

# Politesse

Journal of the Washington Area Retinue of (Tacitly) Highly Organized Gamesters.  
#51 July 1987

## Readers Survey Confirms...

### Greetings

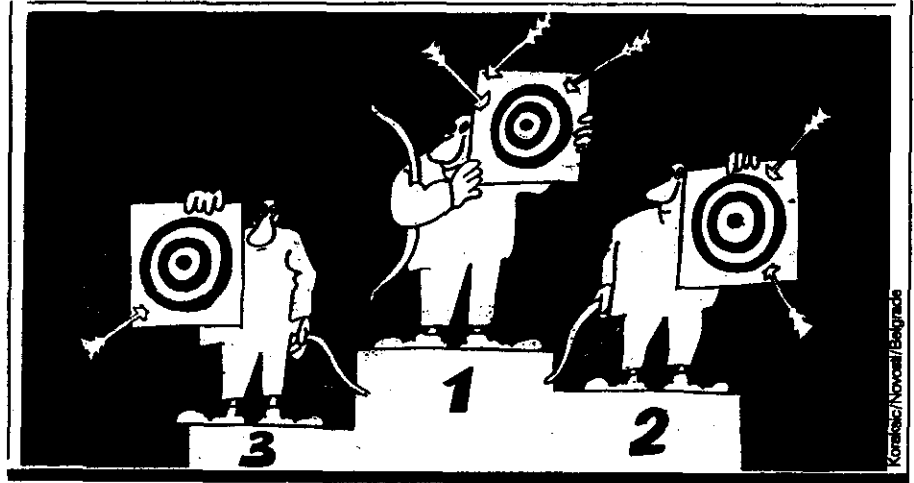
Welcome to another *Politesse*. This is clearly one of the best ever. Honest. Trust me. I know what I am doing.

Thank you very much for the response to the readership survey. We will take the constructive criticism to heart and incorporate suggestions where possible. Although, I feel a little like the old man and his son with the mule. You can't please all the people all the time, especially when some people ask for more Forum and others less. I hope you'll see you ideas at work in these pages. By far the most popular feature was The Congressional Page, so with luck Ken will continue to contribute.

For those of you who asked about how to send questions to publishers about their games, remember Greg Porter is collecting game questions for his answer man column, Patches. Send any questions to Greg Porter, BTRC, 44155 Sprengle Lane, Richmond, VA 23228.

Oh well, I'm afraid I must admit I don't know what all is in this issue. I'm sure Ken will find enough pages from all the stuff I've sent him to publish. Until next month, hang by your thumbs. —Budd

And now, here's Ken. All those who duitifully read the lower header first each month will already know that Marc Hurwitz will be editing the August edition while Budd is on vacation. With next month being our long-awaited Silly Games issue, what could be more appropriate?! So what is *your* favorite summer silly game? Wabbit Wampage? Junta? Awful Green Things from Outer Space? Snit's Revenge? Suburban Slasher? Cosmic Encounters? Subway Vigilante? By the term "silly game," we do not mean that the game is necessarily simple or simplistic. We *certainly* don't mean to infer that it is not a worthwhile game to play even when *not* played during an August backyard cookout accompanied by lots of beer. A good silly game will have at its core a tongue firmly implanted in cheek. So let us hear about your favorite or three, eh? We will gladly retype any submissions with suds and hamburger grease stains appropriately applied. Remember, send your submissions to Marc. —Ken



...*Politesse*: Once Again Tops In Its Class!

### HavaGame

**Vertigo Games, August 29 & 30** – Long time PoliSubber, Brad Wilson, will be hosting another weekend game fest, this time, no, not in North Caroline, but in Paoli, Pennsylvania (just outside Philadelphia). His parents will be out of time, and have asked Brad to take appropriate care of the family mansion. Needless to

say, all shoats invited. If you are interested, contact Brad at 302 Friendship Dr., Paoli, PA 19301. Home ph.# (215) 696-3880, work ph.# (215) 688-3000, ext. 127.

Additional HavaGames still needed for August and September!

Typically, *Politesse* is edited by Budd Haemer, 1758 Dogwood Dr., Alexandria, VA 22302. Next issue, however, will be wholly edited by Marc Hurwitz, typically only lowly Assistant Editor. Send silly game submissions, and whatever else you have for print, to Marc at Warthog Labs, P.O. Box 191, Owings Mills, MD 21117. To subscribe to *Politesse*, send 57¢ per month/issue, for however many months/issues you want, to Ken Peel at 8708 First Ave. #T-2, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

# HadaGame

## DixieCon Report

by David McCrumb

*(Marc Hurwitz here. Dave McCrumb has sent us his observations on this year's DixieCon, as well as a copy of his fine 'zine, The Appalachian General. TAG is "a monthly publication from Davalan Press. TAG is devoted to the playing of diplomatic games. Variants are the main focus, but there are always several games of regular Diplomacy for the purists. There are currently game openings (see below). Standby players are also welcome at all times. A subscription to TAG is 75¢ per issue, or 15 issues for \$10 if paid in advance. The editor and publisher of TAG is: David K. McCrumb, Route 1, Box 109, New Castle, VA 24127. Phone: 703-864-6501. We will not only be printing the review Dave set unto us, but also an excerpt from the longer review he printed in TAG. And now, here's Dave:)*

The first DixieCon was held over the Memorial Day weekend at Dean Smith College (more commonly known as the University of North Carolina). The attendance was in the vicinity of 25 people; however, the experience and the quality of the participants was very high. There were a total of eight games of Diplomacy played, over three rounds. Also, there was a three-game Gunboat Diplomacy tournament held Saturday night.

There were several big surprises this year. The most remarkable was the ease with which Austria grabbed top honors as greatest Great Power. Also Italy captured second place by a large margin over the remaining five Great Powers. The Austrian and Italian players overcame their positional handicap by a fanatic pursuit of excellence. Both managed to get three 2-way draws: Austria with Russia, Turkey, and Italy; Italy with England, France, and, of course, Austria. (ie. five of the games ended in 2-way draws). Austria beat Italy with an additional 3-way draw shared with England and France.

Germany did poorly. Dan Sellers managed to win as Germany; the only win of the con. The other games saw German finishes so poor that they sill ranked as the Worst Power in the tournament. The only other good performance as Germany was a 3-way draw with Russia and Turkey.

The ranks of the powers were: Austria, Italy, England, France, Turkey, Russia, and Germany. The four middle powers each managed one 2-way and one 3-way draw.

The top individual scorer was Morgan Gurley of Charlotte, NC. He edged out Rob McCarter for the victory by recording a 12 center 2-way draw and a 13 center 2-way draw as Turkey and Russia respectively. Rob could only manage two 12 center 2-way draws as Austria and Italy.

The scoring system favored a powerful finish rather than a

victory or draw. Because of the system, Bill Hunter managed to tie Dan Sellers for sixth place by three survivals of third, third, and fourth places. Dan, who recorded the only victory, had two finishes of fifth and sixth place. I feel that the scoring system was ridiculous as the goal of the game is to win, not to survive. A survival should be rewarded, but not to the extent that it was done here.

Saturday night, a Gunboat Diplomacy tournament was held to allow those wishing a break from all the diplomizing. These games were played, and once again Morgan Gurley came out on top. he had a 4-way draw as Italy and a victory as France. The third game also ended in a French victory.

*(Marc here again. Dave went into more dept in TAG about the Gunboat tournament; I'd like to print some of his review now:)*

The only thing I remember about the game was Chris Kiker (who was Austria) telling me about half way through the game that he was going to blitz the rampaging Russians because he didn't want Morgan Gurley to win this game also. Unfortunately for his (Chris') plans, Morgan was Italy, not Russia, and he followed the Austrian units and picked up his centers unopposed.

*(Back again. Pretty funny, eh? playing for spite, envy, or malice can be fun, but in gunboat it's futile.)*

These games took much longer than was originally intended. As a result the variant "Skinny Dip" (*Diplomacy World* #42) will be used instead. The players enjoyed it too much to drop it altogether, so a compromise will be attempted.

Over all, this was a very well-run competition. The only problems were not the fault of the coordinator. These included a scheduling conflict with incoming Freshmen at orientation (*what problem? At Misckatonic U., Freshmen were seen and not heard—Marc*) and the campus police trying to evict us early. The smoothness of the convention gave it a very pleasant and friendly atmosphere. A great deal of credit goes to David Hood, who I understand won DipCon this year.

I would like to encourage more Warthogs to attend DixieCon next year. It was a lot of fun, and would be an excellent warm-up for DipCon. There is also the possibility that they may put in a bid to host DipCon in 1989.

*(Thanks for the review, Dave. I'm sure Warthog's representation at DixieCon will be larger at next year's DixieCon. In fact, I may even produce a second Dick Martin clone to compete next year.)*

## ROLE PLAYING GAMES

Micheal Van Wie has sent in the following suggestions in response to our survey:

"Please Bud (sic) stop the wisecracks about D&D players. They are very annoying and I know at least a few of your readers who play."

Not to worry. I have gone to my refrigerator and thoroughly counselled the beer about its behavior. The beer will make no more comments about D&D.

However, my feelings about D&D are a little more deep seated. It comes from a mispent youth, thinking D&D was pretty neat stuff. I still consider D&D fun occasionally; however, I have discovered real wargames.

Per the dictionary, a wargame is "an instructive game in which figures representing troops, guns, etc. are moved about a terrain model or map in simulation of actual military maneuvers."

(Marc here. Per the dictionary, a bud is "Any immature person or thing". Interesting, no?)

In D&D, there is very little simulation of actual military maneuvers. Consider the concepts of hit points and damage. A high level character can take more punishment than your typical battleship and still fight as effectively on the verge of death as when fresh. As much fun as D&D is, it will never be a wargame.

This is not to say that fantasy role-playing games cannot also be wargames. For example, I am currently involved in a campaign of Beast, Men, and Gods (not to be confused with Beastmen & Gods- Marc), aka BMG. The combat system is much more intellectually satisfying. The system allows for blows to specific body parts. Unlike D&D where when you buy a helmet it improves your protection all over, in BMG a helmet only protects your head. In addition, armor in BMG acts correctly. Unlike D&D where better armor makes you harder to hit, in BMG, better armor makes you easier to hit, reflecting reduced mobility. The advantage of armor is that it absorbs some damage. However, your armor coverage must be fairly even, as a massive helmet will not keep your arms from getting lopped off.

So anyway, although role-playing games are my first love, I must continue to hold that D&D is not a wargame. The combat system in D&D is so simplified to be unrealistic and it adds many unrealisms to the game. (Marc here- maybe that's why it's a fantasy game. If you want reality, try Drovers & Ditchdiggers, a computer RPG coming soon from WARTHOG LABS). Now that I've become more sophisticated, the unrealisms impair my enjoyment of the game.

But now, with a little (a lot!- M.H.) indulgence from my readers, I will branch out to the kind of Haddagame not usually seen in these pages- a Haddagame of

B E A S T S, M E N, A N D G O D S !

# Hada Game

THE CARAVAN by Budd Haemer

There were four in the party; two fighters, an elf and a wizard. The wizard, Seymour, was just learning his trade and was not very powerful, although he could whip up a mean fog on demand. The elf, Eldritch, was a fair shot with a bow and fairly handy with his magic rapier. He was trying to refine his theiving skills. One of the fighters, Rodger, was an accomplished woodsman and heavily armed and armored, he was clearly the most powerful member of the party. The other fighter, a half-orc, was big and strong, but dumb. His awful table manners earned him the name Atrocious Fungus.

The party followed the Dwarvish Ambassador into the bar. Their timely intervention in the last bar had saved the Ambassador from assassination; however, it had earned them the ire of the City Guard. Now they needed employ that would take them from the city, quickly. The Ambassador was looking for guards for a caravan of mules that was carrying gold ~~from~~ the city to the Dwarf Kingdom. A deal was struck.

To show his appreciation, the Ambassador ordered food and drink for all. Fungus was making his usual mess. In addition, because of a slight racial prejudice and half-orc's notoriously insensitive palette, the barkeep had served Fungus vinegar instead of wine. When Fungus complained about the wine's flavor, the barkeep assured him the wine was the bar's finest. The other members of the party held their breath. Fungus has a terrible temper and another encounter with the City Guard would land them all in jail, at best.

Fungus grabbed the bottle, clearly labelled VINEGAR and shouted, "The finest in the bar? It says VAN - A - JAR. It must be one of those fancy foreign wines. It's too rich for me."

He looked around the bar and his eye settled on a table with three powerful warriors enjoying a rich meal. One looked like a sea captain. In fact, they probably were pirates. The bottle of just-opened wine on their table was clearly not vinegar. Fungus strode over to the table, plunked down his bottle of vinegar and grabbed their bottle. Staring into the eyes of the meanest-looking of the three, Fungus exclaimed, "You three look more entitled to the finest wine in the house than lowly me. I'll just take this cheap stuff the barkeep is palming off on you in trade."

With that, Fungus returned to his table and his meal; oblivious to the commotion he had generated. Eldritch looked over at the three warriors, any one of which could make mince meat of the party. They were standing by their table fingering their weapons. Men of Action, and soon they would act. Eldritch shrugged his shoulders. Cleaning up after Atrocious Fungus was a full time occupation. Eldritch hurried over to the three warriors.

"Kind sirs, please forgive my friends's behavior and accept this token as payment for any damages," asked Eldritch, offering a coin worth easily five times the value of the wine.

The more sinister-looking warrior grumbled, "ou should pick your freinds more carefully."

"Yes, sir. I'd like to talk to you about tha . ." So under the guise of apologizing for Fungus's atrocious behavior, Eldritch arranged with the three warriors for an ambush of the Dwarf's gold caravan in exchange for a split. Then Eldritch returned to the table.

Eventually the time came to part ways with the Dwarf Ambassador and prepare for departing the next day with the caravan. The Ambassador

had hired two more guards for the caravan. One, a dwarf, Smitty, was a powerful fighter in his own right. The other, another elf, Lillge, was skilled in archery.

Each member of the party went their own separate ways to make their last minute purchases in preparation for leaving town the next day before turning into the rooms the Ambassador had arranged for them. Eldritch, however, had other ~~plans~~ <sup>plans</sup>. He questioned the townspeople about the specifics of the caravan, obtained scrap lead and iron, bought mulepacks similar to those of the caravan to hold the scrap and hid them outside of town. He managed to sneak about an hour's sleep in the mule's stable.

The caravan left the next morning for the three days journey to the Dwarf Kingdom. Only the twelve mules and the six guards were in the caravan. Once out of town and near where he had hid the packs of scrap metal, Eldritch called the caravan to a halt.

"I have hid scrap lead and iron near here. We can replace half the gold in these sacks with the lead and iron. Then we keep the gold for ourselves."

Smitty voiced an objection. "The Dwarves are powerful and have long memories. They will realize we have ripped them off and hunt us down." There was general agreement in the party with Smitty.

Eldritch responded, "Two days down this road, I have arranged for an ambush. They will steal the gold and scrap from us. No one will be the wiser."

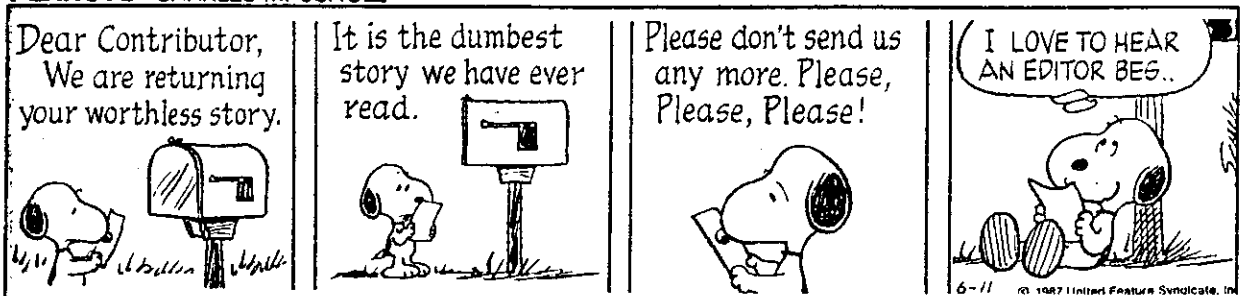
There was now general agreement in the party with Eldritch. They turned to for the work of hiding half the gold of the caravan. However, they quickly discovered the mules only had copper in their packs. Obviously, the caravan was a decoy. The real gold was moved by some other means. Eldritch remembered a statement from one of the townspeople which now had an ominous ring, "Oh, yeah, there is always different guards for each caravan."

Also, Eldritch realized that the warriors waiting in ambush would not see the humor in the situation. They were quite likely to take these developments quite personally.

THINGS WERE LOOKING VERY BLEAK.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

**PEANUTS** CHARLES M. SCHULZ



# Charm City Choo-Choo

Introduction by Doug Byrnes

For the glory of the Pig he did battle, and won Rail Baron Championships at Atlanticon and Origins. For the enlightenment of Hog he laid bare his treasured secrets of that game. And now, so that all swine might share his transcendental knowledge of a new and more challenging contest, Choo-Choo impresario Ed Fahrmeier presents 1830. Since WARTHOG is indebted to Ed for these and other contributions, I say a show of appreciation is in order. All able-bodied shoats should journey to Ed's *spacious new home* in the lovely Maryland countryside to thank him, and, of course, play his favorite game. But in the meantime, here is a brief sequence of play for shoats unfamiliar with 1830.

There are only two phases in the game: the share dealing round (SDR) and the operating round (OR). These alternate until the bank runs out of money, at which point the richest player wins.

In the SDR each player may, in turn, execute stock transactions with the bank. During his turn a player may sell as many shares as he wishes and/or buy one share. A player may pass his turn. The SDR ends when all players pass.

In the OR, each active company is operated in turn by its president. The president of a company is the player who owns the most shares in that company. During a company's OR, its president performs these actions:

- May place one track tile at a railroad
- May use company funds to purchase a (very) limited number of station markers for placement in large cities.
- Using company engine(s) and track rights, makes runs for revenue.
- Must either keep all earnings in the company treasury or distribute all earnings to the shareholders.
- Using company funds, may buy engine(s) from the bank or from another company.

***Happy railroading!***



## AN INTRODUCTION TO 1830

by Marc Hurwitz

You are about to read an excellent article on 1830 by the Master himself, Dr. Choo-choo (aka Ed Fahrmeier). As co-editor I had the opportunity to read it before you would, and I have enjoyed it immensely. It is well-written and sheds light on elements of the game I hadn't even dreamt of.

To prepare the uninitiated, this article will explain a few of the rules of 1830 so that Ed's observations on strategies won't be completely lost. Of course, without having read the rules and played the game you will be unable to fully appreciate Dr. Choo-choo's wisdom, so I urge all shoats who haven't tried 1830 to do so at their first opportunity.

### HOW RAILROADS ARE OWNED:

Each of 10 publicly owned railroads has 9 stock certificates, 8 representing control of 10% of the corporation and 1 representing 20% of the corporation. Initially a railroad's shares are unowned and have no set value. Over the course of time the shares will be owned by different players and by the "pool"- ie. the mass of investors of the stock exchange. Whoever owns the most shares in the railroad is the director. He controls the actions of the railroad, and gets to use the 20% certificate in lieu of two ordinary certificates. Since there is a limit to the number of certificates a player is allowed to own, it is advantageous to own the "director's share"- the 20% certificate.

### HOW RAILROADS ARE RUN:

On a railroad's turn, the director of the railroad will first build or improve the railroad's tracks. He will then place, if he wishes, ~~one~~ of the railroad's station markers in a city he has access to, preventing other railroads from passing through that city. Next, the trains of the railroads make runs. Each train may pass through a number of stops equal to the value of a train. A "5" train may stop at 5 cities; a "2", 2, and so on. No track may be run over more than once per turn by a railroad. Diesels can go an unlimited # of stops (until reaching an opponent's station marker or running out of places to go). The railroad collects money for each city its trains stop at. The money can be spent to buy new trains, or to lay track across rivers or through mountains. It can also be paid out in dividends to the owners, with each certificate owner getting 10% of the payout. (The 20% certificate gets 20%, natch.) After making runs with its trains, the railroad may pay out dividends or put the money into treasury. Finally, the railroad may buy trains- either from the bank, or from other railroads. A railroad must have a train at all times, even if the director must pay for it himself. As more modern trains are purchased from the bank older trains "evaporate", which can leave unprepared or poor railroads (and their directors!) in an embarrassing situation.

## RAILROAD TRACK

The "tracks" are tiles, laid on a hexagonal grid of the north-east US. Laying tiles is possible for a railroad only when the hex the tile is to be placed in connects to existing tiles which form a track leading back to a station marker of that railroad. Originally, only simple tiles, with curves or straight lines (no forks or interconnections) are available. These tiles are yellow. As more trains are bought from the bank, technology advances, and green tiles, with simple forks, are available. There are a limited number of each type of tile (gentle curve, straight line/sharp curve left fork, etc.) so that opportunities are limited to what tiles remain. A green tile may only be placed on an existing yellow tile. Finally brown tiles, with the most complex interconnections, become available. It doesn't cost money to place tiles, unless you are placing a yellow tile on a river or mountain hex.

## PRIVATE COMPANIES

These are railroads which have but one certificate, for 100% of value. They do not buy trains, lay track, etc. All they do is prevent a public railroad from placing a tile in their hex. Also, they pay out a fixed sum (say \$15) to their owner each turn, guaranteeing a minimum income. Eventually, like older trains, they "evaporate".

Private companies may be sold by individuals to other individuals, or to public railroads. A public railroad owning a private railroad collects the private railroad's money into its treasury. It may also lay its tile on the private railroad's hex.

Each private company has a special feature, which gives it value beyond the income it produces. The Schuylkill Valley is cheap. The Champlain & St. Lawrence is cheap. The Delaware and Hudson allows a public railroad which owns it to place a station marker on the D&H hex. This marker allows the public railroad to effectively run two different networks- one on the public's original hex, and one out of the D&H hex. The Mohawk and Hudson may, at any time, be turned in by its owner (if the owner is a player and not a public company) to the bank in exchange for a free share of the New York Central public railroad, if any are available. The Camden & Amboy railroad comes with one share in the Pennsylvania Railroad (a public railroad). The Baltimore & Ohio private company comes with the director's certificate of the Baltimore & Ohio public railroad. However, once the Baltimore & Ohio public railroad begins to operate, the private company "evaporates" leaving its owner "only" with 20% of the B&O public railroad.

## HOW THE GAME BEGINS

Each player gets a sum of money. The private companies are auctioned off. One player now owns one share of the Penn., and one player now owns the 20% director's certificate of the B&O. These



players are now cash-poor relative to the other players. The player to the left of the last player to buy a private company may now buy a share in any of 10 public companies. The first player to buy a share from the bank of any particular company sets the par value- the cost of those shares that remain. The first certificate purchased must be the 20% certificate, which naturally costs twice par. The players then proceed to buy stock in the bank until no player has bought any stock for one complete turn around the table.

If 5 certificates (60% of value) of a public company has been sold, then that company becomes active. If less than 5 certificates have been sold, then those people who invested in that railroad are unhappy, and must wait till next turn (after all active railroads have operated).

Players may not sell stock in public companies to each other.

#### HOW THE STOCK MARKET WORKS

The stock market value display is a 2 dimensional grid, with markers for each active railroad on it. Each box in the grid has a value in it- the value for each 10% of stock a player sells to the "pool". The railroad's marker moves to the right (towards higher values) each time the railroad pays a dividend. Each time a railroad fails to pay a dividend, the marker moves to the left. If, at the end of a share-dealing round all shares in a railroad are owned by players (ie. all have been bought from the bank and none are in the "pool"), the marker moves up, towards higher values. Each time a player sells a share to the pool, the marker moves down. A player may sell any number of shares to the pool at once, and the marker moves down the number of shares sold although the player receives the same value (the value in the box the marker started at) for all shares sold.

However, shares may be bought, either from the bank or from the pool, only one at a time. The bank sells shares at the original par value; the pool, the current stock market value.

No more than half the shares bought from the bank in a particular company may be in the pool at any time. Once  $\frac{1}{2}$  are in the pool more may not be sold to the pool.

Once a stock value goes far down and/or to the left, it enters first the yellow, then the orange, and finally the brown zones. Depending on the zone, these penny-stocks may be bought more than one at a time, may not count against the total number of certificates owned by a player, etc.

A player may not buy stock in a company in the same share-dealing round he sold stock in it. A player exchanges two ordinary certificates for the director's certificate as soon as he owns more shares in a company than the (former) director.

There you have it. Read Ed's article now, and enjoy!

# My Favorite Railroad

by Ed Fahrmeier, Ph.R.R.

**1830.** This is a great game. Buy this game. Most importantly, this game has Dr. Choo-Choo's Seal of Quality as a suitable railroad endeavor. It requires a good blend of capitalist chicanery and sustained analysis that gives scope to the exercise of WARTHOG virtue, yet it gives some protection to true-hearted swine from ugly betrayal and vicious back-stabbing common in that game some piglets still play in uncivilized moods (R.I.P. Dip?). It isn't similar to any other game (except **1829**, its English cousin), but it is well designed and is currently my personal favorite.

**1830** is one of the best games for four to six players, with opportunities to win present throughout much of the game, even for players not leading at the early stages of the game. Experience and skill allow good players to recognize and seize opportunities that aren't always available at the beginning of the game. **1830** also is one of the best multi-player games in which ganging up on the leader to prevent a win is difficult to engineer (if you'll pardon the expression), and in which solid alliances with other players usually aren't necessary.

There are alliances and economic struggles between players and corporations, but because of the interlocking character of ownership of corporations, it is seldom possible to make moves that benefit only one player at the expense of the rest. More typically, the long term benefits and costs to each player of each move are difficult to predict in a complicated economic environment.

The first-time player, however, is at a disadvantage among experienced players simply because the experienced players should have an improved sense of recognizing the better opportunities. Chance is involved only in the determination of the arrangement of players for the share dealing phases of the game. An experienced player has an advantage in dealing immediately after a novice player who is more likely to buy and sell the wrong shares. Similarly, a novice player is disadvantaged by dealing immediately after an experienced player since fewer good deals will be available.

The game has a nice "feel" to it. Careful planning and analysis pay off, yet there is enough variety spawned by the various players' actions to present

interesting challenges. Each player is likely to have different ideas about what actions are in his own best interest. I haven't played the game with only two or three players; I'm not sure what it would be like. With only four players, each has much more control over his own fate than in a five or six person game. A six-player game is particularly tricky in that each has little money and control, yet must make difficult decisions. Games with fewer players are recommended for novices.

As to the finer points of the play of the game, I have some specific comments in the following areas: 1) the private companies, 2) the special characteristics of each corporation, 3) general strategies for running corporations, 4) understanding some of the critical limits built into the game, 5) miscellaneous scoundrels, and 6) final thoughts on successful play.

## The Private Companies

In general, the private companies are good investments, but they must be unloaded before they lose their worth or become liabilities because of certificate limits. The face values are approximately correct in games with four or less players, but in games with more players there are other factors to consider. Simply stated, purchasers of the three most expensive private companies are at the mercy of other players, who begin the game with more available cash. A player buying the Camden & Amboy for, say, \$200, has only \$200 left to buy shares. Some other player with \$400 is likely to gain the presidency of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Setting a Pennsylvania par value of \$67 per share is obviously going to hurt the C & A holder compared to setting par at \$90. Similarly, while a high par value of Baltimore and Ohio shares will protect one's initial investment, other players can turn to cheaper stocks, leaving the B & O president with just a private company.

The Schuylkill Valley (SVR): Buy at \$15 or less, particularly if the purchase results in an opportunity to get another private company you want immediately at a low price. The revenue for the SVR isn't bad, but better companies are available via bids.

The Champlain & St. Lawrence (C&St.L.): This

company can be critical because of its control of the station marker in the D&H hex. The Chesapeake and Ohio need this station to get into New York City early in the game and the New York, New Haven, and Hartford needs the station to head west. The Pennsylvania, Canadian Pacific, and the Baltimore and Ohio could also make use of this hex to place a station marker. Corporations with the most station markers have the most to gain by placing a \$100 station marker in a good location for only the price of the D&H and the \$120 for the mountain building fee. This is definitely a fun company to have and it's worth a bit more than face value.

The Mohawk and Hudson (M&H): The M&H is a good investment at face value, but the hex it commands isn't very valuable to any corporation except the New York Central (NYC). Since it can only be exchanged to get a NYC share rather than sold to a corporation, its resale is limited to individual players. I don't think it is worth a premium.

The Camden and Amboy (C&A): The C&A is a great investment at face value since even a par value of \$67 for the Pennsylvania results in \$25 a turn on a \$93 investment. As a result, the C&A is often sold for a premium. However, as I have noted, a high purchase price for the C&A can result in embarrassment for the C&A owner. The resale value for the C&A is generally quite good and the corporation that gains control of the C&A—usually the Pennsylvania or the Baltimore and Ohio—can place the tile to its advantage in getting to New York City. Like the D&H, the C&A gives its owner some valuable options.

The Baltimore & Ohio (B&O): As a private company, the B&O has relatively little to recommend it. The \$30 it earns each turn won't make up for the retardation of early growth and the possibility that the Pennsylvania will make the corporate life of the B&O cramped. Eventually, other players will make the B&O float as a corporation and the company will end. Of course, buying the B&O private company is the only way to get the president's certificate, but par has to be high to protect one's initial investment. A player has to want the B&O corporation to buy this company, but a good player wouldn't pay much over face value for the company.

The private companies usually get distributed evenly among the players, but it is possible for a player to either be heavily invested in private companies or cut out completely. Heavy investment in private companies usually gives control of the early starting railroads to others. Good cash flow leads to

some good chances to start a corporation in turns four or five because one is likely to have more cash than others, but liquidation of one's few corporate shares will probably be necessary to make the big move. Unloading the C&A at this time to a corporation is also a good idea to get cash.

In contrast, players cut out of private companies have the best chance to control the corporation of their choice. Since cash flow will generally be low at first, these players will have to either sit tight on long term investments or plan a massive share liquidation to raise cash for major moves. Since such major moves should only be made if the corporation is in horrible financial trouble, timing must be perfect for such a move to succeed.

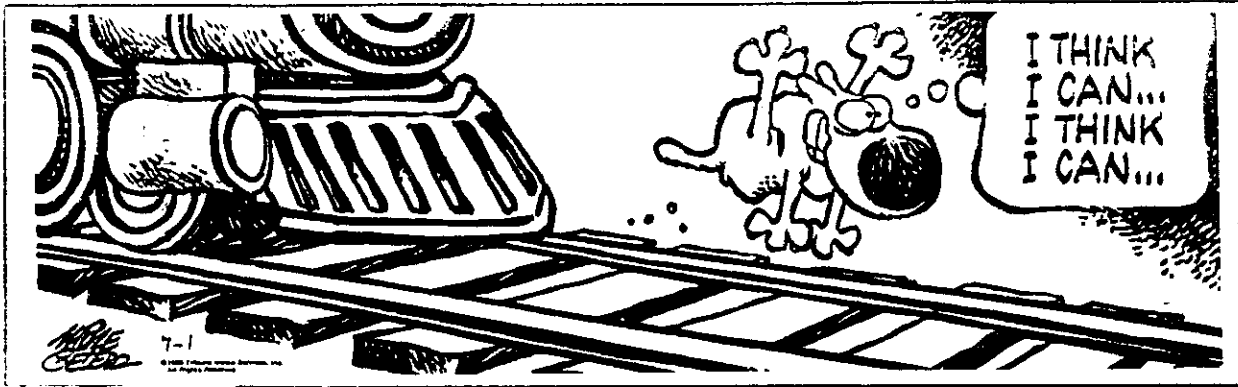
## The Corporations

The Pennsylvania Railroad (PA): The PA is disadvantaged by low revenues in the early stages of the game, but it typically is the dominant railroad in the game. It almost always gets started in the first turn. The PA has sufficient station markers and should play two of them in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The PA should get into New York City and Chicago and should be able to use big engine power at the end of the game. Both a "5" and a "6" engine are ideal, but a diesel usually can be profitable. While the PA can usually make an alliance with either the Chesapeake and Ohio or the Baltimore and Ohio for purposes of route enhancement, its own interests should be carefully protected.

The New York Central (NYC): The NYC is very disadvantaged at the early stage of the game. It has the worst available routes on the board until the "3" engines are in play, and thus it is a poor choice for a very early start. The corporation has to make its way into the territories of other railroads to do well. The best possibilities are around Buffalo and Toronto or Chicago since simple blocks will keep the NYC out of Philadelphia and its environs. Local cooperation is usually necessary to exploit any area. There are possibilities, but the railroad is difficult to play well.

The Canadian Pacific (CP): The CP is a nice isolated railroad: deadly dull to own and run. It is well suited for the lean-engined, steady-dividend, high-stock-value strategy to be discussed later. The corporation can also be run in the manner of an expansion-minded NYC, particularly if it buys the D&H. This play fills the New York area with hostile railroads and makes life difficult for all.

The Baltimore and Ohio (B&O): The B&O can



have a very cramped game unless it breaks into the PA territory early. An early grab of Philadelphia is a joy and should be attempted if the B&O has a chance. The B&O has to defend against a PA-C&O alliance by getting a station marker on the "H" tier or above. Shares are usually good investments if the corporation is going to be started immediately, but I find the price for becoming president a bit steep.

The Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O): The C&O is the great track laying railroad. It has good revenues early in the game but, like the PA, always seems to need more engines, more money, or both. Running the C&O is a roller coaster ride. Investors will typically dump the stock after five or six turns to buy other stocks in anticipation of the C&O stock value decline due to frequent withholding of dividends in turns six through 11. Of course, this corporation can be run leanly, but the C&O is a diesel type railroad and, as a result, timing of savings for the purchase of new equipment is very critical. The best time to save is when revenues are high to minimize the number of times dividends are withheld.

The Erie: Does your spine tingle when you hear the word? It should. Beware of the Erie. It's a lot safer to be president of the Erie than to invest in it. This is particularly true if the president also controls another company. If the Erie starts late in the game with a par of \$100, you can be sure that a diesel will be bought and then sold to another company with smarter investors. The Erie is a nice second or third corporation to control; its success depends on the friendly assistance of other corporations.

The New York, New Haven, and Hartford (NYNH&H): This is a nice local railroad. With a little luck it can place its station marker in a nearby spot like the D&H or the NYC hex and set up a good "5" engine run into New York City (south) or Boston. There are good breakout possibilities to

the west, but saving for a diesel with this railroad doesn't usually make sense. The tile placements to the northeast and west of New York City are critical for this railroad. Try to keep the NYC player from making trouble.

The Boston and Maine (B&M): This is also a nice little railroad, but its breakout potential is less than the NYNH&H. In addition, mountain crossing is often necessary. It is a nice second railroad, particularly when the NYC or NYNH&H is one of the other corporations controlled.

If I can't get my favorites, I'll take the best of what is available; being president of several railroads is what the game is about. At the beginning of the game there is usually only enough capital to start three or four railroads. If the president's share in one of the more popular corporations isn't available, it makes sense to buy single shares rather than buy the president's share of another new corporation if there isn't enough capital to get the new corporation started. Investor confidence is an important element here. The more experienced players are likely to get financial backing.

### Corporate Strategy

The design of the game is such that carefully and conservatively-run corporations have the highest stock values at the end of the game. For such corporations, dividends might be lower on a particular turn than for more grandiose corporations, but the dividends are more steady than those of corporations that save to invest in big engines, particularly the diesels. Let's look at the economics.

Suppose A, B, and C corporations have identical stock value of \$126 on the highest row of the stock market chart. Each has enough money to buy a "5" train. Corporation A buys the "5" and operates it for dividend distribution of \$25 a share until the

end of the game in perhaps 10 turns. Each share would be worth \$350 plus \$250 for the dividends (\$600).

Corporation B saves two turns and by then, as if by magic, a diesel is available and he has a "4" train to trade. He buys the diesel. His revenue is, say, \$50 a turn for eight turns (\$400) but his shares are worth only \$250 (\$650). There are some important "ifs" in this calculation, but the gains are small.

Corporation C buys the "5" engine and saves four turns to buy a diesel (making money somehow). Once the "5" and the diesel engines are at work the dividends are \$75 a share, but only for six turns. The total dividends are \$450 plus the share value of #180 (\$630).

If the game goes longer than 10 turns, the corporations equipped with diesels are favored; but a shorter game favors the conservative corporations. The game is finely tuned enough to make the decision of whether to save for diesels a very important one. Factors in this decision are whether the game will last long enough to make the diesel worthwhile and whether the high revenue routes will be available. The revenue estimates in the above calculations are by no means certain and poor timing of saving or of engine purchase can lead to great disaster. Railroads that often can use a diesel profitably are the NYC, C&O, PA and B&O. The other railroads are usually limited by territory, track, or station markers.

No one strategy is always perfect, but the conservative player has a good chance to win if the quality of his portfolio is high. On the other hand, a more opportunistic player who gets to control two or three corporations (possibly even a corporation with very low share value so he can exceed the certificate limits) often can win with proper engine management.

### Stages of Play: Dance of the Engines

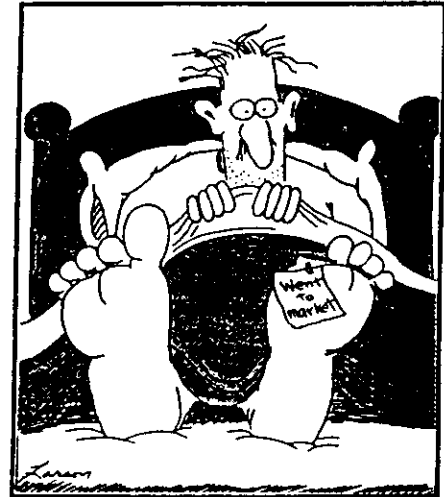
One of the most difficult aspects of the game for the novice is anticipating the changing conditions of the game. These changes simulate gradual modernization and increased complexity. The game is divided into phases in accord with the complexity of tiles and quality of engines available for purchase. For me there are three stages of the game which I'll refer to simply as the opening, middle and finishing stages.

The **opening stage** includes the initial stock pur-

chasing and initial tile laying operations of the game. Engines are plentiful and cheap ("2," "3" and "4" types); dividends are small but regular, and private capital is re-invested to buy more stock. The game looks simple at this point. Heavy investment in trains results in higher dividends, but a railroad often becomes cash poor if this is done.

The real challenge of the game is in the **middle stage** of the game. It is marked by increasing scarcity of engines and high prices for the "5" and "6" trains available. Often there is much action in the stock market as players jockey to improve their overall positions.

Players often sell shares of stocks of corporations with high value but are cash poor to start new corporations, but hold on to corporations with more cash. The



number of turns a corporation must save in order to purchase a new engine is critical for its eventual value. Presidents who start to accumulate too late sometimes have to dip into private capital.

Games are won or lost at this stage; the absence of an engine almost always spells disaster for a corporation and its president. The purchase of the two "6" trains and the first diesel will be made by the corporations run by players with a little good luck (sequence of turn taking is important) and a lot of accurate planning. These purchases squeeze all the remaining corporations.

The **finishing stage** of the game begins after the first diesel is sold. Successful companies are now fully equipped and merely laying a few more tiles. The also-rans are still scurrying to amass capital to buy diesels. Since there are only three "5" trains and two "6" trains, the purchase of a diesel or two is inevitable and only one player will get a cheap one. Seldom do diesel purchases made after the first one pay off, but players often have no other choice, as their existing engines have become obsolete.

## Other Critical Limits

A critical area, although less serious than that of engine purchase, is that of tile placement. Some blocking maneuvers with the non-station green and brown tiles are available to players that want to limit access to particular areas. Close study of the tiles available before it is the corporation's turn to move is sometimes warranted.

More obvious is the proper play of station tiles. Promoting tiles in the 57 to 14 or 15 to 63 sequence is one's own route results in a small but important edge in revenues and access. Placing the right tiles of the 64 to 68 set on the Camden hex can be very significant for the PA and B&O. The Erie and Toronto hexes can be exploited well or poorly (tile 67 is particularly appropriate for Toronto). Last but not least, the 1, 2, 55, 56 and 59 tiles are of tremendous importance in the development of the New York City area. A thoughtful player will spend some time analyzing the possible placement with an eye toward eventual route building.

Another important consideration involves station marker placement. Most corporations have enough markers with the exception of the B&M and the NYNH&H. I have seldom seen the PA, NYC, CP or Erie use all their station markers, while the B&O, and the C&O often need all their markers. I prefer open games with restrained use of station markers leading to big, productive diesel runs.

A final critical area is that of certificate limits. The certificate limits are, of course, lower as the number of players increases toward the maximum. A six player game is usually a very challenging game, as one has to work with fewer resources. One legal way to gain an advantage is to hold as many president's certificates as possible, thereby increasing the actual shares held. A person with two or three president's certificates becomes a favorite to win on shares alone, so the other players have to prevent any player from running three corporations. The other way to increase the number of shares held is to buy shares in the yellow and brown areas of the stock market. How to succeed at this brings us to the next topic.

## The Schemes, Scams and Swindles of Scoundrels

*(Information for honest players who need to know how to protect themselves from those who shouldn't be allowed to play with ladies and gentlemen...)*



Players running only a single corporation can usually be trusted not to ruin their own chances by mismanaging operations on purpose (sometime

s a little advice is necessary to prevent the shooting off of toes), but players running two or more can never be trusted. The most obvious ploy is to run one railroad to help another at the former's expense. Sometimes irate minority shareholders can often detect such an effort and do something about it. However, the more subtle operator also needs to be found out.

If a player holds six shares in one corporation and three in another, watch for signs that the second corporation is withholding dividends to buy an engine while the first corporation always pays dividends. A switch is in the offing. The second corporation will buy an engine, but the engine will quickly be bought by the first corporation at a reduced price. The second corporation will simply keep on saving or be dumped on the stock market. The best defense against this is to wrest the second corporation away from its evil president before the switch is made. This usually requires the good guys to hatch a takeover (convince the other shareholders that you are indeed the deserving president).

A second version of this scam is to gain control of one company deep into the brown or yellow areas of the stock chart. These stock shares aren't worth much, but often there are possibilities for these low value corporation through buying engines for rich sisters or themselves. Values are kept low so that shares don't have to be sold to meet limits, but there is no harm in timing dividend payments so that the stocks don't emerge from the yellow area until just after the last stock dealing round. A partial defense against this scheme is not buying minority shares of corporations without engines, and not buying shares of corporations which look likely to be abused. A second defense is to gang up on the abusive corporations to minimize revenues by blocking routes.

A third version is a true swindle. This is to start a

railroad like the Erie relatively late in the game. Set the share value at \$100 and convince everyone to buy a share or two (but not enough to take away the presidency). Three shares—the president's certificate plus another—are usually enough to pull this one off. If the Erie floats, the \$1000 (with an added \$100 of personal money) buys a diesel is transferred at once. No track is laid and no other engine is ever bought. With a little luck the villain will get to unload his three shares for \$76 each. The best defense here is not to invest; second best is to build a line into Buffalo so the Erie has a run and has to buy an engine. A lot of cooperation may be needed to accomplish this task for an unwilling president.

There is also the scheme of selling shares to lower stock values. This has the effect of reducing the options of the remaining players holding that stock in selling and buying. However, this doesn't affect the long term value of the stock a great deal. Also, it assists the long term investor who wants to pick

up cheap shares. If the seller has a better deal available, the selling has to be done, but such trading should be evaluated in view of long term gain for oneself rather than temporary pain to others.

### Thoughts for Successful Play

Winning *1830* depends on careful planning and taking advantage of opportunities when they occur. Resorting to the worst swindles may result in a victory in a particular game, but since each of us usually plays with the same pool of players repeatedly, reputations develop. There is a considerable advantage to any player who can get other players to invest in the corporations he controls, particularly in the initial share dealing round. Later divisions of corporate funds should be on the conservative side so as to be dismissed as merely good business. Always remember that the free enterprise system that made America great is being simulated in your dining room, and there is a proud tradition of honesty to maintain. Please don't disappoint posterity.



*HaddaGame* (Until Budd becomes Bud, Haddagames will not be Hadagames!)

## *1830: Hurwitz Strikes Back!*

by Marc Hurwitz

In our last *Forum*, I apologised to Ed Fahrmeier for my poor play at the "This Budd's For You" games, and promised to "bring every iota of my genius to bear, and will be a more credible opponent" next time. Well, last May Ed (being desparate for Players) forgave me and invited me to his new hous in Woodbine for a game of *1830*. I accepted.

Four of ust sat down to play: Ed, myself, Doug Byrnes, and Ron Etzel. I, as assistant editor for *Politesse*, had already read the superb *1830* analysis Ed had written, and which appears in this issue. Not only was I determined to do my best, but I also hoped to apply the principles of the article to my play.

In the initial stock dealing round, Ed and Doug bid the B&O very high. Ed bought it but was pinched for capital thereafter (I speak of the private B&O). Doug had also bought a private company—the Camden & Alboy. I bought the SVRNC and the Delaware & Hudson. Ron bought the C&SL and the Mohawk-hudson line.

At this point a strange series of events occurred. Doug set the par value of the Pennsylvania (the public railroad he was trying to float) at \$100. Ed set the value of the B&O public company at \$100. I set the value of the C&O, which I had staked out to be my first railroad, at \$100. And Ron decided to go the Canadian Pacific route and set the par value at \$82.

Because of the high par values, and the money spent on the private companies, there was not enough to float all the railroads. Ron singlemindedly tried to float CanPac; remembering the fate of CanPac in the last

game, no one helped him. I made a strategic decision and made a deal with Ed. I promised to help him float the B&O *now* for his promise to help me float the C&O later. No one then helped Doug start the Pennycy.

The result of all this is that for the first four operating rounds, the only public company in operation was the B&O. The only public railroads paying dividends was the B&O. Only Ed and I were receiving the dividends. More importantly, Doug and Ron had put all their initial capital into non-productive stocks, which gave Ed and I a big advantage.

The fifth operating round saw the CanPac get started. The sixth saw the C&O and the Pennycy start simultaneously. At this point I made my second strategic decision. I saw that the Pennycy and the C&O could cooperate much more effectively and hurt the B&O more than either the C&O or Pennycy could work with the B&O against the other. Doug realized this too, and from that point onwards we combined our rail networks and worked to cut off the B&O. I began selling off my B&O.

Due to the reluctance to buy new engines (and thereby make obsolete one's old engines) the game progressed slowly. I extended the C&O's reach by opening an eastern station at the site of the Delaware & Hudson private railroad. Doug started his second railroad, the New York Central, after round eight. Ed started his second railroad, the NYNHC, at the end of round ten. He was delayed because neither Doug nor I would help him float the company. Ron did a much better job of running the CanPac than I had done in the previous game, but was never able to accumulate the capital to start a second railroad.

The two remaining railroads were the Eire and the Boston & Maine. The B&M had a poor starting location, whereas the Eire would fit well into the C&O's network. Fortunately, I was able to grab the directorship for the Eire before Doug, who had to settle for the B&M. The advantage of directing two railroads is the flexibility in purchasing engines and transferring them from one company to another.

These last two railroads got started before round 12, the crucial round in which the #6 engines and the diesel engines appeared. We had been avoiding buying these high-tech engines because they would cause the #3 and #4 types to "vanish," crippling our railroads. Instead, we had been feverishly amassing capital within our companies (instead of paying it out in dividends) so that we could buy the high-tech engines in quantity when they did become available. This capital-accumulation stage of *1830* is analogous to a long game of brinkmanship. In this game, it was I who first went over the brink.

The Eire started at a par value of \$100, giving it \$1,000 to play with. The Boston & Maine similarly had a par value of \$100. So, both Doug and I had an influx of capital to buy new engines. Because I got the Eire going first, I went first. The Eire bought a #6 train from the bank, and a #5 train (for a great deal of money) from the C&O. With the purchase of the #6, all #3's disappeared, crippling my opponents' railroads. Of course, the C&O was without an engine either, but with the money it had gotten from the Eire, plus the money it had accumulated over the last few rounds, it was able to buy the first diesel, eliminating all #4's and further crippling my opponents. They would be forced to, in some cases, dip into their own pockets (and not just the pockets of the companies they controlled) to buy modern engines.

Three more rounds of operations followed. With our five railroads laying track, Doug and I thwarted Ed's drive to extend the B&O to Chicago. At one point Doug made the cruel remark, "you can still make it to the Gulf, Ed." He then looked and saw that even this modest goal was beyond the B&O's reach, and said, "oh, no you can't." Whaddaguy.

Final stock values were: B&O \$350, NYC \$240, Eire \$225, C&O \$225, CanPac \$180, NYNHC \$140, Pennycy \$142. However, when the value of the last three dividends is added to the final value of the stock, a truer picture of the relative strengths of the railroads' worths is given: B&O \$476, C&O \$441, NYC \$300, Eire \$300, Pennycy \$326, CanPac \$243, NYNHC \$209. I didn't even record the Boston & Maine as I never owned any and its dividends never got over \$8 per share, compared to the average of \$33.25. The best dividend was the C&O's \$71 per share, followed by the Pennycy's \$56. The C&O's could have been higher, Ed observed after the game, but he hadn't felt telling me this would be worthwhile, as I was winning anyway.



The final worths of the four capitalists was: Marc \$9225, Ed \$8538, Doug \$7798, Ron \$6124.

To summarize, I won because of four events. First, Doug and Ron lost four turns at the beginning, whereas I cooperated with Ed to float a railroad immediately. Ron or Doug should have helped the other. Second, Doug and I cut off the B&O from Chicago. Third, I bought the high-tech trains at the proper time, throwing a kink into my opponents's plans. Fourth, I bought the Eire instead of the B&M, giving me a more efficient rail network than anyone else. I certainly could not have won had I not carefully read Ed's article before play.

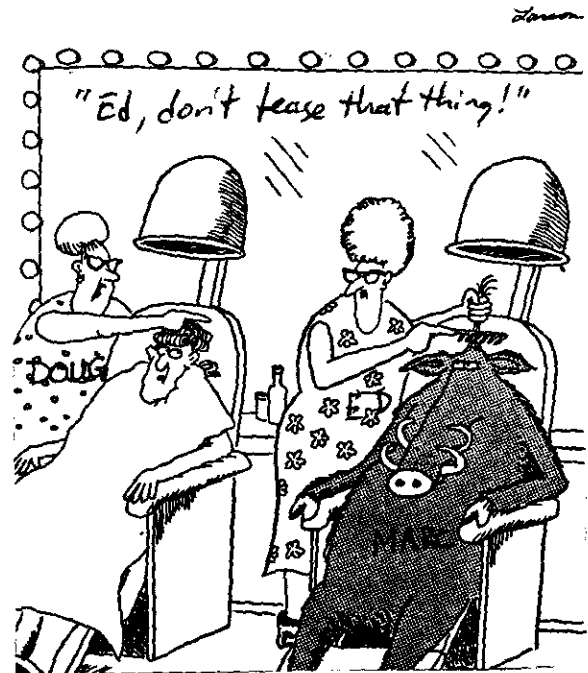
On the side, I would again thank Ed for his hospitality. Thanks, Ed. Ed's new home is the epitome of the pastoral retreat, and I'm pleased to report that the Fahrmeiers are greatly enjoying life in the country.

## And Now, a Word About Spanish Main...

by Marc Hurwitz

Before playing *1830*, before Ron arrived, Ed and Doug and I played an aborted game of Spanish Main. Ed and I were both English, and therefore couldn't attack each other. Doug was Spanish.

At one point, Ed said to me, "oh...I wish you were my enemy (sigh)." Doug then remarked, "I wouldn't let him insult *me* like that, Marc! If he said that to *me*, I'd throw the game to his enemy!"



# AlumniNews

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN SAINT LOUIS □ SUMMER 1987

Marc R. Hurwitz, EN 83, and Lt. Robert Budd Haemer, EN 83, have been named co-editors of *Politesse*, the Washington, D.C., monthly journal of military/diplomatic simulation. Sponsored in part by the Congress, the journal's restricted circulation includes the House foreign affairs committee, various executive branch officials, defense contractors and private-sector journalists and analysts.



Yet another zine to add to the current market glut...

# EXCITEMENT CITY

Excitement City will be a brand new zine published by yours truly, Simon Billenness. It is intended as a small, reliable international zine running several variants with a little chat on the side. Consequently, it will be radically different from the Zine Register (obviously) but also a distinct departure from Inflammatory Material, a rather short-lived chatzine which I edited a couple of years ago.

## GAMES

Excitement City's emphasis will be on its games, particularly international games. Being an Englishman, living in the States whilst retaining a lot of European contacts, I suppose I'm in a unique position to attract games players from both sides of the Atlantic and, hopefully, from elsewhere too.

The international games will run separate from the zine to six to seven week deadlines. However I will insist you subscribe to City though.... I currently have an opening (yes, just the one for the time being) for a revised version of that classic Cline 9, which will probably feature a few map revisions to take the pressure off France. I will take no more than five North Americans (preferably including one Canadian) and hopefully a few Europeans and Australians to make up the numbers. There will be no gamefee.

The regular games will be part of the zine and run to four to five week deadlines. The house rules will be a mixture of North American and European conventions. I will use "European style" prophetic builds and retreats with a two season year. However I will make use of the American habit of standbys. I am tempted to use Mark Berch's "War by Automatic Pilot", though only for a few select games.

For the time being the only domestic games I will be offering are popular British variants which are not readily available in the States. Top of the list are Stab (a rather neat hidden movement variant), Downfall of the Lord of the Rings (as you've guessed a Tolkein game), Deluge and the early English variant, Excalibur. Don't worry if you don't know anything about them yet. I will be printing the rules and maps in future issues.

## CHAT

Whenever I have time, I'll also print articles and letters. Be prepared for some politics (featuring our unique left-wing viewpoint), some music views, treatises urging you to turn vegetarian (complete with recipes), TV and movie reviews, hobby news and little slice of life pieces. Hopefully the zine will exude a sort of mid-Atlantic flavour.

SUBS: 50¢ an issue. Trades all for all and no mutual subs (hawk, spit)

DEADLINE: issue one should be out around June 28th

Simon Billenness & Barbara Passoff, 630 Victory Blvd Apt 6F, Staten Island, NY 10301, USA

# Politesse Historical Document #612:

WE HAVE A LITTLE  
SOMEONE NEW  
TO CUDDLE AND ADORE.  
TO COOCHY-COO  
AND PEEK-A-BOO  
AND LOVE FOREVERMORE!

Emily Liebach Wrobel  
NAME

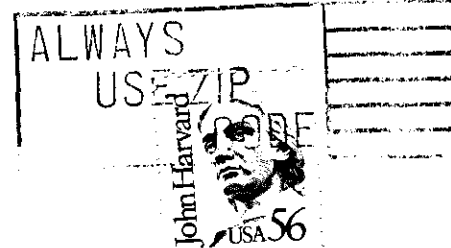
June 3, 1987  
DATE

6 lbs. 12 oz.  
WEIGHT

Ed and Muggie  
PARENTS

## Politesse

c/o Ken Peel  
8708 First Ave., #T-2  
Silver Spring, MD 20910



### In This Issue:

A word or two about 1830:  
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HadaGames by Hurwitz & Haemer  
DixieCon Review by McCrumb  
1987 Warthog Directory

### Next Issue:

Silly Games and more!  
...and HowzaBout a HavaGame?

Larry Peery  
P.O. Box 8416  
San Diego, CA 92102

T

Larry: What are we trading for  
anyway? I forget.  
-Ken