

That would be enough

This has been issue 259 of *To Win Just Once*, published 17th November 2025. It incorporates *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*, a game of *En Garde!*. Issues are published ten times a year, roughly every five weeks. © Paul Evans 2025

Deadlines

Orders for *Railway Rivals* to Mike by Friday 28th November 2025.

Orders for *LPBS* and Fictionary Dictionary votes and definitions to Pevans by Friday 5th December 2025.

(First deadlines for 2026: 2nd/9th January.)

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 – There's a game under way, but Mike can run a second four-player game if enough people are interested. So far that's Mike Dyer, Anthony Gilbert and Peter Jenkins. (Plus Mark Cowper once the current game has finished.) "Only one more needed for a game of *Railway Rivals*!" (Working map and rules provided).

Star Trader – The list for the next game starts with Pevans, Mike Dyer, Mark Cowper and Anthony Gilbert. At least two more needed – and room for up to eight. (Rules provided)

Credits

To Win Just Once issue 259 was written and edited by Pevans with contributions from Mike Dommett. The *LPBS* masthead (page 17) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as are the drawings on pages 18, 20 and 24. The illustration on page 22 is by Tim Wiseman. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Pevans took the photos, except where noted, and played with Photoshop.

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To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



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(LPBS 396: Feb 1677)

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ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank,	Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player
CS	Con Stantinople	12	30	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	QOC/HGds Brigade Maj.	6	Anne	Hunt	1	Pam Udowiczenko
EIF	Sir Elroi le Flingue	12	25	OK	Lt.Colonel	GDMD	7	Lucy	Both	4	Daniel Racke
TCdS	Thibault Chanson de Skye	12	F	OK	Bdr-General/4	F Brigadier	6		Hunt	5	Bill Hay
FdB	François de Blanchefort	12+	37	OK	Colonel	CPC	5	Freda	BG	4	Peter Farrell
PPuf	Sir Percival Puffington	11	F	Comfy	Bdr-General	PM/1 F Brigadier	6		Hunt	5	Tony Taylor
HS	Hugo Serre	11+	45	Poor	Captain	KM	6	Sue	Hunt	3	Paul Murphy
AH	Arent Hayes	10	F	Poor	Lt.Colonel	CPC	4		Hunt	3	Mark Cowper
AA	Armand Alsace	9	16	Poor	Bdr-General		11		Hunt	4	Sebastian Emde
MD	Maurice Danseur	9+	36	Poor	Major	GDMD/Drgn Brigade Maj.	6	Belle	BG	5	Andrew Whiteley
PDT	Pierre De Terre	9+	28	OK	Major	GDMD/LtGen's Aide (2nd	7	Sal	BG	2	Manoj Nair
CdF	Chemin de Fer	8	25	Comfy	Major	RM/1 F Brigade Maj.	5	Jenny	BG	3	Rod MacDonald
CPL	Charles PiedLuminaire	8	F	Comfy	Bdr-General	PLLD/2nd Div Adjnt	8		F&P	3	Nick Tyrrell
JS	Justin Saad	7	16	Poor			3		F&P	3	Gerry Sutcliffe
CE	Charles Etfeevor	6	8	OK	Captain	13F	3		F&P	4	Andrew Kendall
SBC	Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux	6	8	Poor	Captain	53F	1		RP	2	Peter Card
SDS	Steve De Sade	6+	27	OK	Captain	GDMD/BdGen's Aide (LSD)	5	Thomasina	F&P	5	Jon Dean
BT	Beau Taux	6+	20	Poor	Captain	53F	4		F&P		
VdF	Vaux de Fon	5	F	Poor	Captain	CPC	1				
BC	Barthélemy Chifflet	5	F	Comfy	Major	PM	5				
DJA	Dee Jean Aise	5	F	OK	Lt.Colonel	PLLD	5				
X1		4	Ret								
IP	Ignace Pardailon	3	1	OK	Subaltern	GDMD	5		RP	3	Grégory Meurant

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
BeV	Count Ben e'Volence	24	60	Rich	B.General/2nd Army Commandr	11	Lotte	Flr	3	Ash Casey
HDS	Count Henri DuShite	24	55	Flthy	B.Lt-General	16		Flr	4	Dave Marsden
GdB	Count Greg de Bécqueur	24+	76	Rich	B.General/1st Army Commandr	13	Bette	Flr	5	Anthony Gilbert
RS	Earl Rick Shaw	23	F	Rich	General/Min w/o Port	3		Flr	6	Charles Burrows
TC	Count Terence Cuckpowder	22	F	Withy	B.Lt-General/Gds Brigadier	7			6	Mike Dommett
CdP	Marquis Camille de Polignac	22	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General RFG	6		Flr	4	James McReynolds
BdLS	Count Bernard de Lur-Saluces	22	F	Flthy	Lt-General/Prov.Mil.Gov	20		Flr	3	Rob Pinkerton
LSD	Marq. Louis Severin Descartes	21+	75	Rich	Bdr-General/Min w/o Port	6	Edna	Flr	1	Chris Schotmann
JIT	Count Justin Thyme	20	46	Rich	B.Bdr-General QOC	18	Guinevere	Flr	2	Gerald Udowiczenko
ZUT	Marquis Xavier Ulric Turenne	20	26	Withy	B.General	4		Flr	1	Bob Blanchett
FXC	Marquis Frank X Change	20+	67	Comfy	Colonel CG/Justice Min.	11	Justine	Flr	4	Nigel Monaghan
ZvT	Baron Zeold von Tu	19	48	Withy	B.Lt-General/1st Div Commandr	8		Flr	3	Tim Macaire
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	18-	6	Flthy	Fld Marshal	24			6	Ben Brown
JH	Sir Jacques Hatt	18	45	Withy	B.General/3rd Army Commandr	4	Cath	Flr	3	Joel Halpern
CdN	Baron Claude de Nord	18	44	Withy	Colonel KM	4	Chris	Both	4	Andrew Larder
LR	Marquis Louis Renault	18	37	Withy	Lt-General/2nd Div Commandr	3	Maggie	Flr	4	Roy Bleasdale
BS	Earl Balzac Slapdash	16	19	Rich	B.Bdr-General DG	21			5	Matthew Wale
NM	Baron Neville Moore	15	F	Rich	Captain RFG/Capt.K's Esc	1		Hunt	2	Cameron Wood
MdG	Martin de Garnache	15	F	Withy	Lt.Colonel RFG/1st Div Adjutant	3		Both	4	Bill Howell
CA	Marquis Come Asiouar	15	F	OK	Lt.Colonel CG/FMshl's Aide	9		Both	4	Jacob Andersson
FS	Baron Felipe Savant	14	F	Withy	Captain RFG	5		Both	4	Brick Amundsen
TTT	Sir Tiny Thierry Toothpick	14	F	Withy	Major RFG/CPS	6		Flr	1	Jason Fazackarley
BLC	Botte Le Chimiste	13	32	OK	Colonel GDMD/Cav Div Adjutant	2	Eve	Both	4	Tym Norris
HF	Hugo Furst	13	29	OK	B.Bdr-General 13F/2 F Brigadier	5	Ella	Both	2	Graeme Morris
ID	Sir Ian Dediette	13	17	Comfy	Major QOC	3		Both	2	Nik Luker
MHD	Sir Marcel Hatch Dupree	13	F	Comfy	Lt.Colonel RM	6		Hunt	4	Graeme Wilson
HWB	Sir Hector William Boone	13	F	Rich	Major RFG	8		Both	5	Paul Wilson
HJ	Baron Hugh Jeneaux	13	F	Withy	Colonel ALC/Chancellor	9		Hunt	3	Bruno Giordan

Chatter

I forgot to mention last month that the new PC is working nicely. It did want to print PDFs on letter-sized paper rather than A4 for a while. However, I finally tracked down the setting for this and fixed it.

Languid. That's the word to describe the River (!) Pinn on a sunny Saturday afternoon in October. The water is at a low level and flowing gently. The surface is unruffled apart from the odd fallen leaf being carried serenely along. Very calming. Though, in the background, I can hear what sounds like the start of a heavy rain shower. It's not. It's acorns falling off the numerous oak trees and bouncing through the foliage. Release the pigs! It would certainly be good foraging for any wild boar that happened to be around.

Definitely none of those in central London, where I happened to be earlier in the month – at a loose end for a couple of hours. And the first thing that struck me was how quiet it was. It's 5 pm on a weekday and I'm next to what used to be described as the busiest road in Europe. I'm expecting it to be full of traffic. Instead, there are clusters of 10-12 vehicles trundling past every time the traffic lights go green. And loads of cyclists!

And where are all the commuters? I'm close to two Tube stations, so the pavements should be bustling with office workers rushing home. Nope, there are just some joggers and a few lackadaisical pedestrians – all dressed casually. Not even smart casual. I did find a few more people when I moved away from the main road into the back streets of Fitzrovia. They appeared to be mainly students. And it was still quiet. Even the occasional car going past was electric. It's not what I remember central London being like.

It's not even October!

Yep, it was still September when the first mince pies of the season hove into view. This was while we were in Northern Ireland and the cakes in question were Asda's "Exceptional Brown Butter Flavour & Rum Mince Pies" – subtitled "Brown Butter Flavour Enriched pastry filled with a rum-laced spiced vine fruit and citrus peel mincemeat". The first one tasted rather odd to me, so I nibbled the next one to work out what it was. The pastry was fine: short, crumbly and buttery. So it must be the mincemeat (the pies were properly filled). No problem with the rum element, but there was definitely something odd spicing up the fruit. I couldn't identify anything unusual in the list of ingredients, though. But, Brown Butter *Flavour*?! Is Asda too cheap to use actual brown butter? And I found the filling was very, very sweet. 5/10, I think.

Coming back home, Sainsbury's had their mince pies on the shelves too: "Taste the Difference all butter mince pies with all butter pastry filled with a blend of apples, currants, sultanas and candied citrus peel, infused with brandy". And I thought the Asda box was long-winded. No odd taste with these. Decent pastry, ordinary

filling with a respectable brandy hit, but nothing exciting. At least they have real butter as an ingredient. I'll give these 7/10.

Punctuation saves lives!

That’s the punchline on one of my old T-shirts. (The previous lines read: “Let’s eat kids!”, then “Let’s eat, kids”.) I was reminded of this when we caught a bit of a BBC programme showing us “Hits of 1975”. In particular, there were Bob Marley and the Wailers regaling us with “No Woman, No Cry”. Except the subtitles rendered the lyrics as “No, woman, no cry”.

Now I’ve always understood that the song’s title suggests a bloke shouldn’t cry just because he’s lost his (or doesn’t have a) woman. But that punctuation suggests something different. Quick, to Wikipedia! Which tells me that “The lyric is sometimes misunderstood outside Jamaica [and should be] rendered ‘No, woman, nuh cry’ in Jamaican Patois”.

Well, well, well... After 50 years of hearing this song (it was on the juke box in the Student Union bar almost continuously in my first year at university), it suddenly makes a lot more sense. Punctuation rules! (Coincidentally, the title of a book by my mother.)

This month’s earworm

See above.

Spiderwatch

Number of large, spindly spiders inspecting a corner of the bathroom with a view to moving in: 1. (The corner turned out to be subject to frequent heavy showers and some very large, noisy tenants.)

Star Trader

Our most recent game has now finished, so who is interested in another game? There are four on the waiting list (including me!), so we just need a couple more to get a new game started. If we get plenty of players, we can move to the larger map/expanded game. Let me or Mike know.

Online stats

I published *TWJO* 258 on 6th October and the PDFs were downloaded 160 times through the rest of the month. October saw 52 downloads for the previous issue, taking it to 221 in two months. And issue 256 was downloaded 34 times to make 203 since publication.

1 I’ve always thought this to be a nicely succinct précis of Jonathan Swift’s “A Modest Proposal”.

Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Lover
66	Morgane Le Fay	24	B	
67	Justine Caisse	22	I	FXC
65	Therèse Le Vert	21	B/W	
7	Chris Pacquette	19		CdN
61	Bette Noire	19	I/W	GdB
64	Edna Bucquette	18	W	LSD
3	Kathy Pacific	17	B	
54	Madelaine de Proust	17		
35	Katy Did	16	I	
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	LR
55	Jacky Tinne	16		
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	JiT
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	
48	Fifi	14	B/W	
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		
11	Laura de Land	13		
26	Ella Fant	13	B	HF
27	Lucy Fur	13	B	EIF
45	Cath de Thousands	13		JH
8	Lotte Bottle	12	B	BeV
17	Henrietta Carrotte	12	I/W	
28	Vera Cruz	12		
31	Bess Ottede	12	I/W	
1	Sue Briquet	11	B	HS
4	Anne Tique	11	W	CS
23	Agnes Sorel	11	I/W	
40	Sheila Kiwi	11		
63	Carole Singeurs	11		
20	Emma Roides	10	I	
38	Pet Ulante	10	W	
43	Di Lemmere	10	I	
53	Angelina de Griz	10	B	
6	Viv Ayschus	9		
59	May Banquot l'Idée	9		
19	Jenny Russe	8	W	CdF
32	Sal Munella	8	W	PDT
47	Eve Ningalle	8	I/W	BLC
34	Freda de Ath	7	W	FdB
39	Thomasina Tancenjin	7	I	SDS
5	Belle Epoque	6	B/I	MD
24	Violet Bott	6	I/W	
25	Lois de Lô	5	B	

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

Regiments

	RFG	CG	KM	DG	OO	ALC	CPC	RM	CDMD	13F	PLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn
Col	CdP	FXC	CdN	BS	JiT	HJ	FdB	N6	BLC	PPuF+	HF+	CPL	N8	N6		
LCol	MdG	CA			CS+		AH	MHD	EIF	N2		DJA	N3	N6	N3+	
Maj 1	HWB	N1	N4		ID		N3+	N1	MD+	BC	N4+	N4*	N4	N4+		N5
Maj 2	TTT	N1*	N3				N4	N4	N5	N1	N6	N1	N5	N5	N3	N4
Capt 1	NM	N1	N1	N6			N5	N2	N3	N4	N5	N1	N5	N5	N4	N5
Capt 2	FS	N6	N4	N3			N6	N2	N5*	N2	N2	N6	N5	N4*	N6*	N5
Capt 3	N4	N4	N1	N2			N2*	N5	N5*	N2	N2	N4	N6	N5	N5	N5
Capt 4	N2	N5	N3*	N5*			N3	N2*	SDS	N2	N2*	N4		N1	N6	N3
Capt 5			HS				N1			CE						
Capt 6							VdF					BT				

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.

Brigade Positions

Guards Brigade	TC/N/___	Current CO/Aide/Brigade Major of each Brigade; entries are ID for player characters, “N” (+ MA if needed) for NPC, __ for vacant
Horse Guards Brigade	N2/N/CS	
Heavy Brigade	N3/N/N3	
Dragoon Brigade	___/___/MD	
First Foot Brigade	___/___/CdF	
Second Foot Brigade	HF/N/N4	
Third Foot Brigade	N3/N/N4	
Fourth Foot Brigade	TCdS/___/N3	

Frontier Regiments

	F1	F2	F3	(Assault for Mar-May) F4	RNHB
Colonel	N4	N2	N1	N3	N4
Attached				1 Bn CG	RS
Also at the Front					

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

Battle Results

Guards Brigade: 2	4th Arquebusiers: 3
Royal Foot Guards: 4	Frontier regiment 1: 5
4th Foot Brigade: 5	Frontier regiment 2: 4
69th Arquebusiers: 3	Frontier regiment 3: 3
The Gascon Regiment: 5	Frontier regiment 4: 6
Picardy Musketeers: 2	RNHB regiment: 5
Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons: 1	

Other Appointments

King’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain NM
Cardinal’s Escort: Ensign N	Captain N
Aides: to Crown Prince N	to Field Marshal CA
Provincial Military Governors: BdLS/N/N/N/N	
City Military Governor N	Adjutant-General __
Inspectors-General: of Cavalry N	of Infantry N
Commissioner of Public Safety TTT (until end June 1677)	
Chancellor of the Exchequer HJ (until end August 1677)	
Minister of Justice FXC (until end May 1677)	
Minister of War __	
Minister of State __	

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

Letters

Tim Macaire follows up on my recommendation of re-reading *Watchmen*.

Your piece persuaded me to take another look at Watchmen; you're certainly right that it bears rereading, though it has dated, less from the forty years that have passed (aagh!) than from the relatively sudden end to the threat of nuclear obliteration (plenty of other threats since, of course).

I think the pirate theme is just a heavy-handed reiteration of the dangers of doing the wrong thing for the right reason, plus of course the irony of the writers being caught up in someone else's well-intentioned destruction.

Definitely heavy-handed – maybe I thought there was something more subtle.

Colin Bruce got in first with his own mince pie experience.

While you were away I had my first mince pies of the season – Waitrose No.1 Crumble Top Mince Pies with Cranberry & Orange. Very nice.

Though frankly shameful to be starting on them so early in the Autumn. As Anne pointed out. While tucking into her own one.

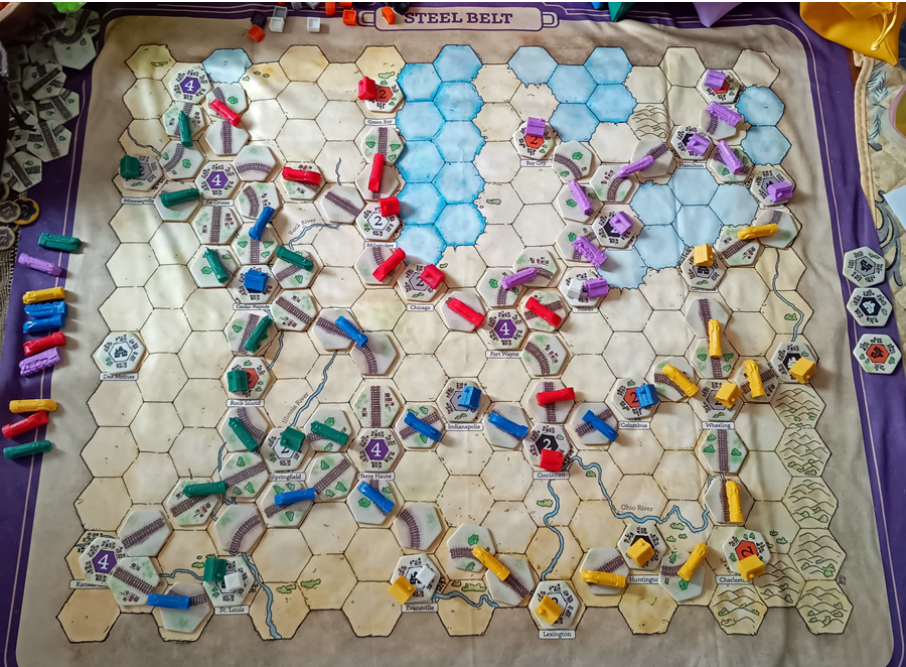
Okay, Colin: “crumble top”? “with Cranberry & Orange”? Is that even a mince pie...

Recent games and first impressions (part 3)

My big arrival recently (after quite a wait) was Martin Wallace’s latest train game (and thus irresistible as far as I’m concerned), *Steam Power* (published by Wallace Designs: www.wallacedesigns.com.au). I tried out the ‘Basic Solo’ game (there’s an alternative solitaire game where you play against a ‘mautoma’, but the rules for this are half the rulebook!) to learn the rules and immediately got déjà vu. As a railway company owner, pay money to play hexagonal tiles onto the board, building train tracks to link cities of different colours. And then ship goods between cities. So far, so *Age of Steam*.

One immediate difference is that companies also build ‘Factories’. These are marked to show who owns them and immediately produce goods of the city’s colour. In this game you’re not delivering goods to cities of the same colour. Instead, there are ‘Contracts’ that require a particular set of goods to be delivered into your network. This earns you rewards of victory points, money and/or bonus actions.

As far as I can see, delivering goods is easy-peasy when they start in your network. They’re already there! (You can use goods or rail links belonging to others, but have to pay for them.) Thus I made a point of building my network to include all four colours of city/good. There’s also a mechanism from *Brass* here: when all the goods have been taken from a Factory, the city flips over and is worth points to the owner at the end of the game.



The end of my solitaire game on the Steel Belt map. The pieces on the left edge were drawn at random for the companies' turns. You can see the factory pieces on towns, along with the odd left-over good.

In the basic solo game you play all five companies, adding their scores together at the end. My strategy seemed to work okay. Until particular colours started to run out. Then companies were having to pay, reducing their score, to complete contracts. I ended up with a score of 169, but have no idea how good this is. It also got a bit tedious, carrying out two actions each for five companies over eight rounds.

Playing a four-player game was much more interesting. My strategy seemed to work well. Though there are some wrinkles: Tom joined his network to mine and built a Factory in one of my empty cities. After which I was careful to use the second action of my turn to build a factory when I'd used the first to connect to a new city.

We played on the West Country map, on the grounds that the geography was reasonably familiar. This meant that not all the city tiles could be placed at the start of the game. The spare tiles add a bonus point to the score of flipped cities in that colour. In our setup, two black cities were left out. Which meant not only that the factories on the black cities were particularly valuable, but also that black

Minister of State will still be vacant at the time of the trial, so one of the King's cronies will be acting MoS and judging the case.

Class 7 favours (and/or bribes) are needed to influence the verdict (class 9 to commute the sentence for each that's found guilty). Witnesses may be called and all players are welcome to contribute to the fun.

New Characters

- Jeremy Tullett gets the Second son of a Merchant: Init SL 3; Cash 150; MA 6; EC 6 (X1).
- Peter Jenkins gets the Second son of a very wealthy Merchant: Init SL 3; Cash 500; MA 6; EC 4 (X2).
- Max Pieksma gets the Second son of a well-to-do Gentleman: Init SL 4; Cash 250; MA 6; EC 2 (X3).

Tables

Army Organisation and 1677's Summer Deployment

First Army (Field Ops)	GdB/N/N5/N
First Division (Field Ops)	ZvT/N/MdG
Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - RFG CG KM	
Dragoon Brigade (Field Ops) - GDMD PLLD	
Cavalry Division (Field Ops)	N1/N/BLC
Horse Guards Brigade (Field Ops) - DG QOC	
Heavy Brigade (Field Ops) - ALC CPC	
Second Army (Siege)	BeV/N/__/N
Frontier Division (Siege)	N1/N/N3
Frontier Regiments (Siege)	
Third Army (Defence)	JH/N/N3/N
Second Division (Defence)	LR/PDT/CPL
3rd Foot Brigade (Defence) - 27M 4A	
4th Foot Brigade (Defence) - 69A Gscn	
RNHB Regiment (Defence)	
Third Division (Defence)	N2/N/N3
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

Frank X Change (with LSD, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Claude de Nord.

Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux declined to meet François de Blanchefort as he was under half Endurance.

Thibault Chanson de Skye declined to meet Marcel Hatch Dupree as he was under half Endurance.

Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux declined to meet Vaux de Fon as he was under half Endurance.

Arent Hayes (gains 1 Exp) beat Thibault Chanson de Skye (with CS & JS, voted cause 9:0).

Grudges to settle next month

Terence Cuckpowder (Sabre, Seconds ZUT, adv.) has cause with Zeold von Tu (Rapier, Seconds CA, 5 rests) for pinching Morgane.

Barthélemy Chifflet (Rapier, Seconds PPuf, 3 rests) has cause with Charles PiedLuminaire (Sabre, Seconds DJA & LSD, adv.) for pinching Violet.

Rick Shaw (Sabre, Seconds JiT, 5 rests) has cause with Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) for pinching Thérèse.

Martin de Garnache (Rapier, 4 rests) has cause with Claude de Nord (Sabre, Seconds FXC & HS, adv.) for pinching Chris.

Trials

Both Justin Thyme and Louis Severin Descartes are on trial at the start of next month (after duels, but before anything else) – CPS “Tiny” Thierry Toothpick will decide the order. The charges in both cases are witchcraft, treason and perjury.

Dee Jean Aise (Sabre) has cause with Steve De Sade (Sabre, adv.) for pinching Thomasina.

Beau Taux (Rapier, Seconds ID) has cause with Botte Le Chimiste (Sabre, Seconds LSD) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Beau Taux (Rapier, Seconds ID, adv.) and François de Blanchefort (Sabre, Seconds AH, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Beau Taux (Rapier, Seconds ID, adv.) has cause with Hugo Serre (Rapier, 1 rests) as he's not Noble but higher SL.

Claude de Nord (Sabre, Seconds FXC & HS, adv.) and Frank X Change (Rapier, Seconds LSD & GdB, 3 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Frank X Change (Rapier, Seconds LSD & GdB, adv.) and Hugo Serre (Rapier, 3 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

“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. Orders conditional on a challenge being voted cause are acceptable.

goods were likely to be relatively scarce. When I realised this, I quickly headed to where there were several black cities and got Factories onto them.

With goods running out towards the end of the game, but all the networks interconnected, I ended up paying others for goods to help me complete my last Contracts. But always at a profit, natch. My strategy definitely paid off (the trial run may have helped too) and I came out on top. I'm sure it will get trickier next time.

Steam Power is clearly in the *Age of Steam* family, but simpler than the original. The good thing about this is that it plays quickly and slickly (Martin's got plenty of experience and feedback to draw on). The bad thing is that this game isn't as demanding/rewarding as *Age of Steam*.

I ponied up for the deluxe version, which has some advantages and disadvantages compared to the standard, 'retail' version. Generally I prefer wooden pieces, but the plastic tiles are nicely tactile – and work well on the cloth (faux silk) 'board'. The domino-style contracts would probably work better as a deck of cards, as they are in the standard edition. The locomotive, factory and (stackable!) goods pieces are impressive for the amount of detail on the models. Though I'd probably have been fine with the wooden pieces. And plastic versus cardboard coins is neither



The end of the West Country game. The three tiles on the right are the ones that didn't get placed on the map. Note that my (green) network includes two black towns just about visible in the bottom right quadrant.

here nor there (I prefer paper money, anyway). What is good about the deluxe edition is that you get six maps rather than two, offering a lot more variety.

I'll give *Steam Power* a provisional 8/10 on my highly subjective scale (*Age of Steam* is a 10!) and look forward to playing it some more.



The final position of the courtiers in our game with cards for a courtier on one side of the board and against on the other.

After the railways, we finished off our session with *Courtisans* (designed by Romaric Galonnier and Anthony Perone and published by Catch Up: www.catchupgames.com), which Tom D had brought along. Despite the title, the game's actually about courtiers, not courtesans. There are six currying favour with the Queen and they'll end up either in her good books (points) or bad (penalties). Players score these for each courtier card in front of them.

Your turn consists of playing the three cards in your hand: one in front of you, one in front of another player and one to influence that courtier's standing. This gives you tricky decisions every turn. Just not interesting decisions. We were relentlessly negative, so our winner had the magnificent score of... zero.

Hmm, it's an acceptable game, but I don't think I need to play it again. That's a provisional 5/10 on my highly subjective scale.

least until Spring." That's a shame, Steven, but you'll be very welcome back "Once things settle down".

Absent friends

Grégory Meurant (IP) continues to be floated.

No orders from Bob Blanchett (ZUT) - 1 turn missed. Anyone heard anything from Bob?

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.

Announcements

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

Camille de Polignac applies for Brigadier of 1st Foot Brigade

Camille de Polignac applies for Minister of War

Camille de Polignac applies for Minister of State

Hugo Serre asks NPC Major 2 of King's Musketeers to resign

Rick Shaw applies for Minister of State

Duels

Results of February's duels

Botte Le Chimiste (with LSD, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Hugh Jeneaux.

Elroi le Flingue (with LSD, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Hugh Jeneaux.

Maurice Danseur (with PDT & LSD, gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Hugh Jeneaux.

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.

Balzac Slapdash (no Expertise) drew with Con Stantinople (with JS & TCdS, no Expertise).

Justin Thyme (no Expertise) beat his enemy Balzac Slapdash (under half Endurance, losing 8 extra SPs).

Arent Hayes (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux.

Thibault Chanson de Skye declined to meet Chemin de Fer as he was under half Endurance.

1 Are streets of Paris safe to walk
For ladies out alone at night?
In shadows tiny terrors stalk;
I fear for my fair lady's plight.
2 Is that a wolf in shadows hid,
With hungry jaws, about to pounce?
Or just a naughty little kid?
You don't get many to the ounce!
3 Their whiskers quiver, like a mouse;
Their noses sniff the cold, damp air.
Should prey unwitting leave the
house,
They drag it to their filthy lair.
4 These orange pipsqueaks roam our
town,
Arresting ladies on a whim.
Methinks they need a cooling down;
The Seine's a chilly place to swim.
5 The Lord may visit wrath on these,
And accidents ~~may come to pass~~ are
sure to come;
If honour they insist to tease,
Bad luck may land them on their ...
bum.

6 So watch your step, on ice and frost,
One slip and you'll be in the drink.
Before you know it you'll be lost.
If you can't swim, you'll surely sink.

Some musing on Marquis L R's Rapier
workshop

1 I flex my arms and flex my steel –
This rapier thing is really light!
I wonder if I really feel
I want it for my future fight.
2 A sabre has a cutting edge,
The perfect weapon for the front.
The rapier couldn't cut a hedge –
Of course not! That's the very point!
3 A proud horseman I'm glad to be,
I'll use my sabre to cut down
The foes of France where'er they be.
But perhaps a rapier back in town?

† Major Maurice Danseur

Points Arising

Next deadline is 5th December

My apologies to Peter Card for applying SBC's bribe to the wrong resignation last month. I re-did the affected actions and the 53F Major stayed in his post.

Sadly CPS TTT only had two warrants remaining, so Mademoiselle de Lô was spared arrest this month (see press).

Welcome

Joining us for the next turn is Jeremy Tullett, who's an *En Garde!* veteran – though hasn't played for a few years.

Peter Jenkins is another veteran, having played the face-to-face game at Furrycon back in the 1990s – you may see some familiar names, Peter.

Conversely, Max Pieksma is a newbie to the game – though he has read the rulebook. (!) The good news is that you won't need to know all the rules immediately, Max.

A warm welcome to all three and enjoy the game.

Farewell

Steven Malecek reports that “while I enjoy my time with *En Garde!*, I regretfully have to ... take a hiatus at

My most recent introduction was to *Habemus Papam* after a dinner with old friend Peter and visiting American gaming buddies, Lisa and Walter.

The title is, of course, the traditional Latin announcement that “We have a Pope!” when a new Pontiff is elected. Hence the game is about electing a Pope. Which means it's all politics. (Yes, it's Conclave – the board game!)

We had a set of candidates – cards – set out on the table. Each with five attributes, some of which will match what each player is looking for. The idea is to get the candidate elected who's a good match with your preferences. That's the way to score points! Or ‘Influence’ as it's called in the game. However, playing influence is also how you establish both who's the best candidate for Pope and who you want to see elected. So there's a trade-off between using the influence you've got for a bigger payout or hanging on to it to score.

You take it in turns to add influence to a candidate – or not – until enough players pass. If any candidate has at least two-thirds of the influence in play, they are duly elected and there's final scoring. Or players earn influence and start a new round.

There's a handy reference card to tell players what two-thirds of an influence total is, and very useful it was, too. I thought I'd pulled something of a coup going all-in on a good candidate to get him elected. However, this guy was also a partial match for Peter (despite his attributes being the opposite of mine) and he outscored me on final scoring (plus I'd blown my stash).

It's an interesting game, but the jury's out so far. One to play again and a provisional 6/10 on my highly subjective scale.

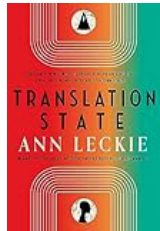
First published on my BGG blog: boardgamegeek.com/blog/8392



My attributes are shown on the card in the bottom right corner and we're down to seven candidates in the middle.

Reading Matter

It's not just the games I need to catch up on reporting, but the books, too. Here's a quick whiz through a couple of the books I've read this year.

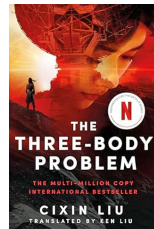


Translation State by Ann Leckie has the same setting as her “Ancillary” trilogy (see *TWJO* 157 for my thoughts on the first of these, *Ancillary Justice*), but not in the Radch empire that was central to those books. We start with Enae, whose life has been devoted to caring for her uncaring ‘grandmaman’. Her death leaves Enae without a role in the extended family, who now take over. She is given a sinecure with the task of finding a diplomat who’s been missing for 200 years. She’s not expected to succeed, just to have a good time spending her (generous) salary.

Qven is a translator for the alien Presger, a role they were born and bred for. Literally. The translators are crucial to negotiations between the two species as neither can comprehend the other. And the all-important treaty between them is due for renewal. But Qven is a bit of a rebel... And then we have Reet. A maintenance engineer who “isn’t from around here”. But what is he?

The plot follows the lives of these three as they are gradually drawn together. At the end, as with the “Ancillary” stories, what has been all about individuals has huge significance for both humanity and the Presger. Recommended.

I picked up *The Three-Body Problem* by Cixin Liu (translated by Ken Liu) based on recommendations and its Hugo award (2015). This starts as an eye-opening history lesson into Mao Zedong’s “Cultural Revolution” in China. However, this is just the backstory of main character, Ye Wenjie.



In the present day, she is an eminent astrophysicist. Meanwhile, an immersive computer ‘game’ is set on an alien planet where everything is unpredictable. Will the sun come up? From which direction? What colour will it be? The answer involves the three-body problem. Players interact with the strange aliens who not only survive on this world but have evolved to sentience and a technological society. Could they be real?

Experiencing the game for us is Wang Miao, an engineer investigating a spate of suicides by scientists who, it seems, have ‘played’ the game. At the same time we learn more about Ye Wenjie’s life and the choices she has made. And the ultimate question of what to do about a human race that is destroying its own planet.

There’s an awful lot in this book, but I found it hard going at times – it took me several months to finish it as more appealing stuff took my attention. And, at the end, I discovered, it’s only the first of a series of three books. I’m not sure I will move on to the next one. So, worth a look, but be prepared to have to work at it.

on it. Let me check... hmmmh... von Tu... something about witchcraft and perjury, plus treason of course... then we have that Count Thyme fellow, he’s new and not been on the list before... the charges... ahh, witchcraft, perjury, treason... naturally... oh, and look, here’s another woman... Mademoiselle de Lô... I’m guessing... wait a minute, yep... witchcraft, subterfuge... that’s interesting and treason!”

“Shall I grab three fresh warrants from that big pile on the Boss’s desk, draw them up with these latest miscreants on them and then get three cells ready? Does the Boss say anything else?”

“Go ahead and do that, Tangerine No.2. Better prepare one of the ‘specials’ for von Tu & Thyme, you know how Commissioner Toothpick insists on nothing but the full works for those he deems on his Top Traitors List.”

“But isn’t that everyone, Tangerine No.1? Doesn’t he always shout very loudly that they’re all traitors of the highest order for whom there can be only one penalty – Deeeaaaattthhhhh – or words to that effect?”

“That may be the case, Tangerine No.2, but we’re not to question him, as long as he keeps paying the wages, gives us this nice orange uniforms and has us on the official Public Safety Ministry employees list. We’re important people now, Tangerine No.2, servants of the CPS and thus doing our bit for King and Country!! Heed, follow and carry out the Commissioner’s bidding, that’s our role, so send out the boys and round these latest three up asap and don’t

forget to drop off that other warrant to Baron de Nord, the one appointing him as an official CPS employee too, you never know he might get a couple of these newbie traitors for us himself, now that he’s all legal and one of us.”

Overheard in the Fleur de Lys: Failing to get a conviction, you say. It was only a Woman, you say. How hard could it be? you say... I say we need a new CPS, as Toothpick is Tooth-less.

Poetry Corner

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

1 When Thierry chose to prey
On Madmousselle [sic] Le Fay,
The Ladies of Paris
Showed solidarity.
2 Paris would be a poorer place
Without so many pretty faces
With an enigmatic smile
And a touch of feminine guile.

† Frank X Change

A Frenchman would seduce.
From his attack we can deduce
That a Frenchman he cannot be.
Toothpick, are you our enemy?

Marching on through the smoke of
death
Beckoned forth by Apollo’s light
Any moment drawing last breath
Duty bound to pursue the fight
Shame, sole reward for selfishness
When Ilion falls under siege
Prize of cowardly Aegisthus
Betrayed of a loyal liege.

† Barthélemy Chifflet

Military Missives

To Colonel Lord de Nord,
Having spent some months in Paris now, it has become apparent that the finest regiment in all France is surely the King’s Musketeers. My Lord Baron, as a humble servant of the King it would be my greatest honour to serve under your command. Please accept my application to join the regiment.
Should I be successful it is my intention to request that the junior Major resign his commission on grounds of his advancing age.
I await your response.
Yours in service of Le Roi,
† Hugo Serre

My Dear boy, you are more than welcome. May your career in the KM be long and prosperous. Would you please second me in my duel against Frank XC?

My Lord,
My humble thanks for your welcome to the regiment. It will be my honour to act as your second, you may rely upon me.

Just not this month. † Le Roi

Personal

Marquis Louis Severin Descartes,
Have I offended you in some way? Why was I turned away from the horse race? Please sir, I beg of you to illuminate the situation!
† CdN

TTT
Take it steady, old boy. I thought your head might explode during the last trial.

I write to apologise for my conduct in the recent duel with Thibault Chanson de Skye. When my honourable opponent yielded, I lost command of myself and pressed on, a disgraceful breach of etiquette halted only by his gallant seconds.
I meant no harm to Thibault. My quarrel was with my own feelings, and I sought only to risk my own life, not another’s.
To Thibault, I offer sincere regret and admiration for your composure. You fought bravely and with the grace I failed to show.
I will stand in support of your challenge to Arent Hayes and do all I can to see that my next affair of honour is conducted in true gentlemanly fashion.
Yours in remorse and respect,
† Sir Percival Puffington

Torchlights flicker along the walls of the corridor to the Commissioner’s Office within the Bastille: a closed door, bearing a gold nameplate with the words ‘Major Thierry Toothpick, Commissioner of Public Safety’.
Inside, to those who choose to listen, can be heard several voices, upon occasion raised voices. Let’s try and see if we can hear what’s being said. Listen carefully now...
“What’s the Boss saying now, Tangerine No.1? Is that another letter that he’s sent you from the Front?”
“Yes, sure is, Tangerine No.2 and this one has more names for warrants

Games Events

HandyCon snuck past me by being on the same weekend as **MidCon**.

The long-running Dragonmeet is on 29th November this year and now at the ExCeL exhibition centre (halls 7-9) in east London. While the emphasis is on role-playing games, all sorts of games are featured and there’s plenty of open gaming space as well as organised events. See dragonmeet.co.uk for details.

Swiggers: games club that meets on 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 or the BGG Guild at boardgamegeek.com/guild/1672

UK Games Expo: 29th-31st May 2026 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 space. For details see www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

Spiel: *the* board games event of the year. 22nd-25th October 2026, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Merz Verlag, Huyssenallee 105, 45128 Essen, Germany or see www.spiel-essen.de/en

MidCon: early November 2026 at the Derby Mickleover Hotel in Mickleover (two miles from Derby city centre). **MidCon** is a friendly board games convention, now in a comfortable modern hotel. It’s largely open gaming, but the new website allows games to be scheduled in advance – useful if you want lots of players for something. There’s also a Bring ‘n’ Buy and a quiz on Saturday night. See midcon.org.uk

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Fictionary Dictionary

First off, my apologies that I’ve not been able to keep the round numbering correct. I’ve double checked that I have the right numbers this time – note that the words given over the page are the last of the game.

Round 8 scores

So, a mot-mot is a tropical American bird (family Momotidae) having a long tail and blue and brownish-green plumage. The word is onomatopoeic for the bird’s call.

While a vavasor is, in feudal society, the noble vassal of a Baron or another vassal.

There were big scores for Messrs Bruce and Luker this round, giving them a decent lead over the pack with two rounds yet to score.

Despite his lack of points this round, Anthony Gilbert remains best of the rest.

The scores		
Player	This round	Total
Colin Bruce	7	32
Mark Cowper	1	15
Mike Dommett	2	14
Anthony Gilbert	0	19
William Hay	0	17
Andrew Kendall	2	14
Andrew Larder	0	8
Nik Luker	7	29
Tim Macaire	3	15
Nigel Monaghan	0	1
Graeme Morris	4	18
Jonathan Palfrey	3	16
Mike Pollard	1	15
Pam Udowiczenko	0	8
Bruce Whitehill	0	3
Andrew Whiteley	0	2

Round 9 definitions

Here are the proposed definitions for the next two words. All you have to do (whether or not you submitted anything) is let me know your favourite definition for each word.

Epicarp

1 Archaic Yorkshire expression in praise of a particularly fine demonstration of harp playing: e.g. “Eeee that were right epicarp, lass!”

2 A convoluted theory that ascribes the apparent movement of the planets

to reflections off the scales of giant fish swimming in complicated loops around the earth.

3 A fabulous large stringed instrument played only by cockneys.

4 A fishy Connoisseur.

The Guards Brigade will be going to the front for the spring season.

† Terence Cuckpowder, Brigadier

Official Public Safety Ministry Announcement

By order of the Commissioner of Public Safety, the esteemed Sir Tiny Thierry Toothpick, Major in His Majesty’s Royal Foot Guards, from henceforth it is deemed a criminal offence for the following –

To have/use the surname Cuckpowder.

To associate with anyone of the surname Cuckpowder.

To not pass on information to the CPS concerning anyone using the surname Cuckpowder.

To not speak up in Court against anyone using the surname Cuckpowder.

Anyone contravening the above directives shall be liable to arrest under the charge of being therefore a ‘Cuckpowderite’ – a crime that constitutes Treason and we all know what penalty awaits those guilty of Treason: **Deeeaaaattthhhh**... slow, agonising... **Deeeaaaattthhhh**. Don’t say you haven’t been warned!

† Commissioner Tiny Thierry Toothpick

His Majesty’s Commissioner of Public Safety

Major, His Majesty’s Royal Foot Guards

A True Frenchman, A True Patriot

Matters of Honour

Arent sighed as he tumbled out of bed for his decider against SBC (1-1 on recent duels). Then a potential

“handbags at dawn” with the Gay Paris wannabe It Girl Thiaubault Chancy de something. “I am safer at the front, to be honest,” he mused as he joined Colonel de Blanchefort on yet another early morning jaunt to the duelling grounds.

Social

Gentlemen of Paris,
During week 2, Miss Nifisent and I will be dining at my club and be delighted to receive gentlemen and their ladies for polite discussion and to play cards: refreshments on me.
Unfortunately, this invitation does not include members of the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers due to their differences with my aide, Captain Pierre De Terre.

† Marquis Louis Renault

The campaign season approaches, and it is time for a wide-ranging discussion of tactical matters. Such as whether the commissariat should provide a light Sauternes or low-grade champagne (must have an eye to the Army Estimates). To that end, all members of the First Division are invited to the Fleur in Week 2 of March; costs covered for those of Social Level 16+.

† ZvT

***** Party – March Week 3 *****
To celebrate the spring equinox, I am hosting a party at my club in March week 3. Open to own and friendly regiments. Please bring your ladies. Social level 7 and above.

† Con Stantinople

de Garnache, another 500 for Major Hector William Boone and Major “Tiny” Thierry Toothpick falls in between them. There are also Mentions for Camille, Hector and Thierry (“Where does it all come from?”). Captains Felipe Savant and Neville Moore get nothing, however.



And Guards Brigadier Terence Cuckpowder makes sure of picking up more than 500 before being brevetted to Lt-General.

The fresh horsemen of Princess Louisa’s Light Dragoons pick on some fleeing (it started as an orderly retreat) Dutch infantry and capture their remaining supplies. These are worth nearly a thousand crowns to Colonel Charles PiedLuminaire – now a brevet Bdr-Gen – and nearly as much to Major Dee Jean Aise, now Lt-Col Dee.

Hugh Jeneaux is serving with first Frontier regiment and positions himself behind Marcel Hatch Dupree’s battalion of Marines. This is a canny move, but neither gets any reward.

Arent Hayes’s squadron of the Crown Prince Cuirassiers serves with second Frontier and provides a much-needed screen for the infantry. Arent picks up a few crowns and is Mentioned in Despatches, while Subaltern Vaux de Fon gains promotion to Captain.

Fourth Frontier has a battalion of the Cardinal’s Guard with them. CG Lt-Col Come Asiouar staves off a rout as his men stand and fight. A close shave from an enemy sword earns Come a Mention (“More of a haircut, really”) and the title of Marquis from His Majesty.

The RNHB regiment has the pleasure of both General Rick Shaw and Lt-Gen Bernard de Lur-Saluces leading battalions and there are MiDs for both. ❖

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.
† Count Thyme

B. Gen le Marquis Camille de Polignac requires an aide. Volunteers are requested to send their applications so that the chosen candidate can be hired by March.

**** Aide Required ****
I am looking for a competent aide. Please contact me with your credentials.
† (Brevet) Bdr-General Count Thyme

- 5 A freshwater fish with a long, pointed proboscis. Often cited as an example of convergent evolution (though sadly less often than the dubious example of the dogfish).
- 6 A long and devastating piece of criticism (literary, theatrical, musical, etc.).
- 7 Medieval emergency treatment which involved finding a carp in a nearby pond, rushing it to the patient and rapidly inserting it into an orifice. It was, of course, essential to hold the patient down for treatment.
- 8 Misspelt to pass internet filters, a rarely used term for the absolute worst entry in a series. Fish-related spelling may be due to the first use of this being for Jaws IV: The Revenge.
- 9 A now antiquated lightweight duelling weapon favoured by some sailors, due to its ornate fish-shaped handle, which has fallen out of favour due to the standard issuing of cutlasses.
- 10 Revolutionary use of a fish to battle allergic reactions.
- 11 A small platform above a pond, for feeding fish from.
- 12 The over-the-top, extravagant, printed ramblings of many a restaurant critic.
- 13 A very big fish from the family Cyprinidae.
- Rostellum**
1 An Ancient Roman water torture, from ‘ros’ (dew, dampness, water) and ‘tellum’ (a small hill, or the revealing of secrets).
- 2 An architectural feature in a Greek temple, a heavily decorated type of arch/doorway.
- 3 An inexpensive form of "vellum", using roasted pig skin, preferred by the lower classes.
- 4 Medieval attempt to use the skin of a roasted animal as greasy paper, cheaper version of Vellum.
- 5 Niche term from Marvel scriptwriters to indicate that there is need for General ‘Thunderbolt’ to rant uncontrollably about why He Is Right. Often, the writers are too lazy to come up with an idea and something cheap and rubbish happens.
- 6 The one where the paleontologist lets slip.
- 7 An ostentatious and entirely unnecessary flourish added to a signature to make it appear more important.
- 8 The pet name of the crossbow used by William Tell to shoot an apple off his son's head and thwart the evil Burgomeister.
- 9 Pink coloured vellum traditionally used, in the days before paper was invented, to solely record financial information (cf. today’s Financial Times)
- 10 The podium they put at the front of the stage at party conferences.
- 11 Posh Latin word for roast potato, or 'roastie'.

- 12 A round Swiss dumpling, often used as an endearment for women in the German-speaking parts of the country.
- 13 The sort of speaker who acts as if the mere occupancy of the rostrum makes them an authority on whatever subject they are pontificating upon.

Words for the final round (aka round 10)

Hemipode and Zizith

What do you think they should mean? Send me your definitions.

What’s this all about?

This game is open to all readers and I guess most of you will have come across some variation of it. Each issue I will put up a couple of obscure (or not) words. Anybody who wants to participate writes in with a fictional definition for each word. (For example: “Geranium: a ceremonial dagger used by Aztec priests for human sacrifice.”) I publish the definitions, anonymously.

All readers (not just those who contributed) vote for their favourite/most plausible/most amusing definitions (any vote for yourself will be ignored). Players score points for the number of people who choose their definition. (In other versions of the game, the definitions include the correct one and players get points for spotting it. However, the internet makes this too easy, so I’ve left this bit out.)

We’ll run this for 10 rounds. The winner will be the player with the most points.

Send your votes and definitions to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE UB10 8UF or
to TWJO@pevans.co.uk by 5th December 2025

The Wizard of Anharitte (Star Trader game 12)
Game End Statements

Paul Evans, Solar Spice & Liquors: 1st

My approach to *Star Trader* is coloured by being Monogram Industries the first time I played. Monogram trades in Monopoles and I realised that this meant I didn't need Cargo pods on my ships and only needed one warehouse in each system. Hence, Solar Spice and Liquors trades in Monopoles and Spice (and Liquors in the 12-player game). And uses cheap Piccolo hulls. These have the added benefit of being streamlined, which helps if you want to do some smuggling. And, given the reputation of the original SS&L and its proprietor*, I'm not above that. Though, given the lack of Cargo pods, it's only Tempus that I'll be smuggling.

A little siege music

In the Netherlands, the French forces maintain their winter sieges while building up strength for a spring campaign against the Spanish Netherlands. Fourth Foot Brigade arrives from Paris to little effect. Brigadier Thibault Chanson de Skye has a close encounter with some Dutch grapeshot when he tries to get a closer look at the enemy fortifications. His brevet rank is made permanent, removing him from the 69th Arquebusiers.

The pressure of the sieges is beginning to tell and the Picardy Musketeers overrun a Spanish fort that’s run out of matériel. Luckily, there’s enough saleable stuff left for the Picardies to loot. Colonel Percival Puffington is brevetted to Brigadier-General, takes command of First Foot Brigade and sweeps nearly fifteen hundred crowns worth of goodies into his baggage. Major Barthélemy Chifflet follows his boss’s lead, but doesn’t get quite as much booty. Still, a lavish Mention in Despatches (“the boy done good”) is worth having.

The Royal Foot Guards don’t make any noticeable headway, but still manage to find something to plunder. That’ll be 500 crowns’ worth for the boss, Camille de Polignac, rather less for Lieutenant-Colonel Martin

Who was where – round and about				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
In jail			JIT LSD	
Practising	JS - Rapier HDS - Cutlass BLC - Sabre JdG - Rapier CdF - Cutlass BeV - Sabre CS - Sabre	CE - Rapier ZVT - Rapier HDS - Cutlass JdG - Rapier EIF - Sabre BeV - Sabre ID - Sabre JH - Sabre	BS - Rapier SBC - Rapier HDS - Cutlass BLC - Sabre JdG - Rapier EIF - Sabre ID - Sabre MD - Sabre JH - Sabre	BS - Rapier ZVT - Rapier SBC - Rapier BLC - Sabre JdG - Rapier EIF - Sabre ID - Sabre MD - Sabre JH - Sabre SDS - Sabre
Regimental Duties				IP
Shows everybody else: Weapon = Weapon practised with; For those doing nothing: -club = not a member of a club; -Cash = insufficient funds; -SL = insufficient Social Level; ??? = Toadying to unknown host.				

Similarly, Maurice Danseur would normally use a sabre, but “there will be advantages to knowing how a rapier works for the next time I have to face one,” he reckons. Then it’s time to rejoin their companions and enjoy a glass or two. This allows them to spot regimental enemies and other no-goods. Now that he’s in the 53rd, Beau Taux discovers an enemy in François de Blanchefort – the feeling is mutual. He also discovers that he must defer to Botte Le Chimiste and Hugo Serre as his social superiors. But neither is of the nobility! Beau challenges both.

This ruckus interrupts Frank X Change’s peaceful time in his club. Taking a look at what’s going on, he spots a regimental enemy in the shape of Hugo Serre. Hugo calls in support from his colleague, Claude de Nord, who’s one of Greg’s guests at the time. Host Louis keeps out of the way by casting some crowns on the club’s gaming tables. His single wager of 200 crowns is lost.

The biggest news from this party, though, is Claude de Nord revealing himself as a ~~traitor~~ ferret and serving arrest warrants on Justin Thyme and Louis Severin Descartes. After spending some uncomfortable time in the Bastille, both miscreants will be on trial at the start of March.



Another courting success means Rick Shaw will be looking for payback on his return from active service. Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux’s success disgruntles no-one, however. Nor Chemin de Fer’s failures.

As they stay in the Fleur for the rest of the month, Frank, Hugo and Claude continue to exchange insults.

Steve De Sade tries his luck on the tables in the Frog & Peach in week 3. He places 50 crown bets, but stops after cutting twice despite actually winning one bet. He doesn’t lose any money overall, but his approach cuts no ice with the cognoscenti.

Hugo Furst has a plane for February. “In light of the bally hoo-ha going on this month what with the womenfolk all up in arms and talk of

witchery, treachery and downright sluttyness, I think the best course is to keep the old head well down and my beady eyes firmly on my own dear sweet thing.” Thus Hugo and Ella pass February at his new club, “comfortably ensconced in a private room in the company of the delightful Ella and some decent bottles of red.”

Henri DuShite brings some extra crowns when he visits the Bawdy houses and the footpads are very grateful. Though they spurned the small change Charles Etfeevor and SBC had after their visits.

This game worked out really well. I was able to trade in my preferred goods and build factories to produce them. And I picked up agent Crip, giving me an advantage in trading. This was topped by getting to smuggle some Tempus. Agent Willy ensured I got the maximum return to push me over the 2,000 HTs.

The one variation I tried this time was putting Passenger pods on my starting ship (not a Piccolo) and carrying passengers. I’ve seen other players do this to great effect in recent games and it generated a constant, if small, income each turn.

It probably helped that SS&L wasn’t particularly damaged by M&M’s ships. While I understand wanting to try out the rules for Combat, Sabotage and other anti-social behaviour, none of these brings much reward. In the form we play, the game is very much about trading and making a profit. (The Corporation game is different as some ‘Corporations’ want to blow things up!)

Anyway, thanks to the players for a great game and especially to Mike for GMing.

* If the “Solar Spice & Liquors” name doesn’t mean anything to you, the company and its colourful boss, Nicholas van Rijn, feature in Poul Anderson’s “Polesotechnic League” series of SF novels. Recommended.

Mark Cowper, Costa Nostra Coffee, Inc: 3rd

That was a total blast (literally). My favourite game of *Star Trader* yet. Thanks to Mike for running it, Przemek for the battle plan and congratulations to Pevans for keeping his head down and cantering to victory. I doubt it was as much fun as the Battle of Mu Hercules!!

GM Notes

Well that was a more violent game than usual. Sabotage, ship to ship action, and competition. Price undercutting to win market positions and block trades by competitors. Even the early departure, which turned out to be just before the end, enjoyed the game. I personally rely on trading when I play, though carrying of passengers has won the game for some players in the past. It helps if you are the sole player following this strategy, or can afford spending on initiative. Combat and sabotage play more of a part in a Corporation game, where there are Corporations whose objectives include destruction and combat. I think that works best with a little pressure: purchase immunity for just a little insurance payment...

All players contributed, and the big shooting match at Epsilon Eridani showed that the fickleness of the dice when using missiles matters. In another life CNCI could have destroyed all of M&M’s ships without loss. Both Costa Nostra Coffee and Rocket Trader’s asset levels were affected by the lost investment in ships, especially the heavily armed ones from RT. SSL was largely unaffected by the infighting, as was TrekBoer, and SSL was lucky enough to pick up a Tempus Opportunity Chit and have the right agent to maximise the pay-off. Well done. My thanks to all the players and when the waiting list has filled we will run another.

Brat’s Hill (*Railway Rivals* game 19 – RR2559LD)

Turn 5

Welsh Interstate Train Service built up to Carlisle and north along the coast as well, Seaside Railways coming the other way. Seaside Railways built east and west branches this turn. They also constructed a branch line to Lancaster. Locomotive Observation Steam Train Company continued its slow builds further south, crossing more mountains. Cart and Barrow Rail built further east and started branches elsewhere.

WELSH INTERSTATE TRAIN SERVICE (WITS), Mark Cowper – Red
Starts: Whitehaven
Builds:
a)(Penrith) – J52 – J48
b)(J48) – J46 – I46
c)(I46) – I45 – Carlisle; (Maryport) – J5
Points: 70 = 70

SEASIDE RAILWAYS (SR), Rob Pinkerton – Blue
Starts: Carlisle
Builds:
a)(L63) – L65 – K66 – K67 – L67 – M68
b)(M68) – Hawes (+6); (Kendal) – C63 – B62
c)(B62) – WINDERMERE (+6); (Carlisle) – F44 – E45 – D47 – C46
Points: 77 +12 = 89

LOCOMOTIVE OBSERVATION STEAM TRAIN COMPANY (LOST), Gerald Udowiczenko – Black
Starts: Port Carlisle
Builds:
a)(M18) – M19; (G10) – Ullock
b)(M19) – L19
c)(M19) – N19 – N20
Points: 34 = 34

CART AND BARROW RAIL (CAB), Chris Rudram – Green
Starts: Barrow in Furness
Builds:
a)(I24) – H23 – H21; (E17) – E16
b)(E16) – E15
c)(G73) – H73 – H74 – I75 – SETTLE (+6)
Points: 43 +6 = 49

GM Notes

Die rolls for the next turn are: 4, 5, 6

Order layouts: Your Name, Company Name, Company Colour.

The letters by the lakes are the initials of their names (U=Ullswater for example).

You cannot build over bodies of water, only rivers.

Orders to Mike Dommett, 12 Watton Park, Bridport DT6 5NJ
or by e-mail to mike_dommett@yahoo.co.uk
by 28th November 2025

Who was where – with the ladies				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Chris	CdN succeeds ex-MdG	Out	Out	Out
Di	SBC succeeds			
Henrietta			CdF fails	CdF fails
Morgane			ZvT at home	
Therèse	BS fails	BS succeeds ex-RS		
Thomasina	SDS succeeds ex-DJA	Out	Out	
Shows who was with a mistress or on a doorstep: Out = Mistress with current lover; I = Indiscreet (+ mistress name); ex-ID = Pinched from former lover; st:down = stood down to rivals.				
Who was where – in the bawdyhouses				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Bawdy houses	SBC + FC AA + FC ID + FC			JS + FC CE + FC BT + FC HDS + FC: Mug-12
Shows who went to the red light district: FC = Female Companionship; Mug n = Mugged & amount lost; (G) = Gambled.				

There's only one Major free

There's a vacancy for a Major in the Grand Duke Max Dragoons and both Pierre De Terre and Steve De Sade want it. However, Pierre has seniority and becomes a Major, while Steve remains a (slightly more senior) Captain.

Having borrowed some funds, fresh face Beau Taux applies to the 53rd Fusiliers. The regiment is happy to accept him and he buys the rank of Captain.

Recent arrival Hugo Serre prefers the King's Musketeers and is signed up by Colonel Claude de Nord. He doesn't need to borrow any money to buy a Captaincy.

Moving up the hierarchy to Brigade level, Armand Alsace has applied for the vacant command of First Foot Brigade. He flashes a bit of cash to improve his chances and is backed by Greg de Bécqueur. Thibault Chanson de Skye tries to contribute some influence, too, but just isn't influential enough. Things are looking rosy for Armand until "Tiny" Thierry Toothpick butts in. Flexing his ministerial muscles, Thierry effectively blocks the application.

As it's the last month of the season, it's no surprise that several Parisians volunteer for some time in action. It is surprising that Brigadier Thibault Chanson de Skye volunteers the whole of Fourth Foot Brigade. Marcel Hatch Dupree gives his battalion of the Royal Marines its marching orders. Cavalry support is provided by the Princess Louisa Light Dragoons, commander Charles PiedLuminaire, Archduke Leopold's Cuirassiers, commander Hugh Jeneaux, and the first squadron of the Crown Prince Cuirassiers, courtesy of Arent Hayes. PLLD Major Dee Jean Aise has already packed his kitbag, but CPC Subaltern Dee Jean Aise is taken by surprise. Lieutenant-General Bernard de Lur-Saluces joins the Royal North Highlanders for a month.

Croissants for the big nobs

Greg de Bécqueur holds open house at the Fleur all month, but only accepts higher-ranking socialites. This probably explains why he and Bette only have a few guests each week. The first week is notable for being peaceful. It's also notable for the number of Parisians inspecting their new clubs. And for some successful courting – though duels will be required to satisfy Dee Jean Aise and Martin de Garnache.

The second week sees Louis Renault bring his guests to the Fleur after the duelling workshop he's hosted. This has given them the opportunity to show off their swordsmanship. Chemin de Fer is slightly embarrassed that his weapon is a hefty cutlass and asks to borrow "an oversized knitting needle" for the fencing exercises.



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

**Orders for March 1677 to Pevans at
180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE
UB10 8UF, UK or
lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk
by 5th December 2025**



February 1677 (396)

It's February and winter is almost over. However, it's still pretty chilly in Paris, so no-one is surprised to see people bundled up in thick cloaks. These are very useful for disguising that some of those about in the early morning are carrying sharpened steel to their appointments.

Hugh Jeneaux has several duels to fight with his sharpened steel (as he's a Cuirassier, it's a sabre). He chooses to meet Dragoon Botte Le Chimiste first, making it sabre versus sabre. This looks an even match, though Botte does have a second, Louis Severin Descartes, to keep an eye on things. Botte steps back initially, but Hugh follows him to draw first blood with a slash. A cut follows this, landing at the same time as Hugh's slash. While Botte is now more badly injured, it is Hugh who surrenders.

Another Dragoon, Elroi le Flingue, is Hugh's next opponent and is also seconded by Louis Severin Descartes. To make the wait more comfortable, Elroi has brought "a folding chair, a newspaper, and snacks". Hugh's new wounds put him at a slight disadvantage, as does Elroi's greater skill. Hugh starts again with a furious slash, ignoring Elroi's attempt to parry, and strikes home with his slash. Elroi promptly attacks with a slash of his own and Hugh concedes to the accompaniment of snide remarks from his adversary.

Maurice Danseur is the final Dragoon to face Hugh and has seconds Louis and Pierre De Terre in tow. Maurice is a clear favourite for this duel as he's the bigger man and uninjured. Both attack with a slash and Hugh throws in the towel again.

Dragoon Guard Balzac Slapdash has appointments with two of his regimental enemies and takes on Cuirassier Con Stantinople first. Balzac uses a rapier against Con’s sabre, but Con’s small stature and lower expertise weigh against him. Justin Saad and Thibault Chanson de Skye second Con, while Balzac is unaccompanied. The rapier’s lunge is met by the sabre’s slash and both men concede the fight. A draw, effectively. Con treats his seconds to a “full Scottish Breakfast” afterwards.

Justin Thyme is more equal adversary for the injured Balzac – who now has a legitimate excuse to duck the duel. Though, like Con, Justin is disadvantaged by his lack of skill. His expected second, Xavier Ulric Turenne, doesn’t show up either. They cross swords and Balzac surrenders without a blow being struck. Something that does not do his social standing any good.

Arent Hayes and Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux choose to face each other before moving on to their other duels. Arent is the sabre-wielding cavalryman in this encounter, with Sebastiane using his regimental rapier. Sebastiane is not a big fellow and is further handicapped by previous injuries. Both duellists start cautiously: parries from Arent, blocks from Sebastiane. Then there’s a lunge from the rapier and a slash from the sabre that coincide. Arent is just scratched, but Sebastiane takes a thumping blow and concedes. It’s a serious enough injury that he cries off his pending meetings with François de Blanchefort and Vaux de Fon.



However, Arent moves on to deal with his challenge from Thibault Chanson de Skye – Paris voted Thibault cause 8:0. This is another even (-ish) match, though Arent continues to use his sabre against Thibault’s rapier. Thibault also has Con Stantinople and Justin Saad as his seconds. Hoping to score first blood

quickly, Thibault opens with a furious lunge. However, Arent parries the initial lunge before starting a furious slash. The slash hits next, closely followed by Thibault’s cut. The decider, though, is Arent’s cut, which does some serious damage. Thibault concedes. And then ducks out of meeting Chemin de Fer and Marcel Hatch Dupree.

This leaves Claude de Nord versus Frank X Change to finish off this month’s duelling card – another chapter in the perpetual feud between the Cardinal’s Guard and the King’s Musketeers. However, despite his regiment, Claude uses a sabre. This and his skill give him the advantage. Entertainingly, his second is present at the duels – as his opponent! While Louis Severin Descartes is Frank’s second. Despite his inferior expertise, Frank is a wily character. He blocks Claude’s slash and dodges the follow-up cut before drawing first blood with a lunge. Claude isn’t about to give up on a first hit. They trade slash for lunge twice before Claude gives up.

Who was where – in (or outside) the clubs				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Fleur de Lys	FXC + Justine GdB + Bette . JfT + Guinevere . ZvT . LSD + Edna . LR + Maggie JH + Cath	FXC + Justine GdB + Bette . LSD + Edna . Cdn + Chris LR(G) + Maggie FdB + Freda . JS . HS + Sue . JfT + Guinevere . BT . PDT + Sal . BLC + Eve . Cdf + Jenny . CS + Anne . MD + Belle . SDS + <u>Thomasina</u>	FXC + Justine Bev + Lotte . HS + Sue GdB + Bette . Cdn + Chris . LR + Maggie	FXC + Justine Bev + Lotte . HS + Sue GdB + Bette . JfT + Guinevere . LSD + Edna . Cdn + Chris . LR + Maggie
Bothwell's	HF + Ella EIF + Lucy HS + Sue	HF + Ella	HF + Ella	HF + Ella
Hunter's		AA	AA CS + Anne	AA CS + Anne
Blue Gables	FdB + Freda PDT + Sal MD + Belle		FdB + Freda PDT + Sal	FdB + Freda PDT + Sal
Frog & Peach	CE BT		JS CE BT SDS(G) + Thomasina	

Shows who was in or outside a club: . = Toadying to character above; (G) = Gambled; CP = Crown Prince; (id) = expected host; **bold** = first visit to new club; underline = first time mistress seen in public with this beau.