



Blood on the Reik

A Journey Through the
Old World



The lands of the Empire are savage and wild, inhabited by strange folk and untameable beasts. From burgeoning cities to lonely villages, from rivers to mountains to seas, life goes on for the many and varied denizens of the Old World.

This beautiful book collects together never before published drawings, detailing the rich and dangerous world of Warhammer. To accompany these fabulous pictures is text penned by one Tobias Helmgart – scholar, diplomat and gentleman – who spent his life travelling the length and breadth of the land, creating an invaluable document in words and images about the dangerous land of men and beyond, and the beasts that lurk in dark places.

Immerse yourself in his travels in the dark land we love, and that he calls home.

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Background book

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Blood on the Reik

~ A Journey Through the Old World ~

Being one man's recollection of his many and varied travels through the diverse domains and territories of the Old World.

With many accompanying drawings and sketches, from the hand of the Author

Tobias Helmgart

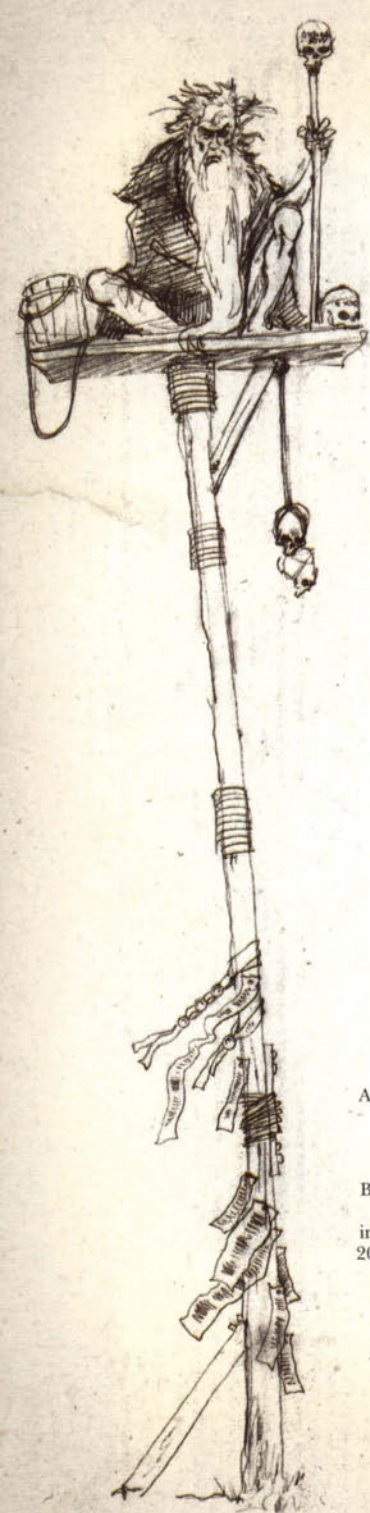
"An Idle Mind Withers and Dies"



Printed with the Blessing of the Elector Count of Wissenland

Wissenburg Press

2515 IC



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Introduction

The time has come for me to rest. I am an old man now, and my present illness has led to a prolonged period of convalescence. I refuse to sit idle in this room, so I ordered my dutiful son to bring me my notebooks and diaries, so I could peruse them before I lose my faculties entirely. Lying here, with my memories, all meticulously committed to parchment in words and art, has given me a welcome chance to reflect on my life.

It is fair to say that, in my capacity as diplomat and political advisor (among other things) to the elector count of Wissenland, I have seen much that the world has to offer a man. I have travelled the breadth and length of the Empire and beyond, into strange and wonderful lands.

Few men have seen or done the things that I have. My life has been rich with experience and adventure. But now Morr's breath chills my neck, and I believe it is time to compile my recollections, before He takes me from the world that I have loved and explored for so many years.

The life of the traveller is a lonely one. Our breed is rare.

By my judgement, I would say that most folk during their lifetime do not roam far from their birthplace. For the most part, people in the Empire work the land, tilling the earth and raising crops and livestock. For them, the trip to a nearby market town is the most distance traversed at any one time, and is undertaken by necessity rather than desire. These simple folk have short sight and narrow minds, they have no education, and do not desire one; their lives are small, limited, and unencumbered by imagination.

And of those that reside in the great cities that bloat with fecund humanity? I declare that the walls, bastions and towers that are raised for their protection makes for a frightened populous. The cities, with their stout citadels, bustling markets and cobbled streets, form a world apart, it shields the citizens from the outside and keeps from them the darkness that fills every corner of the land. Wilful ignorance is their comfort, and they covet it like a babe's doll. And yet the cities themselves are hives of sin and iniquity, wallowing in their own filth and fear. Danger lurks in every lane, and dark things are drawn to the guttering lights.

This book is a living document of my lifetime's travels. It will cast some light on the world as I have experienced it. What the light reveals is not always agreeable, but it is always real. The drawings (and I beg the reader to forgive my rudimentary skills) on the following pages are of actual people (and other things), which I encountered on my wanderings. I have annotated some in detail with certain recollections, but in many instances the images speak for themselves. Beast, butcher, whore and soldier, goblin, beggar, merchant and thief, all are recorded with faithful accuracy.

I invite you to travel with me through my memories, I invite you to journey with me through our Old World.

Tobias Helmgart, Wissenburg, 2515

The Old World



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Haf Lorenentz

Plate No. 1

In Wissenburg, Fat Haf is a well-loved character from folklore. Legend has it that he was a drummer in the count's army, in which he fought in many of his important campaigns, raising the soldiers' spirits with his pranks and jolly capers. These characteristics were appropriated by the playwright Helmut Grieber, in his famous play "The Adventures of a Dumpy Drummer", which sealed the myth of Fat Haf. His cheerful disposition and short stature have made him a firm favourite in children's tales and rhymes.

But, as is always the case with figures from folklore, the truth is less idyllic.

Far from being possessed of a cheerful disposition, in reality he was known for being quite the most contentious and foul-mouthed soldier in the ranks. He became adept at trapping animals and keeping the corpses about his person; he smelled very foul. But worst of all, it is thought that he started the fire that gutted the poor quarter of Wissenburg in 2356. Rumours abound that he was born there, and spent a miserable childhood eking out a living in the workhouses.

He wore his drum-skin as a tabard, had a pearl earring monocle – probably looted – and a cut-down hagbut. He wore his whiskers in the then popular twin-tailed comet style.



Wandering hurdy-gurdy player



Snottling on a chain.

She made an amateurish racket. I paid him to wander to another street.

Candle seller



On the other hand the candle seller had a delightful, melodious voice. It was a pity she wasted her gift just singing about her wares and prices.

Citizens of the Empire

The Colour on the Canvas

There is no such thing as a *typical* inhabitant of the Empire. In my long life of travel, transition and exploration, I have never become bored when observing the nuances of behaviour of the people I am (usually) proud to call my countrymen.

I recall sitting on a busy Altdorf street in high summer. All around me people walked, heckled, laughed, argued, drank and lived their everyday lives. I remained there, rapt, as this carnival played out in front of me. I was fascinated, and became so engrossed in the little dramas and interactions that I completely forgot to draw or write anything down. During my repose I had also been relieved of my purse, my neckerchief and, somehow, my Sigmarite pendant. But I viewed the losses philosophically and decided it was like paying the door money to see an engrossing piece of theatre.

I have seen many strange and diverting things, yet it is humanity – and particularly the phlegmatic, humorous, energetic and altogether vibrant breed from the Empire – that stimulates my curiosity the most. Observing a butcher in Nuln lead a cow into the slaughter room and then, over the course of the day, and with great skill, pare it down to joints, chops, slices, racks of ribs, mince, stock, brain-fodder, boiled hoof, pared-tongue, tail soup and blood sausages is as consuming to watch as a cave troll battling a forest bear (as I once saw on the edge of the Border Princes).

It is in the burgeoning cities of the Empire that the greatest diversity of people are found. Whether it is natural and convivial to the human spirit to be crushed in such close proximity to so many others is another question. It is certainly the case that cities see more outbreaks of diseases and plagues than places in the country.

I see cities as vast melting pots, with a multitude of people thrown together, living cheek-by-jowl and striving to stay ahead of their neighbours. Cities act like beacons, attracting the poor through their gates, like a candle gathers clumsy moths. They come to seek fortune, but for the most part find only privation. The streets are choked with beggars who have fallen from the heights of their own ambitions.

Militia Captain



Skull motif

Well dressed, well paid and a fine example to all law keepers in the land

Pistolier

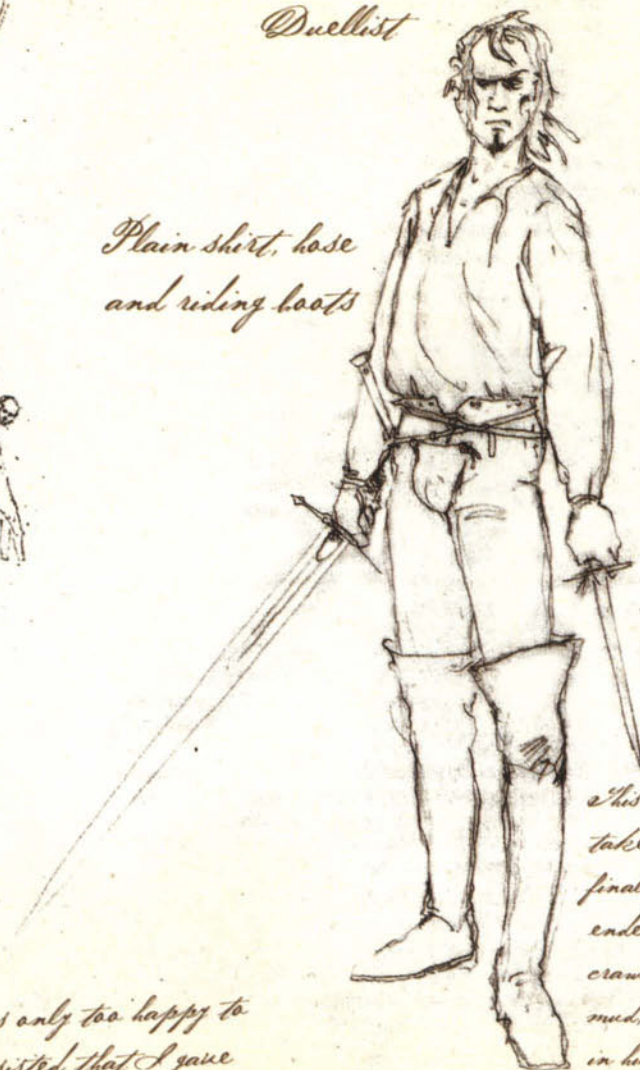


Note the ornate pistol

This young noble was only too happy to pose for me. (He insisted that I gave him an aspect of menace, that in real life he lacked)

Duellist

Plain shirt, hose and riding boots



This likeness was taken before his final duel, which ended with him crawling in the mud, with a blade in his guts. An ignoble death.



Young fop

A fine clean red

*Fashionable,
upturned codpiece*

*Such worthies have
expensive tastes*

Feathered fop



Jewelled hat

Trimmed beard

*Vanity is rife among such
fellows*



*Coat covered in complex and
subtle brocade, with herald sewn in*

Dockers and Sailors

A good rule of thumb for any traveller, especially one who is well-dressed, softly spoken and handsome, as I was in my youth, is never go to the docks at night.

Empire cities rely on trade, so are built by rivers. Thus they benefit from ships, but also inherit the incumbent dangers; the dangers caused by sailors and dockers. Sailors are tough men, prone to violence. Their role in our society is vital, and is oft as perilous as it is unappreciated. They have to contend with rip-tides, treacherous coastlines, sand banks, high weather, terrible sea creatures, pirates, privation – and not just of food – and, perhaps most cunning and unscrupulous of all, merchants.

Brave the docks only during the day, and never travel alone.

Some sailors soak their beards in pitch and light them. This gives them a frightening aspect in battle

Monkey on shoulder with eye-patch

Ship's captain

Beard forked and tied in bows

Scrimshawed skull

Belt with pistol and cutlass

Peg leg made from sea monster tusk or horn

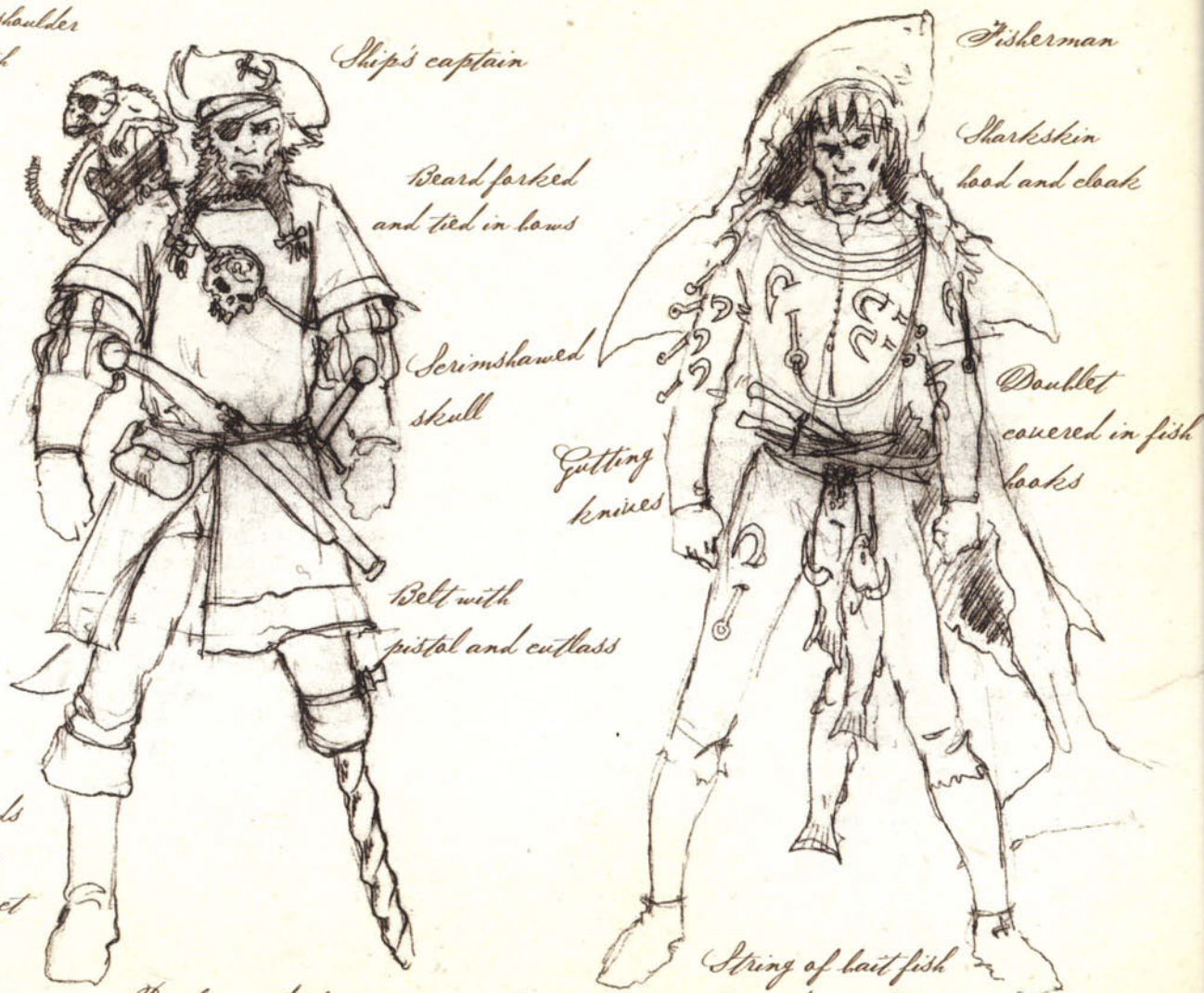
Pungent

Fisherman

Sharkskin hood and cloak

Doublet covered in fish hooks

String of bait fish hooked on belt



Mad old woman
swinging cats



I think this woman was
touched in the head

Fish adornment

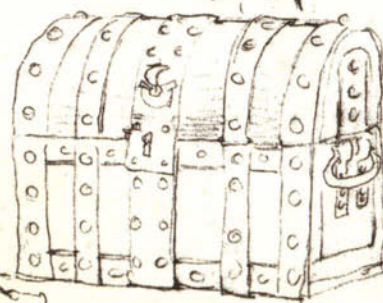
Naked torso
with map
tattooed on his
back. Not very
practical.



Long clay pipe

Shark teeth
on pendant
and sewn into
jacket

Harpoon
stuck in belt
in boot



- Clay bottle on belt
- Bandy legs
- Short breeches, bare feet

A drunkard, shouting for her even
drunker husband to come home



Nice on belt
for supper

The poor quarters of our cities are
full of such uncouth people

Woman of illicit profession



Base in hair

Dark in belt

I found this wench loitering
under a lonely street lamp,
awaiting her first customer of the
night

Old crane

All belongings in sack



Bell to attract
attention

Always accompanied by thugs

Money lenders

*Weighing scales, weights,
seals and stamps*

Shifty eyes

*Scroll with list of
debtors*

Barber surgeon

Long apron

Money Lenders

They sit like vultures behind desks, possessed with equal measures of greed and superiority. They are the carrion eaters of society, they are the money lenders.

The poor and dispossessed are the sheep to their wolves, entering their doors with desperate eyes and outstretched hands. Gladly do the money lenders cross palms with coin, and eagerly is the amount entered in the ledger, with interest payable daily.

Woe betide those who do not pay back what they owe. These men are mean, and care not for other folk. Their gimlet eyes spare not a shred of pity, and all they do is perpetuate the cycle of debt. My dealings with such men has always been unhappy. Soon may they rot in their graves!

Barber Surgeon

Those examination of any backstreet in our cities will reveal the chambers of a surgeon, apothecary or healer. Our streets are violent, crime-riddled places, and some people shy away from the more tempered talents of the Sisters of Shallya, and prefer the more anonymous attentions of back-alley surgeons.

These men are almost always covered in blood, due to the practice of bloodletting, but it also helps demonstrate to all how busy they are. Their shelves are lined with jars, filled with unrecognisable but undoubtedly biological items. Their various instruments and tools are often old, rusty and blunt and their methods questionable. They make frequent use of the curved muscle carver. To determine an illness they taste the patient's urine, using the flavour to detect disease and over-productive humors.

Some of these quacks even pretend to be knowledgeable in the subtle art of leech-craft, putting the creatures on wholly inappropriate parts of the body where they are likely to compound, rather than ease the problem.

They also provide haircuts.

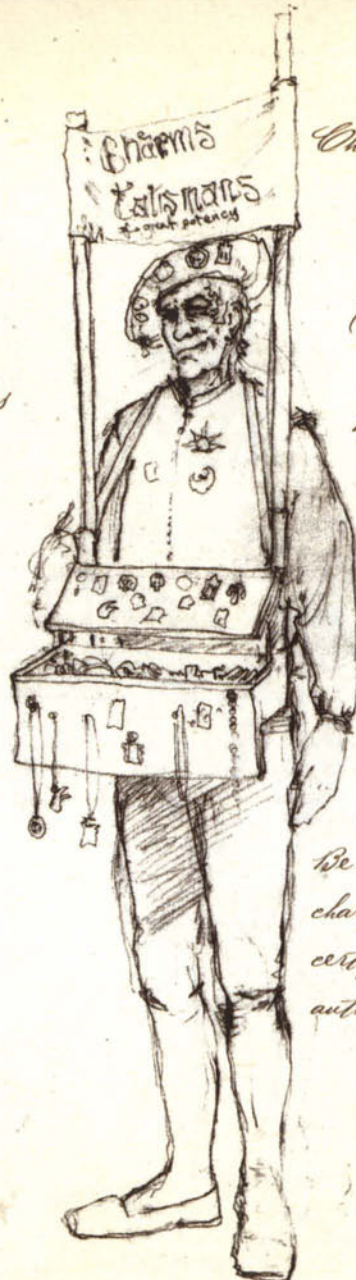
Newsheet vendor



*Vendor of news sheets,
scurrilous rumours, scary
stories and titillating tales*

*With the rise of the
printing presses,
information is spread
with great haste. The
trick is deciphering
truth from rumour*

Charm salesman



*hawker of
trinkets, charms,
pilgrim badges
and useless
artefacts*

*Be sure religious
charms have
certificates of
authenticity*

Dark tongue seller



*Do not always
trust the sign*

Corpse handler

*A man selling pies, who looks like
he eats much of his stock*



Hat with assorted herbs

*Lucky charms,
fetishes and
herbs around
neck*

Long, leather apron

*Leather hood
and mask*

*Nostril filled
with garlic
and pepper*

Leather gloves



Corpse Handler

There are many jobs I am glad to have been spared: daub-handler, gong farmer, sewer-jack, bog iron wader, leech collector, farmer, lime burner, slaughter hand, nit picker, toady, chimney sweep, tanner, spit boy, apothecary, gravedigger, miner to name but a few. Being a corpse handler is near the top of this list.

I had the great misfortune of being resident in the Lace District in Averheim during an outbreak of Blood Fever. We were corralled in and no one was allowed to leave or enter the neighbourhood; no one, that is, except the corpse handlers. What sorts of folk are capable of carrying out such an onerous – not to mention dangerous and thankless – task? I cannot answer, because not once did I see their faces, which were obscured by grotesque masks.

As people died around me, including my faithful servant Franz, we would carry them out and leave them on the street. At night we would watch through the windows as the corpse handlers emerged. They dragged carts – no animals would enter the ghastly place – and loaded them up with the dead. Blood, seeping from the rents in the bodies would trickle through the boards and splash on the ground.

The handlers spoke not a word. It is believed by some that the unclean disease carries in the air, so they wore masks, and covered themselves entirely in tightly sewn leather garments. They stuff garlic and other pungent herbs into every orifice, including the nostrils, to ward off disease.

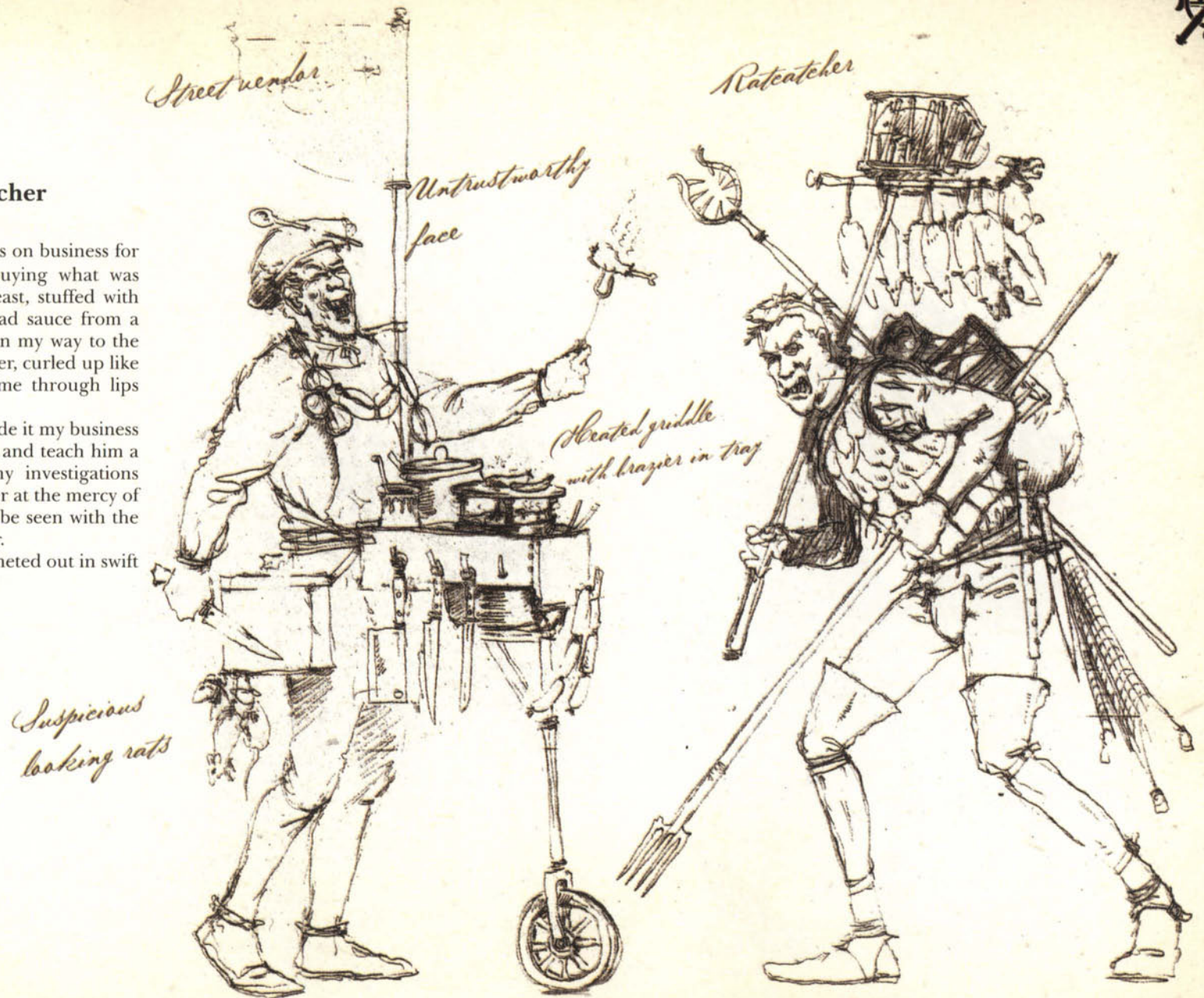
Before disposing of the bodies in lime pits, each body is examined in an effort to determine the cause of death and perhaps learn more about the disease. The search for knowledge is fraught with peril.

Street Vendor and Ratcatcher

I remember a time in Nuln when I was on business for the elector count of Wissenland, buying what was pertained to be charred chicken breast, stuffed with herbs and onion and dipped in mead sauce from a street vendor, and wolfing it down on my way to the palace. Within an hour I was lying in the gutter, curled up like a ball of wool, moaning for Morr to take me through lips frothing with vomit.

I blamed the ruffian food vendor, and I made it my business – when I had recovered – to track him down and teach him a hard lesson. I never did find him, but my investigations uncovered that I was not the only one to suffer at the mercy of his culinary crimes, and that he was often to be seen with the local rat catcher. The conspiracy became clear.

I did find the rat catcher, and a lesson was meted out in swift and brutal fashion.



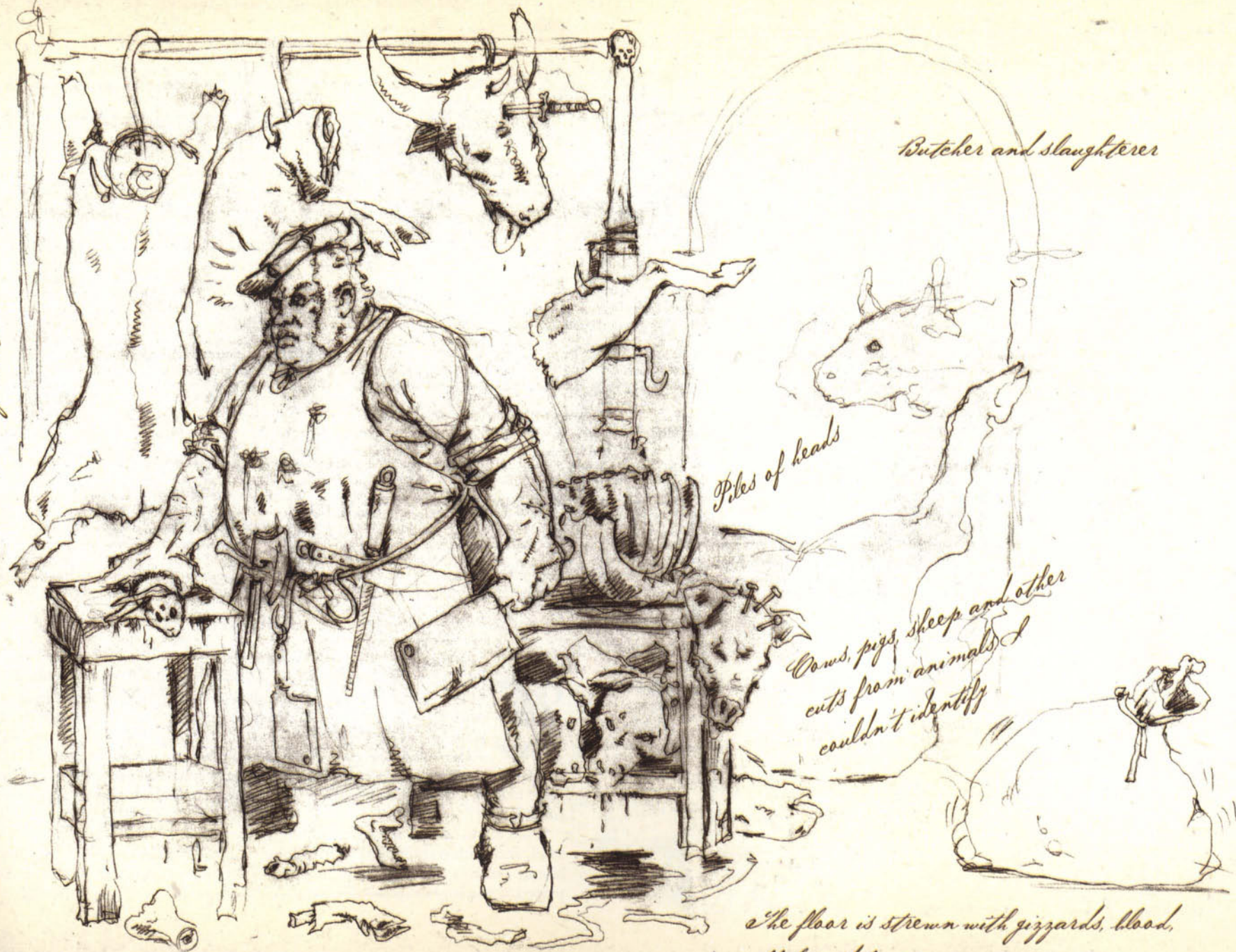
Hung meat

Butcher and slaughterer

Piles of heads

*Cows, pigs, sheep and other
cuts from animals I
couldn't identify*

*The floor is strewn with gizzards, blood,
offal, and bones*



*Like a scene from hell, gouts of flame,
terrible cacophony, serried workers, dark
except for roaring flames*

*Workers hammer constantly at
strips of iron*

*Armour hangs everywhere like
corpses on a gibbet, helmets hang
like strings of onions*

*Lots of smoke and steam, turning
wheels and mechanisms, drop hammers*

*Children pump bellows and
perform the menial jobs*

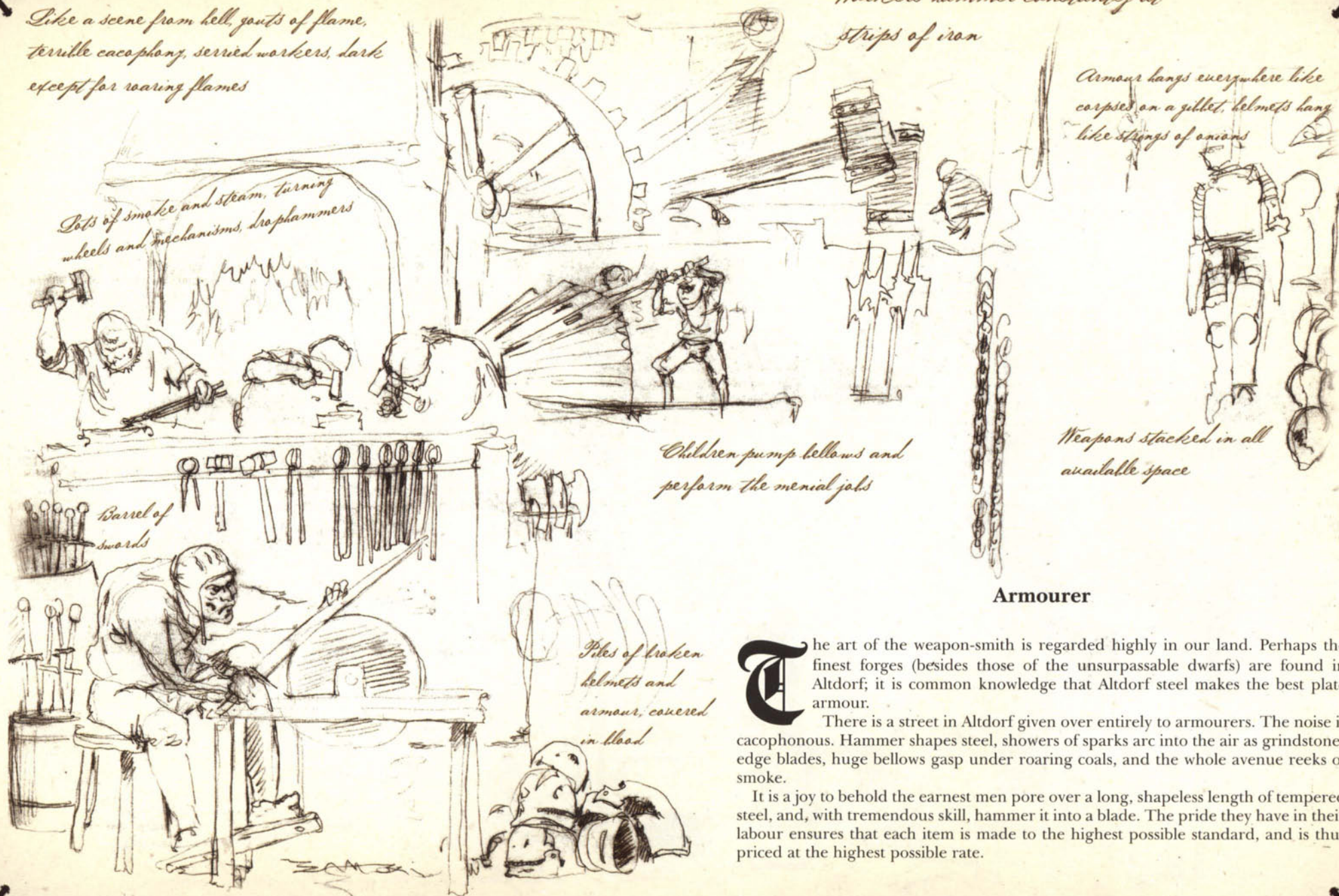
*Weapons stacked in all
available space*

Armourer

The art of the weapon-smith is regarded highly in our land. Perhaps the finest forges (besides those of the unsurpassable dwarfs) are found in Altdorf; it is common knowledge that Altdorf steel makes the best plate armour.

There is a street in Altdorf given over entirely to armourers. The noise is cacophonous. Hammer shapes steel, showers of sparks arc into the air as grindstones edge blades, huge bellows gasp under roaring coals, and the whole avenue reeks of smoke.

It is a joy to behold the earnest men pore over a long, shapeless length of tempered steel, and, with tremendous skill, hammer it into a blade. The pride they have in their labour ensures that each item is made to the highest possible standard, and is thus priced at the highest possible rate.



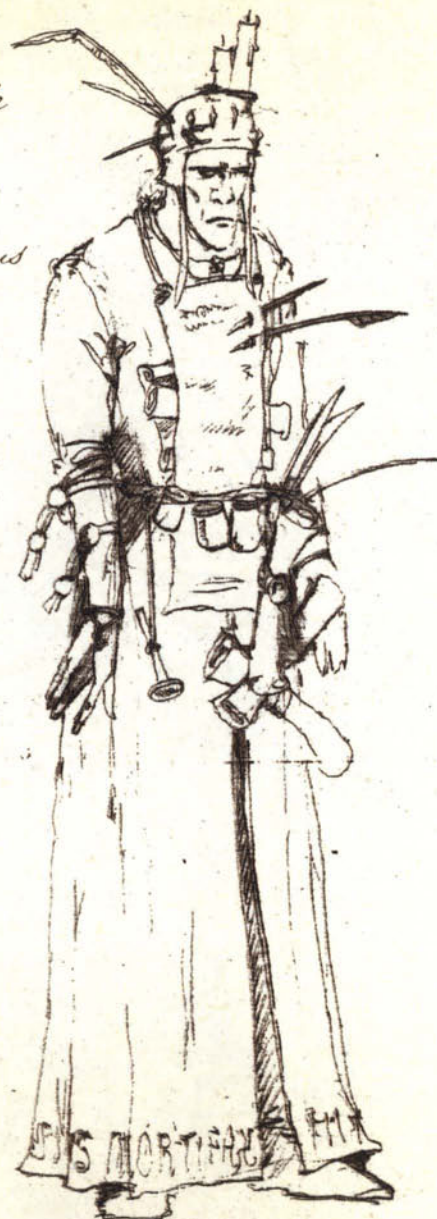
An old fish wife



Cats gather at her feet, waiting for scraps

Scribe

*Stodious
glare*



Scribe

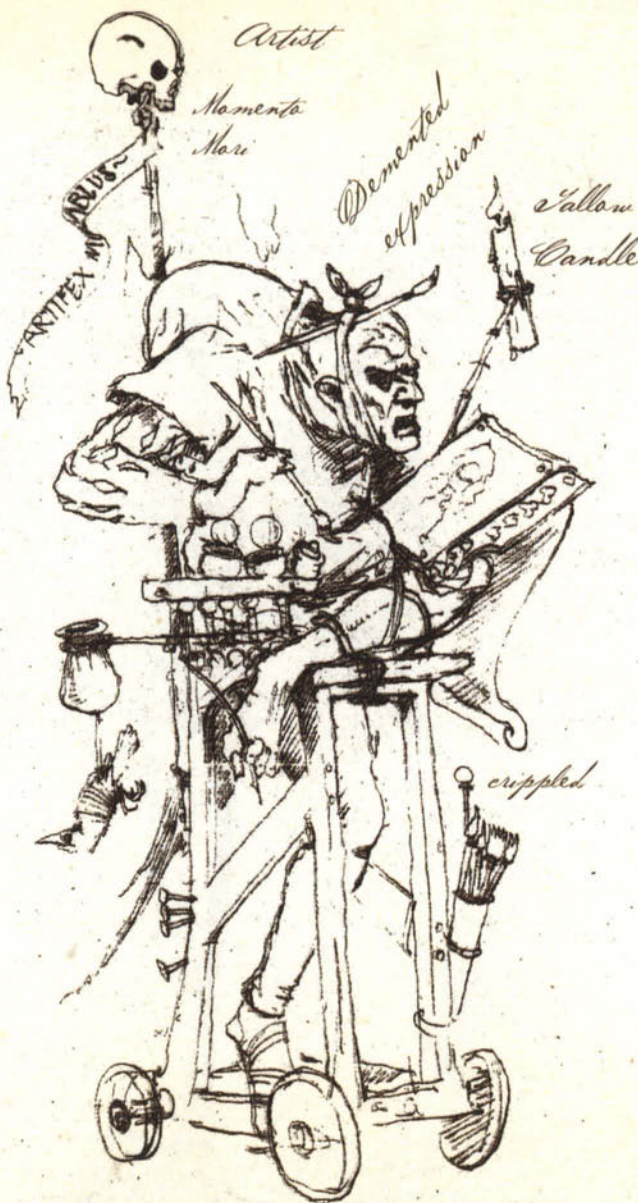
I count myself fortunate that my father – may Morr keep him – realised what a boon a good education is. But the majority of the people in the Empire are illiterate. The peasant underclass and even a great deal of the nobility do not know their letters. For most, the written word is a thing of mystery and the scribes have a lucrative market to exploit. Using their often rudimentary skills, they take down letters, as spoken to them by the ignorant peasants. This way correspondence, legal documents such as last will and testaments, and even diaries can be made, in return for coin. Scribes are often found sat at tiny portative desks in market squares, ready with dripping quill, parchment (watermarks extra) and a rate-per-word written on a sign, which to their customers is, of course, unreadable.

But in an age where the written word is becoming ever more prevalent, and printing presses flood our streets with pamphlets and bill-posters, and stalls and shops appear dedicated to the selling of books, the scribe is finding his livelihood under threat.

Artist

It is a strange custom in Wissenburg to get a close relative's likeness taken when Morr is about to claim them. Research into the history of this custom took me back to the time of the Black Plague, which took a terrible toll on the citizens of that city.

Because the symptoms were so well documented, and were played out time and time again, it was possible to predict exactly when the victim would die. So, to ease the suffering of all involved, it became desirable to employ an artist to paint a likeness of the afflicted, at the near point of death, to serve as a permanent reminder to those left behind (assuming any survived). I also suspect it helped to pass the time, as a strict quarantine was enforced on all victims and their families.



Blacksmith

Muscular build
due to the rigors
of hard labour

Minimal clothing
due to harsh
working
temperatures



Beggars

They line the streets of our cities like human waste, flotsam washed up on the shores of poverty. It is impossible to stroll down the grand walkways of Altdorf without being accosted by beggars and vagrants. They slump under the arches of our temples and palaces, sleep in the cold comfort of the shadow of a statue of a hero. It marks out the flawed balance of our society when one sees such splendid architecture and such riches held by the few, against the background cacophony of the fallen many.

"Spare a coin for an old campaigner."

"I lost my legs and privates defending you from the orcs. Give a little back, guv'nor."

"I've got sixteen mouths to feed and another on the way. Be generous to a man enslaved by his passions."

Such are the heart-rending cries that tear at my conscience whenever I hear them. Although my principle is not to give money, they will only spend it on mead, and that won't do them any good at all.



this came that I saw in Nuln had a cheerful indifference to his desperate situation. Indeed, I never saw a jollier fellow.



Live rat on
string Surly look



Gang leader



Dick in belt

Budgel



Bless their little thieving ways



This tyke had a propensity
to pick up and hurl stones



Ragged shirt,
torn hose and
penknife



Stoic expression



I blame the parents

Wears an adult coat

Festival Performers

The Moon

*Dressed in yellow and covered in
bells to hail the moons*



The Sun

*Garbed in red and bangs
a drum*



The Holy Comet

*Dressed in black and
white, and holds a
burning torch*



The Green Man

*Snake codpiece, a wreath of
twisted foliage with small animals,
birds and skulls bound in*



Hail Sigmar!

Street Performers

This juggler used axes, cleavers, knives, burning skulls, live cats - which meowed entertainingly every time they were hurled into the air - spiked glades, fish and torches, all for his audience's entertainment.

This entertainer carried a club and net to catch and beat senseless anyone who laughed at him or called him short. This was entertaining in itself.

Hobby Horse

Horses skull with burning incense in eye sockets

Used for an obscure festival in a village in the depths of the Drakwald forest

He stood on an assistant, who wore a scarecrow's face, and sported a tail held on with a stiletto dagger.

Brightly coloured clothes

Dance macabre pattern on robes

Women of ill repute

*A walker from Altdorf, who
worked the Street of
Artisans*



*Skirt hitched up at
sides through belt*

*Powdered face and chest
with beauty spots*



*This one may have been
a man*

*A veteran, a bit wrinkly
with no teeth*



*I remember this
one very well*



Thaliaro

Plate No. 2

Amongst the deadly assassins who carry out their nefarious deeds in the blood-soaked streets of Miragliano, few inspire such fear and respect as Thaliaro, the killer thespian. He is a high-ranked member of the Black Assassin's Guild, and has helped many a man into the cold embrace of Morr.

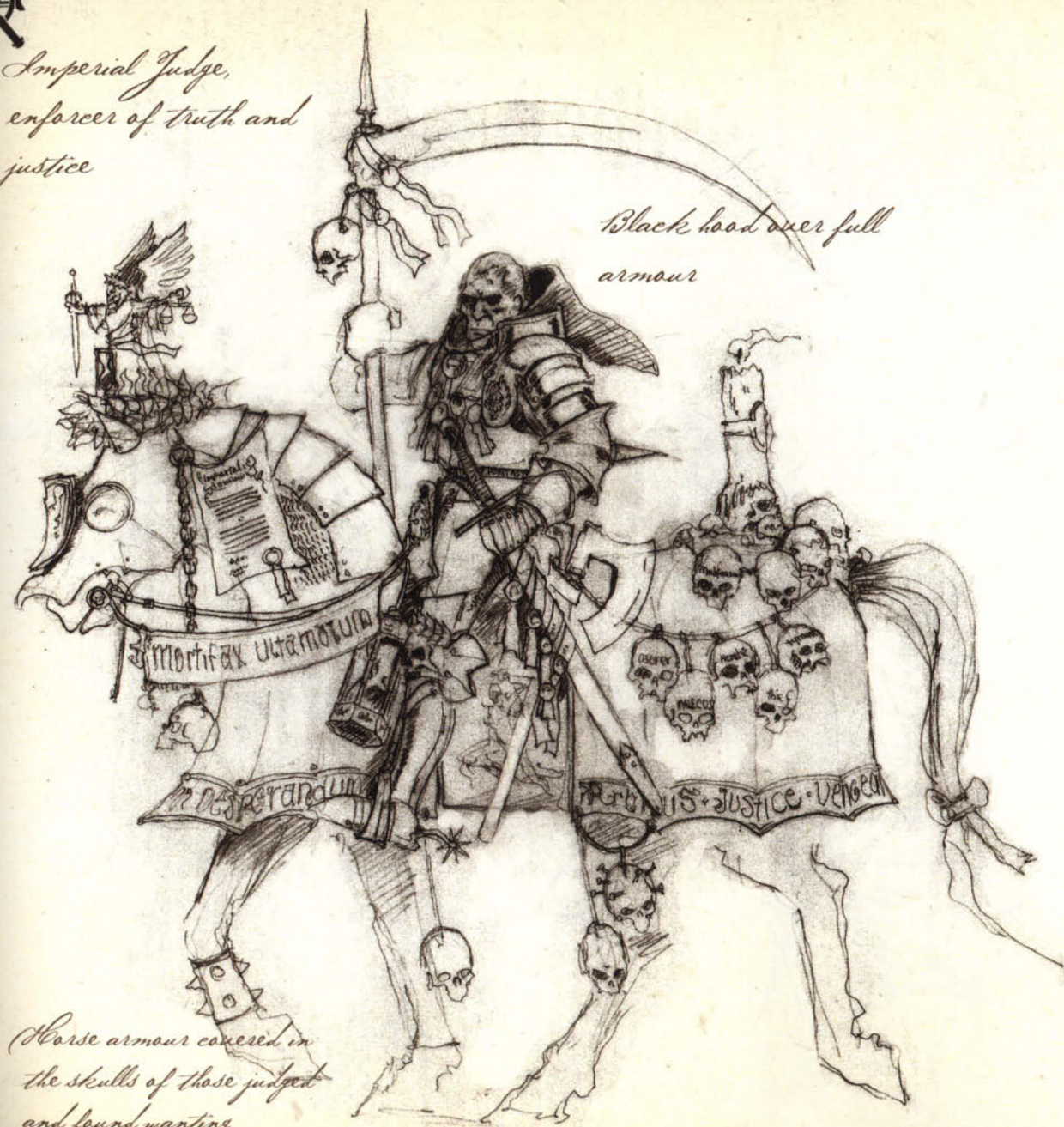
It is rumoured that he plays in some of the smaller theatres in the city, always masked and incognito. He kills whilst carrying his mummers mask and recites pompous verse while the bells that adorn his suit are all a-jingle and a-jangle – no doubt a terrifying prospect for his victims.

He wields a sable-steel rapier, favourite of his breed, and dresses in a black troll-skin suit of the Black Assassin's Guild. He wears bone accessories and always carries a gold casket filled with earrings.



*Imperial Judge,
enforcer of truth and
justice*

*Black hood over full
armour*



*Horse armour covered in
the skulls of those judged
and found wanting*

Servants of the Empire

The Threads in the Fabric

The Empire is the most civilised land in the Old World. One has only to visit the decrepit hinterland that is Bretonnia to understand this (that is if you can stomach the arrogant attitude extended to all visitors by its down-trodden citizens). Our land is strengthened – and only occasionally confused – by a necessarily complex yet effective beaurocracy.

The town militias, tax collectors, land registrars, fiscal policy-makers, inventory keepers, materiel wardens, lime-spreaders, council administrators, clerks, masters of the scales, lamp lighters, executioners, road keepers, gate wardens, beadles, mayors, work house governors, key keepers, gaolers, judges, witch hunters, heralds, sewer jacks, rat catchers, louse pickers, plague watchers and tramp pushers all go about their daily business, ensuring that life in the Empire continues as usual. All perform very different functions. Some are detested: tax collectors and executioners; some are feared: witch hunters and judges, but all are vital to the continuing prosperity of our land.

Whether you be a sewer-jack, wading in effluence and excrement, braving the stinking tunnels and pools that twist and twine under the streets of our cities, or a travelling Imperial judge, criss-crossing the land meting out justice and punishment in even the most remote village or town, you are carrying out the bidding of the great Emperor Karl Franz.

He resides at the top of a bureaucratic tree. Under him are administrative clerks in the various offices, decreeing what tasks are to be done, and ensuring the necessary parchments and seals are produced to make the emperor's word become reality. Then the word is passed to the appropriate organisation, whether it be the Office for the Due Collection of Taxes and Tithes, or the Grand Council for the Proper Dissemination of News and Tidings by Heralds and Criers, or the Guild for the Proper Maintenance of Gallows and other Devices of Public Retribution and Punishment. These words are then put into action by the servants of the Empire.

Executioners and Headsmen

As the wheels of justice turn, the axe of the executioner falls.

There are many forms of punishment practised throughout our Empire. Most are designed to act as a deterrent by fear, ensuring that others will think first before they commit any nefarious deed. But they also fulfil the public's desire for revenge on all those who dare defy the laws of the land.

I have watched many an execution. They are a spectacle, partly an exhibition of the power of the law, partly entertainment for the people. In some towns it is common practice to execute several people at one time. A festival atmosphere is encouraged, seating is provided, crowds gather, a full itinerary is printed with notes on the accused, and special street theatre performances are laid on, with mimes acting out the soon-to-be-headless's crimes.

The preference of the axe or sword depends on what state you visit. The axe and block is used mostly in the more uncouth northern territories, whereas in the south the sword is prevalent. There is an art to beheading. The ideal is to cut the head off with one blow. But this is not always the case. In Albrechtburg I witnessed the beheading – although death by a thousand cuts might be a more appropriate term – of the highwayman Helmut Kopf. The headsman was obviously drunk and after the second blow of the axe severed Kopf's right arm and shoulder, the highwayman is reported to have said: "A little bit more to the left, good sir."

In the south, beheading is reserved to those of noble birth because, if it is done properly, it is swift and pain free. However, stories persist of heads showing signs of life for several minutes after being shorn off the neck. In Nuln in 2235, Sir Jasper Gewolf is said to have proclaimed his innocence of treachery for several minutes, even as the executioner was showing his severed head to the crowd.

The headsman's duties do not end after the severing. He is sometimes required to perform the quartering of the body, if the sentence decrees, and boiling the head and mounting it on a spike.

Executioners

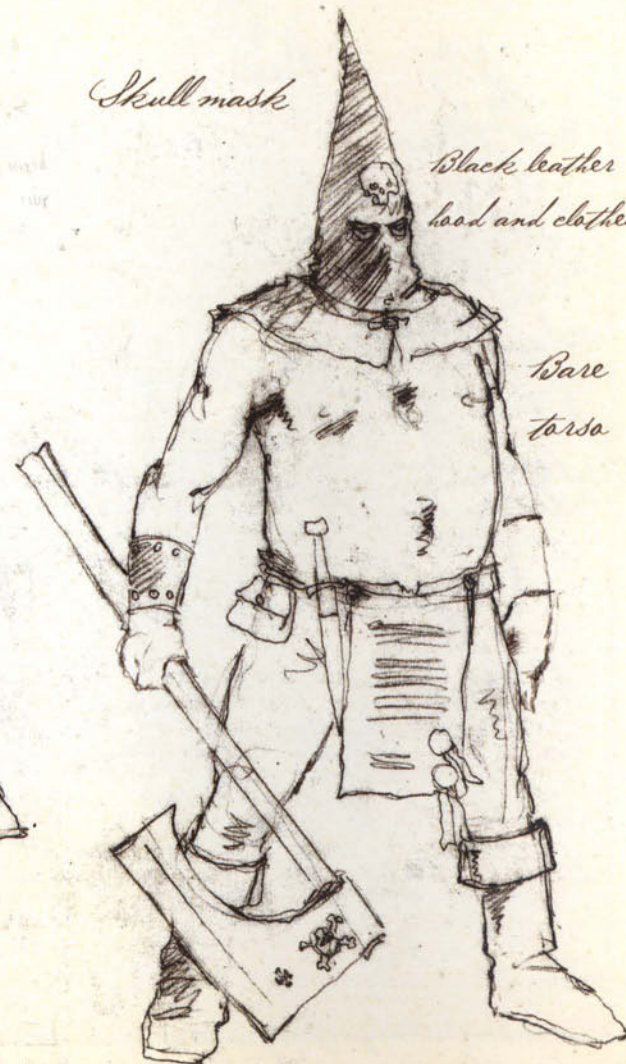
*Beheading by
the sword*

*Mercy bag over
the head*

Skull mask

*Black leather
hood and clothes*

*Bare
tarsa*



Imperial Herald

Ornate headdress
and loud,
booming voice

Thick,
embroidered
tabard



Lamplighter

Circle of
candles over coif

Slow match burning

Sulphur matches and
steel striker on belt



Lamplighter

They appear like shades, emerging as dusk falls over the cities, gliding through the streets like spectres.

The Empire is the only land in the Old World civilised enough to have lamps on main streets. The lamplighters, dutiful and possessed with a strange portentousness, flit from one pole to another, casting back the shadows and enlightening the dark where danger could lurk. Candles and slow tapers adorn their long robes, casting elegant pillars of smoke which trail behind them as they walk, like incense from a censor.

The lamplighter's job is considered to be of such import, and the significance of what they do so indicative of our civilisation, that to interrupt their work without proper cause is punishable by death.

The City Watch

I have a deep affection for the city of Talabheim (the Ten-Tailed Cat being a favourite inn of mine), not least because, relatively speaking, the streets are quite safe. This is because it is proud to have one of the best city watches in the Empire.

The count ensures they are properly equipped, trained and paid. Thus they are not like the rowdy, part-time thugs that one sometimes sees in watch uniforms. Patrols are regular, and they are so much a part of city life that they put on parades and drill exhibitions, for the amusement of the citizens.

City watches in some of the more provincial towns, particularly in the north, are often less than professional. Their ranks are swelled by unpaid volunteers, and I suspect it is not civic duty that drives them, but rather a desire to cause mischief, under the pretence of upholding the law.

The power they wield is open to abuse if not contained by a proper supervising body. Extortion, theft, violence and dereliction of duty are all accusations which could be levelled against some of our so-called protectors. There are enough ruffians and criminals in the land without adding them into the equation.

Well equipped and armed

The Muscle

Sadly gone to seed but splendidly dressed



Militia captain



Sallet helmet
with militia
insignia on shield

Short, dumpy.

Scarred face, eye
turned white

Imperial mandate on
breast plate

Grizzled face,
built like a bear



Parchments around
staff

Skull
fixed to a
well used
weapon

Armour
underneath
long coat

Thin and wiry,
walked with a
pronounced limp



Keys to city gates and gaols
hanging from scabbard

Hanel

Plate No. 3

I met Hanel in Araby, where he was selling his services as a protector to earn enough money to secure his crossing back to the Empire. He has served as my bodyguard on several occasions since and – after much prompting – told me the story of his life.

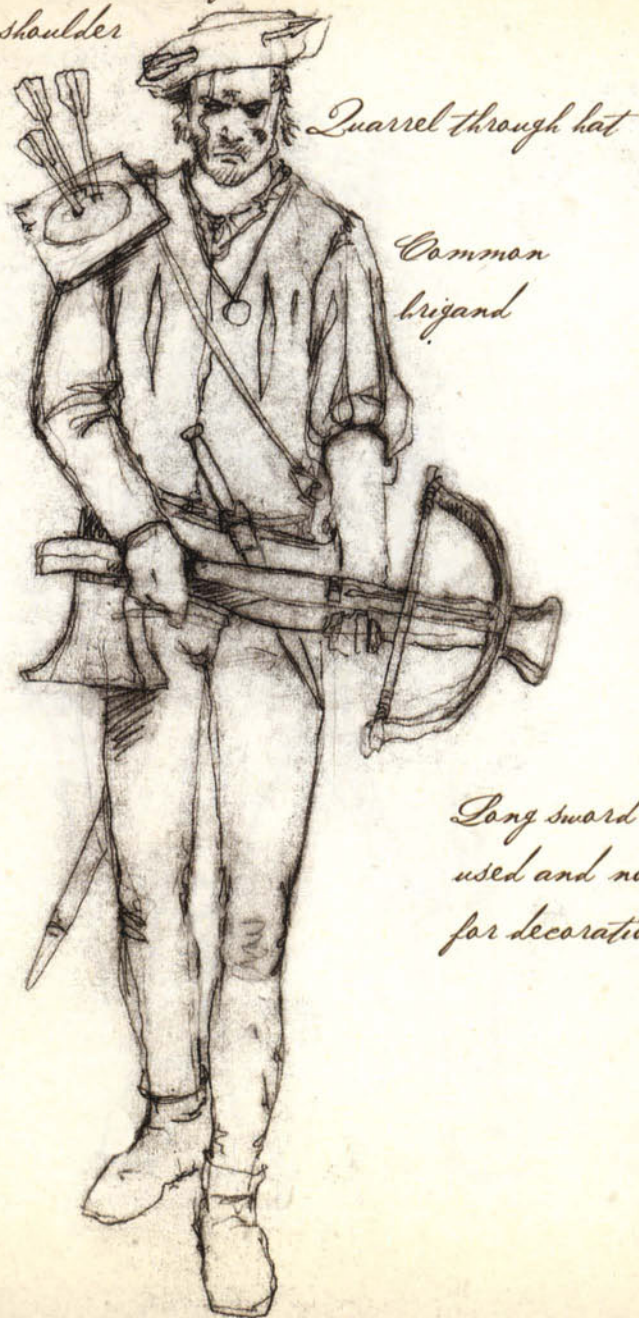
He was born in Middenheim, that great bastion of stone and strength. As a child he ran away to explore the wider world. He worked as a deckhand on a river barge, but was taken in battle and pressed into service as an oar slave on an Arabyan corsair. Unlike most who succumb to this fate, he survived and managed to escape when the ship he served on was rammed by another vessel.

Since then, he has become an adventurer and seasoned warrior, fighting in campaigns throughout the Old World. His helm was constructed in the master forges in Nuln, and an ingenious device, made with mirrors and magnifying lenses, allows him to see with great clarity, even in the dark.

He always carries a telescope, a blunderbuss – perfect for close-quarter deck fighting – a broadsword with a rigging slicing end-blade, a nautilus powder flask and armour. He wears a bearskin cloak, sewn with shark hooks to deflect rear attacks. Several times he has saved my life, and I dedicate this picture to him. May Sigmar rest his bones.



*Small wooden target
on shoulder*



Quirel through hat

*Common
brigand*

*Long sword - well
used and not just
for decoration!*

*Studded
skullcap*



Swords for Hire

Cutthroats, Footpads, Brigands and Thieves

The roads between village, town and city are fraught with peril for the traveller, unwary or not. On many a journey I was inclined to hire professional men of violence to escort me. And who did they protect me from? From men such as themselves! Few are as low as those who accept money to do harm and damage to a fellow human, but our land crawls with mercenary fellows, willing to undertake any dirty task in return for coin.

Our laws are rightly strict, and the great agencies of the Empire fight a battle against the thief and the cutthroat; but the battle, I fear, will never be won. Perhaps we should tackle the root of the problem: our land is beset by plague, disease, starvation and poverty, and while this situation remains, men will be forced to take desperate measures in order to survive. Sigmar knows that the spectre of hunger will turn the most civilised man into a beast, ready to lash out at the weak in order to fill his belly. Every man has a choice to behave a certain way; but some have less choice than others, and there is money to be made in violence.

In fact, I harbour fond memories of some of my protectors: hard-bitten to a man, battle-scarred and ruthless as goblins, but ever ready with a tall tale and a joke, best washed down with strong ale. Not all were villains. One such as me – learned, civilised and wealthy – is not used to such company, but experience changes a man's outlook like nothing else. Oft was I surprised at the bravery and comradeship demonstrated by some of these blackguards. They were even, on occasion, apt to demonstrate a certain kind of honour – at least among their own kind.

The pictures over the next few pages are mostly of men I had dealings with, either by employing them, or being robbed by them. I ask you not to judge them too harshly.

Face hidden
by mask

Kill tally on
blade

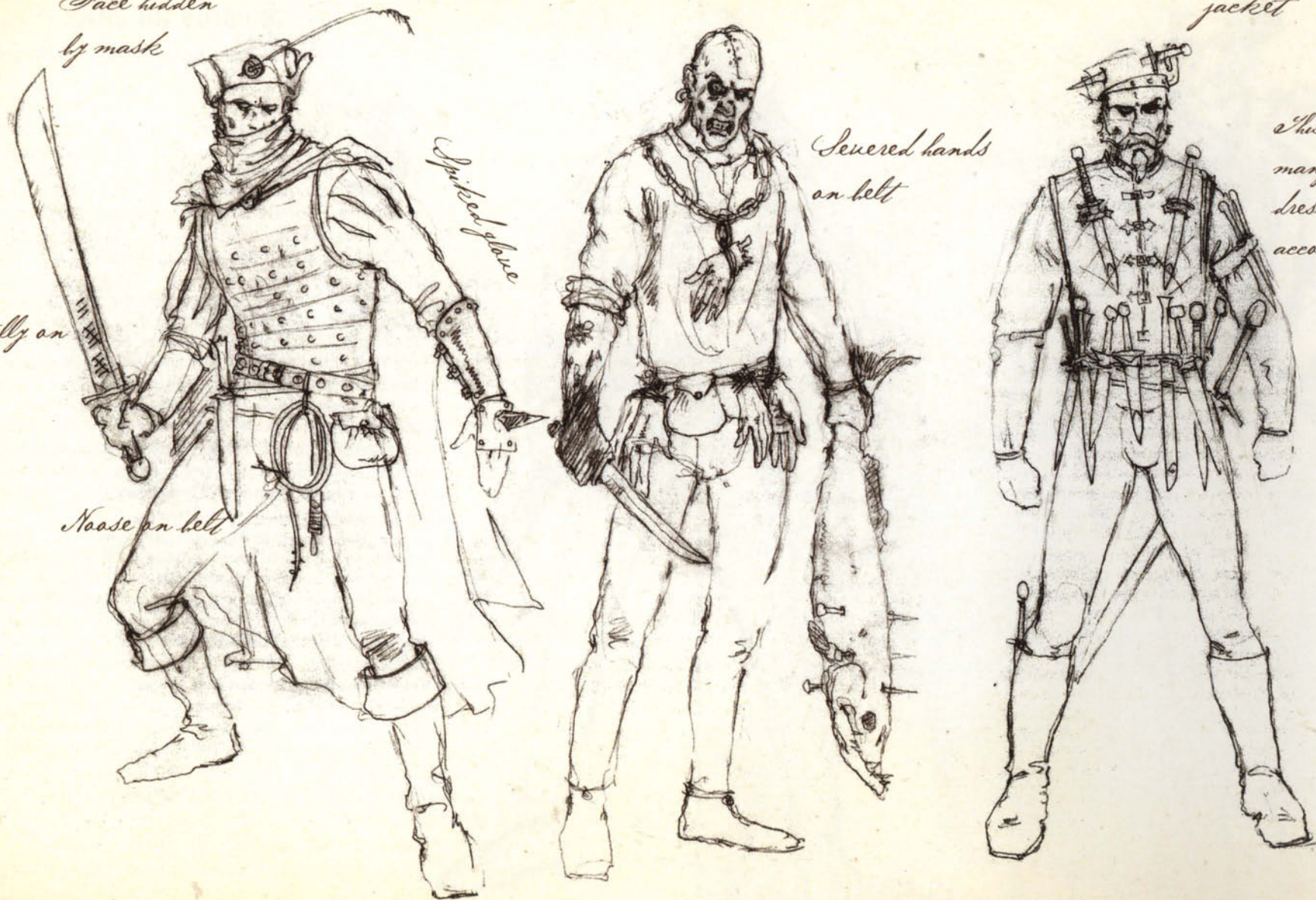
Noose on belt

Mad Fish wielder I hired in
Wurtbad

Severed hands
on belt

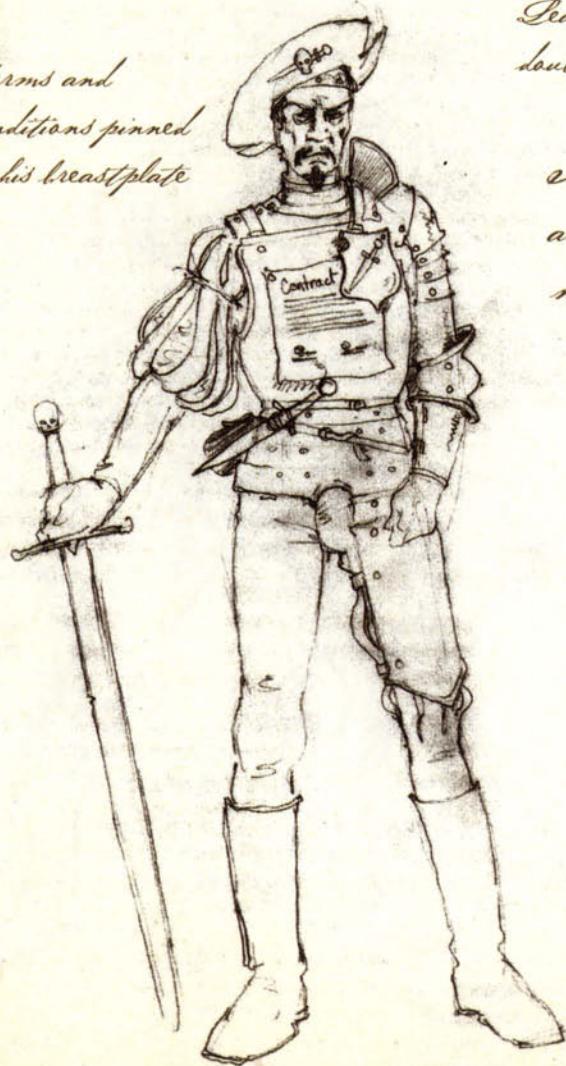
Short quilted
jacket

This cone carried as
many knives as his
dress could
accommodate



Sellsword captain

*Terms and
conditions pinned
to his breastplate*



Shaved head

*Leather sleeveless
doublet*

*Yankard
around
neck*



Great sword

Mercenaries, Hirelings and Brigands

It may seem like folly to hire mercenaries to protect oneself from harm against – let's face it – men of similar disposition. But I have been forced to undertake such risks on many occasions. If other, more official help was not forthcoming, or I needed to travel with no delay into dangerous places on one errand or another, I had to take whatever help I could find.

After a time, I became rather adept at finding suitable accomplices. The inns of the land are always occupied – in varying states of inebriation – by men who fight for coin. In some places, in particular the rougher quarters of Aldorf (such as the halfling quarter, known as the Little Moot) there are Mercenary Guilds, made up of licenced hirelings, who work under written contract, and are liable to pay a sum to the customer's next of kin should they be killed or maimed on the journey (certain injuries subject to negotiation).

It was from Fletcher and Kray's Men of Repute that I hired these men: Otto and Kramer. Despite appearances, they were excellent travelling companions, highly professional (Kramer once beheaded three orcs with one swing of his bastard-sword) and, although you may scoff at this, honest to a fault. On one occasion, Otto lent me money after a particularly unprofitable game of cards at the Crusader's Arms in Carroburg.

Hired Thugs

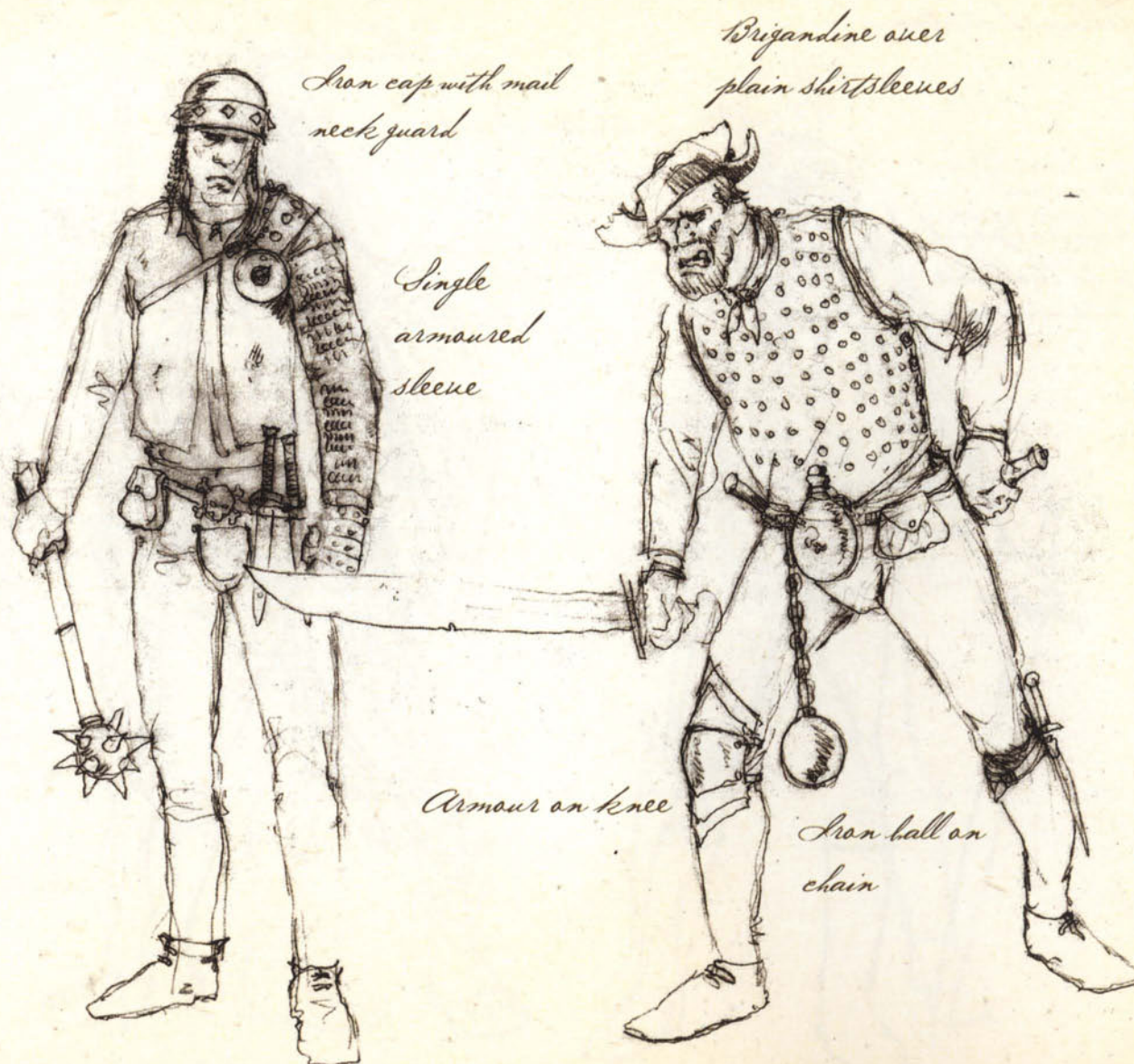
When I was a young man, and not as worldly as I now am, I was not always so wise in my choice of protectors. I forget the names of these worthies, but I hired their dubious services in Wurtbad. I needed to reach Averheim in great haste, but did not relish the journey past the Blighted Towers on my own, so I availed myself of the local brew – appropriately named Orc Phlegm – and discussed terms with them in the Begger's Bowl Inn.

We agreed, and set out immediately. They were taciturn fellows, and my attempts at conversation were returned with less than polite words. We entered the wilds, and I became less and less happy with my predicament (the fact that one of them used a dead fish run through with nails as a bludgeon should have warned me that these were not wholesome fellows, but one lives and learns).

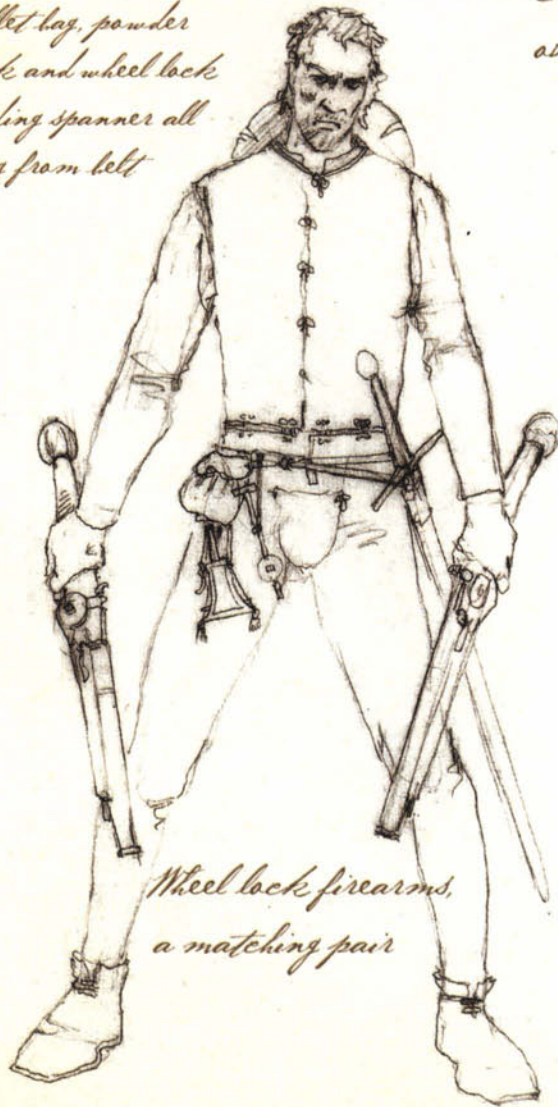
Sure enough, we were set upon by bandits, but rather than fighting the aggressors, my protectors asked if they could join their happy little band, citing the reason that they were bored of my conversation and wanted more stimulating company. Amongst much raucous laughter, they stripped me of all my belongings and left me. They would have killed me but they said it would be more amusing to let the wild animals take me.

I gave myself up for dead; I did not know where I was and had few survival skills. But Sigmar was watching me at that time and I happened upon a hermit who took me in, fed me a meagre yet welcome meal and told me the exact same thing had happened to him twenty years before. The difference was he decided to stay in the wilds and atone for the many sins that had led him there.

I, however, decided to atone for my sins at a later date, and asked him to lead me back to civilisation again.



*Bullet bag, powder
flask and wheel lock
winding spanner all
hung from belt*



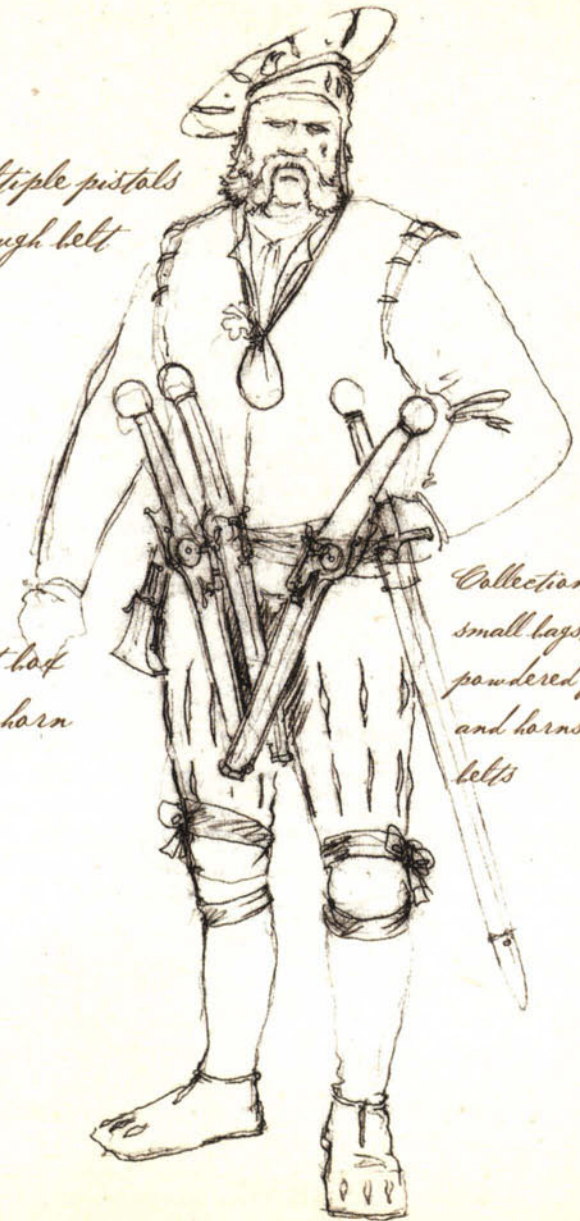
*Wheel lock firearms,
a matching pair*

*Coat open at front
over breastplate*



*Skull bullet bag
and powder horn
on belt*

*Multiple pistols
through belt*



*Collection of
small bags,
powdered flasks
and horns on the
belt*

Gerontious

Plate No. 4

I will never forget Gerontious, the Blind Priest. He is surely one of the most charismatic and appallingly violent men I ever met. He was part of a warband, commissioned by the Duke of Wheburg to secure my passage over the Grey Mountains and into Couronne. Although not the leader of the band, his spiritual vigour and sharp mind ensured that he was constantly rendering advice to us on what course of action to take.

Although blind, he refused all help and guidance, saying that Sigmar Himself walked with him along the righteous path. Sigmar must possess a nasty sense of humour, as the righteous path often led him into trees and ditches. He never spoke of how he lost his sight.

All his few possessions were tied to his clothing for easy retrieval. His robes were covered in parchments where he had written passages from the "Deus Sigmar" from memory. He used a huge blackpowder weapon that was taller than he was, and the noise it made almost deafened those nearby. He was unperturbed by the notion of losing his hearing as well as his sight.

Once, in a high mountain pass, three stone trolls set upon us. As they approached, blocking both directions of the ravine, a comrade turned him to face the nearest attacker; Gerontious shouted passages from "The Life of Sigmar" and fired his weapon. A troll fell back, wreathed in smoke and a spray of blood, roaring in pain. The priest, showing no fear whatsoever, leapt forward, swinging his hammer. The battle was short, and I realised that Sigmar really was guiding his hand.



Priest of Manann,
the sea god

Belt with
articulated
fish



Embroidered silk
tabard, blue and
white

Priest of Morr, god
of death



Plain
black robes
and hood

Shaven head with small
ornate box tied to
forehead

Priest of Verena,
goddess of
justice

Scales of justice



Religion in the Empire

Paragons of Faith, Belief and Fanaticism

In this time of upheaval and strife, faith is the only constant a man can cling to. Like a drowning sailor gripping a piece of driftwood as the waves rear up around him, we look to our gods to protect us from the growing darkness.

Religion has always played a central part in my life: I read from the "Life of Sigmar", and pray to Him every evening, but I cannot pretend to have lived a life free of sin. I am a man of passion – sanguine at heart – and as a priest I would have been found sorely wanting! But a man should choose a path that most befits his humour and character.

That is not to suggest that men of faith are lacking in vim and vigour. Indeed, I have seen witch hunters empowered with such forceful passion that it seemed that the very blood of Sigmar Himself ran hot in their veins. And this is what sets them apart: all men are born with passions, but those who answer a religious calling are unsullied by base human desire. Instead, they set forth to spread the word of the gods, bring light and learning into dark places, and to root out those who would harbour evil in their hearts.

I have seen terrible things perpetrated in the name of religion. My nightmares reverberate with the sound of women screaming as the fires of purity lap at their feet. I heard tell of an entire village brought to trial on charges of heresy. The accused were forced to watch as their homes and crops were razed to the ground. After which the zealous witch hunters tormented them in vile and sadistic ways, creating agony and pain with the craft and ingenuity of artists at the peak of their creative powers, before feeding the guilty, one by one, into the device known as the "Daemon's Harness". But all, I believe, were just and fitting acts, essential to keep the land of the Empire free from corruption and heresy.

And yet, in my heart, I know they fight a battle where the odds are stacked against them. Men are weak, and prone to lose their way in the dark. Light grows dim as the years go by, soon the sun may set over the Empire of men and never return, and we will all stumble as blind men into the waiting arms of our final doom.

Sigmarite preacher

Holy text pinned to robes

*Candles of faith
on shoulders*

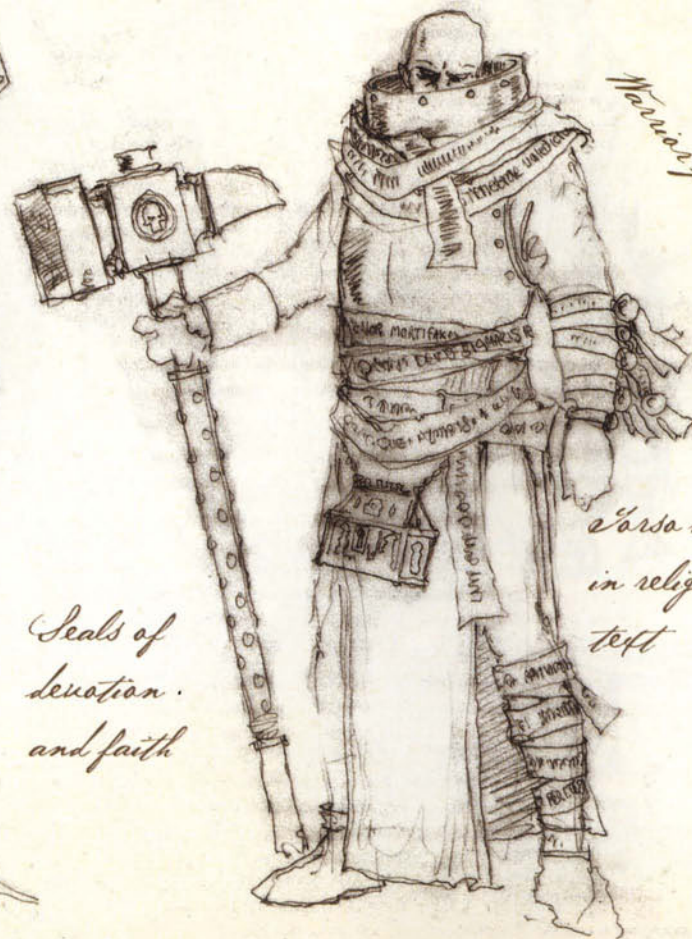


*Pierce and
strident*



*Huge hammer,
symbol of
allegiance as well
as a weapon*

*Iron breastplate
and collar*



Warrior priest

*Seals of
devotion
and faith*

*Arms wrapped
in religious
text*

Voluminous headdress

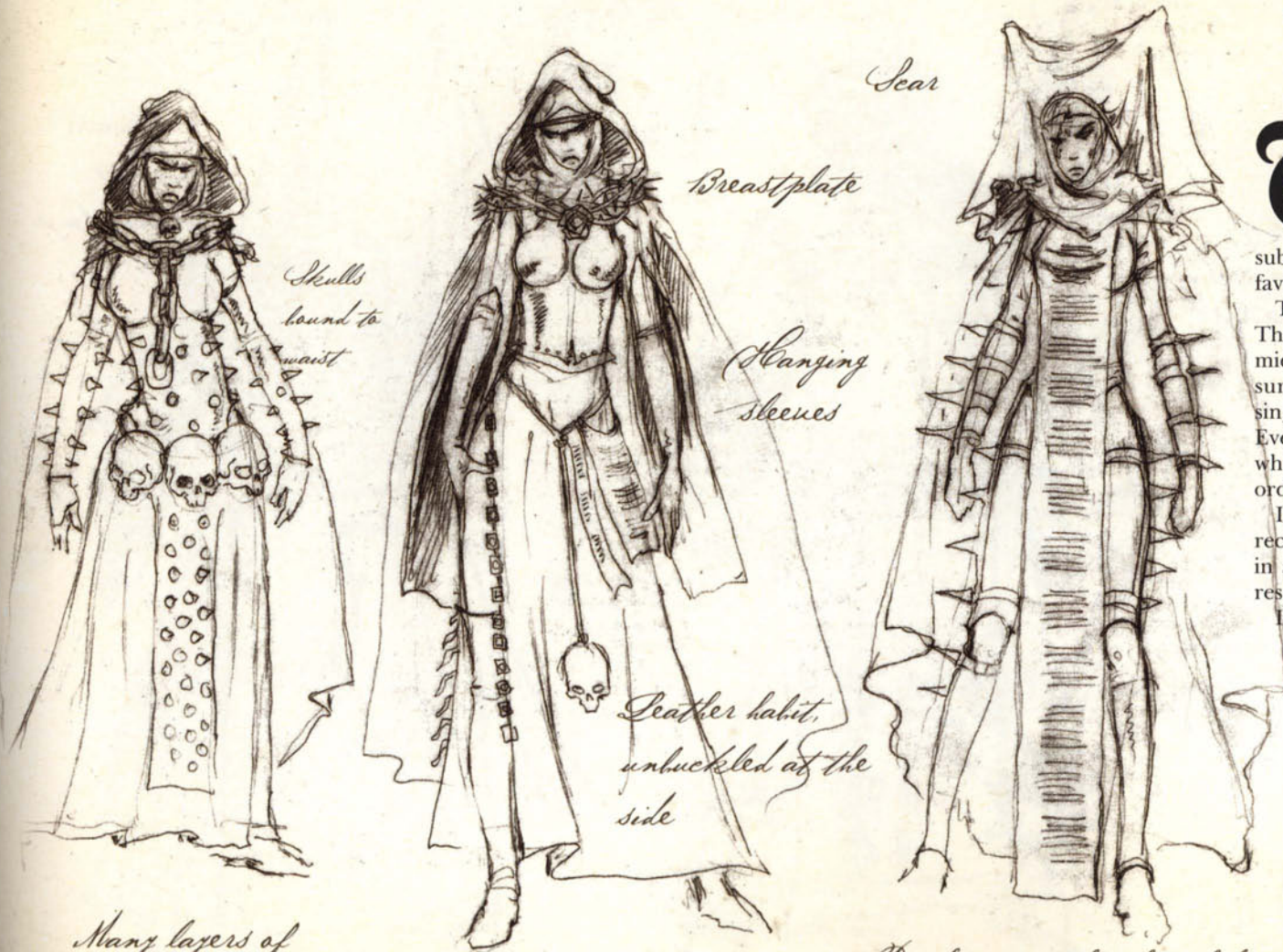
Sisters of Faith and Chastity

One of the most interesting wings of the Sigmarite clergy are the Maids of Sigmar. This reclusive order live to the east of Altdorf, near the Great Forest. They are held in high esteem by the surrounding peasantry, especially the men. They subsist on donations of food from the locals, who gain the favours of Sigmar by doing so.

They permit themselves no contact with the outside world. The only time they ever leave the confines of their walls is on mid-summer's day. At this time they parade through all the surrounding villages, led by their formidable matriarch, singing, over and over again, the "Dirge of the Brutal Truth". Everyone turns out to watch, throwing offerings at their feet, which are quickly picked up by the youngest initiates of the order.

I was refused entry into the walls of their fortress-like-reclusium, but I managed to secure myself a good hiding place in a conveniently close tree, and spent many happy hours in respectful observation.

I certainly found the sights on offer most stimulating.



Scar

Breastplate

Hanging sleeves

Leather habit, unbuckled at the side

Parchment with "Thou shalt not..." list

Many layers of clothing to cover all sinful flesh

Fire, the tool of the
witch hunter

Witch hunters

Manacles and
branding iron

Book of
Crime and
Punishment

Brazier on head to give him
a terrifying look

Skulls of
spikes add to
the effect

Mace of
Retribution

Iron belt with
parchment

Matriarch

Permanent
judgemental gaze

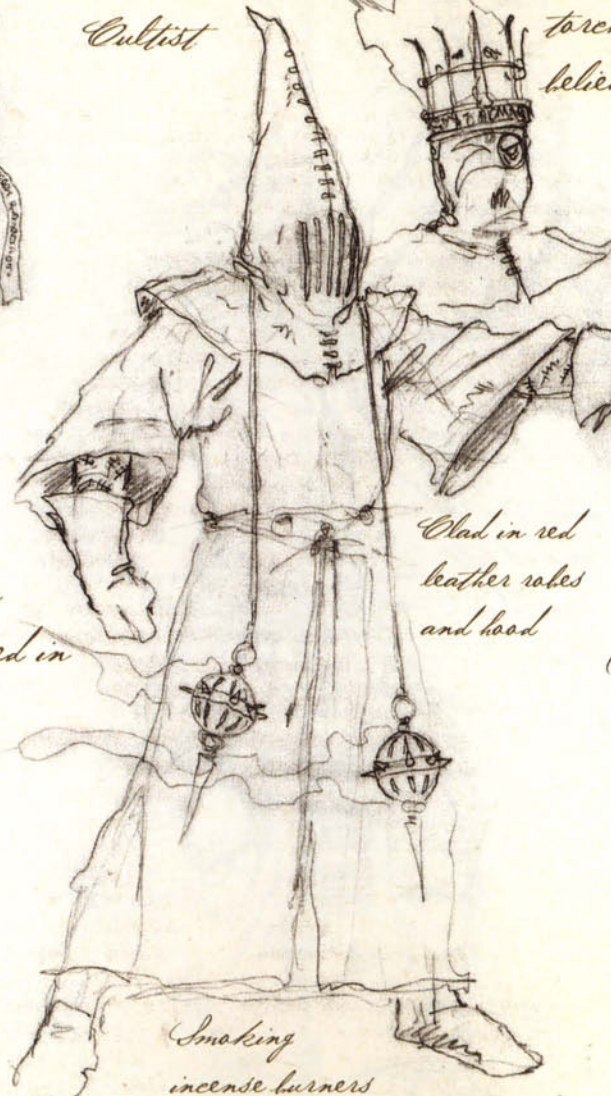
Preacher

Bones of saints
and martyrs
around his neck



Skin
covered in
scars

Cultist



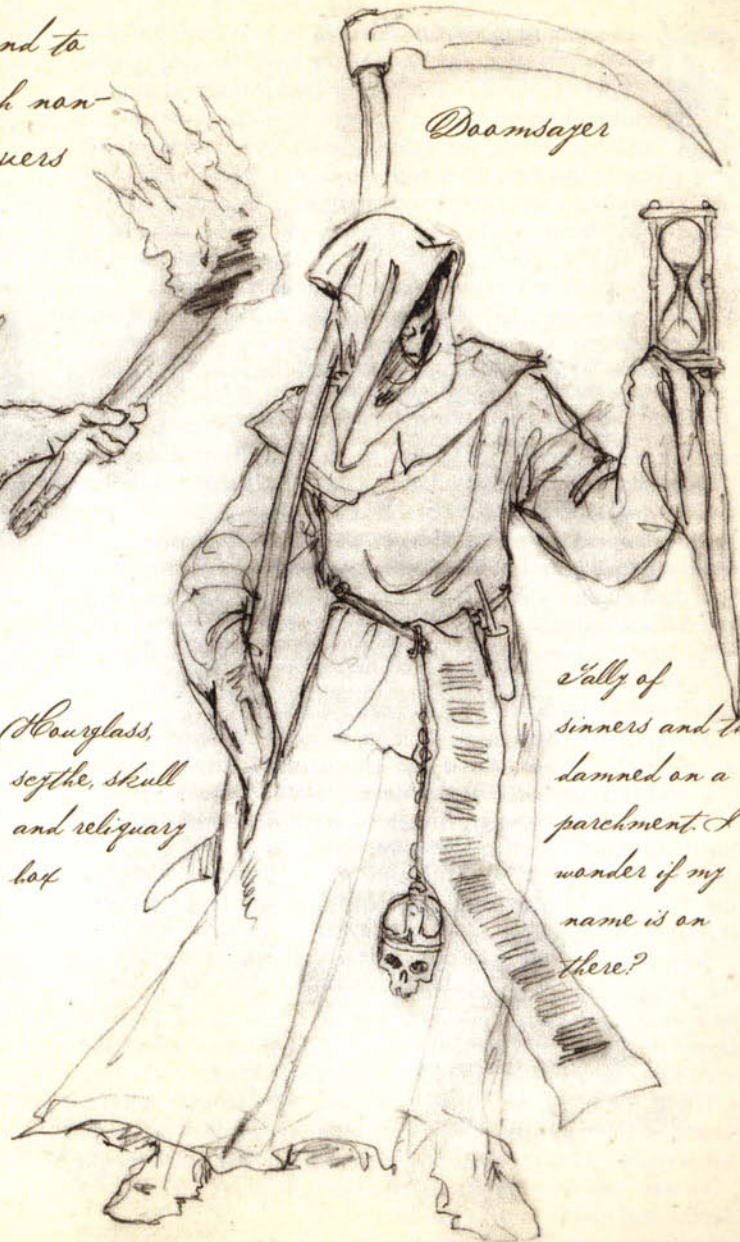
Clad in red
leather robes
and hood

Smoking
incense burners

Brand to
torch non-
believers

Hourglass,
scythe, skull
and reliquary
box

Doomsayer



Roll of
sinners and the
damned on a
parchment. I
wonder if my
name is on
there?

Flagellants

I was acting as diplomatic advisor, on loan from the count of Wissenland, to that hero of the land, General Heisner. A force of heretics was festering in the Middle Mountains, and had begun to take maidens from the local towns to sacrifice to their awful deity. We set forth, and it was with great pleasure that I marched with the Grand Army of Hochland, and a more stirring sight I have rarely seen! But ever on these expeditions, drawn by the smell of war and in the wake of the mounted knights, foot soldiers, archers, hand-gunners, black-powder weapons and baggage train, were the flagellants.

There were over five hundred of them, men and women exhibiting many types of self-mutilation that was both disturbing and inventive. They wailed and lamented, the combined sounds making a doleful eulogy of despair. They chastised themselves with whips, bundles of nettles, or lit tapers. One was even swiping another's face with a live rat on the end of a string. Some were employed with the task of rubbing a solution of salt and vinegar into their fellows' wounds.

I fully expected General Heisner to send them on their way. I could see they were having an unnerving effect on his men, what with their endless wailing about death and apocalypse. Instead he asked me to approach their leader, and issue battle orders to him; all in Sigmar's name, of course. This I did, secretly wondering if the general had lost his mind.

I should have trusted his wild cry for war.

The armies formed up in the early hours of the morning. The usual opening moves played out. The archers fired volleys at the foe, and the foe bared their backsides at us; an interesting if militarily useless stratagem. And this was when Heisner decided to break the deadlock. He waved his sword in the air and, on cue, his men shouted out the *Litany of Battle* from the hallowed pages of the "Deus Sigmar". The ranks parted and, like dogs hungry for the hunt, the flagellants were set loose.

With blood chilling cries and disconcerting speed they charged the cultists' ranks. Even before they hit the line, I saw the enemy back away, their defiant cries dying behind their lips as the rabble closed the gap; they were obviously greatly disturbed to see men even more fanatical and unhinged than themselves.

It was the break we needed. As the enemy reeled under the assault of the flagellants – who cared nothing for themselves and felt no pain – Heisner led a cavalry charge into the breaking line.

Victory was ours, appropriately brought about by the most devout and insane men in the land.

Harsh austerities are sometimes undertaken to bring about liberation from material realms

Spiked vambrace to aid in self mutilation.

Parchment fixed to chest with daggers

Two-way spiked belt locked in place permanently

Long pins slid through flesh





Pieter the Pious

Plate No. 5

The land of the Empire is awash with zealots and flagellants. Faith burns so strong within them that it turns their minds from everyday cares and submerges them into a dark world of raving morbidity, self-pity and physical abuse against their own flesh.

The seminal but little read work, "Armies of the Hammer – The Forgotten Crusades", tells of one man who called himself Pieter the Pious, who led an army of fanatics into the parched lands of Araby. On his journey across the Empire, his rhetoric and charisma turned many men, women and children to his cause. They followed behind him, chanting dirges and chastising themselves until their passing was marked with many trails of blood.

Somehow they managed to find passage across the sea to Araby. But after that, the mouth of history becomes silent. Rumours abound. Were they swallowed by the desert? Were they destroyed by vengeful sand gods? It is my belief that Pieter's Pilgrim army was sold into ignominious slavery, but the history of the Peoples' Crusade has passed into tantalising myth.

*Follow ye not in the wake of Pieter,
Over the sea to the land of sand,
Your blood will boil in the hot, hot sun,
And into the teeth of death you'll teeter.*

Magic Users

Sages, Warlocks and Hedge Wizards

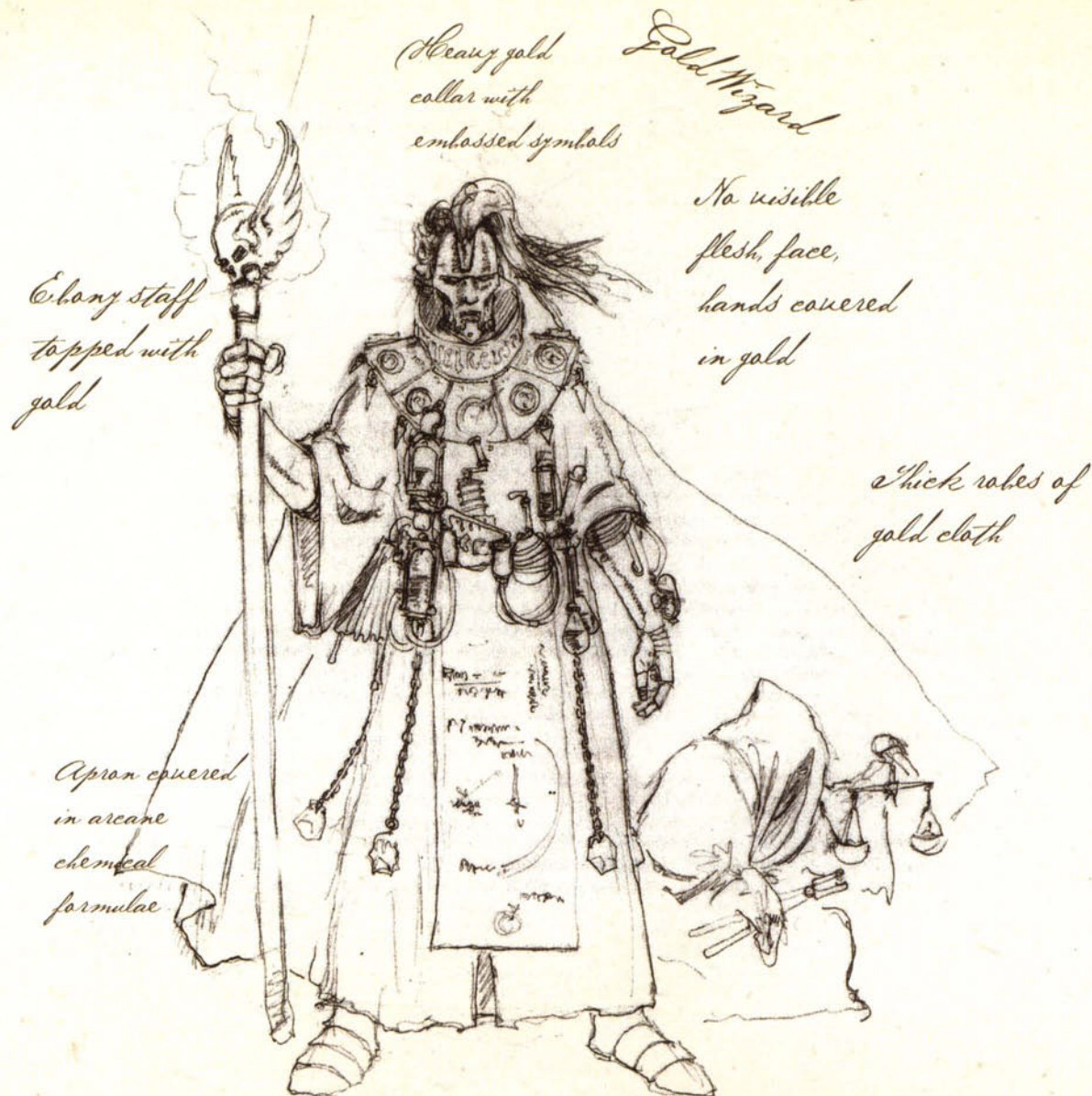
As he neared the end of his life, my father visited – with increasing regularity as more of his limbs seized up – an old woman healer who lived on the outskirts of our estate. My father was a pious man, and he had no time for those who pertained to dabble in what he called “devilish magicks and rash pacts with daemons”. Yet Deaf Nora was allowed to stay and practice her arts on us, and the vassals who tilled our land.

As a child I was always a little afraid of her; there was something about her that stirred up deep-seated unease, probably because I understood so little about how she achieved her feats of healing. But when I became afflicted with the Black Fever – an episode in my young life I would care to forget – and it seemed certain I would die, it was she who saved my life. I believe she was the first person in my life who had magic running through her.

Since then, those who wield the strange winds of magic have become a source of nervous fascination for me. Many people distrust such talents, and this is understandable; it is part of human nature to fear what one does not understand. But it seems clear to me – and my salvation by Deaf Nora attests to this – that we, as a people, greatly benefit from the careful and measured use of magic.

Powerful acquaintances of my uncle in Altdorf used their contacts to allow me brief entry into some of the colleges of magic in Altdorf. There I learnt much about the way these men master their natural talents, and just how beneficial they are to the safeguarding of our lands.

Judge not those who wield the flame. Put aside your childish fears; although I do advise you to treat them with due respect, caution and a considerable portion of tact.



Heavy gold
collar with
embossed symbols

Gold Wizard

No visible
flesh, face,
hands covered
in gold

Thick robes of
gold cloth

Ebony staff
tipped with
gold

Apron covered
in arcane
chemical
formulae

Devices on chest and belt, chemical
distillation, pipes, glass containers
and bubbling liquids

Black roses growing from
staff

Amethyst
Wizard Master

Scythe with carved symbols

Amethyst
Wizard

Shaved head
with tattoos

Several hoods

Skull carved from
Amethyst

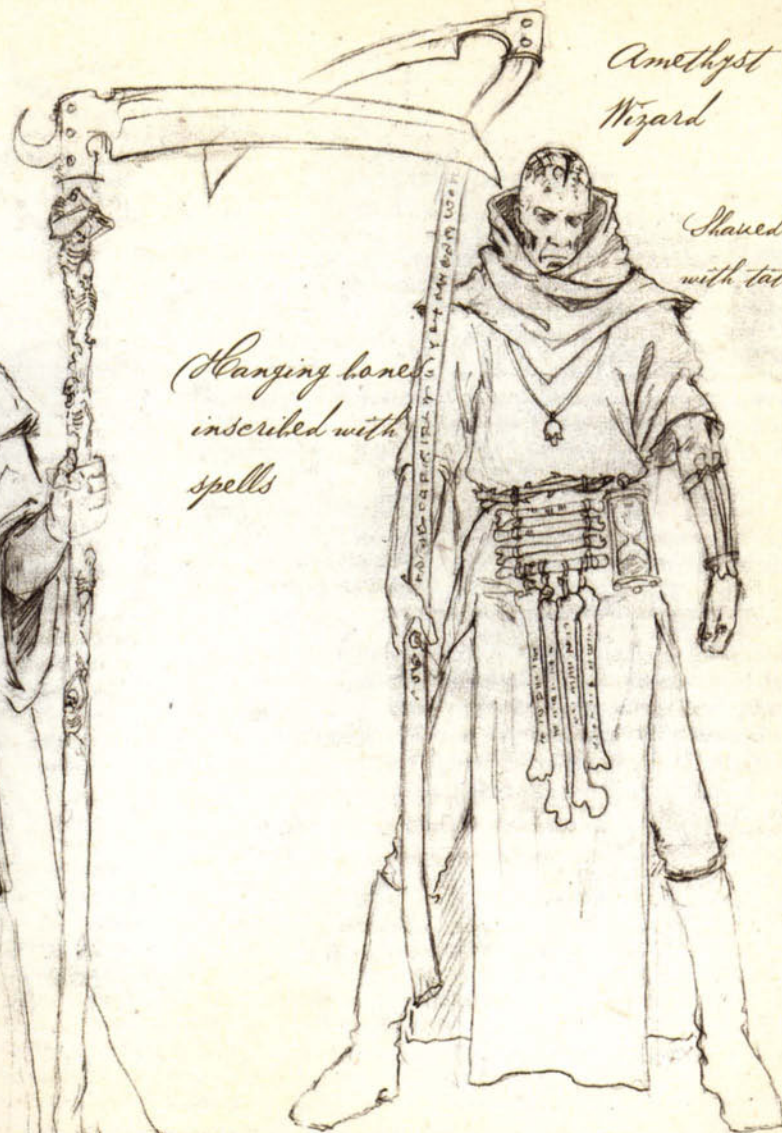
Hanging bones
inscribed with
spells

Dark, heavy
robes of black
and purple
velvet

Bag of
bones

Imp skeleton
with hourglass
familiar

Elong staff with carved
twisting skeletons on its length



Celestial Wizards

If you ever happen across a celestial wizard, chances are it is at night and he blundered into you; they spend much of their time looking up into the sky.

The specific power of the Celestial wizard is hard to quantify. They study the lore of the heavens, also known as Astromancy. Among their talents is the ability to predict the future. They use their sight to read the magics which float in the sky, which distorts the natural augers: the stars, planets and moons.

I was given leave to read some of their charts of the night sky, with all their transchronological grids and predictive lines. I believe the only reason I was allowed a glance at these terribly confusing and complicated parchments was because the wizards knew full well that I could not understand them, so could not reveal any of the secrets contained within.

It is also rumoured – and I think this is where their true power lies – that they can alter fate. Whether they predict forthcoming events and try to alter them by using their foresight, or they magically change the future, I do not know. But it is a startling consideration, to say the least.

*Celestial
Wizard
Master*

*Cloak constantly billowing as if
in strong winds
Sometimes a night sky is visible
in it, giving the illusion that one
is seeing another place*

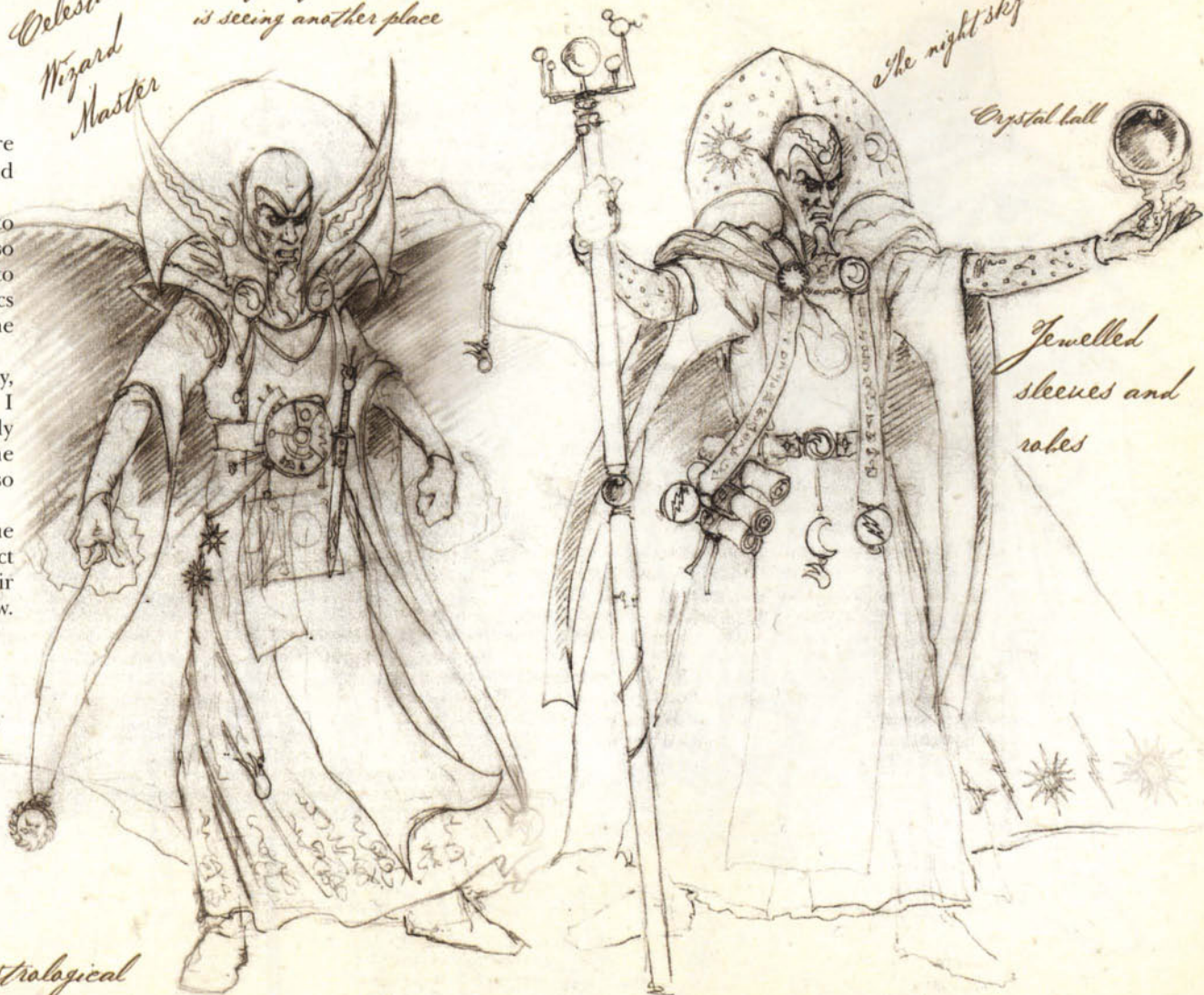
Planet model on staff

The night sky on collar

Crystal ball

*Jewelled
sleeves and
robes*

*Astrological
machine on belt*



Jade Wizard
Master

Fingers
growing into
living staff

Branches growing
through human
skull

Twig
growing
along arm
like veins

Living belt of
plants from
which hang
mortar and
pestle,
pouches of
herbs and
pierced stones



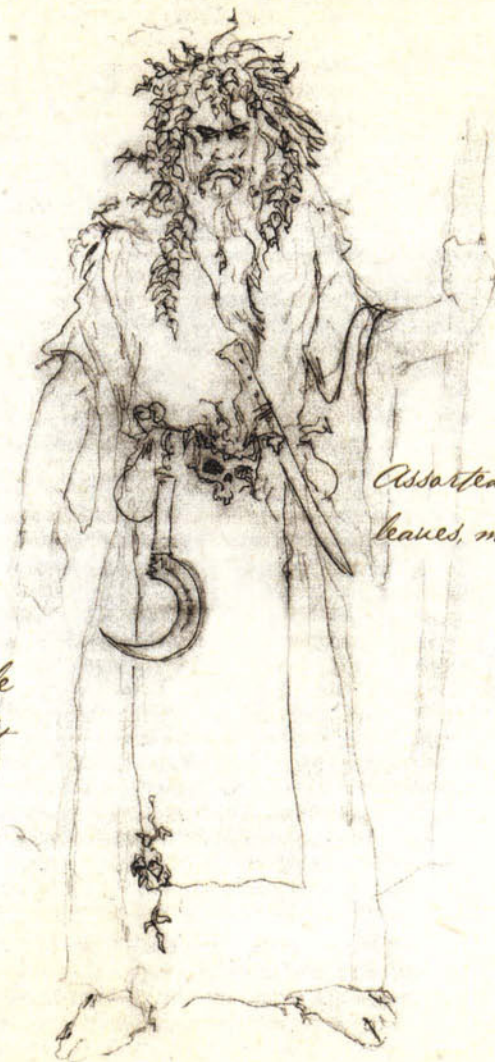
Mild hair
out of
which
grows ivy



Sickle
in belt

Bare feet

Assorted herbs, oak
leaves, mistletoe



Amber wizard master

*Headress made from
animal head*

*Raven on
shoulder*

*Cloak of
pelts,
including
heads and
claws*



Amber wizards



Long robe of leather and fur

*Decorated with various
animal claws and teeth*



Bright Wizard Master

Shrat haze above head

Brazier hanging
from collar on
brass chains

Metal belt,
everything
attached by rings
or short chains

Keys on chains

Bright Wizard

Hair swept back and up to
resemble flames

Burning skull on staff

Runes along arm

Bright Wizards

It is duly apparent, after spending some amount of time in the company of wizards from all of the different Colleges of Magic, that personality and temperament have as much to do with the path a wizard chooses to take, as the talent they have to manipulate the strange winds of sorcery that flow over the lands.

For example, I greatly enjoy the company of Grey wizards, because of their honest wisdom and gently sanguine nature, whereas the sombre outlook of the Amethyst wizards became very oppressive to me.

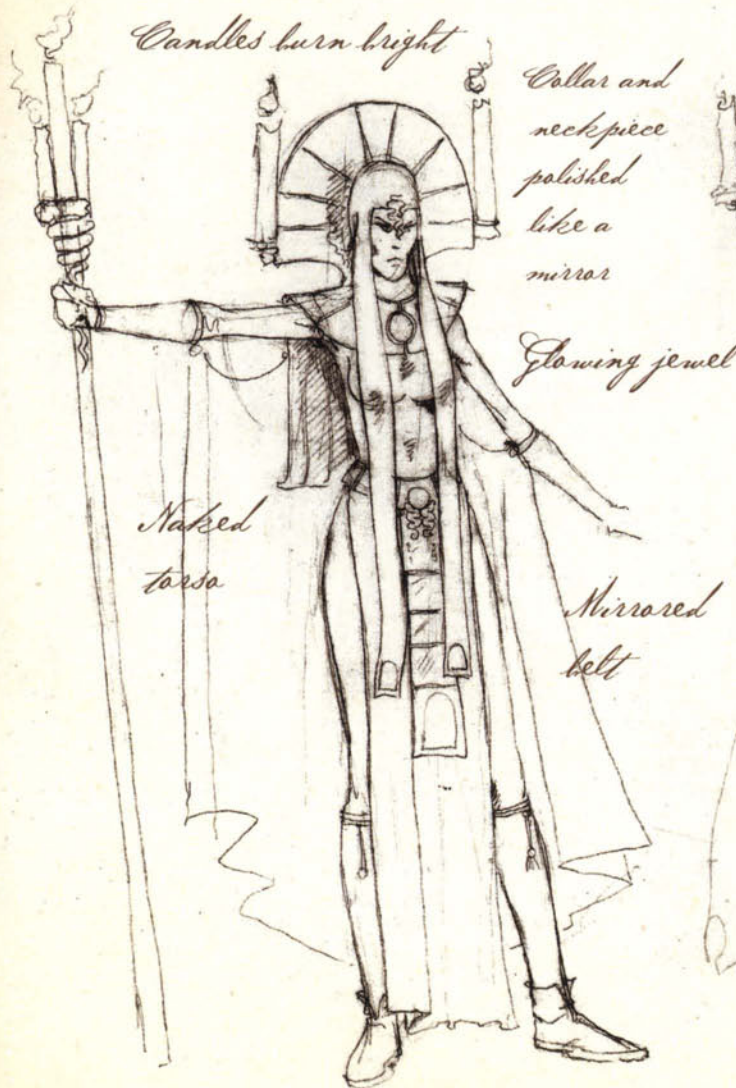
Bright wizards are volatile, hot-tempered individuals, given to sudden fits of rage and scalding sarcasm. Their ruling humor is yellow bile, and they are choleric, tempestuous and prone to violence.

They control flame and heat, and it is the students of the Bright College who are favoured most on the field of battle. I have seen a particularly adept master of the arts turn a field of ploughed mud – and the goblin horde who foolishly tried to rush our line over it – into a white-hot maelstrom of leaping fire and flowing lava. The general in charge of the Empire army was forced to retreat several hundred feet, not because of the foe, but because of the extreme heat and the screeching goblins that ran like mobile torches, hither and thither, shrouded in wreaths of multi-hued flames.

Bright Wizard's



Light Wizard



Light Wizard Master

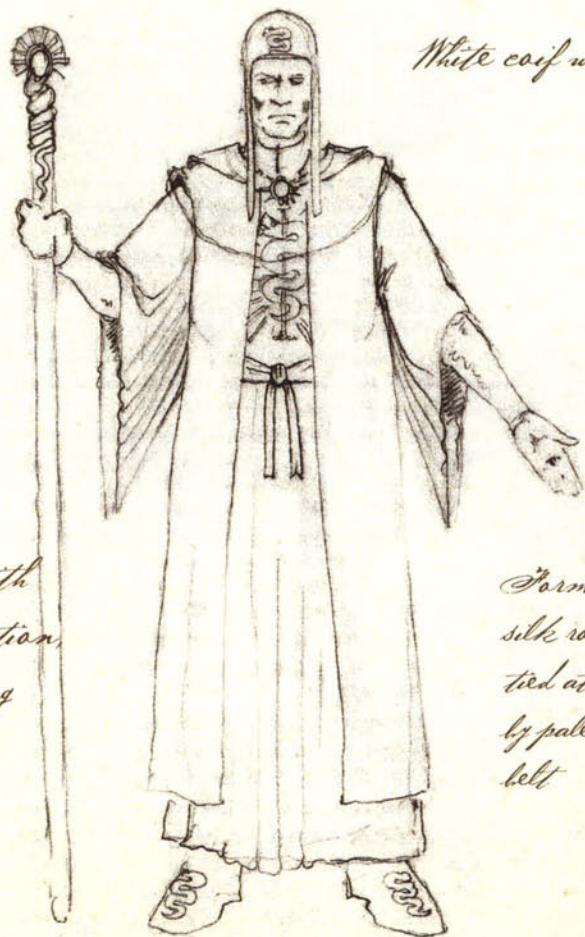


Light Wizards

The Hierophants of the Light Order are the wisest of all men. I count myself as well educated, but I felt like an ignoramus when trying to converse meaningfully with these paragons of knowledge. The magical energies they use are the most difficult to master, and the College of Light on Altdorf (I am one of the lucky few who have been through its doors) is alive with the constant music of a thousand acolytes, chanting ritual dirges in order to control its elusive power.

A Light wizard lends himself to the art of healing and providing protection from harm. Nobles and great warriors will sometimes employ them during wartime, specifically to create magical shields to defend them in combat. But their skills are not confined just to the passive; they have a great mastery of light, and can cast spells of such power that they can melt the eyes of those who look upon them.

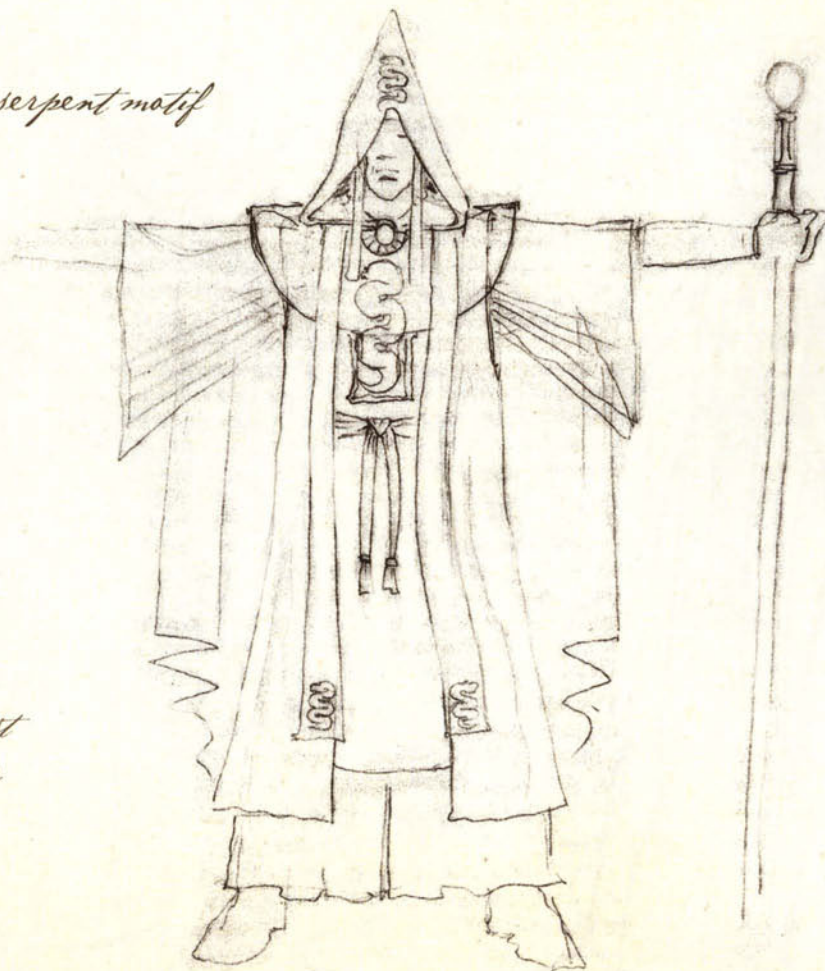
White Wizards



White staff with
silver decoration,
with a glowing
crystal

White coif with serpent motif

Formal
silk robes
tied at waist
by pale blue
belt



Ceremonial
robes

Grey Wizards



Herman Gottz

Plate No. 6

I will happily regale any eager listener with the tale of how I was robbed by Herman Gottz, warrior and highwayman. Indeed, being furnished with this story (true as I write these words) has ensured that I rarely have to buy my own drink in a tavern.

Everyone in Wissenland has heard tell of this famous man. When he introduced himself through my carriage window, I was dumbstruck and handed over my valuables with a slack jaw and amazed eyes. His reputation was so legendary, that my natural curiosity and excitement banished all apprehensions.

In fact, we were lucky to escape with our lives; in life he is far from the swashbuckling hero. He is a stone-cold killer. But he has such charm! In the end, he left the decision of whether to let us live to his seer. The bones fell in our favour that night, and forevermore I have got drunk on the retelling of my meeting with Herman Gottz.

He wore a medal of valour for his services to the count of Wissenland, a gilt wreath and a coin necklace. He was armed with a multi-barrelled pistol – which he pressed against my cheek as he relieved me of my purse – in a sheath of Araby make. His right arm was covered in double-ringed mail and his left shoulder was protected by thick armour. He carried a broad sword and wore turned fur winter boots from Kislev.





*Dried out
corpse of a
saint, bound in
his shroud and
tied to a pole*

*Wrapped about
him are prayers
and testaments
from the
faithful*



*Roadside
shrines*



Street Furniture

Torture Devices, Signs and Grisly Trophies

There are three types of street furniture in our land, those fashioned for public humiliation and punishment, those erected to venerate our heroes, saints and leaders, and those dedicated to informing the public of news, directions and distances.

It says much of our people that by far the most invention, effort and care goes into the design, construction and utilisation of the devices of punishment and humiliation. One can barely turn a corner in Altdorf without tripping over the feet of someone locked in the stocks and drenched in the contents of many chamber pots. And the times I have forayed into the country for a breath of air, only to receive the benefit of a lungful of rotting highwaymen in a gibbet, I cannot count.

Salzenmund has a division of artisans and craftsmen who spend their time designing and testing new and ever more ingenious methods of torture and mortification. Their most famous creation is the "Slow Hammer of Retribution", or the "Flower Press". It is a simple device (the best instruments of torture usually are). The victim is stretched out on a board and tied down. Another board is lowered on top of him, with a strong spring on each corner to help distribute the weight.

He is exhibited in a market square or other public place, with an official of the law reading out his crimes. The citizens of the town are invited to place objects on top of the board. Often, people will sit on the board themselves, buying food from vendors and enjoying their vittals to the background noise of the shrieking victim. I have even seen people carry out heavy items of furniture from their abodes to place on the device. As the weight bears down, the more uncomfortable it becomes. Thus, the public is allowed to judge the person's level of punishment to the degree they feel he deserves. Usually the degree agreed on is when the hapless victim's ribs collapse and all life is crushed from him.

Death on the Streets

No other land parades intolerance, punishment and death like we do. An execution is committed not just to end an unworthy life, but for the benefit of the mob. Death fascinates us, and for as long as it is happening to someone other than ourselves, we enjoy it with a ghoulish relish, consuming other peoples' misery with slaving lips.

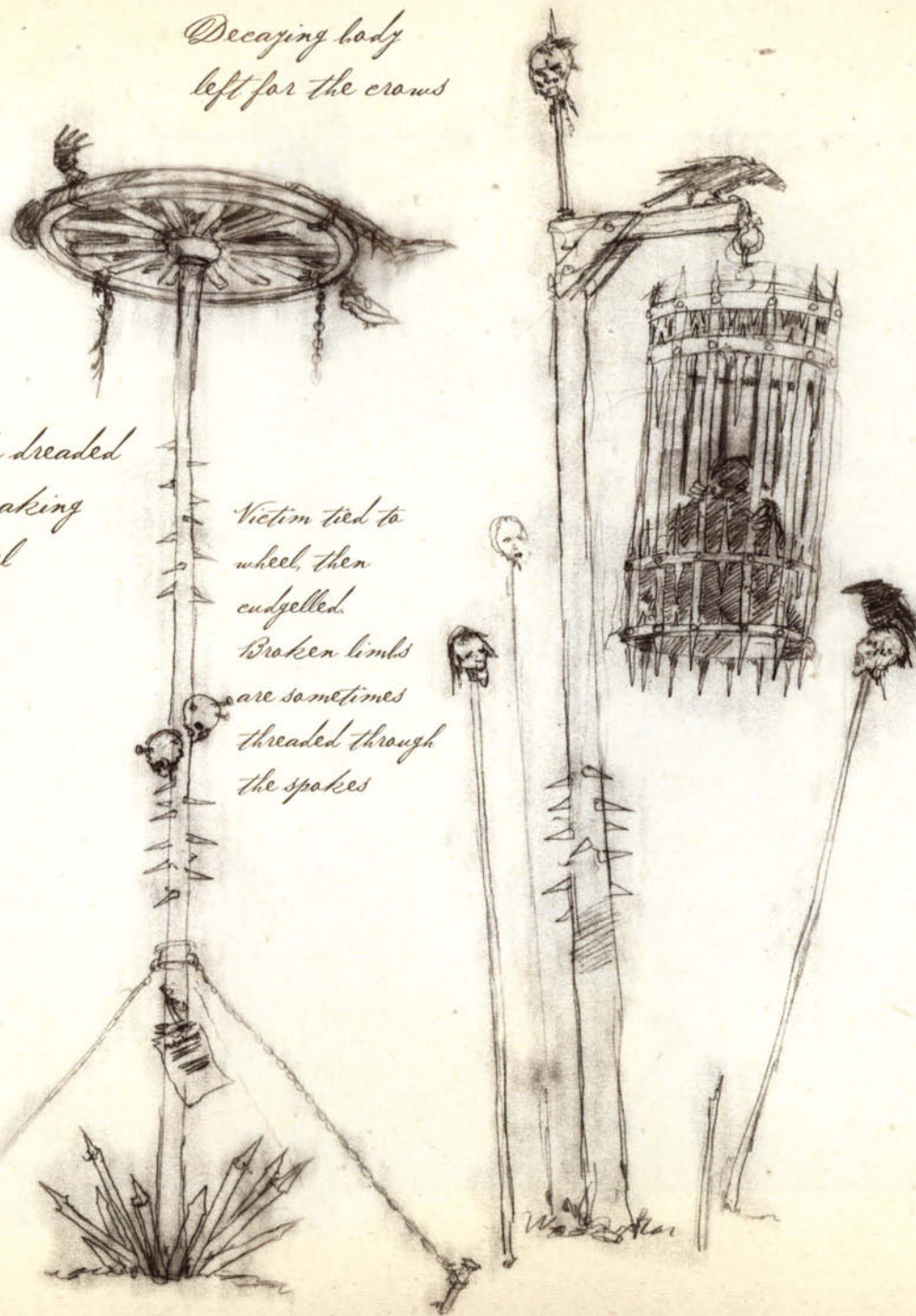
Do we really need reminding that life is a fleeting thing, and that the reaper is waiting patiently for us around the next corner? After seeing all the creative ways that we humans dispose of each other, and hearing some of the spurious reasons for doing so, I wonder if the reaper is stuck for something to pass the time.

Perhaps I have grown sensitive in my dotage, and my withering flesh is binding an ever softening heart, but I find this obsession with death to be increasingly distasteful. We hang the bodies of criminals, heretics and enemies in our streets and along our roads; the crows feed on them and the otherwise beautiful landscape we live in is spoiled with the gallows, impaling spikes, breaking-wheels, rusty gibbets and hanging cages, all heavy with the pitiful remains of human beings.

*Decaying body
left for the crows*

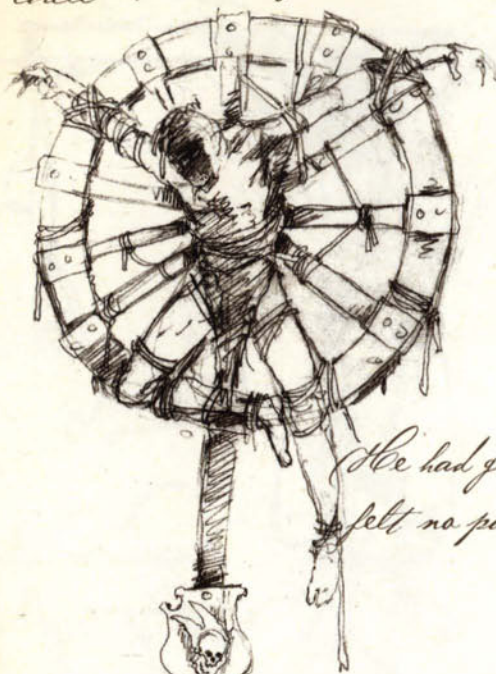
*The dreaded
Breaking
Wheel*

*Victim tied to
wheel, then
cudgelled.
Broken limbs
are sometimes
threaded through
the spokes*

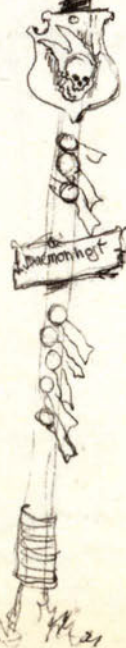


*Daemon's
circle*

*This victim was possessed
by a daemon*



*He had glowing eyes and
felt no pain*

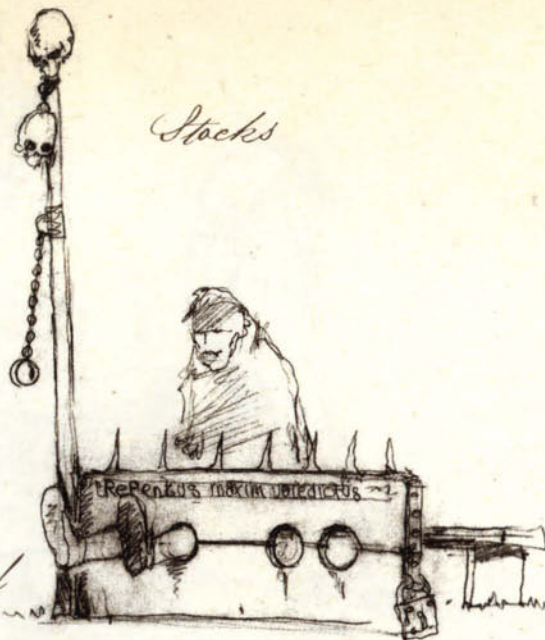


*Eventually he
was put to
the flame*



*A shrine
set into a
wall, filled
with skulls*

Stocks



Roadside Shrines, Fetishes and Sculptures

There do exist more wholesome pieces of street furniture demonstrating human traits which are worth celebrating: faith, belief, hope and beauty. Shrines dot the land where the blessed few – although the numbers grow at such a rate that I find myself reacting with scepticism rather than elation – report to have seen visions of the saints and even Sigmar Himself¹.

It is common to attach parchments with prayers and testaments of faith to such shrines, as those who do will doubtless gain the blessing of the saint so honoured.

In the town of Asthaven, which shelters in the hills south of the Reikwald Forest, they have displayed their local saint in the town square. It is claimed that he was a healer who, during the ravages of the Boil Plague, cured the townsfolk of their ills. But when he declared that he was going to undertake a pilgrimage to Altdorf, the citizens were so distraught that they accosted him and tied him to a pole in the market. There he lived out the rest of his days until the chill took him.

He has hung there ever since, for over two centuries, receiving blessings from the sick in the belief that he can still cure their ills. Considering how the town treated him, I would hazard a guess that he would quite like a virulent disease to take them all.

But he must have had a special quality, because his body is remarkably well preserved and a hint of reproach is clear in the angle of his withered head, and the purse of his lips.

¹It is advisable to get one's facts right. Penalty for lying about such visions is death. Claiming it was a mistake is no defence. The witch hunters have a point in this: if Sigmar was indeed going to make Himself known, it is likely to be fairly obvious as He cuts a striking figure. So ensure it really is our great warrior-god come to lead His people from the dark, and not just Herr Schneider from over the river doing a spot of night fishing.



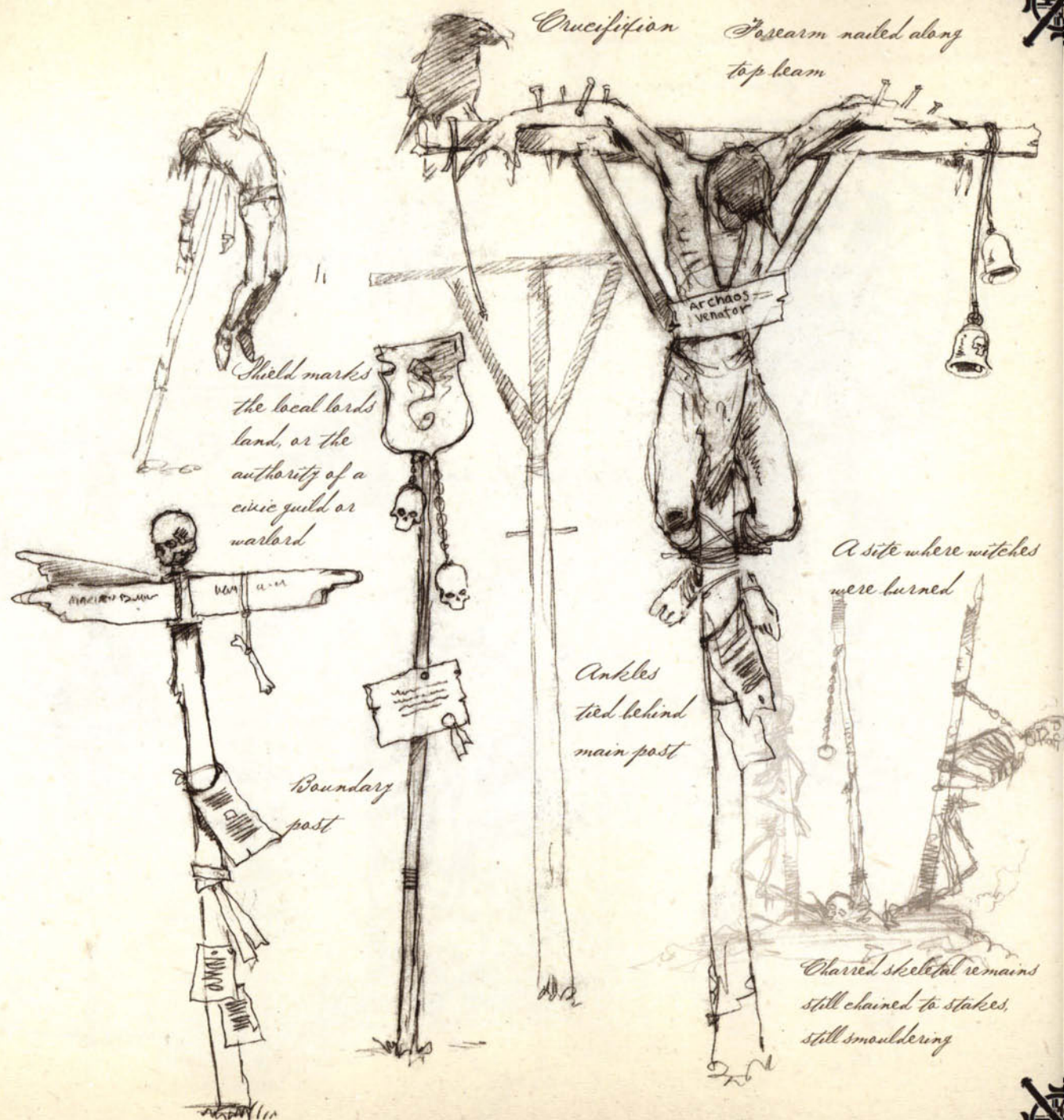
*Signpost decorated
with skulls*

Avenues of Death

There are many ways to kill a man, and some are demonstrated for all to see on the sides of the great highways and byways between our towns and cities. The number of corpses that rot on our roadsides can vary, depending as it does on the nature of the incumbent ruler of the district. Some like to rule their land with fear and an iron fist, others are more lenient. Middenheim is not famous for the leniency of its rulers.

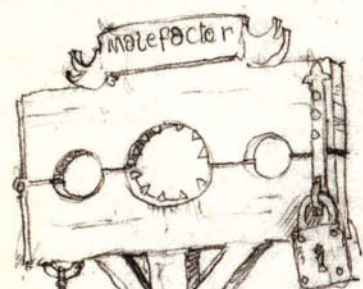
Twisted corpses ripen on stakes, traitors are nailed to the ground, to fall victim to prowling animals, thieves have their hands removed and are left to bleed in ditches, and heretics are crucified; surely the most painful death imaginable.

Is it any wonder our roads are haunted by the restless dead?



Some farmers actually
use corpses to scare
crows

Stocks



Ideal place to dispose
of rancid fruit

Dead birds and other rotting
things hang from the device to
make the victim even more
unhappy



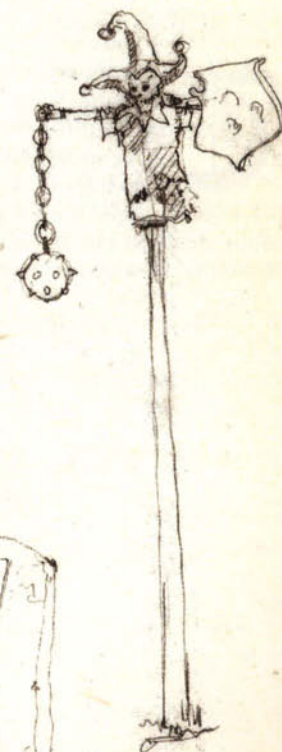
Notice boards, giving
details on public
executions, wanted
posters and local
death toll from the
plague

Scarecrow



Always sinister
looking. I don't like
these things!

Quintain, usually about
6 foot high for combat
practice



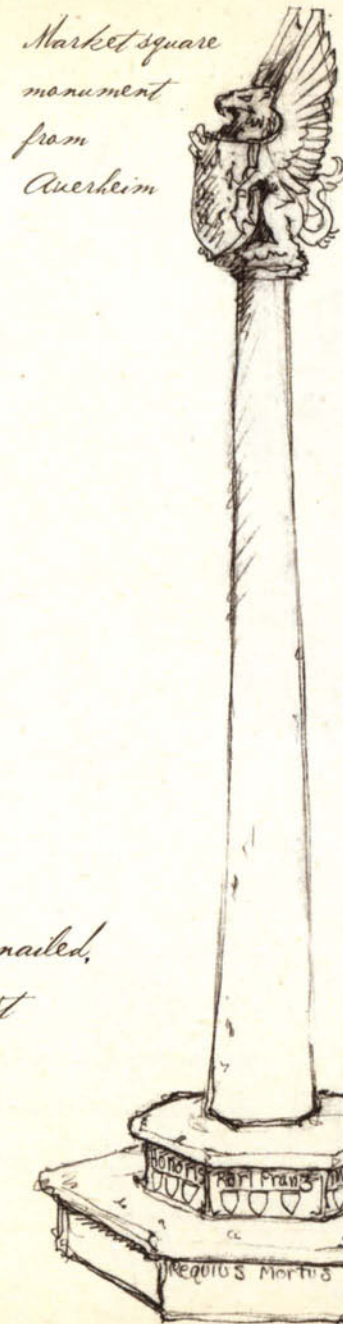
Crow Posts

Crows are regarded as birds of ill omen and harbingers of death. Some communities have such a hatred of the bird that they employ men to catch them – a task of no small skill – and nail them to posts, to teach them a lesson for being crows, one presumes.

I would suggest that if people stopped parading the bodies of the dead on our streets, then crows would have less reason to trouble us with their presence.



*Crows nailed,
to a post*



*Market square
monument
from
Auerheim*

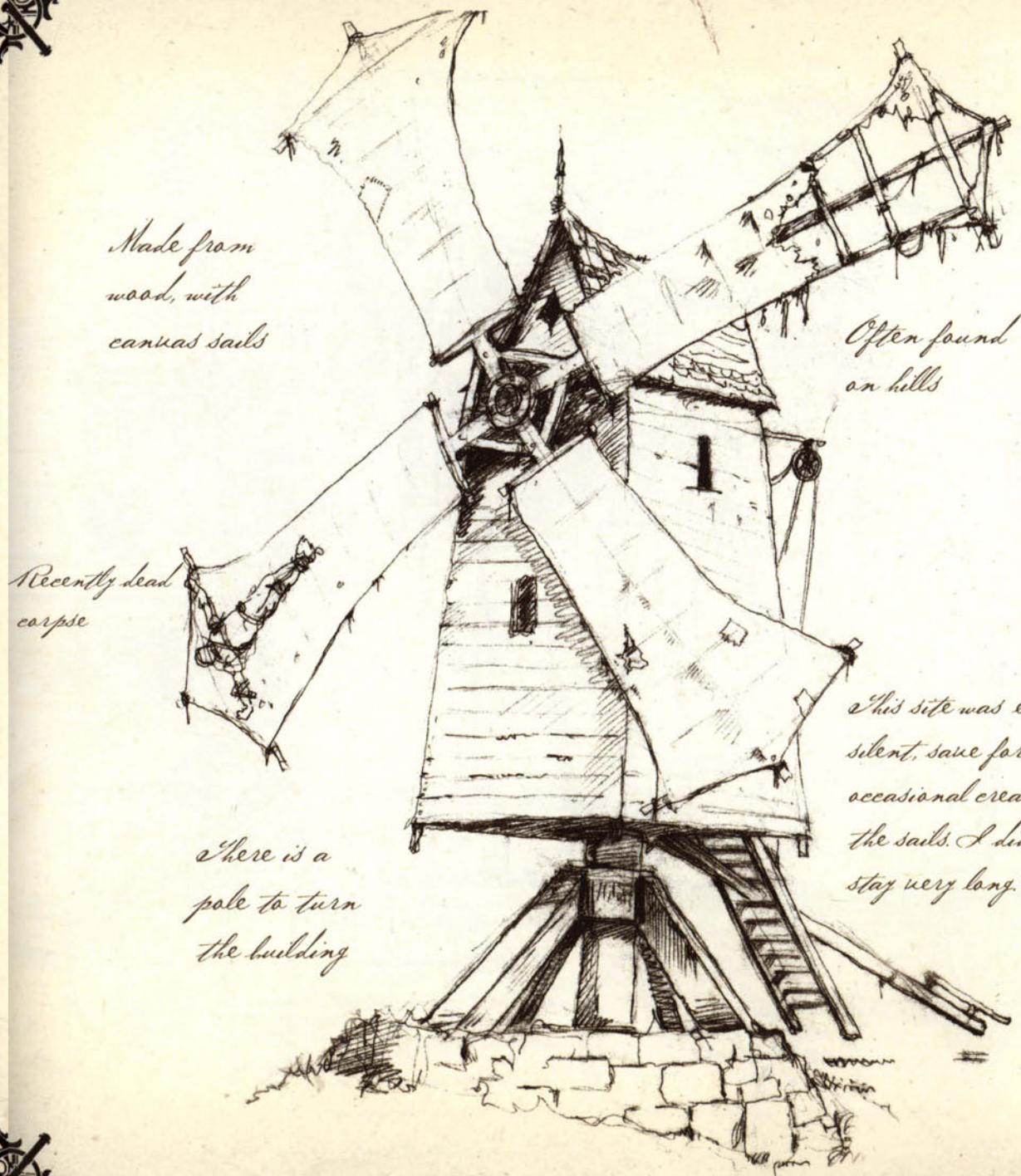


Beacon pole



*Set to warn
people of
invasions*

*Usually placed
on top of hills
with line of
sight of each
other*



*Made from
wood, with
canvas sails*

*Often found
on hills*

*Recently dead
corpse*

*There is a
pole to turn
the building*

*This site was eerily
silent, save for the
occasional creaking of
the sails. I did not
stay very long.*

The Miller of Leiburg

Whilst passing through the somewhat desolate reaches of Wissenland, I happened upon this windmill, perched on a barren hill. It had long fallen into disrepair, and a little research at the nearby village of Leiburg explained why. A few years ago, the miller fell from grace and turned to the worship of dark gods. He sought to poison the people of the village, as a sacrifice to his new patrons, so he laced the flour he made with a vile elixir. This caused any who consumed it to wither from the inside out. A painful death indeed.

But he picked a bad time to enact his plan. The village was host to the then famed Templar of Sigmar, Herr Jaeger Finn. His somewhat arbitrary method of choosing who had fallen from Sigmar's ways had placed the miller under suspicion. (Luck or design? Gods only know.) He led a mob of villagers to the windmill, frothing for the kill after his diatribe against the killer miller. They set the windmill ablaze, with the miller inside. Yet the dark gods must have protected him that night, and even though the building was wreathed in flames, no damage was done to the structure.

After a time Finn and the villagers left, leaving a guard. The next day, the guard was gone, and so was the miller. The windmill was untouched by fire. No one goes there now, except for criminals who are sometimes tied to the mouldering sails to rot in turn.

Gravedigger

Plain
costumes
caked in
dirt

Charm in
bag around
neck

Hood and
cloak

Graverobber

Face scarf which
helps to disguise
identity and smell
of exhumed
corpses

Imperial
graveyard

Crows are abundant



Bottle of
gray on
belt



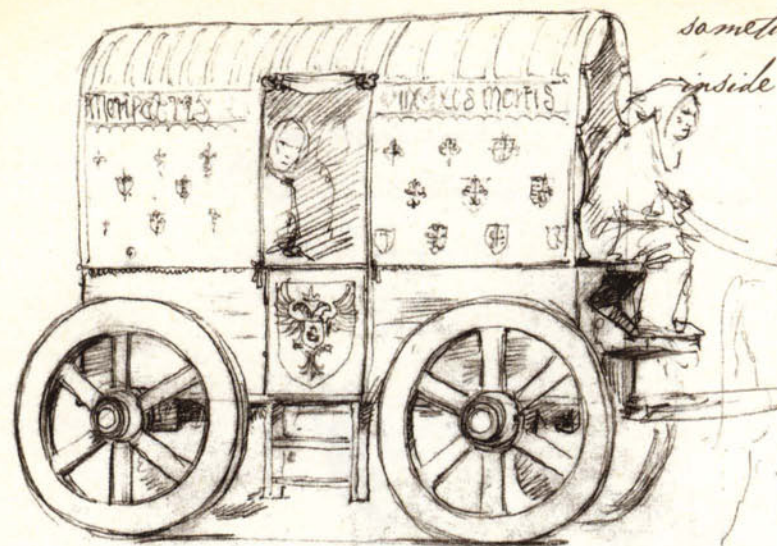
More gray
bottles

Black lamp
which has doors



Monuments include
skulls, hourglasses,
wreaths, scythes,
scrolls, skeletons
with worms and
crossed bones

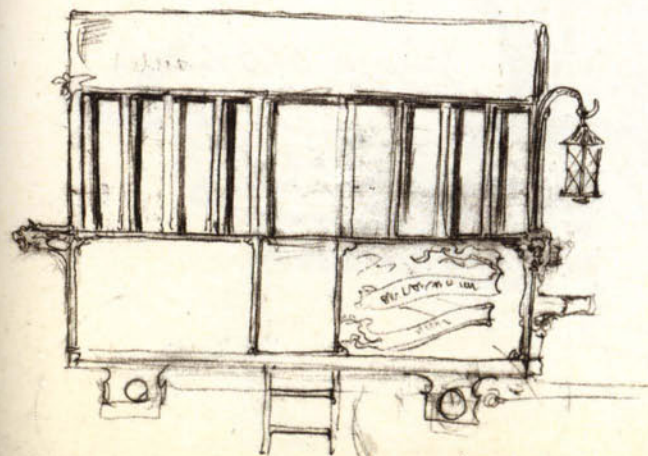
Monuments range
from simple markers
to huge sarcophagi,
obelisks, monuments,
statues, box crypts
and great mausoleums



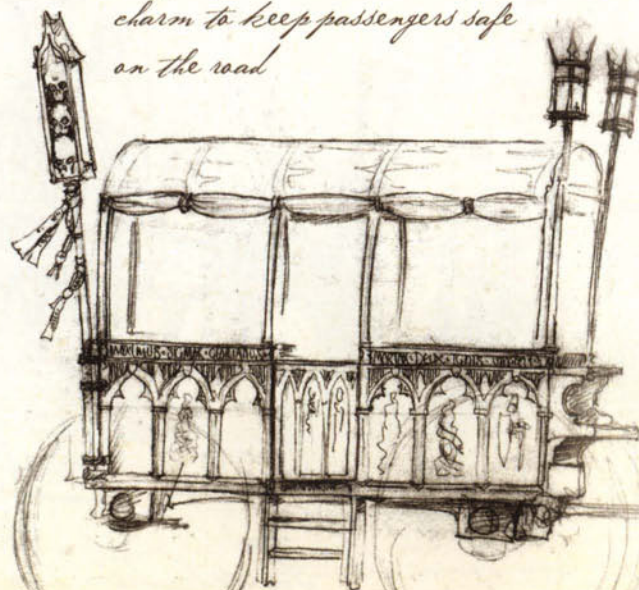
*Drivers are
sometimes seated
inside*

*These wagons are used
across the entire
Empire for travel.
Payment is by the
league*

*Some wagons are ornate and
gaudily painted*



*Body of coach covered in ornate carving, similar to
temple designs*



*Reliquary box on pole, lucky
charm to keep passengers safe
on the road*

Portage Through the Old World

Over Land, Sea and Stone

There are few modes of transportation that I have not employed in my life. I gained passage to Araby aboard a Tilean galley rowed by slaves. I travelled a portion of the Silver Road in a carriage lined with lead and topped with wooden ramparts and, strangest and most exhilarating of all, I rode on the back of the elector count of Middenheim's war-griffon, although I hasten to add I was merely a passenger.

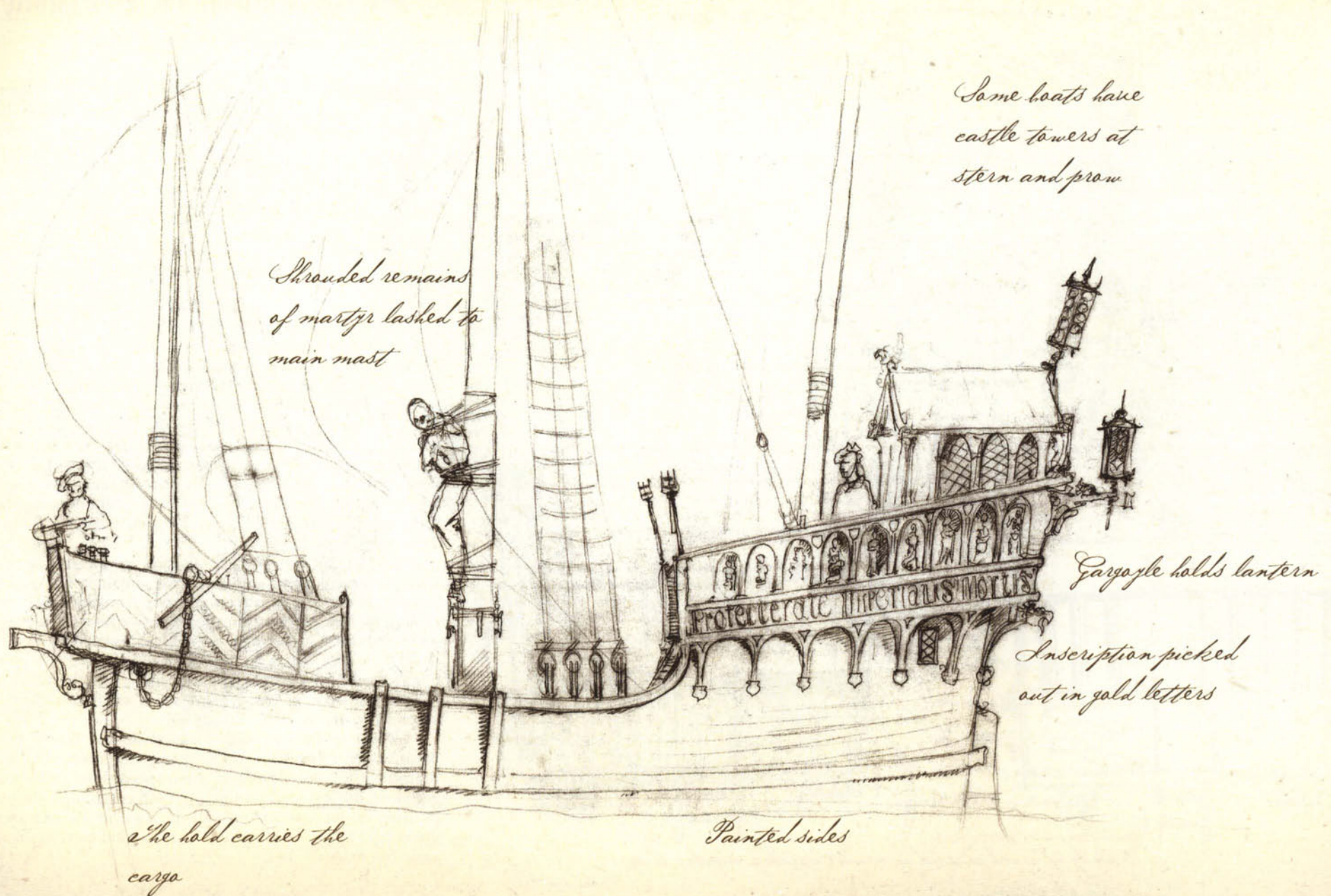
My backside has ridden on the back of horses, asses, mules, camels, elephants, sledges, perambulators, steam tanks (a frightening experience) and a very bad tempered animal in Kislev, the name of which I have forgotten. Indeed, the only form of exotic travel that I regrettably did not try – and the usage of which is now precluded by tiresome old age – is the dwarf gyrocopter.

The Empire is criss-crossed with roads, and those connecting the larger towns and cities are usually passable, but less so in the winter and times of heavy deluges or floods. For the most part, roads are strips of dirt, not maintained, often deserted and which all but disappear in the rain and snow. The further one strays from civilisation, the more dangerous the roads become. Neither is road travel free. Some states (particularly Altdorf, which is proving very adept at taxing its subjects for everything except drawing breath) levy roads taxes, vehicle tolls, road etiquette fines and charges for using bridges and fords.

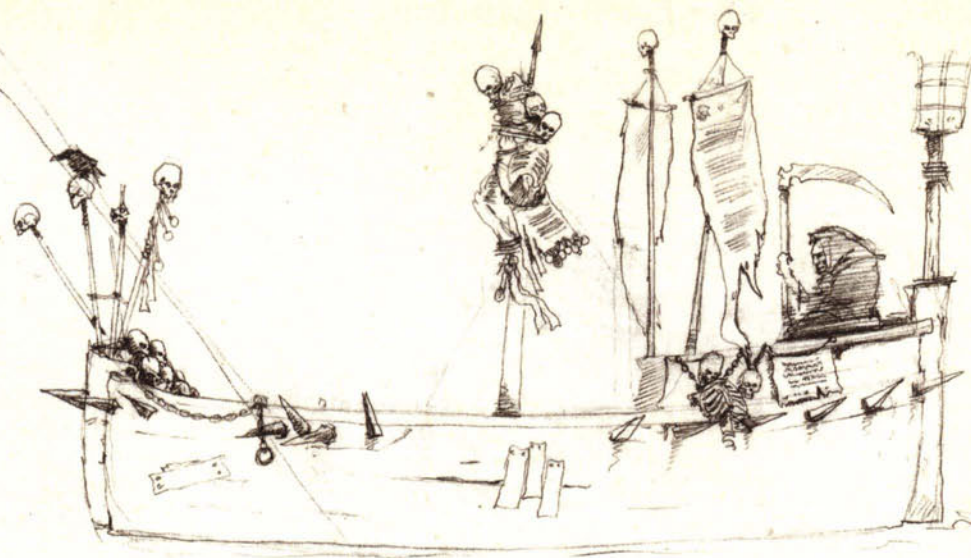
The rivers that run through our land are lifelines, arteries of trade, communication and commerce. Anything can and does journey on our waters: traders and merchants with their goods, citizens, soldiers, and very importantly, news. Rivers near cities are more crowded than the roads, and a good deal safer. Towns thrive when built near waterways, and all kinds of vessels ply past the muddy banks: cogs, barges, rowboats, sailing vessels, shallow-draw galleys, and once, at Barak Var, I saw a small, two-dwarf crew submersible put out to the Black Gulf!

I content myself now with a bath chair, and one of the few pleasures left in my life is driving the good Sisters of Shallya to distraction by wheeling myself at top speed through the temple corridors. But it is small consolation. I will never forget the feeling of flying on the war-griffon, with the wind in my face and the green land below, whirling past in a beautiful blur; never will I again feel so alive.

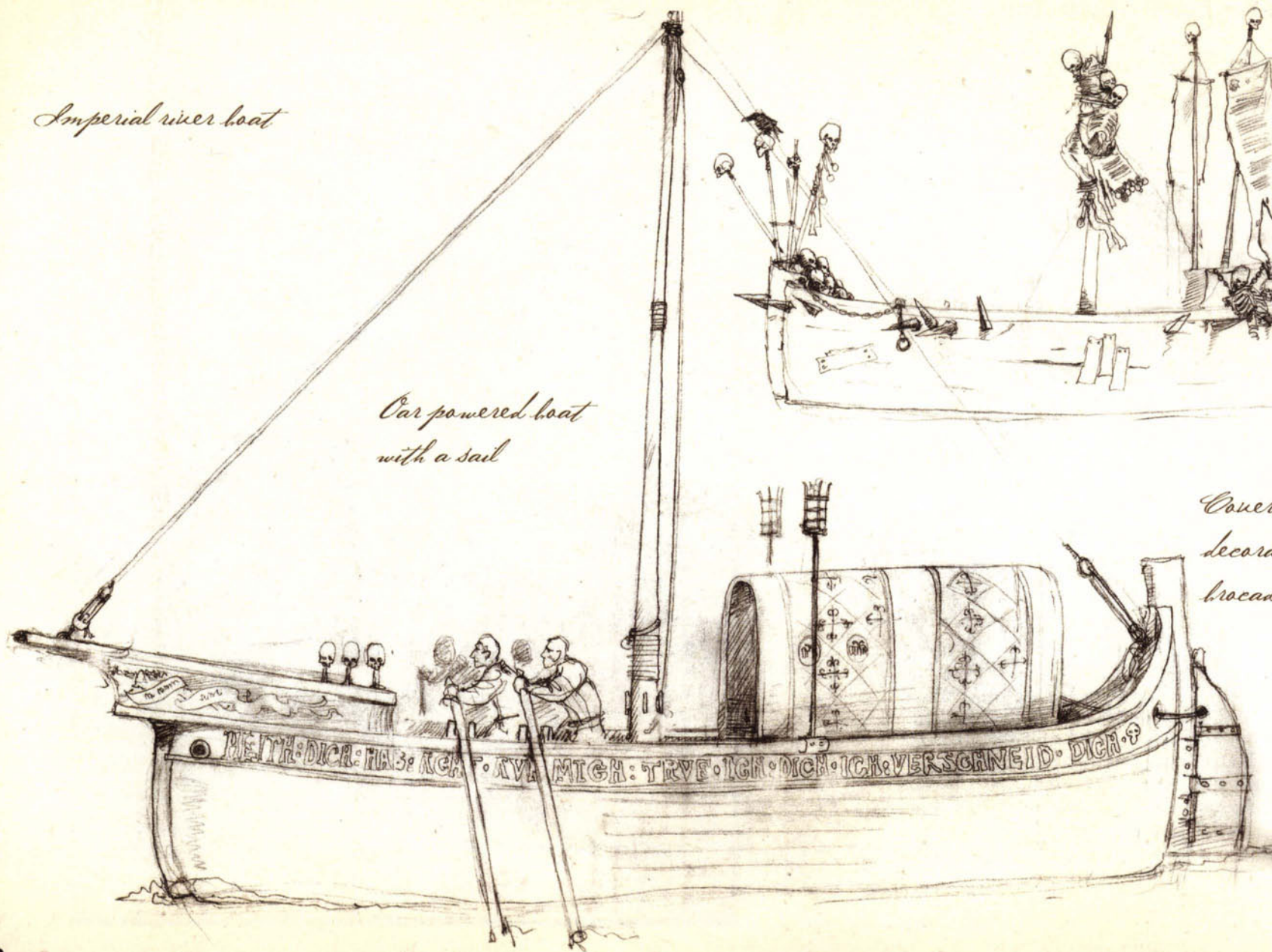
Merchant vessel



Imperial river boat



*Car powered boat
with a sail*



*Covered cabin
decorated with
brocaded material*

The Foul Abductor

Plate No. 7

There is a strange tale in Middenheim – although variations of it exist in many towns – called “The Rat Son of the Butcher”, or “The Sad Tale of Trespass the Ratboy”. The story interests me because it is often the case that myths and fireside stories hold a grain of truth. How else can they keep such a hold over the popular imagination? The tale goes that many years ago, a prosperous butcher in Middenheim had a son. He was born with six toes on his left foot; fearing the attentions of the witch hunters the butcher hid the mutation and treated his son as normal. This he would live to regret.





The Butcher's Son

Plate No. 8

So it was that a band of unscrupulous skaven worshippers stole the boy away. They smelt his mutation, and in the dead of night crept into his room and bore him into the stinking tunnels under the city, but not before murdering the woman who bore him. The cultists believed him to be the Chosen One of the Rat-God, and they treated him as such. The butcher armed himself, closed his shop forever and dedicated the rest of his life to searching for his lost son. He scoured the tunnels beneath the streets, killing the creeping things who lived there, his soul lit with the fire of vengeance. But soon that fire burnt away his hope, and with it his humanity.

Motherkin

Plate No. 9

The charismatic leader of the rat-worshipping cult used to be a citizen of Middenheim, until he came across a shard of warpstone that infected his mind and drove him insane. He began to worship the skaven, who he believed ruled an underground labyrinth, and would some day burst forth from the ground and claim the world as rightfully theirs. He quickly built up a circle of followers. When the butcher's son was delivered to him, he tied a fragment of warpstone to his leg. Over the years, the child became dreadfully mutated. His leg turned into a twisted rat limb, and the other became atrophied. He had been transformed into a vile, misbegotten cripple. If the witch hunters had been allowed to deal with him, a lot of trouble would have been saved.





Verminkin

Plate No. 10

It became Trespass's work to bring hordes of diseased rats into Empire cities to spread infection. He used a mechanical claw to catch rats, and carried cow-bells and gaff hooks because he had a strange attraction to them; there is still some semblance of the butcher's son that he once was, deep inside his mind. This is a sad, cautionary tale: keep Sigmar close, and stray not from the path of His worship. The moral is important, but did it really take the abduction of a child to illustrate it? I doubt the events in the story actually happened, but the subtext is plain: dark forces are at work to undermine our great Empire.

Races of the Old World

*Ancient People, Newborn Usurpers
and Rapacious Enemies*

According to the chronicles of the elves and dwarfs, man is young. Our vigour and quest to expand, our inquisitiveness and curiosity (which burns to this day within this writer's breast) is born out of this youth. We are ignorant. We have much to learn.

On my travels I met and mixed with the elder races of the world. I spent a year travelling with a band of dwarf miners in the Worlds Edge Mountains, and longer still with the high elves. During this time I learnt that one should never expect to hear unbiased opinions about the elves from the lips of a dwarf.

Both races view the world of men through wise, but I would also suggest, concerned eyes. These people seem strange to us, perhaps because they see so far. Can they predict our fate? Do they predict that the rashness of men will lead to our fall? Who knows? Elves and dwarfs are very different, but they do share a common trait: they are both inscrutable.

There are other, more uncouth races who ply an existence in our world, and some mean us much harm indeed. The orcs that live in the mountains and forests, often sally forth to lay waste to settlements and towns. The elector counts rally armies and drive them back, but their numbers increase (how is a mystery) and the danger ever hangs over us.

I have heard countless tales of rampaging beastmen, who appear out of the dank forests to bring misery and death to all who dare stand before them. On several occasions I have witnessed the aftermath of such attacks: the bodies, the burnt timber and always the smell of death, with a ghastly undertone of goat. In one episode that I have never forgotten, my coach was waylaid by one of these dreadful creatures, and only a blast from my trusty pistols drove it off.

Our land is rich with life, but competition for survival is strong. I hope the elder races see a good future for mankind, although I fear they do not.

Elves

*Long hair held by
plain circlet of gold
or silver*



*Small gem on
forehead*

*Hair tied in fine
braids*

*More complex
circlet*

Longer sleeves



*Beautifully
crafted belt*

*Plain tunic with
subtle patterns*

Dwarfs - Mountain Folk

Clothes made from tough fabric

Female dwarf - very similar to male, but no beards

candle on head

fantastic beards



*Grim expression.
Dwarfs are sour by
nature*

Short stature

Arabyans, Nomads and Desert Dwellers

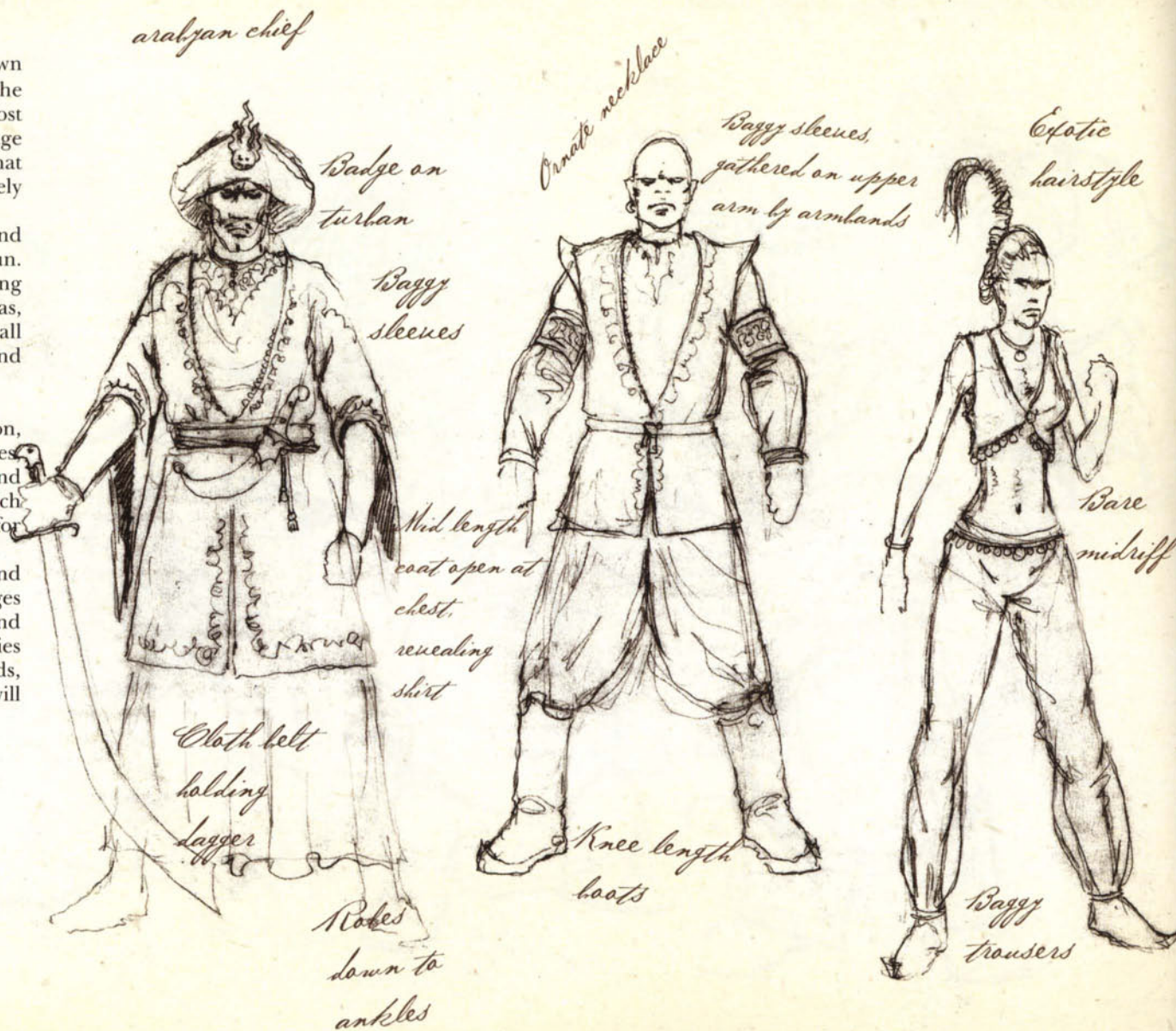
For reasons of political diplomacy, and my own abiding curiosity, I was lucky to travel to the mysterious land of Araby on two occasions. Most people think it is a barren land, ruled by savage heathens. And to an extent it is. It is well known that the populous is godless and bereft of faith. Their ways surely differ from ours, but there is much to admire.

Arabyans are proud. They speak in loud, quick voices and vibrancy runs hot in their veins, heated by the burning sun. Their coastal cities are centres of trade and commerce: long ships from the north pass sleek corsairs in the green deltas, Empire galleys skirt the treacherous coastlines and tall Bretonnian sloops bring their wines to trade for silks and spices.

No cities excite my imagination like those of Araby.

Arabyans are not savages. They possess a proud civilisation, and have made great advances, especially in the sciences, medicine and architecture. They champion the arts, and nowhere is this demonstrated better than the giant mosaic, rich in colour and detail, of a merchant caravan that stretches for half-a-mile along the wall of the emir's palace in Gobi-Alain.

It is only when one enters the southern portion of the land that civilisation ceases. The great sand ergs, mountain ranges and valley passes are crawling with warring hill tribes and bandits. It is as if the land is divided in two. But my memories of the cities will reside with me always: the colours, sounds, smells and people remain forever in my heart. I regret I will never go there again.



Southland warriors

Topknot
scalplock

Ritual scars on
head and arms

Brass
wristguards

Ankle
over boot

Long hair
bound in
coloured strips
and brass rings

Open
waistcoat

Sash with
cards holding
four daggers

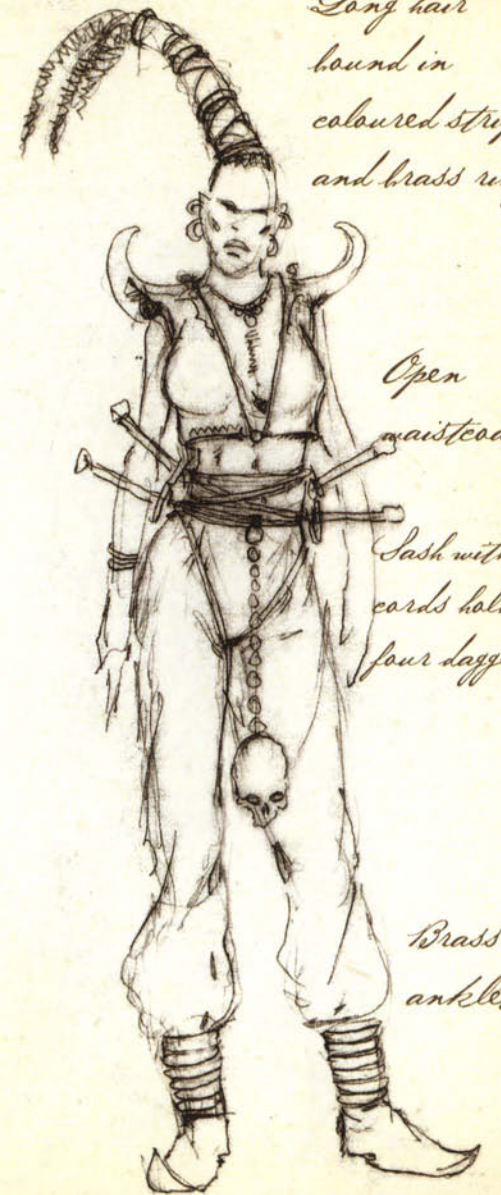
Brass
anklets

Aralyan
Merchant

Skull box inlaid
with silver and
jewels

Crossed
daggers

Coat of
patterned silk
embroidery



Bodyguard

Skull woven
into turban

Daggers
actually through
the skin

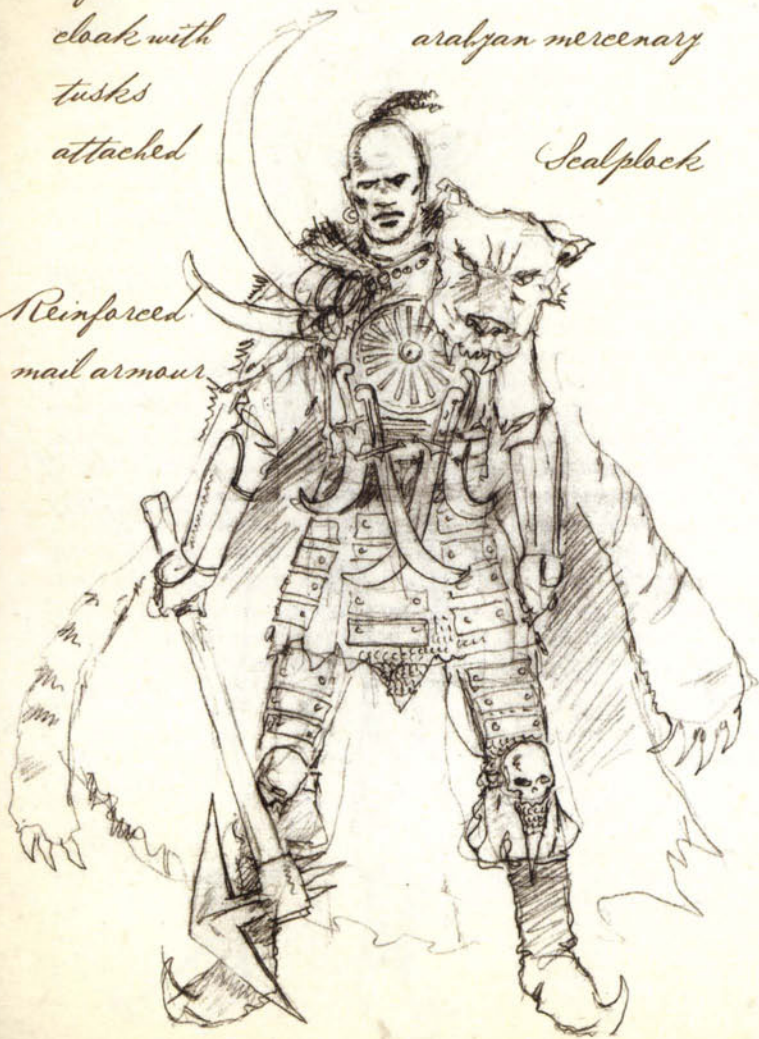


tiger skin
cloak with
tusks
attached

arabian mercenary

Scalplock

Reinforced
mail armour



Warlock

Five snakes
wrapped
around wrists

Imp in
bottle

Lamp on
belt





I was journeying as an observer with the army of Averland near the Black Mountains when we heard news that the night goblins were stirring with a mind for war. I rode ahead of the army with the scouts, eager to catch a glimpse of these verminous creatures.

Along with my companion, a scout with many years' experience, we hid high above a mountain pass from where he suspected they would emerge. He was right. I could hardly hold my pencil and parchment steady, such was my consternation as the gibbering army passed mere feet below me.

A terrible clamour did they make, squabbling and fighting, biting and spitting. All were possessed by a terrible temper, their mean faces denoting evil dispositions and ugly hearts. And there were so many of them! At one stage I let slip a stone with my foot. It hit one on the head. I thought I had sealed my doom, but the stupid creature thought another goblin had thrown it. In revenge he ran the closest goblin through with his spear.

After they had gone, we ventured into their lair. I was able to make some hasty sketches which I embellished later. I believe these are the only pictures of their type in the land, and I dedicate them to Gunther, the captain of the scouts of the Magnificent Army of Averland, who kept me from harm.



Mushrooms were everywhere, from small to towering higher than a man. They grew from the floor and walls, and from rotting corpses.

I added the goblins for effect. The place was deserted, but the stench of these disgusting creatures was everywhere.

Everywhere seemed an ideal place for an ambush.



Some of the tunnels had shored up sections with ramshackle supports. The air was filled with the sound of creaking, and the patter of falling stones.



Some of the openings and caves were fortified, with rocks piled at the entrance.



Along some of the more important passage ways were rough defensive towers, topped with spikes where, presumably, a sentry would sit, watching for invaders.



Squig pen

The camp was surrounded by a shallow, stinking moat, with wooden stakes

The walls were of rough hewn timber, lashed together, all topped with points

The gate was covered in iron spikes

Inside the walls were many shacks

The roofs were made from fetid looking thatch and turf, layered with hides

Entrances were decorated with skulls, limbs, corpses and other grim artefacts

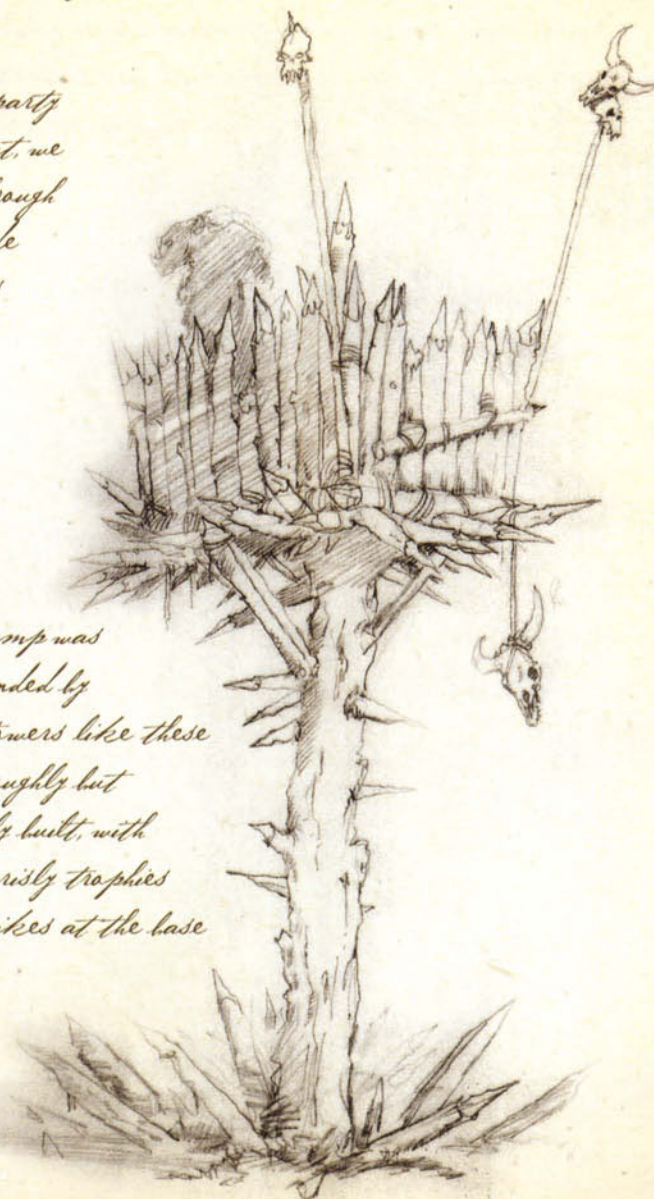
The ground was strewn with offal, bones and refuse

Orc encampment

After a militia raiding party cleared an orc settlement, we were allowed to pick through the remains and I made these incredible sketches

Orc watchtower

The camp was surrounded by watchtowers like these ones, roughly but strongly built, with many grisly trophies and spikes at the base



There were many ore bodies
littered around the camp, in
various states of decay. It seems
ores do not bother themselves
with burying their dead



Bodies were in
piles. Most were
headless. It was
a terrible sight.



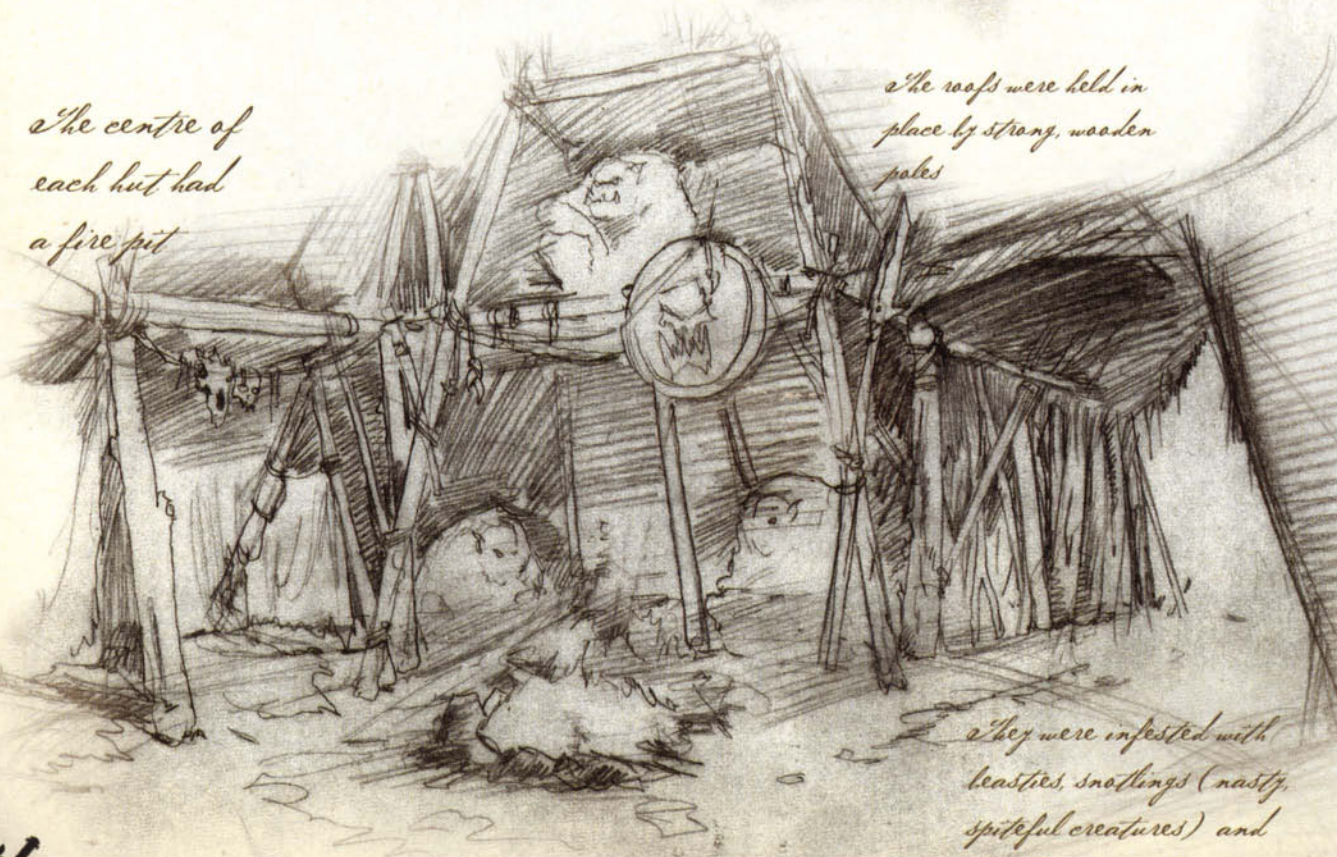
In the centre of the
camp was some sort
of idol to their
primitive god

It was made
of dung



The centre of
each hut had
a fire pit

The roofs were held in
place by strong, wooden
poles



One totem

Covered in heads, with
the chieftain's device
on a shield



They were infested with
leashties, snottings (nasty,
spiteful creatures) and
small squigs

Beastmen

While on a diplomatic mission in Middenheim, I had the fortune to accompany that city's brave soldiers on their excursions into the surrounding countryside. Our mission was to destroy a beastmen herd, who were raiding nearby villages with impunity. We came across their herdstone circle in the wilds, during some sort of magical ritual, presided over by this shaman. The spearmen and archers formed up for the advance, and the whole band was put to death, with much crushing of skulls from the hammers of the Knights of the White Wolf.



The stone in the centre was covered in blood and hanging trophies: bones, carrion, armour and the sad remains of the villagers who succumbed to the beastmen's violent depredations.

Beastmen monoliths and circles

The shaman wore a ragged hood covering his head and shoulders

His garb was tied with skulls, horns, jawbones, teeth and preserved stones



Ungars

their horns were of many shapes and
some had topknots

Gors

Bestial aspect

Large teeth

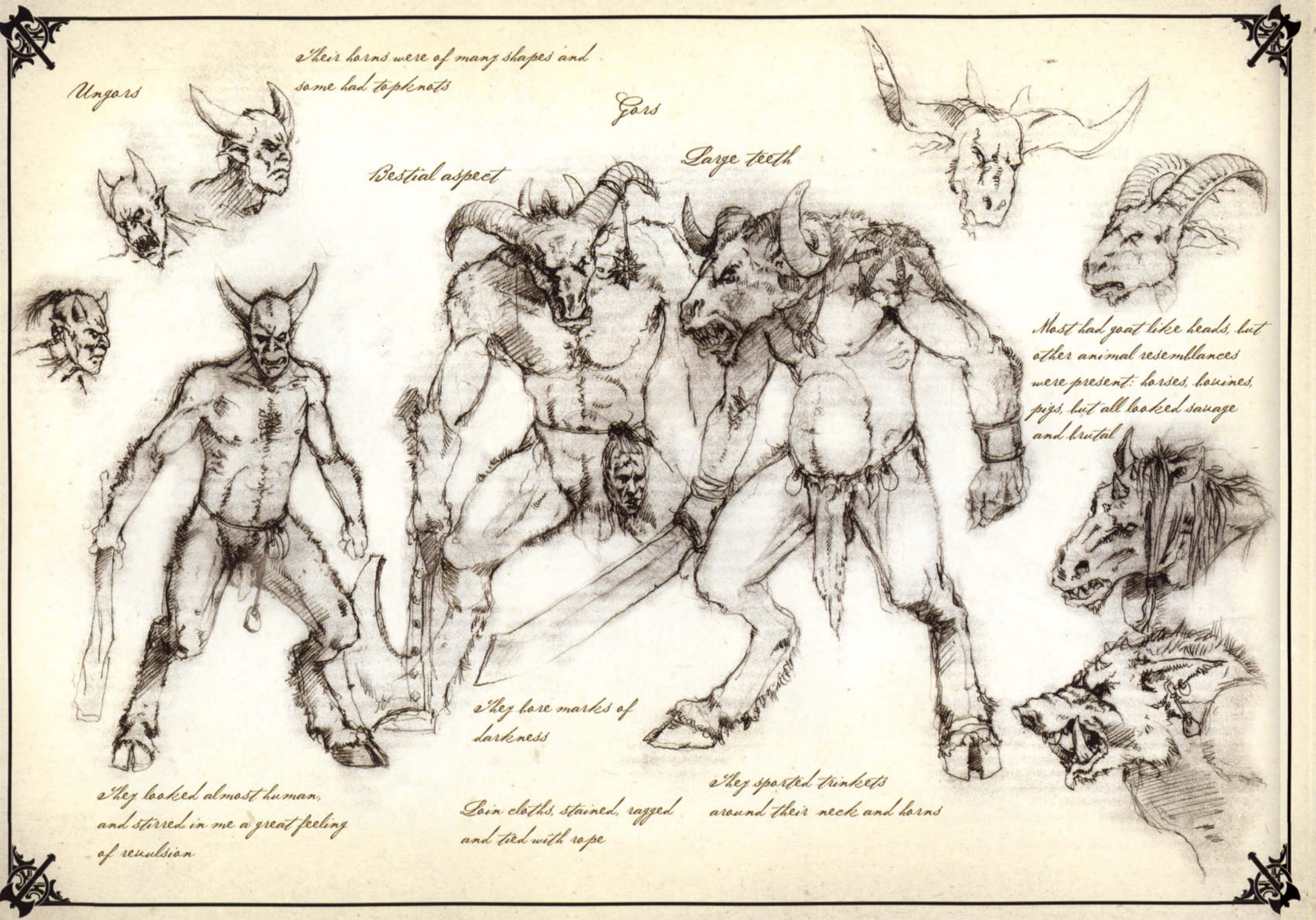
Most had goat like heads, but
other animal resemblances
were present: horses, bovines,
pigs, but all looked savage
and brutal

They bore marks of
darkness

They looked almost human,
and stirred in me a great feeling
of revulsion

Loose cloths, stained, ragged
and tied with rope

They sported trinkets
around their neck and horns



Giant

Its features were
brutish

A large sack was
tied around its
waist, and I swear
something inside it
was moving!

It carried a tree
trunk for use as a
club

It was dressed in various
bits of material, sewn
together



Such creatures are rare, and found
mainly in the mountains and the wilder
parts of the world.

I saw this one only from a great
distance, but with the aid of magnifying
lenses, I was able to take its likeness
in reasonable detail.

It was essentially human in look and
stature, but it looked savage and stupid.

It had a two-handed sword tucked in
its belt, as though it were a knife

Its wrist bracer was made of shields,
breastplates and various bits of armour
lashed together

Albrechtte Wolffpergen

Plate No. 11

The mountain communities around Middenheim abound with tales of Albrechtte "The Wolf". Reputedly a forester and woodsman in the Drakwald forest, he travelled to Kislev to fight the dark powers, when their insidious agents destroyed his home and family.

There are many tales of his stoic heroism, and his name has now fallen into popular folklore, the prey of poets, playwrights and tellers of tall tales. I fear that his true story shall never be unravelled. But people do believe the legends, and every year he is sighted amongst the trees, with his axe over his shoulder and a pistol in his boot. Many say that he was only part man, and could change at will into a huge wolf.

It is certainly true that he was a staunch follower of Ulric, which explains why he has been embraced by worshippers of the wolf god. He carried shrines to that warlike deity about himself, amongst other more obscure ones, possibly gods of the trees and forest.



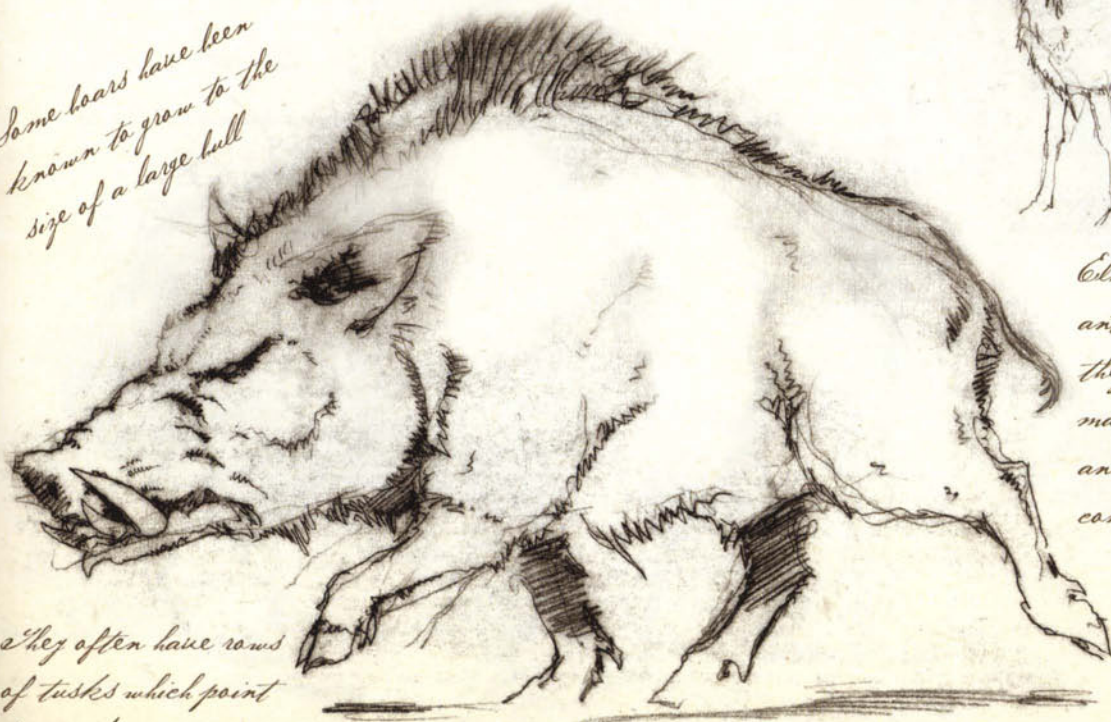
Wild boar



They have sharp tusks
which can rip through flesh,
and gut a man easily

Strong, bad tempered
creatures found all over
the land

Some boars have been
known to grow to the
size of a large bull



They often have rows
of tusks which point
forward

Deer are abundant
in the forests of the
Empire



Elk have huge
antlers which
they use in
mating rituals,
and leadership
contests

Creatures of the Old World

Fabulous Beasts and Fabled Monsters

My father said I was blessed with the courage of Sigmar and the luck of a halfling. Looking back at my life, I am inclined to agree. I doubt if many have seen the things I have seen and lived to tell the tale.

The world has given birth to many strange and fantastical creatures. Where they came from, whether they were born from the rocks, spewed forth out of the rivers, or shambled down from the twisted wastes to the north, I do not know, but nature is not benign, and cruelty, violence and savagery are some of her favourite ingredients.

Because I have visited some of the most inhospitable places in the world, I have also borne witness to the creatures who dwell there. Sometimes it was just a glimpse – as when I saw a basilisk sunning itself on a plateau in the Grey Mountains, before it slithered into a ravine – other times I was afforded views which allowed me to draw their forms as I watched them.

Creatures of the Old World are manifold, and I present in this book a mere sample of them; it would take a man many years to research and catalogue all the beasts which reside alongside us. I have contented myself to demonstrate some of the more interesting beasts that I have seen with my own eyes.

Compare the grace and shyness of the deer to the ferocious manner of the troll, or the savage beauty of the griffon to the misshapen grotesquery of the squig. We live alongside such beasts. Some we exploit by hunting or rearing, other merely frighten us, for we know they harbour evil in their hearts and they wish on us nothing but ill.

The wolf that dwells in the forest will prey on our precious livestock, but we understand that it does so to survive. Other creatures are malignant and unnatural; it is these creatures which we must face. All children hear tales of the ratmen who live in the sewers and steal away those who misbehave.

But they are not just the stuff of tales. Oh no. I have seen them.

Wolf

They live in the
forests

They travel in packs,
preying on the unwary



Their unearthly howls
rent the night sky, and
fear is their friend

Dire Wolf

Even more fearsome than
wolves, these creatures are huge,
and can be as big as a horse

Their eyes glow, they
have huge teeth and
are sometimes black
as night



Bear

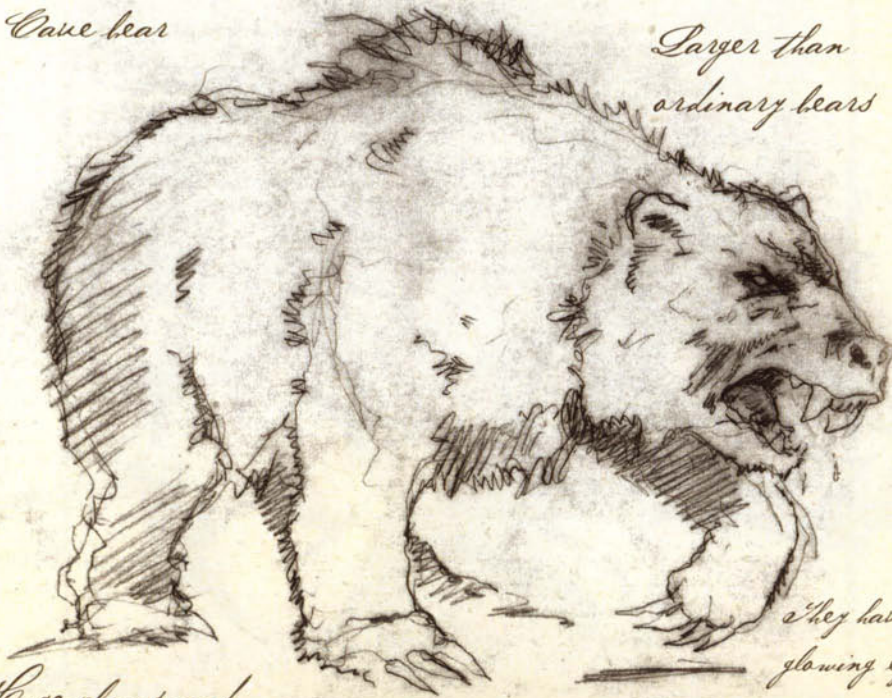
Bears prowl in the forests and near rivers, catching fish



They are dangerous,
and can stand 10 feet
when standing up

Cave bear

Larger than
ordinary bears



Huge claws and
teeth

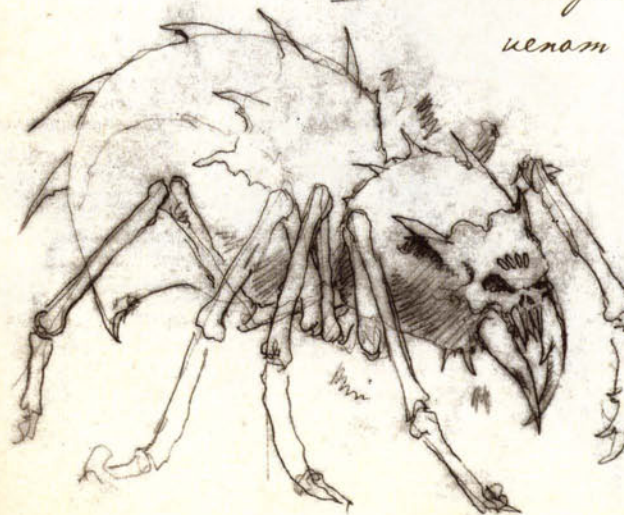
They have large
glowing eyes

Spiders!

Legs covered in
bristles and hair



Tangs drip
venom



This specimen had a
skull like face and long
limbs, perhaps mutated
by malevolent powers

Some have death head patterning on
their head and abdomen

They come in all sizes, from that of a pin head, to
ones larger than men

A monstrous spider, so horrible
that words fail me



grols

*Their skin has a
scaly look*

*Trophies, skulls, bones, teeth and
stones with holes in hang from
various parts of the trolls body*

Grols stink

*Bones poke
through*

Clothed (barely) in skins

*They carry weapons made from
wood, bones and rocks*

*Grols often inhabit river
banks, and can sometimes be
found under bridges*



Squigs

Ores and goblins use these vicious creatures



Fur covered squig



Lesser horned squig

Great horned cave squig



The Oubliettes of Miragliano

Not all mythical creatures are put on display. Some are too dangerous and dark for the public gaze. In Miragliano there is a place spoken of only in whispers: the Oubliettes. It is said that kept in these deep holes are creatures of such worrying aspect and nature, that to look upon them is to see fear itself.

I have been to this place, and, through my family connections, gained access to some of the creatures held there. It is a dark memory for me, and I left a changed man. My eyes were opened; never had I imagined that such awful things could exist.

The men who oversee the Oubliettes are learned scholars. They employ trappers, and commission them to obtain certain specimens. Rewards are substantial, but the risks are high. How does one find a minotaur, let alone trap and transport it? I could not imagine the dangers these men face, but the benefits are obvious.

Instead of hiding from the dangers of the world, we must face them, as they have in Miragliano. By study and scrutiny will we learn about our enemies. I hope that these illustrations will go some way in doing this.



Rats

Vermin with narrow eyes

Black or brown



Some are the size
of dogs

Colours range from
light, reddish brown, to
black



Some have strange
brand marks on
them. Could they be
skaven pets?



Bigger than
normal rats, with
larger teeth

Some rats seem
very prone to
mutation

Spines grow from
their back



Extra tails, spiked
tails, vicious barbs

Hair colour alters: greens,
greys, dirty yellows

I drew these from
various eyewitness
accounts. I would
hazard a guess
that they are
some form of
mutated
skaven
beast



Isles abound of giant rats,
with human stances and
terrible strength

The fur is matted and
mangy

Grossly over-muscled
upper body



Their backs
are covered in
scars and whip
marks

An almighty enemy to face



Five fingers, all
ending with huge
claws

Often they have brand
marks over them

freemen, tree spirit

They have great
strength, but move
slowly

They are far from
human, but they do
have a recognisable
face

Boughs form strong, if
cumbersome limbs

The dark forests of the Empire are full of
strange and mysterious entities: trees that
move. Possessed by faeries, perhaps?

They do not move much,
and spend a lot of their
time rooted into the
ground. But they are
always watching.

Strange, dangerous,
unknowable creatures



Minotaur

Horns can point both forward and back

Heavily muscled with prominent veins

They have dark fur and skin

Hair is confined to the areas around the head, back, forearms, calves and chest

Skulls and trophies hang

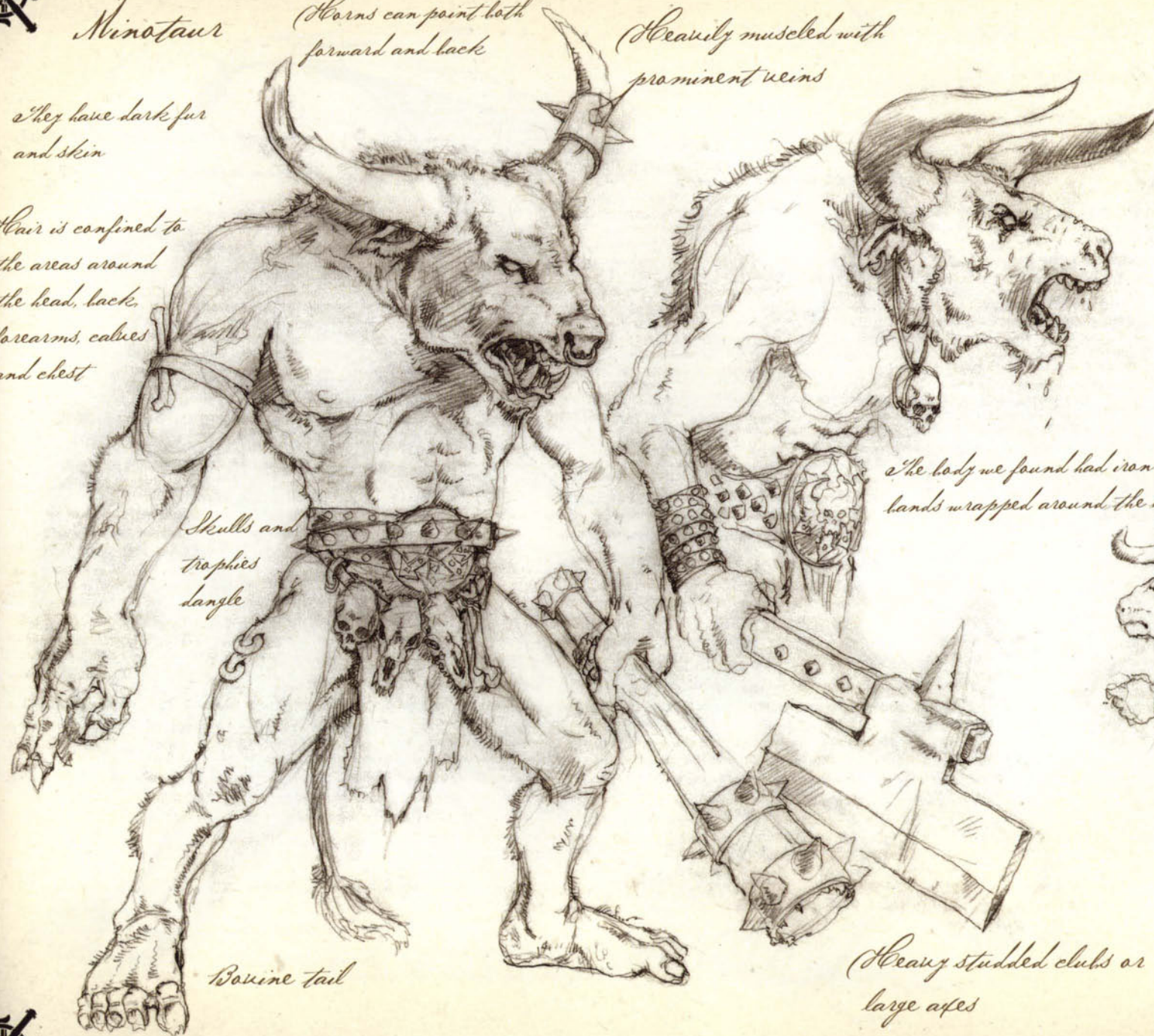
Bovine tail

The body we found had iron bands wrapped around the horn

Heavy studded clubs or large axes

Broad belts with plates

After our attack on the beastmen camp, we ventured further into the wilds. There we found the half eaten body of a minotaur. After examining the corpse, I drew these, which I believe demonstrate a reasonable likeness to these incredible creatures.



Mythical Creatures

The creatures pictured here are so rare, that to find them in the wilds is next to impossible. These likenesses were mostly taken from exhibits kept in the various zoos and bestiaries across the land. It is not unheard of for generals to ride into battle on such beasts. Indeed, our great leader Karl Franz rides a griffon in the campaign season.

The emirs and princes in Araby also keep creatures such as these. Like us, they see them as powerful symbols of status, and the animals are treated with such respect that it verges on the religious.

I harbour an intense fascination for these marvellous beasts; their rarity, beauty and power stirs powerful emotions within me, and I thank the keepers and beast-masters for extending to me the privilege of being able to commit their likenesses to parchment.

Long may the dragons fly.

Manticore

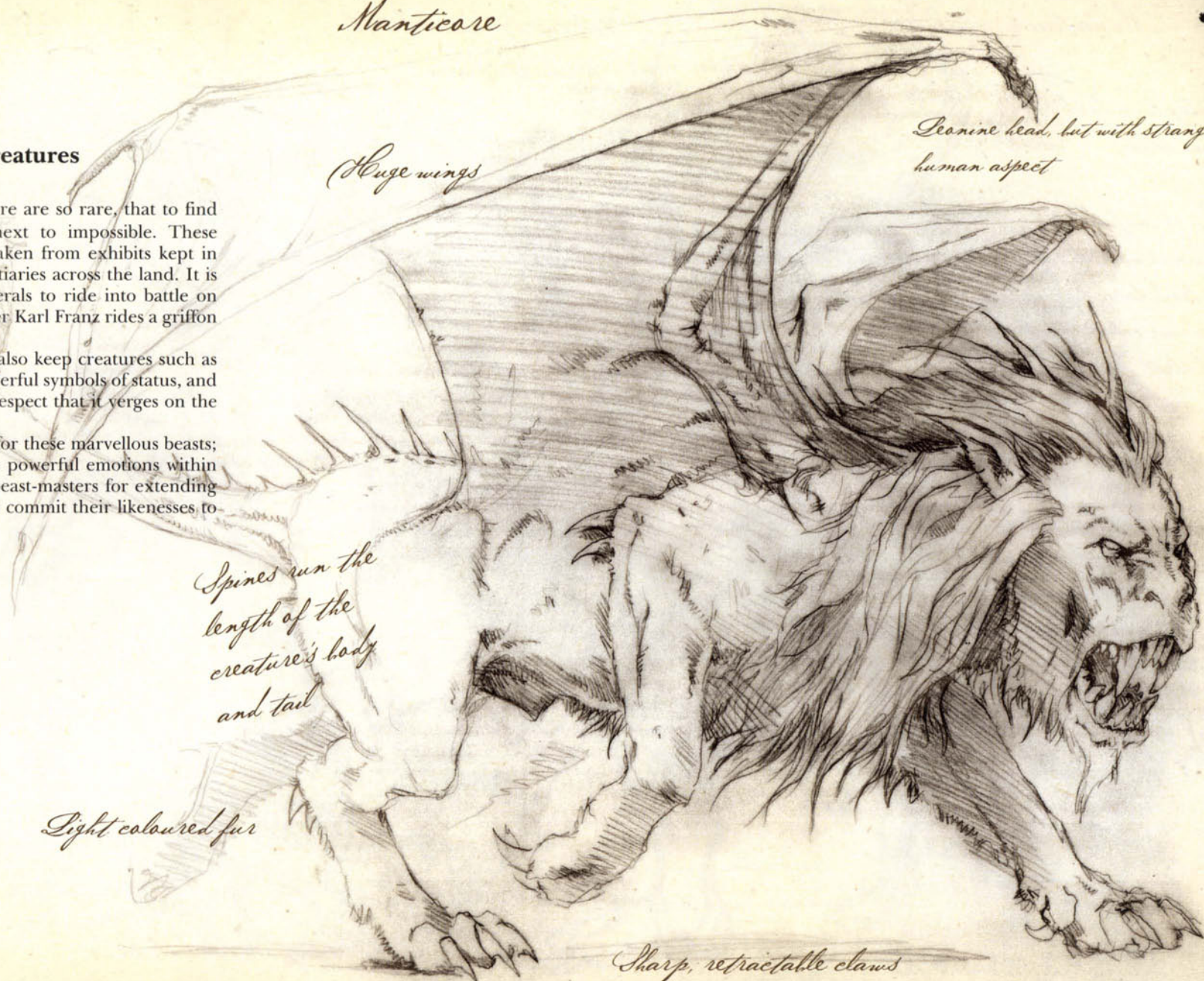
Huge wings

*Leonine head, but with strange,
human aspect*

*Spines run the
length of the
creature's body
and tail*

Light coloured fur

Sharp, retractable claws



Griffon

The war mount of the
great Karl Franz

Noble, birdlike head, wings
and front limbs

The rear is that of a great
cat predator



These creatures soar through the
heavens with the grace of a
winged god.

Wyvern

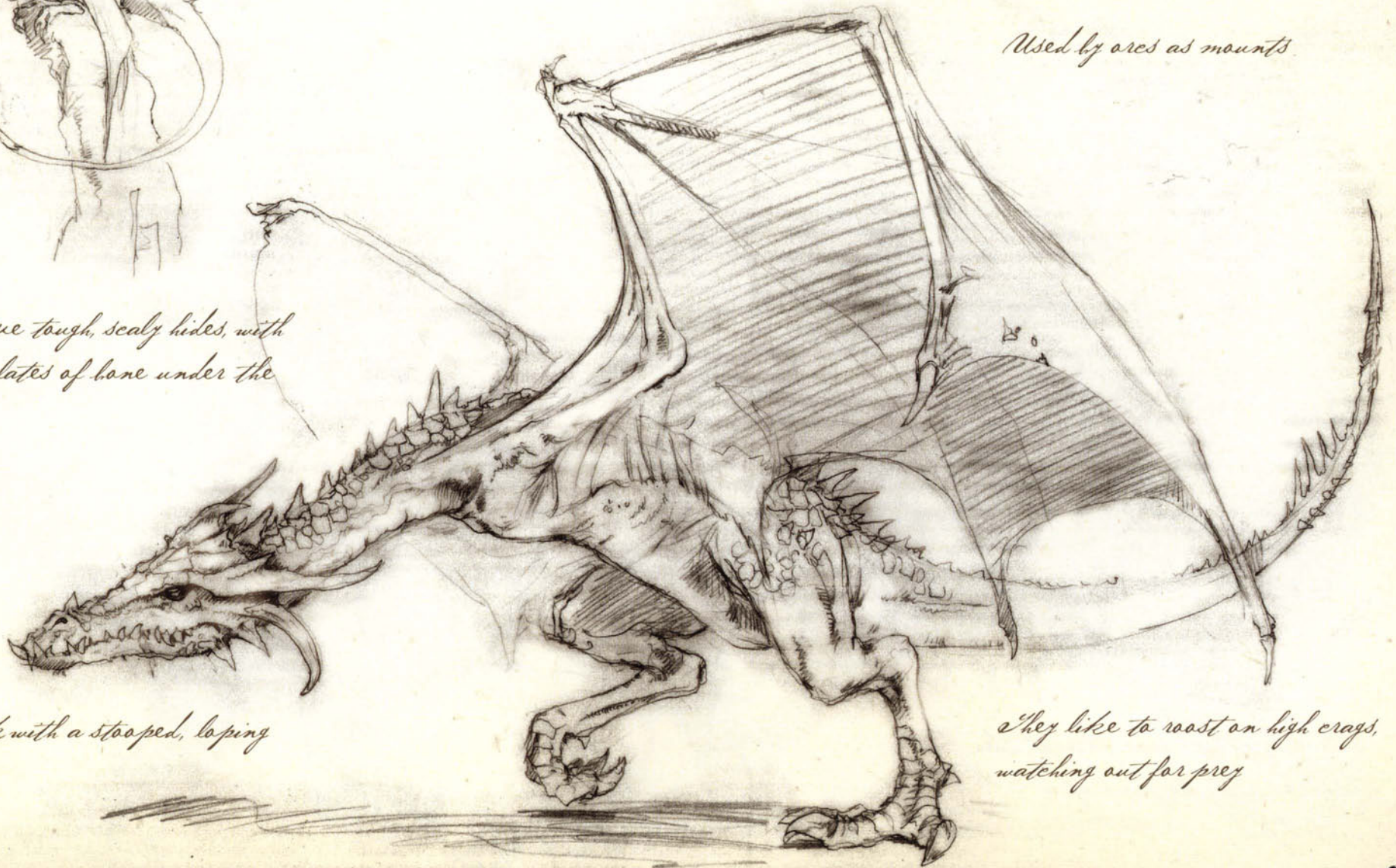
*Relative to the dragon, but
smaller, and lacking front limbs*

Used by orcs as mounts

*They have tough, scaly hides, with
strong plates of bone under the
skin*

*They walk with a stooped, loping
gait*

*They like to roost on high crags,
watching out for prey*



Basilisk

*Lizard-like creature, not
unlike a dragon*

Eight legs

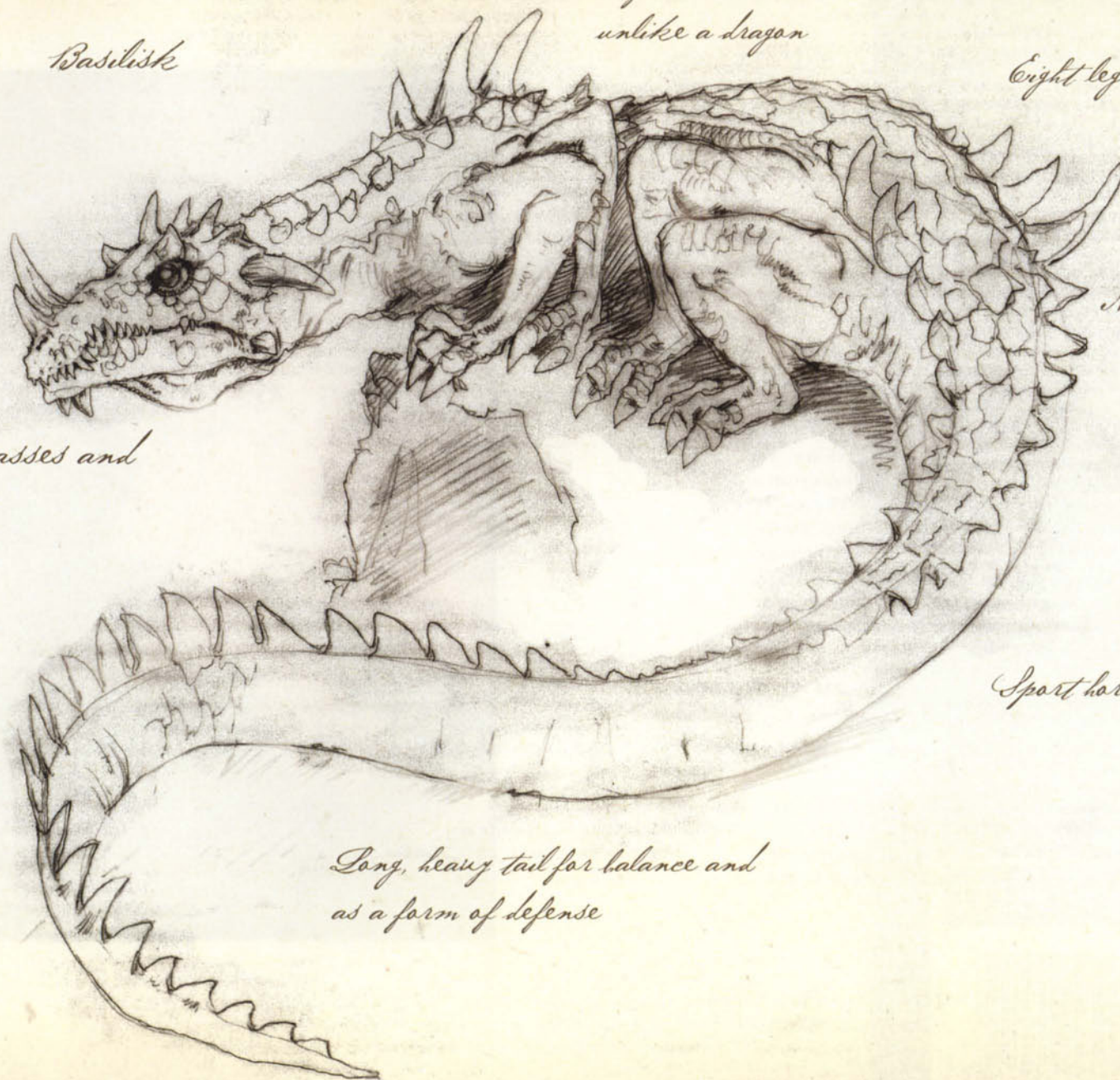
Bony skull

No wings

*Live in rocky passes and
high mountains*

Sport horns on their noses

*Long, heavy tail for balance and
as a form of defense*

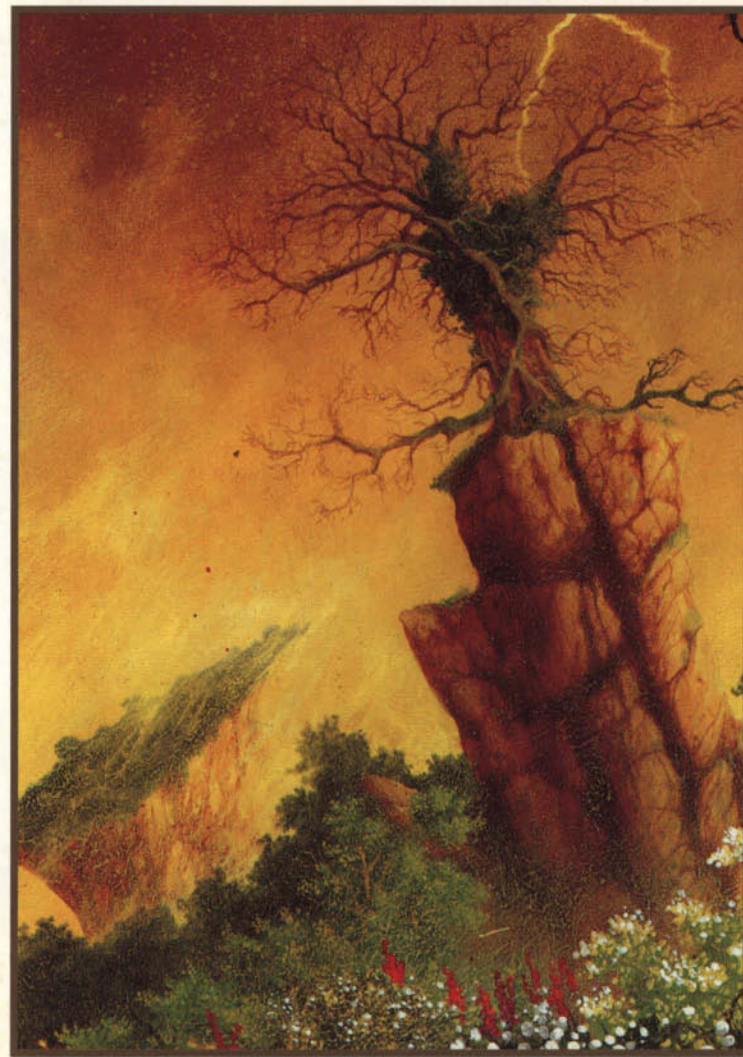


The Withering Tree of Hope

Plate No. 12

At the far end of the world is said to be a tree. Its branches spread towards the cracked open sky, and its roots pierce the earth, taking sustenance from the living rock. As the world ages and wars and strife wreck the land, the tree grows rotten. Black sap oozes from the bark, and no more leaves grow. The Empire crumbles, as do all the civilised nations, slowly but surely. As the bastions of hope sink slowly into the mire, so the tree withers and dies. All things end: songs, books, loves, lives; all we can do is treasure what we have, while we have it, until the transience of life catches up on us all.

This book is dedicated to three: my father, for teaching me about the wider world and then pushing me into it, the citizens of the Empire for ensuring that life is never short of surprises, and Greta, for that cold night in midwinter.



John Blanche's artwork has been a driving force in the appeal of Games Workshop's games for over twenty years. He continues to devote his time to further developing the dark and gothic imagery of the world's most popular tabletop games in his own fabulous paintings and sketches.

David Gallagher has long been a mainstay of the Games Workshop Design Studio in Nottingham. His concept art, which forms the backbone of this book, is just a glimpse into his imagination and creativity. He prefers his art to speak for itself.

Matt Ralphs lives and works as an editor in Nottingham. His previous writing credits include two short stories published in *Inferno!* magazine, and the *Imperial Infantryman's Uplifting Primer*. He is interested in history and books, especially old, dusty ones.

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Open the covers and marvel at the breadth of our land and its peoples.

