

## OO-ER!

I HAVE MOSTLY MAINTAINED that complaints about computer mistakes should really be complaints about computer operators, and I have certainly made my fair share over the years.

From the days when we logged on to a 'main frame' computer in London for just one hour on a Wednesday afternoon, through the early days of home computers when we typed in programs written by others or ourselves, to the present superfast PCs with incredibly sophisticated applications with all the bells and whistles we don't have the time or inclination to use. However, since the last issue of the magazine I have a further complaint – about programmers.

Some of you may have wondered why in the last issue one article seemed to stop in mid-air, no author's name at the end of another etc. It was because what I had laid out on the computer screen was not what I received back from the printers. As many as two lines were missing from the end of certain articles, while 'orphans' and 'widows' (single word or line at the top or bottom of a column of print) which we always eliminate, had suddenly appeared.

As there are so many home computer owners nowadays I thought that there would be sufficient readers interested in an explanation.

I use a number of printers for different purposes and therefore have a selection of printer drivers available on the "Windows" operating system.

I have since discovered that under certain conditions which I have not yet identified, when certain drivers are selected, they actually alter the screen display, so that the layout changes depending on the printer driver that happens to be selected at the time. This means that lines of text showing at one moment can disappear should the selected printer be changed.

This makes no logical sense, as the printers are supposed to be 'slaves' of the system, and should have no effect whatsoever on the screen display of the software application. I haven't had time to investigate any further than to identify cause and effect, so that I can prevent a recurrence of the problem. I have contacted one or two printer firms who have never replied, possibly because they don't believe me, but I certainly have the evidence.

Unfortunately owing to lack of time, I doubt whether I shall ever be able to investigate further, but some software would seem to have become incompatible with others. Sorry about the last issue.

Don Salter.

