | | Flr | 3 | Rob Pinkerton |
| Jdl | Marquis Jean d'Ice | 17 | F | Withy | B.Bdr-General | CG/3rd Army | QMG | 10 | Both | 3 | Tym Norris |
| HD | Baron Henri Dubois | 17 | F | Comfy | B.Bdr-General | DG/HGds | Brigadier | 7 | Both | 3 | Wayne Little |
| CK | Earl Chris Knight | 17 | F | Comfy | B.Bdr-General | CPC/Chancellor | 12 | | Hunt | 2 | Paul Wilson |
| BdLG | Baron Bastian de LaGarde | 16 | F | Withy | Lt.Colonel | RFG/CPS | 4 | | Both | 1 | Jerry Spencer |
| Anon | Les Anonyme | 16 | F | Comfy | B.Bdr-General | 53F/1st Army | Adj't | 3 | Both | 4 | Bruno Giordan |
| GM | Sir Gaz Moutarde | 15 | 31 | Withy | Bdr-General | | 4 | | Both | 2 | Mike Clibborn-Dyer |
| GdB | Sir Greg de Bequeur | 15 | F | Comfy | Lt.Colonel | KM | 8 | | Both | 5 | Anthony Gilbert |
| AFL | Sir Alonzo Fonde-Lapatrie | 14 | F | OK | Lt.Colonel | RM/1 F Brigade | Maj. | 7 | Both | 2 | Graeme Morris |
| GH | Sir Georges Hommemince | 14 | RIP | | | | | | | | Cameron Wood |
| BeV | Sir Ben e'Volence | 13 | F | Comfy | Lt.Colonel | CPC/Cav Div | Adjutant | 5 | Both | 3 | Ash Casey |
| XM | Sir Xavier Money | 12 | F | Withy | Bdr-General | | 7 | | Hunt | 3 | Pam Udowiczenko |
| HDS | Henri DuShite | 12 | F | Comfy | Colonel | RM | 9 | | Hunt | 4 | Dave Marsden |
| RdL | Robert d'Lancier | 11 | F | Comfy | Major | KM | 8 | | Hunt | 4 | Steven Malecek |
| TdA | Thierry d'Actyl | 11 | F | Poor | Major | CG | 1 | | Hunt | 2 | John Cooke |
| CdC | Conrad de Coverlet | 11 | F | Poor | Major | DG | 1 | | Hunt | 4 | Stewart Macintyre |
| EdL | Sir Eclair de Lame | 10 | F | Poor | Major | RFG | 4 | | Hunt | 3 | Peter Farrell |
| MdZ | Marc de Zorro | 10 | F | Comfy | Colonel | QOC | 9 | | Hunt | 4 | Tim Macaire |
| AF | Sir Augustin Fourrier | 10 | F | Comfy | Colonel | GDM | 5 | | Hunt | 3 | Brick Amundsen |
| WdB | Sir William de Beast | 10 | F | OK | Major | CPC | 6 | | F&P | 4 | Simon Peck |

Chatter

As I've already mentioned to *LPBS* players, the start of August saw Geraldine and me heading to Northern Ireland to keep an eye on her father, who was not at all well. He's largely recovered from that incident but, at 92, now needs a lot of support, so we expect further disruptions.

I've returned early enough to get this issue of *TWJO* completed more or less on time. However, we had to spend a gruelling three weeks confined to a very pleasant holiday apartment overlooking the Antrim coast road and the North Channel (linking the northern end of the Irish Sea with the Atlantic Ocean). It was tough, I can tell you, with just Geraldine's siblings and vast supplies of Prosecco and Guinness to keep us going.

This issue is likely to be on the thin side as Mike's got computer problems, so we are without the *Railway Rivals* game and the *Star Trader* game end statements. Next time, I expect.

New *Star Trader* game

As you may have noticed, the *Star Trader* game finished last issue, so Mike is gearing up to start a new one. This will use our Free Deployment starting positions and the eight-system board, so there's room for up to 12 players. So far we have Joel Halpern and Anthony Gilbert waiting to play and yours truly makes three. I expect more of the regulars to join in, but who else would like to take part? If you're not familiar with the game and would like to know more, you can find the rules online: www.pevans.co.uk/StarTrader50.pdf

Online stats

TWJO issue 206 was published on 22nd July and the PDFs were downloaded 147 times in the last 10 days of the month. The previous issue attracted 74 downloads across July, taking it to 209 in two months. And the PDFs of issue 204 were downloaded 44 times for a total of 273 since publication.

2020 'Zine Poll

Alex Richardson has announced this year's poll with a deadline of midnight on 31st October. Plenty of time, then. Which means I'll probably vote round about 11 pm on 31st October. Ahem. A better idea is to vote early.

All British 'zines that run 'postal' games (*Diplomacy*, *En Garde!*, *Railway Rivals* et al) can be voted for by anyone who receives at least one such. Like *TWJO*, for example. To vote, list those you see and give each a mark between 1.0 (low) and 10.0 (high) to one decimal place. Send your votes by e-mail from your own account to alex (dot) bokmal (at) googlemail (dot) com.

Letters

With a little prompting, Chris Baylis gave me his thoughts on solitaire games in reaction to my piece in last issue..

In general I am not keen on [board] games that offer solo variants when they have been designed for multiple players. Even played 2-player they do not offer the same satisfaction as they do with 3 or 4 players. With one player they are mostly (of course there are exceptions) dull comparisons of the author's original idea, very few are improved with just one player.

You speak about solo and cooperative games being similar and I see/understand this point. However there are many 'good' board games that are not cooperative but, because of their mechanics, they may just as well be played solo. For example, we have just played the expansion of Railroad Revolution - Railroad Evolution - and found it to add greatly to the original. [However,] exactly as the base game, you are still playing for yourself without interacting with any other player. Thus it is, or could be accurately described as, a 4-player game, whereas for all intents and purpose it is four solo games going on at the same time.

A fair number of the currently very popular Escape Room games can be played solo and solved Sherlock Holmes-style. But as entertainments, challenges and, in fact, games, they are best played with input from multiple players. Considering the price of these games and that they are only playable once - in most cases - to get good value and enjoyment of playing them you really do need more than one player involved.

Good point, Chris, I hadn't considered multi-player solitaire games. I quite like these: being able to build my engine (or whatever) without interference from other players. The difference from playing on my own is that I am benefitting from the shared experience and from the outside-the-game interaction with the other players. Besides, there can only be a very few games where there is absolutely no in-game interaction between the participants. Alex Bardy also has some thoughts on last issue.

I suspect Lux Aeterna wouldn't appeal to me, either, although I did like the design and style of the cards... not classic Boydell-style, by any description.

Fire! on the other hand does sound intriguing, but it's another one I can probably easily pass on, tbh. The trademark FF trait of not shuffling the deck always fills me with a mix of wonder and pensive disdain: as a gamer and a reviewer, I automatically assume that things will get more interesting and better, but without actually playing through it or cheating and looking at later cards in the deck, there's no real definitive way of finding out, and thus

Femmes Fatales

| No | Name | SL | Attr | Last |
|----|----------------------|----|-------|------|
| 64 | Edna Bucquette | 18 | W | |
| 3 | Kathy Pacific | 17 | B | |
| 54 | Madelaine de Proust | 17 | | |
| 35 | Katy Did | 16 | I | |
| 42 | Maggie Nifisent | 16 | B | |
| 55 | Jacky Tinne | 16 | | |
| 52 | Guinevere d'Arthur | 15 | B/W | |
| 10 | Frances Forrin | 14 | B | |
| 21 | Helen Highwater | 14 | W | |
| 48 | Fifi | 14 | B/W | |
| 62 | Alison Wunderlandt | 14 | | BS |
| 11 | Laura de Land | 13 | | |
| 16 | Ophelia Derrière | 13 | | |
| 26 | Ella Fant | 13 | B | |
| 27 | Lucy Fur | 13 | B | |
| 30 | Leia Orgasma | 13 | B | |
| 45 | Cath de Thousands | 13 | | |
| 8 | Lotte Bottle | 12 | B | |
| 12 | Charlotte de Gaulle | 12 | | |
| 17 | Henrietta Carrotte | 12 | I/W | |
| 28 | Vera Cruz | 12 | | |
| 31 | Bess Ottede | 12 | I/W | |
| 1 | Sue Briquet | 11 | B | |
| 4 | Anne Tique | 11 | W | |
| 9 | Deb Onairre | 11 | I | |
| 40 | Sheila Kiwi | 11 | | |
| 63 | Carole Singeurs | 11 | | |
| 20 | Emma Roides | 10 | I | |
| 33 | Anna Rexique | 10 | I | |
| 38 | Pet Ulante | 10 | W | |
| 43 | Di Lemmere | 10 | I | |
| 53 | Angelina de Griz | 10 | B | |
| 56 | Ingrid la Suède | 10 | | |
| 6 | Viv Ayschus | 9 | | |
| 57 | Ava Crisp | 9 | I | |
| 59 | May Banquot l'Idée | 9 | | |
| 2 | Betty Kant | 8 | I | |
| 19 | Jenny Russe | 8 | W | |
| 32 | Sal Munella | 8 | W | |
| 41 | Marie Antoinette | 8 | B/I | |
| 49 | Mary Huana | 8 | B/I/W | |
| 34 | Freda de Ath | 7 | W | |
| 39 | Thomasina Tancenjin | 7 | I | |
| 50 | Ulla Leight | 7 | I | |
| 5 | Belle Epoque | 6 | B/I | |
| 13 | Josephine Buonoparte | 6 | I/W | |
| 24 | Violet Bott | 6 | I/W | |
| 15 | Ada Andabettoir | 5 | B/I | |
| 25 | Lois de Lô | 5 | B | |

This table shows the mistresses in Paris. B=Beautiful, I=Influential, W=Wealthy; Last=Last lover seen with this month

Regiments

| Col | BrJS | CG | KM | DG | OOC | ALC | CPC | RM | AF | ZUT | N7 | PLD | 53F | 27M | 4A | 69A | Gscn |
|--------|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|------|------|----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|----|-----|------|
| LCol | BdLG | N4* | GdB | HD+ | MdZ | PC | BeV+ | HDS | N6 | LR | N3* | N3 | HDE+ | N5 | N4 | | |
| Maj 1 | EdL | TdA | TH | CdC | JIT | RS+ | N2 | AFL+ | N4 | N2 | N2 | N2 | N3 | N6+ | N1 | N5 | N5+ |
| Maj 2 | N1 | N5 | RdL | PFL | N4 | N4 | N2 | N5 | N6 | N2 | N5 | AC | N3 | N7 | N1 | N4 | N1 |
| Capt 1 | N2* | N2 | N1 | N1* | N1* | N4 | N4 | N5 | | | | | | | | | |
| Capt 2 | N4* | N2 | N2 | N1 | PdT | | N4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capt 3 | N4 | JF | N1 | N1 | N1 | | N5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capt 4 | N4 | | BdB | N4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capt 5 | CdP | | N1 | N4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capt 6 | N3 | | | PFL+ | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

This table shows the ten senior positions in the 17 regiments by rank. Entries are Character abbreviations, N (+M/A) for NPCs, blank for vacant. * shows the regiment adjutant; + shows ranks held by characters with a (senior) brevet rank or an appointment elsewhere.

Brigade Positions

| | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Guards Brigade | JJ/___/___ |
| Horse Guards Brigade | HD/___/___ |
| Heavy Brigade | N7/BdZ/RS |
| Dragoon Brigade | ___/___/___ |
| First Foot Brigade | ___/___/AFI |
| Second Foot Brigade | ___/___/HDE |
| Third Foot Brigade | ___/___/N6 |
| Fourth Foot Brigade | N1/___/N5 |

Current CO/Aide/Brigade Major of each Brigade; entries are ID for player characters, "N" (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant

Frontier Regiments

| | F1 | F2 | F3 | F4 | RNHB |
|-------------------|----|----|----|----|------|
| Colonel | N7 | N4 | N4 | N6 | N9 |
| Attached | | XM | | | |
| Also at the Front | | | | | |

(On campaign for June-Aug)
This table shows the Colonels of the Frontier regiments ("N" + MA for NPCs), together with the volunteers assigned for the season.

Battle Results

- First Army: 1
 - First Division: 2
 - Guards Brigade: 3
 - Royal Foot Guards: 4
 - Cardinal's Guard: 4
 - King's Musketeers: 4
 - Dragoon Brigade: 3
 - Grand Duke Max's Dragoons: 4
 - Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons: 4
 - Cavalry Division: 2
 - Horse Guards Brigade: 3
 - Dragoon Guards: 4
 - Queen's Own Carabiniers: 4
 - Heavy Brigade: 3
 - Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers: 4
 - Crown Prince Cuirassiers: 4
- Second Army: 1
 - Frontier Division: 2
 - Frontier regiment 1: 3
- Frontier regiment 2: 3
 - Frontier regiment 3: 3
 - Frontier regiment 4: 3
- Third Army: 1
 - Second Division: 2
 - 3rd Foot Brigade: 3
 - 27th Musketeers: 4
 - 4th Arquebusiers: 4
 - 4th Foot Brigade: 3
 - 69th Arquebusiers: 4
 - The Gascon Regiment: 4
 - RNHB regiment: 3
 - Third Division: 2
 - 1st Foot Brigade: 3
 - Royal Marines: 4
 - Picardy Musketeers: 4
 - 2nd Foot Brigade: 3
 - 13th Fusiliers: 4
 - 53rd Fusiliers: 4

I'm left wondering if it's going to prove worth all the hassle to press onwards, or not.

Solitaire games have been growing on me for quite some time, more so in the wake of COVID-19 and lockdown, but I have also found myself getting rather snooty with new games that do not offer a solo or solitaire mode, often dismissing them out of hand, or just subconsciously downgrading them because of it.

Guard against it, Alex: one day we **will** be able to play games again! One day... [sobs quietly] Meanwhile Jonathan Palfrey responds on books.

One of the odd things about Good Omens is that most of the characters turn out to be irrelevant. In the end, Adam averts the Apocalypse almost by himself and no-one else seems to matter, except in whatever influence they manage to exert on him. Adam rejects Satan because he's been brought up to be too human; and I think this central point of the story probably derives from Pratchett rather than Gaiman, though I must confess I've read none of Gaiman's solo works (yet?).

I came to Gaiman through the TV adaptation of *Neverwhere*, which I then read, leading me to his utterly brilliant *Sandman* comics.

I agree with you that some of Harry Harrison's works don't seem to stand up well by now, though I haven't read all of them. I still like A Transatlantic Tunnel, Hurrah!, despite its deliberate imitation of old-fashioned romantic adventure stories; and I still like some of his short stories, in particular "Run from the fire" (1975) and "The wicked flee" (1970). The Technicolor Time Machine remains quite fun, though it's a minor novel.

Playing board games online

Pevans on the websites he frequents

I've been meaning for some time to write a piece about the websites where I play board games – both with friends, like the Swiggers group, or simply by setting up a game and inviting people to play. In this way, I have played games with hundreds of people across the world, people I only know by their online IDs. Contributing to *Spirit* magazine's recent coverage has prompted me to actually write this.

Software like Vassal (vassalengine.org) has been around for a while, providing an 'engine' for defining and manipulating game components (board, cards, dice, meeple et al). Players can then use this to play the game. Of course they need to have/know the rules of the game to do so. Tabletop Simulator (tabletopsimulator.com) is a more recent way of doing the same job. It provides

3D graphics and animation – including the option of tipping the table over. I have used Vassal a few times, but not Tabletop Simulator (it's also being used by designers to playtest prototypes).

That's because the kind of thing I'm more interested in is where the software implements the rules of the game. This makes it much easier to play – especially if you're trying a game you're not familiar with. Of course, this needs a lot of programming on top of reproducing the game's components. The first such I came across, in the early noughties, was BSW – BrettSpiel Welt (brettspielwelt.de). However, I was put off by the requirement to download and install BSW's software. I understand it now runs in a web browser (using Java), so I had another look recently. I could not work out how to use it from what I saw on the website and, despite setting the language to English, kept being presented with wedges of German text. I gave up.

I clearly lost my aversion to installing software as I signed up for Days of Wonder's online *Memoir '44* in 2012 – memoir44.com. This is a commercial implementation of a specific game and very good at what it does. It provides an



Hands up everybody who recognises this game! Yes, I'm playing El Grande on Yucata. I must click the button (off the bottom of this picture) to finish my turn.

Tables

Other Appointments

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| King's Escort: Ensign N | Captain N |
| Cardinal's Escort: Ensign N | Captain N |
| Aides: to Crown Prince N | to Field Marshal N |
| Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N | |
| City Military Governor N | Adjutant-General N |
| Inspectors-General: of Cavalry BdLS | of Infantry N |
| Commissioner of Public Safety BdLG (until May 1673) | |
| Chancellor of the Exchequer CK (until August 1672) | |
| Minister of Justice N (until August 1672) | |
| Minister of War BRJS (until February 1673) | |
| Minister of State DdE (until November 1672) | |

Shows who holds appointments outside military units:

ID for Characters, "N" for NPC, __ for vacant, "CPS" for additional posts held by the CPS.

Army Organisation and 1672's Summer Deployment

| | |
|---|----------------|
| First Army (Field Ops) | JdG/__/Anon/__ |
| First Division (Field Ops) | ___/___/___ |
| Guards Brigade (Field Ops) – RFG CG KM | |
| Dragoon Brigade (Field Ops) – GDMD PLLD | |
| Cavalry Division (Field Ops) | N6/N/BeV |
| Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) – DG QOC | |
| Heavy Brigade (Field Ops) – ALC CPC | |
| Second Army (Siege) | UXB/N/N4/N |
| Frontier Division (Siege) | N5/N/N1 |
| Frontier Regiments (Siege) | |
| Third Army (Defence) | LdH/N/___/JdI |
| Second Division (Defence) | N7/___/N6 |
| 3rd Foot Brigade (Defence) – 27M 4A | |
| 4th Foot Brigade (Defence) – 69A Gscn | |
| RNHB Regiment (Defence) | |
| Third Division (Defence) | N5/___/___ |
| 1st Foot Brigade (Defence) – RM PM | |
| 2nd Foot Brigade (Defence) – 13F 53F | |

Organisation and Deployment for the Campaign Season with Army and Division posts (Commander/Aide/Adjutant/QMG)

Entries are ID for player characters, "N" (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant

Alex Cramant (gains 1 Exp) beat William de Beast (with NdB).

Augustin Fourier declined to meet Pierre Cardigan as he was under half Endurance.

Chris Knight didn't turn up to fight Les Anonyme and lost SPs.

Rob d'Masses didn't turn up to fight Les Anonyme and lost SPs.

Bakar di Brieza didn't turn up to fight Jean d'Ice and lost SPs.

Thierry d'Actyl declined to meet Bakar di Brieza as he was under half Endurance.

Marc de Zorro (with NdB, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Conrad de Coverlet (with HD).

Conrad de Coverlet (with HD, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Norman de Bastille (with MdZ & LdH).

Hercule D'Engin declined to meet Rob d'Masses as he was under half Endurance.

Tarquin le Hatter didn't turn up to fight Jean d'Ice and lost SPs.

Tarquin le Hatter (with XM, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Thierry d'Actyl (with Anon & HDE).

Duels held over to September

Lars Kristmass versus William de Beast.

Lars Kristmass versus Greg de Becqueur.

Pierre Cardigan versus Terence Cuckpowder.

New Characters

Cameron Wood gets the Second son of an Impoverished Viscount: Init SL 10; Cash 40; MA 1; EC 2 (X1).

Mark Nightingale gets the Bastard son of an Impoverished Gentleman: Init SL 3; Cash 36; MA 5; EC 4 (X2).

Ray Vahey gets the Second son of a very wealthy Merchant: Init SL 3; Cash 500; MA 4; EC 6 (X3).

Graeme Wilson gets the Bastard son of an Impoverished Baron: Init SL 6; Cash 36; MA 4; EC 2 (X4).

Nik Luker gets the Second son of a well-to-do Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 250; MA 6; EC 3 (X5).

Andrew Larder gets the Bastard son of a very wealthy Merchant: Init SL 2; Cash 450; MA 3; EC 4 (X6).

online version of the base board game. However, it's rather different from most of what I'm covering: general websites with online implementations of board games, usually many different games, free of charge.

Judging by the articles in *Spirit*, the best known of these are Yucata (yucata.de) and Board Game Arena (boardgamearena.com) – BGA to me. Yucata has long been my favourite as it's designed for 'asynchronous' (or turn-based) play. That is, a player logs in to the website, takes their turn and the next player is emailed to tell them it's now their turn. They might respond immediately, they might take hours – or even days. As someone who played games by post back in the 1980s, I am very familiar with this way of playing. Though in those days it might be weeks before you got your next turn.

You can play games live on Yucata, but it's not optimised for this. Thus you don't always see other players' moves as they make them, only when they complete their turn (and they have to click a button to do this, which is easy to forget). Other useful buttons on Yucata games are 'Undo' and 'Reset'. Being able to try out actions and see the effects is valuable – but can really slow down live games. And any redo has its limits: you can't redo to draw a different card, for example, nor redo anything that requires another player to react.

For the last five years, new games implemented on Yucata have used a standard framework (FW2), something other sites had earlier. This has gone some way to giving a common look and feel to the games. In particular, it provides a standard sidebar to show the log of game actions (very useful when playing asynchronously), the game rules, personal notes, messaging between players and so on. Sadly, this can't be retro-fitted to the older games – though all these things are still there.

Yucata has its idiosyncrasies, too. For a start, you must play the game where it became your turn first. Not a problem – unless you're playing live, when your opponents may have to wait while you take turns in other, asynchronous games. When you do click on your first game it opens in a new window. Not a problem when I'm playing on my Samsung tablet (which is most of the time). However, on the PC, the new window is offset and I have to maximise it to get at the control buttons. Then there is the use of mouseover to pop up information windows. No problem on the PC when I'm actually using a mouse. But on the tablet... It's all too easy to click on something when trying to get the pop-up.

On the whole, though, I really like Yucata. It has a clear, uncluttered user interface and responds quickly (though this has been a problem at times during the pandemic – extra servers have been added). It is a pretty professional offering, which is remarkable, given it started as a hobby for Kay Wilke (aka Sparhawk). Nowadays there are a whole team involved and it's supported by player donations.

Like many of the sites, Yucata has a metagame around the actual playing of games. To start with, players are ranked at the games they play – “TrueSkill”. Beating someone who’s ranked higher than you really boosts your skill. While losing to someone who’s ranked lower is a great way to lose points. (I’m currently ranked 40th at *Vinci*, out of 1,355, but 3,086th at *Stone Age*, out of 7,401). On top of this, the site gives players titles (I’m currently a Builder) and you progress through these as you meet the criteria for the next level. While I try not to take much notice of the metagame, I like the fact that it rewards playing different games against different opponents.

Board Game Arena (BGA) is quite different. As you can tell as soon as the pale wood background image unfurls (and on a slow connection, that’s the effect you get). It is optimised for live play and makes heavy use of graphics and animation. It still supports asynchronous games though and this is how I’ve used it until recently. The clever animations, sound effects and ornate graphics are largely irrelevant for asynchronous play, but really enhance live games. One of the site’s



Through the Ages (with the brightness turned up) at BGA. At the top are the available cards, then my hand and tableau. Note the nice pale wood background.

Notes

The *En Garde!* rules are available to LPBS players at a reduced rate: see any month’s Points Arising page at www.pevans.co.uk/LPBS.

There’s a Yahoo! group for *En Garde!* players that provides a forum for players of different games to swap stories and ideas. Sign up and get talking at: <http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/EnGardePlayers/>

Reminders: It is worth sending orders in even if they’re late: I may be

able to action the orders and should be able to use any press. It also reassures me that you’re still there.

Orders (and press) should be emailed to lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk – you’ll get an automated reply when the message arrives in my mailbox. Please give your name and your character’s name and specify actions in full detail. If you want a query answered before the deadline, please use LPBS@pevans.co.uk instead.

Announcements

Marc de Zorro applies for Brigadier of Horse Guards Brigade

Robert d'Lancier applies for Minister of Justice

Robert d'Lancier applies for Minister without Portflio

Duels

Results of June’s duels

Alex Craitant (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Gilles Colbert (with MdZ).

Rick Shaw (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Augustin Fourier.

Bakar di Brieza didn't turn up to fight Jerome Fortmayne and lost SPs.

Hercule D'Engin declined to meet Chris Knight as he was under half Endurance.

Gilles Colbert (with MdZ, no Expertise) drew with Georges Hommemince (no Expertise).

Ivor Edward Defrane didn't turn up to fight Henri DuShite and lost SPs.

Rick Shaw (gains 1 Exp) beat his friend Henri DuShite.

Ivor Edward Defrane didn't turn up to fight Robert d'Lancier and lost SPs.

Tarquin le Hatter didn't turn up to fight Jerome Fortmayne and lost SPs.

Rick Shaw (gains 1 Exp) beat his friend Robert d'Lancier (with BdLG).

Jerome Fortmayne (with JdI, gains 1 Exp) killed Georges Hommemince.

Justin Thyme (gains 1 Exp) beat Xavier Money (with TIH).

Duncan d'Eauneurts (with GdB & TIH, gains 1 Exp) beat his friend Bastian de LaGarde (with HDE).

Points Arising

Next deadline is 18th September

The Minister of State has decided that ALL Brigades will be committed to the summer 1673 campaign. The Minister of War has opted for a mixed Deployment (Organisation 72 in your rule books), as follows.

First Army (Defence)

Frontier Division

Frontier regiments

Cavalry Division

Heavy Brigade – CPC, ALC

Dragoons – GDMD, PLLD

Second Army (Siege)

First Division (Assault)

Guards Brigade – RFG, CG, KM

First Foot – RM, PM

RNHB

Second Division (Siege)

Second Foot – 13F, 53F

Third Foot – 27M 4A

Fourth Foot – 69A, Gascons

Horse Guards – DG, QOC (Field Ops)

All military appointments lapse at the end of August and the new posts (according to the new organisation above) will be filled at the beginning of September. **With your orders for August let me have your applications for posts in September** – these may be conditional on promotions in August. Remember: if you have a brevet rank, you can only get a military appointment at that rank (unless it expires at the end of August when you can also apply for appointments at your permanent rank).

Chancellor of the Exchequer and Minister of Justice also fall vacant at the end of August and may be applied for with your August orders (to take effect in Sept). However, Minister of State DdE appoints these posts.

For those characters at the front, note that you can't join a club until you get back to Paris. Those who tried to do so in June should make a note to put this in their September orders.

Another reminder: one character borrowing money from another only happens if **both** characters put this in their orders.

Absent friends

I had no orders (“No Move Received”) from the following and they suffered the consequences:

BdB Bakar di Brieza (Tony Hinton-West) has NMR'd. Total now 2

RdM Rob d'Masses (Craig Pearson) has NMR'd. Total now 2

LK (Martin Jennings) has been floated at his request

Welcome

Andrew Larder joins us for August, having been recruited by Jason Fazackarley. Thanks, Jason and welcome to the game, Andrew.

Farewell

We say goodbye to Sebastian Emde (SLH) as he's finding he just doesn't have enough time. That's a shame, but you're very welcome to re-join us any time, Sebastian.

recent upgrades has been to add voice chat, which is another great feature for live games (though it can be unreliable).

All these features come at a cost, though, and I find the site noticeably slower than Yucata. This is particularly obvious if you have a slow internet connection (as in my recent sojourn in a holiday home). And you can also see it when you open a game that's heavy on graphics. The animation tells you that the site is opening the box, loading the graphics and then the game log, but it doesn't really disguise that the computers are working hard. BGA's recent growth in popularity has caused access and speed problems, but extra server capacity seems to have dealt with this. (At one point, it was creaking with 1,800 users logged on, now it happily supports 6,000.)

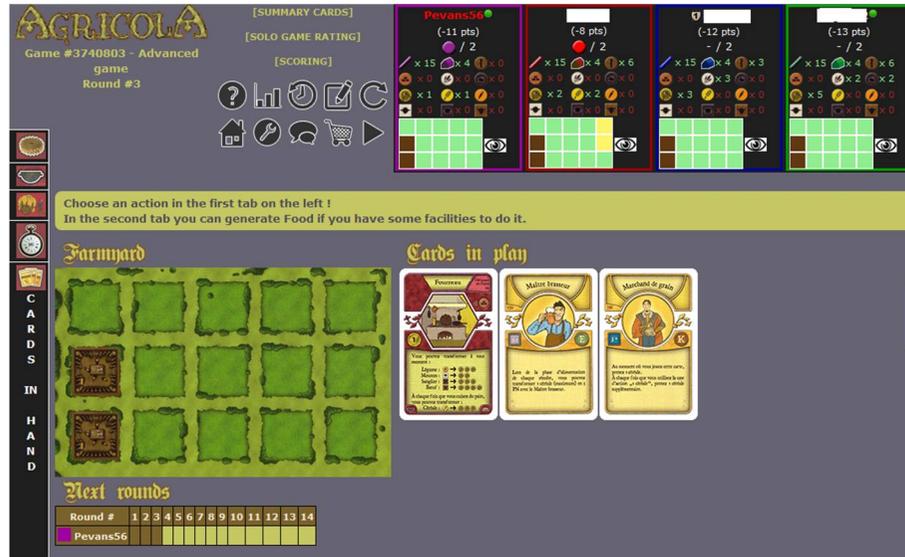
The games on BGA all have a standard framework, which helps as you move from game to game. Again, there is extensive use of mouseover to pop up game and play information, which is fine on a PC, less so on a tablet/phone. It's clearly database-driven as one of the features is going to a game's log and re-playing it from a chosen point – which is when the animations are particularly useful.

One thing BGA is hot on is players taking their turns in a timely manner. Something that's useful in a live game. The time limits are set by the system, though you can opt for a 'slow' game when you're setting one up, and I find them tight. There are sanctions that can be imposed on slow players, but it's up to the rest of the players to do this. Even if not penalised, slow play is recorded by BGA and forms part of a player's “reputation” – it can also be used as a criterion for what players you want when setting up a game.

The bane of asynchronous games has always been the drop-out. Someone who starts a game, but then stops playing, for whatever reason, part of the way through. This also forms part of players' reputation on BGA and, again, can be used as a criterion for players when setting up a game. When I first started using BGA, you had to be quick setting up a game as the system would open it up to players before you'd finished defining all the criteria, but nowadays you can take your time before opening the game to the world.

As with Yucata, BGA is largely a labour of love with a core team (mostly French) and lots of people developing specific games. However, it has a more commercial feel with a Premium membership subscription that offers a number of perks – such as early access to new games and the voice chat feature (though you only need one Premium member in a game to be able to use this). As I've played more games in real-time in recent months, BGA has become my preferred platform for live games.

My third place for playing games is Boîte à Jeux (boiteajoux.net), a wonderfully named French site. Much as I enjoy playing here, the colour scheme is a pain. Black text on a dark grey background makes it hard to see. Premium subscribers can change the colour scheme, but all of them involve a dark background and I



Agricola at an early stage on Boîte à Jeux. You'll notice this is only my personal board and played cards. The column of icons left middle show the main board and my hand, amongst other things, if I mouse over them. Tricky on a touch screen...

find the grey one the least painful. This aside, the site has a fascinating selection of games, all well implemented.

BaJ, as I call it, was also the first of these sites that I noticed had a standard block of icons. Regardless of the game you're playing, this block appears, giving options to move to your next game, return to home, check the game's log, add your own notes, read the rules and so on. This gives each new game a familiar feel, though the implementations differ in detail. The use of mouseover for informative pop-ups is again an issue when using a touch screen, but I'm getting used to it by now.

For me, the main attraction of BaJ is that it has *Agricola*. I've played this a lot since discovering the website. Generally in the same configuration, but you have plenty of options when setting up a game. You can go for the original 'family' game, use any or all of the three basic decks of 'minor improvements' and 'occupations' (though not any of the expansions) and decide how players get their cards: random deal, drafting, pick 7 from 10 et al.

Apart from these three, I still use – and sometimes prefer – sites dedicated to a single game. For example, for *Through the Ages*, boardgaming-online.com is the website for me. Yes, both editions of the game are on BGA, but I prefer the older website (where *Through the Ages* is the only game on offer – both editions again).

Personal

Viscount Terence Cuckpowder

Sir, As we prepare to head to the front, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for the gift of 100 cr which found its way to me last month. It was unexpected and – without wishing to overdo things – came in the nick of time.

I am truly grateful.

Your humble servant,

† Captain Giles Colbert, Gascons

Lt. Colonel Augustin,

While I have not been able, despite the Brigadier's assistance, to achieve the role of aide to the Brigadier, I am nevertheless minded to pay attention to his request that I bring some decent wine to the front with us. The biggest obstacle to this is that, being new to Paris, I have no idea who the reputable wine merchants are. Can you recommend a merchant with whom I can invest 50 crowns or so in palatable wine that will survive being transported to the front? Thank you.

Yours,

† Subaltern (who hopes to soon be a captain) Jacques Hatt

To: All gentlemen of Paris

Major le Hatter is pleased to announce the formation of the 'Tarquin for CPS Group'. Upon our return from the Front I shall be hosting a celebratory party at Hunter's to toast the achievements of the Army, commiserations for those who died for France and to launch the campaign to see the post of Commissioner of Public Safety awarded to my good self.

All gentlemen and their ladies are welcome to attend and details shall follow in due course. I trust that many will attend and a list of the faithful will be taken to ensure these are excluded from 'The List' which means they can rest easy that my future agents and officials will not bother them when it comes to the rounding up of traitors and miscreants that currently besmirch our fine city.

God bless the King, God bless France, God bless Count d'Eaunerts and God bless me!

† Major Tarquin le Hatter
Kings Musketeers, CPS in waiting

Poetry Corner

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

69th Arquebusiers

His weapon's so bulky and stout:
Eleven full pounds thereabout.
It is such a dead weight,
Just to keep it up straight,
He needs a long rest when he's out.

† Le Salame Disparu

This summer for kicks,
I'll be out in the sticks,
Dodging muskets for France,
While at home ladies dance
With inferior men
And dream of times when
Dear Norman returns.
It's for him her heart yearns,
So wait for me Paris
As I face Netherlands' malice
And return as your hero:
France one, United Provinces zero.

† NdB

advantage of Henri DuShite's absence to pinch his mistress and then practises sabre for three weeks – well, he's now got two duels scheduled for September. Bernard de Lur-Saluces doesn't bother with anything else: he just practises sabre all month. ❖

Press

Military Missives

M LaHesse,

I have fond memories of Christmas in Mainz from my time in Giessen years ago!

As I have now taken command of the Picardy Musketeers, I will remedy the unfortunate situation which saw a man of your Calibre having his service in the King's Army overlooked.

Mon Dieu et Le Roi!

† LCol Zavier Ulric Turenne

Brigadier General Hommemince:

I see that your current aide lacks the respect for you to step aside. I hope that he will serve you well anyway during the upcoming campaign.

Which brings me to a small question. May I borrow 300 crowns from you so that I may go to the front as a Captain rather than a Subaltern?

(I would have been happy to remain as a Subaltern if your current aide had been more cooperative. Such is life.)

Thank you,

† Subaltern Jacques Hatt

Certainly, Subaltern, or should I say "Captain" Hatt. Enclosed please find 500 crowns for uniforms and expenses. I suggest picking up a case

or two of good wine to take along to the front. The "wine" we receive from the quartermaster is of rather marginal quality, I am afraid.

Best, † G. Hommince

Thank you, Brigadier. I will certainly make sure to bring some suitable wine to the front with us. I hope that you will not object if I also share it with my Commanding officer, Lt. Colonel Augustin Fourier, as well as yourself.

Yours,

† Subaltern, soon to be Captain,
Jacques Hatt

Certes, Captain. We are all fellow Frenchmen at the front.

† GH

Matters of Honour

Gentlemen,

Considering we have a moral higher duty to King and Country ahead of us, may I suggest that, in order to reduce risk of a death amongst His Majesty's army, we agree that honour is satisfied at first blood?

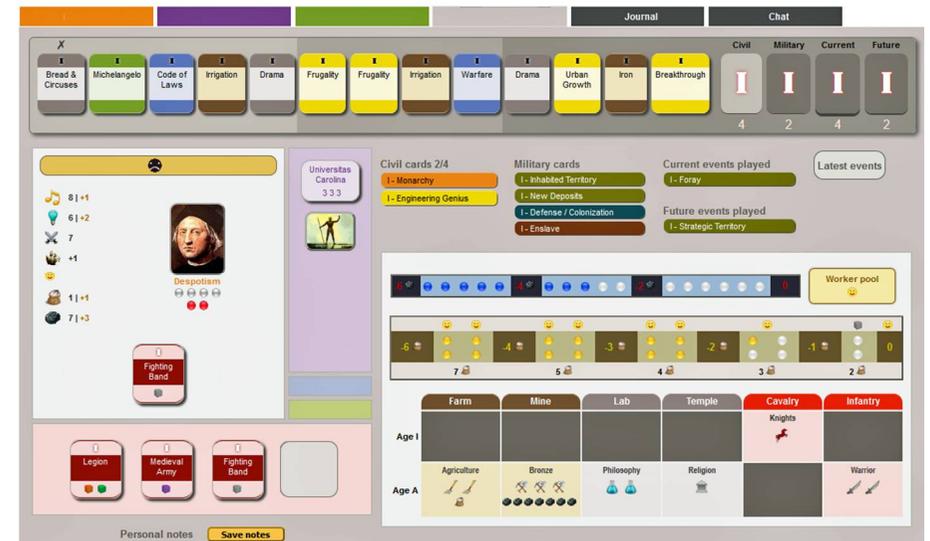
Yours,

† Captain Giles Colbert, Gascon
Regiment

Admittedly this may be because I've spent years getting used to the way boardgaming-online.com has implemented the game. It has minimal graphics, bright colours and some useful features (such as checking the discard pile) that I find clear and easy to use. As usual, I'm playing turn-based games and I don't know how well this site would support a real-time game.

I've only recently started playing *Through the Ages* (New edition) on BGA and struggled to work out what was going on. I found the graphics (from the published game) dull and murky and had to turn up the brightness to see some of the details. However, it undoubtedly works well for real-time play. On either website, *Through the Ages* is one game that really benefits from being played online: the computer handles all the fiddly record-keeping and admin.

Now, I've been playing on boardgaming-online.com for over ten years. But I've been using brass.orderofthehammer.com more than a year longer. As the name suggests, this is an online implementation of Martin Wallace's *Brass* (not *Brass: Birmingham* or *Brass: Lancashire*, but the original game from 2007). It has the clean and bright user interface that I prefer and makes effective use of some graphics from the physical game. *Brass* is another game that benefits from being administered by a computer. Unlike my first few face-to-face games, you can't end up with obviously illegal plays on the board that nobody's spotted until it's too late to unwind them.



Through the Ages at boardgaming-online.com – no need to turn up the brightness here. My hand of cards is just coloured bars, but mouseover shows the detail – as it does with everything else.

Splish, splosh

Progress is much slower for First Army this month as the water level in the polders rises – as do local militias. There are still plenty of Mentions in Despatches scattered about. Army commander General Jacques de Gain gets two for a start (“I said he’d be Field Marshal”). He adds a few hundred crowns to his stash of loot. There are Mentions, too, for the Army Adjutant, Les Anonyme (“Still not fast enough”), though his looting is not as effective.

The Guards Brigade does well, as you’d expect, but there’s no MiD for (brevet) Brigadier Jean Jeanie. Instead, he is promoted to (full) Brigadier-General, opening a vacancy at the top of the Royal Foot Guards. A couple of hundred crowns worth of booty finds its way into his pockets.

The Royal Foot Guards see off the local militia as they occupy towns in Holland. Lt-Colonel Beau Reese Jean Seine is promoted to Colonel, as expected. He gains a Mention (“Well, he is Minister of War”) and 500 crowns worth of loot. Into the Lt-Colonel’s position comes Major Bastian de LaGarde. He is Mentioned in Despatches as well (“Well, he is Commissioner of Public Safety”), but isn’t quite up to Seine’s standards in the looting department. This means there’s no promotion available for the other Major, Eclair de Lame, so he gets a double Mention (“Well, he can’t be promoted”), followed by a Knighthood. Some loot comes his way, but it’s not even as much as LaGarde got. However, it is enough for him to send back to Paris to pay off his debts. Captain Camille de Polignac breaks the pattern by not being promoted. Or getting his name into the Despatches. He does liberate 500 crowns worth of goodies, though.

The regiment may not have the same chain of promotions, but the Cardinal’s Guard are equally successful militarily. Instead, commander Jean d’Ice is Mentioned twice after a close shave with Dutch defenders wielding very sharp swords (“That is a close shave!”). He becomes a Marquis and enhances his finances by the best part of 500 crowns. Major Thierry d’Actyl is likewise involved in a confrontation with locals, escaping with just a shredded jacket. His share of the loot is just a couple of hundred crowns. A similar amount is pocketed by Captain Jerome Fortmayne without any drama.

There’s a shock for the King’s Musketeers as they face stiff resistance from what appear to be regular troops. CO Duncan d’Eauneurts is still buried in paperwork from Paris, so Lt-Colonel Greg de Bécqueur takes the lead. A pair of Mentions in Despatches is the result (“These croissants are very good. Have you tried the pies?”), leading to a Knighthood. Bécqueur picks up several hundred crowns worth of loot as well. The two Majors, Robert d’Lancier and Tarquin le Hatter, get around a hundred crowns each in booty. There’s a footnote in the Despatches for Lancier (“Definitely a former Marine”). Captured enemy soldiers turn out to be wearing Spanish-style uniforms...

Winning on points

Pevans reviews *Blitzkrieg!*

The subheading on the *Blitzkrieg!* box is “World War Two in 20 Minutes” and it pretty much does just that. It’s a tight tactical tussle across the major theatres of the war. Players deploy their troops – by sea, land and air – to swing a theatre’s balance in their favour and win a campaign. Each campaign is worth points: first to 25 wins the war. Who knew WW2 was won on points? One thing to note: the Axis player starts, so if they’re first to 25 the Allies get one more turn to try to beat them.

That’s the game in a nutshell. Playing it is a lot more complicated, of course. To start with, it’s a highly abstracted version of the war. The board shows five ‘theatres’ (Western Europe, Pacific and so on). Each theatre has a number of ‘campaigns’ and a track that indicates which side, Axis or Allies, has the advantage in this theatre (the marker starts in the middle and moves towards one side or the other as players deploy their units). When a campaign is completed, the side that’s ahead scores the indicated victory points. If they’re far enough ahead they get a bonus point or two – an incentive to get a big lead.

Players’ troops are square cardboard counters – aircraft, ships and tanks, plus a couple of specials – with a value (0-3). They go into bags and players draw a few from their bag to start, hiding them behind their shield. Their turns then consist of playing a counter and drawing another. When a counter fills the last space in the row of a campaign, the player in the lead in that theatre scores the campaign’s points. You can immediately see the first tactical consideration: you don’t want to complete a campaign that your opponent will score. Or make it easy for them to complete it.

However, when you place a unit, you move the marker in that theatre to your side by the value of the counter. So it’s possible to swing the result with the piece that completes a campaign. Which means you can’t afford to leave a single space in a campaign row if the margin in that theatre is close. Ooh, it’s getting trickier.

There are restrictions on where counters go, of course. There are also bonuses printed on most spaces that add another factor when considering where to place a unit. Bombing, for example, removes one of your opponent’s counters (at random). This permanently reduces the number of counters they choose from, so it’s more significant than just losing a counter. Conversely, industrial production lets you draw an extra counter, increasing your stock.

Other bonuses score points or adjust the balance in a theatre – sometimes in a different one. And the Research bonus means you add one of the special counters to your bag. These represent advanced weapons, but it’s a matter of chance when, if ever, you get to use them. They range from four-point counters (such as jet

aircraft), which just provide a bit more oomph, to the atomic bomb! The bomb is powerful, but a double-edged sword: it wins you one theatre, but is points against you everywhere else.

All of this produces a tense game that usually ends in a close result. Each turn requires some consideration: do you counter your opponent's last move or play somewhere else? Is there anywhere you can win a campaign or make one certain? Is it time to complete a campaign? Or would it make more sense to grab a specific bonus (there are a few double bonus spaces that are really useful). In particular, when do you give up on a theatre -- you can't win 'em all?

What doesn't seem to work is concentrating on one thing. I've had an opponent who tried to bomb me out of the game, grabbed all the bombing bonuses. I responded by taking the industrial production spaces to increase my counters again and won. I've had an opponent go for research, occupying most of the research spaces and using jet fighters and the atomic bomb against me. However, he still had most of those research counters in his bag at the end of the game -- which I won.

What's really good about this game is that it makes you think hard about your options, but still plays in under half an hour. Full marks to designer Paolo Mori.



And that's a win for the Axis with a crushing victory in the Pacific, despite being behind in three out of the four remaining theatres.



succeed. Frontier regiment 4's success in capturing Fort Crèvecoeur and its sluices is a good step forward as it prevents any further inundation of the area by the Dutch. Xavier-Beauregard is Mentioned twice in Despatches ("And he took Nijmegen") and adds well over 500 crowns worth of booty to his coffers. Brigadier-General Xavier Money continues to serve with Frontier regiment 2 and also receives a (brief) Mention ("Is he still here?").

General Leonard de Hofstadt is in the command tent of Third Army and is busy dividing up his four Brigades (and the Royal North Highlanders) to garrison everywhere. His organisational success brings a Mention ("Where is everybody?") and

elevation to Marquis. He only has time to pocket a couple of hundred crowns worth of plunder though.

Newly promoted to Colonel of the RMs, Henri DuShite becomes acting commander of First Foot Brigade (after the sad death of the Brigadier last month), where his Lieutenant-Colonel, Alonzo Fonde-Lapatrie, is Brigade Major. There's nothing more to say about DuShite's month, but Fonde-Lapatrie has a close brush with death, for which he is Mentioned ("That was close.").

The Picardy Musketeers discover that the fort they've been assigned to is booby-trapped. The way they discover this is by Subaltern Edouard Jogue triggering a tripwire and being squashed flat by a large stone falling from the ramparts. RIP. Colonel Xavier Ulric Turenne promptly leaves the fortress and stays outside, quivering, until he's been assured it's completely safe. Subaltern Cyrano de Lancet has a bright idea and sharpens his sword diligently. Then he runs round the ramparts, sword in front of him, cutting the remaining wires. He triggers a few stones even so, but he's fast enough that they land behind him – though one narrowly misses Major Louis Renault. Lancet's reward is a fulsome Mention in Despatches ("Ingenious fellow – need to keep an eye on him."). As the ranking officer, Renault is promoted to Lt-Colonel. Subaltern Lascar Vivrebras fails to distinguish himself.

Hercule D'Engin is Brigade Major of Second Foot. This allows him to poke through the nooks and crannies of the forts assigned to the Brigade. When I say "nooks and crannies", I mean storerooms. The result is worth almost 500 crowns to Lt-Col Engin.

- Dragoon Brigade: 1
 - Grand Duke Max's Dragoons: 3
 - Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons: 3
- Cavalry Division: 2
 - Horse Guards Brigade: 3
 - Dragoon Guards: 1
 - Queen's Own Carabiniers: 1
- Heavy Brigade: 1
 - Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers: 2
 - Crown Prince Cuirassiers: 1
- Second Army: 2
 - Frontier Division: 3
 - Frontier regiment 1: 4
 - Frontier regiment 2: 5
 - Frontier regiment 3: 2
 - Frontier regiment 4: 4
- Third Army: 4
 - Second Division: 4
 - 3rd Foot Brigade: 6
 - 27th Musketeers: 5
 - 4th Arquebusiers: 2
 - 4th Foot Brigade: 3
 - 69th Arquebusiers: 2
 - The Gascon Regiment: 5
 - RNHB regiment: 1
 - Third Division: 5
 - 1st Foot Brigade: 6
 - Royal Marines: 5
 - Picardy Musketeers: 4
 - 2nd Foot Brigade: 6
 - 13th Fusiliers: 6
 - 53rd Fusiliers: 4

July 1672 (341)

In a famous victory the French forces cross the Rhine at Arnhem into the northern United Provinces. The major city of Amsterdam lies within French grasp despite the Dutch tactic of flooding the polders – the water is rising too slowly. However, Amsterdam has newly built walls (reinforced with cannon from the Dutch fleet), a large militia and can be supplied from the sea. As the King hesitates, His Eminence intervenes: “Your Majesty, you know the promissory notes we pay the troops with? Guess which banks issue them...” The prospect of Europe’s financial system collapsing keeps Amsterdam safe.

While First Army wades slowly north, Second Army lays siege to the “impregnable” fortress town of ’s-Hertogenbosch and Third Army is busy occupying the dozens of strongholds taken from the Dutch. General Uther Xavier-Beauregard, commanding Second Army, is not happy. The fortress at ’s-Hertogenbosch is known as the ‘swamp dragon’ – the marshes surrounding it make a siege difficult. However, the garrison is small, so perhaps the French can

The game includes a solitaire variant (from David Turczi) using a simple AI mechanism. However, I haven’t tried this yet. There’s also a slightly bonkers expansion: Nippon. This presumes the Axis won WW2 and Japan is now invading German-occupied America. The *Man in the High Castle* scenario, if you will. Except the Japanese forces include Godzilla. Go figure. The interesting thing is that geography plays more of a part. Each theatre has only one campaign and the winner chooses a linked theatre to fight next (thus, a win in Boston lets you move on to New York). Worth trying to see how that works out, but first I want to play the base game some more.

Blitzkrieg! is an abstract wargame designed by Paolo Mori (with a solitaire variant designed by David Turczi) and published by PSC Games. It is for 1–2 players, aged 14+, and takes 20 minutes to play (certainly under 30 in my experience). It gets a solid 8/10 on my highly subjective scale. This review was first published in the Winter 2020 edition of Gamers Alliance Report.

Reading Matter

After enjoying Ann Leckie’s “Ancillary” books (see my thoughts in *TWJO* 155 and 157), I was definitely going to read her latest – despite my relative disappointment with 2017’s *Provenance* (*TWJO* 192). The good news is that Leckie’s inventiveness is going full pelt in *The Raven Tower*. It’s clearly a fantasy as our main character is a god. No, really. One of many gods in the world portrayed in the book, sustained by the prayers and devotion of human beings.



The interesting thing is that it doesn’t need many people to power a god. Thus there are Roman-style household gods that just need the family’s prayers and do little things like keeping the knives sharp and the fire lit. Then you’ve got a host of “small gods” and the big boys, like our ‘hero’, “The Strength and Patience of the Hill”. Who’s a rock. Well, is embodied in a rock, anyway – gods can shift to different bodies, but this one chooses not to.

One strand of the book is the story of this god, whose consciousness starts at the dawn of time and observes the evolution of physical life and the development of humanity to its current peak of iron tools and stone buildings. We discover that what a god says is true. Unless contradicted by another god, when it becomes a battle between them. A god needs to have the power to enforce its words. And the gods need to be careful just what they say in case another god or pesky humans exploit a loophole or double meaning.

The other strand is narrated by The Strength and Patience of the Hill, addressing its central character as “you”. Given Leckie’s track record, I quickly realised I shouldn’t make any assumptions about the sex of this character. This seems settled, though when other characters talk about Eolo (you) as he. He is a

soldier and aide to Mawat, heir to the Raven's Lease, ruler of the land of Iraden. The Raven is Iraden's god, keeping the land secure against its enemies. However, it is incarnate in the body of a raven and, when that raven dies, so must the Raven's Lease. Which is when the heir steps up, ruling with the new embodiment of the Raven.

The plot of this strand starts with Mawat (and Eolo) returning to Vastai, capital of Iraden and where the Raven is consulted in his tower. Mawat is expecting to succeed his father, but finds his uncle on the throne (umm, bench, actually). Before you can say "Hamlet", we're knee-deep in politics and intrigue, with poor out-of-his-depth Eolo trying to work out what's going on. With the added mystery, for the reader, of why this is narrated by The Strength and Patience of the Hill.

The plot of the other strand, years in the past, concerns the life of the god and its interactions with humans. Which eventually involve it in the rivalry between the Raven and the gods of Ard Vuskitia. This latter being the city to the north of Vastai that controls – and taxes – the sea traffic through the strait between them. As the two stories unfold, the reader begins to realise how they will converge, but is still left wondering why Eolo is so significant to The Strength and Patience of the Hill.

I have to say I found this book baffling to begin with, but was drawn in by the narrative and the characters. As with the "Ancillary" series, Leckie quickly engages our sympathies with the main characters: Eolo on the one hand and The Strength and Patience of the Hill on the other. Yes, we can even relate to this strange being that calls itself a god. Particularly when we discover it, too, has emotions – anger, in particular. Which doesn't bode well...

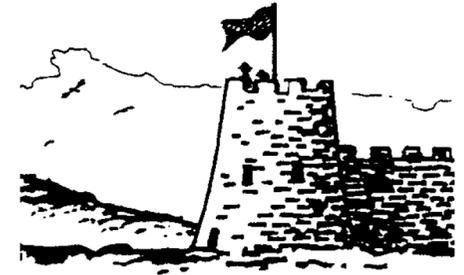
Once I was hooked, *The Raven Tower* grew on me. Watching the development of Stone, Bronze and Iron Age man in one strand, while grappling with the politics of Iraden in the other, and trying to work out where this journey would take me. It was a very enjoyable ride.

Games Events

Well, the next Tringcon is scheduled for 19th September and still seems to be going ahead (at Marsworth Millennium Hall, outside Tring). The website currently lists seven people booked in, but I don't know when this was last updated. If you're interested, I suggest using the contact details on the website to check the latest situation: www.tringcon.org

The following Saturday (26th September) should be Raiders of the Game Cupboard LII (at the Waterside Community Centre in Burton-on-Trent). The website does not seem to have been updated since they cancelled the June event, but also says "it is unlikely that we will be able to host another event in 2020." Again, I suggest checking: www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk

Gascon Captain Gilles Colbert is one of the casualties: a bridge collapses as the Gascons march across and several men are swept away, including Captain Colbert. RIP.



First Foot Brigade Major Alonzo Fonde-Lapatrie grumbles about the Brigade's assignment ("digging ditches..."), but is promoted to Lt-Col anyway. The Royal Marines are similarly disgruntled: why aren't they on board the ships fighting at Sole Bay? Instead they're being shot at by Dutch musketeers. And those musketeers can shoot! Major Ivor Edward Defrane falls to the musketry. RIP. And Lt-Colonel Henri DuShite, the regiment's commander, only survives because his horse is between him and the Dutchmen. However, it's an ill wind etc and he is promoted to Colonel.

Alongside them the Picardy Musketeers do a bit better – there are no significant casualties for a start. Though Subaltern Lascar Vivrebras does have his hat shot off by a well-aimed musket ball. There is no reward for him, nor for Subalterns Cyrano de Lancet and Edouard Jogue, nor even Colonel Zavier Ulric Turenne. Captain Louis Renault gains promotion to Major, however, and picks up the cash to buy one of the two horses he needs. He finances the other one himself.

Hercule D'Engin is Brigade Major of Second Foot which brings him promotion to Lt-Colonel. Hugh Jass commands the 13th Fusiliers and falls to Dutch sabres when the regiment is surprised by Dutch Chasseurs. It's not a sustained attack, but Jass was leading from the front and is the first to fall. RIP.

It's oh sooo quiet

With all this going on elsewhere, who's left in Paris? Well, Gaz Moutarde for one. The unassigned Bdr-General spends a couple of weeks with his lady friend and one week practising cutlass. The other week he "potters around at home". Unassigned Lt-General Terence Cuckpowder takes Madelaine de Proust to the Fleur, practises sabre for two weeks and then steals Pierre Cardigan's mistress! Balzac Slapdash is just un-military. He pops into the Blue Gables with Alison Wunderlandt and practises with his rapier for the rest of the month. Bernard de Lur-Saluces spends all month with his weapon: the sabre. And that's that. ❖

Battle Results

First Army: 2
 First Division: 2
 Guards Brigade: 2
 Royal Foot Guards: 1
 Cardinal's Guard: 1
 King's Musketeers: 3

Col Norman de Bastille does less well with the looting, but rather better with his Mention (“He comes from where? I thought it was a prison...”). There’s the same amount of cash for Major Justin Thyme, but even more Mentions (“Good job he arrived when he did”). Nothing is the reward for Captain Pierre de Terre, but Subaltern Petit-Garson Riche gets a footnote in the Despatches for no reason.

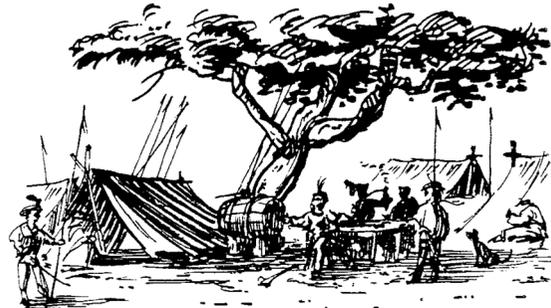
Heavy Brigade Major Rick Shaw gets the round 500 crowns worth of plunder. In his regiment, the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers, Lt-Col Pierre Cardigan receives a note in the Despatches (“Wasn’t he a General?”) and grabs some booty – a few hundred crowns worth.

Chris Knight commands the Crown Prince Cuirassiers, which allows him to add a few hundred crowns to his personal wealth. He is Mentioned in Despatches as well (“Was that brave?”). There’s no loot for Major William de Beast, but he is Mentioned twice (“That definitely wasn’t brave. But it was effective”) and is granted a Knighthood. Subaltern Rob d’Masses contents himself with a couple of hundred crowns worth of loot.

How many castles is that?

Second Army – aka the Frontier troops – has the job of besieging the various Dutch fortresses. However, these capitulate so quickly that the Army is moving almost as fast as First Army’s Field Ops. General Uther Xavier-Beauregard is the army’s new commander and shows his mettle by acquiring over 1,500 crowns worth of loot along the way. That’s got to be worth a Mention in Despatches (“A good haul”). There’s a Mention, too, for Bdr-General Xavier Money, who’s been assigned to Frontier regiment 2 (“He’s pining for a regiment”). At the end of the month, the army is digging siege works around the Rhine fortifications.

The job of Third Army is covering First Army’s lines of communication and making sure the Spanish don’t get any ideas while the French forces are busy elsewhere. There’s no need to worry about the English as they’re France’s glorious allies against the Dutch. Given First Army’s rapid progress, Third Army has to keep on the move as well. Brevet General Leonard de Hofstadt is army commander and “bravely surveys” the army’s performance from his command tent. Though it does have to be moved around a lot. And why is there a cart full of



manure following him around? It’s come all the way from Paris, bearing the legend “For the roses”... Hofstadt has his rank made permanent and a little loose change goes into his pocket. There’s no comment on the state of his roses.

The following box concentrates on events I hope 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)~~ to play online at various websites. For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers

Games Games Games Days: ~~from noon (ish) on the second Saturday each month 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). Please contact me if you’re thinking of attending in case other things have got in the way.~~

UK Games Expo: ~~end of May at the NEC (Halls 1 3 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. 22nd-25th October 2020, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.spiel-messe.com/en~~

MidCon: 13th-15th November 2020 at the Hallmark Hotel (and Hallmark Inn across the road) 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, plus a trade stand from Spirit Games. 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

Online Games

I’m playing a lot of board games online (by e-mail) and would like *TWJO* readers to join me. Let me know what games you’d like to play and I’ll add you in.

I’m running low on *Agricola* games in progress. Who’d like to join me on Boîte à Jeux (www.boiteajeux.net)?

I won *Brass* game 93 (at www.brass.orderofthehammer.com) to make two in a row. Game 94 is nearing its end with Mike Tobias just in front. Who’d like to join the next one? Password, as always, is pevans56

I’m definitely pining for another game of *Pax Porfirianai* (at yucata.de) and more *Rajas of the Ganges* and *Snowdonia* needs a fourth player...

I fancy some more *Keyflower* (at BoardGameArena.com). And how about *Puerto Rico* while I’m there? Or their implementation of *Through the Ages: a New Story of Civilization*?

I prefer *Through the Ages: a New Story of Civilization* at boardgaming-online.com and it’s about time there was a new *TWJO* game – standard or pacifist.

Trophy Hunter

Turn 9 revisited

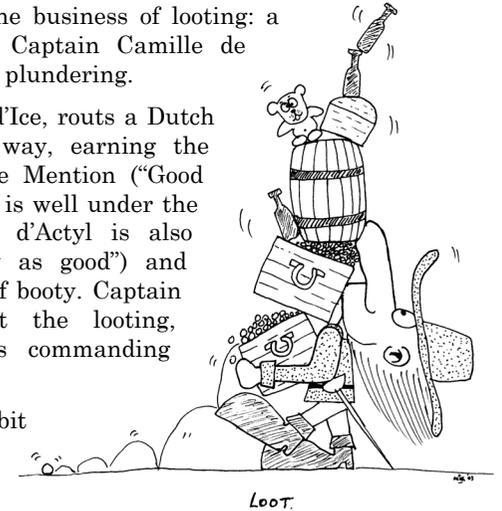
Aagh! Some twit forgot to put the turn 9 board into *TWJO* 206. Since this is rather necessary for people to make sensible decisions, here is that board. And you have until the next deadline to let me have your final shots.

This turn's shots

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | e | e | | | | | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | e | e | | | | | x | | | ♠ | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | ‡ | | | | | ♠ | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | g | g | | S | | | ‡ | | | ♣ | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | x | | | X | S | | ‡ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | x | s | B | | | | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | X | | | | | | X | | | | | ♣ | | | | |
| 9 | | | ♠ | | | | ♠ | | ‡ | | | ‡ | ‡ | ‡ | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | ♠ | | | | ♠ | | ‡ | | | | | | B | | | | X | |
| 11 | | ♣ | | | | | | | ‡ | | | | | | | | | ♣ | | |
| 12 | | | | | | | x | | | | | x | | | | | | | | x |
| 13 | | | | | x | | | | | X | | | | | G | | | | x | |
| 14 | | | | | | | X | X | X | | | X | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | e | e | | | | | | G | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | e | e | | | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | | | | | G |
| 17 | x | x | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | | | ♠ | ♠ | | | | | ♠ | | X | | | | | | | | ♣ | |
| 19 | | | | | | | | x | ♠ | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20 | | | | | x | x | | | | | | | | | | ♠ | ♠ | | | |

de Lame has no distraction from the business of looting: a round 500 crowns is his reward. Captain Camille de Polignac does slightly better with his plundering.

The Cardinal's Guard, led by Jean d'Ice, routs a Dutch force that attempts to bar their way, earning the regiment's commander an extensive Mention ("Good job"). However, his share of the loot is well under the 500 crowns mark. Major Thierry d'Actyl is also Mentioned in Despatches ("Nearly as good") and pocketed a token 100 crowns worth of booty. Captain Jerome Fortmayne does best at the looting, liberating slightly more than his commanding officer.



The King's Musketeers encounter a bit more resistance, but it's useless: the French forces push forward. KM commander Duncan d'Eauneurts is Mentioned in Despatches ("Look, it's the Minister of State") to go with a few hundred crowns worth of loot. Lt-Colonel Greg de Bécqueur just gets a Mention ("Wasn't he Divisional Adjutant last week?"). There are mentions, too, for the two Majors ("There are two of them!"): Tarquin le Hatter, whose loot is worth less than their CO's, and Robert d'Lancier, whose takings are a bit more than Eauneurts'.

The Dragoon Brigade handles scouting and foraging for the Division, the horsemen relishing the flat open spaces. Brigade Major Augustin Fourier is promoted to Colonel (of the GDMD) for his sterling work. Said work also brings him over 500 crowns worth of loot. In Fourier's regiment, Subaltern Jacques Hatt survives. As does Captain Alex Craimant in the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons.

Ranging further afield, the Cavalry Division has a whale of a time as Dutch defenders melt away before them. Divisional Adjutant Ben e'Volence has his work cut out keeping track of everything, but gets two Mentions in Despatches for his trouble ("Good man with a ledger, that"). Plus over a thousand crowns worth of loot transferred to his personal account.

The Dragoon Guards Colonel, Henri Dubois, is actually Brigade Major of the Horse Guards. He is brevetted to Brigadier-General. Shame there isn't a vacancy for command of the Brigade. Major Conrad de Coverlet has an enjoyable, but unremarkable time in the Dragoon Guards, while DG Captain Phillipe F'Loppe picks up a couple of hundred crowns worth of booty and receives a Mention in Despatches ("Excellent one-handed pick-up!").

Marc de Zorro is Colonel of the Queen's Own Carabiniers and is also Mentioned ("Grabbing with both hands") as he scoops up nearly 500 crowns worth of loot. Lt-

of rank means Lancier no longer meets the criteria to be Adjutant of Third Army, the appointment Leonard de Hofstadt offers him. Hofstadt keeps the place open.

There is just one governmental change: Minister of State Duncan d'Éauneurts appoints the man he's just beaten in a duel, Bastian de LaGarde, as Commissioner of Public Safety. Not that this will make much difference while everybody's on active service. It does leave a vacancy as Brigade Major of the Guards, however – LaGarde's previous appointment. His Majesty declines to grant a further title to Sir Bastian.

And then the assembled might of the French armies marches (or trots) out on the road north (and east a bit, carefully navigating between the bits of the Spanish Netherlands) to teach the upstarts of the United Provinces a lesson. Even those who, for some reason, are not expecting to go are on the march. Such as King's Musketeers commander Duncan d'Éauneurts and new Major Robert d'Lancier. And Hercule D'Engin, Brigade Major of Second Foot. Not to mention 13th Fusilier's commander Hugh Jass. D'oh! However, there is one additional volunteer: Brigadier-General Xavier Money has no command, but trots off with the rest to serve in a Frontier regiment.

Franco–Dutch war

First Army leads the way into Dutch territory, effectively roaming the countryside with little opposition – the relatively dry spring season means the rivers and canals are fordable. First Army commander General Jacques de Gain makes a point of putting himself in harm's way and his uniform gathers several holes from near misses with musket balls. His bravery brings him a Mention in Despatches (“He should be Field Marshal!”) and he is named as Field Marshal for the next year (from September). The odd spot of looting adds over a thousand crowns to his wealth. His Adjutant, Colonel Les Anonyme, struggles to keep up. He still gets his own Mention, though (“You'll have to move a bit faster, Anon”), and is brevetted to Bdr-General. He collects just as much loot as General Gain.

First Division consists of the Guards Brigade supported by the Dragoons. They march north through the United Provinces, carefully bypassing Maastricht and aiming to cross the Rhine. Guards Brigadier Jean Jeanie has a pleasant time, trotting on his horse from encampment to encampment and selecting interesting pieces of plunder: well over 500 crowns worth by the end of the month.

With Jeanie commanding the Brigade, Lieutenant-Colonel Beau Reese Jean Seine is in charge of the Royal Foot Guards. The regiment doesn't run into any serious resistance and Seine gets a brief Mention in the Despatches (“Look, it's the Minister of War”) and picks up a couple of hundred crowns worth of booty. Senior Major Bastian de LaGarde is distracted by the paperwork that keeps arriving from Paris, but is also worth a footnote in Despatches (“Look, it's the Commissioner of Public Safety”) which brings him elevation to the title of Baron. He also pockets a couple of hundred crowns worth of goodies. Junior Major Eclair

Scores

| Player | Shots | This turn | Total |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|-------|
| Alex Bardy | K18, L14 | 0 | 10.22 |
| Chris Baylis | O13 | -4 | 1.00 |
| Bob Blanchett | | | -4.00 |
| Colin Bruce | H14, I15 | 0 | 7.06 |
| Charles Burrows | S16 | -4 | 1.06 |
| Mark Cowper | | | 9.56 |
| Mike Domett | F16, H14 | 0 | 10.00 |
| Anthony Gilbert | E5 | 0 | 4.33 |
| William Hay | F6 | 2.5 | 1.06 |
| Andrew Kendall | G14, H14 | 0 | -4.00 |
| Nik Luker | I14, H15 | -2 | 2.00 |
| Tim Macaire | F7, E6 | 0 | 9.89 |
| Graeme Morris | E16, G16 | 0 | 6.06 |
| Rob Pinkerton | H15 | -2 | 7.50 |
| Gerald Udowiczenko | F7, E8 | 0 | 7.56 |
| Pam Udowiczenko | F6 | 2.5 | 6.50 |
| Matthew Wale | K8, S10 | 0 | 20.00 |
| Graeme Wilson | J13, P10 | 0 | 6.00 |
| Paul Wilson | G14, N7 | 0 | 21.22 |

What's this all about

This game is essentially a *Battleships* variant and is open to all readers of *TWJO*. The 20 x 20 grid represents a safari park that needs to cull some of its animals. The players are hunters who've paid for the opportunity to bag trophies.

All you have to do each turn is nominate two squares to take pot-shots at: F9 and M17, say (the second is only used if the first misses). Letters (A-T) run across the grid and numbers (1-20) up and down (thus A1 is the top left corner).

The first hit on each animal scores points in proportion to its size. For example, a Lion is three squares and worth 15 points, so the first hit scores $15/3 = 5$ points. If several players hit the same square at the same time, they share

the points; if several players hit different squares of the same animal at the same time, they get the points for the square they hit.

Once an animal has been identified, subsequent shots share the points of the square they hit (no more points for the first square/s). So if players A and B hit the second square of that lion and C gets the third, C gets 5 points, A and B $2\frac{1}{2}$.

An animal is dead when all its squares have been hit. No more points can be scored for this animal. However, animals worth minus points are patched up between turns and thus each hit scores (negative) points.

After 10 turns or when the board is clear (except for any snakes), the player with the most points wins.

Key

| Animals | Symbol | Size (squares) | Number on grid | Points Value |
|--|--------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Bush | B | 1 | 12 | 0 |
| Monkey | M | 1 | 12 | 4 |
| Antelope | A | 2 | 9 | 8 |
| Snake | S | 2 | ? | 10 |
| Gorilla | G | 3 | 6 | -12 |
| Lion | L | 3 | 3 | 15 |
| Elephant | E | 4 | 2 | 20 |
| Other symbols | | | | |
| | X | Missed shot | | |
| UPPER CASE = this turn, lower case = last turn, Strikeout = dead animal | | | | |

Notes: animals go up and down or left and right, not diagonally, with two exceptions. Elephants are blocks of four squares; each Snake is two diagonal squares and moves by up to three squares a turn.

Animals only touch (if at all) at corners and only Snakes will go next to a Bush.

Send your shots to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF or to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by 18th September 2020.

Subscribing to TWJO

TWJO is published on paper and online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO (as a free PDF). 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, and the games only subscription.

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It’s then turn-about as Bastille seconds Zorro against Coverlet. This time it’s the Carabinier who is the more expert swordsman and Coverlet opts for a careful approach. His opponent is more cautious: a parry, blocks and a bit of dodging allow him to avoid Coverlet’s first slash. Then he strikes with his own slash to inflict the first damage. Then both men slash together. But Zorro’s attack is just the first part of a furious slash and he hits Coverlet hard with the cut. This is enough for the Dragoon Guard, who surrenders.

Who’s CPS?

As the soldiers pack their kit bags, there’s just time for a few last-minute adjustments to the military hierarchy. And a final opportunity to invest. Beau Reese Jean Seine hits the moneylenders for as much cash as he can get. This is about a quarter of the sum he invests in Commerce. Then he calls in a favour that persuades the Adjutant of Third Division to resign. This must be in support of Henri DuShite’s desire to have this post himself. Sadly, no-one uses any influence to support DuShite’s application and it fails.

Seine hasn’t finished yet, though: he uses more of his influence to get rid of the commander of Second Army. This is supported by Uther Xavier-Beauregard, who’s applied for the job, but opposed by Terence Cuckpowder. Cuckpowder is not influential enough to stop the resignation, however, and then supports Xavier-Beauregard’s application (go figure). Xavier-Beauregard’s own favour seals the deal and he is duly appointed to command second army, relinquishing his role as Minister without Portfolio.

Greg de Bécqueur calls in a favour to remove the senior Major in Archduke Leopold’s Cuirassiers, but it is Pierre Cardigan’s influence that makes the man’s departure an absolute certainty. This also leaves the Brigade Major’s position vacant in the Heavy Brigade and Bécqueur deploys more influence to assist the junior ALC Major, Rick Shaw, in getting the appointment. Bécqueur resigns his own post, preferring to lead his battalion of the King’s Musketeers rather than serve as Adjutant in First Division.

Other military men buy themselves up the ranks. Zavier Ulric Turenne, for example, makes himself Colonel of the Picardy Musketeers. William de Beast borrows heavily to fund his purchase of Major of the Crown Prince Cuirassiers. He also buys a cartload of manure, for some reason. Rick Shaw doesn’t borrow and doesn’t have the cash to become Lt-Colonel in the ALCs as he’d like. However, Captain Pierre Cardigan already has enough money to buy the rank over Shaw’s head. (He wants to be Colonel, but that position is taken.)

Henri Dubois donates funds to Phillipe F’Loppe and Tarquin le Hatter. The former borrows a bit more and makes himself Captain in the Dragoon Guards. The latter takes a loan and buys Major in the King’s Musketeers. The second Major’s rank is filled by Robert d’Lancier, formerly Colonel of the Royal Marines, who KM commander Duncan d’Eauneurts signs up for the regiment. This change



rather, doesn't. Shaw employs the same approach as before: a furious lunge. DuShite bobs and weaves, dodging the opening lunge. However, his timing isn't good enough to get out of the way of the cut. And that's another win for the big fellow.

Shaw moves on to the Colonel of the Royal Marines, Robert d'Lancier, seconded by Bastian de LaGarde. He still has the advantage of size – especially as Lancier is carrying old injuries – but it is sabre versus cutlass again (though Lancier seems to think he's using a sabre). Shaw's furious lunge technique has worked so far, so he tries it again. He prods Lancier with his sabre, drawing a little blood. Lancier returns the favour, prodding Shaw with the completely blunt end of his cutlass for absolutely no blood. Then Lancier goes for a parry, which makes no difference at all to the cut that hits him hard. That's three out of three for Rick Shaw, while Lancier is unable to fight Ivor Edward Defrane (who doesn't put in an appearance).

Justin Thyme has the matter of a mademoiselle to settle with Xavier Money. The two are of similar physique, so this looks like being an even fight. Except that Thyme is using his regimental sabre while Money, who has no regimental affiliation any more, has a foil – with which he is not particularly skilled. He does have Tarquin le Hatter as back-up, though. Thyme slashes. Money surrenders. Then he takes Hatter for a "slap-up" breakfast.

Hercule D'Engin may be too ill to fight his own duels this month (though neither Chris Knight nor Rob d'Masses shows up), but he still makes a decent second. His principal is Bastian de LaGarde, who is facing the Minister of State, Duncan d'Eauneurts, over the affections of a lady. Despite his membership of the King's Musketeers, Eauneurts uses a sabre. Engin has a rapier and a lot less skill. He has fewer seconds, too, as Tarquin le Hatter and Greg de Bécqueur support Eauneurts. Engin starts with some blocking, while Eauneurts parries. However, Engin drops his guard too soon and is hit by a slash. He surrenders immediately and then can't meet Rob d'Masses (who isn't around anyway).

This brings us to Conrad de Coverlet, Major in the Dragoon Guards, taking on his regimental enemies in the Queen's Own Carabiniers. His first adversary is QOC Lieutenant-Colonel Norman de Bastille. Bastille is seconded by his Colonel, Marc de Zorro, plus Leonard de Hofstadt, while DG Colonel Henri Dubois seconds Coverlet. Both men use their regimental sabre, but Coverlet has the advantage of greater expertise. He opts for a furious slash, while Bastille chooses to block. This saves him from the initial slash, but does no good against the following cut. Bastille concedes.

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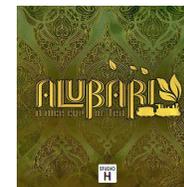
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Orders for August 1672 to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF, UK or lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk by Friday 18th September 2020



June 1672 (340)

The start of June means just one thing: time for France's armies to mobilise and get the summer campaign under way. However, there's still time for gentlemen to settle matters of honour between them. Hence the number of figures to be seen skulking around Paris in the early light. Though Lars Kristmass is not among them – his appointments are postponed to ... well, it will have to be September.

Instead, Alex Craimant and Gilles Colbert are the first to cross swords. Craimant being in the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons and Colbert in the Gascons, they need no other reason to fight: the former wielding a sabre, the latter a rapier, their respective regimental weapons. Apart from having the heavier weapon, Craimant is the bigger of the two. His nominated second, Zavier Ulric Turenne, does not show up, but Marc de Zorro is there to support Colbert. There's no subtlety to this fight: Colbert lunges, scoring first blood, Craimant slashes. Following the gentleman's agreement he proposed (see Press), Colbert surrenders when injured.

Craimant moves on to confront William de Beast – they clashed over a certain young lady. This looks more even: the two men are much the same size and Cuirassier Beast also uses a sabre. His second is Norman de Bastille. Craimant sticks to his simple plan: slash. Beast hits him first, though, by going for a furious slash. As before, Craimant ignores this initial injury and it's his opponent who concedes when hit.

Elsewhere, Georges Hommemince (a more senior member of the PLLD) is Colbert's next opponent. As has already been established in these pages, Hommemince is a little guy. He may have a sabre, but he's going to have to hit an awful lot harder than Colbert to win this. As it happens, he abides by Colbert's suggestion. His slash meets a lunge coming the other way and both men surrender. We'll call that an honourable draw.

Bakar di Brieza doesn't show up to his meeting with Jerome Fortmayne, so the Cardinal's man is next in line for Hommemince. Despite Fortmayne's lack of skill and old injuries, this is a horrible mismatch – think David and Goliath. What's more, he's using a two-handed sword and has Jean d'Ice as his second. First blood goes to Hommemince as he slashes Fortmayne before the big blade gets moving. He then skips out of the way of Fortmayne's own slash. And closes in to apply his boot. Just as the two-hander comes round in a cut... Hommemince is not so much dead as sliced and diced. RIP.

Fortmayne cleans his sword and heads off (Ice in tow) to find Tarquin le Hatter. Musketeer le Hatter has been squaring up to another Cardinal's man, Thierry d'Actyl. This is a rapier fight and the odds are with le Hatter. He has the one second, Xavier Money (equipped with brandy and bandages), to Actyl's two (Les Anonyme and Hercule D'Engin). By lunging furiously Actyl gets his blow in first, but is skewered by a lunge the other way and surrenders before he gets to the intended cut.

This wound is enough to let Actyl decline his duel with Bakar di Brieza (not that he shows up). Le Hatter has no such excuse: he just refuses to fight Jerome Fortmayne or Jean d'Ice. As Brieza is still absent, this means no fights at all for Ice. Seconding duties out of the way, Les Anonyme goes hunting his own duelling opponents. But of Chris Knight and Rob d'Masses there is no sign.

For his first duel, Augustin Fourier of the Grand Duke Max Dragoons chooses to take on Rick Shaw, a member of the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers and thus his enemy. Fourier is of average build. Shaw is a lot bigger. Both use their regimental sabre, though Fourier is more skilled. Shaw surprises him with a furious lunge. The initial lunge is technically first blood, though it's not much more than a scratch. Fourier doesn't take the hint and strikes home with a slash.

Then Shaw gets him with a cut and the fight is over. Fourier departs to get medical attention and is unable to fight Pierre Cardigan.

Ivor Edward Defrane doesn't appear for his duel with Henri DuShite, so DuShite is next up for Shaw. This looks like being a repeat of Shaw's previous duel. Except that Royal Marine DuShite uses a cutlass. Or

