

Research Document: Dogboy/King & GI GAMES

Compiled by Gareth Pitchford / 8bitag.com / December 2018

I compiled this document when looking into the game **Dogboy** by **St. Bride's School**. It also covers several associated text adventure games republished by GI Games, Zenobi Software and the Northern Underground, around which there is often some confusion regarding the timeline of publication.

This is a **work in progress**... with many unresolved issues... if you have any information or sources to add then please get in touch!

Dogboy is a curious entry in the Spectrum online archives. It's listed as being a **Quilled** game published in **1985**, as shown in the WOS entry below...

Full title	Dogboy, The
Year of release	1985
Publisher	St. Bride's School (UK)
Re-released by	G.I. Games (UK) Zenobi Software (UK)
Machine type	ZX Spectrum 48K
Number of players	1
Controls	Keyboard
Type	Adventure: Text
Message language	English
Original publication	Commercial
Original price	<i>unknown</i>
Availability	Available as both Perfect TZX and non-TZX
Protection scheme	None
Authoring	Authored with Quill Adventure System, The
Additional info	Appeared on side A of the compilation Even Yet Another Big Disk (Zenobi Software) Features Illustrated Adventure
Score	5.50 (4 votes) VOTE

However, on examination of the game files given (both the GI Games and Zenobi versions) it appears that the game was written using (some version of) the Professional Adventure Writer, not the Quill. The Professional Adventure Writer wasn't commercially released until 1986. It's possible that St. Bride's had access to an early version (after all they did have access to a four word parser variant of Gilsoft's the Quill, which they used to make Buggy), and the 1985 date still stands, but there is no source online anywhere (as far as I can see) for the 1985 date.

Dogboy is certainly hugely different to St. Bride's other 1985 games, 'The Secret of St. Bride's' and 'The Snow Queen'. It's hard to see how the version that listed as Dogboy (1985) on the archive sites is a contemporary of those games.

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You are in a small dormitory
with three beds. One corner is
cluttered with books, hockey
things etc. The door is East.
You can see:
CYNTHIA
FIONA
A lamp
Ready when you are...
>

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I am in a little parlour.
There are flowers on the mantel
and a cuckoo-clock on the wall.
Outside the window a bird sings
on the branch of a blossoming
rose-tree.
Doors lead North and South;
stairs UP.
Can you advise me?
>

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The Secret of St. Bride's & the Snow Queen above and Dogboy below... Are we really saying they were created and published in the same year? If 1985 is attached to Dogboy for a reason, then there must've been an earlier version of the game!



There is certainly no mention of 'Dogboy' in the December 1987 issue of Your Computer which profiles the company, the game's they've released so far and the forthcoming White Feather Cloak (based on another of Marc Peirson's poems) and the deliberately controversial Jack the Ripper.

The first game they offered was *The Secret of St. Brides*. Published and, initially, distributed by themselves, it was an adventure starring a girl called Trixie Trinian who comes to St. Brides on holiday and finds a community of strange people living in the past. This semi-autobiographical tale originally appeared in 1985 but is likely to be re-released in the near future.

1986 saw three more games arriving on the market. *Snow Queen*, for Mosaic, was a computerised rendition of the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale. It was not a big seller but it was unusual in that it attracted young girls to playing with computers. "It is definitely a female game", says Miss Langridge.

The *Very Big Cave Adventure* and *Bugsy* were their most successful projects to date. Both are comedy adventures, the former a witty parody of the famous *The Colossal Cave*.

Two new games are now due for imminent release. One, *White Feathered Cloak*, was originally conceived by Marc Peirson after a lengthy poem he has written about good and bad gnome kings. The Ladies took over for the writing of the text and the programming. Miss Langridge reports that it has been described to her as a "yuppie" contrast with most people involved in the game but she confesses to not knowing

The earliest date that the game seems to show up anywhere, as far as I've found so far, is late 1987 /1988 when it appears under the guise of "King".

Here's the most detailed reference to King by St. Brides in Mike Gerrard's Adventure Trail, Your Sinclair, Issue 36, December 1988...

● Destiny's the name of a new label from Mediagenic, whose address is strangely enough still Activision House, 23 Pond Street, London NW3 2PN. On this new label is to be released a 'new' adventure, King programmed by St Brides and based on an epic poem by Marc Pierson. I describe it as 'new' because the poem's been around for a few years now, and the release of an adventure based on it was first announced by another software company, now defunct, quite some time ago. It'll be interesting to see whether St Brides have managed to make it a state-of-the-art adventure.

The story is set in a world that's ruled by the grotesque figure of King, and this character's so grotesque that not even his mother loves him. In fact when he was born the midwife slapped his face 'cos she thought it was his bottom. He is gross, he is revolting, he is diabolical, and what's more he's got absolute power over everyone. I bet you can guess the next bit. Right, only one person is brave enough to defy him, and that is you, Dogsbreath — sorry, Dogboy. Yes, you alone must struggle to lead your people to freedom. Now there's a novelty!

"King" and "Dogboy" certainly share the same plot!

From the Zenobi information sheet for the game...

In the poem "KING" by MARC PEIRSON, the subject of the poem is a monstrous and despotic glutton. Somebody who has more regard for the disgusting and excessive eating habits he enjoys so much than he has for the race of half-human goblins he rules over. Such is KING - an altogether despicable creature, more despised than loved and one whose very name strikes terror into the souls of the weak.

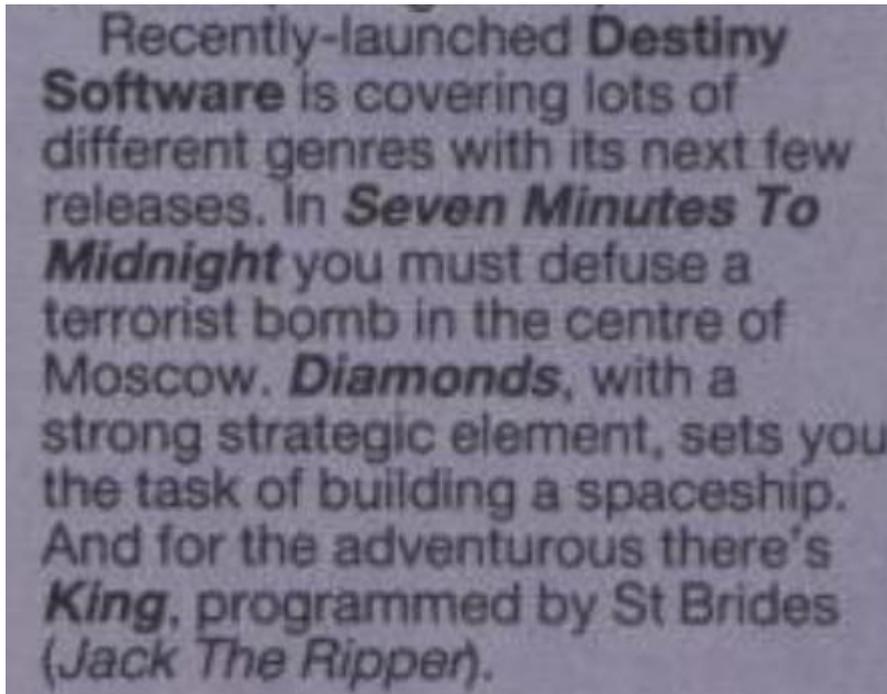
On the eve of an important festival, his wilful daughter elopes with a young singer, taking with her a box containing the city's greatest treasure. Unknown to her and her troubadour, the "treasure" is in fact a very powerful weapon which is capable of destroying the entire city ... if not the entire kingdom. However, she is safe enough as long as the box stays CLOSED, but if she should OPEN it then the world as she knows it could come to an end.

In this game our hero is King's "dogboy" - a mute boy who can understand the ways and language of the animals and the birds. These animals quickly learn what the princess has done and are anxious to escape before she is foolish enough to open the box.

The poor old "dogboy" on the other hand has his job to attend to - somebody has to see to the safety of the dogs. However, it is also his "destiny" to descend into the "Caves of Illusion" beneath Cuckoo Hill, because it is here that he will be able to solve the mysteries of the netherworld. It is here that he will be able to discover the means to rescue his fellow goblins and it is here that he will attain his heart's desire.

Going back to Mike's article... Mediagenic had two existing labels Electric Dreams and Activision. It's hard to see what this new label added, if it was indeed connected.

Destiny Software's mooted first set of releases certainly spanned the genres, a fact that is noted in Crash issue 50, March 1988...



Recently-launched **Destiny Software** is covering lots of different genres with its next few releases. In *Seven Minutes To Midnight* you must defuse a terrorist bomb in the centre of Moscow. *Diamonds*, with a strong strategic element, sets you the task of building a spaceship. And for the adventurous there's *King*, programmed by St Brides (*Jack The Ripper*).

The even earlier mention in Your Sinclair, December 1987, also promises a game by the legendary Mike Singleton...



● Hello, what's this? Yes, another new company masterminded by ex-Beyond, ex-Starlight boss Francis Lee (*Always preferred Mike Summerbee meself — Fitba' Ed*). "More than just a software label, Destiny will be producing a complete entertainment package." (In other words, it's a software label.) Titles include *Seven Minutes To Midnight*, *Veri* (from Cybadyne, who did *Xecutor*), *King* (by those ladies of St Brides) and *Blue Back* from Mike Singleton!

According to the online archive sites, only Yeti (*Veri*, as mentioned above!), a game called *Teladon* and *Diamond* made it onto store shelves. The other titles listed under the imprint are deemed "missing in action", despite the odd one getting a review.

There seems to be no trace of this Destiny release of "King", under either the name *King* or *Dogboy*. Give Mike Gerrard's Your Sinclair comments perhaps *Dogboy* started its life as a Quilled adventure for another publisher then got moved across to a PAWed game...?

Marc Peirson's official biography, on his agent's webpage, does mention his poetry 'The White Feather Cloak' and 'King' inspiring (the St. Bride's) computer adventure games...

Marc Peirson

While at university studying for an English Degree, Mark wrote his first play, *The Virgin's Kiss*, which sold out at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival for its one week run and was invited to stay as part of the official festival.

He later wrote a children's book in verse, *The White Feather Cloak*, bought by Dorling Kindersley and a further sixty verse book, *King*, which was bought by the Bertelsman group and sold with a computer adventure game based on the narratives.



StooB on the Spectrum Computing forums referenced this biography and points out, *"The connection with Destiny Software is that King was bought by "the Bertelsman group" - better known to us [in the Spectrum community] as Ariolasoft."*

He continues: *"Francis Lee started a label called Starlight Software which was marketed through Ariolasoft in late 1986 after leaving Beyond (where he worked with Marc Peirson). This label was reportedly planning to release St Brides' "The White Feather Cloak", also based on a poem by Peirson, which never happened as Ariolasoft pulled out of the UK market.*

Lee started a new label with Activision called Destiny Software in November 1987, which disappeared by the end of 1988 after failing to release "The Bobby Yazz Show".

It's not too much of a stretch to assume that Francis Lee was behind the St Brides/Ariolasoft/Starlight deal and took the deal with him to Destiny."

Comic capers

IN addition to all its other marketing deals with the likes of *Starlight*, *Viz Designs*, and even the mildly eccentric *St. Bride's School*, Ariolasoft has tied up the rights to *The Pink Panther*

and *Tom and Jerry* (which must have cost a pretty penny). As the deals have only just been signed they are unlikely to be completed this year.

Seemingly not released by Destiny, King/Dogboy seems to disappear from the scene until it is published as a group of St. Bride's re-releases by Gordon Inglis' GI GAMES in 1991.

A news piece from Red Herring fanzine, issue 2 (December 1991)

SCOOP!

GI Games has bought the rights to the following St. Bride's games: The Secret of St. Bride's, The Very Big Cave Adventure, Buggy, Jack the Ripper, The Snow Queen, The White Feather Cloak, Silverwolf and The Dogboy.

All of them except, St. Bride's are multi-part and will sell at £1.99. See the GI advert for further details.

The advert in question...

**GI GAMES, 11 WEST MAYFIELD,
EDINBURGH EH9 1TF.**

EXCLUSIVE SPECTRUM ADVENTURES
£1.99 EACH POST, FREE IN UK.

THE SECRET OF ST BRIDE'S : DOGBOY
THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE : BUGSY
JACK THE RIPPER : THE SNOW QUEEN
SILVERWOLF : THE WHITE FEATHER CLOAK
THE EXTRICATOR : ENERGEM ENIGMA
CASTLE ADVENTURE : MISSION X
MANSION QUEST : DESERT ISLAND
FOUR MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT : PYRAMID
ICE STATION ZERO : FAERIE
A HARVESTING MOON : EARTHSHOCK
THE WEAVER OF HER DREAMS : H.R.H.
RONNIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD : CUDDLES
IN SEARCH OF ANGELS : QUANN TULLA

SECONDHAND AND SPECIAL OFFER LISTS (SEND SAE).

CHEQUES TO SANDVEN LTD.
PAYMENT BY ACCESS/VISA WELCOME
PRICES POST FREE IN UK
OVERSEAS ADD £1.00 PER GAME.

Gordon Inglis was an active member of the Spectrum adventuring scene... first as a reseller through his main Sandven Ltd company...

SANDVEN LTD

28 WEST TELFERTON, EDINBURGH EH7 6UL, SCOTLAND. TEL: 031-657-1508

AFFORDABLE SPECTRUM ADVENTURE GAMES : THE COMPLETE SOLUTION : SILLY PRICES!!

Hello folks!
 We specialise in Spectrum Adventure Games...but only those we can get hold of at Special Prices!!

All items listed below are brand new and in stock now(we don't advertise figments of our imagination!!)

All orders are sent out the same day we get the order!!

We accept payment by cheque,postal order,cash(send it registered!!)and even Matabille Dumbo Reads.....you can also use Access/Visa either in written form or phone us on 031-657-1508 which has a 24 hour answerphone on it!!

Postage is **FREE** on orders over £6....under that add .50p!!

Book of The Dead(CRL)	£1.99.
Frankenstein(CRL)	1.99.
Federation(CRL)	1.99.
Loads of Midnight(CRL)	.99p.
Mountains of Ret(Incentive)	1.99.
Temple Of Vran(Incentive)	1.99.
The Final Mission(Incentive)	1.99.
Maryasia(Incentive)	1.99.
Apache Gold(Incentive)	1.99.
King Arthur's Quest(5 Ways)	1.99.
The Realm(Cult)	.99p.
The Damned Forest(Cult)	.99p.
Lords of the Rings(Melbourne House)4.99.	
(2 tapes;book;user guide!!)	
Time & Magik(Level 9)	4.99.
(Lords of Time/Ped Moon/Price of Magik)	

More goodies are being negotiated at present and will be advertised when we have them in stock(and not until then!!) Watch this space!!(groan)

SANDVEN LTD

28 WEST TELFERTON, EDINBURGH EH7 6UL, SCOTLAND. TEL: 031-657-1508

SPECTRUM ADVENTURE GAMES AT SPECTACULARLY SILLY PRICES THAT YOU CAN AFFORD!!

SPECIAL LIMITED OFFERS

INGRID'S BACK

The Level 9 classic game of the year!!
 3 cassettes and the Second Gazettefield Journal
 all in a very nice big box....**only £4.99!!**
 (we only have 25 of these so be quick!!)

BOD FIEE'S HORROR COMPILATION

Three classic 3-part horror adventures(Frankenstein/Dracula, Wolfman)in a beautiful big box!!
At an UNBEATABLE PRICE OF ONLY £7.99!!

SCOTT ADAMS SCOOPS

4 Classic Scott Adams Games on one tape!! Pirate Adventure/
 Voodoo Castle/Strange Odyssey/Buckaroo Banzi!!!!
At another fabby price of only £1.99!!

a few more late arrivals.....

KAYLETH(US Gold).....only.....99p!!

SPIDERMAN(Americana).....only.....75p!!

SPY-TREK(Americana).....only.....75p!!

Yes folks,believe it or not we ARE selling Spectrum Adventures at prices that are CHEAPER THAN A BLANK TAPE!!

And as an **extremely** limited offer we have a mere 9 copies
LANCELOT(Level 9) 3 cassettes in a pretty box...£4.99!!

POST FREE OVER £6.....otherwise add .50p postage.
 (Outside UK sent for pro-forma invoice;postage charged at cost!!)

(advert from July 1989, Gordon stopped this service at the end of the year)

Then, he ran a service where he would buy and sell old games...

SECONDHAND SPECTRUM ADVENTURE GAMES WANTED!!

CLEAR THOSE DUSTY SHELVES OF OLD GAMES!!

ALL ADVENTURE GAMES BOUGHT(48k Spectrum only!!)

NONE REFUSED!! SEND DISPOSAL LIST(with sae)

FOR OFFER BY RETURN POST!! **ORIGINALS ONLY!!**

LOOKING FOR A PARTICULAR GAME??

SEND YOUR "WANTS" LIST(with sae)FOR INSTANT

RESPONSE WHEN YOUR GAME(S) ARRIVE!!

or just send SAE for current sales list!!

Gordon Inglis,11 West Mayfield,Edinburgh EH9 1TF.

(Adventure Probe, August 1990)

...and a Spectrum PD library (which was passed on to Tim Kemp of From Beyond to run)...



FROM BEYOND SPECTRUM PUBLIC DOMAIN ADVENTURES.

The Spectrum Public Domain Library was started by Gordon Inglis (all the hard work of getting the main bulk of the owners was down to Gordon) and the running and upkeep of it has now passed over to me (Tim Kemp). Each game costs 99p + a second class postage stamp, and Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Tim Kemp. Orders should be sent to Tim Kemp, 36 Globe Place, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 2SQ.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS I

48/128k. Text Only.
Author: John Wilson. Rib Tickler.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS II

48/128k. Text Only.
Author: John Wilson. Rib Tickler 2.

A LEGACY FOR ALARIC

48/128k. Text Only. Author: Palmer P. Eldritch. Fantasy/Humorous

THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT

48/128k. Text Only. Author: Mike Young. Biblical 2 part epic.

NOAH

48/128k. Text Only. Author: Mike Young. Biblical epic.

SOLARIS

48/128k. Text/Graphics. Author: Clive Wilson. 2 part Sci-Fi.

MICRO DRIVEN

48/128k. Text/Graphics. Author: Clive Wilson. Treasure Hunt style game.

THE DAMNED FOREST

48/128k. Text/Graphics. Authors: J. DeSalis & T. Huggard. RPG-based.

THE REALM

48/128k. Text/Graphics. Author: Ian Williams. Fantasy.

THE CRYSTAL OF CHANTIE

48/128k. Text Only.
Author: Gary Power. Fantasy.

DOLLARS IN THE DUST

48/128k. Text Only. Author: Gary Powers. Spaghetti Western.

MATT LUCAS

48/128k. Text/Graphics. Author: Ian Williams. Miami Vice-style detective game.

SHADOWS OF THE PAST

48/128k. Text/Graphics. Author: John Lemmon. Fantasy.

There are a few more titles in the pipeline that should be released around about Christmas time. If there are any adventure writers out there who are reading this then dig out your old Spectrum adventures and send them to us. We don't make money by selling them (that's the whole idea of PD) but you will at least have the pleasure of knowing your games are being seen by an appreciative audience

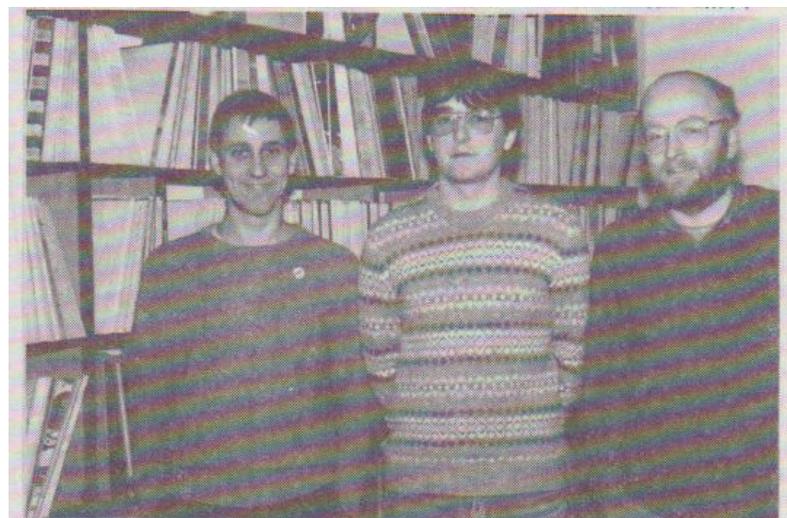
Send a S.A.E. for a free copy of the latest Adventure booklet.

...before later publishing (and republishing) Spectrum games through **GI Games**.

Under his GI Games label he secured the rights to republish titles from Walter Pooley, Delta 4 and 8th Day and also St. Bride's games such as Jack the Ripper.

(He also ran a record shop in Edinburgh. See...

<http://www.britishrecordshoparchive.org/gi-records.html>)



BRIAN HOGG ('BAM BALAM' MAGAZINE), ALISTAIR NEILSON & GORDON INGLIS (L-R) AT GI RECORDS IN EDINBURGH. DEALING MAINLY IN CURRENT ITEMS ALSO HAS A STOCK OF BACK CATALOGUE, DELETES, & LIKE 'EZY RYDER' ALSO HAS A MAIL ORDER CATALOGUE LISTING MANY GOOD RECORDS FOR SALE. BOTH EZY RYDER & GI HAVE BARGAINS.

Eventually GI Games got in the way of his other ventures, as mentioned in this article from Red Herring issue 4 (April 1992)

A slight point about GI Games (see Bytes & Pieces). John Wilson has kindly taken over the distribution of Gordon's games and Gordon wishes to please point out that this is merely a distribution-only deal... John will do the day to day work on the games which sadly Gordon cannot manage any more, due to pressure of work, but he still retains the rights to all the games.

And later that issue...

LICENCE TO THRILL

John Wilson of Zenobi Software is now selling the range of GI Games under licence due to Gordon Inglis' time being taken up by an increase in his other commitments. So any orders for these games should be made payable to Zenobi Software and sent to John where they'll be given his usual prompt attention. Zenobi have also added Jester's Jaunt, The Taxman Cometh and The Amulet of Darath to their range; tape £2.49, disk £3.49.

Zenobi's flyers from the time reference the licensing arrangement...

The following titles are also available, under licence from G.I.GAMES, at only £2.49 each, including all postage and packing, for TAPE versions and £2.99 each for AMIGA, ATARI and PC.

5TH DAY SOFTWARE

Four Minutes To Midnight
Cuddles
✓ Gianni Tulla
Ice Station Zero
In Search Of Angels
Faerie
H.R.H.
Earthshock
A Harvesting Moon
✓ Ronnie Goes To Hollywood
The Weaver Of Her Dreams

ST. BRIDES

The Secret Of St.Brides
The Snow Queen

FERGUS McNEILL/DELTA 4

✓ Sherwood Forest
✓ The Dragonstar Trilogy
✓ Quest For The Holy Joystick
✓ Return Of The Joystick

WALTER POOLEY

Pyramid
Castle Adventure
Desert Island
Mansion Quest
Mission X

PRECISION SOFTWARE

The Extricator
The Energem Enigma

THE DOGBOY

Also licensed from G.I.GAMES, this is a splendid tale of magic, romance and one boy's quest to do the impossible. Written by St.Brides, it is a gem of a game, full of intricate little puzzles and characters so 'cute' you could cry. Price .. DISK - £3.49 (2 parts)

Zenobi Software eventually went on to come to arrangement to publish the games under the Zenobi banner itself, without the references to GI Games, as mentioned in the August 1992 Zenobi newsletter...

ZENOBI SOFTWARE HAVE RECENTLY ACQUIRED THE RIGHTS TO PUBLISH THE FOLLOWING TITLES ON THEIR OWN LABEL AND UNDER THEIR OWN "BANNER". THESE RIGHTS WERE LICENCED FROM GORDON INGLIS IN FULL.

TITLE	AUTHOR	TAPE	DISK
The White Feather Cloak	St.Brides	£2.49	£3.49+
The Dogboy	St.Brides	£2.49	£3.49
Silverwolf	St.Brides	£2.49	£3.49
Jack The Ripper	St.Brides	£2.49	£3.49
The Very Big Cave Adventure	St.Brides	£2.49	£3.49+
Bugsy	St.Brides	£2.49	£3.49+
The Boggit	Fergus McNeill	£2.49	---
Bored Of The Rings	Fergus McNeill	£2.49	---
Robin Of Sherlock	Fergus McNeill	£2.49	---
The Big Sleaze	Fergus McNeill	£2.49	---

+ indicates that the games in question are supplied on DISK and will load from DISK but it will be necessary to make the use of a tape-deck in order to SAVE/LOAD your 'saved' positions. All other DISKS are 100% compatible with the DOS of the Spectrum +3 (SAVE/LOAD to disk etc)

Just to add to the confusion, there's this twist in the tale from Red Herring 6 (August 1992)... the (extremely) shortlived company **The Northern Underground** also came to an arrangement to distribute the GI Games titles...! The reviews in that issue of the associated games are very confusing.

UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT
Northern Underground have taken over the distribution of GI Games so if you're interested in any of the wide range of titles (24 in all!), get in touch with them. They've also taken on the Spectrum PD Library which was started by Gordon Inglis and later taken over by Tim Kemp of From Beyond.

Despite promising large royalty fees to authors, the Northern Underground didn't last long... Zenobi on the other hand still continued to sell their "GI Games" until they closed in 1997.

As for Gordon himself? After the closure of his records business, Gordon's last commercial venture seems to have been an antiques shop. Here's his letter to the The Scotsman Newspaper from 3rd April 2009...



My old shop was a genuine antique

DESPITE being delighted to be listed in the High 5 of places in Edinburgh to find antiques in the News, I assumed this was an April Fool as Gordon Inglis Antiques closed seven years ago . . . obviously the lady who chose the shop is not a regular customer!

Gordon Inglis

And St. Bride's? You need to read the Owen Williams piece to learn about them...

<https://flexiblehead.blog/2014/02/16/st-brides-school/>