

That would be enough

This has been issue 257 of *To Win Just Once*, published 25th August 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* and *Star Trader* to Mike by Friday 5th September 2025.

Orders for *LPBS* and Fictionary Dictionary votes and definitions to Pevans by Friday 12th September 2025.

(Next deadlines: probably 17th/24th October, then 21st/28th November.)

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 Mark Cowper, Mike Dyer and Anthony Gilbert. "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 Mike Dyer, Mark Cowper and Anthony Gilbert. (Rules provided)

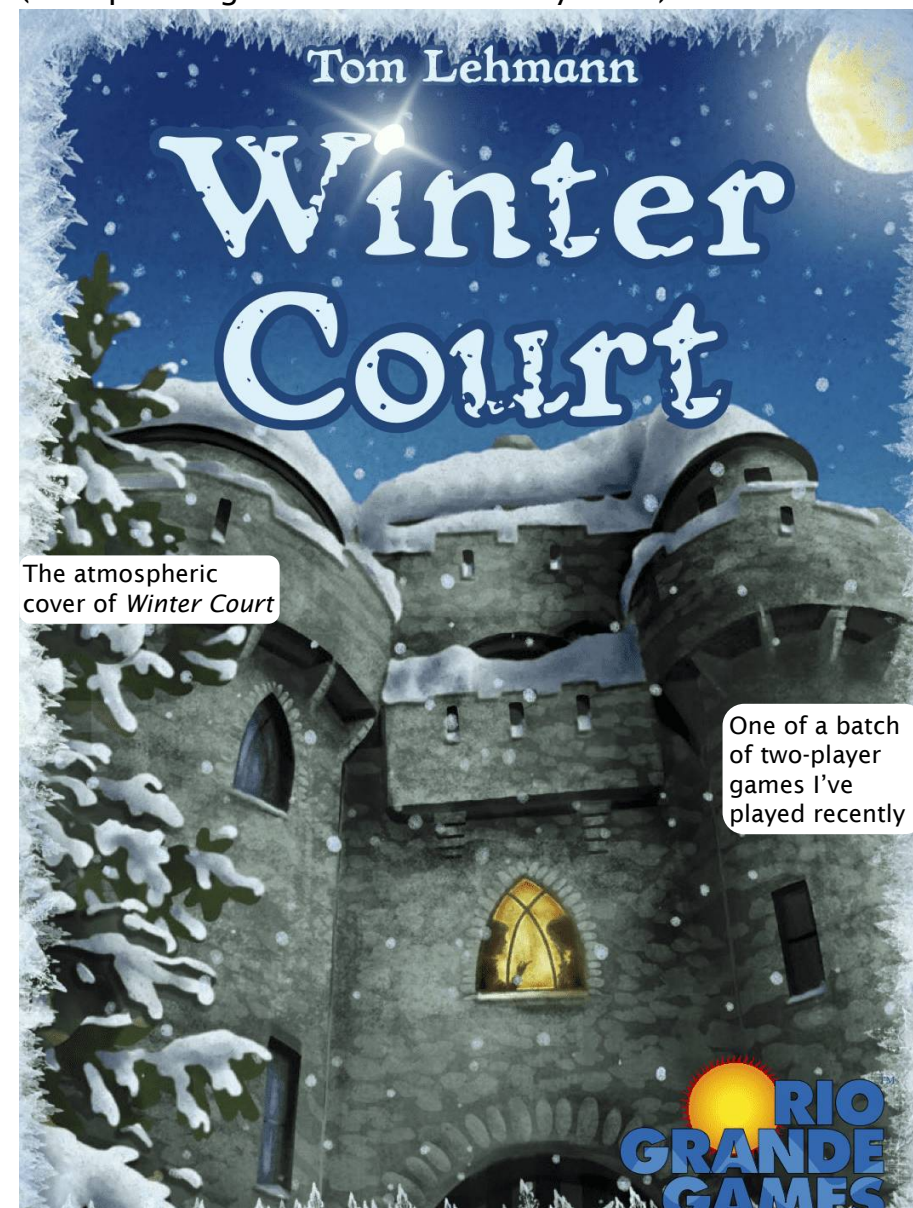
Credits

To Win Just Once issue 257 was written and edited by Pevans. The *LPBS* masthead (page 20) is by Lee Brimmicombe-Wood, as is the drawing on page 24. The illustration on page 28 is by Nik Luker. Game and book artwork is courtesy of the publisher. Pevans took the photos, except where noted, and played with Photoshop.

Printed and published by Margam Evans Limited
(A company registered in England and Wales, number 05152842,
Registered office: 180 Aylsham Drive, Uxbridge UB10 8UF)
Tel: 020 7183 6256, E-mail: TWJO@pevans.co.uk,
Web: www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO

To Win Just Once

(incorporating *Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses*)



The atmospheric cover of *Winter Court*

Issue 257: September 2025
(LPBS 394: Dec 1676)

£2.25 (where sold)
and online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO

Contents

Chatter	3
Letters	4
Recent games and first impressions	5
I've been playing some new-to-me games	5
Reading Matter	10
Games Events	11
Fictionary Dictionary	12
Round 6 scores	12
Round 7 definitions.....	12
Words for round 8	14
Subscribing to <i>TWJO</i>	14
The Wizard of Anharitte (<i>Star Trader</i> game 12)	15
Turn 15	15
Star systems map	17
Brat's Hill (<i>Railway Rivals</i> game 19 – RR2559LD)	18
Turn 3	18
Turn 3 map after building	19
Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses	20
December 1676 (394).....	20
Press	29
Points Arising.....	32
Announcements	33
Duels	34
Trials.....	35
New Characters.....	35
Tables.....	35
Army Organisation and 1677's Summer Deployment.....	35
Brigade Positions	36
Frontier Regiments.....	36
Battle Results	36
Other Appointments.....	36
Femmes Fatales.....	37
Regiments.....	37
The Greasy Pole	38
That would be enough	40
Deadlines	40
Waiting lists	40
Credits	40

ID	Name	SL	SPs	Cash	Rank, Regiment/Appointment	MA	Last seen	Club	EC	Player	
BLC	Botte Le Chimiste	12	36	Comfy	Colonel GDMC/Cav Div Adjutant	2	Eve	Both	4	Tym Norris	
HF	Hugo Furst	12+ 58	OK	B.Bdr-General	13F/2 F Brigadier	5	Ella	Hunt	2	Graeme Morris	
EIF	Sir Elroi le Flingue	12+ 42	Comfy	Lt.Colonel GDMC		7	Lucy	Hunt	4	Daniel Racke	
SE	Stephane Etrange	11- 6	Wlthy	B.Bdr-General	CPC	3		Hunt	4	Neil Packer	
PPuf	Sir Percival Puffington	11	29	Poor	B.Bdr-General	PM	6	Viv	5	Tony Taylor	
JdA	Jean d'Aubergine	11	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General	4A	4		Hunt	3	Paul Robbins
CS	Con Stantinople	11+ 59	Comfy	Major	QOC/HGds Brigade Maj.	6	Anne	Hunt	1	Pam Udowiczzenko	
TCdS	Thibault Chanson de Skye	11+ 51	Poor	B.Bdr-General	69A	6	Katy	Hunt	5	Bill Hay	
AH	Arent Hayes	10+ 40	Poor	Major	CPC	4		F&P	3	Mark Cowper	
FdB	François de Blanchefort	10+ 34	Comfy	Lt.Colonel	CPC	5	Freda	BG	4	Peter Farrell	
HS	Hugo Serre	9+ 46	OK			6	Sue	BG	3	Paul Murphy	
AA	Armand Alsace	9+ 36	Comfy	Bdr-General		11		BG	4	Sebastian Emde	
JS	Justin Saad	7	17	Poor		3		F&P	3	Gerry Sutcliff	
PDPT	Pierre De Terre	7+ 61	Comfy	Captain	GDMC/LtGen's Aide (2nd	7	Sal	F&P	2	Manoj Nair	
MMD	Maurice Danseur	7+ 45	Poor	Major	GDMC/Drgn Brigade Maj.	6	Belle	F&P	5	Andrew Whiteley	
CPL	Charles PiedLuminaire	7+ 35	Comfy	Colonel	PLLD/2nd Div Adjutant	8		F&P	3	Nick Tyrrell	
CdF	Chemin de Fer	7+ 29	Comfy	Major	RM/1 F Brigade Maj.	5	Jenny	F&P	3	Rod MacDonald	
SBC	Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux	6+ 27	OK	Captain	53F	1		RP	2	Peter Card	
BC	Barthélemy Chifflet	5+ 23	Poor	Captain	PM	5		RP	4	Hunter Charest	
SDS	Steve De Sade	4	8	Comfy	Captain GDMC/BdGen's Aide (Drgn	5		RP	5	Jon Dean	
DJA	Dee Jean Aise	4	4	OK	Captain	PLLD	5		3	Jovan Bogdanovic	
VdF	Vaux de Fon	4+ 62	OK	Subaltern	CPC	1		RP	4	John Cooke	
IP	Ignace Pardailon	3	1	OK	Subaltern	GDMC	5	RP	3	Grégory Meurant	
X1		2	Ret							Tim Rattray	
JC	Justin Cartier	1	F	OK	Major	27M	1		3	Steven Malecek	

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, Wlthy = 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
JJ	Count Jean Jeanie	25	Ret								Andrew Kendall
BeV	Count Ben e'Volence	24	56	Rich	B.General/2nd Army	Commndr	11	Lotte	Flr	3	Ash Casey
HDS	Count Henri DuShite	24	55	Fthly	B.Lt-General		16		Flr	4	Dave Marsden
GdB	Count Greg de Bécqueur	23-10	Rich	B.General/1st Army	Commndr		13	Bette	Flr	5	Anthony Gilbert
RS	Earl Rick Shaw	23	F	Rich	General/Min w/o Port		2		Flr	6	Charles Burrows
BdLS	Count Bernard de Lur-Saluces	22	62	Fthly	Lt-General/Prov.Mil.Gov		19		Flr	3	Rob Pinkerton
TC	Count Terence Cuckpowder	22	F	Comfy	Bdr-General/Gds Brigadier		7		Flr	6	Mike Dommett
CdP	Marquis Camille de Polignac	22	F	Comfy	B.Bdr-General RFG		5		Flr	4	James McReynolds
JdG	Count Jacques de Gain	20-10	Fthly	Fld Marshal			24			6	Ben Brown
JiT	Count Justin Thyme	20	40	Rich	B.Bdr-General QOC		18	Guinevere	Flr	2	Gerald Udowiczenko
ZUT	Marquis Xavier Ullric Turenne	20	37	Withy	B.General		4	Laura	Flr	1	Bob Blanchett
LSD	Baron Louis Severin Descartes	20	23	Rich	Bdr-General/Drgn Brigadier		6	Edna	Flr	1	Chris Schotmann
ZvT	Baron Zeold von Tu	19	45	Withy	B.Lt-General/1st Div	Commandr	8	Morgane	Flr	3	Tim Macaire
JH	Sir Jacques Hatt	18	55	Withy	B.General/3rd Army	Commndr	4	Cath	Flr	3	Joel Halpern
CdN	Baron Claude de Nord	18	36	Withy	Colonel KM		4	Jacky	Both	4	Andrew Larder
LR	Marquis Louis Renault	18	36	Withy	Lt-General/2nd Div	Commandr	3	Maggie	Flr	4	Roy Bleasdale
FXC	Marquis Frank X Change	18+58	Comfy	Colonel CG/Justice	Min.		11	Justine	Flr	4	Nigel Monaghan
BS	Earl Balzac Slapdash	16+52	Rich	B.Bdr-General	DG		21	Alison	Both	5	Matthew Wale
NM	Baron Neville Moore	15	F	Withy	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	Baron Come Asiouar	15+58	OK	Lt.Colonel CG/FMshl's Aide			7		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	Comfy	Major RFG/CPS		6		Flr	1	Jason Fazackarley
HJ	Baron Hugh Jeneaux	13	28	Withy	Colonel ALC/Chancellor		9		Hunt	3	Bruno Giordan
HWB	Sir Hector William Boone	13	F	Withy	Major RFG		7		Both	5	Paul Wilson
ID	Sir Ian Dediette	13+41	Comfy	Major QOC			3		Both	2	Nik Luker
MHD	Sir Marcel Hatch Dupree	13+39	Comfy	Lt.Colonel RM			5		Hunt	4	Graeme Wilson

Chatter

I've been having fun over the last few days as I've been setting up a new PC. The old one was... well, old. And unable to run Windows 11. (Microsoft said so, so it must be true.) Now, ever since my first PC (from Viglen in the late 1980s – it cost £1,600), I've had a tower case. You know, 40 x 38 x 17 cms with lots of air around the circuit boards and modules inside, tucks neatly (?) under the desk.

My new computer is a “mini PC” from Geekom (geekom.co.uk – started by a geek called Kom, apparently) and measures roughly 11 x 11 x 4 cms. Suddenly there's rather more legroom under the desk! And everything's working fine so far (though I haven't run any *En Garde!* programs yet) under the new, Windows 11, regime.

Taking my walking route to the River (!) Pinn, I've noticed that the HS2 works (on the other side of the Chiltern Railways lines) are much noisier. This appears to be because they've finished the boring – this site is the West Ruislip portal to the underground segment across London. And now they're dismantling the access roads, the buildings, the railway sidings... all the temporary works. Which means cranes, diggers, dumper trucks and more activity than there has been for months.



A view over (part of) the HS2 works at the West Ruislip portal, taken from the bridge over the existing railway lines (that's a Chiltern Railways train heading for Marylebone) outside West Ruislip station. I originally took it because of the deep orange hue of the sun, but the camera sees it as bright yellow.

Pet peeves

Another thing that gets to me is nouns being ‘verbed’. Especially when there's a perfectly good existing word. No, you're not going to ‘loan’ me anything, you'll **lend** it. Don't ‘gift’ that to charity, just **give** it. (Or even donate!)

However, it’s not recent usage, as I thought. Apparently loan as a verb dates back to the 1300s! (Says Merriam-Webster.) It fell out of use in Britain but, you guessed it, was retained by the emigrants to America. Which is why I’m right to blame American English.

Merriam-Webster again takes the wind out of my sails by pointing out that ‘gift’ has been used as a noun since the 1700s. And I can’t even blame the Americans for this one. Or can I: Merriam-Webster continues that “Since the 1990s the [usage] has surged in popularity, perhaps in part because of a well-known *Seinfeld* episode”. It’s even better: I can blame Seinfeld!

Spiderwatch

The arachnids are definitely out and about this month. Number of large spiders expelled from bedroom and returned to the wild: 1. Number of tiny spiders that have taken up residence on the bathroom wall: 1. Number of tiny spiders dissuaded from rappelling into the chopping board in the kitchen: 1.

Online stats

TWJO 256 was published on 21st July and the PDFs were downloaded 112 times in the remaining 10 days of the month. The previous issue, 255, attracted 99 more downloads in July to take it to 210 in two months. And there were 24 more for issue 254, meaning it’s been downloaded 237 times since publication.

I also had a look at the stats for 404 errors – pages that visitors try to go to but don’t exist (just in case there’s anything I need to correct). Top error URL in July was /.well-known/traffic-advice, which definitely doesn’t exist on pevans.co.uk. Quite why I’d be offering traffic advice, I don’t know. However, it’s actually something Google’s web crawler looks for – hence the numerous (109) attempts to find it – and has instructions for Chrome in case it wants to ‘prefetch’ content.

Letters

Mike Pollard thinks he should correct me.

Just a small correction to your "Peeves" article on page 3, which should read "I'm gonna start checking how gotten is used by Americans now".

Ho, ho, ho.

Jonathan Palfrey pitches in with his view of Roger Zelazny’s “Amber” books.

I like Roger Zelazny, but I’m not a fan of his Amber books. Occasionally I reread the first of them (Nine Princes in Amber), but I may skip chapters 6 to 8, which are tedious. The magical Tarot cards area nice idea, and I enjoy the car journey across shadow worlds, but I have various gripes:

Femmes Fatales

No	Name	SL	Attr	Lover
66	Morgane Le Fay	24	B	ZvT
67	Justine Caisse	22	I	FXC
65	Therèse Le Vert	21	B/W	
7	Chris Pacquette	19		
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	TCdS
42	Maggie Nifisent	16	B	LR
55	Jacky Tinne	16		CdN
52	Guinevere d'Arthur	15	B/W	JiT
10	Frances Forrin	14	B	
48	Fifi	14	B/W	
62	Alison Wunderlandt	14		BS
11	Laura de Land	13		ZUT
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		PPuf
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	
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																
	RFC	CG	KM	DG	OOC	ALC	CPC	RM	CDMDPM	13F	PLD	53F	27M	4A	69A	Gscn
Col	CdP	FXC	FXC	BS	JiT	HJ	SE	N6	BLC	PPuf	HF+	CPL	N8	JdA	TCdS	
LCol	MdG	CA	CdN		ID	N5*	FdB	MHD	EIF	N2	N4+	N1	N3	N6		
Maj 1	HWB	N1	N4		CS+	N1	AH	N1	MD+	N3	N4+	N4*	N4	N4+	N3+	
Maj 2	TTT		N3				N3+	CdF+					JC	N5	N6	
Capt 1	NM	N6	N1	N6	N4	N1	N5	N2	PDT	N1	N6	N1	N5	N5	N3	
Capt 2	FS	N1	N4	N3	N4	N6	N6	N4	N5	N4	N5	SBC	N5*	N4	N4	
Capt 3	N5*	N1	N1	N2	N4	N5	N4	N5	N3	N4*	N1	N3		N5	N3	
Capt 4	N1	N1*	N3*	N5*	N4*	N1	N2*	N2*	N5*	N2*	N5	N2*		N6*	N5*	
Capt 5									SDS							
Capt 6											DJA					

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	LSD/SDS/MD	
First Foot Brigade	___/___/CdF	
Second Foot Brigade	HF/N/N4	
Third Foot Brigade	N3/N/N4	
Fourth Foot Brigade	N3/N/N3	

Frontier Regiments

	F1	F2	F3	F4	(Siege for Dec-Feb)
Colonel	N2	N3	N6	N2	RNHB N5
Attached		JC			RS
Also at the Front	Guards Brigade (Royal Foot Guards) 4th Arquebusiers				

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

Battle Results

Guards Brigade: 3	Frontier regiment 1: 3
Royal Foot Guards: 3	Frontier regiment 2: 3
	Frontier regiment 3: 2
4th Arquebusiers: 4	Frontier regiment 4: 3
	RNHB regiment: 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 N (until end February 1677)	

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

1. We’re told that Amber is the best of all possible worlds, but we see little of it, and what we see doesn’t seem wonderful.
2. The royal family of Amber has lived and stayed young for centuries, but they all behave like maladjusted teenagers.
3. They pursue their adolescent quarrels by raising large armies of anonymous humanoids to fight for them (cannon fodder). This is ugly behaviour.
- Long ago I read several sequels in this series, but I liked them less and less as I went on.

I definitely agree with the first point. But, maybe the princes and princesses behave like teenagers because they’ve stayed young. And their behaviour would certainly fit with a mediaeval mindset – cf the Wars of the Roses – which is how Amber is portrayed.

Here’s a bit more from Jonathan.

Congratulations on your full-byte issue! 256 is, as any fule kno, the number of different values that can be stored in a byte of memory.

Thank you, Molesworth. I didn’t realise you’d turned to programming.

Recent games and first impressions

I’ve been playing some new-to-me games

With people away on holiday in July, the Ruislip group was just Tom D and me for a couple of weeks. Which was an opportunity to work through some two-player games. We started with Tom’s copy of *Mottainai* (not restricted to two players), which I’d not played before. However, like Tom, I’m a fan of *Glory to Rome* and *Mottainai* is a re-themed development of it. Not having played *Glory to Rome* for quite a while (must dig out my copy), it took me a while to get up to speed.



Mottainai in play – my store of materials is looking a little precarious, but look: I’ve made a Go set!

Once I got my head round the different theme – temple acolytes producing stuff for visitors rather than architects rebuilding Rome – it started to come back to me. Then I picked up the instant win card. It took me a couple of turns to set things up, but that was that. Not a particularly satisfying end, but it was a fun game. Definitely need to get *Glory to Rome* on the table. (Mottainai was designed by Carl Chudik and published by Asmadi – asmadigames.com)



After this we tried my recently acquired *Burger Joint* (designed by Joe Huber and published by Rio Grande – www.riograndegames.com). Though it seems I'd lost some of the pieces since punching them out – we improvised. Only one player has burger joints, it turns out. The other has pizza parlours.

First thing each round is to draft coloured cubes. Then players use combinations of colours (slightly different for each player) to 'build' new food outlets by marking them on their personal board. Each building is worth a victory point and the first to 12 wins. On top of

this, the 'Upscale Bistros' (the top level of food outlet) are generally worth more points and each provides a special ability. These let players trade cubes or get extra ones. They are, of course, tricky to construct.

I made a point of collecting cubes to buy an Upscale Bistro while Tom grabbed points by building cheap outlets. I chose the most powerful one – giving me a cube of my choice each turn – even though it's not worth any points. However, this advantage let me catch and pass Tom for the win. Neither of us particularly enjoyed *Burger Joint*, however. It gets a provisional 4/10 on my highly subjective scale and I doubt I'll be playing it again.

Back to one of Tom's games and this was *Reign of Witches*. Tom and I both enjoy Phil Eklund's Pax games and Tom described this as a "light Pax-style" game. (It's also designed by Amabel Holland, one of Tom's favourite designers.) I was dubious, though there is only a small pack of cards (there are 27 of them, and four are the rules – I like this game already!) so it clearly wasn't going to last very long.

The theme is "America's Quasi-War with France, viewed through the lens of factional conflict within the Federalist Party." That conflict being: who will stand against Jefferson in the 1800 US Presidential election? One player is President John Adams, the other Alexander Hamilton – though this doesn't have much effect on the game. We start with cards laid out as a market, getting more expensive as you move along the row. As cards are bought, the row moves along so remaining cards get cheaper. Players take turns to buy a card, play a card or use a played card's ability. (Yep, that feels like Pax...)

Duels held over to March

Terence Cuckpowder versus Zeold von Tu.

Trials

In a first for the game, Mlle Morgane Le Fay will be on trial at the start of January on the charge of "Witchcraft, Aiding an enemy Spy and Beguiling His Majesty through use of the Dark Arts which collectively all adds up to a further charge of TREASON too!" CPS Thierry Toothpick will prosecute (from the front) and the NPC Minister of State will act as judge.

Class 7 favours (and/or bribes) are needed to influence the verdict (class 9 to commute the sentence if Morgane is found guilty). No witnesses can be called in this instance, but all players may contribute to the fun.

New Characters

Andrew Kendall gets the Bastard son of a very wealthy Marquis: Init SL 7; Cash 675; MA 3; EC 4 (X1).

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

Duels

Results of December's duels

Charles PiedLuminaire (gains 1 Exp) beat Hugh Jeneaux.

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

Jean Jeanie didn't turn up to fight Claude de Nord and lost SPs.

Zeold von Tu declined to meet Frank X Change as he was under half Endurance.

Balzac Slapdash (gains 1 Exp) beat his enemy Con Stantinople.

Justin Thyme (with ZUT & RS, gains 1 Exp) beat enemy Balzac Slapdash.

Grudges to settle next month

Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux (Rapier) and Stephane Etrange (Sabre) have mutual cause for enemy regiments.

Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) and Con Stantinople (Sabre, Seconds JS & TCdS, 5 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) and Justin Thyme (Sabre, Seconds ZUT, 5 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Arent Hayes (Sabre, adv.) and Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux (Rapier) have cause for enemy regiments.

Botte Le Chimiste (Sabre, Seconds LSD) and Hugh Jeneaux (Sabre, adv.) have cause for enemy regiments.

Balzac Slapdash (Rapier, adv.) and Ian Dediette (Rapier, 5 rests) have mutual cause for enemy regiments.

Elroi le Flingue (Sabre, Seconds LSD, adv.) and Hugh Jeneaux (Sabre, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Hugh Jeneaux (Sabre) and Maurice Danseur (Sabre, Seconds PDT & LSD, adv.) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Hugh Jeneaux (Sabre) and Pierre De Terre (Sabre, Seconds LSD & MD) have cause for enemy regiments.

Marcel Hatch Dupree (Cutlass, Seconds CdF, adv.) and Thibault Chanson de Skye (Rapier, Seconds CS & JS, 1 rests) have mutual cause for being in enemy regiments.

Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux (Rapier, 2 rests) and Vaux de Fon (Sabre, adv.) have cause for enemy regiments.

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

Thibault Chanson de Skye (Rapier, Seconds CS & JS) has cause with Percival Puffington (Rapier, Seconds BdLS, adv.) as he tried to court Katy.

"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.

There are a few event cards in the deck that take effect if they're bought or reach the end of the row. And one of these triggers the end of the game – as does the deck (not the row) running out. At this point the category/suit on the played cards matters. Players tot up their points (card values) in each of the three categories: diamonds, hearts and black suits combined. The player with the higher score in two of the three wins.

Except. Jefferson scores the value of the played Event cards (between an unlikely 8 and a very possible 15). If the players' combined score doesn't beat Jefferson's, Jefferson wins. (This was the historical result, but reading about the election on Wikipedia is a revelation. Makes hanging chads look straightforward.)



My played cards at the end of our first game of Reign of Witches. The cubes (money!) mean I've used the abilities of these cards and have the extra hearts and diamonds.

At the end of the game, I led in hearts, Tom in black suits and we tied in diamonds. Jefferson won, dammit! It was a terrific game, though – and it's all in the cards. (Well, you also need ten coins – players start with four each and there are two in the bank. And the coins are a zero-sum game: you start with 10 in play, you end with 10 in play.) In fact, we enjoyed it so much, we played again the following week, swapping roles, and this time we beat Jefferson, but Tom dominated both red suits for the win.

Reign of Witches gets a provisional 9/10 on my highly subjective scale. The original print run was a freebie from Hollandspiele (hollandspiele.com), but a Print 'n' Play edition is available from Wargame Vault (www.wargamevault.com). I've grabbed one and was amused by the Instructions document: "MAP – There is no map. COUNTERS – There are no counters. RULEBOOK – There is no rulebook."

Our first game that second evening was *Winter Court* (designed by Tom Lehmann and published by Rio Grande – www.riograndegames.com), another recent acquisition of mine. The court has a dozen members, shown on the board between the players. Each has a points value, an ability (except the Royals, but these are worth more points) and one or more suits that influence them.

Players have a hand of cards in the six suits and play a card each turn on their side of an appropriate member of the court, picking up a new card. The card played



The end of our second game of *Winter Court*. Tom has control of the two highest-scoring nobles (lefthand end – note the purple pawns), while I have the lowest and we both have some one-pointers. 6:10 to Tom.

has to be worth more than what's on the other side. This either gives the player control of that court member or removes it from their opponent.

Players may use the abilities of court members they control during their turn, but lose control of them. These let them do things like playing extra cards, drawing extra cards and so on. The game finishes when the deck runs out and whoever has the most points wins. Unless either player controls all four Royals at any point, when they win outright. As I did in short order, Tom not having the cards to take any Royal back. So we played again and it was a much harder fight – back and forth until we finished the deck. And Tom won this time.

It's a decent game, but didn't grab me, so *Winter Court* gets a provisional 6/10 on my highly subjective scale.

Next up was *The March of Progress*, which neither of us had played before. The idea is that the game's core rules can be applied to warfare in different historical periods. With some specific adaptations for each period. We tried the basic rules for the introductory Thirty Years War scenario.

This is fought over three cards – a 'home country' for each player with a 'neutral country' card in between. They have a hand of (large-format, robust) 'Action' cards the same for both) and three 'army' pawns. Starting with one army each, the players use their cards to move armies, recruit new ones, increase the strength of their armies, attack, fortify a country or score points.

The last card is important. First, it's how to win. When you play it, you score a point plus the value of the countries you control and the first to 18 points wins. Second, you then pick up your played cards – the only way you can do this. The home countries start at a value of three, the neutral one two. However, using the strength action decreases the value of a controlled country in exchange for increasing the strength of the player's armies.

won't be published until early October and the gap between deadlines will be six weeks (rather than the usual five).

Some players are not getting the auto-responder message that your orders have been received (at the [lpbsorders@](mailto:lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk) address). That's because they're being bounced back to me as my ISP is apparently on a spam blacklist. If you don't get a response, email another address (LPBS@, for example) and I'll try to confirm receipt manually.

The retirement of Jean Jeanie means the post of Minister of War is vacant – apply now!

Farewell

Tim Rattray is pausing his participation in the game. "I enjoy it but I need more time for my studies," he explains. Good luck with the studies, Tim, and we look forward to having you back.

Absent friends

The following didn't get orders to me in time and suffered the consequences.

Announcements

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

Charles PiedLuminaire asks NPC Major 1 of Princess Louisa Lt Dragoons to resign

Louis Severin Descartes applies for Brigadier of 1st Foot Brigade

Louis Severin Descartes applies for Minister without Portfolio

IP (Grégory Meurant) continues to be floated.

SE No orders from Neil Packer - 1 turn missed.

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.

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.

Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux asks NPC Major 1 of 53rd Fusiliers to resign

Thibault Chanson de Skye asks NPC Brigadier of 4th Foot Brigade to resign

Thibault Chanson de Skye applies for Brigadier of 4th Foot Brigade

An orderly rapped on Major Hayes door in the CPC Barracks. “Delivery for you, Sir.”

Hayes replied, “Thank you, is this one ticking too?”

“Why yes, Sir. How did you know?”

Hayes replied, “And was it delivered by a small boy with a big moustache who did not speak any French and was wearing orange livery?”

The orderly was stunned. This Major Hayes must be a super detective to know so much through a closed door. “Err, yes, Sir,” he replied.

Hayes replied. “Right: careful now, Lad. Take the parcel to the Duty Sergeant and ask him to put it with the others in the safe room. We’ll detonate them all at midnight in a safe manner.

The orderly trotted off.

Hayes sighed, “Dear me, Thierry, can’t you do any better than that?”

Poetry Corner

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

There was a young lady called Jenny,
Who owned a pretty penny.
If I were her beau,
I’d grab hold of that dough
And spend it on pleasures aplenty.

Join a club where they call you Sir!
You’ll want to be a member of Fleur.
Not quite yet that class of punter?
Then you might become a member at Hunter’s.

Unless you ride a Horse and think
you’re hard,
In which case you’ll prefer The Horse
Guards.

If those three are out of your reach,
You might want to try the Frog and
Peach.

If you still can’t afford the fees and
tips,
You’ll find things cheaper at Red
Phillips.

Then again if you’re looking to sip
With red lips? curvy hips? or chains
and whips?

You need female company, so use your
nous

And get yourself to a bawdyhouse.
† FXC

What motivates Thierry Toothpick?
Is he insane? or is he just thick?
Persecuting his Brigadier?
He’ll find himself at the front for the
year.

At least he’ll have plenty of days
To plan his next steps against Arent
Hayes.

We can be reassured this will all end
soon:
Toothpick’s out on his ear – at the end
of June.

Points Arising

Next deadline is 12th September

Many thanks to Andy Kendall for Jean Jeanie’s farewell. As noted in the General’s missive, he’s had a long

career in Paris. But what will Andy’s new character achieve?

I’m taking a couple of weeks’ break just after the deadline, so next issue

Tom and I started by recruiting a new army and moving one into the neutral country – not necessarily in that order (home countries have a ‘garrison’, so the enemy can’t just walk in and take over). However, I then scored points (just my home country) while Tom strengthened his armies. He duly trashed my army in the neutral country, taking control of it.

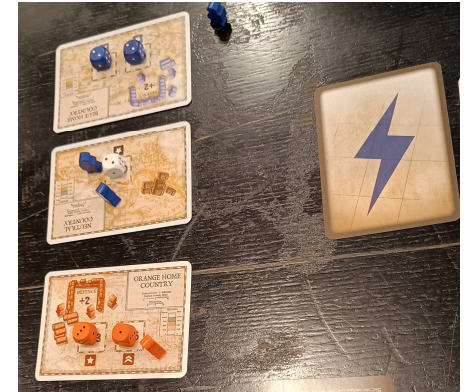
We both recruited another army and then I scored again (you can’t use the Score action twice in a row, but you only need play one other card in between). I then realised that my lead in points meant I just needed to keep scoring. Even if Tom started scoring at the same pace (and getting one more point each time), I’d hit the magic 18 points first. And so I did, using the intervening actions to bolster my home country (recruit, fortify) and dissuade Tom from invading.

In fact, Tom hadn’t spotted what I was doing and expected me to make an attack on the neutral country, so it was an easy win. I doubt I’ll get away with that again! More generally, doing what your opponent is not expecting seems the way to go.

The later scenarios add complications (a second neutral country and rule tweaks in “The Age of Marlborough”, different action cards in “Vive l’Empereur” and so on), making them more of a challenge. However, even the basic scenario challenges you to out-think your opponent. *The March of History* gets a provisional 7/10 on my highly subjective scale.

We finished that session with a quick push-your-luck game, *Blossoms*. The

delightful theme is cultivating flowers of several types, harvesting them at the right time to score for both sets of the same type and sets of different types. I don’t think I’d played this much since I acquired it at Spiel in 2018, but it was a great way to complete our evening. *Blossoms* is 8/10 on my highly subjective

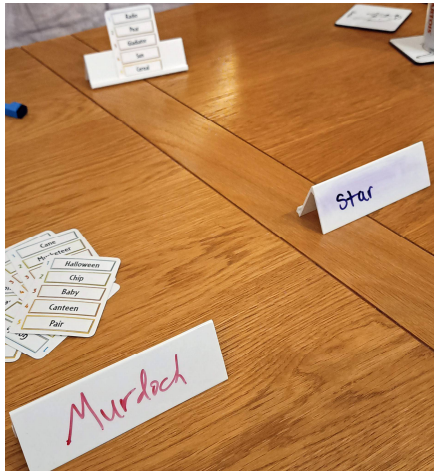


Tom (Blue) has conquered the Neutral country with his strong armies and the Initiative card is in his favour...



Look at all the pretty *Blossoms*!

scale. (You'll find my first impressions of the game in *TWJO* issue 190, as part of my report from Spiel '18.)



But will nephew Tom guess "Sun" from those clues...

A few days later, a family meal gave me the chance to play a few after-dinner games with nephew Tom and his other half, Eleanor. And we baptised my copy of *Just One*. This had been sitting on my shelves for quite a while. Every so often I take it down, read the rules, shake my head and put it back. The idea is that one player has to guess a word based on the one-word clues written by the other players (who have seen the card with the chosen word). "This is a game?" I keep asking.

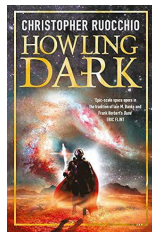
However, when you play it, all becomes clear. Since it's a cooperative game – there's a stack of cards to get through and the number you get right is the players' score – everybody wants the words to be guessed. So it's about how

well the players understand and relate to each other. Hence a good after-dinner parlour game. I think it needs more than three people to be at is best, though. It clearly went down well as Tom promptly 'borrowed' it.

We followed this with a quick game of *Sushi Go!*, which was new to the other two. Experience told.

Reading Matter

Having finished *Empire of Silence*, the first volume of the "Sun Eater" series (see TWJO 249) that nephew Tom had recommended, he passed me the second, *Howling Dark*. And I have to say that I struggled. The first volume of nobleman Hadrian Marlowe's fall and rise in an interstellar empire at war with an implacable foe had its longueurs, but kept me gripped. The second rather dragged. Until the last 20% or so.



It's clear that some years (decades?) have passed since the action of the first book and Hadrian has had some adventures in the meantime. He and other characters refer to these, but we don't learn the details. Instead, we're off to explore more of author Christopher Ruocchio's universe. My problem is that this felt like window dressing until we get to the 'talks' between humans and the bloodthirsty alien Cielcin. Despite the finale, I don't think Hadrian's story has

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...

"I don't give a Huguenot's arse who knows it, that rogue Cuckpowder has stuck his nose up to all of us: the Law, the Crown, the Public Safety Ministry, even to France itself. The villain must be re-arrested and, next time, we make no mistakes – we use every possible advantage to ensure that there will be no more escaping justice, no more stealing of other people's women nor murdering of their suitors. Cuckpowder must die... death... DEATH... HORRIBLE, TERRIBLE DEATTTTTTHHHH!"

"Calm yourself down, Commissioner. Take a few deep breaths! No point in getting yourself all aerated over things. We've got good men out on the streets already hunting him down, looking for evidence. This Cuckpowder won't evade us for long. Everything's in hand and I've already had the cell prepared for his arrival. You know, Sir, the special one, with the 'accessories', just like you asked!"

"I guess you're right Tangerine 1. Cuckpowder's living on borrowed time. Before the Christmas turkey is roasting on a fireside spit we'll have him in jail where he belongs... mwwuuuhh ha ha ha ha... mwwuuuhh ha ha ha... HOWEVER,

don't forget that accursed witch wench of his. That spell-casting harlot who beguiled His Majesty into sparing Cuckpowder's worthless life. What was her name again... Ah, yes, Morgane Le Fay... I mean if that name doesn't give away the fact she's a black-hearted sorceress, what does?!! We should have no difficulty in convincing the courts of her guilt either. Send out the lads to bring her in too."

"Right away, Sir. Consider it done".

"Just before you go, Tangerine 1, there are a couple of other quick matters. Namely this elusive Lord Percy Percy fellow. I suspect he's yet another English Spy AND the lickspittle of Cuckpowder's, Baron Descartes. You'll find a couple of arrest warrants in the top drawer of my desk there. As it's Christmas time – season of good cheer etc – let's give the people something to cheer about eh? Bring those two in as well... Might as well have a full house in the cells for Yuletide... mwwuuuhh... mwwuuuhh... mwwuuuhh ha ha ha ha... ha ha ha ha."

"Steady there, Sir, you're going all red in the face again. The old veins are becoming all pronounced in your forehead... Can't be healthy for you, Sir."

It seems my desire for experience in the role of a Gentleman's Second has quickly been resolved. May God grant me the wisdom to learn from the experience and may I fulfil the role with honour.

† JS

Sir

I am grateful for the invite. I need some Christmas cheer after my recent Trial and Tribulations. I will join you in Weeks 2 and 4. I will not bring a mistress as I am a target for the Dominion and do not want our finest ladies to become collateral damage.

Your Good Health Sir,

† Arent Hayes

RACE INTO THE NEW YEAR!

Let's start 1677 with fine equestrian pursuits!

Horse race in week 1 – prize pot at 2000 GC!

All gentlemen and their mounts are welcome, and the ladies are expected to cheer.

100 GC starting fee including drinks and buffet, or 50 GC for spectators.

By Paris' most active horse race organizer after Le Dauphin,

† Baron Louis Severin Descartes

PS: It may be the New Year, but we respectfully request to refrain from fireworks at the event in order not to unnecessarily scare the horses.

Gentlemen of Paris,

To dispel the tedium of the long winter evenings. I have engaged the services of a renowned string quartet to entertain us at my club. Accordingly, please bring your ladies and join Miss Nifisent and me during the second week of January for dinner and music. Refreshments at my expense.

Regrettably, I must inform you that this invitation does not extend to members of the Archduke Leopold Cuirassiers.

† Marquis Louis Renault

Neville Moore and the lovely Vera Cruz invite all tactically-minded gentlemen of Paris to participate in his annual chess tournament, to be held at my club in the 3rd week of January. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes of 1,000/500/250 crowns! Drinks provided for guests and mistresses. Let us sharpen our wits for future encounters with enemies of France!

Personal

To Bdr-Gen Descartes,

Congratulations on your well-deserved promotion to full Brigadier-General.

If I can manage to lead the Dragoon Guards half as well as you did, I will be more than satisfied. I feel that I have some very large (riding) boots to fill.

Your good friend,

† Col Chemiste

Dear Count Jeanie,

Many thanks for clarifying your whereas about at the time of the duel. I really do need a Aide as soon as possible, as I was only able to find details about the duel, and totally missed that you were fighting for the King aboard.

† Count Thyme

To Maj. le Flingue,

Now that our esteemed Colonel had been promoted, I will be taking over his position and the Lt-Col. post is yours to take.

I look forward to having your help in leading the regiment.

† Col. Chemiste

advanced much after these 650-odd pages, but he has gathered a team (fellowship?) about him. And gained the nickname “Half-mortal”. Which makes no sense to me, even though I’ve read how he got it.

What I really want to know is how he becomes the species-killing monster he admitted to at the start of the first book. But I’m not sure I can wade through five more hefty books (plus seven supplementary volumes) to find out. Maybe I should ask an AI to summarise them for me, since they’re keen to do this for any document I’m sent...

Games Events

The latest Raiders of the Game Cupboard games day in Burton-upon-Trent (in the function room of the Albion Pub on Shobnall Road in Burton) is on 27th September 2025. It’s described as “an event for people like us who just want to take a day off real life and have fun.” What more could you want? Details at: www.raidersofthegamecupboard.co.uk

The next TringCon is scheduled for 4th October. This is an open gaming day held twice a year at Marsworth Millennium Hall in Marsworth (near Tring!) and run by the estimable Keith Thomasson. Details are on the website – www.fwtwr.com/tringcon – where you can also book a place. As 24 people have already done.

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. 23rd-26th October 2025, at the Messe (Exhibition Centre) in Essen. Contact Friedhelm Merz Verlag, Postfach 210250, Bonn, 53157 Germany or see www.spiel-messe.com/en

MidCon: 31st Oct–2nd Nov 2025 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

Fictionary Dictionary

Round 6 scores

A “divi-divi” is a tropical American caesalpiniaceous tree, so there. The votes were widely spread, though definition 4 (“Sharing the spoils of derring-do (or criminal activity)”) got more votes than any other.

And to stravaig is to wander aimlessly (in Scotland and northern Britain). As did the votes for this one.

Anthony Gilbert noted of stravaig’s fifth definition, “Special Brew? That dates the reference. Tennent’s Super or Buckfast would be more likely, these days.” I bow to your superior knowledge, Anthony.

A decent haul of points sees Colin Bruce leapfrog into a narrow lead from Nik Luker and Anthony Gilbert.

The scores		
Player	This round	Total
Colin Bruce	5	20
Mark Cowper	3	11
Mike Dommett	3	10
Anthony Gilbert	1	18
William Hay	3	14
Andrew Kendall	1	12
Andrew Larder	0	6
Nik Luker	1	19
Tim Macaire	2	10
Nigel Monaghan	0	1
Graeme Morris	3	13
Jonathan Palfrey	4	9
Mike Pollard	2	12
Pam Udowiczenko	0	6
Bruce Whitehill	0	3
Andrew Whiteley	0	2

Round 7 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.

Guipure

1 Belgian (or possibly Dutch, origin is disputed) spelling of the nickname of Ronald Reagan.

2 A distilled alcoholic drink made in Brazil from jabuticaba berries, sometimes flavoured with herbs.

3 A dubious male grooming product made from the bodily fluids of a goat.

4 An early windowing system written entirely in LISP using pure functions. Failed due to poor performance characteristics.

5 Gujarat Guipure, Captain of the Indian Test Cricket team in the 1950s. Forced into early retirement by a

Press

Announcements

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 January.

**** 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

**** Aide Required ****

Matters of Honour

Letter to select addressees and responses
Gentlemen,
It appears that life in Paris requires the settling of matters of honour on a fairly regular basis. I wonder if you would do me the honour of acting as my seconds should the occasion arise? I would of course reciprocate.
Yours,
† Bvt. Brigadier-General Thibault
Chanson de Skye

Certainly, Bvt Brigadier-General. I would be honoured both to be your second and to have you as mine.
Yours etc,
† Con Stantinople

Greetings Honoured Sirs,
I was mildly puzzled at first receiving messages between yourselves Chanson de Skye and Con Stantinople in which I was included. I would be most happy to act as mutual seconds for both of you if that is your desire? † Justin Saad

Dear Justin Saad
Ditto, that would be lovely. I would be honoured to be your second.
Yours, etc,
† Con Stantinople

Blatant brown-nosing

1 Christmas comes but once a year to bring us joy and Party cheer.
Saint Nick, the present bringer bold,
Brings Frankincense and Myrrh and Gold.
2 So let us raise our glasses high,
For now does Christmastide draw nigh.
Give thanks for gifts that it will bring
And drink Good Health unto the King!

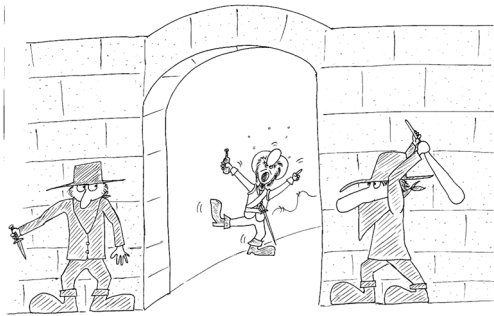
Social

[Sent to a select ~~few~~ many.]
Messieurs,
All shall be most welcome to join me at the Fleur for festive frivolity in the second, third, and fourth weeks of the month. Refreshments will be provided. Gentlemen are encouraged to bring a lady friend. I find their gentle influence a welcome counterpoint to the inevitable regimental hostilities.
Kindest regards,
RSVP † Greg

Skye. And Zeold von Tu uses the time-honoured tactic of courting someone whose bloke is on active service. It's fine now, but he'll be in trouble come March.

Reeling out of a bawdy house, Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux makes a point of jingling the few crowns he's kept in his purse. "Here you go, lads," he cries when some disreputable types approach. "This lot's for you!" he finishes and chucks them the money.

It's not been a good month for Steve De Sade, what with Freda not being amenable. And if only he could remember who it was he was going to Toady to... Still, he got in a bit of practice.



Looting in the rain

The weather is wet and miserable and so are the French troops laying siege to Dutch strongholds. Especially the ones who didn't want to be there in the first place. However, the Royal Foot Guards put a brave face on it and do what they do best – pillage the countryside. The new boss, Camille de Polignac, receives a Mention in Despatches ("that peasant didn't stand a chance") and carries off more than five hundred crowns worth of loot. Lt-Col Martin de Garnache can't find quite as much booty, so no Mention for him. Major Hector William Boone can only amass some three hundred crowns' worth, but gets a pair of MiDs ("That was a tough peasant!") and is Knighted as a result. His fellow Major, "Tiny" Thierry Toothpick, concentrates on the looting and gets close to a thousand crowns' worth. The same amount is achieved by Captain Felipe Savant, but Neville Moore is so distracted by the circumstances that he gets nothing. Brigadier Terence Cuckpowder pulls in close to a thousand crowns, too.

The Fourth Arquebusiers follow the RFG's example, but with less competence. CO Jean d'Aubergine enriches himself to the tune of some five hundred crowns to go with his own Mention ("Just following suit").

Attached to Frontier regiment 2, Justin Cartier survives the damp and the misery.

But there's better news for Rick Shaw who grabs over fifteen hundred crowns' worth of plunder as the RNHB overruns a Spanish outpost. ♦

tragic chapati accident. After which his teammates were encouraged to "Win one for the Guipure".

6 An honest gentleman on the mating scene.

7 Inflammation of a specific region of the buttock. Inflammatory conditions in other areas of the derriere include endure, reassure and, of course, obscure.

8 Pronounced Joo-i-pure: ethnic cleansing in the middle east, esp. Palestine.

9 Scottish expression usually applied to snotty children as in "Guipure nose!!"

10 A specially distilled pint of Guinness produced only using Irish mountain water that has been ultra filtrated 10 times. Sells for a premium price in top Dublin hotels.

11 A type of bobbin lace, woven by hand.

12 An uncluttered, ad-free screen on an app.

13 An unpleasant substance used by tanners.

Yunker

1 A child from Yonkers, NY.

2 Gangsta style street greeting for your pa's bro.

3 A light cannon commonly used in the English Civil War, of about 2-inch calibre, popular for being light and relatively cheap.

4 Marine who fails to complete a yomp. His comrades might say: 'What an absolute Yunker'.

5 More properly spelled with an apostrophe "you'nker". This is the inebriate's frequently shouted and slurringly-contracted form of "You! Wayne Kerr" (apparently being associated with this highly-reputable electronic components company is considered with derision in some circles).

6 A particularly annoying American.

7 A safe way to refer to Donald Trump.

8 Someone from Yonkers, a suburb of New York City.

9 Textspeak for YOU **NKER.

10 A tool for uprooting tough weeds and small shrubs

11 An unripe conker.

12 A young German nobleman.

13 A young lad who had to a visit A&E following a painful incident, the cause of which can be blamed on a tattered copy of Razzle that his elder brother kept hidden behind the faucet.

Words for round 8

Mot-mot and Vavasor

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 12th September 2025

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 shows the subscription rates for the paper edition, including postage, and the games only sub.

	UK	Rest of World	Games only
10-issue (1 year) subscription	£39.00	£54.00	£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 Games@pevans.co.uk. Or subscribe online at www.pevans.co.uk/TWJO, where you can pay by credit card or PayPal.

However, the talk of the Fleur is provided by Zeold von Tu when he brings his new conquest, Morgane Le Fay, to the club. Apparently, he found her in a dishevelled state after spending time in the Bastille. “It was those horrid little men painted orange,” she wept when Zeold found her. She’s certainly grateful to her new beau.

Hugo’s third is the “Santa’s on his way” party and time to “compile my pressie list”. Louis actually suspends his own party to attend Greg’s for one week and this noticeably reduces the friction between partygoers. Only for the week, though.

The finale is the “Who’s been naughty, who’s been nice?” party, according to Hugo. Still Toadying to Greg, he has taken Ella “to help me carouse and unwrap my HUGE pile of pressies (and to dispose of the wrappings in an eco-responsible manner. Her wrappings ... well, they come later).” This doesn’t stop the regimental challenges being repeated. Louis’s group remains peaceful at what their host describes as “his wholesome Christmas gathering with mulled wine”.

Donating to the needy

In the courting stakes, we find Freda is not amenable to visitor’s charms even when she’s at home. Barthélemy Chiffert shows that switching objectives can work, but earns a duel into the bargain. (Charles PiedLuminaire may want to re-think his approach post-success, especially as it left him at a party without a date.) Percival Puffington demonstrates that persistence is not always a good idea, much to the amusement of Thibault Chanson de

Who was where – with their weapon				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Practising	HJ - Sabre HDS - Cutlass JdG - Rapier BeV - Sabre MD - Sabre SDS - Sabre BdLS - Cutlass	FdB - Sabre JiT - Sabre HDS - Cutlass JdG - Rapier CdF - Cutlass CdN - Sabre CPL - Sabre BdLS - Foil	FdB - Sabre JiT - Sabre ZVT - Rapier SBC - Rapier HDS - Cutlass BLC - Sabre JdG - Rapier EIF - Sabre CdF - Cutlass CPL - Sabre MD - Sabre BdLS - Foil	FdB - Sabre HS - Rapier ZVT - Rapier SBC - Rapier JdG - Rapier BC - Rapier AA - Rapier CdF - Cutlass BeV - Sabre DJA - Sabre
Shows who is in the gyms: Weapon = Weapon practised with.				

Who was where – with the ladies				
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Alison	Out	Out	Out	Out
Anne	Out	Out	Out	Out
Belle		Out BC fails		Out
Bette	Out	Out	Out	Out
Cath	Out	Out	Out	Out
Edna	Out	Out	Out	Out
Ella	Out	Out	Out	Out
Eve	Out	Out		Out
Freda	Out	Out	SDS fails	
	DJA fails			
Guinevere	Out			Out
Jacky	Out		Out	Out
Jenny	Out			
Justine	Out			
Katy	Out TCdS succeeds	Out Out PPuf fails	Out TCdS at home PPuf fails	Out Out PPuf fails
Laura	Out	Out	Out	Out
Lotte		Out	Out	
Lucy	Out			
Maggie	Out	Out	Out	Out
Morgane	ZvT succeeds ex-TC	Out		
Sal	Out	Out	Out	Out
Sue	Out	Out	Out	
Violet	CPL succeeds		BC succeeds ex-CPL	
Viv	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.				

The Wizard of Anharitte (Star Trader game 12)

Turn 15

MADNESS & MAYHEM have made a strategic decision to close down their operations this Quarter as operations have not panned out as well as might have been hoped. Their serving crew are praised and M&M have withdrawn.

Gamma Leporis saw Alloys drop in price but was quiet again.

In trading at Epsilon Eridani ROCKET TRADERS sold 5 Spice for 3 HTs each.

ROCKET TRADERS were buying Isotopes at Tau Ceti using their Market Manager position and ending up with 13 costing but 1 HT apiece.

SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS used their agent to sell 4 Monopoles for 9 HTs each at Mu Herculis as the price fell.

At Sigma Draconis COSTA NOSTRA COFFEE INC bought 8 Spice for 4 HTs each and gained a dealership. SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS sold 9 Spice for 1 HT each and gained the Market Manager position. COSTA NOSTRA COFFEE INC sold 6 Monopoles for 10 HTs apiece and took a Contractorship. ROCKET TRADERS bought 5 Isotopes on Contract.

ROCKET TRADERS sold 5 Spice on Contract, but only after SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS sold 3 units for 4 HTs each.

TREKBOER flew to Sigma Draconis and unloaded their Tempus at a large profit, selling at 50 HTs a unit.

ROCKET TRADERS repaired the Apollo’s Phoenix Hull and added two cargo pods as well. Both ships at Tau Ceti are now loaded with Isotopes and a few passengers were collected too.

COSTA NOSTRA COFFEE INC. took OP 16 and bought a Dagger Hull with a military pod.

SOLAR SPICE & LIQUORS loaded passengers on one ship and decided to buy 5 new Spice Factories at Sigma Draconis while cost was so low. Spotting everybody else was busy they sneaked a ship onto planet at Epsilon Eridani and took Tempus.

Press

Has anyone seen my Clarinet?

So, you owe me one, Afrikaner.
But I'm a businessman, by damn. How about I lend you Agent Willy to help sell any contraband you might have picked up on planet at Tau Ceti?
Bargain price of 100 HTs – you'll make more than that on the deal!

Pevans van Rijn, Solar Spice & Liquors

Corporation Table

Corporation letter and name	Connections Bus/Crim/Pol			Init'v Bid	Turn order	Cash Rep		Player
A Costa Nostra Coffee	10	0	1	0	3rd	444	40	Mark Cowper
B Madness & Mayhem	9	5	0	5	5th	6	21	Anthony Gilbert
C Solar Spice & Liquors	8	3	4	10+4	1st	1141	40	Paul Evans
D TrekBoer	10	7	2	0	4th	905	40	Mike Dyer
E Rocket Traders	10	0	8	5	2nd	281	34	Przemek Orwat
N under Initiative Bid means No move received, F indicates the Corp was floated								

Market Positions

System	Commodity	Positions
Gamma Leporis	Alloys	Dealers: A, D and E.
Epsilon Eridani	Alloys	
	Isotopes	Dealers: A and E.
	Monopoles	Dealers: A and C.
	Spice	Dealer: E. Contractor: C.
Tau Ceti	Alloys	Dealer: E. Contractor: C.
	Isotopes	Market Manager: E.
Mu Herculis	Alloys	Dealer: E. Contractor: D.
	Isotopes	Dealers: A and E.; Contractor: D.
	Monopoles	Dealers: D and E. Contractor: A.
Sigma Draconis	Alloys	Dealers: D and E.
	Isotopes	Contractors: D and E.
	Monopoles	Dealer: E. Contractors: A and D.
	Spice	Dealers: A and E. Market Manager: C.
Beta Hydri	Alloys	
	Isotopes	Contractor: E.
	Monopoles	Dealers: A and D.
	Spice	Dealer: C. Contractor: E.

News

SS&L Took OP 12 this turn.

Turn 19 **B8**

There were three new News chits this turn. The current list (new chits in **bold**) is:

(Chits are identified by the Connection type and level required to see them and disappear/take effect in the News Phase of the turn listed.)

Turn 17 **P3, C3**

Turn 18 **B7**

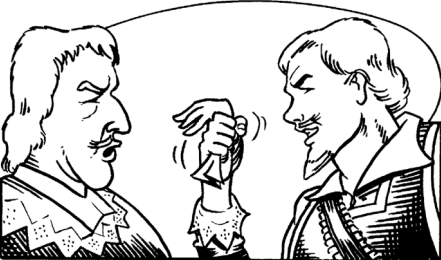
Who was where – in the other clubs, in the bawdyhouses and misc			
Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Bothwell' s	BLC + Eve . PPuf + Viv . LSD + Edna . Cdn + Jacky		Cdn + Jacky
Hunter' s	HF + Ella		
Frog & Peach	PDT + Sal	JS	JS
Shows who was in or outside a club: . = Toadying to character above; (G) = Gambled; CP = Crown Prince; (id) = expected host.			
Bawdyhouses	MHD + FC: Mug 0 AH + FC AA + FC CdF + FC ID + FC	ZvT + FC JC	JS + FC HDS + FC CA + FC
Shows visitors to the red-light district: FC = Female Companionship; Mug n = Mugged & amount lost; (G) = Gambled.			
Regimental Duties			IP
Busy doing nothing	SDS -Toady to ????		SDS -Toady to ????
For those doing nothing: -club = not a club member; -Cash = insufficient funds; -SL = insufficient Social Level; ??? = unknown host.			

They have some company on the road to the Netherlands. Jean d'Aubergine orders the Fourth Arquebusiers into action. Rick Shaw decides the Royal North Highlanders are good bunch to be with this winter. And Justin Cartier throws in his lot with the Frontier regiments without bringing his battalion with him.

If it's Christmas, there must be parties

Parties abound this December, it seems. Hugo Furst has them all classified. First, there's the "pre-party party" as he takes Ella carousing at his club: "the festive season is a marathon NOT a sprint!" Others, however, start the partying. Louis Renault gets a good turnout for his commemoration of the Feast Day of St Nicholas of Myra. A good few of those attend Mass with him and Maggie beforehand (that's Balzac, Chemin, Elroi – though he fidgets all the way through the service, Felipe, Hugo, Justin S and even the CPS, Thierry). Nothing like a state of grace before starting the revels. There is a bit of a squabble, though as Balzac Slapdash renews the mutual hostility between his regiment and that of Con Stantinople and Justin Thyme. Elroi le Flingue is distinctly worried that any wine thrown around may end up on his nice new Lt-Colonel's uniform and keeps well away.

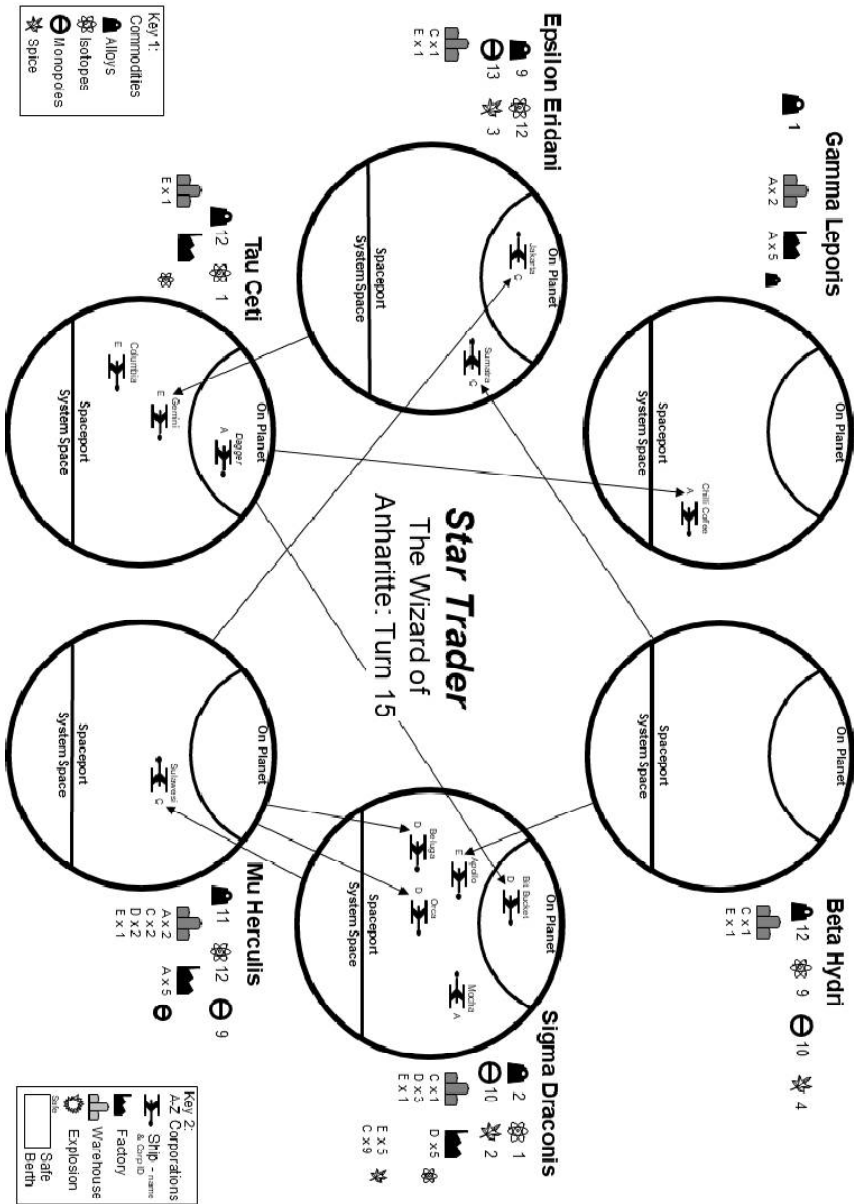
Down the road in Bothwell's, freshly minted Colonel Botte Le Chimiste (he's paid off his loans, too) holds his early Christmas party for a select few. Louis Severin Descartes congratulates the new Colonel of the GDMD, where he has served for a full 3 years. He proposes toasts to "the Fallen, on victories past and future, and on the new commander. And on the very welcome fact that Descartes will never have duels with regimental enemies ever again!"



Second, says Hugo, is "the 'Is it Christmas yet?' party". He takes Ella with him to Greg's shindig "to keep me in check (while carousing) and guide me home. (Spoiler alert: it isn't Christmas yet.)" In fact, there's competition between Louis Severin Descartes and Greg de Bécqueur, both hosting in the Fleur. A feature of Greg's gatherings is the copious supply of plum pudding. "I

love plum pudding," notes the host. While Louis describes his guests as "mostly a collection of old GDMD comrades and some other young officers who [I'm] supporting in their career, plus a few old friends." Ben e'Volence gets in on the act, too, but his bash is small beer (and no pudding) in comparison. A slew of regimental challenges result. Interestingly, most of them are inter-party rather than intra-party. Everybody at Louis's do gets on with each other; they're just not so happy with the other lot. This time it's Come Asiouar who's protective of his nice new Lt-Colonel's uniform, partly purchased with his gift from Claude de Nord – the commander of his enemy regiment!

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



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

Turn 3

Welsh Interstate Train Service built through the Keswick gap and got to Boot to see the stone circles. Seaside Railways continued building south and got as far as Heysham, before turning back to construct a branch line. Locomotive Observation Steam Train Company built further south down the centre of the lakes and connected into Carlisle at the north east corner. Cart and Barrow Rail built east and south, meeting SR, and then north along the west coast to meet WITS.

WELSH INTERSTATE TRAIN SERVICE (WITS), Mike Dyer – Red

Starts: Whitehaven

Builds:

- a)(Keswick) – N11 – B52;
(Egremont) – B13 – B14 – C15
- b)(C15) – Ravenglass;
(C16) – Boot
- c)(B52) – D53 – E53 – F53

Points: 70 +2 = 72

SEASIDE RAILWAYS (SR), Rob Pinkerton – Blue

Starts: Carlisle

- a)(C66) – M28 – Carnforth (+6)
- b)(Carnforth) – M31 – Morecambe – Heysham (+12);
(Tebay) – H61
- c)(H61) – I62 – J61 – K62 – L61

Points: 32 +18 +7 = 57

LOCOMOTIVE OBSERVATION STEAM TRAIN COMPANY (LOST), Gerald Udowiczenko – Black

Starts: Port Carlisle

- a)(N10) – N11 – Keswick – M16 (2 to SR)
- b)(M16) – M17;
(Wigton) – C45 – D44
- c)(D44) – F43 – Carlisle;
(Maryport) – G7

Points: 36 -2 = 34

CART AND BARROW RAIL (CAB), Chris Rudram – Green

Starts: Barrow in Furness

- a)(H24) – I25 – I27 – J27
- b)(J27) – K28 – Grange-over-Sands – M27 – M28 (+6, 1 to SR)
- c)(M28) – Carnforth (4 to SR);
(D17) – E17 – Boot (2 to WITS)

Points: 38 +6 -7 = 37

GM Notes

Die rolls for the next turn are: 4, 3, 5

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 5th September 2025

Who was where – in (or outside) the Fleur

Where	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Fleur de Lys	FXC + Justine JH + Cath LR + Maggie ZUT + Laura FdB + Freda JS BS + Alison HS + Sue JIT + Guinevere VdF AH BC AA EIF + Lucy CdF + Jenny GdB + Bette CS + Anne	ZvT + Morgane FXC + Justine LSD + Edna TCdS + Katy BLC + Eve AA EIF MD + Belle BeV + Lotte HS + Sue VdF GdB + Bette ZUT + Laura BS + Alison HJ HF + Ella MHD SBC AH PDT + Sal CS + Anne ID CA JH + Cath LR + Maggie	FXC + Justine BeV + Lotte HS + Sue VdF GdB + Bette ZUT + Laura BS + Alison HJ HF + Ella MHD PDT + Sal LSD + Edna CS + Anne ID CA JH + Cath LR + Maggie	JIT + Guinevere FXC + Justine LSD + Edna TCdS + Katy BLC + Eve EIF CPL MD + Belle GdB + Bette ZUT + Laura BS + Alison HJ HF + Ella MHD AH PDT + Sal CS + Anne ID CA JH + Cath LR + Maggie

Outside Fleur de Lys

DJA (LR)

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.

him a clear advantage over the pint-sized Con and so it proves. Balzac lunges, Con slashes and then surrenders.

After which Balzac wipes down his rapier and takes it to meet the QOC commander, Justin Thyme. Justin is a bit beefier than Con, but there's not much in it. And he's no more skilled. He does, however, have seconds. Both Rick Shaw and Xavier Ulric Turenne turn up to support him. Again, the rapier lunges, the sabre slashes. This time, nobody concedes. However, a cut from Justin's sabre is enough for Balzac and he gives in.

Surprise volunteers

There being no applicants to be Minister of State, His Majesty turns to one of his old friends, Comte Monty Christie, who is a safe pair of hands when it comes to not doing anything that will make waves.

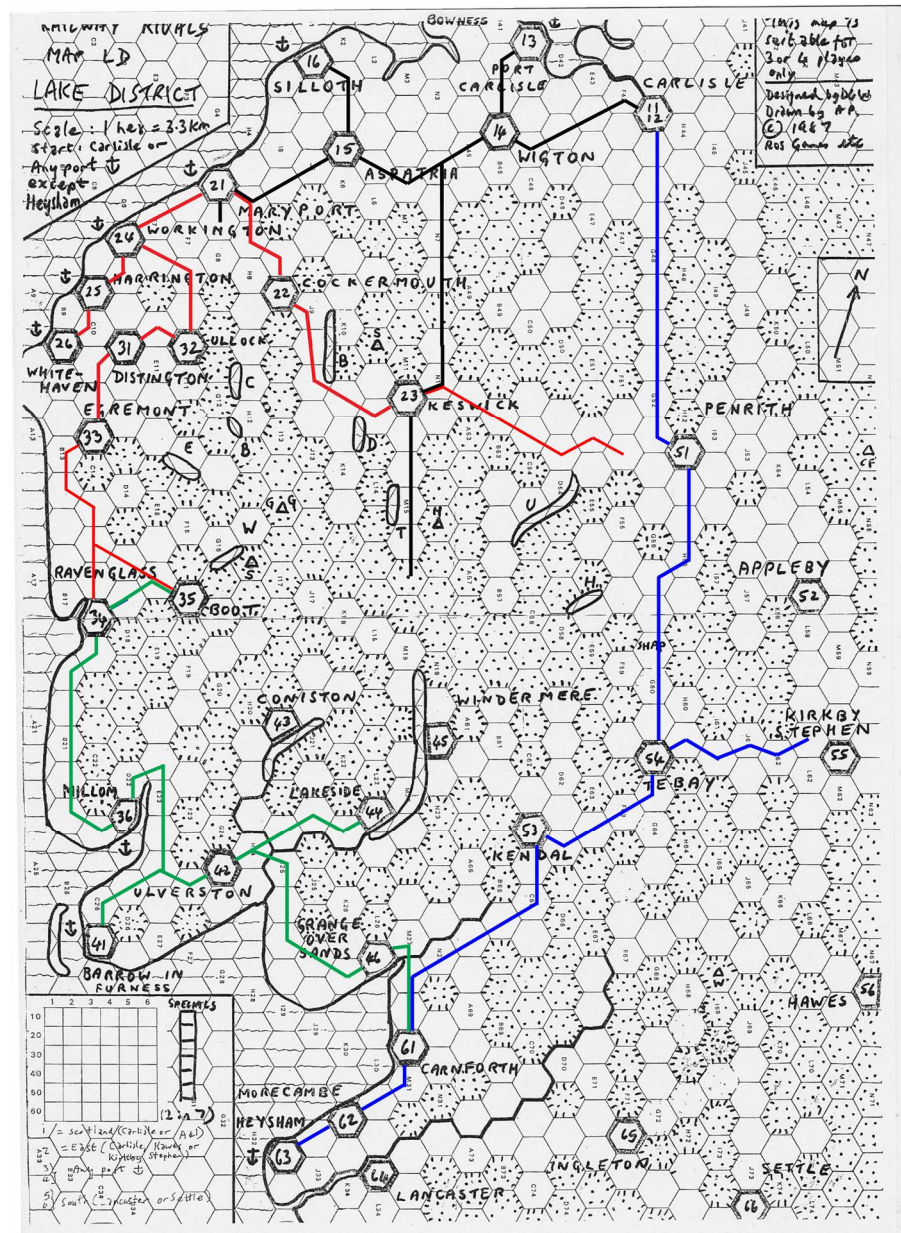
The commander of the 69th Arquebusiers, Thibault Chanson de Skye, is more choosy when appointing a Regimental Adjutant. He picks the best man for the job, even if he is the regiment's most junior Captain. Intending to go wooing and expecting it to be expensive, Thibault takes out a substantial loan. And is surprised to receive a small gift.

Having suggested that the Brigadier of First Foot should quit, Armand Alsace backs up his words with some cash. However, it's Jacques Hatt who really persuades the man, weighing in with his and Cath's influence. This leaves a vacancy for a new Brigadier, but Armand hasn't applied for it. Who will?

Similarly, Charles PiedLuminaire would like the Colonel of his regiment (Princess Louisa's) to resign. Louis Severin Descartes calls in some hefty favours to make sure this happens, despite opposition from "Tiny" Thierry Toothpick. "Unfortunately, this gentleman's overall mediocre performance is holding back the impact of the Brigade as a whole. New leadership is necessary!" insists Louis. Charles is quick to borrow some cash from Louis and then buy his way into the rank. Further down the regiment, Subaltern Dee Jean Aise purchases a Captaincy, but then discovers he's not qualified to join the Frog & Peach.

Having applied to take command of Third Division, Henri DuShite is disappointed to find that the position is already occupied. Hmm, more research needed, Henri.

And then the Guards Brigadier volunteers his command for active service through the winter. Hold that: it's just the Royal Foot Guards that Terence Cuckpowder mobilises (though Brigade HQ is going too). Of the RFG officers, only the CO, Camille de Polignac, is expecting this. He could at least have warned Lieutenant-Colonel Martin de Garnache, Majors Hector William Boone and Thierry Toothpick (hang on: is that the same man who's threatened to arrest Terence and put him on trial again?) and Captains Felipe Savant and Neville Moore. That's the last Paris will see of them for three months... And Thierry had just re-scheduled his debts, too, using some of the cash raised to pay his Tangerine entourage.



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 January 1677 to Pevans
at 180 Aylsham Drive, UXBRIDGE
UB10 8UF, UK or
lpbsorders@pevans.co.uk
by 12th September 2025**



December 1676 (394)

The end of 1676 approaches and Parisians are determined to see it out in style. In some cases this means fighting duels – honour will be satisfied. First up we have Hugh Jeneaux taking on Charles PiedLuminaire over the latter's disgraceful behaviour with Mlle de Lô. As good cavalymen, both carry sabres, though Charles is the more adept of the two. Apart from this, they appear evenly matched and neither man has a second. Trying to surprise his opponent, Hugh opens with a lunge. However, Charles is ready for this. He parries the attack and ripostes to score first blood (not very much blood, given the blow is with the blunt end of a sabre). This is plenty for Hugh and he surrenders.

Time for some regimental animosity now as Major Arent Hayes of the Crown Prince's Cuirassiers squares up to Captain Sebastiane Blanc-Chevaux of the 53rd Fusiliers. The regiments mean it's sabre versus rapier and Arent has by far the greater skill. He also out-bulks his opponent. Again, no seconds are in evidence. Arent launches into a furious slash, but Sebastiane sees this coming and blocks the slash, his rapier withstanding the blow. However, his timing isn't good and his retaliatory lunge meets a cut coming the other way. Ouch! Arent sustains a small cut, while Sebastiane has a bloody wound. Sebastiane's attack is also furious, though, and his cut strikes Arent more effectively. Arent thinks about this and then capitulates.

Sebastiane is expecting to meet Arent's colleague Stephane Etrange next, but this encounter is held over to January.

The duelling field appears to be empty when Baron Claude de Nord arrives, although nearby a solitary ostler in a thick cloak against the cold stands with a

horse. The man taps his hat and nods to the open field. This draws Nord's attention to the usual place of satisfaction where a single rapier stands, point embedded in the ground, skewering a letter to the grass. Hanging from it is a medallion. The rapier looks used and is adorned with the crest of Count Jean Jeanie, the medallion recognisable close up as the seal of office of the War Ministry, the letter addressed to de Nord.

Baron de Nord,

I regret that I will not meet you this day, or on any other day. After recent killings, I choose not to risk another loss to the higher ranks of the armies.

Paris has been decent to me throughout my career – spent mostly in the RFG, including as Colonel, before becoming a General. But the omens have become clearer as the autumn set in. A system where having a long and decorated military career – thirty-seven Mentions in Dispatches! – means that taking up the Ministry of War leads to dissatisfaction at the palace is regrettable. A lesser man can take the position.

And, as the days grow short this year, first I lose my fortune, and then lovely Jacky is seduced away, and by a Musketeer at that! Oh, don't be offended, I understand you are doing well enough there. The last month has been the first without her for years and, added to the regular missives from His Majesty, I find that the lights of Paris are dimmed and entertainments grow bland. A long winter does not appeal. So a breaking point has been reached. Keep Jacky well, de Nord, until another takes her as you took her from me.

One thing, if you will, sir. I charge you to return the ministry seal to the palace and request that this letter is displayed at the Fleur for one week. I believe that you are a member of only a lesser club, but who knows, the Fleur may take pity on you. I believe my standing there remains good, maybe they'll let you look around!

Be well, de Nord, and Vive La France!

Count Jean Jeanie, General, Minister of War (ret'd)

P.S. if you could get that horrid little oik who's prancing around as the RFG junior Major out of the army, please do!"

On reaching the end of the letter de Nord looks up. The only sound is hoofbeats as the stable hand rides up the hill away from Paris. As he crests a rise, one could imagine that he stops to look for a last time at the city and sits taller in the saddle, a fine rapier at his side, before turning away.

Returning to the private places used for clandestine clashes, we find Frank X Change. He didn't turn up to second Claude, but has remembered his own duel. Not that there will be a fight as Zeold von Tu is still too wounded after last month.

Balzac Slapdash and Con Stantinople are the next to actually cross swords. The Dragoon Guards (which Balzac commands) being enemies with the Queen's Own Carabiners (where Con is junior Major). Although sabres are to be expected on both sides, Balzac prefers his trusty rapier. His substantial build and superb skill give