

Quotation Column.

Daily Express- "LAST CHANCE TO SEE DAVID CASSIDY FREE"!

Scottish Education Dept.- "In the event of nuclear attack, school children will be given the day off."

Reporting Scotland- "The Scottish team won 6 medals emulating the Irish feat."

Daily Mail- "Edward Heath is the most formidable man to lead this country since Churchill had his second stroke."

Buckinghamshire Advertiser- "Eton Rural District Council rodent control officers assisted with the destruction of one fly; one gnat; one beetle; two spiders; 17 ants; three unspecified insects; 173 wasps; 10 bees; eight fleas; five bed-bugs; one red spider mite; one strawberry weevil; one weevil; one woodlice and five squirrels in 1972."

SHOCK HORROR DRAMA!

Geoff Corker just told me on the phone that John Piggott is dropping out of postal Diplomacy; I don't as yet know why, but apparently he's been thinking about it for some time. I'll need replacement players for England in B game and Elves in I, first come first served. I know Geoff is taking over three games of those left homeless, but have no idea what arrangements are being made for the others. I don't think I need say how great a loss Ethil will be - against all the evidence it makes me feel that Diplomacy itself is collapsing. (Shock horror melodrama?)

New Variant.

With what can only be described as a deadly mistiming Buldengrath-

Hill Ltd. bring you a new variant, set in Britain of today - a struggle for power in the back-streets of pamphleteering British Diplomacy - "DOLCHSTOSS vs THE WORLD IV".

It is designed by Bob Harris and myself, and should be published by OMRUD with next STAR. A game will be run in STAR and it is hoped that as many GMs as possible will be induced to play their own zines.

Star costs: 3p 2nd class, 6 1/2p 1st class. (for AD!)

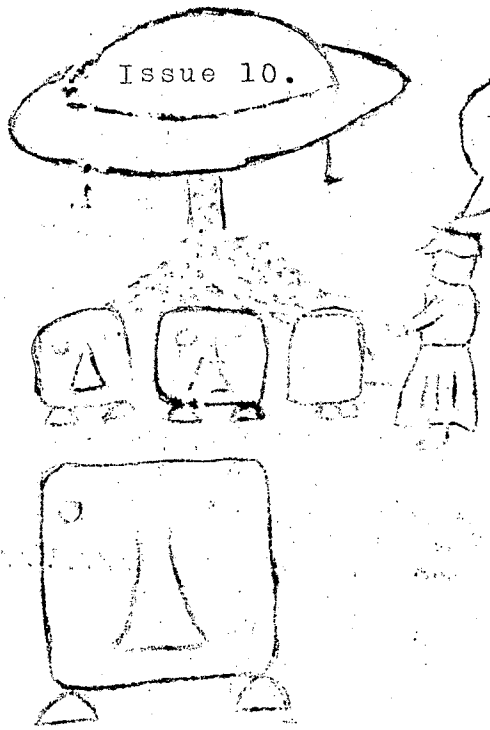
COA: Andy Davidson goes to 4, Ivy Close, Acton Trussell, STAFFORD.

Ian McBay, 27, Gallowden Ave., Arbroath.

Other students, myself included, will be going back to University about the first week in April.

Scratch what I said about standbys for John Piggott's games earlier - Bob Harris will take over Elves in I, but I'll still need someone for B. Gordon, however, has managed to fill all the vacancies in his section.

Gordon Neilson keeps Diplomacy maps stuck above his bed, so they can be read from a reclining position. Hence, the following dialogue:  
Bob Harris: "What are they there for?"  
Gordon: "In case I ever want to think about something."



An OMRUD publication.

The Bolshevick Star, incorporating Variety & Amoeba or The Surrey Rose-growers Gazette or..... (Please let it arrive, please please.....) was produced by John Lettice, 69, Craigie Dve., Dundee, who is returning to David Russell Hall, St. Andrews on April 5th, possibly for the last time (that worries you? Think what it does to me.....), and Gordon Neilson, 28, Kingsway Pl., Dundee; and John Robertson, ~~BEHIND THE APT WATER PIPES~~ 54, South Tay St., Dundee, and Gregory Ward, Lindisfarne, St. Nicholas Hill, Leatherhead, Surrey. (Please, please.....)

Andy Davidson snore, but now -

BOB HARRIS GRIPES.

The issue's STAR victim is Hannibal the Cannibal, beginning with:

David Pink and his review of Satrap. Quote: "Satrap is yet another variant based on the Persian Empire." Er, Dave, what are all the other variants based on the Persian Empire? I'm damned if I've seen them. But more deserving of mockery is:

Dermot Dwyer with his article on Carthage. (containing no fewer than 39 spelling mistakes). As a student of Ancient History and having written a 4 000 word dissertation on Hannibal last year I think I'm qualified to attack this article. Firstly Carthage was not founded as the new Phoenician capital as is proved by the fact that for hundreds of years it sent tribute to its mother city of Tyre. The Phoenician "Kart Hadasht" does not mean "New Capital", but new city only.

Dermot says, "Carthage eventually took Sicily and, by adding this fresh conquest to their domains they now had at their disposal the greatest wheat producing areas of the Mediterranean except for Egypt." This is almost too laughable! Carthage never, repeat NEVER, conquered Sicily. In fact she never even came close. All she managed to do was to maintain some bases on the western extremity of the island, and she actually ended up losing territory to the Sicilian Greeks.

Speaking of Spain he says, "After his death, Hannibal and Hasdrubal conquered the peninsula as far as the Ebro." No Dermot, they only conquered the southern half. It was only in the first century BC that the Romans managed to subjugate the whole of Spain. The article continues, dominated by Dermot's rather tedious obsession with economics. Talking of the economic crisis after the 2nd Punic war and Hannibal's financial reforms he says, "The subjugation of Carthage at least saved him money as he would otherwise have had to spend on the army." (sic) Surely if Carthage had won the war she would have had all the money she needed anyway. Your logic's gone wrong somewhere, Dermot.

Finally he says, "The Carthaginians still existed and assisted the Roman rise to power in Africa keeping their own language and religions into the 4th and 5th centuries (sic) and the great upheaval that was to change the world - The Fall of Rome." There's just one small error here. The Romans destroyed Carthage in 146BC and sold her inhabitants into slavery. If people are going to write irrelevant articles the least they can do is get their facts right. These aren't just little mistakes, they are enormous ones!

Brian Yare - In Grafeti 27, Yare said, "Bob objects to all the contents of every magazine just to be objectionable." Now this is downright untrue so I wrote a long, logically argued denial to Yare, but not only did he not print one word of it, he didn't even mention that I had denied his slanderous charge. Surely if GMs are going to slander people they should at least allow them letter space to defend themselves.

Andrew Waldie - John answered Andrew's ridiculous letter but there is one part of it that is so absurd I just have to say something about it. He says to John, "I'm sure that you have other interests apart from Diplomacy; why not tell us about them?" He actually thinks GMs should write articles on their own interests! What a tremendous idea! Flashpoint could become a sailing journal, Duncan Morris could write pages about his favourite judo throws and John Piggott could fill Ethil with essays on how to cut up a rat's intestines. Thank goodness most GMs have more sense than Andrew and don't bore us with drivel about their own little pastimes.

Well, those are this issue's gripes. People are continually criticising me for writing complaints so why the hell don't they try to prove I'm wrong. Let's have some feedback. No replies will be ignored. (Hear that, Brian?)

.....ah.was.here.....

I hope someone replies to Bob's column, which will be a regular feature from now on. Your feedback on last issue, however was an overwhelming wave of nothingness, apart from Andrew Waldie being a good sport, so I don't hold out much hope.....

STAR 'A', Autumn 1904.

PIMLI RETAINS INITIATIVE!  
THEY'VE LANDED!

ENGLAND (O'Rourke): a lpl gives another 21 gun salute to the departing french along with the message that they will swim out and board them if they do not move soon; f eng s f nth; f nth s german f swe-nwy.

FRANCE (Sherrad): f iri-wal; a spa jumps up and down on those two silly men with the big boots and the funny shaped hats; a bur-bel; a bre buys a pair of big boots and a funny-shaped hat.

GERMANY (Dunn): f swe-nwy; a mun-bur s by a bel; a ruh-hol; a kie-den.

ITALY (~~BALE/BA~~ Ovens): a tri-bud s by a vie; f adr-apu; ~~A/AAA/AAA~~ ((guess again, it is, or was in ser)); a ser stands unordered; f tun-ion s by f nap.

RUSSIA (Pinley): a gal-vie s by a bud; f con s a bul; a bul s turkish a rum-ser; a fin-swe s by f ska; a sev-rum s by f bla; f nwy s f ska.

TURKEY (Davidson): a rum-ser; f ems-ion s by f gre; f ion-nap s by a apu. (a gre went to apu last time, so f aeg-gre succeeded. Sorry sorry sorry)

Retreats: french a bur-mar; italian a ser disbanded; russian fnwy disbanded.

F: 5 bases: mar, spa, par, bre, por. Builds a par.

E: 3 bases: edi, lpl, lon. No change.

G: 7 bases: kie, ber, mun, hol, den, bel, nwy. Builds a kie, f ber.

I: 6 bases: tun, nap, ron, ven, vie, bud. Builds a ven.

R: 10 bases: swe, stp, war, nos, sev, rum, bud, bul, con, ank. builds a war, a mos.

T: 3 bases: sny, gre, ser. removes f ens, f gre.

Potsdam (military spokesman): The Kaiser expresses his regret at the error in the last official communique (see, we're not anti-French.). The Kaiser himself has a great fascination for puss; we hasten to add that this does not indicate any weakness, sentimentality or trait of humanity - he just likes cats, especially with things the way they are now.

Dear Blackburn Library: Get stuffed in 71 languages. Ps. please find my cheque for £35.18s.6d.

Residenzplatz, Berlin: The Kaiser picked himself up from amid the ruined rococo magnificence of his palace, cursing under his breath as he dusted the plaster from his uniform. Not content with being the cattiest zine on the market ((miaow - ed)), the STAR was now a monster which had required the withdrawal from the front of a whole Guards battalion just to deliver it. Well they weren't going to get away with it! He was going to send them a bill for 5 zillion Reichsmarks. ((its been added to your credit))

Nothing was going right - the falling of the STAR from the letter-box to the floor had just reduced his palace to a shambles. The war was turning into a disorganized mess, and he had just missed breakfast, or rather, the ceiling had just fallen on it. "This never happened to old Fred", thought the Kaiser pedantically, "Still, not much else can happen." But, in that quaint manner peculiar to Kaisers, he was wrong; for at that moment his aide, somewhat agitated, picked his way through the rubble. "Exzellenz, we are invaded! Flying machines are landing all over the country and they're pouring out 3 foot high creatures who seem determined to wipe out all the cats in the country!"

"What!" The Kaiser paled and ran out onto the balcony. In his state of shock it was several seconds before he realised that the balcony no longer existed. Dusting the plaster from his uniform again, he asked the aide, "What do these things look like? Are they Things from beyond space, or Things from another world perhaps?"

"Well, Exzellenz, can you imagine a television set with two suckers like those on sink plungers, with a ground-hog nose and two eyes - the right one larger than the left?" The Kaiser turned bright Prussian blue, "Lasterplatz! Are you suggesting I allow anachronisms in this press release? How would you like to go back to the Musikkorps?" (Yes, you've guessed it - He was

a band-aid). The aide fell to his knees, "Of course not, Excellenz. What I meant was.....er.....if you could imagine a television set with two suckers, then that's what they would be like."

"How many of these things are there?"

"Zillions! Zillions! They're all over the place!" Screeched the Aide, hopping up and down. The Kaiser sighed. These imported American exaggerations were becoming tiresome. "Follow me!" He ordered the Aide, "I want to see this myself."

\* Hobbiton: Isn't he a little gen kiddies? So why don't the rest of you send in some press, then you can have five zillion Reichsmarks.....

STAR 'B', Spring 1904.

COLIN WALSH FAILS TO MISS MOVES! (JUST)

ENGLAND (Piggott): f nao-nao s by f por; f lon-cng; f nth-hol; f hel-kie s by a den.

FRANCE (O'Rourke): a bel s german f hol; a pic s a bel; a-brc-s-a-pic; f-spa(sc)-por; f-nao-spa(sc).

GERMANY (Kelly): a kie s russian f bal-den; f hol s a kie; a ber s a kie; a mun s a ber.

ITALY (Walsh): f tys-gly; f ion stands; a tyr-vic; a vic-bud; s by a tri.

AUSTRIA (Anarchy): a ser stands.

RUSSIA (Ward): f sev stands s by a ukr; a run-ser s by a bud; a war-gal; f pru-ber s by f bal.

TURKEY (Charlton): a bul-gre; f gre-aeg; a con-bul s by f bla; a arm stands.

Retreats: German a kie disbanded, Russian a bud disbanded.

Vienna: Marmaduke P. Anarchy, retired human being, Ex-Emperor and part-time figment of the GMS imagination, sighed. He had never wanted to be an Emperor anyway, having put himself down for general brain-surgery at Auchtenuchtý Polytechnic, having removed his own brain at the tender age of three, but he had been refused entrance, and had retired to his bolt-hole in darkest Upper Austria to meditate and to plot. He plugged his battery into the wall. "Yes," he mused, darkly, "some day they would all pay."

STAR 'C' Mordor vs the World - BALROG BRIDGED! DESPERATE DAN DARK-LORD STARTS PACKAGE HOLIDAYS!

ARNOR (Ward): abb mit-isn; 2a cre-mor s by a mis; a tha-ere s by a dun; da art stands.

GONDOR (Robertson): a umb bbb; da mti-sgo s by 2a hrd; a lam-~~l~~/~~l~~/~~l~~ a esf; ((ahem!)) a per stands.

MORDOR (Thompson/): a ang-cad; a mor stands; a ano ms 3a hon; a wol-rau s by a dea & Naz eem; a utu-mim; a sha-por; da nuw ms da non.

RHOVANION (Wein): 2a crk-ang; a gun-cad; a mir-crks by a gla; a wil-dog; ~~l~~/~~l~~/~~l~~ - it's already in nom, Richard!

ROHAN (Sherrad): 2a ith-rau; a lor stands; a cel-wol; a wem-eem; da fan-wem; a edo-wem.

Retreats: mordor a ang & a mor disband.

- A: 7 bases: ths, amo, iml, grh, tha, ere, mor. Builds a iml, a amo.
- G: 6 bases: tol, umb, hrd, mti, leb, dol. Builds a leb.
- M: 8 bases: kha, udu, mim, bar, ano, hen, igd, cad. No change.
- RH: 7 bases: wor, nwi, mir, esg, dog, crk, ang. Builds a mir, a nwi.
- R: 6 bases: edo, wem, fan, rau, lor, cel. No room to build. 1 short.

Barad-Dur: The Dark Lord sat pondering his next dastardly (could it, can he say that Ern? Well look it up then, look it up!) plan. His thick black brows were knitted in a study of concentration. (Funny, I thought they were knitted in wool!) ((Thank you Gerry Anderson)) Three armies gone, what would he do now? Enemy armies stood ready for the attack against Mordor.

Then he had a brain wave. (Strange, it wasn't often that he had a brain wave at him.) He would open all the forts and towers in Mordor and turn them into holiday camps for the enemy troops. Then when they had all been lulled into a false sense of security.....!

Schlaechtbat/VAH Isengard Sun-farm: "Zere iss no cause for alarm, Meester Denethor, dchutst kom zis vey for a nice cool shower....."

Moria, Costa Brava: Frodo looked around him, "This is the Hotel Imperial, isn't it, por favor?", he asked, flicking through his copy of Baedeker's guide ineffectually.

"Si, Señor, eez Hotel Imperial, but eez June already?" The workman waved an arm at the half-completed concrete foundations.

STAR 'D', Autumn 1903.

END OF THE LINE FOR JESUS FREAKS?  
NO BUILDS FROM FRENCH - H. CARPENTER  
ON STRIKE?

AUSTRIA (Corker): a gal-war; a gre-bul s by a ser & a rum;  
a bud s a rum; f alb-gre.

ENGLAND (Pendlebury): f nwg-nwy; f ska-den s by f nth;  
a hol ms f bel.

FRANCE (Thompson): a bur ms a mun; a pic s a bur; a pic-tyr;  
f mao stands.

GERMANY (Davidson): a ruh-hol s by f hel; f bal-kie s by a ber.

ITALY (Robertson): a tun-tus c by f tys; a tri stands;  
f ion-gre.

RUSSIA (Have): f sev s turkish a arm-rum; a ukr-war;  
a stp-nwy s by a swe; f gob-bal.

TURKEY (O'Rourke): a arm-rum c by f bla & s by a bul;  
a con s a bul.

Retreats: none.

- A: 5 bases: vie, bud, gre, ser, rum. Removes a gal.
- E: 6 bases: lon, lpl, cdi, hol, bel, den. Builds f edi.
- F: 6 bases: par, bre, mar, por, spa, mun. No build received. 1 short.
- G: 2 bases: ber, kie. Removes a ruh, f kie.
- I: 5 Bases: tun, nap, rom, ven, tri. Builds f nap.
- R: 6 bases: war, mos, sev, stp, nwy, swe. Builds f stp(nc)
- T: 4 bases: ank, con, smy, bul. No change.

Paris: Yes Andy, it was a good idea but looking at the situation here and in Enry VI you'll see it is not as good a proposition as it looked.

STAR 'E', Spring 3005.

IT REALLY ISN'T VERY FAIR YOU KNOW!  
MORDOR IGNORES MINAS TIRITH!

ARNOR (McBay): a shi-bra; 2a grh bbb; a amo-art; da im stands;  
a mis-ere s by a tha.

GONDOR (O'Rourke): a mti-sgo; a hrd-hrr; a umb-hrd;  
a dol-tol; a ano-mti s by a lob; a lam-ano; da anf-dol.

MORDOR (Charlton): 3a por s naz hen; a udu-dea s by naz hen;  
a rau-ith; a col-lor s by a dog; a mim-udu; a iss stands;  
da sha ms da nuw.

RHOVANION (Corker): a emy stands; 2a cad-ang; a ang-crk;  
a crk-gla s by a mir; a osg-nwi; da nwi-wil.

ROHAN (Thompson): 2a mor-ere; a wcl-cel s by a lor; a wem-eeem;  
a edo-wen; da fan-wen; a ith s gondor a ano.

Retreats: Rohan a lor goes to that big blow-football pitch in the sky!

Elland Rd.: Well David, if Lettice is going to mix me up with Blabber Clough then it's no wonder he gets criticised. Elland Rd. is Leeds ground so stop mucking up our press releases.

Elland Rd.: "Two please." "Certainly Sir; forwards or backs?"

STAR 'I', War of the Rings, Autumn 3002. LINDSAY PULLS IT OFF!  
DOUBLEDAY TRAPPED!

- MORDOR (Lindsay): 2a riv stands; 2a wil stands; 2a dun-mor;  
3a dag-rhn; 2a gap-ism; 2a ith ano; 2a min-ith.
- ROHAN (Davidson): a mn3-igd s by 2a wem; a eem-edo; a rau-ano.<sup>a</sup>
- GONDOR (O'ROURKE): a rhd-umb s by a hrd; 2a sit-pel s by  
a mti; a lam-mti; a isn-gap.
- MEN (Corker): 2a rhn ms a wrh; a nwi s elvish a beo;  
a dal-mir; a ndo-cad; a non-bre.
- ELVES (Piggott/Harris): 2a bro-dog; a nor stands; a beo s  
Men a nwi.
- DWARVES (Robertson): a bar ms a tha; 2a ngu-bro; a and-mir.

Retreats: Elvish a nor-din, mordor a umb (which should be ordered a umb will heroically resist to the last any expansionist acts by the neo-fascist pseudo-imperialistic privateering marionette rulers of the crypto-capitalistic puppet state of Gondor, wheeze....) and gondor a isn d2sband.

M: 9 bases: udu, bar, min, isa, ith, ano, nor, riv, wil. builds a udu, a min.

G: 5 bases: umb, har, pel, mti, dol. No change.

R: 5 bases: igd, fan, wem, eem, edo. builds a eem.

M: 7 bases: rhn, nwi, esg, dal, shi, cad, bre. builds a esg.

E: 4 bases: mir, lor, dog, beo. builds a lor.

D: 4 bases: tha, er2, ngu, ere. No change.

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Umbar: The Stainless Steel Rat winced as the salvoe of rockets flew over head and landed at the far end of the street with an ear-spitting crunch.

"Some rest-cure, " he mused bitterly. A full fortnight's rest and relaxation, the man at the travel-agent's had told him. Well that was the last time he would use Thompson's anyway - come to think of it that travel-agent had had a very funny look in his eye; not the sort of look he'd have expected from Moshe Dayan, anyway. There was only one thing to do - get out of the vicinity, fast.

A salvoe of shells demolished the buildings across the street. The Rat twitched his whiskers nervously and disappeared round the corner, to run smack bang into a couple of Gondorian soldiers, recognisable from their distinctive helmets, the camouflage netting of which was interwoven with flowers, and from their lipstick and false eyelashes.

"Go on then, Cyril," said the first encouragingly. "But I couldn't, Rikki darling, I'm ever so delicate." "You can do it, Cyril!" "Oh, all right then - You are under arrest - you will be escorted behind our lines and will be held for interrogation by the Gondorian army." He jabbed his bayonet into the Rat with a resounding clang.

"Oh Cyril, I like you ever so much when you're butch..." cried Rikki dancing around the pair.

"Really sweetie?" said Cyril coyly.

Pelargir: The Rat sped down the road towards Ithilien at the helm of the Gondorian tank. It had been relatively simple to steal - the Gondorian Captain had turned his back to congratulate Cyril and Rikki in typically affectionate Gondorian fashion, and the Rat had hopped into the Chieftain, neatly decapitating the tank commander as he did so. He rounded a corner, and for the second time that day he was confronted by units of the renowned Gondorian army.

Before darkness closed on him, as he was being picked out of the ruins of the tank, he heard the words "Interrogation" and "Arik O'Rourke" - names whose conjunction spoke only of terror and unending, hopeless pain.

Listen: Mr. Davidson, I don't know what your game is but it looks as if I'm going to be in a hell of a spot in a hell of a short time if you do not give me some hurried assistance. By the way I will take help from anyone - yes, even you Peter.

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LETTERS - The Andrew Waldie column.

Andrew Waldie: .....If people haven't been writing to you, ie if nobody else has written to you, I take back all I said, Because if that's the case the fault lies with your readership, and not with you. ....thanks for calling me a turd!

((That's about it I'm afraid; Andrew sent me a nice understanding letter, and everyone else did nothing in particular. Story of my life.....))

One day in 1815 Napoleon Bonaparte, exiled to Elba for plunging Europe into war and for refusing to tell anyone why he kept his hand stuffed in his shirt, invaded France with less than 1,000 men just for a laugh. King Louis, who was too fat to fit into the throne and therefore totally unsuited to ruling France, sent Marshal Ney with an army to stop the fiend, but everywhere Napoleon went the French soldiers joined his army, mainly because they were hoping he might tell them why he kept his hand stuffed in his shirt.

King Louis escaped from France disguised as an elephant and when Napoleon arrived in Paris he was warmly received by the people and Monsieur Aristides Desmoulin, 22 Rue des Chats, Boulogne. After taking a bath the Emperor set off with his army to Belgium to defeat Wellington and Blücher who had had a bad accident and had split their forces.

At Ligny he surprised the Prussians, who were holding a beer festival, and chased them off, sending Grouchy with a third of the army to pursue them. The Duke of Wellington attempted to make a stand at Quatre Bras but was forced to retreat by a barrage of puns from the French such as, "When are you going to get the boot?"

He stopped and positioned his men on the ridge of Mont St. Jean near the flooded toilet of Waterloo. Next day the battle began.

- 11.00am - Jerome Bonaparte makes a feint attack on Hougoumont with an eighth of the army. Napoleon waits for Wellington to weaken his centre.
- 11.30am - Jerome makes a feint attack on Hougoumont with  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the army. Napoleon waits for Wellington to weaken his centre.
- 12.00am - Jerome makes a feint attack on Hougoumont with  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the army. Napoleon waits for Wellington to weaken his centre.
- 12.30pm - Napoleon gets fed up waiting and sends Ney forward with the infantry. Infantry sink into the mud and vanish from sight. Ney has horse shot out from under him.
- 12.35pm - Wellington sends the Scots Greys to kill Ney. The Greys charge too far and lose their way. Head off in the general direction of Budapest.
- 1.00pm - Ney tries to capture La Haye Sainte. Has horse shot out from under him but fails to capture farmhouse. Napoleon advises him to take some soldiers with him next time.
- 1.30pm - Napoleon retires from field complaining of pains in the stomach. Rumour runs through the army that this is why he always keeps his hand stuffed inside his shirt.
- 2.00pm - Ney sees a British soldier looking over his shoulder. Takes this as a sign that Wellington's entire army is retreating and leads the entire French cavalry force to attack.
- 2.00pm - French cavalry reach the top of the ridge. See that the British have formed square. Decide this is unfair and go home. Ney attacks single-handed. Has horse shot from under him.
- 2.00-3.00pm - Ney attacks 32 times, has 32 horses shot from under him.
- 3.00pm - Napoleon returns to the battlefield and orders Ney to stop the attack as he is using too many horses. Ney sits down for a rest. Has chair shot from under him.
- 3.15pm - Grouchy arrives in Berlin and is surprised to find that Blücher isn't there.
- 3.30pm - Blücher and his army are sighted approaching Waterloo. He had meant to go home to Prussia but had lost his way because he was so drunk.
- 4.00pm - Napoleon, wishing to finish the battle before the pubs opened, decides to send in the Guard.
- 4.16pm - The Old Guard march up the ridge of Mont St Jean in their old battle-stained uniforms. Suddenly, thousands of immaculately dressed British troops appear in front of them. They gape for a few moments, then ashamed of their own scruffiness, slink back to their own lines.
- 5.00pm - The Prussians arrive singing Lutheran hymns. The French, seeing that the Prussians have God on their side, give up and go home.
- 5.15pm - The Duke of Wellington hopes to God he has seen his last battle. Ney has horse shot from under him.

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17			

Across

- 1. The fate of British Diplomacy.
- 6. Easy going for oxen.
- 8. Frodo's delight.
- 9. Victory for Hannibal.
- 10. Andy Davidson?
- 12. Could be the last time.
- 15. The Desert Fox.
- 16. Place to take a risk.
- 17. Non-stop game.

Down

- 2. Behind the I.D.A.
- 3. Found in the Tardis.
- 4. It came from Beyond Space.
- 5. Or is it his beard.
- 7. N.G.C. zine.
- 11. Who is this man Jacks?
- 13. Turn around the frog.
- 14. Nowhere on Earth.

\* \* \* \* \*

You thrilled to 'Fail Safe'  
 You gasped at 'Dr. Strangelove'  
 Now YOU TOO can plunge the world  
 into a nuclear holocaust with  
 'HOLOCAUST'



Richard Wein's SUPER atomic warfare variant incorporating the ENTIRE WORLD.

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\* \* \* \* \*

Some of you will be receiving Tales from the Black Forest with this issue. If you are, then the second number on your mailing label is your credit with Geoff. The first is your credit with me.



don't have time to write it and get it down to J.G., it will just have to do here, otherwise the changes of typestyles will make the zine seem even more chaotic.

### Thoughts on a Middle-Earth variant

A question that must always be asked when a Middle-Earth game is designed is - How accurate should this game be? By accuracy, I mean the degree of similarity that exists between the game and the books. It is all very well to go off and produce a variant with single armies all over the place (with a few doubles and triples thrown in for good measure) but what will result will bear little resemblance to the books except to provide a game which is practically the same as regular Diplomacy with different province names.

According to the book, however, these armies were as much overthrown by the performances of individuals as by opposing forces. In comparison with the deeds of Gandalf and so on, the descriptions of the few battles taking more than two or three pages are quite vague. Therefore, if we are to obtain a game which might reproduce the feeling of the books then I feel that we have to bring in individuals with their corresponding powers. (which are greater than those of our readers!)

However, if this is done, a major difficulty is encountered - that of scales. Obviously, as a general outline, the larger the scales, the more complex the game will be, but I believe that it would not be impracticable to have two or more sizes of scale connected with the one game. That is to say, in terms of area, a very large scale for the individuals and a province map such as the one given in the last issue - which itself is considerably more detailed than equivalent maps - for the larger units.

The recreation of similar situations to those occurring in the books would require the existence of quite a considerable character scale. The ideal scale being one which could comfortably hold all the features of Middle-Earth - something, possibly, along the lines of the map of a part of the Shire given at the beginning of 'The Fellowship of the Ring'. This may be regarded as carrying things to extremes, but I'm only putting forward some ideas. However, such a scale would certainly enable all the characters to visit all the obscure places mentioned. It would, of course, take quite a lot of time and effort to create the necessary maps but it might be possible to produce these as they are needed. As some parts of Middle-Earth are described in much more detail than others, we would probably have to create some of the smaller features of the terrain.

In most Middle-Earth variants, at the moment, there are rules which attempt to bring in the effect of the ring. They usually say something like "an army can put on the ring and become invisible while increasing its strength." To me, this seems rather unrealistic. Consider the following points. The existence of the ring was known to very few people. If anyone put on the ring then it rendered only that person invisible. In the books, practically no-one dared to use it for fear of either being unable to control its power or being overcome by its power. Therefore, to say that an army can double its strength and become invisible is ludicrous. Not even Sauron's armies knew of the ring's powers.

There is, however, a case for introducing the ring - with the powers described - into the game. In fact, I feel that it might be possible to build a complete version of the game around the attempts to destroy the ring. It would probably develop into a three or four player game: Mordor, Gondor, Rohan and the ring bearer & company. There would also have to be a significant amount of intervention by the gamesmaster. By that I mean that the gm would probably decide what problems would be encountered by the company - whether any were killed, got lost, etc. Certain limitations on the gm's powers would have to be imposed, but I feel that a gamesmaster attempting to play a neutral part in the game would be necessary to recreate the sense of the unknown.

One unfortunate feature is that of hidden movement. I don't see how this type of game would be possible without it and so, with individual game reports being sent out, each containing what the gm thinks that player should know, it could lead to very dull reading for any non-player that might be interested. One way to counteract this would be to introduce a delay of 4 or 5 issues into the general reports in a magazine. These reports would probably best take the