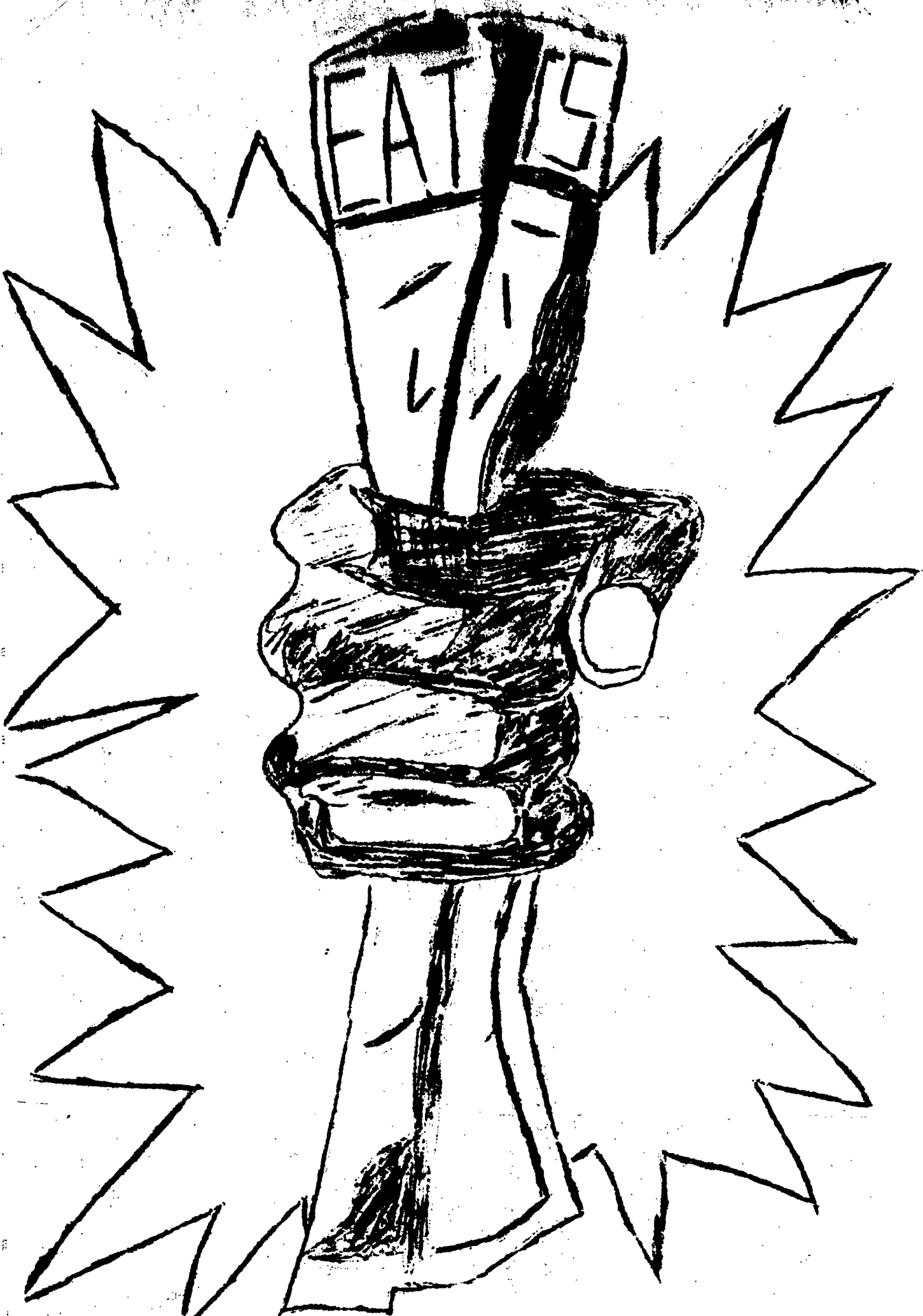


THE MAGAZINE THE MEN READ

40-1



GREATEST HITS

EDITORIAL

Well, where were we? As I type, the Tonight programme is paying a tribute to Charlie Chaplin, 'whose genius has brought joy to the world'. It seems, in a way, a fitting comment on the passing of 1972. In a year when many of the giants seemed to pass away - Callas, Stokowski, Presley and Crosby - Chaplin stood head and shoulders above them all. In a sense, of course, it is easy to feel bias, as a lover of films I guess that a lover of opera will feel the loss of Callas more; a lover of classical music the loss of Stokowski, but Chaplin represented something else - the little man.

Which is a fairly wishy-washy way to start an issue of Greatest Hits, but I think that it is deserved. However, to more cheerful matters. Following on from my points about next year's Eurocon, I have received a very interesting letter from Paul Simpkins, and the promise of one from Richard Sharp, which has not, as yet, arrived (Surprise, surprise!). Elsewhere will also be a chat about my doings since last issue, and quite eventful it has been! (But then again, I guess everybody's was.)

Of course, a problem with editorials is deciding what to write. Everything, after a fashion, could be placed elsewhere in the zine - reviews, recounts, regurgitations and rehashes of other articles. All I can really talk about is the state of the hobby, and such material eventually wears pretty thin. However, having said all that, this is exactly what I intend to do! It was all sparked off by a conversation with Tricky Dicky (in a pub, where else) in which he said, basically, that there was no fun in receiving the vast majority of zines, nowadays. Sadly, I felt I had to agree. At the present time, I feel I am in a better position to assess my feelings on zines which in general I receive, having returned to Canterbury for the first time in nearly a month, and thus viewing about ten zines at once. My earlier view is shown to be something of an exaggeration. I enjoyed reading all of the zines in question (I see no point in naming them and thus unintentionally starting a feud) but the point that struck me was the speed with which I was able to get through them, and the paucity of interesting material within each particular zine. In other words, what was there, was interesting, but there wasn't enough.

But then again, I am not a typical reader. I tend to skim over the articles on games, or the reports of non-Dippy games, simply because I feel that neither the subject matter, nor the style, will interest me. A zine producer has to be a very good writer indeed to make uninteresting subject-matter worth reading. It may well, however, be of great interest to others, and therefore has a place in the zine. Others, however, have nothing worth reading to the non-player in a game - and it is these zines, I feel, that are contributing to an isolationist feeling within particular zines. No comment about other zines received, hardly any interaction between players, etc. Let's look at it this way, of the zines you receive, how many would you still subscribe to if you were not playing a game in it? If there become too many zines like this, then the hobby could collapse into a mass of one-zine players - they can play all the games they wish without changing to other, untried zines (better the devil you know.....) and just play their one, two, three or even four games within the one particular zine. Fine for Diplomacy playing, sure, but not much kōp for the cohesiveness of the hobby.

What should be done? Well, to not take a biased view, nothing. If that is the way the hobby is leaning, who am I, or who is anyone, to be so presumptive as to claim the right to turn the tide? Surely, however, it will make most zines far less enjoyable to read, and possessors of a smaller circulation?

Damn! I've just realised that because I wanted to watch the thing on Dubček (I must write an article on that sometime, perhaps in August...) I have missed most of The Old Grey Whistle Test on Beeb 2. Sod it. Still, I guess I wouldn't have got this page typed with all those new-fangled lights flashing out of the square window on the outside world..... A very disjointed editorial this - that's the trouble with stream of consciousness writing. Do you know that some people actually write out their editorials before typing them? (No names, no packdrill...) Where do they get the time? It's all I can do to type this stuff out for the first time, let alone make it into a work of art, but then again, that's what separated the amateurs from the professionals, I guess. It might also be an explanation for the inordinate number of typing errors - I change my mind on what to type, subconsciously, of course, half way through the word! But then again, it may be just because my fingers have poor aim and my brain has bad coordination. Duhhhhhh.

And not a word about reaching number 40! Not far to the half-century, now, and then it's downhill all the way (metaphorically, not a comment on the standard of the zine, I hope) to the century. Mind you, by then I expect I'll be the hundred and nty-nth person to have done it. I only just found out today that I won't even be the first PhD zine producer, Bob Brown is one already, and a lot higher than I can ever dream of reaching. Christ, he actually writes things not get published, like!

LETTERS:

Chris Tringham:

(4.1.78)

That 'Parade Of Dwarfs' Article was interesting, but my main criticism is that it tries to over-simplify things. This seems to be a common fault in politics - the politicians seem to think that most people are too stupid to understand the full argument, so they use various devices to 'simplify' things. The problem is, of course, is that distortions occur in the simplification process - sometimes deliberately and sometimes not. To equate income to height is, I think, an over-simplification since people are able to alter their income to a certain extent, and are able to modify their habits to adapt to a given income. By doing this it is possible to enjoy a better standard of living than income alone would suggest, and so makes 'income' less valid as a measure of living standards. Although there are undoubtedly wide differences between the highest paid and the majority of workers, all sorts of things cut the real gap down; Taxation will be important in this respect, but probably less so than the limitations on the amount of goods and services that one person can consume, regardless of income. It is the difference in living standards between the richest and poorest that most worries people, and I would suggest that this may well have little to do with income.

The Barry McManus/Der Garvey NGC 202 controversy seems principally to demonstrate once again that sub-zines are a bad thing, and should be avoided at all cost. Most subzines are of little value anyway, (the only exception to this is Pancake Roll, which is far better than its wrapping paper, and will hopefully go 'solo' in the future) so the sooner sub-zines disappear the better. Incidentally, how can anyone with any sense wish to play in Sauce anyway?

((I had some thoughts before printing the Parade of Dwarfs article - it struck me that it would look out of place. The response it created, however (massive by the lethargic standards of the Diplomacy hobby) makes me think it worthwhile. This leads me to the point in your letter, Chris, in that you thought it over-simplified the situation. Yes, it did, but would not an article which was totally deadpan, and did not simplify at all, been above the heads of anyone but an economics graduate? I could quite well have selected an article on wealth which dealt with such obscurities as the effect of the marginal propensity to consume on income distribution and the advantages of inequalities in terms of investment response, but who would have read it? Besides being enlightening, I thought that an article performed an entertaining function, and was thus at least read, even if it did oversimplify.))

((Secondly, it wasn't a Politics article, it was an economics article, although its conclusions are, in a sense, political. All it did was to show how rich some people are in terms of income, and let the reader draw his own conclusions. It was far from socialist in its tone - indeed, your letter was more in that direction! I refer to the parts on income not being a true measurement of net economic welfare, for such is the gist of the statement that it is possible to enjoy a better standard of living than income would suggest. Also, the physical limits on spending for happiness would indicate, surely, that the excess wealth of the rich should be redistributed?

Of course, it doesn't work like that, in that the whole structure of society works not just on contentment, but on ambition and status as well. Some people may not care for the latter two, but many people do, even if contentment is sacrificed. Sir Eric Miller, for example, pursued wealth for its own sake, not for what it could buy. Many rich people in business seem to be like this, and many of them are also very philanthropic, for once they have the money, they have no desire to spend it - so they give it to charity.))

((The situation is obviously more complicated than the article suggested, but the article set its own limitations, and within those parameters, I feel, it succeeded. It managed to put over the concept of inequality in layman's terms, without making any moral judgements thereof. That further issues need to be studied is not to be denied, but the place is not here, but in the Financial Times and the Economist. You make a further point, however, about how Politicians make simple statements because they feel people would not comprehend the truth. I don't think this is quite so. Surely they are indulging in realpolitik? Callaghan can hardly say, 'I think that inflation is more important than unemployment, so we will aim for single-figure inflation at the cost of 1 1/2 million unemployed.'? But that is what he has done, although to put it to him like that would probably result in apoplexy. Likewise, Healey cannot say, 'I was wrong and the Tories were right, so now I will adopt their policies before they get the chance,' and Thatcher cannot admit that that is what has happened. It's all part of the electioneering game.))

((As to the McManus Garvey thing, if only Der would give me his address I might be able to send some Greatest Hits to him! I hate people who don't put their address at the top of a letter - Ron Canham did the same when he sent me a sub - and the absence of any nearby Leviathans meant that I couldn't send him a copy of GH! But, to return to the point, I'm not sure that subzines are inherently bad, but I can only see one thing that bodes in their favour, and that is as a training ground for prospective GMs. Steve Pratt, for example, ran a subzine before starting Ad Nauseam. Other producers, whose names temporarily escape me, have done the same thing, and the experience has usually done them good (Ah! Laurence Parrott, for example). Similarly, The Annexe, John Morrison's subzine to Mad Policy, meant that Richard Walkerdine did not have to close his waiting lists, because he had someone else who could share the workload, who was reliable. That, I think, is the test. A producer and his subzine editor must be in perpetual possibility of mutual contact (or at least the main editor must always be able to contact the sub-editor) and the sub-editor must be more reliable, or at least as reliable, as the main editor. Delays in subzine production are fatal. Though not, therefore, condemning them out of hand, I would say that they are things to be avoided unless they are absolutely necessary, and then someone who has proven himself reliable (order sending, etc) should be chosen to produce a small amount of stuff - none of this twenty-page stuff!))

John Marsden:

29.12.77. I'd like to take issue with a statement you made in GH 38, Pete. You said that 'Half the trouble with the world today is that politicians, economists and members of the public come to the right conclusions from the wrong assumptions.'

I would rather argue that the greater error is that of deriving seemingly reasonable conclusions from the wrong assumptions. This then becomes almost impossible to argue against because the particular conclusion is entirely logical - given its assumptions. The most well-known examples are probably the Department of Transport's road enquiries where one is forbidden to question the basic premises of traffic increase; and if these are accepted, the case is proven almost immediately. I would also cite a particular 'bete-noire' of mine - Mr Enoch Powell - whose arguments are extremely logical and thus impossible to refute. Assuming, that is, that is, that you accept his premises; and they are rarely directly questioned. There are many other situations where decisions are made 'because it is in accordance with the general policy' or 'it fits the theory', although an empirical assessment of the particular situation might suggest an alternative course of action.

Your article on 'The Press As Political Influence' also interested me. My parents, politically, float between Conservative and Liberal. They have always taken the Daily Mirror and the Daily Express. Nowadays I either read the Guardian or the Daily Mail. On that basis I suppose I should be confused!

Seriously, though, there does seem to be a case for the influence of press bias; if not in Britain. The reports I have read of the recent election in Australia have pointed out that the press there is so overwhelmingly Conservative that the Labour Party is operating under a permanent handicap in that its campaigns are never given a chance. This situation does not yet occur in this country - but it is perfectly possible.

More amusing was your amazement at Jonathan Palfrey's travelling. It simply reminds me of some of my great journeys; in particular one Sunday evening when I wanted to travel from London to Cambridge, calling in on a friend in Peterborough on the way, and ending up accepting a lift to Corby ('Well, it's in the right direction',). I eventually reached Peterborough (by means of two lifts and a bus) in time to catch the last bus to Cambridge! But the principle I operate on is that England is small enough to make any journey possible if you want to make it.

((On your first point, I entirely agree - but the phenomenon I described struck me as a peculiarly recent one. Political decisions are taken which are perfectly correct in themselves, but they are done for electoral reasons, or blackmail reasons and thus may be changed at any moment, even if the true reason for the action still exists! The cutbacks in education expenditure on the training of teachers, for example, was entirely necessary, but only took place because we were in a field of general recession - had we been in an expansionist phase (as in the early seventies) the cutbacks in the training of teachers would not have taken place (as they did not) even though they were necessary. Hence the large number of unemployed teachers today. Pressure is finally brought to bear on Israel. Why? Not because the world suddenly sees that the Palestinians want autonomy, but because the oil-producing countries suddenly found they possessed as much, if not more, muscle than the pro-Israeli businesses in world commerce. There is uproar over the death of Steve Biko, but the repression in Iran is conveniently overlooked because Iran is an important business area, far more than S. Africa. And so on.))

((I wasn't pleased with that article on the press. I took a long time saying nothing at all. Your point about Australia, though, is interesting. It brings me to a point which I should have ~~made~~ made, but failed to. The press, and the TV, which, with a virtual monopoly of 'unbias' between the two companies, means that what is and what is not deigned as 'news' is decided by very small groups of people. More and more 'news' is dictated on TV by the possession of film of the event. No film, no headline. Then there are issues which it is thought 'unwise' to play up, while others are played up for more than they are really worth. The firemans' dispute, for example, has been covered by the TV medium in a way flagrantly opposed to the firemen. The old value-loaded terminology 'Moderates' vs 'Left-wingers' etc etc and the interviews of firemen who had quit their job because they were against the strike. Fires were covered in an attempt to turn the public against the firemen etc etc.))

((In Australia the situation is no more than a joke. Even political issues are played down if they favour the Labour Party, while those that favour the Country/Liberal coalition ('Conservatives' in common parlance) are headlined, covered for days on end and boiled to death. No party can work under those handicaps, and when character assassination is also an accepted part of the media, no Labour Politician has a hope in hell.))

Paul Simpkins:

3.1.78 A good issue of GH, the first different one I've seen for three months! I presume that Bruce and GH crossed in the post but you'll have noticed by now that I didn't get GH 38. It's not too important but if you have a spare I'd like to see it.

I was interested in your article about Eurocon in the editorial section of GH. Some of the points you make are very valid, and although you've probably seen Richard by now I'll update you on this coming venture (Eurocon 2). I've located a house which purports to have 24 beds all in the same building, and I've sent the details to Richard - as far as I know he's sent of the a cheque to cover the 25% deposit as asked. The house is near Casteljaloux which is 35 miles south-west of Duras. The brochure for the place lists the distances from the house to various sites such as the Atlantic Coast (Arcachon Casino?) one hour, Spain and the Pyrenees 2 hours and Mediterranean $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours, Dordogne caves etc only 2 hours. It's called Le Grand Pichon, and no, I don't know what that means. But on information like that I'm sure that many visits such as the ones you suggested could be arranged.

One point which will affect the travelling down to the place, always assuming that we've rented it, is that I will not finish work (i.e. school) until 3-30 on the Friday before the Saturday when we take up the lease. This means that Karen and I will have to drive shifts from Dewsbury to Bordeaux during the 24 hours between 3-30 (English time) and 2-30 on Saturday (French time) and we'll still probably be 150 miles from target.

Unfortunately, schoolteachers are still one of those oppressed professions who are required to attend on the last day before the hols or lose their entire holiday pay! I don't know how many other occupations require this of their employees but there you go!

Plans at the moment are to breeze down to Brighton for the night ferry Newhaven to Dieppe, possibly taking Craig and Ellie over with us, and landing at around 5 in the morning and just driving and driving and driving and hopefully covering the distance in one day only. Mental arithmetic shows the distance to be somewhere in the region of 750 miles!

Now, just a few words on GH. I managed 10 of the film quiz and neither of the first two questions! I liked the article on dwarfs and income, etc, although it did seem to be a little long. It made a very interesting point, though. Out of interest, I get (not earn) ((sorry, that should be the other way round)) 20% less than the mythical average wage of £80, and I've trained for x years etc etc etc.

Comment on the NGC 202 affair, the real culprit is the NGC and the orphans secretary (if there was one in the affair). The game should never have been rehoused in a subzine which didn't have some proven record of competent GMing, and even when it was placed there, it should have been made clear who was running it, Bartle or Garvey. Both have left the other to sort it out, no-one actually took the responsibility. A similar thing happened in NGC 120 which you may remember started ff as a fast (3-week) no press game in Fifth Column. When Richard Scott left the hobby someone (I know not whom) transferred the game to Shenandoah Services. This meant exorbitant prices, currently 40p per issue) and deadlines five or six weeks apart with turnround taking up to three weeks! The only reason I have remained in the game and the 'zine' is that I'm going to win the game and I'm not going to throw that away lightly. General principle does emerge, however that the NGC has not taken perfect care of the games entrusted to it. Until the organisation does

such elementary safeguards such as proven reliability and price into consideration then it will not gain great acceptance in the hobby and independent zines will proliferate.

P.S. if you have a house of sorts to yourself for a while will there be a con there?

((You read it first with Bibks! Well.....in the first three, anyway. The news of the site proposed seems reasonable, although the hypothetical journey times seem a bit optimistic to me. One disadvantage is that we're about 1½ hours from Bergerac, but that's not as terrible as all that. I have been on the famous Newhaven-Dieppe ferry, three times, in fact, the last time in September of last year (1977). It's quite pleasant, except for the fact that you have to either (a) get in quick and grab some seats, 'cos people often want to sleep and take up more space than the mythical one foot six that they're allotted, or (b) resign yourself to standing up all the way. The latter course was forced upon Michelle and I on the outward journey, so I found the bar, leant on it, and got so drunk that we had been afloat for two hours before I realised, and have no recollection of the (alleged) singing competition a Canadian guy and I had during disembarkation! On the way back, we were smarter, and got a seat in the bar. I got just as drunk (Christ, gin and tonics were 23p or something) but far less tired. From what Richard has told me, we were all thinking of going via Newhaven-Dieppe, but we would probably take either the Thursday afternoon or the the Thursday night boat. Much as I would like to travel in a large group, 24 hourse continuous driving is not the most enjoyable thing on earth! Can't you pretend you're dying or something, and take the last day off?))

((Certain additions to last year's group are so far Doubleday, Hawes, Baird and Cousins, all of whom will no doubt have something to contribute, although I can't help possessing some feelings of trepidation at whatever it is going to be! Last I hears, Richard had not heard anything from these people, and was getting slightly worried, but this may have been cleared up by now. My cheque, meanwhile, is winging its way at snail-speed (courtesy of G.P.O) towards Tricky Dicky, before I lose it all in a Poker game. Such pessimism!))

((I agree with all you say about NGC 202, and all you say about the NGC, except I'm beginning to think that the NGC is staggering under the strain, and if, as is rumoured, the fliers are now in operation, and another 'burst' of new membership could be on its way, then the independents will gain the most subscribers out of it. GH certainly won't be running NGC games from now on - the bureaucracy of the thing means that no-one knows the hell who's got what or where it should be going. I can't really think of anything earth-shattering to say on this subject - it's all been said before, by me, and by most other people. Let's just let everything run its own course, shall we?))

((As to a con, well, ah. I do actually live with two other girls and one other bloke (no, Michelle is not one of them, and no, there isn't anything funny going on, not on my part, anyway.) Mind you, they won't be here in the Easter holidays, so I could hold one then. Trouble is, the places isn't that big, although there is Jerry's house just round the corner, but the other residents there are much more permanent, and Jerry might not be down here after Liz finds a job in London (It's like Peyton Place, isn't it?). I suppose I might be tempted, but it couldn't be an all-comers thing, like it was the last time I committed house-suicide - twenty at the outside, and then I don't know where they could all sleep! I'll think about it.))

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

Odds and Ends:

Just arrived today (well, yesterday, in fact, it's now 12.45 a.m. on Saturday morning) are Ethil The Frog (with a deadline for today!) and Ad Nauseam. With it is the sad, but not totally surprising news, that Ad Nauseam is to fold as of issue 31. I would be quite prepared to take on any games, Steve, if you wish. The standard reasons for folding are put forward - producing has become a drag, waning of enthusiasm for the hobby generally, all the things that happen to most zine producers when they get into the thirties (zine-wise, not age-wise). I can't really say that Ad Nauseam was exactly my type of zine - too much on word-oriented games in which Sharp would always beat me, but it was always well-produced, literate, and neat, besides being reliable until near the end. As such, it was in an all-too-small minority that will decrease even further with its demise. Subscribers to AN who will be looking for another zine could try Scotch On The Rocks from Iain Forsyth (address in zine review) for a pretty similar zine, although lacking the emphasis on Scrabble and Crosswords. Otherwise, Fall Of Eagles from Richard Hucknall, another zine of the same genre.

FILM QUIZ - ANSWERS.

((A quite gratifying response, really, Bob Lloyd, Richard Sharp, Brian Williams and Chris Tringham all had a go, and all did rather well. Paul Simpkins freely admitted to being unable to do more than ten. Colin Gamble reckoned he could do thirty, but was disqualified on the grounds that she set the damned thing with me!))

1) Part of A London District is found to belong to Burgundy, and the inhabitants find themselves free of rationing restrictions - name the Ealing Comedy.

A) Passport To Pimlico, of course, no trouble, really, a film that has been on television many times.

2) A Department store Santa Claus claims to be the real thing, and a court case backs him up. Name the 1947 American film.

A) Miracle On 34th Street. You didn't do very well here, but the film is really a classic. It is finally proved that the man is Santa by the fact that the U.S.P.S delivers all the mail addressed to 'Santa' to the esteemed gentleman. A government body cannot be wrong, ergo, he is Santa Claus! A marvellous tear-jerker that has been on TV at Christmas many times - the gentleman is Santa, anyway, of course.

3) Who played seven parts in Kind Hearts And Coronets? Who killed him seven times?

A) Sir Alec Guinness played the seven members of the family, and Dennis Price, of 'Jeeves' fame killed him, in one of his earliest roles.

4) Who or what was 'Harvey'?

A) A rabbit who happened to be six feet tall - never seen, but we know that he does really exist. If anyone had answered 'A mythical rabbit' they would have been wrong, 'cos someone else sees him before the end of the film!

5) In which city did French Connection II take place?

A) Marseilles, of course, where else?

6) Who or what was 'Rosebud'?

A) 'Rosebud' was the sledge in Citizen Kane. The last words of Kane, ~~that~~ it represents the last thing which he possessed before he came into all his wealth and was taken away to be properly schooled - it was symbolic of his desire for a return to the 'simple life.'

7) Claude Rains starred in his first film, yet only appeared for two seconds, the rest of the time you only hear his voice. Name the film.

A) Too easy! The Invisible Man is the only film that could possibly fit the bill, even if you had never heard of Claude Rains.

8) Who played 'Minnesota Fats' in The Hustler?

A) Jackie Gleason, who uttered the famous lines, 'OK, kid, let's play some pool,' when over \$20,000 dollars down and after 24 hours continuous play. Paul Newman, needless to say, was cleaned out within the next twelve hours - a tribute to determination over talent.

9) Who played 'The Man' and who played 'The Kid' in The Cincinnati Kid?

A) Edward G. Robinson ('You pay to play, lessons are extra') and Steve McQueen. Another interesting point. In the book, the hole card in the last hand is the Jack of Hearts. Why was the suit changed to diamonds in the film? Likewise, the kid's hand is changed from a boring tens full house to a more exciting Aces Full House, with, of course, the Ace of Spades in the hole. Catering to the non-poker playing audience? Far more exciting to have had it all decided on an Ace-high vs a pair of Kings.

10) What was the name of the novel on which Three Days of The Condor was based?

A) Six Days of the Condor! They probably ran out of money half way through the filming - at least, that's the rumour.

11) Nathanael West wrote a novel based in Hollywood in the thirties, ending with the martyrdom of an innocent man in the fanatical crowd at a film premiere. Name the film, and name the man who is trampled to death.

A) Day of the Locust - Donald Sutherland, a meagre accountant who eventually cracks up under the strain of living in Hollywood society. Not put over in the film is the artist's foreboding of disaster when working on the drawings for a set.

12) Who came to dinner in Guess Who's Coming To Dinner? Who were the parents?

A) Sidney Poitier, the 'White man's Nigger', came to dinner (and who wouldn't let their daughter marry him?) and Spencer Tracy and Katherine Hepburn were the parents. Tracy died before this film was technically finished (they still had nine days' shooting left) but he apparently said to the director, the night before he died, that the film could be broadcast as it was without any loss. So it had to be.

13) In what film did Julie Andrews play a rather magical nanny?

A) Anyone who couldn't do this should be shot. The memory of Dick van Dyck trying to play a Cockney is forever inscribed on my brain. A true Hollywood image of Victorian London, Mary Poppins, and what an abortion it was.

14) Who was the Midnight Cowboy? Who was his sidekick?

A) Jon Voight and Dustin Hoffman, although Hoffman stole the film, showing his versatility in a film only two years younger than Mrs Robinson. Personally I preferred this one, in that it took the lid of the dregs of New York far better than the former analysed middle-class America. Both, however, were brilliant, and both were made by Hoffman (What ever happened to Jon Voight, voted most promising young actor on the basis of this film? Bugger all, that's what.)

15) Who was the first person to win a posthumous Oscar? What was the film?

A) A bit of a catch question, this, although one of you saw through it. Peter Finch was the first, last year, for his performance in Network, a film I must admit to not yet having seen (along with Star Wars, damnit). Certainly a more deserving award than those heaped upon the apology for a movie, Rocky. (Although Oscars are nothing to go by - Citizen Kane was completely upstaged by How Green Was My Valley, and we all know what happened to Citizen Kane.)

16) Who played 'Woodstein'?

A) Another slight catch. 'Woodstein' was Ben Bradlee's nickname for Woodward and Bernstein, the reporters in All The President's Men. They were played by Dustin Hoffman (Carl Bernstein) and Robert Redford (Bob Woodward). They are now not on speaking terms. I bet Nixon wishes that they had never come to be on them.

17) Name the five Marx Brothers.

A) The first question which Sharp ripped off. Harpo, Chico, Groucho (the easy ones) Zeppo (who appeared in the first two films) and Gummo, (who never appeared in films at all, although he was part of the stage act, and who is now the only surviving one of the original five).

18) Who played the Magnificent Seven?

A) The second disgraceful act of Sharp plagiarism - I'll sue him one day. They were, Yul Brynner, Steve McQueen, Robert Vaughn, Horst Bucholz, James Coburn, and Brad Dexter, whhops, and Charles Bronson. It might have been more fun to ask for the Dirty Dozen, of whom only Bronson was a survivor.

19) Frank Capra directed a film in which Mr Smith went on a holiday. Where did he go?

A) The Capra bit should have told you it was James Stewart who played Mr. Smith (also directed It's A Wonderful Life and, of course, Harvey. The title of the film tells you where he went, as the youngest Senator on Capitol Hill. Mr Smith Goes To Washington.)

20) Who played Captain Bligh in the 1935 version of Mutiny On The Bounty?

A) Charles Laughton, you peasants. Trevor Howard played him in the remake.

21) Who played Mr Christian in the remake?

A) The incomparable Brando, who did naughty things with a half kilo of butter in another film of a less family nature.

22) Who played Ned Kelly in Ned Kelly?

A) Mick Jagger.

23) Name the two child stars of National Velvet.

A) Mickey Rooney and Elizabeth Taylor, and on TV over this Christmas.

24) A businessman is mistaken for a spy, and enemy agents try to kill him because he knows too much. The businessman was Cary Grant, the film was made in 1959 and Alfred Hitchcock directed it. Name the film.

A) Well, really! The answer is North By North-West, and you should be ashamed of yourself if you didn't get it.

25) Who played The Odd Couple?

A) In the film, Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau, which contained an hilarious Poker game, Matthau getting Salami sandwich all over the cards, and Jack Lemmon screaming that the cigarette smoke is destroying his sinuses. I should have asked who played them in the TV version, but that was a bit too difficult, the answer being Tony Randal and Jack Klugman.

26) In a recent film, the leading role neither speaks, is seen, nor heard. It was renamed shortly after its release. Give both names of the film.

A) The original name was Mohammed, Messenger of God, but the New York Islamic faction objected to the hero even being named. It thus became The Message. Surely the only film where the star is played by a camera.

27) Who won an Oscar (best supporting actor) without saying a word (he played a mute).

A) John Mills, in Ryan's Daughter. It was also, I think, Mills' first Oscar, which seems a bit unfair!

28) Who, or what, was Laughing Gravy?

A) Nobody got this, nor would I have expected them to. Laughing Gravy was a dog who belonged to Mr Laurel and Mr Hardy. Richard guessed that it was Andy Holborn - hmmm, half a mark for that.

29) Who was The Third Man? Who shot him? What instrument was made famous as a result of its being used for the theme tune? Where was the film shot?

A) Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, the zither, and Vienna. A hard question for a cult film. Pity I couldn't remember the name of the woman.

30) Name the first words used in a talkie.

A) The film was The Jazz Singer, and Al Jolson uttered the immortal words, 'You ain't heard nothing yet.' Quite apt that the first American words should be grammatically incorrect, don't you think?

((Right. Bob Lloyd got twenty-two, falling down on 'Rosebud', surprisingly, and a few others. Chris Tringham got 18, Tricky Dicky got 22 as well, and Brian Williams got a staggering 28! Including, I notice, the dog belonging to Laurel and Hardy! In fact, he only failed on The Magnificent Seven, of which he got five, and the John Mills Oscar. (Who's Alan Arkin, Brian?) So, free issues to Bob and Richard, and three free issues to Brian. God, I must be mad.))

((How successful does everyone think this has been? I must admit that I enjoy doing them, but there isn't much point unless people respond, or at least try to do them. Richard's Christmas quiz in Dolchstoss will probably be answered by far more people, but then again it was a once a year thing. I'm a bit annoyed at that - with a bit of effort I'm sure that I could have scored far better, particularly on the geographical place names. I was quite pleased with my performance on the pseudonyms, however, getting, I think, only one wrong. Also the first question, and the completion of sets. All good fun, though.))

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +

* ZINES SEEN *
* ZINES SEEN *
* ZINES SEEN *

ETHIL THE FROG: (John Piggott, 15 Freeland Road, London, W5 3HR).

Celebrating the production of his 100th issue of a fanzine (he's produced five different ones in all) with a perfectly normal issue, Ethil is still one of the zines I positively look forward to receiving. The return of Fetlock in issue 12, who is no comparison to Fiat Lux, but has quite a humourous pastiche of a Bridge article. Also excellent SF reviews, including one of the film Star Wars, surely breaking Piggott's own law on fanzines (You find in fanzines what you cannot find elsewhere). Doubtless this will elicit a riposte from the accursed Piggott that I have misquoted him, etc etc. Plenty of games, which are not cheap, but probably worth playing in, and interesting zine reviews, commenting on the wisdom of reprinting old Dippy articles, something I must admit to having done in the past, but only when I think the majority of my readers will not have seen it before. 25p per issue, four-weekly, and well worth every penny except the last twenty-four.

AVAM: (Paul Harper and Steve Hill, 4 Batsford Close, WGC Herts and 43 Robins Way, Hatfield, Herts - 4p plus postage and no game fees.) The last issue, no. 17 didn't really have much in it, although it was well-duplicated and is now fairly reliable (not that it was ever anything else) A new variant called 'Wings', bringing aircraft onto the standard Dippy board. Lots of postal backgammon, not the most fascinating game on earth and three Dippy games. There's an old adage 'You pays yer money and you takes yer choice.' Add to that, 'You get what you pay for,' and you have my view, which is rather cryptic even for me!

LEMING EXPRESS: (Bob Howes, 180 London Road, Headington, Oxford, OX3 9ED).

Its only fault is its infrequency! I don't think that this is one that I would like to play in, but it's certainly one that I like to receive. Bob has an interesting style, a nice sense of layout (far better than GH) and is full of chat. Plenty of postal games also on offer, and with Stuart Dagger and punk Lovibond helping him out, it's full of interest. There is also a large section on games in general, so this is one for the games fanatics. Crosswords, letters, and 36 A4 pages all at a very reasonable price which I can't find at the moment!

THE TINAMOU: (Dr Robert G. Brown, 53 Broadwood Drive, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 4SS.)

The last issue I have id number 35, reduced photocopy, and 25p for 36 pages of A5 reduced from A4. Piggott has made the valid comment that with the inculcation of Will Haven The Tinamou may go the sad way of Jigsaw, ultra games-heavy with no guarantee that similar efficiency to Jigsaw can be maintained. Railway Rivals, some fantasy game which I refuse to plug, Dippy, Bourse, and PANCAKE ROLL (Advt), produced by the ex rock-superstar ex-heavyweight ex-human being Ronnie Fisher. The Tinamou, worth getting on its own merits, is doubly so with the existence of Pancake Roll (although rumours of its forthcoming independence may mean you subbing to two excellent zine instead of one!) Ron shows absolutely no respect for anyone, so he can't be accused of bias, and it is undoubtedly the only publication which carries on the Wakefield tradition of Misteimer. Sub to it.

SCOTCH ON THE ROCKS: (Iain Forsyth, 6 Ardrossan Road, Saltcoats, Ayrshire.)

A much smaller, cosier zine, than those mentioned before, and one which deserves a better chance. At 15 p per issue, 6 of them under his belt, and very efficient so far (but then again, so was I up to that point!) Not much to say about it, except that it is, thus far, a zine for players rather than subbers. This may change when it grows, though.

FALL OF EAGLES: (Richard Hucknall, 124 Southcliffe Road, Carlton, Nottm, NG4 1ES)

From once-again father Richard, a very well-laid out zine that suffers from wither a bad typewriter or a bad duplicator. A good letter column, and a reasonable amount of chat, and last issue (no. 13) had an analysis of a face-to-face Diplomacy game, so of some interest to erstwhile players (hmm, not quite the right adjective there, never mind). Another of these hyper-efficient zines, three-weekly I think, and very regular in its appearance. Not really much to choose between this and Scotch on the Rocks, really, basically a zine for people who want to play in a few more games in another zine, rather than putting all their eggs in one basket.