

DIB DIB DIB

BE HE ENGLISH OR BELGIAN,
A FRENCH MAN, OR SWISS,
A MAN WILL GO FAR,
TO READ HIS DIB IN PEACE.

(Trad)

37



This is Dib Dib Dib 37 - a postal games zine catering for everyone and anyone who cares enough to read it, with an editor who's fed up with doing these colophons anyway. As always each issue costs 35p per issue UK rates - though quite a bit more, well more than that even, overseas rate. Anyone wishing to subscribe, or send money, need only write to me, Tom Tweedy, 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513.

EDITORIAL

This is it then, yet another issue. Actually my heart hasn't been in it this time; I've had to force myself to the typewriter more than once to get this out on time. It's all Jan's fault, she does the organising of deadline dates see, and last issue she worked things out so the deadlines of Spots of News and Dib ended up on the same weekend - yes, she did it to me AGAIN! It was HELL getting them both out on a weekend turnaround - but I did it, didn't I? It certainly surprised me.

Anyway, the shot of it all is that it completely knackered me for typing the rest of the month; all I felt like doing afterwards was reading (Roger Zelazny's excellent 'Amber' series). And that's just what I did. But I dunno once Jan sees I've got time on my hands she'll think of something else to volunteer me for. God knows what will happen if I end up with three deadlines on the one weekend! Now it's back to typewriter ho hum.

Because of the rush last issue, I didn't get much time to mention a couple of things I wanted to - that's typical anyway. One of the things was Richard Walkerdine's Zine Archives. It seems Richard is missing certain back-issues of zines, some of them including a few Dib's. These are, issues 1-5, 8-10, 12, and 13. If anyone has these (or has issues of other zines) and would like to help him out, send them to Richard Walkerdine, 144 Stoughton Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 6PG. Or perhaps give him a ring, Tel. 0483 577312.

If you remember last issue, I mentioned the Fall of Eagles ID Diplomacy Comp. being on its final leg, with Richard Scott and myself playing out the final game. Well I've finally gone and done it, and finished the game with a surprising win in Autumn 1901! I must admit, I was slightly disappointed, I expected a far stronger fight. I mean, winning is very nice and all that, but I really paid my money to play in a couple of good/tough games. Anyway, the £40 cheque as first prize will come in very handy I think - seeing as we've already spent £45 of it!

But this sees out the very last issue of the Fall of Eagles as we know it - Richard Hucknall lets it fade out without so much as a whimper. It's funny, but because of Richard's idea of winding the mag down slowly, no-one has even noticed, or really made any comment on it. Perhaps everyone has just become used to the idea. It seems to me, that if a zine goes out with a bang it's more likely to be remembered - it is certainly noticed - and is more likely to be welcomed back if the editor so desires to start up again. I think if I ever decide to fold Dib (no it isn't likely yet!) I'll make it a quick death. No lingering half-life for me. Still, sad to see the last of FOE.

Never mind though, there are always rising stars to carry on. The Les Pimley Award results have finally been brought out and the winner is none other than mega-star himself, Simon Billeness, who won with quite a definite lead. There's no doubt that Simon has done a lot to spread the word of our hobby around - no fickle little youth here flitting from job to job; once he decides to advertise something, it's advertised!

Mind you, I wasn't too struck by his latest little contribution. At least, that was the case when I first saw it (issue 1). I'm referring, of course, to Simon's new zine, Flame (short for 'Inflammatory Material'). As most of you must know by now, Simon has handed 20 Years On over to his brother Mark. He's done this merely so he can switch over to doing his own chat zine; an organ dedicated to expounding his own views, or so it says in the blurb. Fair enough, most editors air their own views in their mags, it helps to generate feedback. But I

couldn't help thinking after reading issue one, that Simon has really let his ego go over the top this time. First he said he intended to charge astronomical fees for his games so as to "discourage players" from playing in his zine. Not a good start, I thought, attempting to alienate players/subscribers right from the beginning (most editors wait until issue 5 or 6).

Issue 2 of Flame however sees a much more flexible Simon; wanting to please, and offering to supply some sort of service to any suggestions made. It certainly made a far more relaxed and therefore far more interesting zine: There's always been this argument that an editor can do what he likes in his own zine. Something that beats me. This may be true up to a point, but it's no good producing a zine that others won't want to buy, surely? You can expound your views till you're blue in the face and it'll matter not a jot.

Talking of chat zines though, if anyone can make a go of it it's Chris Tringham's Megalomania. Yes yes, I've finally had to give in and have accepted his offer to trade. The man keeps sending it to me, REGULARLY! (I've had two since Christmas!) And I'm the fool, I read it from cover to cover. He's making me dependent on it - the start of an addiction. Oh yes, well do I remember my Megalomania game - the nightmares still come back. And I was prepared never to touch another Meg as long as I lived. But it has to be admitted... when he rambles on, the man CAN write. As long as Chris keeps away from games, stuff that he produces in Meg seems to read alright. It never used to be like that; Chris at one time used to be very caustic in print; gave his subscribers hell - a lowly lot he thought. Now, I think, he's more mature (he'll give me hell for that), and he's taking things nice and easy, writing because he likes to write, and not just because people (the right people) will see it.

You know, I have a sneaking feeling that if any zine could measure up to John Dodds' idea of a Hobby Central Zine (Central Hobby Zine?), Megalomania can. Little by little, while no-one was watching, Chris could take the job over. School for Scandal, a zine produced by Trevor Mendham reports to be after this very same job. But I don't think it stands a chance. Trevor asks editors to send any news they might have straight to him, with the hope of linking the ever-expanding zine scene together. And this is where he fails - editors, as with many other hobby members, are an apathetic lot, most can't be bothered to print the news in their own zines! Chances are, often as not, news won't get sent because editors don't get the time (certainly this will be so 9 times out of 10 in my case), so SOS looks destined to fail. Chris Tringham on the other hand asks for nothing, and gets on with the job. A much more powerful way of putting down roots without anyone noticing - making the lot of us dependent on him. I shall be watching this development with interest.

And just to finish off, a couple of little snippets - Information for MIDCON 84 has finally been released: dates this year are 9th/10th/11th November 1984, and is to be held yet again at the Royal Angus Hotel in Birmingham. Accomodation: a Single Room costs £16.50 per person per night (B&B); Shared Rooms £13.50 per person per night (B&B). Registration £6.00, or a Special Hobby Rate £4.50 (until June 30th). For more information (like who to pay the money to - Chris?) I suggest you write to Chris Tringham, 204 Beulah Hill, London, SE19 3UX.

Most of you should find enclosed flyer of another con, LINERCON II. The ship sails from the River Tyne at 7.30pm on Saturday, 23rd June and returns 8.30am on Tuesday, 26th June. Prices for this are: £38 for a 4 berth cabin or £41 for an outer; £47 for a 2 berth cabin or £53 for an outer. A single cabin is £68, and the convention fee is £2. For more information write to Larry Edgar, 15 Featherstone, Great Lumley, Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham, DG3 4NB.

Just room I think to tell that there may still be time to send votes in for Mike Allaway's Gladys Awards. It seems because Mike is so late getting Pyrrhic Victory out he may well allow late votes to trickle in. I hear he may be holding the Gladys Awards over anyway. Why is this, Mr A? Slacker! You'll end up clashing with the Zine Poll again!

THE CATACOMBS OF COPERNICA

A postal AD&D Campaign by Chris Sandow

Turns Four to Six

AINA-AMARTH (Nick Clark)

Having opened up the sarcophagus this excuse for a Paladin then decided not to pursue things any further by removing things from it, thus earning the 'Yellow Chicken Award For The Coward Of The Month'. Moving deeper into the crypt they go down a corridor flanked by coffin-filled niches, where they encounter a couple of armour-clad figures (on loan from the set of 'The Old Dark House') These prove to be Undead and are easily turned by Dolmorial the cleric.

Further down the corridor they come to a dead (I) end, but a short search soon revealed the inevitable secret door. They are now examining the room beyond, pondering the meaning of the battered doors (one is completely broken) and the animal odour which they can smell.....

SIR GUY DEWAYE (Derek Andrews)

Things are definitely getting interesting for the Campaign's most pessimistic character. A careful scout around by the party's thief (handy things these invisible potions!) revealed a group of three smugglers, stashing away some crates. With the aid of a neat ambush Sir Guy and his companions have dispatched two of the smugglers and captured the third.

But will he talk...?

THORN (George North)

A 'stairs and pit' trap proved to be no problem (well, not much!) for Thorn and his party. Nor, for that matter, did the bunch of Kobolds who then attacked them - Broadbent's 'Sleep' spell dealt with the lot of them!

However, they have now met with Erasmus Septugesima ((Jessie for short, tee hee...)), the person who apparently controls the kobolds (though even he doesn't seem to know how he does it!), and his sinister-looking side-kick, Sourgrim the gnome. The two of them have a proposal to put to Thorn....

CADELLIN SILVERBROW (Simon Craddock)

Employing his 'Speak with Animals' spell Tromador manages to win over the ape with a promise of food (let's hope they find some soon!). He also learns that the ape is one of the animals stolen from the travelling carnival.

Releasing the ape they search the surrounding rooms, and find themselves to be in part of the old Temple of Soltan - but who is using it now?

In one room they discover three chests, each with a rather odd figure on top, but as they are about to try and open them a troll enters the adjacent hall....

MAGNUS SIMONSON (Clive Booth)

Magnus and Alwyn have suffered the ignominy of being caught by one of the oldest tricks in the book! Fortunately they are not badly hurt, and they are now in the cellar of the derelict house. They discover a secret cupboard, with very little of interest in it, but they also find a well with a ladder inside it leading down to a passageway. Unfortunately their thief, Harris, discovers (to his great alarm!) that the well is guarded....

RANDOLPH THE RANGER (Dave Tant)

Having found their way safely down to the crypt Randolph and company find that it seems to suffer from a lack of exits. They search around, but in the end they discover the exit almost by accident - in trying to ensure that a statue remains safe they triggered a hidden mechanism, and the way out was revealed.

Disguising themselves as clerics of Helvath-Nar (by wearing the robes which they found in the temple) they enter and follow the passage until it bends round and leads to a door with a curious symbol on it. They also find a charred circle on the wall.

Will they fathom out the significance of it all? And what will happen if they don't?....

DIBS SUBSCRIBERS AND TRADES

Kenny Adams, 262 Drumchapel Road, Glasgow, G15 6DS,
Mike Allaway, 60 Poynter Court, Gallery Gardens, Northolt, Middx. E85 5PA Tel. 01 845 2790
Martin Allen, 15 Ragley Crescent, Broom Park, Bromsgrove, Worcs. B60 2BD H/Tel. 0527 72092
Derek Andrews, 18 Hume Street, Warrington, Cheshire, WA1 3QR
Mick Antrobus, 136 Pankhurst Crescent, Stevenage, Herts., SG2 0QN
24694601 Trooper Bailey S., Intake No. 84103 A Squ., RAC Training Regiment, Catterick Garrison, N. Yorks. DL9 3
Richard Bairstow, 20 Queen's Drive, Guildford, GU2 6PP, Tel. 0483 38247
Ralph M. Baker, 3 Summit Close, Jericho, Bury, Lanc. BL9 7TS
Chris Bartrum, 20 York Road, Montpelier, Bristol, BS6 5QE
Richard Bass, Lingwood, The Mount, Grayswood, Haslemere, Surrey, GU27 2EB H/Tel. 0428 2978
Mick Bensted, Harrietsham Manor, Nr. Maidstone, Kent, ME17 1NR Tel. 0622 859235
Simon Billenness, 20 Winifred Road, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR3 3JA Tel. 01 660 8608
Mark Billenness, 20 Winifred Road, Coulsdon, Surrey, CR3 3JA Tel. 01 660 8608
David Bird, 13a Roman Vale, Priory Avenue, Old Harlow, Essex Tel. 0279 42987
Pete Birks, 65 Turney Road, London, SE21 7JB, Tel. 01 274 3731
John Boogert, Flat 6, 51 Bradley Gardens, Ealing, London W13 01 997 1420
Clive F. Booth, 12 Bassford Avenue, Heanor, Derbyshire, DE7 7SS H/Tel. 07737 61944
Colin Bruce, 33 Cockburn Place, Bishopmill, Elgin, IV30 2HY
John Bycroft, 9 Barfield Grove, Leeds, LS17 8TF, Tel. 0532 680878
Peter Calcraft, 13 Ridgeway Road, Long Ashton, Nr. Bristol, BS18 9EX H/Tel. 027580 3357
John Cavanagh, 39 Herbert Road, Plumstead, London, SE18 3SZ
Geoff Challenger, 117 Shrubbery Road, South Darenth, Kent, DA4 9AP Tel. 0322 862213
Rob Chapman, 7 Baymount, Paignton, Devon, TQ3 2LD Tel. 0803 551045
Nick Clark, 25 Broadclyst Gardens, Thorpe Bay, Southend on Sea, Essex. SS1 3QP
Martin Clifford-King, 11 Lordsbury Field, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 9OE H/Tel. 01 669 9920
Nicholas Clifton, 4 Bonchester Close, Chislehurst, Kent, BR7 5HS H/Tel. 01467 5396
Mike Close, Lamont, Claude Road West, Barry, South Glamorgan. CF6 8JG H/Tel. 0446 737733
Derek Cowan, 95 Mill Road, Ballyclare, CO. Antrim, BT39 9DZ
James Cowie, 24 Cullin Court, Hallglen, Falkirk, Stirlingshire, Scotland
Simon Craddock, 34 Woodfield, Parkhill Road, London, NW3
David Crawford, 14 Kiln Street, Fintona, Co. Tyrone, Northern Ireland. BT78 2BG
Brian Creese, 256 Canbury Park Road, Kingston, Surrey, KT2 6LG Tel. 01 549 6872
Cathy Cuning, 710 W. Las Palmaritas, Phoenix, Arizona, 85021 U.S.A. H/Tel. 602 997-1556
Mike Dean, Knockhill Cottage, Newport-on-Tay, Fife, DD6 8RD
Mike Deans (Private & Confidential), Fjellsenden 4, 4000 Stavanger, Norway,
T.J. Dibden, 5 Lampeter Square, London, W6 8PS,
John Dodds, 47 Mossford Lane, Barkingside, Essex, IG6 2JA
Konrad Dolata, Hermann-Loens-Weg 34, D-5650 Solingen M, W. Germany,
Paul Donley, 7 Dan-yr-heol, Cyncoed, Cardiff, CF2 6JU
John Field, 19 Forest Way, Ashstead, Surrey, KG21 1JN H/Tel. 03722 75515
David Fish, 30 Derby Avenue, Upminster, Essex, RM14 2NR
William Fisk, 76 Morningside Drive, Edinburgh, EH10 5NU,
Iain Forsyth, 6 Ardrossan Road, Saltcoats, Ayrshire, H/Tel. 0294 61414
Alan Frost, 33 Fryent Close, Blackrod, Bolton, BL6 5BU
Gil Gavel, 13 Chamberlain Street, London, NW1 8XB,
Joe Gibbons, 42 Elm Park Road, Reading, Berks., RG3 2TN
Steve Gregory, 45 Herbert Road, Nottingham,
David Hall, 5a Glenfield Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, SK4 2QP
Victor Hall, 5D Teasel Way, Manor Road, West Ham, London. E15
Bill Haygarth, 203 Caledon Road, East Ham, London E6.
Nick Hoyle, 5 Hilltop Drive, Tottington Nr. Bury, Lancs., BL8 3NW
Martyn Ives, 76 Lumsden Road, Southsea, Hants., PO4 9LR
Ulf Jiretorn, Algbacken 2 D, 372 00-RONNEBY, Sweden,
Steve Jones, 6 Kingsdown, Hitchin, Herts, H/Tel. 0462 35195
John Keight, 12 Langham Gardens, Gordon Road, London, W13 8PY H/Tel. 01 998 8224
Nick Kinzett, 11 Daleway Road, Green Lane, Coventry, CV3 6SF Tel. 0203 414759
R.J. Lampard, 14 Richmond Gardens, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 8ES
John Lee, 'Ashlea' 10 Chapel Close, Hilton, Huntington, Cambs. PE18 9NS H/Tel. 0480 830225
Richard Lewis, 15 Wistwood Hayes, Moseley Parklands, Wolverhampton, West Midlands. WV10 8UQ
Dr. Mark Lipton, Blue Hills, Long Meadow, Gayton, Wirral, Merseyside, L60 8QQ
Niall Litton, 47 Queens Place, Summerseat, Bury, Lancs. BL9 5PH
Nick Lourie, 15 Brocklebank Road, London, SW18,
Robert Lozynskyj, 41 Rokfield House, Hendon, London, NW4 2BH H/Tel. 01 203 4780
Grahame MacLennan, 6 Melrose Road, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 8UP Tel. 0932 41169

John Marsden, 17 Church Road, St. Leonards, Hastings, TN37 6EF
 Nick Marshall, 8 Chivalry Road, London, SW11 1HT,
 Pete Mearns, 33 Kincaig Terrace, Inverness, , H/Tel. 0463235199
 David Messenger, 3 The Leasow, Aldridge, Walsall, West Midlands, WS9 0EF Tel. Aldridge 51453
 Martin Mills, U. Aurelio Saffi, 2, 10138 Torino, Italy,
 James Mills-Hicks, 71 Leman Street, Mayfair Park, Derby, DE3 3UY
 Brian Moore, 87 Pimlott Road, Hall i'th'wood, Bolton, Lancs. BL1 8TW Tel. 0204 58228
 Richard Morris, 1 Highland Ville, Lightcliffe, Halifax, W. Yorks. HX3 8AG H/Tel. 0422 206139
 Paul Morton, 40a Fairwell Road, Fairfield, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland TS19 7HT H/Tel (0642) 581720
 Jon Moss, 2 Lodge Court, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, SK4 3HZ Tel. 061442734
 Mike Motley, 53 Huntley Road, Ecclesall, Sheffield, S11 7PB
 Pete Muson, 32 Hartlands Road, Fareham, Hants., PO16 0NJ
 Simon Nightingale, 91 Tenna Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B32 2JB H/Tel. 021 427 1168
 Steve Norledge, 75 Hawkhurst Way, W. Wickham, Kent, BR4 9PE
 George North, 24 Wigton Road, Romford, Essex, RM3 9HD H/Tel. 04023 47586
 Peter Northcott, 16 Fawley Road, West Hampstead, London, NW6 1SH H/Tel. 01 794 6024
 Alan Parr, 6 Longfield Gardens, Tring, Herts., HP23 4DN Tel. 044282 4173
 Sandy Peters, 33 Mitre Close, Woolpit, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk. IP30 9SJ H/Tel. 0359 40403
 Colin Pickard, 5 Pattons, Stoke St. Mary, Taunton, Somerset Tel. 0832 442467
 John Piggott, 'Bosworth House', Central Wall Road, Canvey Island, Essex. SS8 9PQ
 Gary Piper, 5a Woodstock, Billing Road, Northampton,
 Mike Pollard, 208 Fairwater Drive, Woodley, Berkshire, RG5 3JF Tel. 0734 694773
 Matt Quartermain, 138 Three Bridges Road, Three Bridges, Crawley, W. Sussex. RH10 1JP
 Nigel Quinn, 3 Alma Way, Newtown, Birmingham, B19 2LN
 Simon Ratcliffe, 12 Wendron Close, Stoney Hill, Bromsgrove, Worcs. B60 2LT
 Steve Rennie, 7 Caernarvon Drive, Hazel Grove, Stockport, Cheshire Tel. 061 483 8404
 Chris Sandow, 2 Coronation Avenue, Keynsham, Bristol, BS18 2PT Tel. 027 56 68874
 Richard Sharp, 27 Elm Close, Amersham, Bucks., H/Tel. Am 6148. Work Tel. GX 87241
 Alan Sharples, 20 Lingfield Grove, Broadgreen, Liverpool, L14 3LQ H/Tel. 05122006
 Julian Shepley, Shackleford House, Shackleford, Godalming, Surrey. GU8 6RX
 Iain Singer, 19 Rosefield Gardens, Uddington, Glasgow, G71 7AW Tel. 0698 815006
 Andrew Smith, 8 Nicholas Gardens, Pyrford, Woking, Surrey. GU22 8SD
 Chris Spall, 17 Duppas Hill Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 4BG
 James Steele, 1 Bowfield Cottages, Howwood, Renfrewshire, Scotland. PA9 1DB Tel. 050 57 3650
 Pete Tamlyn, 2 Popular Road, The Coppice, Aylesbury, Bucks. H/Tel. 0296 88994
 Dave Tant, 32 Nursery Avenue, Dexleyheath, Kent, DA7 4SZ H/Tel. 01303 7405
 Les Tassell, Roslyn, Church Hill, Lydbrook, Glos. GL17 9SW H/Tel. Dean 60377
 Dave Thomas, 16 Ballater Close, Burnside, Stanley, Co. Durham, DH9 6UN Tel. 0207 39630
 Ian Tillson, 31 Baylis Road, Slough, , H/Tel. 86 28981
 David Tottey, 7 Brook Terrace, West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside. L48 4DX
 Larry Trask, 11 Carnatic Close, Carnatic Road, Liverpool, L18 8DW Tel. 051 724 2301 EXT 211
 Chris Tringham, 204 Beulah Hill, London, SE19 3UX,
 Richard Walkerdine, 144 Stoughton Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 6PG Tel. 0483 577312
 Richard Wernick, 40 Hurstbourne House, Tangle Grove, London, SW15 4EJ H/Tel. 01876 9611
 Nicholas Whyte, 215 Upper Lisbon Road, Finaghy, Belfast, BT10 0LL Tel. 0232 615412
 Sgt. Steve Williams, Warrant Officers & Sergeants Mess, RAPC Worthy Down, Winchester, Hants. SO21 2RG
 John Wilman, Flat 2, 37b High Street, Ely, Cambs. CB7 4LT H/Tel. 0353 61553
 Ian Winstanley, 400 Billinge Road, Highfield, Wigan, Lancs. WN3 6BM
 Alec Winton, 42 Lansdowne Avenue, Orpington, Kent, BR6 8JU Tel. 0689 51042
 Daniel Worthington, 41 Bursledon Road, Bitterne, Southampton, Hants.

UNIVERSITY AND TERM ADDRESSES

Martin Allen, Room F14, Lady Spencer-Churchill College, Wheatley, Oxfordshire.
 Simon Billenness, Faulkner/Eggington Court, Forest Road, Loughborough, LE11 3UG.
 Nicholas Clifton, 3 Haymarket Road, Cambridge, CB3 0BQ, . Tel. 0223 322048
 Cathy Cuning, 5027 - 16th NE, Seattle, WA 98105, U.S.A..
 Iain Forsyth, Reduction Works, Bracken Mines Ltd, PO Box 73, Evander 2280, South Africa.
 Nick Hoyle, Am Dahnbach 26, 7160 Gaildorf-Munster, W. GERMANY, .
 R.J. Lampard, Collingwood College, South Road, Durham, DH1 3LT.
 Paul Morton, Conygre 96, Bath University, Bath, Avon.
 Peter Northcott, 'Lake Hall' The Vale, Church Road, Edgbagton, Birmingham. B15 3SX.
 Simon Ratcliffe, Room K4, Lady Spencer-Churchill College, Wheatley, Oxford, OX9 1HX.
 Andrew Smith, Zennor House, Lafrowda Flats, St. German's Road, Exeter, Devon. EX4 4TG.
 David Tottey, Room C45, Kingswood Hall, Coopers Hill Lane, Englefield Green, Egham, Surrey, TW20 0LG.
 Alec Winton, 2 St. Thomas Cottages, Howard House, 6 Richmond Place, Brighton.

LETTERS

And once again we start off with letters from contented subscribers, those who hang on my every word and are grateful for everything I send them...

ALAN FROST:

"Is this a conspiracy? My copy of DIB 36 jumps from page 14 to page 21. Since my game 'MACHA' is somewhere in between, I'd be grateful if you'd send me the rest."

((See... grateful...))

JOHN PIGGOTT:

"There's something very wrong with my copy of Dib 36 - there's no page 28 in it! ((*Sigh* so much for the weekend turnaround)) But I digress! What I'm really writing for is to request a Diplomacy game in Dib. ((Stunned silence)) Yes, after 36 punishing issues I can resist no longer! Katherine goes to school in September - roll on the happy day - but with Edward only 1 year old and No.3 (Mathew) due in May it's clear that I'll have many sleepless nights yet to plan intrigues, treachery, etc.

P.S. 'P' (iggott? Must be, surely!)"

((Ah... nothing like the joys of parenthood to bring out the best in a man; intrigues and treachery, John's true colours maybe?

So far I've been using Celtic Gods and Goddesses to name my games, now tell me, have you ever heard of a Celtic God called Piggott? Hell's teeth, John, have you heard of anything Godlike called Piggott? Mind you, it hasn't gone unnoticed that you are seriously challenging the Chapman fertility deity.))

oo000oo

T.J. DIBDEN:

"There was I, quietly reading Dib 36, when I get to the Sopwith 'Kingfisher' press. What is this man Singer on about? Does he doubt my existence? I'll have you know we Dibdens are a unique and distinguished clan. The cheek of this man to suggest I am a figment of your imagination. I am considering taking action against him for libel."

((Then you take action against a shadow: Singer's existence has been in doubt for as long as I can remember. Some say he is a Mike Close clone, but who would dare imagine such a figment as horrific as that? Certainly not I!))

oo000oo

SIMON CRADDOCK:

"I enjoyed reading Dib 36 especially the Diplomacy article, although I have been doing a lot better since our local postal area went on strike and I've been unable to post letters, thus disproving the write lots of letters theory."

((Heh heh, says it all really, dunnit? Perhaps you are too trusting in your letters, Simon...))

oo000oo

BILL HAYGARTH:

"Thanks for the latest issue of Dib. I was interested to read Richard Sharp's letter as I was one of the many who came into the Hobby by reading his book and then writing to him for a game in Dolchstoss. Of course I then heard from the Novice Package chappie (who's name escapes me for the moment) and ended up playing my first postal game in the now defunct BR. I must admit to being disappointed when I first learned that Dolchstoss had long since folded and was glad to hear that Richard is now editing again. From what I read of the circumstances surrounding the Dolchstoss fold, and reading now of Richard's commitment to sorting out the outstanding subs issue, I think we should welcome

him back to the Hobby as someone who has given a great deal in the past and seems prepared to do so again."

((Can't we give him seven trials to pass first before we totally welcome him back? No...pity. No need to worry about him, Bill, the devil looks after his own. He's had eight bloody gamestarts in two months because of subscribers crawling back, begging, wanting to play Diplomacy in his magazinell It would seem the hobby has no shame and has welcomed him back without reservations. Well, there has been one or two grumbles. Quite right too...))

oo000oo

The CGS has been taking some surprising flak lately (namely in old man Sharp's Dolchstoss, damn him), and has sparked off a couple of letters...

JAMES STEELE:

"I've received my gamestart in Pespiring Dreams and I thought it was quite quick, considering I've heard reports that nobody uses the CGS (somebody must)."

((Thank you, James. And...))

MARK MANDER:

"I received Dolchstoss 72 the other day and saw the letter you had written to Richard Sharp. Gil had shown me the copy you sent to him before, but it was still a shock. As you can tell from my letter printed by Richard below yours it was all a big mistake.

I am sorry if I caused you any bother or concern due to my criticisms of the C.G.S. and I understand that you must put in a lot of voluntary work and money into running it. You must admit, however that some of what you said is bull shit though. ((I admit nothing of the sort))

Why shouldn't people send in applications together. Anyone who is sensible who is trying to get 2 countries in one game would send in their applications seperately, a couple of days apart, thus your suspicions would never stop this kind of cheating. Also I'm afraid you DID NOT mention this in your reply to Gil a few weeks later. I thus felt I had been forgotten and felt frustrated, since I had been trying to get a game for a year or so, first through the NGC which turned out to be defunct and finally through the CGS. Anyway hopefully that is all behind me now. I have written to Richard not to print (in very bold letters) my reply to your letter, which was sent in too late to be printed in D.72 and now I hope to be able to read through my next D. without worrying who's abusing me in the letter column."

((Are you saying then that the one man/one application ruling should be ignored? To what purpose? I freely admit that anyone can send in two seperate applications hoping for two countries in one game. However it is much harder for the cheat to pull it off when there's two signatures to match up and there is some chance of one application going to one game and the other application to another. Why is it bullshit trying to protect (admittedly in a small way) zines from possible cartels?

I saw no reason to go into a long explanation of why I required seperate applications in my letter to Gil. - surely it must be sufficient to know that that is the rule of the CGS? Is it too much to expect that someone should be interested enough to apply for Diplomacy game himself? I have my reasons to see that the ruling is enforced... do you have any sensible reasons for refusing it? Obviously you haven't, because you did write in for a game, and I DID set you up in a game.))

oo000oo

GIL GAVEL:

"Thanks for at least trying to get me into a game. I am referring to the CGS. You told me that I had been put on the list, however my name must have been lost somewhere. Meanwhile, Mark Mander (whom you did not initially notify) has started a CGS game in Gazfinc. Never mind, I used my own initiative, and am just

staring a game in the Walamalaysia Gazette (weird name I know). I hope I'll be the only novice to experience such disappointment (with the CGS), although it was a great introduction of the (understandably) widespread inefficiency of the hobby. I did not really mind all this, however it is likely to be off-putting for other people."

((Yes, I explained my ONLY mistake to you already, Gil, and once again I commend your perseverance in finding your own way into the hobby. Yours, thankfully, is an isolated case. I think I've solved one problem of why players think they have to wait for a long time: one novice phoned to ask where his game was and failed to recognise his gamestart when it came, out of the blue, from a zine he hadn't previously subscribed to. It makes you wonder, dunnit? Other long waits are because editors have to get their zines out (some being in between issues, so to speak), and check whether players still want to play, etc - WHICH IS DEFINITELY NOT THE FAULT OF THE CGS!))

GIL (CONT.):

"In Dib 39 ((Er, 33?)) Konrad Dolata wrote about the German opinions on war-games. I myself am half German - both my parents are German. Both my grandfathers participated in the 2nd World War on the German side and one of them even in the 1st World War on the Russian side (he was a POW together with English officers). Even though I now live in England, I usually spend my holidays in Germany. I witnessed similar opinions on board-wargames I played, by German friends, to those that Konrad brought up. Most younger people and many older ones have strong feelings against the catastrophe caused by mankind, generally known as war (though many euphemisms, like 'conflict' exist and many governments like using them). I don't think they want to turn their backs on it, Tom, it is something that happened - and its effects are irreversible - however, like any sane person they do not want to glorify mass murder. Since most wargames don't exactly tell you what was done to all the people participating in the war, and thus seems to play war down to something like "jolly good fun"! Hence, many people say one is conditioned, playing those games to thinking that war is harmless, which it isn't.

I myself don't know exactly why I play wargames, though I guess it is mainly to socialise, pass ones time and of course for competition. However it is difficult to justify to German people that wargames are just games and I have often been accused (even by my father) of a warmongering (which I'm sure I'm not). It's the same with war linked toys, which definitely conditions small children to killing. These toys exist in Germany, but the people I know also frowned at them. I think German people simply don't want to glorify war, however they are a bit rash with most wargames (this is to justify me playing them)."

((I don't think anyone playing wargames can be, or is, conditioned into thinking war is harmless - though certainly they may be fooled into thinking war is fun.. Probably not so much today, but certainly before (and leading up to) the 2nd World War most kids and young men thought it would be a lark/adventure/brave to go out and fight for their respective countries. No-one thinks he or she is going to die in a war, so war must be fun. No-one worries about the dead and dying of the 'other side' (at least, not until they see the dead and dying) because they, those over there, are in the wrong/killing women, babies, etc.

It's not 'Wargames' as such that people enjoy I think, but the strategic and tactical elements of said games. Wargames are just scenarios to try these elements out. It's interesting though, that most male children like to think of themselves as brave and fearless; think of going on adventures, fighting for justice, fighting against evil, killing dragons, etc, etc. And in doing so often look up to heroes, from Peter Pan to Lawrence of Arabia and Saint George killing the dragon.

As for the Germans, surely their kids are the same? What heroes are they allowed to look up to without others frowning on their actions as warmongering? Is a sword or a lance not as bad as a gun or a grenade?))

oo000oo

Nick Lourie's letter concerning his 1962 rulebook caused a stir of interest last

issue...

BRIAN MOORE:

"When I started Diplomacy, I too had the 1962 rulebook so wrote to Philmar, who then sent me a 1971 rulebook. I'd said I'd lost the earlier one. When I lost the rules of Risk, I wrote to Waddingtons - I discovered when I found my rules again that they had sent me EARLIER rules....."

oo000oo

And also....

PETE BIRKS:

"If Nick Lourie has a copy of the 1962 rules I would be happy to buy them off him for a quid or so. Does he have a pre-1971 set as well? Is it a pre-1971 GRI set? The mind boggles."

((That's what I thought. Well Nick, if you're interested in selling, Pete's Telephone number is: 01 274 3731.))

PETE (CONT.):

"Terry Tallman presumably belongs to the 'Americans are taller and therefore better, more macho and therefore better, and like Macdonalds and therefore better' school. Thankfully the majority of Americans have enough commonsense to have better taste than this. Unfortunately the moronic minority are either (a) in the armed forces, or (b) in Government, or (c) High up in the Republican Party.

I note with cynicism and amusement Sharp's renowned ability to distort facts by omission, rather than by blatant untruth. ((What... resorting to a Booth-like tactic? Surely you jest?)) Under (1), in his letter last issue, he points out that only one person claimed credits in Richard's 1979 offer to refund them to anyone who asked for it. What Richard fails to mention is that even this ONE person was not repaid.

By way of mitigation (and if you print the above, please print this), the person involved was so obnoxious, and the sum so paltry, I doubt whether I myself would have sent him anything!"

((Mitigation eh? Heh heh, surely you don't think Richard will let this little 'truth' past? I wish you could've pinned a better argument on him - he doesn't squirm easily, and I've seen him wriggle out of better.))

PETE (AGAIN):

"Nicky Palmer's comments are revealing, but hardly encouraging. That THE EDITOR found the reviews 'quite different' when accepting that 'at first glance they may all seem to be reviewed the same way' seems to indicate a distinct target audience, i.e. those who are prepared to go beyond superficial similarities and put effort into reading the material (e.g. me) and those who already have some knowledge of CMGs (e.g. Bob Brown). Unfortunately a rather bland and uninspired style of presentation throughout the zine put me off, and although Bob is quite capable of speaking for himself, I don't think he would mind me representing his viewpoint as being critical of an overall shallowness. However as I wrote in GH it's hard to get the balance right straight away, and I'm quite prepared to give it 6 or 7 issues (a year or so) to realise that it gets what it pays for in terms of writing quality, and that 'jazziness' usually sells copies."

((Very true - but Nicky is no novice to the glossy mag scene. One would have thought he's had plenty of time to realise jazziness pays... especially with first issues. I wish him well, and I would have said 6 or 7 issues to get Flagship together seems fair enough - but will that be enough time? I don't know, I wasn't that impressed to see the familiar cover of issue 1 on issue number two. What can Nicky be playing at - surely he can't think using the same cover as issue one will in the long run save him money?! It'll probably have the predictable effect of turning future subscribers off, surely? It seems to me as

though he's playing it too cagey this time, after The Gamer crash, in saving money. Inside of issue 2 might be a little better this time, but at £1.70 a shot Flagship is expensive enough, and some might think they've at least payed for, and therefore are entitled to expect, service in respect of another cover. A small point.. I know, but surely some sort of standard must be maintained for a magazine to have some credibility. What kind of service should a paying customer expect from a glossy magazine - are frills really that unnecessary for a successful professional magazine to succeed? I don't think so. But then I suppose limited funds must always dictate the style.....!))

PETE (CONT.):

"P.S. I think the 'No-one's infallible' joke refers to not only the Pope being unmarried, but also to 'Papal infallibility', a 'laughable' doctrine which has only recently been reaffrmed."

((Er, yes Pete, actually I did understand it, my comment was made merely to give me an excuse for not thinking of how bad the joke really was. Thankfully I have 'friends' like you to readily explain things to me - thus depriving me of the one luxury I sought; that of missing out. I thank you. Now, about the elephant one.....))

oo000oo

Er, ummmm....

NICKY PALMER:

"Herewith the (I fear rather limited) payment for your excellent article. As a matter of interest, the illustration is from the original game box - my 'consultant editor' (who does the layout) had a virgin copy and applied scissors. It'll be interesting to see how many takers Richard Morris gets.

I look forward to seeing your comments on issue 2 in due course? We're still experimenting with different themes and article lengths, as well as varying the type of illustrations, so feedback is pretty vital to us."

((Many thanks for the cheque Nicky, but as I said, it really wasn't necessary. I don't know yet how many takers Richard Morris has got, but I've recently received a Diplomacy CGS request from someone who read the Simon Billeness article in issue 2.

Look forward to reading my comments eh... oh dear. I should forget them, but can you answer some of Pete's, above? Why is Flagship produced so intentionally low-key (so it seems), when individual issues cost more than most other glossy magazines in a similar field?))

oo000oo

ANDREW SMITH:

"Since last I wrote to you I've given up being URE's station manager but instead have taken up being the Union's Senior Elections Officer. When I say I have just had a couple of 'days' off in 3 weeks (except weekends) I'm not joking. I almost regret doing it now - I seem to be missing out on a number of lectures. I also got hauled before my Tutor to be told what I had known all along. - I'm not working hard enough. So I need to extract the old digit, I think, what with Part 1 exams in the summer.

My radiator has just been leaking.

This weekend, a friend and I are going to be attempting a 24-hour sponsored broadcast for Rag Week, which has just begun. I also have a disco to organise for this evening, which the Labour group are going to picket as they find Rag 'offensive' - viz. drinking pubs dry, beauty 'contests' for charity, flan flying et. al. are not 'ideologically sound'. Well, I guess we could all think about what we are doing, but I feel that's rather taking it too far.

Going back to this election business, I see that we have 17 candidates running for the Chesterfield by-elections on March 1st. Ah - if only we had the single transferable vote. But a story ensues here. STV was the reason for the 'wrong' guy getting elected as next year's Union President. People here are now

very much more circumspect when they vote: I for one do not transfer my vote now unless I really think it's worth it."

((Well Andrew, University sounds really terrific (or should that be t'rific?), what happened to all the mad social whirls and eating at posh restaurants, and punting down river, and orgies in the common rooms and..... Don't think I'll enroll as a mature student after all.....))

oo000oo

LARRY TRASK:

"Andrew Smith's letter in the last Dib and your comments on it, suggest that I failed to make myself clear in my earlier letter. Let me try again.

I never meant to suggest that a piece of good music must necessarily last more than five minutes, nor that electricity in music is intrinsically bad. I merely intended to remind you that pop performers are utterly dependent upon a whole battery of gadgets, technicians and amplifiers by means of which they simultaneously bludgeon their audience into submission and try to distract attention from their conspicuous inadequacies as musicians. My claim was, and is, that any pop performer deprived of his electronic impedimenta and forced to fall back on his own musical resources would be about as entertaining as an ITV commentator who has lost all his video clips.

You yourself remind me that one should not be limited to particular forms or materials in art or music, and of course I agree. But it does not follow either that all forms and materials are equally valuable, or that any particular enterprise is worthwhile merely because it has been undertaken. My contempt for pop music derives not simply from its reliance on electronics, but rather from the observation that what these people do with their medium is odious and unpleasant and unworthy of time and attention that could be given to genuinely rewarding pursuits. Andrew suggested that all I am saying is that I don't like the stuff, and that I should recognise that other people do. Well, I don't like the 'popular' newspapers, either, but I know that millions of others do. But popularity is no more evidence of intrinsic worth than mere existence is, and I believe not only that the Sun and the Star are garbage, but also that this opinion is based on something more substantial than a matter of taste. My view of pop music is identical.

Andrew urges me to listen to the lyrics of pop records. This is a little like advising me to read a poorly-printed newspaper across the street while fleets of lorries rumble past in between - - it's a near physical impossibility. But I have occasionally made out some lyrics, and sorry, Andrew, but I'd rather read the backs of Cornflake packets. It's difficult to know which is the most flagrant characteristics of pop lyrics: their pretentiousness, their utter inanity, or their disregard for the structure of the English. Ye Gods, Andrew, do you really want to defend pop music by appealing to the lyrics? You might as well appeal to the record sleeves - - the lyrics of even real music are rarely a major part of its appeal. The quite imbecilic lyrics of The Magic Flute, for example, do not prevent it from being one of the most sublime musical creations ever to flow from the mind of Man - - and by the same token the poetry of Homer himself can do nothing for the bad music.

However, a more positive note. Andrew asserts or suggests in his letter that much pop music is unpleasant, that much of it is not designed to entertain, and that it is intended chiefly to serve "as a focus for reaction against the social and political outlook of contemporary Britain". In other words, Andrew seems to be suggesting, pop music is not to be regarded as music at all, but as something in the same category as funny clothes and clownish haircuts. With this assessment I am happy to agree - - I am convinced that pop music is every bit as important a contribution to Western culture as the orange-dyed Mohican haircut, and that it will be remembered and revered for just as long.

I think I'll stop now, Tom, before Brian Creese nominates me for Most Tedious Correspondent of the Year. I don't know why I started this. Hell, if listening to pop music is a sign of mental deterioration, writing letters about it must indicate imminent mental collapse. I promise not to write you any more letters about it if you'll stop issuing challenges. Anyway, it was Alan Parr who offered me a post as pop music correspondent for his zine, a function I have so

far magnificiently fulfilled by writing not one word."

((Heh heh - yes, I rather expected an amusing letter like this. Thanks Larry. Mind you, your conclusion is still only a personal one, and nowhere near a majority viewpoint. However, your argument is certainly appealing enough, and I found myself agreeing with most of what you said. Certainly the lyrics of most popular songs, the Sun, and the Star are what I would consider rubbish. Will Andrew concede defeat I wonder....))

oo000oo

CHRIS SANDOW:

"Here is this month's report from the 'Catacombs' game - I hope it makes interesting reading for all your readers! You asked about letting a couple more players into the game....er..yes.., but not quite yet - I'll have to get a few things organised first, not the least of which will be a new edition of the introductory booklet. The original one very soon proved to be lacking a number of important details.....

No replacement yet for 'Angel' I'm afraid, but I'm working on a few ideas which might have possibilities. Watch this space! I've now bought myself some proper artists pens (about time too!) and they're proving very useful - it's amazing what a difference they make. I've been working on improving my drawing, and I hoping to send some of my stuff off to Imagine in the next week (well it's about time someone did something to improve the illustrations they use!) After all, I might as well try and make some money out of this!

Would you be interested in reviews of computer games? I only have a Spectrum, but a number of the games which I have got are also available for other makes of computers, so reviews would be of interest to more than just the Spectrum owners."

((Yes, I would be interested in computer reviews - it doesn't just have to be games though; anything that might be hobby related will do; word processors, mailing lists, usable printers, and stuff like that are fine because they give others possible insights into what can be used to print zines and suchlike. Does the Spectrum have any serious software, or is all games-related?))

oo000oo

DAVID CRAWFORD:

"I'm very sorry about being unable to do any software reviews this month only I have had to make some pretty drastic changes to my plans for selling software. If you can recall our telephone conversation on the last deadline, you will remember me saying that I intended to sell exclusively by mail order from my own home. However since then I have been informed that it's illegal to buy in stock and keep it in a house rented from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. After checking this up with an officer of the N.I.H.E., I discovered that there were three options open to me.

1. Buy in no stock and only order from the suppliers what has already been ordered from me.
2. Throw the family out and declare the house a shop.
3. Rent a vacant premises and open a computer shop.

Obviously option 2 was out from the start (the family nearly threw me out when I proposed it) and number 1, while workable, would be very slow, so what I have decided to do is to go for option 3.

The shop is going to be in Omagh, which is the largest town in Tyrone and will be a partnership between an old school friend and myself. We had spent every day this last three or four weeks searching Omagh for a suitable vacant building but at the moment we have had no luck. Actually there were quite a large number of vacant shops a couple of months ago but then the I.R.A. tried to do in Omagh what they managed to do at Harrods of London only on a much larger scale, increasing the explosives from 30lb to 100lb and adding a few hundred nails to increase the chances of killing some Christmas shopper. Fortunately the police managed to clear the area before it exploded so nobody got hurt but a large number of businesses were damaged and their owners have rented all the