

That would be enough

This has been issue 237 of *To Win Just Once*, published 2nd September 2023. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2023

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* to Mike by Friday 22nd September 2023.

Orders for *LPBS*, Trophy Hunter entries and any other contributions to Pevans by Friday 22nd September 2023.

(Remaining 2023 deadlines: 27th Oct, 1st Dec)

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 – pre-start for a four-player game in this issue and Gerald Udowiczenko is on the list for three more to join him. (Working map and rules provided).

Star Trader – pre-start is in this issue and there's room for one more player. (Rules provided)

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 237 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 17) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as are the drawings on pages 18, 21 and 24. The illustration on page 19 is by Tim Wiseman and those on pages 22 and 23 by Bryan Lea. 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 238: September 2023
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Chatter

My latest excursion along the River (river!) Pinn revealed some familiar looking flowers on the climbing plant festooning the new bridge over the river: hops!



I don't think I've come across wild hops before, though I do remember the hop field that was visible from the bus on my way to school in my teenage years.

Spiderwatch

Number of large, spindly spiders guarding the kitchen door for the evening: 1. Number of small spiders patrolling the bedroom ceiling: 1. Number of large, chunky spiders rescued from the bath and returned to the wild: 1. Number of large, aggressive spiders eating a moth behind the curtain rail during a Ruislip games evening: 1.

2023 UK Games 'Zine poll

Alex Richardson has announced this year's poll and sent these details.

a) WHO MAY VOTE? Anyone who sees at least one eligible 'zine.

b) WHICH 'ZINES ARE ELIGIBLE? Any 'zine published in the British Isles which has produced an issue in 2023 (up to and including the Poll deadline); is distributed by post, as an e-mail, as an attachment to an e-mail or as a download from a website; and runs games that we would recognise as 'postal' ones (e.g. *Diplomacy*, *Railway Rivals*, 18xx, *En Garde!* or *United*, to name only a few). Please note: The

zines should be from the UK but the voters can come from anywhere – all that matters is that you are a regular reader.

c) HOW TO VOTE. List all of the eligible zines that you see and give each one a mark between 1.0 (low) and 10.0 (high), to one decimal place if you wish. Editors may vote for their own zines. Votes should be sent by e-mail from the voter's own account to alex.bokmal@googlemail.com. The Poll deadline will be midnight on TUESDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2023. Results will be sent by e-mail to each voter and (I hope) published by a 'zine editor near you.

TWJO placed 18th (out of 26) last year, which is not surprising as it's not in the mainstream of games 'zines. Still, it would be nice to be a bit higher this year...

New *Railway Rivals* games

We have a four-player game, Troodos, starting up this issue on the Cyprus map – see page 14.

Mike is happy to run a second four-player game alongside this, probably on the Lake District or Denmark map, and Gerald Udowiczenko is first on the list for this one. Let Mike or Pevans know if you want to play – preference will be given to those **not** playing in Troodos.

New *Star Trader* game

Our new game is entitled “The Wizard of Anharitte”, a Colin Kapp story that was being serialised in (*Worlds of IF*) when I started my subscription to the UK edition (yep, that was 50 years ago). We have five players and room for one more – details on page 13.

All-reader game

There was lots of positive feedback on the By Popular Demand game that finished last issue (with ~~mild-cursing~~ congratulations to the winner, Mike Pollard). I've decided to go back to the familiar territory of Trophy Hunter next, while I psych myself up for another BPD. See page 15 for details.

Online stats

Last issue, TWJO 236, didn't hit the streets until August, so has no numbers from July. However, the PDFs of issue 235 were downloaded 103 times in July, to make 168 in five weeks. And TWJO 234 attracted 27 downloads, taking it to 192 in just over two months.

Letters

Jonathan Palfrey has some reading suggestions.

I'm currently on my second reading of the three Cairo stories from P. Djèlí Clark: “A Dead Djinn in Cairo” (novelette, 2016), The Haunting of Tram Car 015 (novella, 2019), and A Master of Djinn (novel, 2021). These are quite well written, entertaining, and deliberately exotic, being set in Cairo in an alternative world in the year 1912, in which magic and various supernatural beings have come into the world in the last few decades, and humans are still struggling to cope with it all. I think the plots are rather over the top, with too much in the way of flashy special effects and The Whole World Is In Peril. A more restrained plot in that setting could work well (in fact, The Haunting of Tram Car 015 is more restrained than the other two). However, although these are not top favourites, I can foresee rereading them periodically.

Thanks, Jonathan, these sound interesting. Checking further, I see Clark's stories have been nominated for several awards and *A Master of Djinn* won the 2021 Nebula (among others).

Man the battlements!

Pevans's first impressions of *Fort*

I couldn't resist picking up a copy of *Fort* because the theme – children building play-forts – was just so appealing. In fact, it's a deck-building game with the fort-building abstracted to moving a marker along a track. Shame. I wanted to be piling cushions around the furniture and grabbing the ironing board to be the front wall (it's an indoor fort, okay?).

The cards in question are your friends – that is, other children. In time-honoured deck-building fashion, you have a starting deck of 10 cards, draw a hand of five, play what you can, discard the rest, add new cards, draw a new hand and shuffle your discards when your deck runs out. *Dominion* has a lot to answer for.

There are, of course, some wrinkles. Unused cards are not immediately discarded at the end of your turn. Instead they go into your 'Yard' (or garden, as we say in English) whence they can be picked up by other players in their turn. Only at the start of your turn do you discard the cards in your Yard. This adds a nice twist when considering which card to play.

Most cards have two actions on them: a public action and a private one. When you play a card, you can do either or both actions. However, other players can discard a card of the same suit (childish things like skateboards, squirt guns, crowns...) to 'follow' the public action (whether or not you did it). Something else to consider



Fort in play (yes, that's *Root* in the background)

when deciding what to play. You can also beef up the action by playing additional cards of the same suit (followers can't).

There are quite a lot of actions in the game – often variations on the same thing – which are depicted by icons on the cards (so there's no language on the cards). Hence, there's a sizeable reference card describing all the icons (and editions in other languages just need different reference cards).

There are two actions that are key to my mind. First, picking up 'Stuff' – neat little hexagonal wooden pieces: the blue ones are 'Toys', the orange ones with red dots are 'Pizza'. Gotta love a game with pizza in it! The second is using your 'Stuff' to improve your Fort. That is, move your little wooden cylinder to the next slot on its track. Sigh. This increases the points for your fort at the end of the game and, at certain points, gets you a bonus.

The first bonus is a (secret) 'Made-up rule' card (shades of Calvinball here), which scores points at the end of the game. And it usefully provides something for you to aim at through the game. The card I took scored points for cards with 'increase

Fort level' actions, so I started collecting them. Usefully, this also increased my opportunities to improve my Fort (as those cards cycle through my discard pile to my deck and into my hand).

The second bonus is a (public) 'Perk' card which gives a permanent advantage or one-off action. My Perk was the 'Birthday Party', allowing me to draw an extra card each turn. Guess what cards I went for... The final bonus comes when your Fort reaches the top level. The 'Macaroni sculpture' is worth points and triggers the game end. (The game can also end if anybody reaches 25 points or the central draw deck runs out – no re-shuffling this one).

A player's turn, then, starts with discarding cards in their Yard and then playing a card from hand. They may boost it with other cards of the same suit before taking one or two of the actions shown. Any followers do their action before the player on turn drafts a card from the 'Park' (a row of cards laid out at the start and replenished when taken), the deck or another player's Yard. Played cards and



Here's my board mid-game. Lots of pizza! And my fort is up to level 3. Note the two actions (white rectangles) on the discarded card – though the public (upper) action is blank. The card in my Yard has no actions.

drafted cards (and unplayed 'Best Friends' – cards you can't lose) are discarded, the others go into their Yard. And they draw a new hand, reshuffling their discards if necessary.

There are a couple of wrinkles on top of this. One action lets you add cards as 'Lookouts', a permanent boost when you play cards of the same suit. And another action allows you to store Stuff in your Pack, allowing you to go above the usual limit on what you can keep. Clearly these improve your subsequent actions, so I assume the idea is that players build up to begin with and cash in later on.

I have to say, I didn't. My first hand let me get enough Stuff that I could build the second level of my Fort on my second turn. This gave me my Made-up rule. After that, I concentrated on adding cards that either drew Stuff or built my Fort. This gave me a bulky deck (I didn't bother with any deck management nonsense), but lots of cards for the actions I wanted. So I powered my way to the top level Fort, grabbed the Macaroni Sculpture and ended the game six points ahead.

This is all pretty straightforward and you quickly lose sight of the game's theme as you concentrate on the actions and suits on the cards. The question is whether there are more subtleties to the game than my simple strategy suggests. I'll find out when we play it again.

Fort is a deck-building card game designed by Grant Rodiek and published by Leder Games (ledergames.com) with their usual artwork from Kyle Ferrin – a style that I find slightly unsettling. It is for 2–4 players, aged 10+, and takes 20–40 minutes to play (our learning game took well over an hour). It gets a provisional 6/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Reading matter

My retro-SF reading has moved on to another CJ Cherryh novel. I recently picked up an omnibus e-book of *Cuckoo's Egg* and *Serpent's Reach*. Now I remember reading *Serpent's Reach* back in the day, but I missed out on *Cuckoo's Egg* and grabbed the chance to read it.

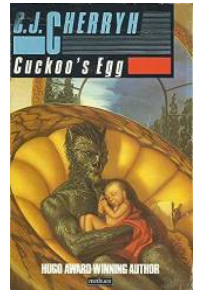
It's vintage Cherryh: humans learning to live with aliens (and vice versa), check; major developments taking place off-stage, check; main characters unaware of and/or struggling to influence these developments, check. Unlike *Forty Thousand in Gehenna*, the last Cherryh I caught up with (see *TWJO* 217), here we have a sole human on an alien world. And this human doesn't even know what he is (nor can we readers be sure – though the picture on the cover rather gives the game away).

Our main character is Thorn – more formally, Haras-hatani – a baby, child and then young man being raised and trained by Duun-hatani. Thorn is aware that he is not physically like his mentor/father or the other Shonun he occasionally meets, but doesn't know what he is. However, his upbringing is in the isolated woods of Duun's family (?) estate. And anyway, his attention is focused on his training. He is being taught to be on guard always, to trust nothing and no-one, to check everything and to fight – mostly unarmed combat, though he lacks the claws and fangs of his teacher.

However, the reader is aware of the politics/conspiracy around this young man as we see some of the meetings Duun has away from Thorn. This escalates when an unfortunate incident sees them re-locate to the capital city where Thorn's education broadens. This doesn't last too long either, as we are precipitated into the novel's climactic events. We suddenly learn a lot more about Shonun society even as it is subjected to massive upheavals – largely off-stage, of course.

We finally learn what Thorn is and I have to say that I was not expecting that. (*Cuckoo's Egg* appears to be set in the same universe as Cherryh's Alliance-Union novels and I'm wondering if there's a reference in one of those to the seed of this story.) And it left me wanting more. What happens next? Both to Thorn and the Shonun. As far as I can recall, neither re-appear in other Cherryh novels. Sigh.

I was also fascinated by the hatani guild, to which Duun belongs and is training Thorn as an apprentice. Building on the snippets Cherryh gives us, they are itinerant judges on ethical/moral matters. Plus jury and, as required, executioner. To ask a hatani to judge an issue is a dangerous move: you may not like their solution; you may end up dead. But there's clearly more to it, given the martial arts core to the training and the constant danger they're in. Fascinating stuff and something else I'd like to see more of.



Games Events

The next Raiders of the Game Cupboard games day is on 23rd September at the Waterside Community Centre in Burton-upon-Trent. It's simply a day of open gaming in convivial company. For more details, see the website at: www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk

And then, of course, it's time for this year's Spiel games fair in Essen, Germany. Running from 5th-8th October, it's a showcase of (mainly) board games with lots of new releases, plenty of opportunity to play and lots to buy. Plus all the after-hours play that goes on in and around Essen. For all the latest, see the website: www.spiel-messe.com/en

Spiel has been getting earlier in October over the years and this year it clashes with the Autumn Tringcon on 7th. This is a day of open gaming run by gamers: "All forms of board games, collectable card games and other similar tabletop pastimes are welcome." It's at the Marsworth Millennium Hall in Marsworth, just outside the town of Tring (Herts) and, if you're not in Germany that weekend, you can book a place on the website: tringcon.org

The following box concentrates on events I used to attend.

Swiggers: games club that meets most Wednesday evenings (co-ordinated on WhatsApp) upstairs at The Shipwright's Arms, 88 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TF (next to London Bridge station) – though without me these days. For more info, see www.pevans.co.uk/Swiggers

UK Games Expo: 31st May - 2nd June 2024 at the NEC. 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. 5th-8th October 2023, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.spiel-messe.com/en

MidCon: 3rd-5th November 2023 at the Mickleover Court Hotel in Mickleover (near Derby). **MidCon** is a friendly board games convention, but has been in a new venue since 2021 that I haven't been to. Expect open gaming and a few organised events, including a Bring 'n' Buy and a quiz. See <https://midcon.projectboo.co.uk/>

Seahill (Railway Rivals game 17 - RR2509I(N))

Turn 12

The IRISH RAILWAY ASSOCIATION was really lucky in the last round of races and finished well ahead of RUBBER BANDITS RAILWAY. BIEN finished third, the cost of their missed turn counting. The other three companies did less well.

This turn's races

Race results					Scores					
					IRA	RBR	BASH	CR	AGO	BIEN
36	S1	South	66	Athboy/Navan	20		0+5		0-1	10-4
37	S5	Shopping	15	Larne/Donaghadee	10					20
38	63	Dublin	23	Limavady/Ballymena		20	+6	0-6		10
39	55	Armagh/Dungarvan	43	Claremorris/Boyle	20					
40	56	Dundalk/Monaghan	32	Donegal/Armagh		20				
41	13	Belfast	25	Cookstown/Portadown	20+2	0				10-2
42	42	Galway	31	Enniskillen/Strabane	20		+3		10-3	
TOTAL					92	40	14	-6	6	44
JR = Joint Run; ERP = Exchange of Running Powers										

Builds and Points

IRISH RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

(IRA), Anthony Gilbert – Green

Builds:

None

Points: 237 +92 = **329 1st**

RUBBER BANDIT RAILWAYS

(RBR), Mike Dyer – Black

Builds:

None

Points: 273 +40 = **313 2nd**

BALLNOKE ARMAGH STRAB-ANE HAULAGE (BASH), Bob

Blanchett – Red

Builds:

None

Points: 122 +14 = **136 6th****CANTERBURY RAILS** (CR), Rob

Pinkerton – Blue

Builds:

None

Points: 174 -6 = **168 5th****AW GO ON** (AGO), Gerald

Udowiczenko – Orange

Builds:

None

Points: 184 +6 = **190 3rd****BIEN'S INTERNATIONAL EXPRESS NETWORK** (BIEN),

Christian Bien – Purple

Builds:

None

Points: 136 +44 = **180 4th****GM Notes**

You must include at least one space on your own track in a race.

Game End Statements**1st: Irish Railway Association, Anthony Gilbert**

The valleys soon filled up, making it hard to expand my network after the main building rounds. I was reasonably happy with my NE/SW main line and N/S branches, but some rounds just did not work for me. I really should make a habit of at least checking the races early so I have time to organise joint runs. I hope to close the gap on RBR in the final round, but expect to remain in second place, so congratulate Mike Dyer in advance on his victory. Should he lose boiler pressure in the final stages, allowing me to steam past, I thank him for a great battle. Thanks to Mike Dommett for running the race, and to all the engineers for keeping railway rivalry alive.

2nd: Rubber Bandit Railways, Mike Dyer

This one was a surprise! I wasn't so happy with my rail lines during the builds. The map just felt constricted and I completely neglected any strategic planning around the concept of twin towns. Seeing as many of the runs went my way, I think I simply got lucky in this game. Anthony did have me worried for a while there, but cruising into the last turn I think I may have this one in the bag. Thanks everyone!

4th: Aw Go On, Gerald Udowiczenko

Well done to Mike (RBR – Black), similar network to mine (North to South) but Mike's was more Eastern, and got more of the routes. And well done to everyone else not having so much better routes than me, as I got no offers of any joint runs.

And, as always, many thanks for Mike (D) for running and sorry you had to keep using those "special dice". 🤖

I look forward to better luck with the next game.

5th: Canterbury Rails, Rob Pinkerton

Another fun game, I really like this map. My initial builds being along the North Coast and North-South proved to be sub-optimal when it came to the races, but I would love to play this map again.

GM: Mike Dommett

Thanks to all players for taking part. It's the first time I've used the map and a good north-south route seems essential. Together with the branches. Perhaps more joint runs would pay benefits next time.

The Wizard of Anharitte (*Star Trader* game 12)**Pre-start**

We have five players for this game (and room for one more):

Mark Cowper
Mike Dyer,
Paul Evans,
Anthony Gilbert and
Przemek Orwat.

We'll be playing on the original map (six star systems), using the basic four commodities (and three illegal ones). (That is, ignore the "expanded" stuff in italics in the rules.) However, we will play the free deployment version, where each player gets a special ability for their Corporation from the list in section 24 in the rules. No player can have the same special ability, so clashes will be resolved by die roll, and the loser will take a lesser choice.

What I would like for the Game Start is:

Corporation Name,
Preference list of six special abilities,
Allocation of your initial 7 Connection levels (which may be dependent on your special ability),
Location of ship(s) (ditto) and
Location of warehouses (and factories if appropriate).

[Pevans notes: the title is from a terrific Colin Kapp story that was serialised in (*Worlds of IF*) when I started my subscription to the UK edition 50-odd years ago.]

**Orders to Mike Dommett, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk
by Friday 22nd September 2023**

Troodos (*Railway Rivals* game 18)

Pre-start

We have four players for this game:

Mike Dyer,
Anthony Gilbert,
Rob Pinkerton and
Chris Rudram.

With four players, this will be on the Cyprus map (PDF working copies will be sent to players with this issue of *TWJO*).

To start the game, please confirm you're playing and let me have:

Your company name,
Preferences for starting position and
Preferences for colour (Black/Blue/Green/Red).

**Orders to Mike Dommatt, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommatt@yahoo.co.uk
by Friday 22nd September 2023**

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.

	UK	Other Europe	Rest of World	Games only
10-issue (1 year) subscription	£27.00	£36.00	£43.00	£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 account details), by UK cheque (payable to Margam Evans Ltd) or by PayPal to TWJO@pevans.co.uk. Or subscribe online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO, where you can pay by credit card or PayPal account.

Trophy Hunter

Start-up

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 (except the gorillas). The players are hunters who've paid 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 top of the grid and numbers (1-20) down the side (A1 is thus 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 new squares 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.

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

Send shots to Pevans at 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF or to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by 22nd September 2023.

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.

Games from Pevans

Hand picked board games since 2004



Beer & Bread

A neat two-player game of neighbouring villages that compete over the beer and bread they produce. You have six years – of feast or famine – to outdo your opposition.

For 2 players, aged 10+, playing time 30-45 minutes: **£27.00**



Concordia: Salsa

A large box expansion for Concordia that adds a wild resource, salt, two new maps (western and eastern Mediterranean, in effect) and Forum cards that add bonuses and special abilities.

For 2-5 players (with base game), aged 12+, playing time 90 minutes: **£27.00**



EXIT – The Return to the Abandoned Cabin

A sequel to the original *Exit* game, five years on. The players are called on to bring down sinister riddle master Dr. Arthur Funbeq, the man behind the infamous cabin. Difficulty level: 3/5.

For 1-4 players, aged 12+, playing time 45-90 minutes: **£12.00**



Marrakech

Terrific tactical game that I've always enjoyed. It's about laying carpets (tactile felt strips) to box in and out-score your opponents.

For 2-4 players, aged 6+, playing time 30 minutes: **£30.00**



Pax Pamir 2nd ed

The second edition lifts the game to a new level with both superb production and much more accessible rules. The theme remains Kipling's "Great Game" between Britain and Russia on the Northwest frontier (aka Afghanistan).

For 1-5 players, aged 13+, playing time 1-2 hours: **£65.00**



Online at www.pevans.co.uk/Games

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 14). You will also need (access to) a copy of the published rules to *En Garde!* (see www.engarde.co.uk).

Orders for April 1675 to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE
UB10 8UF, UK or
lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk
by Friday 22nd September 2023



March 1675 (373)

It's the start of Spring, though you wouldn't know that from the distinct chill in the air at the start of March. Still, in the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of... duelling! And Ray de Sofdelosdarc has quite a few duels on his plate (postponed from February). He chooses to take on Louis Severin Descartes first. Is this, perhaps, because of Descartes' diminutive stature? Particularly compared to the hefty Sofdelosdarc. Descartes is wielding a sabre against his opponent's rapier and has the greater expertise. Plus a second, Jacques Hatt (Tristand Sault should be there as well, but is not in evidence). The two duellists start cautiously, with a parry on one side and block on the other followed by some ducking and diving. Then they attack: a lunge from Sofdelosdarc is partially deflected by a slash from Descartes. Both men are injured and both surrender simultaneously. We'll call that a draw.

Alexandre Capone is next on Sofdelosdarc's list, but Capone is not to be found. Hence, it's Claude de Nord's turn. Nord is another sabre user and is much the same build as Sofdelosdarc. He's also more skilled with his blade and has a second: Tiny Thierry Toothpick. Though it's easy to overlook him. Another cautious start sees both men block. Sofdelosdarc then dodges a slash from Nord before striking with a lunge. This coincides with a slash from Nord so, again, both men are injured. However, this time only Sofdelosdarc surrenders. We'll call that a loss.

Next up is Maurice Pauvre, whose weapon is a rapier. This looks a relatively even fight, though Pauvre has more skill and two seconds: Louis Renault and Xavier Ulric Turenne. Turenne sets up a table for a picnic breakfast. "The Picardy Musketeers always have the 27th Musketeers for breakfast," he claims. A cautious

parry from 27M Sofdelosdarc is wasted as PM Pauvre waits a beat before lunging. Another hit on Sofdelosdarc and another concession.

Thomas de la Lune is last on the list. And the most skilled swordsman Sofdelosdarc has faced this month. The two have similar physiques and use rapiers, but that expertise gives Lune an advantage. This time Sofdelosdarc's parry succeeds in countering his opponent's lunge and he ripostes for first blood. Lune is not the sort of man to stop fighting after a scratch and he attacks again with a cut. Which Sofdelosdarc jumps aside from. However, his lack of skill catches up with him and he has no answer to Lune's next lunge. Sofdelosdarc concedes this one, too, so that's three losses, one draw and one fight postponed to next month.



The freshly bandaged Claude de Nord has moved on to meet Zeold von Tu in another sabre versus rapier clash. Nord is the beefier and more expert of the two and the man with the sabre. He also has Toothpick as his second again, while Come Asiouar supports Tu. Nord starts with a block only to find Tu closing in and applying his boot. Despite the kick, Nord strikes with a slash. Tu tries a more conventional slash himself – though it isn't as effective with a rapier. Then Nord completes his furious slash with a cut that leaves Tu in a bloody heap on the ground. Asiouar checks on his principal and reports that, being mostly dead, Tu surrenders. Luckily, mostly dead is slightly alive. What's left of Tu is rolled onto a stretcher and rushed to a doctor – though leeches are the last thing he needs.

Time for Asiouar to meet Thomas de la Lune for his own duel. This is a rapier affair with Asiouar on the wrong end of size and skill. Technically, he has a second, but Zeold von Tu isn't likely to be much help. Lune starts with his usual furious lunge, taking Asiouar completely by surprise and prompting an immediate surrender.

Tiny Thierry Toothpick has a duel as well, swapping roles with Claude de Nord who is now his second. His adversary is Pierre a'Noyer, who is no more than medium build, but still a lot bigger than Toothpick. Neither of a'Noyer's seconds (Jean-Claude Etienne and Louis Severin Descartes) shows up, but he has a rapier while Toothpick just has some knives in his belt. Toothpick steps back, drawing a knife, but a'Noyer hits him with a slash. This doesn't disrupt Toothpick's rhythm as he launches the knife. It lodges in a'Noyer's upper arm – luckily, not his sword arm. A'Noyer follows up his slash with a cut, but Toothpick skips out of the way

and hurls another dagger. It misses. Another slash from the rapier unsettles Toothpick's third throw and this knife misses, too. He's taken more than enough damage and Toothpick surrenders.

The last duel should see Toothpick take on Jean-Claude Etienne, but that worthy is nowhere to be seen and the fight is postponed. At least the little man will have some time to recover before his next duel.

Choice of one

The big news this month is the new Minister of War. It's a bit of an anti-climax, though, as only Ben e'Volence has applied for the job. He calls in a couple of favours himself (though only one reaches the ears of the King) and garners support from Les Anonyme, Beau Reese Jean Seine and Greg de Bécqueur. With this backing, he's a shoo-in for the post and His Majesty rewards him with the title of Viscount.

As is now traditional, Minister of State Beau Reese Jean Seine declines to appoint a Chancellor of the Exchequer. One has to wonder why...

Thomas de la Lune uses his influence (well, technically, it's Agnes's influence) to persuade the Third Foot Brigadier it's time to retire. However, the gentleman in question will have none of it, so Lune can't get to be Brigadier himself.

Rick Shaw uses Therèse's influence to better effect, removing the commander of Second Division, a post that Shaw can then leave open. For the time being.

Greg de Bécqueur has some pull in his own right and uses this to get rid of the First Division commander. Well, that's the plan, but the incumbent Lieutenant-General is not for leaving. Shaw's attempt to appoint Louis Renault in his place is thus unsuccessful.

Bécqueur joins Kitt Chevalier-Cavalier and Louis Severin Descartes to persuade the 53rd Fusiliers' Lt-Colonel to resign. This vacancy allows Major Chevalier-Cavalier to buy his way to the Colonelcy of the regiment, whereupon he volunteers it for active service.

Tiny Thierry Toothpick promotes himself as well, using a substantial gift from his mentor, Claude de Nord, to buy the rank of Colonel in his regiment, the 69th Arquebusiers and giving his men a pep talk (see Press).

Grand Duke Max's Dragoons needs a new Regimental Adjutant and CO Louis Severin Descartes knows just the man for the job. Well, the fellow was top of his class in military tactics. This comes just in time as Dragoon Brigadier Jacques Hatt orders the Brigade into action.



Both Descartes and Balzac Slapdash, commanding Princess Louisa's Light Dragoons, are ready for this and lead their regiments out of Paris. For six months.

Tagging along behind the Dragoons is Lt-Col Roger d'Horne of the Queen's Own Carabiniers. He's anxious that he's missed his regiment's mobilisation and keen to catch them up on the road. However, the Dragoons make him welcome and he trots along with them. (The rest of the QOCs are in the regiment's barracks keeping busy with off-duty chores...)

Meanwhile, a curious scene plays out at one moneylender's office. In comes Ramond Repose de la Tombe, ready to pay off his 300-crown loan (plus interest) early. However, no matter how he scours his pouch, he can't find more than 215 crowns. "No matter," beams his genial lender, "that will do." "For now," he adds. Tombe goes on his way, missing the rueful head-shaking going on behind him. "Did he take out a new loan?" enquires the clerk, expectantly. "No," is the reply, prompting the sound of air being sucked through the teeth. "I'll put him down as a bad risk, then."

Sure enough, despite receiving his pay, Tombe can't support all his horses and one is repossessed. Then he heads for Red Phillips, but can't stump up enough cash for membership.

Party, Practice – and repeat

The parties are a bit sparse in March, but a gentleman may be high-ranking enough to drop in on Camille de Polignac at the start of the month, put in a bit of fencing practice, then almost certainly hang out with Louis Renault before wrapping up the month – maybe with some more fencing.

Yes, the month starts in the Fleur de Lys where Camille De Polignac and Angelina di Griz host members of the Guards Brigade and senior Parisians. Sadly for Louis Renault, he is neither of these and languishes in the club's foyer instead – Camille isn't even aware of his offer to pay for everybody's drinks. What will happen should Camille turn up to Louis's do later?

The guests that are admitted start with Claude de Nord and Madelaine de Proust. Eclair de Lame arrives on his own. Felipe Savant brings Pet Ulante. Greg de Bécqueur escorts Bette Noire. Hector William Boone flies solo. Jean Jeanie is accompanied by Jacky Tinne. Lou Scannon has Bess Ottede on his arm. Martin de Garnache brings Fifi. Vera Cruz is with Neville Moore. Pierre a'Noyer is alone. Terence Cuckpowder escorts Morgane Le Fay, who is very happy with the lengths of fine black cloth and lace that arrived at her residence. Terence is bemused...

They are not alone in the Fleur. Ben e'Volence and Lotte Bottle are there and are joined by Les Anonyme and Carole Singeurs. Beau Reese Jean Seine brings Chris Pacquette and has Xavier Ulric Turenne and Laura de Land Toady to them. Pierre Cardigan and Justine Caisse occupy their usual position.

Bothwell's sees Rick Shaw show Therese Le Vert a good time, while Belle Epoque wheels Zeold von Tu over to the gaming tables. The parsimonious Zeold has to be persuaded to increase his bet to the house minimum, so he sticks to just the one. This is probably a good idea as he loses his money.

Thomas de la Lune and Agnes Sorel are the couple occupying Hunter's. Tiny Thierry Toothpick takes Sue Briquet to the Frog & Peach. And Red Phillips is the preserve of Stephane Etrange and Thomasina Tancenjin.

Missing out on the party are Henri DuShite, Jacques de Gain and Phillipe F'Loppe, who are all busy practising their swordplay. For Henri and Phillipe, it's their regimental weapons: cutlass and sabre, respectively. While Jacques forks out to continue improving his rapier skills. Henri and Jacques keep this up all month, so the iron man title goes to Henri for his more strenuous activity. After three weeks' work-out, Phillipe has other plans for completing the month.

Bernard de Lur-Saluces, Claude Oppere and Maurice Pauvre can be found in different parts of the red light district getting their oats. Gaz Moutarde gets his at home. Antoine d'Eques goes courting and is successful in the absence of the GDMD – specifically Fouche La Vache. There's success for Elroi de Flingue, but failure for Ray de Sofdelosdarc. While Come Asiouar and Frank X Change find each other on the same doorstep. Neither will give way. The unlucky Ramond Repose de la Tombe can't afford even the minimum gift to woo his intended.

As expected, week 2 sees the gymnasiums fill up. The Royal Foot Guards' facilities have Hector William Boone, Martin de Garnache and Neville Moore practising with their regimental rapiers. Their colleague, Felipe Savant, chooses to develop his sabre skill and has to patronise a commercial establishment.

All four do this again after Louis's party. Zeold von Tu exercises very gingerly in the Cardinal's Guard's barracks just this week, propping himself up with his rapier. Picardy Musketeers Maurice Pauvre and Ramond Repose de la Tombe work out with rapiers in their regiment's gym. Maurice is back to finish March, but Ramond has duties to perform. Thomas de la Lune hits the 4th Arquebusier's gym with his rapier for the rest of the month. Paying their way are Bernard de Lur-Saluces (two-hander for just this week), Elroi le Flingue (two weeks with sabre), Greg de Bécqueur (two sabre-rattling weeks), Jean Jeanie (two weeks with rapier), Louis Renault (rapier this week) and Terence Cuckpowder (three weeks with sabre).





The argument between Come and Frank continues outside a certain lady's door. She's actually at home this week and doesn't take kindly to the disturbance. Pierre a'Noyer gets nowhere with his wooing, while Gaz is at home with his lady again. And the bawdyhouses are where to find Ray de Sofdelosdarc.

There may be no actual parties, but Ben e'Volence and Lotte continue to host Les Anonyme and Carole at the Fleur de Lys. Zavier Ulric Turenne and Laura Toady to Beau Reese Jean Seine and Chris again. Claude de Nord arrives at the Fleur with Madelaine in tow and they are joined by Tiny Thierry Toothpick and Sue. Camille de Polignac and Angelina are back, but without the hangers-on. And Pierre Cardigan and Justine are in their usual place. Beau makes his way to the tables and lays a 2,400-crown wager, which he wins and gets a round of applause to go with it.

Rick Shaw and Therèse return to Bothwell's to find it busier than last week. Eclair de Lame brings Lucy and they go in for some gambling. So does Come Asiouar. While Lou Scannon and Bess stick to the drinking. Eclair limits himself to two bets at 100 crowns a time. He wins both and looks very pleased with himself. Come is also putting down 100-crown bets, but loses and loses. Despite a third loss, he sticks with it and wins his fourth and fifth wagers to limit the damage. Antoine d'Eques is the man in Hunter's this week and has Eve Ningalle on his arm after last week's activity. Red Phillips club has Stephane Etrange and Thomasina still in residence.

The old arrest warrant

Which brings us to Louis Renault's celebration of the life of the late Lascar Vivrebras in Bothwell's with some fine Cognac for the toasts. Katy Did joins Louis as hostess and, together, they welcome quite a list of Parisians (though not Camille de Polignac, which would have been an interesting confrontation). We start with Come Asiouar, who comes alone. Claude de Nord brings Madelaine. Elroi le Flingue shows off his courting success: Violet Bott. Felipe Savant escorts Pet. Greg de Bécqueur turns up with Bette. Gaz Moutarde and Anne Tique make a rare appearance in public. Fifi is with Martin Garnache. Maurice Pauvre is without a plus one. Vera accompanies Neville Moore. Ramond Repose de la Tombe relishes someone else paying for the drinks. Stephane Etrange and Thomasina leave Red Phillips for the week, Stephane joining in the toasts and listening intently to the tales of times at the front. Tine Thierry Toothpick has Sue on his arm, but needs to free that to slap the upstart Maurice around the face – the man has no nobility! And the arrival of a limping Zeold von Tu on Belle's arm provokes an exchange of challenges between him and Claude. However, Claude has the ultimate comeback: "Tu, you're under arrest," he shouts, brandishing a warrant in the invalid's face.

And the surprised Captain of the Cardinal's Escort is dragged off to the Bastille instead of attending to his regimental duties.

Eclair and Lucy return to Bothwell's to place a couple of bets, losing one and winning one to break even this week. Come Asiouar is also in the club again, but steers clear of the gambling. Rick Shaw and Therèse are back as well.

The Fleur remains fairly busy, not least with the Crown Prince's Aide, Lou Scannon, boozing with his boss – who's making eyes at Lou's lady, Bess. Bernard de Lur-Saluces arrives at his club to be joined by Zavier Ulric Turenne and Laura. For the third week in a row, Ben and Lotte have the company of Les and Carole. Camille and Angelina are there again. In comes Jean Jeanie, escorting Jacky. And Pierre Cardigan and Justine occupy their usual corner.

Hunter's is occupied by Antoine d'Eques and Eve as usual.

Fencing practice continues with Beau Reese Jean Seine joining those in the RFG gym with his rapier and staying there for next week as well.

Frank X Change finally gets to woo the woman of his dreams and, another dream, she says yes! Presumably she's fed up with Thomas de la Lune not paying her enough attention, but Frank will get some attention from him – in a duel.



Courting works for Pierre a'Noyer, too, at the second attempt. But there'll be duel for him as well. Ray de Sofdelosdarc succeeds at his second attempt, but won't have to face any angry ex.

The last week of March sees the gyms fill up again. Thos attending for just this last week are Claude de Nord (sabre, despite being in the King's Musketeers), Frank X Change, now he's finally got a mistress (Cuirassiers' sabre), Rick Shaw (sabre) and Stephane Etrange (Fusiliers' rapier).

Come Asiouar goes courting again, but fails as the object of his advances is still smitten with Frank, despite his absence. Hector William Boone goes for a sure thing at the bawdyhouses. Ramond Repose de la Tombe would like to do the same, but is thrown out when he can't even pay for his drinks.

Ray de Sofdelosdarc hits Red Phillips with his new belle, Lois de Lô. Tiny Thierry Toothpick and Sue return to the Frog & Peach. The Horse Guards gets its first visitors: Phillipe F'Loppe and Freda de Ath. Antoine d'Eques and Eve make it three weeks in Hunter's.

Half a dozen members visit Bothwell's. Come Asiouar is there again. Eclair de Lame and Lucy have a third go on the tables. A win and a loss mean they break even again, but are ahead on the month as a whole. Gaz Moutarde rolls up on his own and plonks 300 crowns on the table. He wins this bet. Louis Renault brings Katy, Lou Scannon Bess and Pierre a'Noyer brings his new lady friend, Alison Wunderlandt.

Bernard de Lur-Saluces entertains Xavier Ulric Turenne and Laura in the Fleur for the second time. Ben e'Volence, Lotte, Les Anonyme and Carole make it all four weeks. Camille de Polignac and Angelina are there again, as are Pierre Cardigan and Justine.

Carnage in the Low Countries

Despite being bolstered by the arrival of the Dragoon Brigade and the 53rd Fusiliers, French forces take a thumping from a joint offensive by Spanish and Imperial forces. Heavy cavalry trounces the Fusiliers, the new Colonel Kitt Chevalier-Cavalier being one of those crushed under the armoured hooves. RIP.

Not expecting anyone to get past the Fusiliers, Grand Duke Max's Dragoons are taken by surprise by the arrival of the bloodied Imperial horsemen. Brigadier-General Louis Severin Descartes, leading the regiment, does what he can to rally his men. This earns him a Mention in Despatches ("Stout fellow hanging on to the colours like that"). Major Alvin Charles is promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel when a vacancy appears.

That's because the enemy has also overridden the Brigade HQ and the Brigade Major, GDMD Lt-Col Tristand Sault, has fallen to their sabres. RIP. The Brigadier's Aide, GDMD Captain Fouche La Vache, tries to escape, but his horse isn't fast enough. RIP. This news is particularly galling to Descartes as he advanced Vache a substantial loan before they left Paris.



Brigadier Jacques Hatt survives as he's inspecting the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons at the time. This means the Light Dragoons are in full kit when the attack happens and ride to the rescue. The enemy's discipline has disintegrated in the fight and the concerted charge by the Dragoons sends them reeling. There's a Mention for CO Balzac Slapdash ("In the nick of"), who picks up over five hundred crowns worth of booty. He becomes a Baron when news reaches His Majesty.

Having arrived to find no sign of his regiment, QOC Lt-Col Roger d'Horne is assigned to Frontier regiment 4. The regiment comes under a sustained bombardment from Spanish guns and the unprepared Horne finds himself underneath a cannonball. RIP. ❖

Press

Announcements

**** Join the QOC ****

Gentleman of Paris, if you are new to the city or are looking for a new Regiment, then you can do no better than join the Queen's Own Carabiniers.

Please contact me for more details, and some financial help is available.

† Marquis Thyme

The Picardy Musketeers are looking for fine young men, especially those with the qualities that would make them good Officers.

Financial assistance available to those Officers that need it.

The Horse Guards Brigade may leave for the front to aid our troops there.

† T Cuckpowder

"The office of the Field Marshall has a highly confidential and urgent new position for the Lt. Colonel 53F. He is to resign his current position with immediate effect and wait at his place of residence (if any) until further notice."

**** Aide Required ****

I am looking for a competent aide. Please contact me with your credentials.

† (Brevet) Bdr-General Marquis Thyme

Social

Jacques As Memorial Stakes

His Highness the Dauphin is pleased to sponsor the fourth annual horse race in memory of the late Minister Jacques As. This takes place in week 4 of April and the Crown Prince is pleased to offer a magnificent prize fund of 5,000 crowns. **Those taking part in the race** are welcome to Toady to His Highness afterwards with their ladies.

***** EASTER EGG HUNT *****

Gentlemen and Ladies of Paris, Please join me in the Bois de Boulogne for an Easter Egg Hunt during April Week 4. Please bring your ladies. All welcome.

Yours, etc, † XM

In preparation for this summer's conflict and general intellectual fun, I am once again hosting a chess tournament week 2 of April at my club. This year's prize will be 500 crowns to the victor, 250 crowns to the runner-up. Refreshments for participants, observers and their companions provided by myself and the lovely Vera Cruz.

Gentlemen of Paris,

During week 3, after attending mass at St Eustache, Miss Katy Did and I will be dining at my club and be delighted to receive gentlemen and their ladies for polite discussion and a few hands of cards; refreshments at my expense.

Please note that officers and men of the 4th Arquebusiers find polite conversation difficult with my old friends from the Picardy Musketeers and so will not be welcome.

† Sir Louis Renault

Despatches from the Front

A returning soldier writes:

Upon returning to the Big City after a somewhat downbeat month "away", I realise that what you really need sometimes is somebody to greet you with a smile and a hug.

So it's springtime in Paris, and I'm on the hunt for love. Even if, based on past experience, I may have to lower my expectations a little.

Personal

...the protracted and complicated situation on the Continent with various overlapping wars for an extended amount of time is taking a growing toll on the common man, as well as on the fighting soldiers. But at the same time there are also those who profit from it, and not to a small extent. In the United Provinces, where Arms Investments have at times become even more profitable than tulip stocks, there is a class of Merchants and Investors, sitting high and dry and enjoying their profits far from the fields of battle, where their less fortunate countrymen are being sacrificed to fuel said profits.

In the Kingdom of France, the situation is of a different nature. The military, the economy and the government are intertwined on a level hence unknown, with the Minister of State, Count Beau Reese Jean Seine, being himself not just the biggest investor of arms companies like Royal Armoire, Dynamite Nobel and the Fabrique Nationale, but also riding at the head of the most elite regiment of the French Army, the Royal Foot Guards. And yet Count Seine is only the visible head of this "Military-Industrial Complex", which also seems to include much less tangible people, such as the mysterious and untouchable French Minister of War, who is only known among the public as "N". Together, they constantly keep a maximum of the French Army at the Front, holding all of Europe in a stranglehold of what can only be described as Total War...

Gentlemen of Paris, I have grave news to impart. In my capacity as Commissioner of Public Safety it has been reported to me that a dreadful scandal has engulfed our great nation. You may be familiar with the business, 'Cheveux, Nez and Dents' purveyors of fine wigs, nose caps and wooden dentures to the rich and famous of Paris.

As you know, only the finest, softest and purest pubic hair is used in such wigs.

Someone, and I believe that it might be the Dutch, has been supplying lice-riddled hair with the intention of passing on disease and pestilence to our nobility and even Royal family. And all for profit. *Sacré Bleu!* Those behind this treason will suffer in the depths of Hades for their treachery.

God Save the King!

Letter addressed to Sir Devon Miles Chevalier-Cavalier

Dear father,

I am travelling to the front. I hope to be Colonel of the 53rd Fusiliers and take the Regiment; if not, the Company shall suffice. I have some information on the whereabouts of the Spanish Cavalry Commander and his Troop who did for poor old Petit that a Dutch Informant is offering. Sadly, he is holed up in a town our forces are besieging. I will have to break in during the siege over the next 3 months to find him, but this is not the time to falter. Yes, I am hot-headed and reckless, but I follow my heart and am true to my friends. Wish me luck!!

Your loving son, † Kitt

Oops!

† Le Roi

At the barracks of His Majesty's 69th Arquebusiers all Officers and Subalterns are ordered to attend a briefing by newly appointed Colonel Toothpick. Conversation flows amongst those assembled as they await his arrival, certain rumours having circulated around the regiment that significant changes are being planned.

Their discussions are interrupted by the sound of a gong outside the Orderlies' Office where the men are assembled. The door opens and into the room, seated in a sedan chair, atop several cushions, carried by two privates, comes a diminutive figure, dressed in a somewhat colourful Colonel's uniform, sporting a helmet slightly too large for his head – a helmet that's adorned with an impressive trio of dyed ostrich feathers.

"Now, look here everyone I'm your new Colonel, Tiny Thierry Toothpick, and I want to make it quite clear from the start I wish to hear no comments that can be considered of a heightist nature. OK, that's Rule No.1!! Stick to that and we'll all get along just fine, as well as a couple of other rules too... Rule No.2: No Officer or soldier will ever be seen wearing heeled boots. It's all 'flatties' from now on... Rule No. 3: I don't want to see any scrawling on the latrine walls about "You've got to hand it to the Colonel, because he's too short to reach it". And, finally, for now, Rule No.4: I want milk and cookies added to the menu of the Regimental Refectoire... and not in those big mugs, but nice cups that people can hold properly. That's all, gentlemen: dismissed!"

“Do you like my new cloak?” asked Katy.

“Isn’t black a little bit drab for you? Would you not normally choose something brighter and more vibrant?” replied Louis.

“But black is much esteemed and desired by all sorts of people, especially as a sign of refinement and elegance. Besides, it is so very reasonably priced just now. Here let me fetch you the pamphlet my seamstress gave me.”

Louis perused the pamphlet.

The Joyful News of the Oak Apple Harvest and the Solemn Celebration of the Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers in Paris

To all the faithful and loyal subjects of His Most Christian Majesty, King Louis XIV, by the grace of God, King of France, we, the members of the Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers in Paris, do hereby declare and proclaim the joyful news of the most abundant and plentiful harvest of oak apples that God has bestowed upon us this year, in the year of our Lord 1674.

This year, the extraordinary quantity of oak apples from all parts of the kingdom that we have enough to dye more cloth than ever before and to supply not only our own city but also other provinces and foreign countries with our excellent and renowned black cloth.

Therefore, we have resolved to celebrate this happy occasion and invite all our brethren of the guild, as well as all our friends and benefactors, to join us in our pious and joyful celebration. We will go in procession from our guild hall to the church of St Eustache, where we will attend a solemn High Mass sung by the most reverend Archbishop of Paris himself. We will also distribute alms to the poor and needy as a token of our gratitude and charity.

Also, in honour of all our brave soldiers, who will fight once more to save us from the machinations of the unholly Spanish, we will donate to the grieving widows whose sweethearts fall in battle this summer two yards of the finest black cloth and a length of black lace.

We hope that this humble declaration and invitation will find acceptance and favour in your eyes and that you will not fail to honour us with your company on this auspicious day. We pray that God may bless you all with His Grace and Favour and that He may preserve His Majesty’s person and government from all dangers and enemies.

Long live the King!

Long live the Guild of Weavers and Drapers, Spinners and Dyers!
Signed by, The Master, The Wardens,
And all the Members of the Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers in Paris

“Mmmm, most interesting, my dear. Though I fear the guild members will not be the only ones dyeing this summer. I worry that my poor boys in my old regiment, the Picardy, will also be dying in large numbers, plus other young men of the First Division. I did my best to persuade the present commander to resign and stay in Paris. Even though the sound of drums and cannon must be a distant memory to him now, he seems most resolute in his decision despite, by all accounts, a most ineffectual leader. I trust the guild appreciates how generous their offer may prove to be.

We should join the guild for their High Mass at St Eustache, and I believe your new cloak might be most appropriate for the occasion. St Maurice is also the patron saint of infantrymen, and they will need all the religious blessing the saint can offer.”

Lord Percy Percy says, as fashion tends towards the flatulent, Beau Reese Jean Seine is very fashionable these days.

Poetry Corner

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

Cape, blade, seconds, place,
Disrobe, stretch, prepare, face,
Bow, engage, feint, pray,
He’s hit first, touché.

Frank X. Change

Points Arising

Next deadline is 22nd September

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 as well. And me.

Note that Anthony Gilbert (GdB) is using his old email address again, as shown in the Guilty Parties list.

Welcome

Re-joining us (it's been a while) this turn is Sebastian Emde. Welcome back to *LPBS*, Sebastian, and enjoy the game.

Farewell

Real life has got the better of Rob Strudwick and he’s decided not to take up his new character. Thanks for playing, Rob, and you're welcome to come back any time.

Absent friends

I didn’t receive orders from the following (No Move Received) and they suffered the consequences:

AC Alexandre Capone (Ray Vahey) has NMR'd. Total now 1

JCE Jean-Claude Etienne (Tim Rattray) has NMR'd. Total now 1

JiT Justin Thyme (Gerald Udowiczenko) has NMR'd. Total now 1

VdP Vinne d'Pooh (Terry Crook) has NMR'd. Total now 1

XM Xavier Money (Pam Udowiczenko) has NMR'd. Total now 1

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 an email group for *En Garde!* players and GMs, providing a forum to swap stories and ideas. Sign up at: <https://groups.io/g/EnGarde>

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.

Duels

Results of March's duels

Claude de Nord (with TTT, gains 1 Exp) beat Ray de Sofdelosdarc.

Ray de Sofdelosdarc (no Expertise) drew with Louis Severin Descartes (with JH, no Expertise).

Maurice Pauvre (with LR & ZUT, gains 1 Exp) beat his friend Ray de Sofdelosdarc.

Thomas de la Lune (gains 1 Exp) beat Ray de Sofdelosdarc.

Pierre a'Noyer (gains 1 Exp) beat Tiny Thierry Toothpick (with CdN).

Thomas de la Lune (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Come Asiouar (with ZvT).

Claude de Nord (with TTT, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Zeold von Tu (with CA).

Grudges to settle next month

Ray de Sofdelosdarc (Rapier, 3 rests) has cause with Alexandre Capone (Sabre, Seconds PC & RS, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Jean-Claude Etienne (Cutlass, adv.) and Tiny Thierry Toothpick (Dagger, Seconds CdN, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Come Asiouar (Rapier, Seconds ZvT) and Frank X Change (Sabre, Seconds BeV, adv.) have mutual cause as neither stood down over Agnes.

Thomas de la Lune (Rapier, adv.) has cause with Frank X Change (Sabre, Seconds BeV, 4 rests) for pinching Agnes.

Claude de Nord (Sabre, Seconds TTT, adv.) and Zeold von Tu (Rapier, Seconds CA, 4 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Tiny Thierry Toothpick (Dagger, Seconds CdN, 3 rests) has cause with Maurice Pauvre (Rapier, Seconds LR & ZUT, adv.) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

"adv." shows who (if anyone) has the advantage of higher Expertise: his first duelling sequence need only contain six actions.

All duels listed above (including any to be voted on) must be fought next month unless held over (below). Orders conditional on a challenge being voted cause are acceptable.

Duels held over until June

Balzac Slapdash versus Pierre a'Noyer.

Announcements

All characters may use Influence (and/or a bribe) for or against these actions.

Louis Renault applies for Division Commander of First Division

Rick Shaw asks NPC Division Commanders of First and Frontier Divisions to resign

New Characters

Pauli Kidd gets the Second son of an Impoverished Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 40; MA 6; EC 4 (X1).

Mark Cowper gets the Second son of a very wealthy Baron: Init SL 7; Cash 750; MA 4; EC 4 (X2).

Steven Malecek gets the Second son of a well-to-do Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 250; MA 4; EC 3 (X3).

Mark Nightingale gets the Second son of an Impoverished Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 40; MA 5; EC 2 (X4).

Sebastian Emde gets the Second son of a very wealthy Merchant: Init SL 3; Cash 500; MA 6; EC 4 (X5).

Tables

Army Organisation and 1675's Summer Deployment

First Army (Defence)	___/___/N2/N
Cavalry Division (Defence)	N4/N/N2
Heavy Brigade (Defence) - ALC CPC	
Dragoon Brigade (Defence) - GDMD PLLD	
Frontier Division (Defence)	N1/N/N3
Frontier Regiments (Defence)	
Second Army (Siege)	___/___/N4/N
First Division (Assault)	N1/N/N4
Guards Brigade (Assault) - RFG CG KM	
1st Foot Brigade (Assault) - RM PM	
RNHB Regiment (Assault)	
Second Division (Siege)	___/___/N2
2nd Foot Brigade (Siege) - 13F 53F	
3rd Foot Brigade (Siege) - 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Siege) - 69A Gscn	
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - DG QOC	

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

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	GdB/N/EdL
Horse Guards Brigade	TC/N/N5
Heavy Brigade	N2/N/N1
Dragoon Brigade	JH/FLV/_
First Foot Brigade	N4/N/VdP
Second Foot Brigade	N5/N/AdE
Third Foot Brigade	N3/N/N5
Fourth Foot Brigade	N4/N/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

	(Defence for Mar-May)				
	F1	F2	F3	F4	RNHB
Colonel	N5	N5	N6	N1	N8
Attached					
Also at the Front					
Dragoon Brigade (Grand Duke Max's Dragoons, Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons) 53rd Fusiliers					

This table shows the Colonels of the Frontier regiments (“N” + MA for NPCs), together with the volunteers assigned for the season.

Battle Results

Dragoon Brigade: 5	Frontier regiment 1: 3
Grand Duke Max's Dragoons: 6	Frontier regiment 2: 3
Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons: 1	Frontier regiment 3: 5
53rd Fusiliers: 5	Frontier regiment 4: 6
	RNHB regiment: 1

Other Appointments

King's Escort: Ensign N	Captain PaN
Cardinal's Escort: Ensign ZvT	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince LS	to Field Marshal LSD
Provincial Military Governors: N/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General RS
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry N	of Infantry N
Commissioner of Public Safety CdN (until end December 1675)	
Chancellor of the Exchequer _	
Minister of Justice CdP (until end September 1675)	
Minister of War BeV (until end February 1676)	
Minister of State BRJS (until end January 1676)	

Shows who holds appointments outside military units (except Aides): ID for Characters, “N” for NPC, __ for vacant, “CPS” for extra posts held by the CPS

Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Lover
66	Morgane Le Fay	24	B	TC
67	Justine Caisse	22	I	PC
65	Therèse Le Vert	21	B/W	RS
7	Chris Pacquette	19		BRJS
61	Bette Noire	19	I/W	GdB
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	
54	Madelaine de Proust	17		CdN
35	Katy Did	16	I	LR
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	
55	Jacky Tinne	16		J
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	
48	Fifi	14	B/W	MdG
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		PaN
11	Laura de Land	13		ZUT
26	Ella Fant	13	B	
27	Lucy Fur	13	B	EdL
45	Cath de Thousands	13		
8	Lotte Bottle	12	B	BeV
17	Henrietta Carrotte	12	I/W	
28	Vera Cruz	12		NM
31	Bess Ottede	12	I/W	LS
1	Sue Briquet	11	B	TTT
4	Anne Tique	11	W	GM
23	Agnes Sorel	11	I/W	TdL
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		
63	Carole Singeurs	11		Anon
20	Emma Roides	10	I	
33	Anna Rexique	10	I	
38	Pet Ulante	10	W	FS
43	Di Lemmere	10	I	
53	Angelina de Griz	10	B	CdP
6	Viv Aychus	9		
19	Jenny Russe	8	W	
32	Sal Munella	8	W	
47	Eve Ningalle	8	I/W	AdE
34	Freda de Ath	7	W	PFL
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	SE
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	ZvT
24	Violet Bott	6	I/W	EIF
25	Lois de Lô	5	B	RdS

Mistresses in Paris. Attr(IBUTES): B= Beautiful, I=Influential, W=Wealthy. Lover only if seen together in public this month.

Regiments

Col	RFG	CG	KM	DG	OOC	AIC	CPC	RM	CDMDPM	13F	PLLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn	
CoI	BRJS	N6	CdN	PFL	JIT	AC	BeV	HDS	LSD	MP	N5	N6	N7	TdL	TTT		
LCoI	CdP			CO		PC	N1+	N1	N2	CA	N6	N6	N7				
Maj 1	EdL+		N1		N5+		N1+	VdP+	N2	RRT	N6	N6		N5+	N5+	N5	
Maj 2	MdG*		N4*		N1		N1	JCE	N2	RRT+	N6*	N6*	N1			N3	
Capt 1	NM	N3	N4	N1	N4	N3	N3	N5	N4	N3	N4	N4	N3	N1	N6	N6	N3
Capt 2	LS	N5	N4	N1	N4	N3	N3	N2	N4	N3	N4	N3	N4	N2	N4	N2	N4
Capt 3	PaN	N4	N5	N1	N3*	N3*	N5	N4*	N4	N3	N6	N2*	N4	N3	N3	N4	N4
Capt 4	FS	N2*	N6	N5*	N1*	N3	N3	N4*	N3	N3	N4*	N2*	N3*	N5*	N5*	N4*	N4*
Capt 5	HWB																
Capt 6																	

This table shows the ten senior positions in the 17 regiments by rank. Entries are Character abbreviations, N (+MA) for NPCs, blank for vacant. * shows the regiment adjutant; + indicates the reserve position of a character assigned elsewhere due to their appointment or brevet rank.

The Greasy Pole

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	24	43	Filty	Fld Marshal		24				6 Ben Brown
PC	Count Pierre Cardigan	24	41	Withy	Lt.Colonel ALC		10	Justine	Flr	5	Matt Shepherd
BeV	Viscount Ben e'Volence	24+75	Withy	B.Bdr-General	CPC/War Minister		9	Lotte	Flr	3	Ash Casey
BRJS	Count Beau Reese Jean Seine	24+72	Filty	B.Bdr-General	RFG/State Min.		12	Chris	Flr	4	Bill Hay
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	23	59	Filty	General		32	Jacky	Flr	3	Andrew Kendall
GdB	Viscount Greg de Bécqueur	23	48	Rich	Bdr-General/Cds Brigadier		11	Bette	Flr	5	Anthony Gilbert
BdLS	Count Bernard de Lur-Saluces	22	59	Filty	Lt-General		18		Flr	3	Rob Pinkerton
TC	Viscount Terence Cuckpowder	21	44	Comfy	Bdr-General/HGds Brigadier		6	Morgane	Flr	6	Mike Dommert
CdP	Marquis Camille de Polignac	21	41	Poor	Lt.Colonel RFG/Justice Min.		4	Angelina	Flr	4	James McReynolds
Anon	Baron Les Anonyme	20	56	Poor	Bdr-General/Min w/o Port		3	Carole	Flr	4	Bruno Giordan
HDS	Marquis Henri DuShite	18	30	Rich	B.Bdr-General RM		13		Both	4	Dave Marsden
ZUT	Baron Xavier Ulric Turenne	18+57	Comfy	Lt-General/Min w/o Port			4	Laura	Flr	1	Bob Blanchett
EdL	Baron Eclair de Lame	17	53	Rich	Major RFG/Gds Brigade Maj.		12	Lucy	Both	3	Peter Farrell
RS	Baron Rick Shaw	17	49	Comfy	B.Lt-General/Adjutant Gen		2	Therèse	Both	6	Charles Burrows
LS	Lou Scannon	17	43	Rich	Captain RFG/C.Prnce Aide		4	Bess	Both	2	John Cooke
XM	Baron Xavier Money	17	40	Withy	Bdr-General/Min w/o Port		7		Flr	3	Pam Udowiczzenko
JiT	Earl Justin Thyme	16	42	Withy	Colonel QOC		12		Both	2	Gerald Udowiczzenko
GM	Sir Gaz Moutarde	15	31	Withy	Bdr-General		4	Anne	Both	2	Mike Clibborn-Dyer
CdN	Sir Claude de Nord	15+49	Comfy	Colonel KM/CPS			3	Madelaine	Flr	4	Andrew Larder
NM	Sir Neville Moore	14	36	Withy	Captain RFG/LtGen's Aide		1	Vera	Hunt	2	Cameron Wood
PFL	Sir Phillippe F'Loppe	14	36	Comfy	B.Bdr-General DG		4	Freda	HGds	4	Phil Urquhart
LR	Sir Louis Renault	14	26	Withy	B.Lt-General		2	Katy	Both	4	Roy Bleasdale
PaN	Pierre a'Noyer	13	35	Poor	Captain RFG/Capt.K's Esc		3	Alison	Both	3	Tym Norris
MdG	Martin de Garnache	13	33	Comfy	Major RFG/RFG Regt. Adjt.		3	Fifi	Both	4	Bill Howell
JH	Sir Jacques Hatt	13	F	Comfy	B.Lt-General/Drgn Brigadier		4		Both	3	Joel Halpern
CO	Sir Claude Oppere	12	37	OK	Lt.Colonel DG		4		Both	6	Paul Murphy
ZvT	Zeold von Tu	12	21	Poor	Subaltern CG/Ensn.C's Esc		5	Belle	Both	3	Tim Maccaire
LSD	Louis Severin Descartes	12	F	Withy	B.Bdr-General GDMD/FMshl's Aide		3		Hunt	1	Chris Schotmann

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
FS	Sir Felipe Savant	11	29	Poor	Captain RFG		5	Pet	BG	4	Brick Amundsen
TdL	Thomas de la Lune	11	27	OK	B.Bdr-General 4A		3	Agnes	Hunt	5	Peter Card
HWB	Hector William Boone	11	23	Comfy	Captain RFG		5		Hunt	5	Paul Wilson
AdE	Sir Antoine d'Eqes	11	16	Poor	Major 13F/2 F Brigade Maj.		7	Eve	Hunt	2	Graeme Morris
BS	Baron Balzac Slapdash	11	F	Withy	B.Bdr-General PLLD		15		Hunt	5	Matthew Wale
AC	Alexandre Capone	10-	5	OK	Colonel ALC		3		Hunt	5	Ray Vahey
MP	Maurice Pauvre	9	18	Comfy	Colonel PM		3		Hunt	4	James Waters
AiCh	Alvin Charles	9	F	OK	Lt.Colonel GDMD		7		F&P	2	Graeme Wilson
RdH	Roger d'Horne	9	RIP								Steven Malecek
VdP	Vinne d'Pooh	8	13	Comfy	Major RM/1 F Brigade Maj.		4		RP	2	Terry Crook
TS	Tristand Sault	8	RIP								Mark Nightingale
KCC	Kitt Chevalier-Cavalier	7	RIP								Mark Cowper
FXC	Frank X Change	7+26	Comfy	Major CPC			4		F&P	4	Nigel Monaghan
JCE	Jean-Claude Etienne	6-	5	Comfy	Major RM		7		F&P	4	Tim Rattray
FLV	Fouche La Vache	6	RIP								Pauli Kidd
TTT	Tiny Thierry Toothpick	6+	38	Poor	Colonel 69A		5	Sue	F&P	1	Jason Fazackarley
CA	Come Asiouar	5	17	Poor	Major PM		3		F&P	4	Jacob Andersson
SE	Stephane Strange	5+	17	OK	Captain 13F		3	Thomasina	RP	4	Neil Packer
RRT	Ramond Repose de la Tombe	4	14	Poor	B.Lt.Colonel PM		7			1	Olaf Schmidt
RdS	Ray de Sofdelosdarc	4	8	OK	Captain 27M		2	Lois	RP	4	Nik Luker
EIF	Elroi le Flingue	3+	19	Poor			6	Violet		4	Daniel Racke

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+