

The Dragon #17

Vol. III No. 3
AUGUST 1978
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Vampires in the Dungeon * Driving Mapmakers Wild

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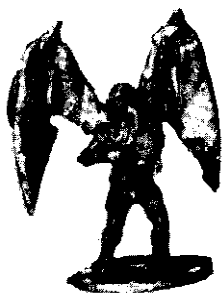
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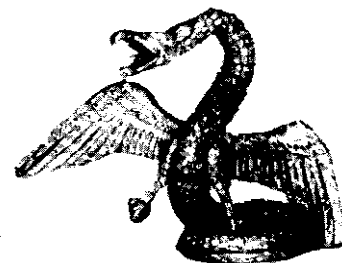
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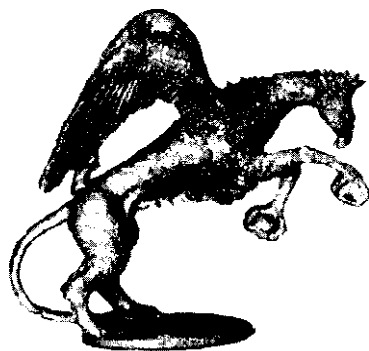
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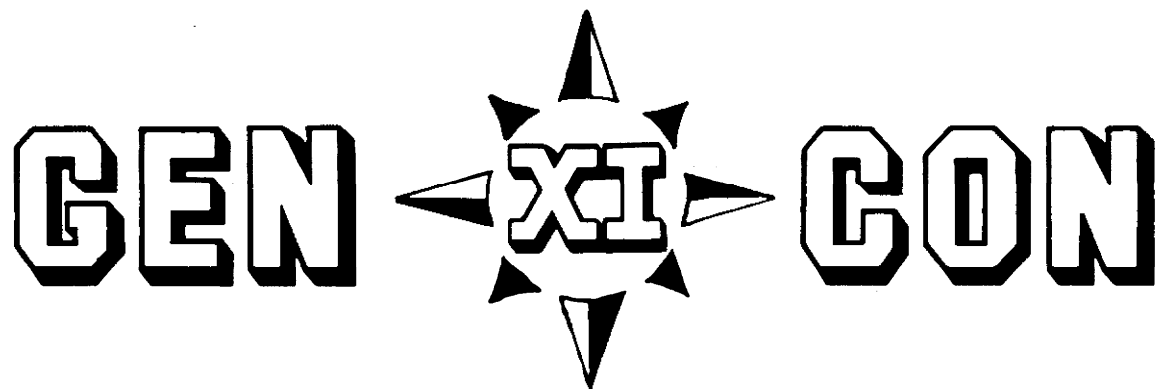
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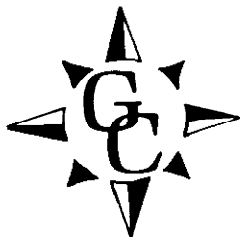
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Correction

We let a mistake slip by on The Judge's Guild ad last issue. The 3 Year Sub is \$33.00, not \$29.00 as stated. We apologize for any inconveniences.

THE DRAGON is proud to welcome a new cartoonist to our pages, Will McLean. He has provided a number of amusing cartoons which will undoubtedly be popping up in future issues, and we hope he sends us more.

You may have noticed that this is the biggest TD ever that doesn't contain a game or insert of some sort. We hope to keep it at least this size, and hope to add more pages in the fall. There is one major stumbling block, however, that could easily prevent that; more pages use more material. The simple addition of more pages, even though one or more are sold to advertisers, means we consume that much more material. At this very moment, TD is *hurting* for good quality material. All of you writers that have been stalling around had better get hot soon . . . especially those that are late on promised pieces.

As you peruse the Table of Contents, you might notice that this is our *potpourri* issue, containing a little bit of everything, hopefully something to please everyone. In this issue, and the next, we are running quite a number of reviews of games that came out this past year. This came about because it was not until rather recently that we got together with a couple of good reviewers. This way, we are clearing the decks for the floods of convention releases that is imminent, and will be able to review them in much more timely fashion.

Don't forget to cast your ballots for the Strategist Club Awards if you haven't already done so. I hope to see a number of you at the SC Banquet on Thursday, August 17th. More details can be found elsewhere in this issue regarding the Banquet; if you're planning to come to GenCon, you shouldn't miss the rare opportunity that the Banquet offers; good food and stimulating company for a reasonable price. How can you lose . . . ?

Timothy Kask

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— or —

“Hey, Dave, why is this fog moving with us?!”

by Clayton J. Miner

As anybody who has played D&D for awhile knows, and any judge who has rolled one of these up knows, vampires are bad news. When properly run, vampires are partystompers of the highest degree. A good vampire has all the tenacity of a D.S.D., the charm of a wanton, willing damsel, and the craftiness of a Chinese fox, but most of all, vampires are possessed of high strength and an even higher intelligence. One vampire in the dungeon should be sufficient to, at the least, decimate a hardy band of adventurers; he usually totally annihilates his opposition.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, depending on which side of the fangs one is on, most judges I have had the pleasure of playing with do not use the vampire to its fullest potential. Now then let us look at the vampire and its abilities, and see why these creatures of the night are so dreaded by the not so ignorant peasants of the old country.

First of all, the vampire's greatest weapon is his vast strength. This takes first place over charm because there is little chance of failure for the vampire. On the average, the minimum strength for a vampire is an 8:69. With this reservoir of energy a vampire can rip doors off of the hinges, batter down lords, and lift all but the strongest of fighters off of his feet, crushing his windpipe as he hauls the warrior into the shadows.

The charm ability is deadly to the party, but here one has a chance for one last scream of terror. Too often have vampires in many a dungeon, mine included, just charmed one person, told him to come to the master, and spirited him away, leaving behind a whole room full of tasty corpuscles and nourishing platelets. What an intelligent vampire does is charm as many people as possible, tell them to wait here for him to return, and then goes off to retrieve the rest of the party, returning to his banquet in a short while. Here is one of the places that the legendary high speed of the vampire is most useful.

But what is the vampire hungry, and doesn't want to go on a blind hunt for more victims? The answer is simple enough, and takes just a few minutes of advanced planning on the part of the vampire. Instead of just using his rats and so forth as an attack force, what the thinking vampire will do, as soon as he moves into your labyrinth, is to whip the rats and mice, and whatever else he can charm or bully, into a highly effective spy network. How many adventurers have bothered to engage a rat in hand-to-hand combat? Why, with this set up, the vampire can be the undisputed master of the dungeon, not only terrorizing players, but many monsters (undead not included, of course.)

It is generally recognized that the average vampire can turn himself into a bat, flitting here and there, looking for a quick snack, but this is not the only form of transport available to the lamia. I am speaking, of course, of the vampire's gaseous form. This is both an offensive and a defensive ability. All judges are familiar with the defensive aspect of this, when threatened the vampire becomes gaseous and moves off, away from the party. However this ability can be very effective in assaulting the party. All the vampire has to do is rush past the party at the highest speed it can reach, (in some sources this is said to be up to 50 m.p.h.) buffeting the party as a high wind, continually retracing its path, eventually wearing down and confusing the poor mortals. And if things don't go the way the vampire wants things to go, he just leaves the party, only to follow it a short distance away, waiting for the chance to resolidify and pounce once more.

The problem with vampirism in the dungeon is that it grows, like the plague, as long as there are living creatures available. Eliminating the vampire is just as hard as surviving an attack. Before you say, "All you need is a cross!", consider this; that the older a vampire is, the more resistant he is to crosses, holy water, sunlight, etc. An inexpensive means of protection is to wear some garlic. You won't have many friends, but you might live longer. Another way of insulating yourself is to dive into a room in the dungeon, close the door and recite biblical phrases, and break up whatever passes for a host in whatever world you are in, at the bottom of the door. Outside the dungeon draw a circle in the ground, an sprinkle the host fragments into the depressions left by

the stick or whatever you have used, reciting prayers and so forth. When properly made, there is a chance that any unfortunate who is charmed will be prevented from leaving the circle.

As to mirrors, it depends on how the judge wants to run it. Here legends conflict, but the main view is that the vampire will run from it. The secondary view, and a bit more realistic, is that the average vampire will stay at bay, trying to get the player to drop the mirror.

The recommended method of dealing with a vampire is to stake the thing, but the noise and struggles involved will usually attract something else looking for a free meal. The stake is a good method, providing that the stake is made of either hawthorn or blackthorn, and is correctly installed. Here is another point that is confusing. According to legend, the stake has to impale the heart either in one and only one stroke, or in a number of strokes not to exceed four. The final determination should be left up to the judge himself. Stakes are a temporary measure at best. They can rot, be burned away, be pulled out, or jarred loose, all of which allow the vampire to rise again.

In legend, the best way to permanently end the existence of a vampire is to find him in his coffin, preferably before dark, or just after dawn; however, if you can find the vampire after he has been sated at any time, he, she, it, they will be easier to handle. A vampire with fresh blood around his mouth has just fed, and if in his coffin, will be rather lethargic. The procedure for disposing of a vampire is as follows; while the one person is hammering the stake home, his companion has the option of saying a prayer for the dead, which will commend the spirit to heaven. Once the vampire has finished it's death throes, one of the participants removes the head from the body, leaving it in the coffin. Next the heart is to be excised and burned. This ensures that the vampire will remain in the world of the dead. One of the many options is the placing of flowers in the hands and the mouths of the body after the stake is in place, and before the head is removed. Generally however, if the vampire is over one-hundred years old, it will crumble to dust. In this case, both the dust and the coffin must be burned!

Another way of sticking it to the vampire is to pour holy water into the coffin, making it a booby trap. If, as you are walking through the dungeon, fortunate enough to find a vampire's coffin, with no vampire, leave in it a broken host, or a crucifix. This makes the coffin useless to the vampire, but it won't destroy him. It will only deny him rest until he can charm or bully a couple of kobolds into getting him a dirt-filled replacement. Outside the dungeon however, this is usually a good method for destroying a vampire without jeopardizing yourself.

Stealing the dirt is another nasty trick, and one worthy of even the most lawful cleric. A final word of warning; don't try to employ any of these measures on a coffin containing the vampire, unless he is sated with blood, as he will be able to charm you even if the coffin is opened in sunlight. The charm is almost always successful, because vampire hunters are sure to be surprised when the vampire looks at him in broad daylight.

The list of tactics and trick on the part of a vampire is close to endless. For example, being in gaseous form in a fog, or a mist, going to gaseous form and slipping part way under a door or window in order to entice players to fling open the door or window, thereby inviting the vampire in.

Use your imagination, as I have said the list is almost endless. One last practice by the vampire is to take a quick snack from the victim, without killing him, and then either releasing him, or trying to keep him alive, with the intent to prolong a food supply. A vampire's victim does not begin to develop vampire characteristics unless near death, or forced by the vampire to drink the vampire's own blood. (See *Dracula*, by Bram Stoker)

Well we have now reached the end, and hopefully this will help both the player's and the judge in what to expect when battling a vampire. One thing left needs to be said; Next to a dungeon vampire, Count Dracula and Nosferatu were pikers! Steer clear of graveyards at night, and patches of mist in the night, or you will soon be hearing a voice from the heavens asking; "What was your armour class???"

D&D Variant

CHAINMAIL Revisited: JOUSTING IN D&D

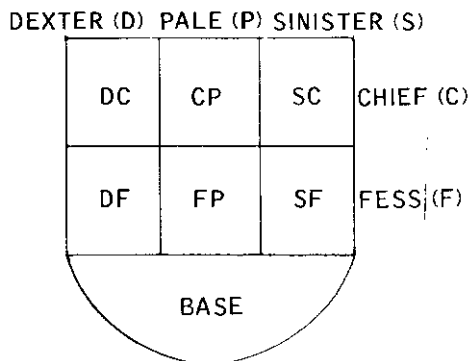
by Jon Pickens

The peaceful slumber of the glen was shattered by the sound of thundering hooves as two men clad in mail careened toward each other. A shock, a splintering crush, and a dull thud resounded as one of the contestants measured his length upon the turf. Lord Alturic rose gingerly and limped to his charger. "Again, Varlet," he growled. The scene was repeated again, and again . . . and again.

Wait one minute, thought Alturic, as he gazed upward from his position of recline. I'm a Lord, and he's a lowly Level 1. IT ISN'T FAIR!

Thus was born the option you are about to read . . .

The jousting system used in the adventure above was the one in TSR's *Chainmail* booklet. Although the system is adequate for normal tournaments, *D&D* adds the factors of experience levels and magical equipment which the original system was not designed for. Hence the need for this option, which builds these factors into the original *Chainmail* system.



The figure above is a representation of a shield, showing the possible aiming points for an attacking knight. The other common aiming point is the opponent's HELM.

The jousting matrix below summarizes the aiming points, the defensive positions, and which defensive positions may be taken by an attacker aiming at a specific target.

JOUST MATRIX

Defensive Position	1 Lower Helm	2 Lean Right	3 Lean Left	4 Steady Seat	5 Shield High	6 Shield Low	Attacker's Position Consider ing AP
HELM	0	0	0	0*	12	0	4-6
DC	12	4	0	4	4	0	3-6
CP	9	12	2	4	9	12	Any
SC	2	0	4	2	2	12	2,4-6
DF	4	9	0	4	0	4	4-6
FP	9	2	4	9	9	4	Any
SF	2	0	9	2	2	2	4-6
BASE	4	2	12	4	9	4	1,4-6

Note: The numbers on this matrix we added to the roll of a twenty-sided die and the result found on the Joust Results Table

* — see, Joust Results

To resolve a jousting pass, or "ride", take the following steps in order:

- 1 Knight A and Knight B both secretly select an aiming point and a defensive position from the **Joust Matrix**.
- 2 Knight A's pass is resolved. Knight A compares his aiming point with B's defensive position on the Joust Matrix to find his base number.
- 3 Magical weaponry adjustment:
 - a Add the "to Hit" bonus for A's lance.
 - b Subtract the bonus for B's shield. Note that if A aims at B's HELM, B receives the shield bonus only if he played position #5, Shield High.

4 Subtract B's experience level from A's to find which column to use on the Joust Results Table.

5 Knight A rolls a twenty-sided die, adds his adjusted base, and reads off the result.

6 Repeat steps #2-5, reversing the roles of A and B. This completes one "ride". Continue rides until one knight is unhorsed.

JOUST RESULTS TABLE

Knight Level Comparison

Result	-12 or more	-11 to -8	-7 to -4	-3 to 3	4-7	8-11	12-up
U	25	23	21	20	19	17	15
U B	23	21	19	18	17	15	13
B	21	19	17	16	15	13	11
G	17	15	13	12	11	9	7

Notes:

1 Numbers listed are the minimum adjusted score necessary for the listed result.

2 Note that there are no bonuses for exceptional strength or dexterity.

EXPLANATION OF JOUST RESULTS

U Unhorsed. Opponent is unhorsed with 10% chance of injury (see Injury Table*)

U/B Same as above, but attacker's lance is broken if non-magical. Magical lances are broken only if the defender's shield is rated higher than the lance.

B Attacker's lance is broken as above, but defender is *not* unhorsed.

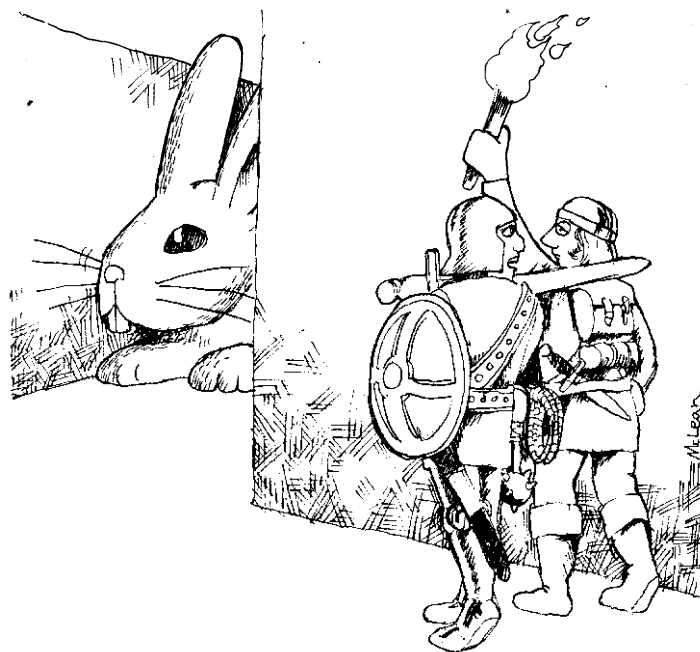
G Glancing blow. This is effectively a miss, *unless* a hit is scored on the opponent's HELM (an "*" on the JOUST MATRIX).

* — HELM is hit and knocked off, shattering if non-protective. If knight is unhorsed, injury is automatic with 20% added to the percentile roll. If knight is helmetless, he will take maximum lance damage in addition to other injury.

INJURIES

Any injured knight must pass a constitution check vs Resurrection or be rendered temporarily unconscious. Roll percentile dice for hit points lost:

01-60	Knight loses 10% of total hit points
61-75	Knight loses 25%
76-85	Knight loses 33%
86-95	Knight loses 50%
96-99	Knight loses 80%
00	Knight is killed



Game Review

DRAGONLORD

by Glenn Williams

Publisher: Wee Warriors Designer: Morno Price \$4.95

This is both an unfortunate game and a very lucky find. As readers of *The Dragon* know, Morno's artwork and writing are superior. The artist seems to understand on a subliminal level the mythic elements of fantasy and has an extraordinary ability to communicate these emotional elements. I purchased the game for several reasons. This was the first Wee Warrior product I had seen which was not blatantly a *D&D* rip-off. Second, I wanted to see what this artist could do in game design. Third, the subject is intriguing and not adequately covered in fantasy gaming.

Summary

The game is on an individual dragon level and recreates combat between opposing dragonlords who have been locked in constant war for control of their magically isolated region, the Lost Hills. Each dragon and his rider have attributes which govern their performance. Dragons and their riders fight aloft: dragons with claw and fire, their riders with lance, sword and axe. Peasants, whose fields are ravaged by dragon-fire, may attempt to shoot arrows into the winged beasts. Tactics are determined by two aspects of the game: 1) the game sequence of sequential movement then combat with the attacker striking first; and 2) the maneuvers available to dragons, as the number needed to roll on percentile dice for a hit is determined by the intersection of the dragons' maneuvers on a matrix. The greatest tactical advantage is gained by moving second (and thus striking first) and rising above your opponent.

There are four scenarios: 1) a simple, single combat; 2) a village raid; 3) open battle between small teams of dragons and riders; and 4) "Ragnarok" — an end of the world battle mustering all the dragons. Because dragons move individually, the last scenario is suggested only for those who have mastered the game's system and tactics.

Critique

The artwork is outstanding. It is equalled only by the rule book illustrations in *Red Moon*, *White Bear* and *Nomad Gods*. The pictures convey the swirling blur of scales, claws and flame that I have imagined would be the nature of dragon combat. Unfortunately the excellent artwork is applied inappropriately on the map. The map is drawn from perspective so that hills and cliffs are seen from the side rather than from on top. While aesthetically pleasing, that technique has mechanical drawbacks which affect play. Where are those slopes and cliffs supposed to be? If you are diving onto a low flying opponent, that ambiguity can create bitter feuds over whether or not you have clutched your opponent or plowed into a rocky slope. In the middle of the board is a very nice picture of a ruined castle, but because it is drawn from the side, the castle would have to lean at a forty-five degree angle to occupy the space it fills on the map!

The map is archaic in terms of game technology. At the price, some cut and paste is permissible. Each section of the map, printed on construction paper-like material, has to be trimmed and taped to its fellows. Unfortunately, the map sections do not align properly, creating a strange jog when your dragon flies across a taped edge. Further, the map grid is a set of Cartesian squares which regulate movement and combat. Thus, each diagonal move counts as 1.5 squares. That may leave a half movement factor lost simply due to the grid. An old time gamer remembers why the hobby almost universally adopted the hex grid system. Sometimes there are good reasons for such a system; for example, the tactical display boards in *Battlefleet Mars* are based on Cartesian co-ordinates because of the Newtonian movement. This game has no such compelling reason. Since SPI gave the hobby permission to use their numbered hex grid system so long as they received credit, why settle for an inferior system that distorts the game?

The mechanics of the game are also complicated. A dragon has five separate attributes: maximum speed, dexterity, strength, endurance and maximum damage they can absorb: Riders have two characteristics: strength and maximum damage. They also have the option of wielding one of three weapons, all of which can be carried aloft simul-

taneously. Each weapon varies in the damage it may inflict, the number of times it may strike per combat round, and the directions in which it may be used. The lance may strike only in a forward direction, a sword forward and to the sides and side rear squares, while an axe may be used in any direction.

Speed, altitude and damage taken require separate tallies for each beast plus damage taken by his rider. Since there is a scenario using twelve dragons and riders per side, the player may have to monitor up to 84 individual factors (dragon speed, altitude, endurance, strength, damage taken, rider strength and endurance). Under these circumstances, bookkeeping is more important than fun.

The weaknesses of the game do not mar its concept, which is an important addition to tactical fantasy games. Many games include aerial combat that differs in no real sense from ground action, or lacks the extra-dimensional feeling of war in the skies. *Dragonlord's* system is an excellent appendage to such games. It adapts well to miniatures or boardgames. For example, *Red Moon*, *White Bear* has only four dragons (not counting the pterodactyls), so the complication added would not be excessive. With slight changes, a gamer could add eagles to a Tolkien game such as SPI's recent *Gondor*.

Adapting *Dragonlord* to an existing game requires modifications. First, the grid must be changed to the more common hex grid. Movement can be left basically as is, one point of speed for each hex moved or for each incremental change in altitude. Add a facing cost of one point per hex side changed. Since the grid system affects combat, the weapons require small changes. A lance may only be used against the front hex, a sword against all but the rear hex, and an axe in all directions. Next, reduce the attributes, dragons need but three: speed, dexterity and strength (which also measures the endurance and damage allowed). Similarly, a rider needs only strength. These modifications are similar to the system used by Metagaming in their microgames *Melee* and *Wizard*.

A further play aid can be added: altimeter charts and speed indicators like those of *Richthofen's War* or the suggested aid in a recent *Little Wars* article on *Airwar*. To simplify even further, limit a dragon's maximum altitude to three thousand feet and changes in altitude to increments of fifty feet. In the Ragnarok scenario you will have twelve charts, but the information is displayed far more conveniently (and can be changed far more easily).

I have played the game with the suggested changes on both an old *Renaissance of Infantry* and *Warriors of the Green Planet* map. It plays smoothly and is more fun. Believability and enjoyment are the two major criteria by which a game should be judged. *Dragonlord*, with its potential for adding to other games, meets both criteria. That potential justifies its purchase. It is a very cost-effective way to literally add a new dimension to your fantasy boardgaming. After playing the game through a few times to get the feel of its three dimensional tactics among sentient beasts, your armies will begin to cast nervous glances to the skies. Buy the game, play it, add it to your other games and beware the stoop and clutch of the dragon who has risen above you!



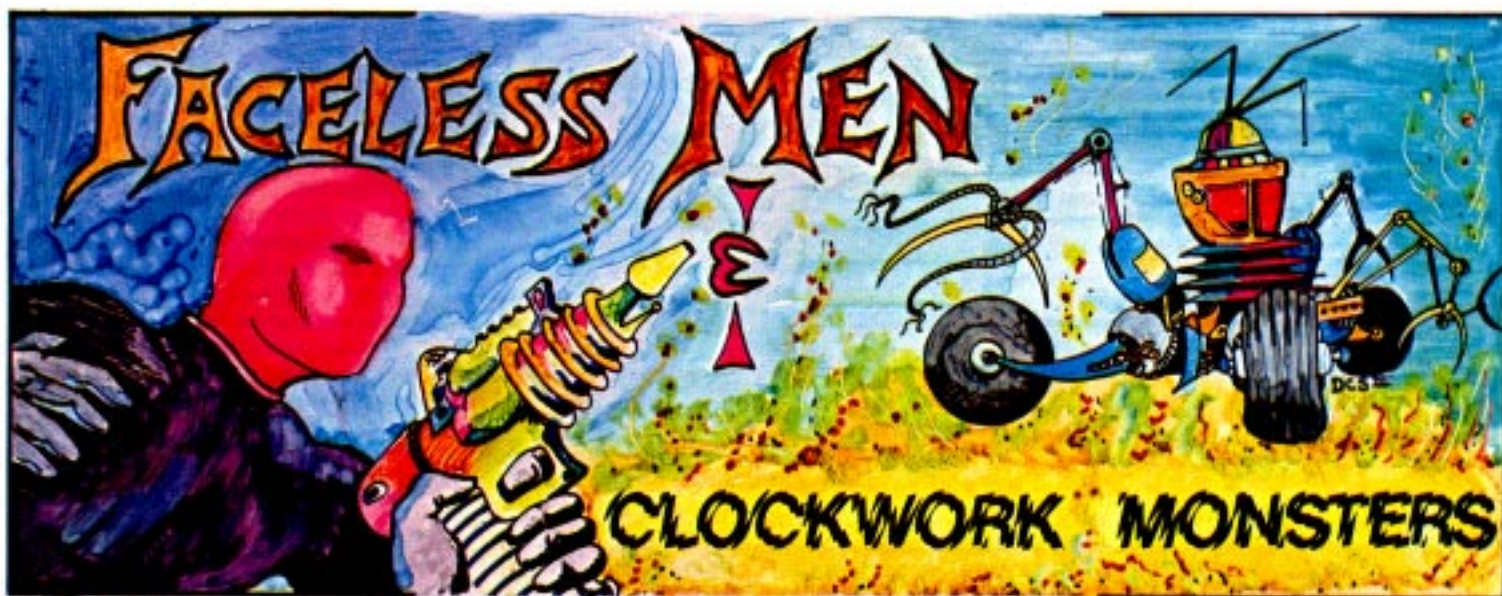
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A DUNGEON & DRAGON ADVENTURE ABOARD THE STARSHIP WARDEN

by Gary Gygax

When last winter's tedium was broken by the fun and games at WINTER FANTASY, I was scheduled for DMin'g continual adventures in Greyhawk Castle, and that is exactly what they turned out to be — continual. Not having the heart to cut them short, I ended up eating meals while play went on, and the games lasted from morning into the late hours of Saturday night, from early Sunday morning straight through until evening, and fatigue made me a bit silly. When the last party, which included several regulars in the campaign (Mark Ratner and Jim Ward each playing one of their player character henchmen, and Ernie Gygax playing the character another participant had abandoned when he or she had to leave for home), beat up a body of gnolls and slew their master, there was a scroll amidst the heap of booty. It was, of course, a curse scroll, and it was a curse which whisked all creatures off to another world. Jokingly, I said that there was a 1 in 10 chance that the curse would teleport them all to Jim's starship, and when the die was tossed out what should come up but the stark single line of a 1! imagine the surprise which struck my weary countenance with a look of wonder. . . imagine the groans from the regulars! They didn't want to be stuck aboard Warden, not with precious henchmen aboard that deathtrap. But all six characters, along with three gnoll prisoners, were, in fact, exactly that. The whole party was gone from the ken of D&D-kind and off amongst the horrors of METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA.

That took place in January, and the affair was not resolved until Jim Ward's next visit to Lake Geneva in late March. Frantic letters and telephone calls from Mark Ratner were to no avail; determination of the fate of the nine intrepid creatures from Greyhawk could be resolved no sooner. Mark, being headquartered in New Jersey, was unavailable for play, so we had Brian Blume fill in for him. And instead of refereeing, yours truly was now a player, a pawn of the remorseless ShipMaster, James M. Ward. The cast of characters for the game that followed was:

9th level assassin (human) SCRAG FLATCHET (party)
9th level cleric (human) THURIBLE of ROAKY (G Gygax)

9th level fighter (human) dorag (L. Gygax)
8th level fighter (human) NIVELL (party)
8th level magic-user (human) NEB RENTAR

(B. Blume)

6th/5th levels fighter/magic-user (half-elf)
HODKIN AP-A WRD (E. Gygax)
3 hapless gnolls (party)

The names given for the characters have been changed in order to protect the innocent . . .

* * *

There was a moment of darkness and vertigo, shot with flashes of purple, and then the group felt the ground come up to jar their soles. All had the sinking feeling which normally accompanies the realization of real trouble. That was a curse scroll which had been read, and a cursory examination of their surroundings confirmed their worst fears. To the left — where the sun burned in the sky — was an unrelieved landscape of flat grasslands, seeming to go on endlessly; but to the right was a wall of incredibly hard metal, running ahead and behind and stretching upwards as far as the eye could see. It was unbroken by door or window, unpierced by arrow slit, unrelieved by battlement or bartizan. Immediately upon arrival the warlock Neb Rentar had attempted to use a wish to escape, while the wily Ap-Awrd the half-elf called upon his enchanted blade to teleport him from the place. Neither was to any avail, so the group held council, the two would-be escapees a bit chagrined and most willing to make amends now that they were unable to make off. It was decided that hereafter it would be a "one-for-all, all-for-one" affair. The material possessions of the party were pooled. In addition to a good selection of the usual gear typical of members of a dungeon expedition, there were the following noteworthy items:

1 gem of seeing, 1 fireball wand (97 charges),
1 strange gem with 2 wishes contained within,
1 snake staff 3 magic swords (+3, +2 teleporting — with some other minor abilities, +1), a +2 hammer, a +2 dagger, 2 suits of magic plate mail (+2, +1), 2 magic shields (+2, +1), a scroll of 6 sixth level magic-user spells (none too useful!), a scroll of 4 fourth level cleric spells, 3 potions of healing.

There was also an assortment of normal armor and arms, including 2 bows — one carried by a

fighter, one being amongst the arms taken from the gnoll prisoners. Fortunately, there were also packages of iron rations and skins of water, for the group spent much time in areas where there was no game, but I am getting ahead of the story.

The sun was growing dim — not setting, simply growing dim, so the consensus of opinion was to call its position west, proceed north, and keep near to the unrelieved expanse of stark metal bounding the "world" they had been thrown into. The evening and night passed uneventfully, and next day the party continued trekking northwards over seemingly unalterable terrain until finally, late in the afternoon they came upon a colossal cube of metal, in titan-sized fortress from the look of it, and none liked its look.

Scrutiny revealed numbers of small things — mostly insects — strewn about the perimeter of the place, all quite dead. All members were pleased they had looked before laying hands upon those metal sides. Concluding that some very powerful magic protected the place, Scrag Flatchet and Hodkin led the group in a wide flanking movement which allowed observation without coming too close to possible danger. A door of proportion equal to the rest of the place was observed when the north face of the place came into view. The party came close, found no way they could easily open the huge valves, and fearing to actually lay hands upon the gate, left. Water was already running short, so it was decided that a westward track might prove more fruitful, for near the wall they had seen neither game nor water of any sort. When the sun darkened into another night lit only by strangely bright stars, sans moon, there were several leagues between them and the tremendous metal fortress, occupants (if any) unknown.

A swamp turned their path to the north again around midday. Just before they had shot a smallish deer with pink horns and legs. An incautious touch of the pinkish flakes which fell from those parts of the deer quickly taught the adventurers that death in this place came in at least as many forms as were to be found in the dungeons of Greyhawk Castle. The animal's flesh was tasty nonetheless . . . That night a huge walking plant attempted to creep up to the camp and devour the party while it slept. Infravision of half-elf and gnoll noted the monster's intent, and

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a fireball sent it to a fiery death without further ado.

Afternoon of the following day found the party in a better frame of mind. Rain had fallen, so swamp water was replaced by freshly caught rain. Game was fairly plentiful and easily brought down, as none of the creatures seemed to have any fear of man. Then they saw the pillars and the box of shifting colors which they fenced. The cube of colors attracted attention first, as its scintillating, running hues blended and reformed into all the colors of the spectrum — and some that were not. It seemed to crouch against the metal wall stretching to the sky, seeking shelter there with its fence of pillars. And what pillars! The assassin crept near them to observe the cube, but beat a hasty retreat when they moved towards him when he attempted to pass between them! After consultation, the cleric, Thurible, strode forward, slowing as he drew near the columns. They were seemingly of layered wet sand, massive, and quite motionless. When Thurible touched one some of the sand came off on his gauntlet, and when this was rubbed off on the nearby grass the vegetation blackened and died. Not easily daunted, the cleric stepped between the towering piles of sand; he rued it immediately, as one snaked down with lightning speed and smote him for 34 hit points of damage at one blow. He reeled back and away with alacrity.



A **fireball** discharged at one of these 100' monsters caused it to move and squirt forth water. Another such missile was tried upon the colored box, and the pillars all moved inwards towards the great box, dousing it with water, while the many-colored cube spewed forth a bluish aura about itself. A **flame strike** spell from Thurible, and several more **fireballs** from the wand wielded by Ap-Awrd drove the halo of light away and shrunk the cube smaller and smaller. Another flaming explosion and the box was nothing but a haze of dust — spore dust thought the clever half-elf, and discharged a final **fireball** into its midst. The last vestige of the strange thing disappeared, and a normal-sized portal in the wall was revealed. Of more immediate interest was a pile of material where the cube had been — a mound of reddish goo, a strange wand-like thing, a crystal egg, and a bracelet.

Ap-Awrd's former master had once had a wand similar to that they found, he said it was called a

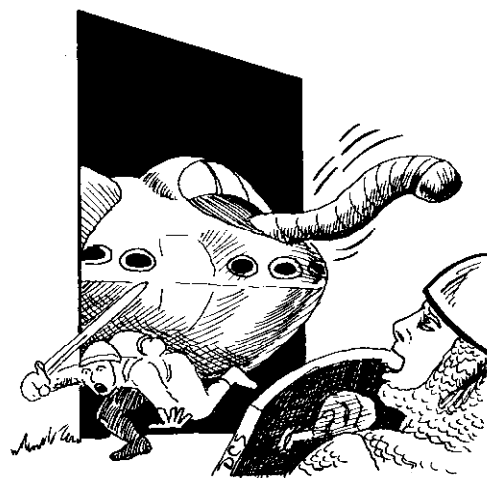
pistol. Neb Rentar agreed, for he had seen a mage in Greyhawk with one. The egg-thing was possibly some sort of poison, flame, or acid missile — similar to the oil-, holy water-, and like bombs hurled by adventurers in the known world from whence they had come. It was stowed away for later inspection. The cleric was given the bracelet to use for whatever purpose could be determined. The dark pink gel stunk, and it was left where it was smeared. Time to go on to the door, armed now with the hoped-for extra powers of the pistol-wand, the adventurers agreed.

The warlock inspected the area of the metal gate with the aid of the **gem of seeing**, and much of interest was noted thereby. The man-sized door was not provided with any sort of handle or visible, or invisible, means of manipulation, but neither was it trapped. A small area of white material, a rectangle about the same size as the colored area of the bracelet held by Thurible, was ignored in favor of a most intriguing discovery. The walls were milky on either side of the portal, as hard as the metal surrounding them, but the **gem of seeing** showed what was behind these translucent panels. There was a large room there, one whose size was indeterminable, but whose occupants could — in part — be seen. Standing rigidly beside strange bed-like things were faceless men with pistol wands strapped about their waists! No fewer than 10 could be seen, and there were certainly more. An augury spell cast by the cleric boded death and destruction if the party could manage to cause the mysterious door to open.

Neb Rentar was under *geas* not to engage in magical combat for a sennight and a day. He had cast a **legend lore** divination to learn what could be learned of the place they had been cursed to, and for a full eleven days the warlock needed to refrain from such activity if he were to gain the benefit of the magic. When the group determined to open the door of metal at any cost, the magic-user was ordered well away. After various and sundry ploys failed to affect the portal, Dorag suggested that the red rectangle of the bracelet be placed against the white one by the door, for possibly it was some magical key. It worked.

As the door slid aside, the faceless creatures inside drew their weapons and leaped for the door. Thurible was prepared, and a spell to **hold persons** froze four of the things as they stepped forth. Black rays shot from the entrance as their fellow things attempted to slay the party outside. In desperation, the warlock uttered a **wish** with the enchanted gem, stating that the faceless things must slay each other instead of his comrades. The noises from the chamber indicated success, and no further rays darted forth. A dull gonging sound was issuing from inside, possibly an alarm, so the group sprang into action. The gnolls and Rentar watched the rear. The cleric stripped weapons and bracelets from the motionless creatures before the doorway, then dispatched the things to whatever hell spawned them. Scrag, Dorag, Nivell, and Hodkin leaped into the chamber to gather up weapons and any other available items of likely use. They had managed to gain six of the pistols when an unnoticed door at the far end of the place slid open, and a metal monster with a long and menacing snout of iron ground into the room. When the gate had begun opening the looters had beaten a hasty retreat, but two were too slow. Scrag, the assassin, and the superhero, Nivell, were hit by a sparkling ray of corruscating blue light and flung into the air to land motionless a score or more feet outside. The clockwork monster trundled up to the door to the outside, but its bult was too great to pass through the frame, so only its questing metal snout thrust forth, poking this way and that seeking a victim, but all were outside its arc and safe. Thurible cast a **continual darkness** spell squarely upon this great probocis, and the magic-user ordered one of the gnolls to run over and recover the two still forms before the door. As the creature dashed out to accomplish this task a strange pinging came from the

blackness surrounding the portal; yet another blue ray flicked forth, and the gnoll was sent rolling — shaken but unhurt. Luckily for him, the weapon evidently had full effect only upon humankind, but what to do? More noise from the darkened doorway settled the question quickly.



The area of black was retreating from sight, which indicated that the automaton was either **dispelling** the magic or retreating from the gate to allow something smaller to issue out. Sounds indicated the latter, and the wiley Hodkin wasted no time in launching a **fireball** from the wand he held. A flash, thuds of falling bodies, and the slam of a heavy metal door closing told the adventurers that they had won at least a temporary victory. Recognizing that it was probable that the full force of the opposition had not yet been arrayed for battle, the party took the opportunity to themselves withdraw, going a short distance due westwards and then hurrying south and east to the familiar endless wall once more. The bodies of the assassin and fighter were carried only part of the way, for it was discovered that they were abraded, bruised, and unconscious, but not dead.

Cure light wounds spells placed upon each in turn, plus a bit of water and a helping hand, served to enable them to move under their own volition, if a bit slowly. The delay turned out to be most fortuitous, for when the group arrived at the wall, they found that a wide swath of the tall grass had been crushed flat by the passage of nobody knew — or wanted to learn — what! The path ran from the north where the faceless men had been fought to the south where the titan fortress was. The six men and three gnolls followed the flattened track through the gathering dusk.

When they came to the huge place it was brightly illuminated by some magical lights; faceless men and more of the strangely fashioned clockwork machines were active round it. The adventurers stayed well out of the light and decided to turn west and travel through the night and decided to turn west and travel through the night as long as their strength permitted, for they were now in great fear for their lives. Before long another great swath was revealed, running westwards along the same route they had traveled just a day or two before. Now they were certain that some device could sniff out their trail, a horrid metal golem bloodhound. To confuse it they stayed in its path until the night was old, then rested. They were just settling down when one of the gnolls gave a cry. A huge flying thing was coming at them from behind! It too seemed to be able to follow their tracks, and there was no alternative now but to take quick offensive action. Hodkin Ap-Awrd aimed the **fireball wand** with care, and his missile burst just above the on-rushing creature. It stopped still in its progress and floated gently downward. Three things separated from the bulk as it touched the ground, and the **tzinging** sounds which accompanied this action indicated that they were probably faceless men

armed with the pistol wands which shot black, killing rays. Thurible held one with a spell, but the other two rushed in and slew Flatchet and Nivell (both already weakened from their previous encounter with the ray from the metal monster). Blows were struck, with most of the party sustained wounds before the two faceless men — and then their frozen companion — were dispatched. From them were taken yet three more of the pistol wands and three more of the metal wrist bands with rectangles of an unidentifiable brown substance. When this was done the survivors went to examine the device which had flown so swiftly and carried the creatures to battle so unerringly. A thick disc of metal, many feet across and topped by a railing, was revealed. A metal flying carpet!

Upon mounting upon its surface and attempting command words, a strange voice-like sound came forth from a grill set into the device's deck. The cleric then cast a tongues spell, and conversed with the creature — if indeed it could be called that, for it also was a clockwork monster, albeit benign and most useful as it proved shortly. The spell revealed that it could take all members, alive and dead, upon its back, and carry them at many leagues an hour away from all pursuit, although the damage caused to the device by the well-aimed *fireball* prevented it from flying in the air like a normal magic carpet. The group boarded, the machine lifted itself a few hands off the ground, and then it rapidly gained speed and carried them across the black waters of the marsh to a place of relative safety on the opposite side.



Hidden amidst the tall grass, the adventurers rested and recuperated for two days. Nivell's constitution could not stand the shock of being raised, but Scrag Flatchet was made of harder stock. Wounds were also cured by the ministrations of the cleric. The party was beginning to feel confident by the third night when they were attacked by surprise. Three more of the face creatures, this time armed with triangular metal shields and swords of incredible sharpness, leaped from hiding in the tall grass and fell upon the unsuspecting members of the group. A frenzied melee ensued in which the assassin was run through and slain again, and one of the now trusted gnolls died too. All of the monstrous opponents were dispatched, and like their better-armed fellows, they immediately turned into quaking mounds of noisome red jelly. But the adventurers welcomed the addition of their shields and swords, and the next day a *raise dead* casting managed to revive poor Scrag once again. There was general agreement that still more leagues must be put between the party and the relentless foes without faces if they were to survive to escape this world and return to the safety of the devils they knew . . .

At last the *geas* was lifted from the warlock, and Neb related what had come to him in a dream. They were in a vessel of unbelievable size. A vessel which

was floating in **nothing**. Could that be possible? All had grave doubts, especially when the magic-user went on to relate that the spell had also informed him there was no magic on the vessel — other than that they possessed. This was scoffed at, for all had magic wand pistols and had seen the various enchanted monsters, and there was their own metal carpet. How could they escape the place and return to their own place? Only by leaving the vessel and enter nothing? Still more doubtful, but this at least gave some small hope. Lastly it was related that somewhere in the vast ship of metal there were humans. The party was encouraged, for if they could find men they would surely aid their fellows — even at a price. They had a small store of gold pieces, some choice gems, and a few pieces of rich jewelry with which to bribe the hesitant. Should only a bit of the information learned prove useful, let it be the bit on how to escape, and then allow them to find other men.

Exploring to the westwards, the party eventually came to another metal wall, and the bounds of the "world" were known. Time had been taken from adventuring to rest and hunt, otherwise they could

have traveled on their flying carpet from one side of the place to the other in less than a day. When the small size of the place was commented on, Rentar mentioned that his vision had shown that there were layers of land within the vessel, many layers like the one they were on. They would have to find a way to get to these other plateaus in all likelihood, for on one would be a doorway to the outside. By means of another *tongues* spell Thurible of Roaky put questions to the metal circle, but it was stupid and could answer very little. Finally it did relate something useful to the group. It was running out of energy and needed to be fed. When the cleric asked if it ate meat or vegetation, the automaton related that it needed to be fed a special substance which was available at a place nearby. Assured that survival was next to impossible without the benefits of the machine, it was agreed that the food for the flying metal carpet must be found before anything else was attempted.

The disc traveled quickly to another of the tremendous-sized houses built into the wall of the vessel. Before the vast doors of this metal box rested two strange idols of metal — or were they statues? golems? Too late! One being came to animated mo-

cont. on pg. 27

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D&D Variant

A WIZARD WITH A DIFFERENCE

by James M. Ward

ED. Note: The following is recommended as a source of bedevilment to be used by DM on their NPC's. Some of the possibilities here will drive the average group of PC's wild when trying to deal with running NPC's.

The magic user class in *D&D* has been tested by time and found tried and true for many of the players that love to become them (myself included). The nine spell levels and the ability to use magical items all make the magic user a very fine character to be. What I want to suggest is an alternate system in which magic users select areas to work and study in, instead of being the normal *D&D* type magic user.

The player character can be one of the following types: "Wizard of Aggression", "Wizard of Defense", "Wizard of All Things Rustic", "Wizard of Control", "Wizard of Tenaciousness", "Wizard of Detection", "Wizard of Fire", or a "Wizard of Movement".

Any of these wizards raises in levels of experience in the same manner as the *D&D* wizard. These new wizards pick spells from any spell level on their lists at the rate of two spells per experience level. The "area" magic user has a given percent chance of working any spell from his list, with that chance increasing by 5% for every level over the first that the magic user attains. Naturally the better the spell the less chance a first level "area" magic user has of performing it. The making of these "area" wizards created some new spells and some of the old ones became modified, but essentially the system is the same, in that a magic user still throws his or her spells and hopes for the best. When using these magic users since they study nothing else but their areas they are faster in their use of spells over the normal *D&D* magic user. The following is an example of their use in a game: a wizard of fire casts a "heat ray" spell at a creature. The wizard is of the fifth level and therefore has a + 20% chance of using the spell and the spell is a sixth level one so there is a 30% chance of it working. The magic user rolls the percentile dice needing a 1-50% for it to work and he rolls a 51%) the spell does not work and he no longer has a "heat ray" spell memorized, (unless he took more than one).

While some players might think that these wizards are too restricted for play, some judges might think that wizards of this type are perfect for nonplayer characters (and they would be right!). Imagine the surprise of a "mighty" fighter when he slashes a wizard of defense and the wound heals instantly because the wizard has the spell of "no punctures" on himself. The same goes for the master thief that has just made a daring robbery in the castle of a rich low level wizard of detection and goes to safety in the local robbers den only to find the magic user and four hefty fighters appearing beside him when the wizard uses a "transport to the spot" spell. The possibilities for these magic users are endless and it gives players a different sort of magic user to be.

In the following pages * signifies that the spell has been changed in a manner that logically fits the area of the magic user. Two ** signifies that the spell is new.

CHANCE OF MAKING ANY SPELL PER LEVEL

First Level:	100%
Second Level:	85%
Third Level:	75%
Fourth Level:	50%
Fifth Level:	40%
Sixth Level:	30%
Seventh Level:	20%
Eighth Level:	10%

WIZARD OF AGGRESSION

Spells

First Level	Charm Person Sleep Magic Missile*
Second Level	Phantasmal Force Web

Third Level	Hold Person* Fire Ball Lightning Bolt Slow Spell
Fourth Level	Polymorph Others Confusion Charm Monster Fear Magic Spear**
Fifth Level	Death Spell Disintegrate
Sixth Level	Delayed Blast Fire Ball Power Word Stun
Seventh Level	Power Word Blind Symbol Dancing Magic Sword**
Eighth Level	Power Word Kill Meteor Swarm Melt**

WIZARD OF DEFENSE

SPELLS

First Level	Shield* Protection from Evil*
Second Level	Invisibility Darkness Mirror Image
Third Level	Dispell Magic Protection from Evil 10' Radius* Invisibility 10' Radius Infravision Haste Protection from Normal Missiles Rope Trick
Fourth Level	Remove Curse Dimension Door
Fifth Level	Teleport Pass-wall Protection from Swords**
Sixth Level	Projected Image Anti-Magic Shell Protection from Edged Weapons**
Seventh Level	Phase Door Mass Invisibility Repulsion Field**
Eighth Level	Mind Blank Prismatic Wall Maze Etherialness** No Punctures** Protection from All Weapons**

WIZARD OF TENACIOUSNESS

SPELLS

First Level	Hold Portal*
Second Level	Wizard Lock* Knock*
Third Level	Hold Person Hold Swords** Hold Crossbows**
Fourth Level	Extention I Hold Staffs** Hold a Cube of Force** Hold Rings**

	Hold Wands**
	Hold Monster**
Fifth Level	Telekenisis
	Transmute Rock to Mud
	Extension II
	Stop Magic**
	Hold Groups**
Sixth Level	Repulsion
	Extension III
	Hold Openings**
Seventh Level	Reverse Gravity
	Permanent Spell
Eighth Level	Time Stop
	Wizard Lock Openings**
	End Arcane Walls**

WIZARD OF DETECTION**SPELLS**

First Level	Detect Magic
	Read Magic
	Read Languages
Second Level	Detect Invisible
	Locate Object
	Detect Evil
	ESP
Third Level	Clairvoyance
	Clairaudience
	Find Traps*
	Infravision
Fourth Level	Wizard Eye
	Contact Higher Plane
	Find Secret Doors*
Fifth Level	Legend Lore
	End Surprise**
Sixth Level	Find the Path*
	Reveal the Way**
Seventh Level	Divine Any Object**
Eighth Level	Transport to the Spot**

WIZARD OF FIRE**SPELLS**

First Level	Fire Ball*
	Phantasmal Force
	Fire Illusions*
Second Level	Pyrotechnics
	Explosive Runes
Third Level	Wall of Fire*
	Fire Negation**
Fourth Level	Delayed Blast Fire Ball
	Control of Fire**
Fifth Level	Conjure Fire Elemental*
	Body of Fire**
Sixth Level	Fire Resistance*
	Heat Ray**
Seventh Level	Fire Immunity**
	Melt**
Eighth Level	Combustion of All Things**
	Fire Vision**

WIZARD OF MOVEMENT**SPELLS**

First Level	Levitate
	Knock
	Fly
Second Level	Slow
	Haste
	Water Breathing
	Polymorph Self
Third Level	Water Travel**
	Dimension Door

	Negate the Ability to Fly**
	Negate the Ability to Move on or in the Water**
	Negate the Ability to Run from a Fight**
Fourth Level	Teleport
	Pall-wall
Sixth Level	Lower Water
	Part Water
	Move Earth
	Phase Door
Seventh Level	Reverse Gravity
	Time Stop
	Mass Teleport **
Eighth Level	Etherialness*
	End All Barriers**
	Safe Teleport*

WIZARD OF ALL THINGS RUSTIC**SPELLS**

First Level	Light*
	Strength
	Continual Light
Second Level	Wall of Ice
	Growth/Plant
	Massmorph
	Hallucinatory Terrain
Third Level	Communicate with Mammals**
	Communicate with Plants**
	Communicate with Reptiles**
	Communicate with Insects**
	Communicate with Avians**
	Communicate with Monsters**
	Ice Storm
	Command as the Staff**
Fourth Level	Charm Insect**
	Charm Snake*
	Charm Mammal**
	Insect Plague
	Growth/Animal
Fifth Level	Conjure Earth Elemental*
	Transmute Rock to Mud
	Wall of Stone
	Wall of Iron
	Animate Dead
	Summon Felines**
	Summon Canines**
	Summon Avians**
Sixth Level	Lower Water
	Part Water
	Reincarnation
	Move Earth
	Control Weather
Seventh Level	Limited Wish
	Charm Plant
	Reverse Gravity
Eighth Level	Clone
	Shapechange
	Wish

WIZARD OF CONTROL**SPELLS**

First Level	Charm Person
	Sleep*
	Ventriloquism
Second Level	Levitate
	ESP
	Magic Mouth
Third Level	Fly
	Infravision
	Water Breathing

Suggestion
Monster Summoning I

Fourth Level Polymorph Self
Charm Monster
Monster Summoning II

Fifth Level Conjure Elemental
Animate Dead
Magic Jar
Monster Summoning III

Sixth Level Stone to Flesh
Invisible Stalker
Geas
Control Weather
Monster Summoning IV

Seventh Level Simulacrum
Monster Summoning V
Control as the Staff**
Mass Charm
Polymorph Any Object

Eighth Level Gate
Monster Summoning VI
Astral Spell
Charm Golems**

EXPLANATION OF THE SPELLS FOR THE WIZARD OF AGGRESSION:

Magic Missile: This spell has one more arrow per level of the magic user over the old spell.

Hold Person: This spell has the power to affect 1-6 persons instead of 1-4.

Magic Spear: This spell creates three plus one spears that move as do the magic missiles per every four levels of the magic user casting them.

Dancing Magic Sword: This spell creates a plus 1 sword that will fight as a hero for four melee turns at the command of the magic user.

Melt: This spell acts on all metal of any person it is used on so that the metal turns red hot in one melee turn and melts the metal on the next melee turn (magic saving throw applicable). The spell affects masses of metal no greater than a set of plate mail.

EXPLANATION OF THE SPELLS FOR THE WIZARD OF DEFENCE:

Shield: This spell gives the magic user an armor class of 2 for five melee turns plus the level of the magic user.

Protection from Evil: This spell has the affect of forcing any chaotic being to take a minus one in all attempts to hit the magic user with the spell on him. Spell lasts for 6 melee turns.

Protection from Evil 10' Radius: This spell does the same as the above affecting a circle area around the magic user.

Protection from Swords: This spell forces any being attacking the magic user using this spell to make their magic saving throw to hit the magic user with a sword. The spell lasts four melee turns plus the level of the magic user.

Protection from Edged Weapons: As the sword spell, this spell applies to all edged weapons for the same amount of time.

Repulsion Field: This spell creates a force field around the magic user that stops anything from touching him made of physical matter. The spell lasts for two melee turns plus the level of the magic user.

Etherialness: This spell works as the potion for three melee turns plus the level of the magic user.

No Punctures: This spell stops the magic user from being affected by any attack that breaks his or her skin. All such attacks will heal themselves *instantly* and not be felt. The spell lasts for three melee turns.

Protection from All Weapons: As the sword spell with this spell applying to all weapons.

EXPLANATION OF THE SPELLS FOR THE WIZARD OF ALL THINGS RUSTIC:

Light: This spell gives the light of full day.

Communicate with Mammals: This spell allows the magic user to speak with any mammal for ten melee turns.

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Communicate with Plants: This spell allows the magic user to speak with plants for ten melee turns.

Communicate with Reptiles: Same as the Mammal spell with Reptiles.

Communicate with Insects: Same as the Mammal spell with Insects.

Communicate with Avians: Same as the Mammal spell with Avians.

Communicate with Monsters: Same as the Mammal spell with Monsters.

Command as the Staff: This spell allows the magic user to command like a staff of commanding once.

Charm Insect: A charm spell that works on any type (or size) insect.

Charm Snake: A spell like the charm insect spell for snakes.

Charm Mammal: A spell like the charm insect spell for mammals.

Insect Plague: As the cleric spell.

Conjure Earth Elemental: This spell will summon a 20 die earth elemental in the first melee turn, that has the power to think for itself and will not attack the magic user if he or she loses concentration. The earth elemental will simply vanish.

Summon Felines: Similar to the monster summoning spell, this allows the magic user to summon any type of cat that he or she has seen. These cats will do whatever the magic user dictates, but vanish after one full turn or death.

Summon Canines: As the feline spell for any type of dog.

Summon Avians: As the feline spell for any type of bird except the magical Roc.

EXPLANATION OF THE SPELLS FOR THE WIZARD OF CONTROL:

Sleep: As the normal spell with the addition that it affects two beings with five dice and one being with six dice.

Control as the Staff: This spell allows the magic user to command like a staff of commanding once.

Charm Golems: This spell cuts through the magic protection of any given golem (giving it the saving throw of a 14th level wizard) and allows the magic user to try and control it.

EXPLANATION OF THE SPELLS FOR THE WIZARD OF TENACIOUSNESS:

Hold Portal: This spell will work like a wizard lock for this magic user.

Wizard Lock: This spell becomes stronger in that only 2 dispell magics will break its power, the normal knock spell will work.

Knock: This spell will open any locked, fastened, or blocked thing (defined as a passage filled with rubble, etc.)

Hold Swords: This spell will hold any sword in its scabbard that hasn't been drawn at the casting of the spell in a 60 yard radius. The spell lasts for 2-20 melee turns.

Hold Crossbows: This spell will not allow any crossbow to fire its shaft in a 60 yard radius of the magic user as long as he or she concentrates on the spell. The spell lasts for 2-20 melee turns.

Hold Staff: This spell will contain the magic of any given staff within itself for 3-30 melee turns.

Hold Cube of Force: This spell will not allow a cube of force to function for 2-20 melee turns.

Hold Rings: This spell will not let a ring function in its normal magical manner for 3-30 melee turns.

Hold Wands: This spell will stop a wand from working for 2-20 melee turns.

Hold Monster: This spell stops a monster from using any special power for 1-10 melee turns if the monster does not make its magic saving throw, (it affects things like troll regeneration, dragon breath, etc.)

Stop Magic: This spell stops any enemy from using any magic of any type in a 30 yard radius of the caster if they do not make their magic saving throw. The spell lasts for 6 melee turns.

Hold Groups: This spell will hold any enemy group of less than 12 beings even if creatures and humans are intermixed when each being does not make their magic saving throw.

Hold Openings: This spell creates a field of force that stops beings from going through any given area less than 40 feet tall by 30 feet

wide. It will last for 24 hours and takes damage like a human having the same number of hit points as the caster. Once the spell is up the magic user may leave the area and not concentrate on it.

Wizard Lock Openings: This spell covers the same area as the above spell but lasts for only one hour. It takes a dispell magic to destroy it and *nothing* can get through it or hurt it but the mentioned spell.

End Arcane Walls: This spell dissolves all (walls of stone, walls of fire, walls of ice, etc.) that have been created by magical means.

EXPLANATION OF THE SPELLS FOR THE WIZARD OF DETECTION:

Find Traps: This spell is as the wand of the same name and lasts for 1-4 melee turns plus the level of the magic user.

Find Secret Doors: As the above trap spell, for secret doors.

End Surprise: This spell will warn the magic user of attack or other types of surprise for 1-6 melee turns plus the level of the magic user.

Find the Path: As the cleric spell.

Reveal the Way: When chasing a creature that the magic user has encountered or chasing something that has been carried away the actual footsteps (or claw steps) of the being running will glow in front of the magic user, if the thing flew away the flight path will glow. The spell lasts for 24 hours.

Divine Any Object: This is the process of using a willow wand to actually feel the way to a certain *known* object or being and there is no range limitation. The spell lasts for 24 hours.

Transport to the Spot: This spell transports the magic user and 1 - 6 other beings of the magic users choice (that are within 20 feet of him) to the area mentally projected by the magic user *safely*. The magic user must know exactly what thing he or she is transporting near by having studied it for over 6 hours.

EXPLANATION OF THE SPELLS FOR THE WIZARD OF FIRE:

Fire Balls: This spell for a fire wizard adds a plus 1 point to every die of the fire ball and the fire wizard is never affected by his own fire ball, (his or her equipment is however).

Phantasmal Force Fire Illusions: The fire wizard can only make illusions dealing with fire.

Wall of Fire: This is a 10 die wall of fire that will stay up for 1-4 melee turns after the wizard stops thinking about it if the wizard so desires.

Fire Negation: This spell creates an area around the magic user that will destroy any fire that the magic user comes in contact with. The spell lasts for 2-20 melee turns.

Control of Fire: This spell allows the fire wizard to directed fire types spells thrown at him or her back at the thrower if the fire wizard makes his or her saving throw against magic. The spell lasts for 2-20 melee turns.

Conjure Fire Elemental: This spell will summon a 20 die fire elemental in the first melee turn, that has the power to think for itself and will not attack the magic user if he or she loses concentration. The elemental in that case will vanish.

Body of Fire: This spell allows the magic user to turn his or her body into a raging inferno of flame for the number of dice (or hit points) that the magic user has. The spell lasts for 2-20 melee turns.

Fire Resistance: This spell allows the caster to be immune to all fire damage for 1-10 melee turns.

Heat Ray: This spell causes 10 dice of heat damage in 1 melee turn to any creature, (even a fire type creature).

Fire immunity: This spell makes all beings in a 10 yard radius about the magic user, immune to the effects of fire, for 1-10 melee turns.

Melt: This spell acts on all metal of any person it is used on so that the metal turns red hot in one melee turn and melts the metal on the next melee turn (magic saving throw applicable). The spell affects masses of metal no greater than a set of plate mail.

Combustion of All Things: This spell will *cause* the burning of anything for 1-6 melee turns doing 5 dice of damage every turn.

Fire Vision: This spell allows the magic user to see into any area with a lit fire for 5-50 melee turns.

cont. overleaf

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EXPLANATION OF THE SPELLS FOR THE WIZARD OF MOVEMENT:

Water Travel: This spell allows the user or the being the magic user casts it on to walk on water for up to 5 full turns.

Negate the Ability to Fly: This spell paralyzes the muscles that allow any given being to fly, for 1-5 melee turns.

Negate the Ability to Move on or in the Water: This spell paralyzes the muscles that allow creatures to breathe underwater or swim in it for 1-6 melee turns.

Negate the Ability to Run from a Fight: This spell will force the legs of any running being not making their magic saving throw to run towards the very creature they sought to flee.

Mass Teleport: This spell will transport a maximum of 20 beings plus the caster to the area the magic user mentally envisions. It acts in all other respects as a teleport spell.

Etherealness: This spell works as the potion for three melee turns plus the level of the magic user.

End All Barriers: This spell makes any single barrier to the progress of a wizard of movement vanish for 1-10 melee turns.

End All Barriers: This spell is a giant disintegrate spell that unblocks anything stopping the progress of a wizard of movement.

Safe Teleport: This spell is as the normal teleport spell except that the magic user will not come in high or low on his or her target.

D&D Variant**Sights and Sounds in Dungeons & Dragons**

by Robert Dushay & Michael Weisberg

Dungeons & Dragons is deprived of much of its atmosphere of mystery and frightfulness when it loses its element of surprise. Experienced player/dungeon masters know all the monsters, and nothing comes as a surprise to them, excluding the inventiveness of the presiding dungeon master.

Moreover, what's a good dungeon without thick cobwebs and odd stains, not to mention the screams wafted randomly on the wind? What does silence mean if there is no noise to contrast it? Non-surprising monsters could make themselves known by noises, ie, drum beats, cheers, curses, shouts, and the tramp of many feet could announce the arrival of a band of Orcs. Furthermore, some noises could be heard that have no bearing on play. Try these tables on some unsuspecting players and watch them get very cautious!

Every 30 minutes, there is a 25% chance of hearing a random noise. Such noises will either cease if investigated, or lead investigators away, possibly to a trap. These noises will seldom lead into a position where their prospective cause could be seen.

Die roll	Result
1	Moans or groans
2	Screams or shrieks
3	Rattle of armor
4	Insane laughter
5	Footsteps
6	Sounds of battle
7	Scratching or scraping
8	Mumbling
9	Sobbing
10	Wind
11	Creaking
12	Drums
13	Whispers in an unknown language
14	Muffled explosions
15	Thuds
16	Roars
17	Rumbling
18	Slamming doors
19	Squelching or other sounds of non-human passage
20	Heavy breathing
21	Rattling dice/ dungeon master's screams of anguish/ garbage disposals/ etc.

These sounds are also good for "noise rooms". Note that these noises could be distorted, or sound more distant due to the acoustical qualities of dungeons.

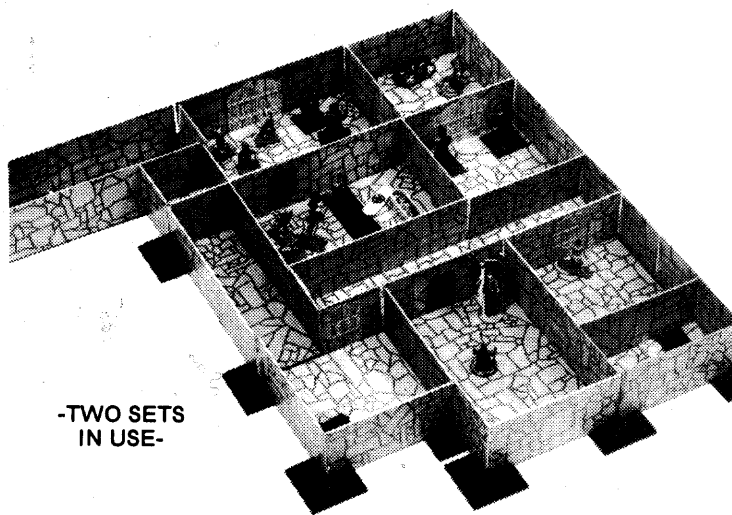
For the same chance, a few visual goodies are also frustrating. Note that these apparitions are real to all senses, including touch, but they vanish immediately after the party has left.

Die roll	Result
1	Blasted or melted stone
2	Cracks in walls, floor or ceiling
3	Moss
4	Dark mist
5	Light mist
6	Thick cobwebs

7	Bloodstains or pools
8	Damp patches
9	Bulging walls
10	Luminescent areas
11	Shadows that are wrong (ie: An iron spike having the shadow of an Ogre)
12	Footprints, or a trail
13	Pitted or corroded spots
14	Trail of blood
15	Rusted, useless armor or weapons*
16	Exceptionally thick dust
17	Slime (Not Green Slime!)
18	Scorched sections
19	Chipped spots
20	Corpses shackled to the wall

**If these are picked up, or touched, they will immediately flake away to piles of rust.*

These apparitions are great for misleading players, ie; when they use them as landmarks, and return to find them gone.

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Variant Monster Dept.:

It's a dwarf!
It's a gnome!
**OHMIGOD! It's a
Magic Munchkin**

by Michael Kolakowski

Munchkins (*chuckle*). Big deal, they're the cute little fellers in the *Wizard of Oz*, right? Well, my munchkins are somewhat different. My munchkins are chaotic in the full and true sense of the word; it's almost impossible for anyone (*except the DM*) to figure out what they'll do next. The one thing you can always count on a munchkin to do is stay and bring more munchkins. Munchkins are permanent pests; they are immune to most magic, and are regenerative. So when you see a munchkin, assume it'll be with you for a long time.

Munchkins live in a matriarchal society, in clans ranging from 3-12 in number, with one Munchkin Mother per clan. The mother is about four feet in height, with the offspring ranging from three to four feet tall. There is rarely a male parent to be found (5% chance), as the male leaves not long after mating. The offspring are predominately male (75% chance each), but males often die upon reaching adulthood, so there are actually more female adults than males.

As said before, munchkins are permanent pests. They prefer to sleep in the rubbish pile, so it is advised that this be made as far from the camp as possible. The munchkins enjoy sorting the garbage, and playing with it. Don't try sneaking away, however, as they have remarkable hearing and smelling abilities. There is a 5% chance per week (cumulative) that they will leave if ignored, out of boredom. Don't count on it, though, as bored munchkins can be quite troublesome. Bored munchkins have set fire to thieves, and jumped on fighters shoulders and banged on their helms.

Some munchkins are different than the others, however. These dreaded *Magic Munchkins* (10% chance of 1 per 25) are exactly like their normal (?) cousins, except that they can use one magic spell per day (up to and including 9th level, as an eighteenth level Wizard). The Munchkin Mother can do three spells per day.

Munchkins tend to be rather stupid, as well as moderately weak (but persistent). They can't be fought in any ordinary fashion, nor do they fight. It is possible to escape normal munchkins by flying or teleporting, but this will not work against the magic variety. The only way to kill a munchkin is with a special weapon such as a Sword of Munchkin Slaying (automatically kills upon scoring a hit). Some magic items can detect approaching munchkins. Even the most ancient of magic items sometimes can; they've been around for quite some time.

Note! Munchkins should not be employed in normal dungeon expeditions; they should be used when all the characters are high-level types who are easily bored, or with hot-shots who think they know it all.

THE SCHOLAR

by Patricia LaPointe

NUMBER APPEARING: 1-4; in special case of symposium, 10-20

ARMOR CLASS: 9

HIT DICE: 1-3 (6-sided)

LAIR: 30%

TREASURE: 5 copper pieces (Scholars are notoriously poor)

Scholars are short bearded men wearing frayed robes of tweed with leather patches at the elbow. They usually smoke foul smelling pipes whose smoke can be generated in sufficient volume to produce Invisibility. Three levels of Scholars are known to exist: Instructors, Associate Professors and Fool Professors.

Two spells, Confusion and Read Obscure Languages, are known by Instructors. Confusion is produced by attempting to answer a simple question. The answer, of course, is in an obscure language. The Second

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Level Associate Professors have three more spells at their command, Fear, Time Stop and Book Missiles. The Fear spell takes effect after mutterings about term papers soon due. Time Stop is well known to all clock-watchers, and Book Missiles inflict 1-8 points of damage.

Fool Professors have three ultimate and powerful spells, the first of which is Power Word — Stun; its incantation is "Surprise Quiz Today." Academic Dust does 3-18 points of damage and can paralyze the mind for 2-4 turns. Cause Boredom, the final spell, speedily induces gentle and peaceful sleep and the clock finally begins to move.

There is one powerful spell which causes Scholars to be seized with immediate cardiac arrest, no saving throw. The incantation is brief: "Tenure denied."

THE CRS'TCHEN

by Dennis Chapman

Author's Introduction

My friends and I are incurable Empire of the Petal Throne players, and we play with such detail, that after more than three years of play, none of us is yet over third level. But we have the best time, and have all invested more than our pockets can afford in the game.

Anyway, even though we have played for this long, we have yet to meet all the creatures that Prof. Barker schemed up, and I would still like to submit this new creature for possible publication, hoping that other game moderators will see the humor in it and possibly incorporate it into their own adventures:

CRS'TCHEN

NA: 1-12 HD: 1/2
AC: 12 T: nil
M: 15 L: 80/1-100

T in L: G:30

These fearsome creatures of unclear origin are never seen without their assumed human form, but are always smiling and well-dressed. They are *never* without their Book of Eternal Existence (cf: below) and may attempt to read from it in an offensive action. Their alignment is not known to the victim until they speak to him, and if the opposite of the player's alignment, then there is a 33% chance of it being changed without the player's knowledge! The Crs'tchén assails its victim with words of a strange and mystic power. Only the very strong or religious are immune to its effects! During a discourse such as this, the creature transfixes his victim and a period of inactivity results (30%:3 turns; 30%:4 turns; 30%:5 turns; 5%: half day; 5%: full day). Levels III and higher are permitted a saving throw, and Magic Users are allowed to use control of self.

It will try to beg money and services (20% has taken 100-600K.; 10% has your services for 1-12 days). This creature is so feared because it attacks relentlessly, and from so many angles! It never rests, and will hound its victim until killed or lost. The dead body must be burned within three turns, or it will regenerate and seek out the player ceaselessly. A victim once caught may be saved by Divine Intervention or Eyes No. 1, 16, 19. However, if you are unfortunate enough to be taken to one of their lairs, the forces there are too powerful, and you are lost!

The Book of Eternal Existence:

is a heavy and widely-distributed book of the dreaded Crs'tchén, setting forth the purpose and cause of their existence, and the guidelines of their lives. It is usually covered in leather (its armour class is higher than that of its owner!) and stamped with cryptic crossed or bird-like designs. It makes very dry reading for all but the most devoted, and unfortunately, has the ability to sense whatever language the character knows, and it becomes "translated" to that language!

Additional notes on the Crs'tchén:

There are rumours of a Crs'tchén origin centered around the speakings of an obscure plebian who put on shows of common magic in distant, localized areas, and claimed to be the son of Hnálla. Their numbers are growing, however, as more and more appear to be leaving their native area to prey on the simple minds of the villagers in outlying provinces of the Empire.

THE MONK AND BARD IN 'DUNGEON!'

by Jon Pickens

Here are two new pieces for that great game, 'Dungeon!'. The Monk competes well with the Hero, Elf, Dwarf, and Hobbit, while the Bard takes on the Wizard, Superhero, Cleric, and Thief. The new pieces will allow players to experiment with a grand total of ten different strategies.

THE MONK. Representing the far eastern martial arts expert, the Monk moves six spaces per turn. He fights as an Elf, getting two strikes in combat (only one if using a magic sword). If his first blow kills (or has any effect on an ambusher), the Monk gets a bonus move of one square, which may not be used to initiate another attack. A Monk treats Serious Wounds as "drop one prize, retreat one square, lose one turn". He cannot otherwise be wounded or lose turns, but he does lose prizes and can be killed. The Monk ignores all traps except those that transport him to a chamber one level lower. The Monk may not ambush other pieces. He may not pick up Magic Armor or any prize worth more than 3000GP. The Monk needs 10,000 GP to win.

THE BARD. The Bard moves five spaces per turn. He attacks and defends as a Hero. The Bard is unaffected by "Hold" and is only affected by Fireballs and Lightning Bolts on a roll of 8 or better. In addition, he gets any combination of the following cards up to a total of four. *Entrancement Song* is played instead of attacking. The opponent's return is automatically "No Effect", but the Bard cannot pick up treasure. *Combat Song* allows the Bard to fight as a Superhero when played. Unlike the other pieces using cards, the Bard need not return to the Main Staircase to replace his. He replaces them at the rate of one per each turn he is stationary and initiating no other action. The Bard may lose his songs in the Anti-Magic Trap. He needs 20,000 GP to win.

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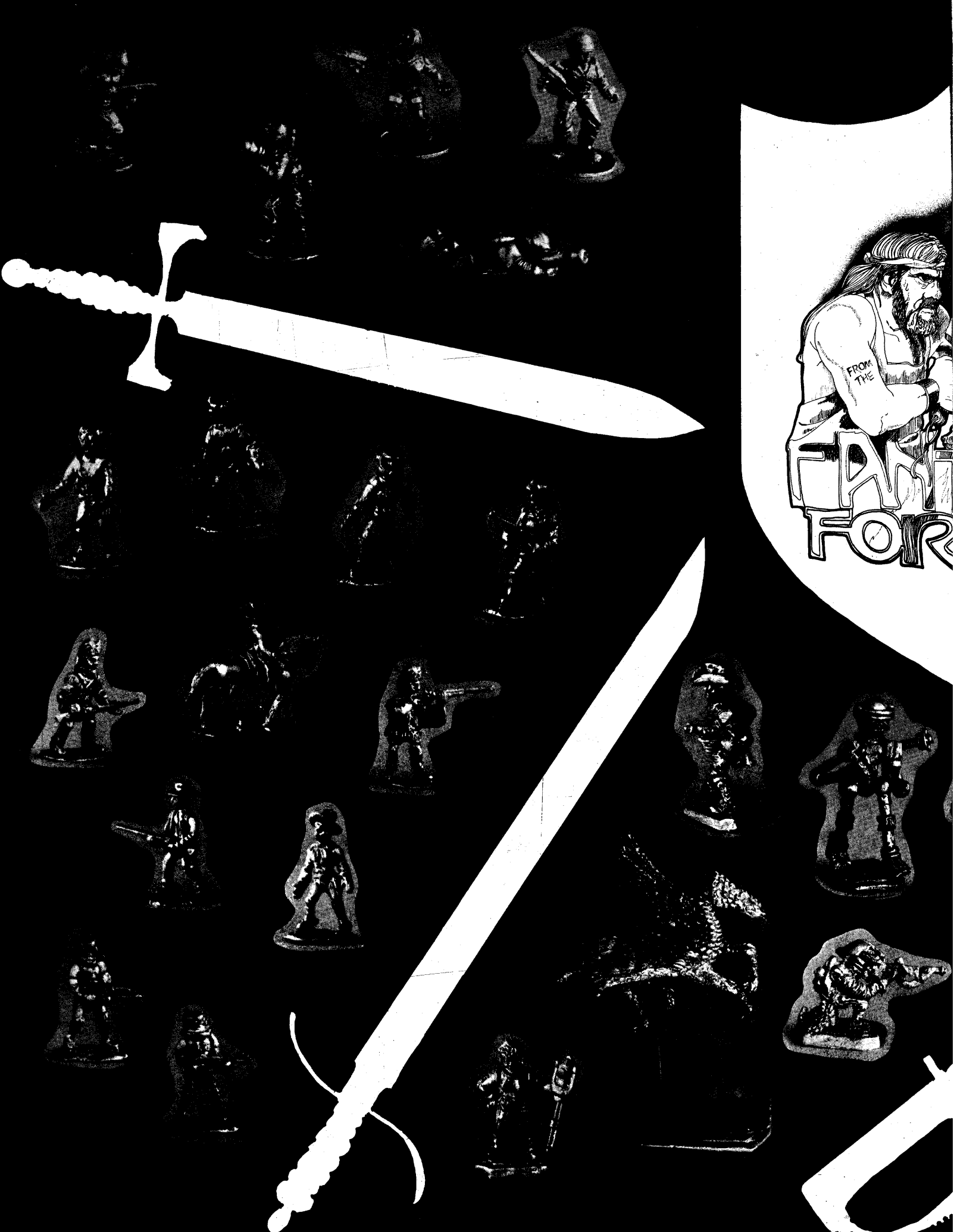
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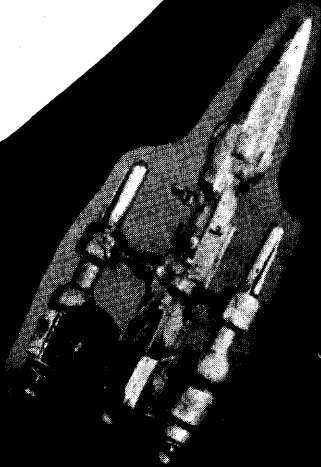
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Or

by Gary Jordan

The tesseract is a mathematical abstraction whose math escapes my high school algebra but whose properties are known and easily applied and adaptable to D&D. Look at figure 1. Bear in mind that each

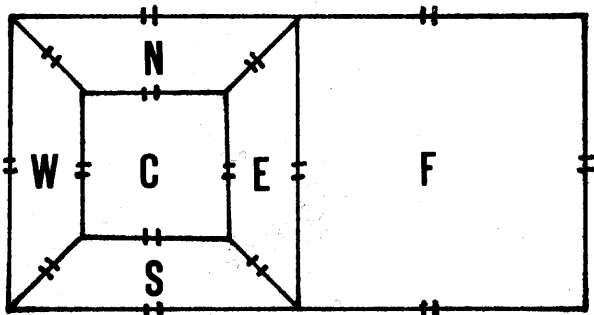


FIG. 1

Never mind. For the purposes of the DM, all he need do is make some such notation as exhibited in figure 2 and keep a separate map

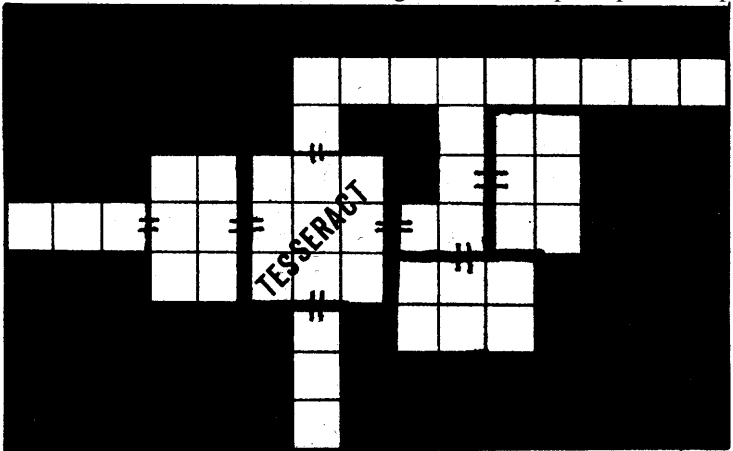


FIG. 2

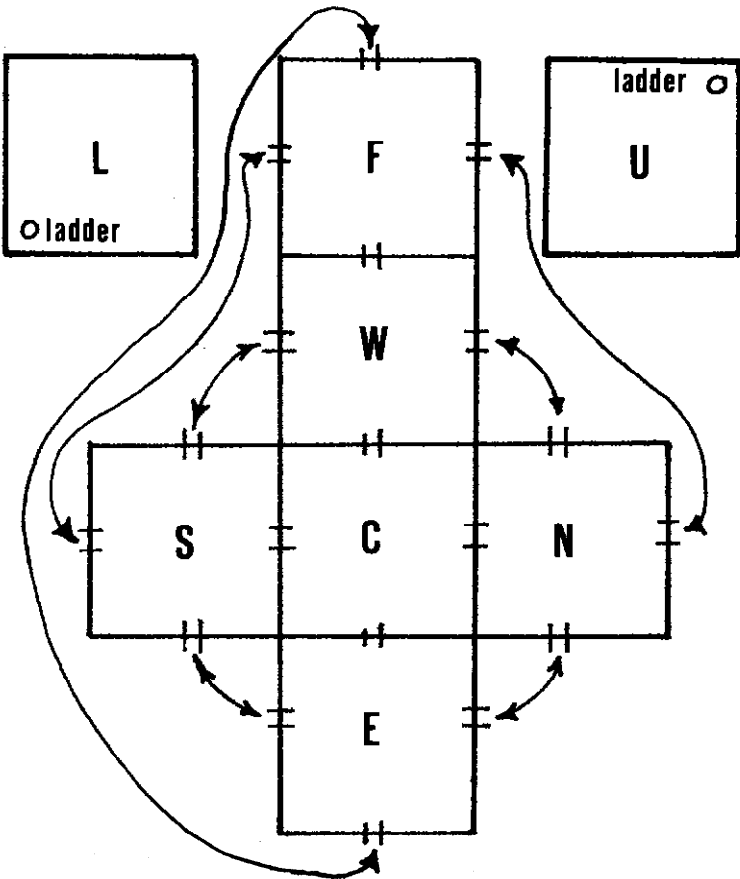
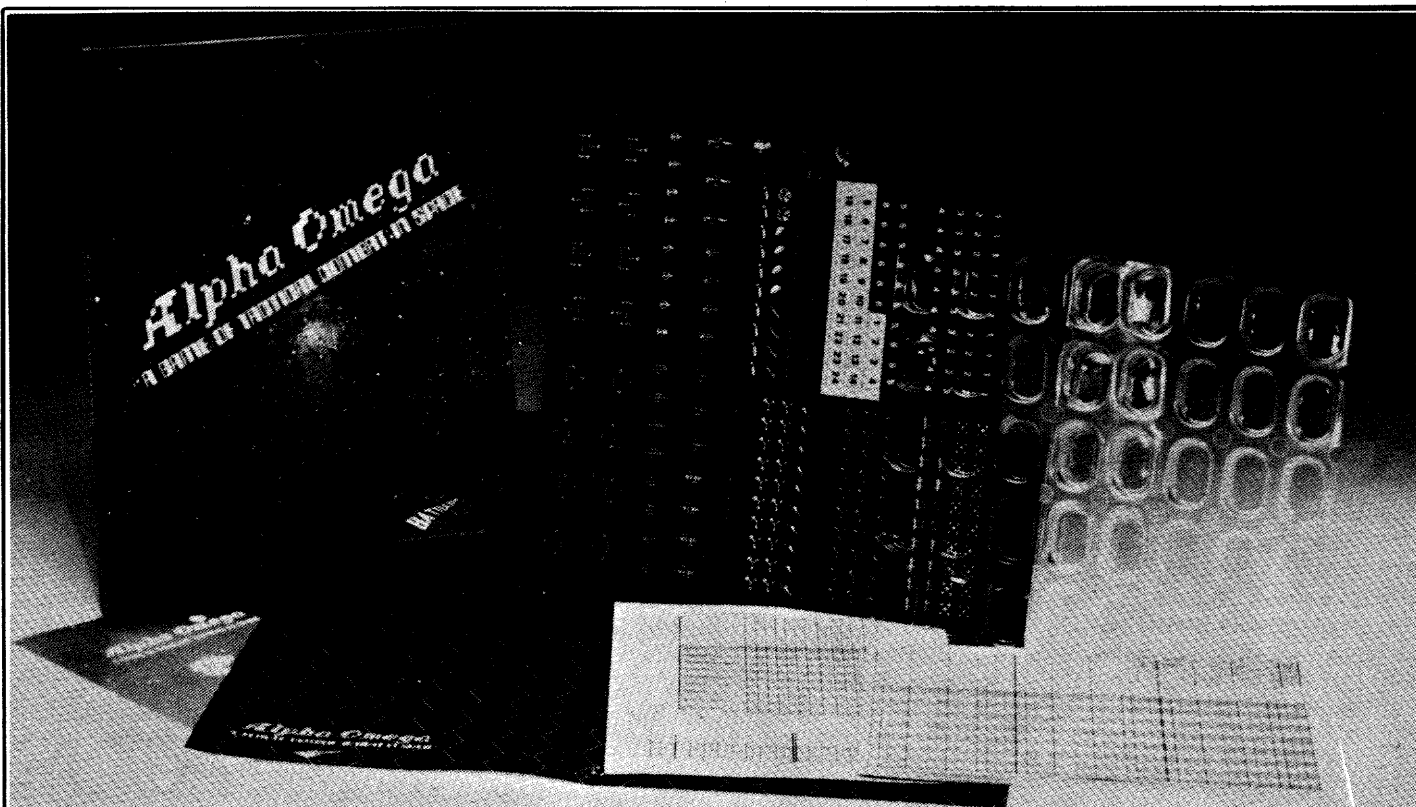


FIG. 3

Unless you're the type of DM who delights in having people fall on their heads, it is highly recommended that you not bother to design in an access between L or U and F . (Nor between L or U and any other



START TRANSMISSION.....BEGIN MESSAGE.....TO: CEG.....FROM EXPEDITION APLHA.....
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 END MESSAGE....END TRANSMISSION...

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OGRE PIECE BY PIECE

by Jerry Epperson

OGRE is one of those games that get their hook in you the minute you play them. Some of the reasons why this happens are: 1 — the game can be learned in less than an hour; 2 — it doesn't take a long time to play a single game; 3 — it doesn't take-up a lot of space (you can set the game up in a 1 x 1 foot area). But hidden in the game are small subtleties that can only be found after playing OGRE several times.

The combat results table is extra bloody; a 2-1 will give a 50% chance of destroying the weapon or unit attacked. There is a variability in the forces involved in each scenario so that it is possible to never get the same set-up again. The map is easy to maneuver in. And then there are the counters.

OGRE counters are fantastic. Each unit has a different type of use. Some have silhouettes and the type of unit it is printed on it; others have symbols and their type on it. The four different numbers printed on the pieces correspond to that unit's ability to fight, move, defend, and it's range. And in those numbers are that unit's weaknesses and strengths.

After playing the game many times these things become apparent and they seem to form natural links to each other. Some units are found that work well together and others are loners. But each type of unit has a different psychological effect on the players which further complicates the tactics that should be used.

The object of this article is to help you as wargamers to get the most out of your OGRE pieces. And to help your opponent go crazy. One more thing before I go into detail about the OGRE units; Steve Jackson, thank you for such an enjoyable game.

THE OGRES

The Ogres are the biggest units mostly because they are computerized and can handle all of the weapons given to it all at once. If the Ogre were controlled by humans inside of it, the Ogre would be nothing more than a big tank. If you don't believe me do what I did; The Ogre can only fire *one* weapon at a time. It just isn't the same game.



Mark 5:



Mark 3

Strong Points: Movement; a non-motile Ogre is no threat to anything out of its range.

Weakness: Weapons are easily destroyed. The defense strengths are low enough that the smaller units can eliminate something from the Ogre before being destroyed.

Uses: The major objective in the game, for the Ogre, is to destroy the command post. In a perverse way they are also used to protect the command post.

Threat: Total destruction. Expect to see plenty of units being destroyed before it reaches the command post, if it does at all.

Prey: Everybody.

Range: 0-5 hexes. The Ogre is known for it's hard hull when it rams another unit. Ask any infantry unit how hard it hits.

Result after combat: A kill half the time; all the time with infantry if enough anti-personnel guns are used.

Friends: No one.

Enemies: Everyone.

Fate: Considerable damage, but should survive.

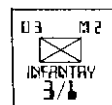
Loss: The Ogre player will lose the game.

Placement: Anywhere it wants to be. Try to get a bead on the Command Post and head straight for it stopping only to destroy the units around you.

Comments: The most important items on an Ogre are it's missiles, main battery, and it's antipersonnel guns. Use the missiles only for the important stuff. The main battery should be used as much as possible against the armored units while using the antipersonnel guns to destroy the infantry. One of the favorite tactics of mine is to rush up on the front units, ram a close unit, then sit there and blast away the infantry and missile tanks before they can move out of the way. This little trick does wonders for breaking an opponent's morale. Another trick is to drive straight for the C.P. and stop for nothing, using your guns and missiles as needed.

THE INFANTRY

The poor bloody infantry are something of a cushion for the Ogres to (hopefully) chew up and thus slowing down the progress of the cybernetic tank. This is hardly the answer to the problem and so infantry is sometimes disregarded. To the player who uses infantry to its full potential, I give him the game because infantry are decisive in the skirmish and thus must be used for their designed purpose; defense.



2. Infantry

Strong points: Movement; it can move as fast as a tank.

Weakness: Attack and Defense Factors.

Uses: The function is to protect land. They should give it up only at the cost of the Ogre's movement points and antipersonnel guns.

Threat: Mobilizing/antagonizing.

Prey: Ogre treads and antipersonnel guns.

Range: 1 hex.

Result after combat: A small dent in your treads.

Friends: Howitzers and other infantry.

Enemies: Just the Ogre.

Fate: Blown up by a main battery.

Loss: Shruggable.

Placement: Out in the open when out of range, behind crests (rubble) when in range of the Ogres.

Comments: The infantry should be used to reduce the Ogre's movement capability down to nothing or close to it. They should stay under cover until they can move into assault position. Remember: 1 —

Tesseract (continued from page 20)

room except C, since L's walls are E, N, W, and S's floors, and U's walls are their ceilings.) The tesseract is complex enough without adding these unnecessary frills.

Now that the basics have been established, draw one up and play it solo, populating it as your whims dictate, just to get the feel of it. Get used to saying left and right instead of north, west, etc., since you've seen that a straight line can take you in all four directions in a matter of four rooms.

I first designed this fiendish set of rooms nearly a year ago, after a close encounter with a member of that semi-intelligent species, *papyrus* meticulosus, whose habits are well known; to wit, they must have every detail of a dungeon set to parchment, every nook, crack, cranny, or stain. I wasn't the DM — I was one of the bored players whose time he was wasting. After careful consultation, the DM included one in his dungeon. I learned a valuable lesson — never call on Thor in a moment of weakness — and the mapmaker should be out of the sanitarium early next year. Good luck with your own mapmakers.

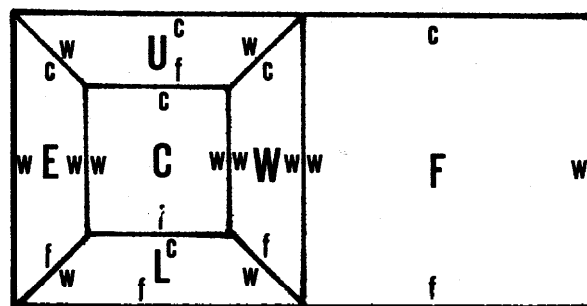


FIG. 4

never make attacks at less than 1-1; 2— use infantry as a first opponent of the Ogre and the last ditch defense; and 3 — the infantry shouldn't be expected to last the game so don't feel bad about it.



3. Command Post:

Strong points: Strong points? What strong points!

Weakness: Movement; ever heard of a sitting duck? Noooo go.

Uses: In the game; none. In the actual wars; communication centers, order relayer, and operations bunker.

Threat: Channelization; place the C.P. in the corner of a map and the Ogre heads that way as if the C.P. were a magnet.

Prey: No one.

Range: None

Result after combat: Elimination for the command post.

Friends: All friendly units, especially howitzers.

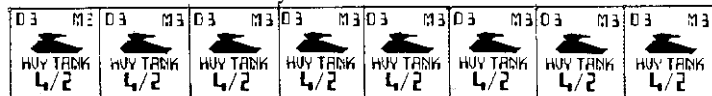
Enemies: A moving Ogre.

Fate: Either instantaneous death or total survival.

Loss: Expect the losing player to resign in defeat.

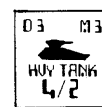
Placement: As far away from the Ogre as possible.

Comment: Since the C.P. can't protect itself the other units have to protect it. What else can I say?



THE TANKS

The tanks involved in this small battle are the missile tank and the heavy tank. They are the main battle force for the C.P. side. These should be kept in lots and should be entered in to the battle after the infantry have already entered the Ogre's combat range (main battery range). The object of the tanks entering the battle after the infantry is the Ogre's guns will be occupied with the armored units and the infantry can dent some of the treads without being destroyed.



4. Heavy tank

Strong points: Attack factor.

Weakness: Range and movement factors; never enough.

Uses: Distraction forces.

Threat: Blasting away missiles or secondary batteries and occasionally a main battery.

Prey: The Ogre's batteries and missiles.

Range: 1 or 2 hexes, although at a range of 1 the tank won't last long.

Result after combat: 33% chance of a kill.

Friends: Infantry and howitzers.

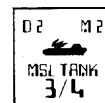
Enemies: The Ogre; especially it's missiles.

Fate: Blown up by fire and missiles.

Loss: Could be damaging, could be shruggable; it depends on the number of units.

Placement: Directly behind first defense infantry.

Comments: As is obvious by now, the tanks and infantry should work together. Infantry should engage the Ogre in the first battle alone; the next round the tanks should be brought up. The object of this is to get too many targets around the Ogre for it to shoot at and thus getting in a few damaging shots.



5. Missile Tank

Strong points: Range factor.

Weakness: Defense factor.

Uses: Distraction forces.

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Threat: Blasting one of the Ogre's missiles.

Prey: Ogre missiles and secondary batteries.

Range: 2-4 hexes; anything less than that will result in destruction next turn.

Result after combat: 33% chance of a kill.

Friends: Infantry units and howitzers.

Enemies: The Ogre's main battery and missiles.

Fate: Blown away by a main battery or missile.

Loss: Shruggable.

Placement: With the heavy tanks, just behind the infantry first opposition.

Comment: What can I say that hasn't been said in the comments on the heavy tanks. The tactics are the same.

THE HOWITZERS

These units represent a small part of the artillery weapons available to larger forces than the ones shown here. They have a fantastic range (longer than the Ogre's missiles). They must be towed by special tractors not shown in the game and so are immobile. They are used in covering other unit actions.



6. Howitzer

Strong point: Range factor and Attack factor; it's cup runneth over.

Weakness: Defense and movement factors.

Uses: Powerful cover fire.

Threat: Pressurizing; having one of those in range of an Ogre can get very nerve-wracking for the Ogre player.

Prey: Anything.

Range: 1-8 hexes; it would be better if the longer end of that range was used because the missiles can reach them at 5 hexes.

Result after combat: 50% chance of knocking out a main battery or missile.

Friends: Tanks and infantry to keep the Ogre away from the howitzer.

Enemies: Ogre missiles.

Fate: Rammed or destroyed by missiles from the Ogre.

Loss: Damaging; these units burn up a lot of points.

Placement: Scattered deployment. 1 or 2 within range of the first opposition the infantry and within range of the command post and the hexes in front of it.

Comments: Using these units will prove to be very profitable if used properly. Cover as many hexes as possible and use overlapping ranges so that it would be possible to knock out more of the Ogre's armament at once. They should try to get the missiles and if the missiles are gone the main battery and movement points should be the next targets.

THE GROUND EFFECT VEHICLES (GEV)

These units have a distinct capability that makes them a must for an infantry-lead force. They can move, fire, then move again before the Ogre can react. This means the GEV's can get into range fire and can live to tell about it. Use this vehicle as much as left over points will permit.



7. Ground effect vehicles GEV

Strong points: Movement factor; hit the Ogre then skip away untouched.

Weakness: Attack and Defense factors; no effects on almost everything.

Uses: Hit-and-run vehicles.

Threat: Mobilizing.

Prey: Ogre treads.

Range: 1 or 2 hexes; 2 hexes would be better that way the Ogre won't be able to ram it.

Result after combat: 33% chance of 2 movement points being gone.

Friends: Infantry and tanks that are better targets.

Enemies: Main and Secondary batteries of the Ogre.

Design Forum

BOREDOM AND THE AVERAGE D&D DUNGEON

by James M. Ward

There comes a time in the life of every Dungeon Master when he or she wants to sit down and do a level in their castle and they have used all their ideas up. I am not saying that if the normal D&D judge doesn't really try he or she can't pull a good encounter room out of their head, but sometimes the ideas for an entire level just will not come. I do not think there is a *good* Dungeon Master that merely wants to fill his or her levels with treasures guarded by monster type rooms.

The solution to the problem above is fairly simple; fill sections or entire levels with "areas of history". While I know the normal DM can take the idea from there I would like to suggest some possible areas to develop.

Ancient Egypt: This level would have altars dedicated to the Gods Set, Ra, Thoth, Horus, Anhur, and last but not least "Ptah". The monster types in this area would be heavy on the mummy, giant snake, giant beetle, master thief, sphinx, giant cat type monsters. I would also suggest that if you make many such "area" levels you make up wandering monster type charts that fit the levels the area deals with; an example for the Egyptian level could be:

Egyptian Level

Monster	Die Roll
1-3 Minions of Set.	1-2
EHP of Set and 5 men at arms	3-4
2 Mummies.	5-7
11th level grave robber thief.	8
Sphinx.	9
1-4 giant snakes.	10-13
Paladin of Horus	14
Evil hero and 5 men at arms.	15
2 giant beetles.	16-19
Evil Lama of Set and 10 men at arms.	20

The traps for this area would have to be many and deadly and include crushing ceiling stones in series of 3 and 4 in any given 60 feet of passage, hinged pit traps that drop for 90 feet onto long steel spikes (no lead spikes, folks, they might give the player lead poisoning), and the permanent shifting walls should come by the dozens. The treasures for these areas should have less gold than gems and jewelry and be in coffers and other containers with poison needle type traps. Last but not least, the Egyptians were famous for two special concepts: the placing of their kings in rich tombs and their putting curses on everything; keep that in mind.

Ancient India: The Gods of this level would have richly carved altars; some of the better known Gods include: Shiva, Brahma, Kali, and Devi. The monsters would include things like the demons called

cont. on pg 26

Fate: Blown away to dust by the secondary or main battery of the Ogre.

Loss: Shruggable, these units are cheap, but deadly, cannon-fodder.

Placement: These can be placed up with the tanks and in the middle of the map. It wouldn't hurt to put a few with the last ditch defense either.

Comments: These units should be daring and they shouldn't be expected to last the whole game. They are cheap to buy, so be as generous as possible with them. For no more firepower than they have, they sure do a good job on Ogre treads.

If you have come this far in the description of the units, I thank you. You can now go win a few games more than if you didn't read these few pages. *Please*, if you play me in *OGRE* don't use my own material against me. I hate being embarrassed by my own tactics. Happy wargaming!

Runequest

by Steve Perrin & Friends



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Boredom cont.

Rakshasas and Yakshas, giant magical snakes called Nagas, intelligent ogres that can polymorph, elves called Ribhus that will not be as normal elves in that they are servants of the Gods, and finally wind spirits called Maruts. India of ages past is famous for their great sages, perfect for an encounter room where the treasure is knowledge instead of gold. India is also famous for its jungles that hide hidden cities with piles of treasure guarded by nothing more than a 200 feet long intelligent snake (whew).

The Far East: Altars to the Gods like Huan-Ti, Wen Chung, Lu Yueh, and Kuan Yin all must be carved in jade-like substances and filled with traps and *great* treasures. The monsters of the Far East must include the Imperial Dragon, the Shen Shu spirits, and fairies of the mountain type. The Far East has always been known for its strange magic and even stranger treasure containers (puzzle type boxes). The East has also been known for the richness of its treasure hordes.

The Future or Machine Age: While some steady readers might think that I harp on this topic too much, the first time I came in contact with a level of this type was in the "mighty" castle of Greyhawk; run by Gary Gygax and Rob Kuntz. Imagine conveyor belts that force players to travel in one direction or another, a cellophane machine that wraps you up no matter how big or small you are and puts you in a

holding area for as long as it takes to rip yourself out, how about a die press that shapes anything in its path into a bottle top (Boy, can that hurt!), or a row of blades that cut in a pattern on the belt with a 25% chance that any given blade will cut you? Try a slot machine that takes only large sums of gold and with the flip of the handle takes a random magic item from the party, and how about a lever that turns on something way off in another part of the level (like a robot or level clean up machine) that you can't know about until you travel to that part of the level? The treasures of this level could easily be more fun than the level: imagine bottle tops made out of mithril on wine bottles; how about guns and pistols that work; a set of chain mail made out of a super hard and light alloy that acts like plus 5 armor and shows no magical traits; how about a huge pile of gold dust in a large plastic bubble that isn't small enough to get out the door and can't be cut by anything less than a plus 5 sword?

Other areas of study for levels could include: the Viking Era, Greek and Roman epochs, an African setting, or Aztec level. If any of you are hard up for listings of Gods I might hesitate to suggest you get a copy of *Gods, Demi-Gods, & Heroes*. Keep in mind that these areas can be anything, their only function is to help the DM give his or her players something much more than a boring adventure. May the ever growing tide of magical refutation not drown out these small words.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 18

Activity begins to pick up as GenCon moves into full swing, with a full slate of events for everyone.

Two of the convention's largest events begin on Friday. The first is the 256-player **DUNGEON!** tournament, sponsored by TSR Hobbies and conducted by Timothy Jones. There's plenty of action for everyone, and that means that up to 256 players can take part, using the standard game rules and some special additions just for this tournament. This event has a \$2.00 entry fee, but the prize list is impressive — including a \$300 **TSR gift certificate** and trophy plaque to the winner, and plenty of other top prizes for the winning finalists.

The other gargantuan tourney is GenCon's annual **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** event. This year's tourney is run under the aegis of Gary Gygax, Bob Blake, and a host of Dungeon Masters. The event will encompass **288 players**, with first rounds for 144 players each beginning at 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM. Players will be arranged in teams of 9 adventurers per party, and there will be 3 rounds for the fortunate few who advance to Saturday evening's final round.

The "empire builders" at GenCon have their chance for greatness beginning on Friday morning as Dave Danner runs a 25-player tournament of Avalon Hill's **RAIL BARON**. There will be five 5-player games, with the winner from each advancing to the final round in the afternoon. A trophy from Avalon Hill will go to the deserving winner. All aboard!

Historical boardgamers will not want to miss a chance to participate in one of several such events to be featured on Friday. Notably, these boardgame tournaments feature **AFRICAN CAMPAIGN** by TSR (judged by John Edwards), SPI's **PANZERGRUPPE GUDERIAN**, and AH's **MALTA** mini-game (both judged by Joe Orłowski). For the fighter pilots in the crowd, Glenn Larson will oversee an **AIR FORCE/DAUNTLESS** tournament which will pit two-man teams against each other in WWII aerial action.

GenCon's first auction session gets underway at 4 'o clock as auctioneer extraordinaire Mike Bartnikowski returns to preside over this bargain-hunter's dream. Mike will be ably assisted by Paul Wood and Bill Somers, and all three gentlemen are noted members of the Metro Detroit Gamers.

An old favorite has its day as Skip Williams presides over a 36-player tournament of the card game **PIT** starting at 7:00 PM, with 6 tables of 6 players each vying for a spot in the final game from which a single winner will emerge. If you're not familiar with this game, get ready for some fast action and a rip-roaring good time. Beginners welcome!

Movies will again be featured in the evening, with two showings, the first beginning at 7:30 PM.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19

Saturday is always the biggest day at GenCon, and this year is certainly no exception! The action starts bright and early as Paul Schwab and Dave Jedlicka conduct the annual **FIGHT IN THE SKIES** "Dawn Patrol" game — actually two separate but simultaneous games for 14 players each. This is one of GenCon's traditional events, and never fails to attract plenty of early risers. As usual, this year's games kick off at 7:30 AM.

World politics is the order of the day as Paul Cote presides over the sprawling **INTER NATION SIMULATION** beginning with the preparation briefing at 9:00 AM. Up to **fifty players** can be involved in this fascinating game where teams assume the roles of major world powers. For this event, a preliminary sign-up will be held on Friday so that "Participant's Manuals" can be distributed to familiarize players with the game's outline; the sign-up on Saturday will fill in remaining positions.

Gridiron strategists have their opportunity as Tom Shaw of Avalon Hill hosts an elimination tournament of **FOOTBALL STRATEGY**. Enthusiasts are invited to come and test

their mettle in this long-standing favorite, and a sizable number of player spots are open (bring your copy of the game if you can!).

There are plenty of miniatures games on Saturday as usual. One contest that stands out is an old-fashioned WW II **miniatures** battle in HO scale for up to 20 participants. Bob Mijanovich, veteran gamesmaster, will officiate.

The roar of high-speed action will be heard starting at 1 o' clock as no less than 40 drivers (in teams of two) compete in **LES HUIT HEURES DU MANS — The 8 Hours of Le Mans**. This popular event from the last two years at GenCon is designed to give players a real test of team ability and provide all the "feel" of a grueling endurance race which will run for a full 8 hours without interruption. Judges Paul Schwab, Mark Eggert, and Mike Carr will moderate the action.

Boardgamers should find something to their liking as tourneys in four separate games get underway in the early afternoon. The games in question are SPI's **SAURON** game (from the **LORD OF THE RINGS** game), SPI's **BASTOGNE** folio game (from the **WESTWALL quad**), GDW's **IMPERIUM**, and **WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR: 1066** from TSR. The first two events will be run by Joe Orłowski, and Tim Kask will preside over the latter two games.

A **seminar** of great interest to fantasy fans will be held at 1:00 PM, as **Guest of Honor J. Eric Holmes** hosts a discussion of "Fantasy Literature, Fantasy Art, & Fantasy Gaming". A showing of slides will complement the presentation, and anyone interested in this area should not miss being in attendance!

At 4:30 in the afternoon, Mike Bartnikowski, Paul Wood, and Bill Somers will present the **second GenCon auction**. There's certain to be some interesting items up for sale, so if you're looking for something old or new, don't miss the action.

Movie-goers will be treated to yet another **double feature** at the Cinema beginning at 7:30 PM.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 20

GenCon winds down on Sunday, but not until after an assortment of events occurring throughout the morning and afternoon.

Two traditional classics, **BACKGAMMON** and **MAH JONG**, are featured in play-down tournaments beginning in the morning. Dave Trampier will oversee the **BACKGAMMON** action, and Schar Niebling will preside over the activity in **MAH JONG**.

Four separate fantasy game adventures are on the slate for the morning as well: an **EMPIRE OF THE PETAL THRONE** adventure run by Gerald Syepura, **D&D** adventures run by Len Lakofka and Tom Christiansen, and a **special beginner's D&D** adventure run by J. Eric Holmes (editor of the "Basic DUNGEONS & DRAGONS" booklet).

The **FIGHT IN THE SKIES** Society holds its biannual **MASTERS GAME** at 1:00 PM in the afternoon. This invitational game brings together the finest FITS players anywhere, and they vie for the coveted trophy cup which goes to the winner. Twice defending champion Chris Weiser is expected to be there to defend his title as "best of the best" in this hard-fought game of WW I aerial action against a field of hungry players set on capturing his crown.

A **seminar** of note to WW II boardgamers will be on tap for 1 o' clock, as **Guest of Honor John Edwards** hosts a discussion on "**Designing WW II Games**". This area is Mr. Edwards' specialty, as anyone who has enjoyed his numerous games of that genre (**RUS-SIAN CAMPAIGN**, **AFRICAN CAMPAIGN**, **WAR AT SEA**, and **FORTRESS EUROPA**) can attest.

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Faceless Men fr pg 9

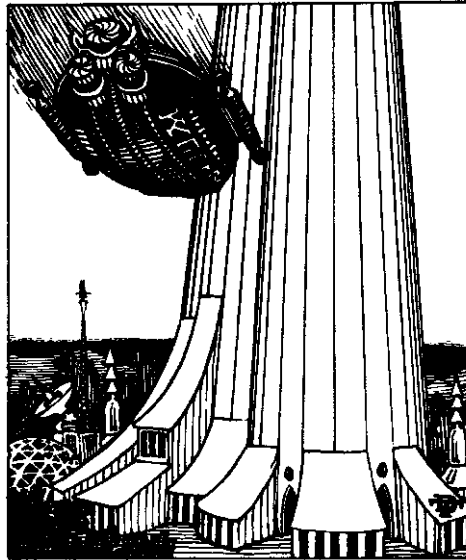
tion before anything further could be done to prepare. The clockwork monster lashed forth its tentacles and grabbed the half-elf. At first it seemed as if it would tear Hodkin to pieces on the spot, but something made it hesitate and examine the struggling figure more closely. Other snakey metal arms shot forth and began to strip off the half-elf's armor. Thurible, unable to use another *tongues* spell, cast a hasty augury to learn what this examination boded for the prisoner, and it was ill indeed. Unless stopped, the automaton would surely slay Ap-Awrd when stripped of armor. In desperation, and hating greatly to do so, Neb Rentar voiced the last *wish* allowed by the magic gem, asking that the mighty machine be prevented from harming his associates and himself because of its love and loyalty to them — it being an obedient servant.

Now this world was filled with strange and powerful things which were unknown to the adventurers, but magic was most potent, for nothing in the place seemed to be able to resist it. The party had been most grateful for the cleric's spells which were renewed divinely each day. How much happier they were at the potency of *wishes* is hard to tell. That the clockwork creature immediately ceased its fell actions respecting Hodkins and obeyed the party heartened them beyond measure, for such a servant would certainly mean that their chances of escape were greater now than any had thought possible. Better still, the creature was useful in many ways. First a means of communication had to be established, for the device seemed to understand the tongue spoken to it but could make no intelligible reply. It was ordered to raise one of its metal tentacles whenever a "yes" answer was indicated, and the whole group then set to questioning their new servant.

It was quickly discovered that the device was a mechanical physician, churigeon, and barber in one. It could heal the still infirm members of the party. It could go inside the metal building; it could take the members of the party with it, for there were no other creatures or machines inside. It could converse with the flying carpet and instruct it what to do. This was the first order, for the party did not desire to lose the services of this transport, and it must be fed. When the two devices held conversation, the new servant went into its huge house immediately and came forth as quickly with a blue brick. This is placed into a heretofore unseen compartment in the disc, withdrawing first a pale brick of the same color but no longer bright. Eventually direct intercourse with the device by *tongues* spell revealed that it normally was fed a liquid (invisible?) form of food, but not being able to fly to heights, it was unable to go to the places where the tubes for this food were placed. Therefore, the blue bricks must be fed to it every time it had operated for 24 hours. The other machine was meanwhile ordered to bring forth as many of the blue bricks as it had, for the party wished to have a supply of food for the metal carpet.

The new automaton continued to serve its masters as well. It healed them, and the group then proceeded into the building where all sorts of arcane apparatus was observed. Little was of value to them however, although there was a supply of small strips of blue which recharged their wand pistols, and these were happily gained. Dorag inquired about gems and money. The machine went to a flat crystal area, manipulated several knobs, spoke it its gibberish, and a container of gems and another of strange coins were produced. While the jewels turned out to be nothing but imitation gemstones (which the gnolls were most happy to receive) the party learned that the "domar" pieces were the medium of exchange in this cosmos. When more questions were put to the automaton, it trundled again to the wall which bore the strange scrying de-

vice — the flat crystal ball — and after several minutes finding various information for the party, a series of operations by the machine brought an image of a faceless man to the screen. Snarling, the adventurers ordered the clockwork servant to shut the device off immediately, and the party then left the place in considerable haste, for they all felt that the thing which appeared could see without eyes, could sense their presence even through a scrying device. With the automaton riding aboard their metal carpet of flying, the adventurers set forth once more determined to find a place where the magic forces of the strange world they were marooned upon were weak, a place where teleportation and plane shift would enable them to return home.



Traveling along the metal wall which confined the boundary of this world on the west, the party saw nothing more of threat or interest to them, and by the end of the day had put many leagues between the automaton's building and themselves. Early the next morning, the wall turned northeast, and following this turn soon brought them to a place where there were many large and small metal doors. Beside each was a strip of colored material — while not the same color as the brown and red of the bracelets taken, still of the same unknown composition. As the adventurers were well acquainted with the mysterious method of door-opening which prevailed in the metal vessel, it was no problem to cause a set of the great valves to part. A very large metal room was thus revealed. In the place was another strip of the colored material which showed rectangles of blue and red stripes, brown, green, gray, and brilliant red which exactly matched the color of the first wrist band the group had discovered in the remains of the faceless thing which lurked within the cube of colors. Also scribed on the walls were strange glyphs and symbols. Warily these marks were first perused, then deciphered. They told of a people who allied themselves with men of any kind — evidently half-ling, elf, dwarf, whatever were attacked by the weird monsters of the place and banded together to seek protection and revenge upon giant plants which ate men and werewolves which slew with weapons. The device of this league was an open eye. This information was carefully noted for future reference, as the group thought that these people would be likely to aid them.

Thereafter, when all of the strips of pure red color were touched with the matching part of the bracelet, there would be a delay, and then the huge portal would slide open to reveal first one weird place, then another. None suited the party, and when the last disclosed egg-shaped automatons which spewed forth streams of leather-like missiles, the red layers of the world were written off as not suitable places

for the adventurers to seek escape — especially since the missiles of the automatons had knocked the hapless Flatchet and the warlock Rentar unconscious. Fortunately, the machine which served the party could quickly revive the pair, and the search for a place to escape continued. The group decided that they would try brown and green areas, and after six different layers of the ship had been revealed by application of the red wrist band to different rectangles, an inviting vista of low mountains and trees in the far distance drew them from the metal room into the reaches of the layered world again.

That night they made camp near the edge of a large forest. Alert as ever they must be in this place, a formation of werewolves brought the whole party to wakefulness not long after they had laid themselves down to sleep. These creatures were marching like men-at-arms and carried weapons too. The watch had spotted them at some distance, so it was not difficult to blast them at long range with a carefully aimed *fireball* from the wand. The creatures died easily, and examination of the corpses for loot disclosed a metal cone. The automaton was instructed to demonstrate the use of the device — at a fair distance — to the party, so it flew (or levitated perhaps) into the air. A bright beam of light sprang from the cone, swept through the sky, and then glared down upon the adventurers. Angry shouts brought the machine back to earth, and the group moved hurriedly to a location several miles distant, for they were certain that unwelcome visitors would be attracted to the spot where the beacon had shone. It proved true, for later that night still another company of the werewolves was sighted marching towards the locale of the first camp. These too were taken by surprise at a distance and wiped out in a single stroke by a *fireball*. These beasts had nothing of value save a contraption of thin metal rods which the leader wore to brace its legs. Rentar put them on his own limbs, fastened the device's belt about his waist, and attempted to set them in motion. There were numerous dials, switches, and levers to operate, however, and even with the aid of an *augury* spell the attempt came to a bad end. After several operations of various knobs and switches, the thing gave off an odd humming and tiny lights began to wink madly along the belt. Without much urging from the others, the warlock hurriedly divested himself of the contraption, and it was tossed onto the deck of the disc for possible use at a later time.

The next day the party traveled through a countryside which consisted of forests occasionally broken by meadowland. Moving southwards still, they eventually came to a wall which prevented any further travel in that direction, so the course was turned to the west for a few leagues, and as dusk approached the carpet was steered back northwards in order to insure a relatively safe campsite amongst the shelter of a woodland there. But night time is dangerous anywhere, particularly so on the world of layers, and the party spent an active rather than restful night.

When full darkness fell the guards noted a strange glowing a few furlongs distant. As the metal carpet could see as well in darkness as in daylight, it was no trouble for it to transport the group to the source of the eerie light. Caution was used, but all that threatened was a primitive hut, covered over with skulls of animals and humans, but shedding a glowing light nonetheless. Thurible immediately identified it as the place of some evil cleric. The party did not approach too closely, but camped nearby and watched both the hut and for unwelcome intruders until the sun of the world glowed softly in its strange "dawn".

The *gem of seeing* was employed after the cleric's spell for detecting traps revealed that there were many on the hut. Nothing moved about the place, but a watchful eye was kept on the path which snaked northwards from the hut to some unknown

distance in the surrounding woods. Meanwhile the magical gem showed that the supposedly crude hut was a metal building masked by branch and thatch. The place glowed because of deadly lightning coursing through it, and any unwary creature touching the place would be done to death. When no means of dispelling this magic could be located near the entrance to the place, a wider search was begun, and this soon discovered a lever hidden in a nearby bush. A simply movement of this switch caused the magic to desert the hut, and the doorway to change from the dead black, of a force wall of some sort to normality. Luckily, Neb Rentar did look further for some other small trap, for what looked like a red blanket was noted to be rolled up above the door. When this blanket was poked with a stick, the limb was torn from Dorag's grasp and disappeared into the creature — for there could be no doubt that some monster which appeared to be a blanket lurked above. Poisoned sticks and flaming branches were subsequently poked at and consumed without noticeable harm by the creature. Black rays from the pistol wands did not harm it. Rentar paced back carefully and aimed a *fireball* so as to just lap into the hut's doorway. The thing had dropped down tentacles, evidently feeding and growing upon the material we had thrust at it, and if they were to gain entrance to the hut and loot it, the party would have to destroy the guardian — or at worst keep it from getting large enough to be able to reach tentacles into any place within the hut, if some other means of ingress to the place should somehow be discovered.

The blast of the missile caused the creature to drop several of its scarlet appendages and to curl up and a bit away from the opening. Success! Seeing this; the warlock decided to use one of his few precious spells remaining to him, so a *wall of fire* was conjured up. Just as it began to roar into full effect, a buzzing occurred, and down from the heavens shot a broad beam of deep blue. When this ray met the wall of fire a flickering aura sprung up, and a moment later the magical flames were completely extinguished. Additional *fireballs* could be cast, but each such attack ran the risk of being miscast and destroying part or all of the contents of the hut. There was another solution, risky or otherwise, teleporting into the place by means of Hodkin Ap-Awrd's sword. The half-elf was urged to do this, for it seemed unlikely that the guardian's tentacles commanded more than the doorway. With a somewhat desperate air, Hodkin winked out of existence where he had stood before the metal hut and simultaneously appeared on the section of the hut's floor which had been carefully scanned under the bright light of one of the magical cones.

The half-elf discovered a wealth of interesting objects in the interior of the building. He quickly scooped up numbers of the large and small cubes upon which automatons and wands alike fed. A metal club topped off the pile, and he was out and in again, leaving those outside to sort through the haul. Back inside Hodkin examined several suits meant to disguise the wearer as some plant monster, a four-armed human, and so on. Being cautious, he noted that a number of green smears discolored these skins. Taking a small orange disc from a pile on a nearby shelf, the half-elf scraped some of the greenish sap onto the disc. The stuff sizzled as it contacted the disc, and Hodkin quickly dropped it, for the potent goo completely destroyed the disc with corrosive action. There was also one of the odd flat scrying devices on the wall, with a bench full of strange openings standing before it. Ap-Awrd ignored both, fearing to call attention of the faceless men upon his activity. All that remained within the hut was an unusual back pack and a rod. Hodkin grabbed these and left the hut for the last time.

Being rather satisfied with the results of their activity, the party decided to follow the path which led northwards from the hut, as they felt confident they could overcome any additional opposition from the

hut's owner and perhaps gain yet more. If, by chance, the owner of the place was one of the people of the eye, they could make amends if their reception called for it. With the new loot piled aboard their flying disc, the adventurers went on to find where the path led. After a short time they came to a small village, and it was populated with the strangest conglomeration of creatures the bold adventurers had yet seen.

A number of crude huts of various sizes surrounded an open area in which the party brought their craft to rest. They were immediately surrounded by a throng of humans, distorted humans with multiple appendages or similar freak nature, animals, and mobile vine-like plants which gave out a pleasant humming sound. An imposing figure in garb which indicated his position as a shaman strode forth. As the obvious questions he was uttering were unintelligible to the party, Thurible cast a *tongues* spell, and attempted to engage in a cleric-to-cleric discussion; something about this shaman immediately rang false. Thurible inquired about the god of the shaman, if they were people of the eye symbol, and what they called themselves. The shaman replied that their god was a metal being which rested inside the largest (his own, of course) building, that they were most certainly not people who had anything to do with the eye, and the trespassers were amidst the people of the "Tribe of Thirdlev". He then spoke of the tribe as being hostile to all humans who did not welcome god-changed (he used the term "mutated") animals and plants. After a few additional remarks, the shaman then ordered the party to disarm themselves and submit to examination and questioning by himself and the tribal leaders. As he spoke the throng of creatures and freaks about the metal flying carpet upon which the group stood ready increased dramatically. Armed and threatening men and monsters pressed closer. Some of the humans and human-things glowed or created mirror images of themselves. As Thurible refused, and suggested that the sham and his charges might better acknowledge the adventurers as their new leaders, the vine creatures began to hum and sing a most soothing and pleasant song. "Beguiling!" shouted some of the adventurers; "beware of charming!" said the cleric, as he began the incantation and passes which mo-

ments later brought down a curtain of silence around them all.

The shaman was obviously very angry and intent upon calling down the wrath of the entire tribe upon the party. A *fireball* from Hodkin and black rays from the weapons of Flatchet, Thurible, Dorag, and Rentar slew the pseudo-cleric on the spot, and as his corpse toppled it turned into reddish jelly. Horror spread over the visages of all of those onlookers who had recognizable faces. The shock was in part at the death of their shaman, but primarily it was caused from what his death proved him to have been — a faceless thing masquerading as a human! Most of the Third-levers turned and fled in shame and shock. Several of the small huts were aflame, and fearing that the fire would spread to the large central structure which was the most likely repository for treasure, Thurible urgently motioned Neb towards the dark entrance of the place. The warlock complied hurriedly, unfortunately for him. A flash of released energy greeted his attempt to pass through the portal, and Rentar fell stone dead before the trapped doorway. While Scrag the assassin and Dorag kept their wand pistols trained on the few remaining tribesmen, Hodkin went to the magic-user's body and removed the still intact *gem of seeing*. Meanwhile, the cleric cast a successful raise dead upon the body of Neb Rentar, and the mechanical churlgeon proceeded to restore him to full vigor. Gazing through this device revealed the shaman's dwelling to be criss-crossed with a mesh of fine wire. Thurible took forth a coil of strange silvery wire that had been acquired during the course of their sojourn on the vessel of layers. He thrust one end into the ground, and tossed the other onto the mesh which guarded the hut. Power flowed through the thick strand, but the *gem of seeing* still showed an aura around the building. If anyone entering the place would be killed, it was obvious that not even the shaman would be able to go into it in its current trapped state. Therefore the shaman must have a way to shut down the field. While the others searched for a lever, the cleric examined the remains of the pseudo-shaman. A small black box with a switch protruding from it was found.

Fearing further traps, everyone in the party got aboard the disc and drew well-off while Thurible screwed up his courage and stood before the building's entrance and moved the switch. A faint click sounded. The doorway of the place grew light, and the interior of the building could be seen. Hodkin and the cleric went in, but they found nothing of any possible value save a ring of blue and red upon a square of cloth which rested before one of the clockwork automatons common to this world. They picked it up and came forth with obvious disappointment. Three of the tribesmen were awaiting them, and these three glowed.

"You have brought ruin upon our tribe. You have defiled our God's sanctuary and taken out the sacred artifact. You must replace it and make amends!" So speaking the three creatures threatened the adventurers. They did not seem fearful, but confident. "We can slay you all if you do not comply now," one said, "for we have great powers." This seemed possible, as the words came to each member of the group by telepathy.

"Surrender yourselves, or die!" shouted Thurible. Then the battle was on.

One of the glowing figures gazed at the warlock, and Rentar gasped and clutched his head. All of his spells — all knowledge of magic — were gone! The other party members felt a tug as if their strength was flowing away. The cleric cast a hold person spell to stop these fell magics, and one of the creatures stopped glowing and stood immobile and helpless. The two remaining ones drew more strength from the adventurers, but a criss-crossing pattern of black rays struck them as all of the individuals of the party used their deadly pistols to effect. In but a few

cont. pg 31



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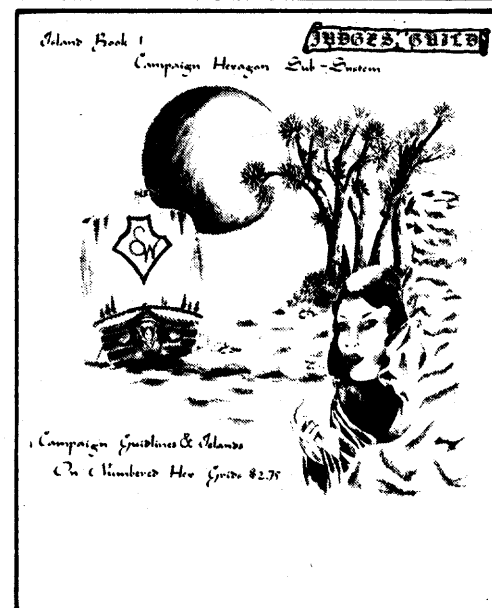
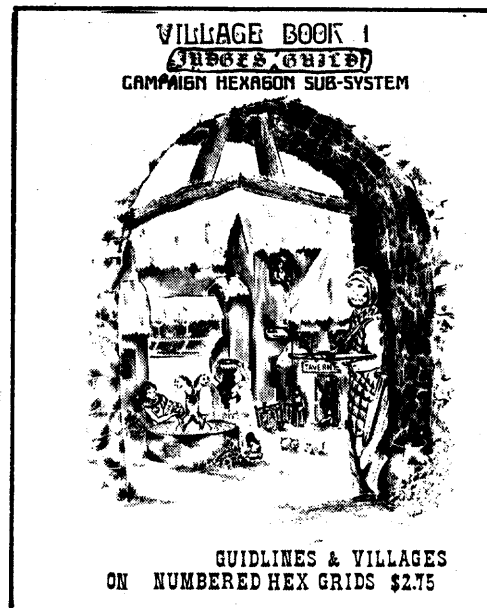
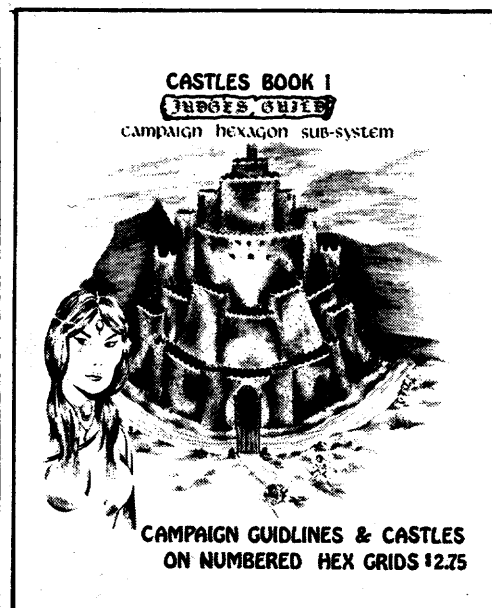
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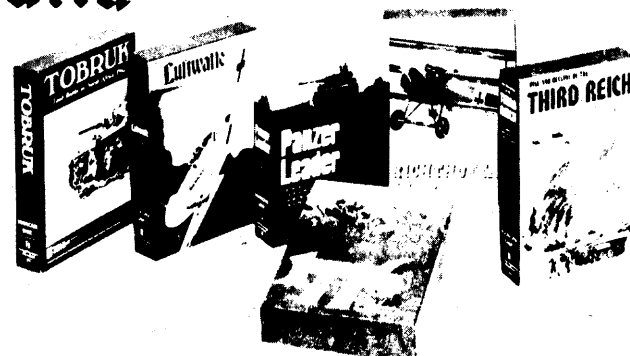
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Faceless Men cont.

seconds the combat was finished and the tribesmen dead; the rays coupled with a *fireball* slew them most easily. "Let us leave this miserable place far behind," urged Hodkin. Picking up the stunned Rentar, gathering their silvery wire, the party boarded the traveling device and went away, not certain if they had won or lost, for the magic-user had become quite unable to comprehend anything connected with dweomer and knew not a spell from a spigot.

Returning from whence they had come upon this tier of their exile world, the adventurers were prepared to go into the gates of the room of levels again when Dorag spotted an arrow pointing to the southeast. Closer inspection also showed the glyphs of the eye. All agreed that they might as well follow this pointer as go elsewhere. They needed friends and allies badly, and perhaps the people who showed friendship for all humans with their signs would actually practice what they scribed. Only Neb Rentar was not a bit cheered by the prospect, having grown morose and gloomy after the magical loss of his powers. The carpet moved them speedily in the direction desired, but almost immediately they met trouble.

A cloud of miniature men came out upon the

party, tiny men mounted upon giant dragonflies. These atomies were armed with bows, and looked threatening despite their size although they did not attack. Before the other members of the group could do anything, the vituperative Rentar ordered the automaton to slay the sprite-like creatures. The automaton complied, but as the little men died, they showered forth a cloud of arrows which struck down the ex-warlock and one of the two remaining gnolls. The group went on with regrets, for they suspected that the tiny creatures had been sentinals for the people of the eye, and slaying them would not favorably impress their hoped-for allies. Again, the former magic-user had to be raised and then revived by the cleric and the automaton's ministrations. A short time later, still proceeding to the southeast along the track marked by the eye symbols, the party was attacked by a flying automaton. This thing was upon them immediately, and it would have done great execution had not the alert Thurible pressed the two-colored ring upon it, presenting the device boldly as if it were a holy symbol. At this the device stopped short, and the party's own automaton was instructed to speak to the machine and ask if it obeyed the ring. The thing related that indeed it did and would continue to do so. It was ordered to follow and guard the adventurers, and that it did most docilely. Yet another automaton sallied forth to attack the party within a league, but now that the adventurers were ward by two of their own machines, it was quickly subdued and enlisted, and now a large train of clockwork monsters and adventurers followed the road to the people of the eye. They were to meet them in but a few minutes.

When this meeting occurred the adventurers were greeted in a friendly, if not warm, manner. Two very muscular men, bristling with weapons, strode forth. Both were amazed to see the machines obeying the party — even more surprised to note the blue and red ring which the cleric displayed upon his hand. The leaders of the people called for a telepath, and soon the two groups were deep in conversation. Yes. The people of the eye were friendly towards all humans of good will. Yes. They would happily welcome the adventurers to the sanctuary of their village, and they would help them to leave this world, for they knew how to get outside its magical fields. Yes. There would be a price for such services, for the Vigilists (as they named their conglomerate tribe) were locked in a struggle of life and death against faceless men, wolfoids (the werewolves), and even a group of evilly disposed human merchants bent on revenge against them for acts which the Vigilists committed in order to improve the lot of all humans in this world. The price required of the party was the two-hued ring and the pistol wands, called protein disruptors, by the Vigilist leaders.

The parlay grew into a detailed conversation. When the adventurers related the whole of their tale, how they had destroyed well over a score of faceless men and nearly a score of the werewolves (and had

numbers of charred pelts to prove it!) their hosts were visibly pleased, and a great feast was ordered. The Vigilists told more of their adventures and activities, their plans and purposes, and the adventurers were in turn impressed. "Here," exclaimed Hodkin "is a place a bold adventurer could stay for a time and do great deeds!" Flatchet, Dorag, and Thurible agreed heartily — although the cleric reserved agreement pending his appointment as the chief priest of the Vigilists. After a few days stay, an amicable agreement was reached: The Vigilists would escort the adventurers to a place where Thurible could employ his plane shift magic to send both Neb Rentar and the Gnoll back to their own world. The other four adventurers would stay in this world of weird layers, to seek wealth and aid the Vigilists. The Vigilists would receive the special ring and all the excess goods which the party had taken as spoils, and they would give the adventurers positions of importance in the organization, as well as whatever protective devices and weaponry they needed. Thurible would be shaman, Flatchet would teach his skills to promising young tribesmen, Dorag would train warriors, and Hodkin would set to work to scribe a new (albeit very slim and sketchy) book of spells. The half-elf could thereafter see if any of the Vigilists could learn magic-use as apprentices. The Vigilist lords, Xorax and Al-Neen were most agreeable to this arrangement, welcoming the fellowship of the adventurers as trusted lieutenants and councilors. All could see the benefits of a forceful cleric urging on all the members to be more zealous in the slaying of androids (faceless men), wolfoids, and those in opposition to the manifest destiny of the Vigilists.

Within a few days Neb Rentar and the Gnoll were sent upon their journey home, all of the gold and jewels going with them. The adventurers now had two more red bracelets, healing devices, weapons which paralyzed and burned, a machine to restore the magic to the cubes which powered their weapons, and other good items in addition to their own magical arms, armor, and devices. They talked of the intaking of the place where the aged werewolves were housed, or retribution upon the metal fortress of the faceless men, of humbling the puffed-up merchants who dared to place a price on the lives of Vigilists, and of serving "Angels" by destroying monsters of pure energy (could these be cousins of will-o-wisps?) in order to gain divine aid. They were now Vigilists, heart and soul. Their names were scribed at the bottom of a broadside which was to be spread far and wide on the layers of the world, a tract which touted the Vigilist cause and offered a rich reward for each merchant brought before the Council of Vigil, each captive to be bound in thongs of wolfoid skin or smeared with red gel. After all, faceless men and clockwork monsters were nothing more than creatures to be met and slain in the course of adventuring, and did not the vista of wonderful adventures lie just ahead?!

— The Beginning —



A Short History of Adamanite

by Charles Sagui

Mithriferral Carbide sold under the trade name of Adamanite is an expensive alloy of Mithril, Carbon, Iron, and certain other materials known only to a very few metal workers, armorers, and alchemists. It is approximately 4/5 the weight per density of iron and of a much higher tensile strength (+2 on AC and hit probability for armor and weapons respectively). A suit of armor plate, for instance, would make the wearer AC1 and would weigh about 600 GP (640 with helm).

Adamanite plate or chain are usually a dark color (55% black 25% dark blue 20% dark green) with a radiant glowing glaze. Adamanite that is tempered to hold an edge is most often silver in color as bright or brighter than the mithril used to produce it.

Adamanite is a very tough metal and for that reason it is much more difficult and costly to work than iron. This toughness makes the

metal much more difficult to charm as well. It costs twice as much and twice as long as iron to charm Adamanite for the first three levels after which both price and time zoom way out of proportion. Due to the construction of Adamanite any charm after three added to the initial plus two will last at maximum one year and usually less. Because of the high cost and heavy expenditure of time most Magic Users refuse to even consider working with it.

Many legends abound as to the discovery and spread of Adamanite. One source claims that it was a gift of the gods to an alchemist who did a service for one of their number. Another source claims that a natural deposit of the material was found at the site of a meteor crater and that it was later synthesized in a work shop. As far as this author can determine from the lore available (as told to me by a certain Hobbit named Wiltham Purpletoes) it was discovered by a certain dwarf armorer. Aolor Fireforge was working on a double edged broadsword that was intertwined with bright mithril for decoration. A dwarven apprentice Donan the Dense (St 17 Int 4) was stoking the furnace just as

Aolor was heating the mithril wire on the iron blade and as the bucket of coal hit the fire a fine mist of coal dust settled on the red hot blade. When Aolor examined the blade later he found that the blade was stronger than either of the ingredients separately. Aolor began to run tests on the metal and work to improve upon it.

Legend of the Blue Warrior

About fourteen months after the accidental discovery of the alloy by Aolor, trouble struck the Valley of the Iron Pits in which the Dwarves made their home. The valley was invaded by a host of Goblins of the Black Boot led by Snog of the Scarred Jaw. The goblins demanded a tribute of gold or manufactured goods depending on the business that they worked at. There had been little real strife in the village for many years and most of the dwarves felt that this was a small price to pay to be left alone. A small group of dwarves led by Aolor refused to give as much as one arrow head to these loathsome creatures. Snog (an 8th level fighter) accompanied by his body guards (2nd level fighters) visited Aolor at his shop and demanded presentation of four suits of plate armor altered to fit Goblins by three days or face loss of his life. To show that he meant what he said Snog drew a dagger and slashed the ring finger from Aolor's left hand. Luckily for Aolor few people knew about his research into metallurgy or he would probably have been enslaved and forced to work arming Snog's army. As it was, outside of the shop his research was unknown. Snog and his guards left the dwarves and returned to their camp.

Two nights later in the camp of the goblins a shadowy figure was observed moving among the tents. One of the night guards challenged the figure who produced a large double-bladed two-handed axe. It gleamed in the moon light as with one stroke the figure struck down the guard. Goblins poured out of the tents grabbing at weapons as they came to challenge the figure as he made his way to the commanders tent. The personal Guard of six men rushed to meet the figure as goblins fell left and right. The bodyguards in their mail shirts fell before the figure's now bloody weapon. As the figure passed the fire in front of the commanders tent his armor seemed to glow a deep blue. Snog stepped out of his tent to meet the advancing terror and attempt to halt the rapidly spreading terror that was going through the ranks of the goblins. The darkly glowing figure rushed to meet the commander of the slimey band and with one mighty swing split the helm and skull of Snog cleanly to the shoulders. Panic set in among the company. Goblins in their terror ran in all directions trampling and slashing at each other with weapons. The blue figure drew forth a short sword that was, if possible, brighter than the axe and hacked once at the hand of the fallen monster. The warrior then sheathed his weapon and slipped silently away into the night.

The dwarves of the valley upon finding the goblins no longer a threat took up arms (Mostly purchased from Aolor's shop, thus insuring his fortune) and proceeded to dispatch what was left of the invading army. The dwarves were proud of their newfound ability to defend themselves and paid homage to those among them who had refused to bow to the invaders' pressures. The money surrendered the gift but when the soldiers returned with blood in their eyes and talk of looting the collaborators, they were more than happy to give a small gift that they had considered lost anyway. Aolor, as one of the leaders of the resistance, was named Royal Armorer and known from then on as Aolor the Adamant (From which the alloy later derived its name.) The blue warrior was not seen again by the dwarves and few but his mate ever saw the goblin finger suspended from Aolor's neck by a blue Adamanite chain.

Aolor as Royal Armorer had a large amount of time and after the war unlimited funds to put into metallurgic research. After about five years, however, he realised that while he could develop quite a powerful alloy, he was not competent to perfect it. Aolor took a lave of absence from the king and traveled to a nearby city where he had a conference with a certain Alchemist, Dealanan the Mixer. A bargain was struck and signed in blood. Dealanan would work and perfect the material and return a copy of the formula to Aolor. Two years later a

rider entered the valley seeking the shop of one Aolor the Adamant. After receiving directions the rider went to Aolor's shop and delivered to Aolor personally a large parchment scroll. Aolor read the scroll three times and had Globan the Quick, his youngest apprentice, do the same (Donan could not be trusted with it) then he burned the scroll in the furnace. In the years since the perfection of the alloy, now called Adamanite, many of the students of Aolor and Dealanan have spread to the many reaches of the world. Lately there have been many attempts by Armorers, Alchemists, and Metal Workers to recreate Adamanite. This work has met with dubious success ranging from no effect to reduced effectiveness (-1 Hit Prob. or AC). The best of the imitators is an alloy that leans heavily on Mithril, and while it can increase HP & AC, it is unstable (ie +2 first melee round +1 second melee round). The best way to test for true Adamanite is with a diamond (A diamond will scratch all imitations but not the real thing.)

Hardened plate adamante sells on the open market for 20-40 (depending on availability determined by DM) times its weight in gold. Temperable Adamanite capable of holding an edge sells for 25-60 times its weight in gold depending upon the above consideration. To charm Adamanite beyond the original +2 costs the purchaser of the charmed equipment about 8000 GP per level for full plate armor about 4000 for sword or shield (adjust for other products by size). This is assuming purchase direct from a MU and the MU makes at least 100% profit making the cost to the MU approximately 1/2 the listed price. Because of the reluctance of MU's to get involved with the alloy a person with a +5 armor or shield can just about name his price and not follow the above chart.

Base Price for Adamanite Equipment (Sug. Retail Prices Subject to Alteration)

These prices are for handcrafted, uncharmed +2 Adamanite equipment. If a MU purchases equipment to charm rather than the fighter purchasing them and then having them charmed, the MU will probably make a small profit on the equipment as well as the charming. (04%-08%)

Equipment	Price GP	Weight GP
Plate Armor	20000	600
Chain Mail	14000	400
Helm	4000	40
Shield	4000	120
Broad Sword	4000	40
Two-Handed Sword	5000	120
Battle-Axe	3000	80
Mace Flail etc.	2000	80
Dagger	1500	16
Arrow Points +1	400@	nil

D&D Variant

MESSENGERS OF GOD: ANGELS IN DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

by Stephen H. Dorneman

In *Eldritch Wizardry*, Gyga and Blume have given nefarious Dungeon Masters a plethora of immensely evil, incredibly powerful supernatural beings, the demons. A worthwhile and logical addition to Dungeons and Dragons, and just the thing for trashing that arrogant twelfth-level's castle. From *Gods, Demi-Gods and Heroes* a DM can draw for purposes of divine intervention that practically omnipotent being particularly suited to his or her universe. But something is still lacking in this panoply of other-worldly creatures. There is a need for beings powerful, yet not omnipotent, who would be in the service of the good gods. And so, in keeping with the Judeo-Christian tradition of *D&D*, propose the creation of a new class of supernatural beings, Angels.

Angels, unlike demons, should only appear on Earth with a particular mission, a manifestation of a god's will. They may appear in

response to prayer (with a base 1% per cleric's level chance of response), if summoned by various holy artifacts, as guards for certain holy shrines or relics, or at the whim of the gods.

Although the classical celestial hierarchy has nine members, the Chronicle of Bishop Matthews in Rudigore records the appearance on Earth of only four types of angels. All the types seem to be physically weaker than their demonic counterparts, though each is endowed with a number of magical abilities, many especial to a particular type. Abilities common to all the angels are:

Teleportation (no chance of error), Continual Light (of varying degree), Bless, Fear and Detect Evil. All angels can speak any human tongue as well as Speak With Dead. The very presence of an angel turns undead as a Patriarch. Angels are immune to psionic attack and to the Finger of Death.

Each of the four types of angels has a general purpose, with special abilities commensurate with that purpose. The four types are:

Type I: The Angel of Wrath. This angel appears as a white-winged, haloed, male warrior in golden armor and shield. They often appear on the side of Law in fateful battlefield conflicts with Chaos, to rally warriors for a holy cause, and as holy guardians. The Angel of Wrath wields a +5 Holy Sword in battle (the sword, along with the golden armor and shield, disappears if the angel is vanquished). Aside from those abilities common to all angels, the Angel of Wrath can at will cast a Continual Light, 5' radius equal to full daylight, Cure Serious Wounds, Quest, create a double-strength Wall of Fire three times/day and pronounce a Holy Word once/day. Without the Holy Sword, magic resistance is 65%. Armor class 0, can only be hit by magic weapons, moves 12/24", and has ten (eight-sided) hit dice.

Type II: The Angel of Healing. This beautiful winged woman in white robes often appears miraculously in response to the prayers of the sick, the wounded, and the dying. She has the power to, at will, Cure Serious Wounds, Cure Disease, Cure Blindness, Insanity and Paralyzation, Neutralize Poison, Remove Curse, Raise Dead Fully, Create Food and Water, Dispel Evil, Dispel Exhaustion (as the Illusionist spell), Cast Continual Light, 10' r., and Strength (as the Magic-User spell). Her touch has the ability of Regeneration. If necessary, she fights with a Flaming Sword. Magic resistance is 75%. Armor class 9, moves 15/24 1/4, six dice.

Type III: The Archangel of Mercy. Appearing as a winged old man in silver robes, this angel is most often found as a guide to those who walk in darkness, a protector of the weak, and a last-minute deliverer from the jaws of evil and death. At will this angel can Cure Serious Wounds, Cure Disease, Remove Curse, Part Water, Find the Path, create a Wall of Fire, Ice, Stone, Iron or Fog, Blade Barrier, Wind Walk, Mass Teleport (up to 10' radius), and Continual Light, 15'r. The Archangel of Mercy is not affected by a Time Stop, and can only be hit by +2 magic weapons or better. He fights with a Sword of Sharpness. Magic resistance without the sword is 85%. Armor class -1, moves 15/30", twelve dice.

Type IV: The Seraphim. The Seraphim acts as the right hand of God, and so appearances on the Earth by this angel are truly rare and momentous occasions. Appearing as a ten foot tall extremely beautiful winged humanoid of indeterminate age and sex, a Seraphim can, at will, Cure Serious Wounds, Cure Disease, Remove Curse, Restoration, Raise Dead fully, Dispel Evil, Quest, generate a triple-strength Wall of Fire, Blade Barrier, Earthquake, Insect Plague, cast Continual Light, 20'r. of varying intensity (from Faerie Fire to Binding), Improved Invisibility (as the Illusionist spell), use a Holy Word once/day, use any Symbol once/day, and once a day can call down the Wrath of God (a double-strength Meteor Swarm). A Seraphim cannot be Time Stopped, Charmed, Held, or rendered stunned or unconscious by any means. A Seraphim can call to its aid 2-16 Type I, 1-4 Type II and 1-6 Type III angels. He/she fights with a Vorpal Blade, and has a base 95% resistance to magic. Armor class -3, can only be hit by +3 magic weapons, moves 24/48", 16 dice.

The appearance of angles should be a rare event, usually brought about in some way by the players themselves (though not as often as they might like!). Angels have no earthly lair or treasure unless guarding some Holy Relic. Although there should be no random encounters with angels, remember that these are manifestations of a god's purpose on Earth, and gods move in mysterious ways.

Game Variant

Natural Armor for Monsters in Monsters, Monsters

By Doug Miller

In *Monsters, Monsters*, armor is worn by man-like monsters. However, some monsters, like dragons, have their own natural armor. This armor is due to very thick skin or hard bodies which protects the monsters. Some monsters are more affected by blunt weapons than edged weapons and vice versa because of its type of natural armor. Note: like armor, natural armor doesn't protect against magic and unlike armor it cannot be strengthened magically.

Note that positive numbers are the amount of damage taken off and negative numbers are the additional amount of damage.

Protection against			Protection against		
Monster type	edged	blunt	Monster type,	edged	blunt
Dragon	12	9	Half-Orc	1	1
Goblin	0	0	Vampire	3	3
Ogre	1	1	Dwarf	1	1
Shadowjack	0	0	Gremlin	0	0
Orc	0	0	Lamia	0	0
Troll	2	2	Living Statue	10	5
Witch	0	0	Ghoul	0	0
Giant	0	0	Gorgon	0	0
Werewolf			Harpy	0	0
(Human form)	0	0			
Werewolf			Snollygoster	2	2
(Wolf form)	3	3			
Hobbit	0	0	Mummy	0	0
Demon	2	2	Yeti	1	1
Zombi ¹	-1	0	Sphinx	0	0
Slime Mutant	3	5	Warg	1	1
Minotaur	0	0	Unicorn	1	1
Balrog	4	4	Wyvern	6	3
Ghost ²	0	0	Giant Spider	0	0
Centaur	0	0	Hydra	4	3
Living Skeleton	0	0	Giffin	1	1
Merperson	0	0	Earth Elemental	2	1
Night Gaunt	0	0	Air Elemental	0	0
Giant Slug	1	3	Fire Elemental	0	0
Shoggoth	3	3	Water Elemental	1	2
Worm ³	8	5	Elf	0	0
Snarks ³	—	—	Chinese Fox	0	0
Chimera	1	1	Rock Person	8	4
Basilisk	2	1	Tsathogua	0	0
Gorilla	1	1	Human	0	0

1. Zombies are already dead and, in my opinion, decaying, which would weaken the skin and make edged weapons more effective.

2. This number for ghosts is for only when the ghost is struck with magical weapons or weapons with spell on them.

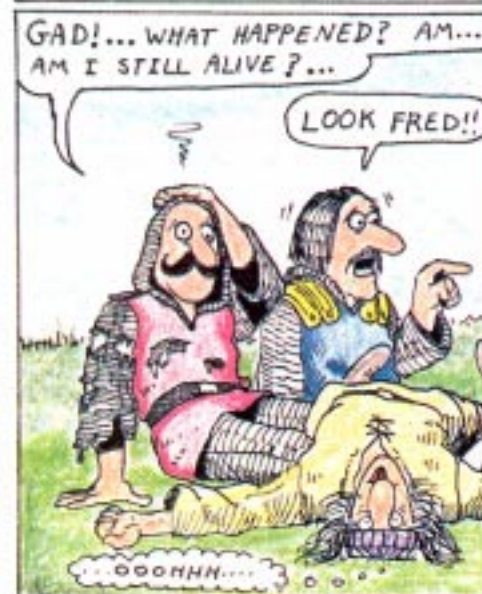
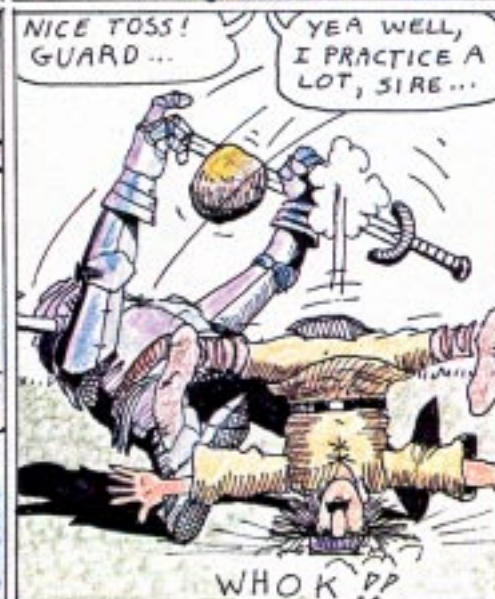
3. The protection ability depends on what the snark is imitating at the time.

If you think that this table is a little bit generous to some monsters and not to others, remember that this has worked the best for our group. Of course, if you don't agree with something, change it.

I hope this adds more to your *Monsters, Monsters* campaign. May your victims be many and your treasure grow large.



MY LATEST RESEARCHED SPELL: I CALL IT "FEUDAL-MIND". IF A FIGHTER FAILS TO SAVE HE RIDES OVER HIS OWN CROSSBOWMEN AND BLINDLY CHARGES THE NEAREST ENEMY UNIT.





Game Review

WARP WAR

by Tony Watson

The Mosulian warship popped into the Ninevah system and almost immediately its tracking system picked up the enemy warship. It was of a strange design, a type not yet encountered by the Mosulians. But the Mosul captain was too eager for victory to ponder this much; he dropped his system ship and began to close on the enemy. After some perfunctory beam fire the Ninevah ship began to flee. Well, what ever type it was, the Mosul captain reasoned, it didn't have the stomach for a fight. With a smile of delight he ordered pursuit. His elation was short-lived however, for the enemy vessel swung around and the unfortunate Mosul commander found himself on an unalterable collision course with two Tech III missiles...

Sound interesting? It's just a dramatization of what could, and often does occur in a game of WARP WAR.

WARP WAR is the fourth in the ubiquitous line of Micro-games from the people at Metagaming. As with the previous games in the series, fast and simple play coupled with a low initial cost, is emphasized.

The low cost of the games (\$2.95) means that, of necessity, physical quality is somewhat limited. In WARP WAR's case it can be said that the physical components are the best of the "Micros" so far.

Rules are contained in a small (about 7" x 4") booklet of eighteen pages. The cover is in full color (a very impressive touch) and features an imaginative combat scene by Winchell Chung. Mr. Chung's artistry graces numerous pages of the rule book, as well as appearing silhouettes on the counters. The depictions are very good and add considerably to the visual appeal of the game.

As mentioned, the counters are the best of the Micro-Game line graphically and while they are thin board and not diecut, they are laminated. They come in two colors: blue on white and white on blue. Each bears a crisp ID code and a ship silhouette. A number of different types of ships are included so that players may appropriately reflect the relative size and power of their ships if they so desire.

The map is small (14" x 8"), and of heavy blue paper. It is not particularly colorful or exceptional. It depicts a number of stars, represented by asterisks. Each is connected to at least one other by a black line termed a "warpline". No charts or other playing aids are printed on the map; they are all included within the rules themselves.

WARP WAR is a game of technology and tactics, and the first has a strong bearing on the second. The game is actually two-fold. There are aspects of strategic games in that battles are fought for control of star systems, paralleling victory conditions for most strategic space games. As well, construction of ships is an important part of the game. In most tactical games, the types and numbers of forces are pre-determined for the players. In WARP WAR, the construction of battle craft will often determine a player's battle tactics (and as he becomes more proficient at the game, vice versa). A player may opt for a fleet of small size warships that depend on numbers to split the enemy fleet and force it to defend at many places at once, or he may choose to launch just one or two lumbering behemoths that have a tendency to chew up most of their opposition. The choice is entirely in the hands of the player.

Two types of ships are available: the warship, the only capable of movement between stars via its warp generator, and the system ship, unable to move on the map under its own power. The expensive warp engine is the only difference between the two. Movement on the map is very quick if the warplines are used, since these lines function something like a railroad net in that movement between two connected stars costs only one movement point, irrespective of the actual hex distance. Non warp line movement is at a standard rate of one per hex.

System ships are a different case. Any ship without a warp generator is by definition a system ship and unable to move on the map unless it is carried by a warship equipped with special carrying racks.

Players begin the game by building a fleet with the available number of build points at the game's onset. They are free to construct ships as they see fit up to the economic barrier imposed by the build point total. There are a number of items. Warp generators are the

single most expensive, costing five build points each. Other attributes (at one build point per) include: system ship racks, beams, screens, tubes, power/drive and missiles (which are three for one build point). The power/drive rating is probably the single most important for it determines strategic movement and in combat situations, one unit of PD is used to power each factor of screen or beam used as well as activating tubes and powering tactical movement. Beam and screen rating will determine the maximum factor usable in a turn; the amount of PD applied will give the actual strength. Beams are the primary ship weapon, while screens are the only defense. Tubes are used for firing missiles at the rate of one per tube per turn. The drawback to missiles is that they are not reusable as are the beam weapons, though they are more tactically flexible.

Each of the scenarios begins with a certain number of build points: forty in the *learning*; fifty in the *basic* and twenty in the *advanced*; In the *advanced* however, players receive an additional ten points per turn. Build points are not as plentiful as they might seem at first, as even a medium size warship might cost upwards of twenty points.

A final aspect of ship construction is technology, applicable only to the advanced scenario. Every four turns the tech level increases one. Each ship constructed after technology has advanced receives an additional combat bonus; it may add its tech level to any damage caused by beams, to each missile hit, and to its screen value. This rule allows a smaller but more technically advanced ship to defeat a larger opponent.

Once opposing ships are in the same star hex the real action of the game begins. Building ships may be fun, but the real interest lies in tactical engagements. The combat matrix is the heart of the game, as well as its most interesting feature.

Each round of tactical combat, players must determine the actions of each of their vessels involved. These orders are written for each ship. This is perhaps the game's only drawback as writing orders can become tedious and cause the game to play a little longer than most of the Micro-Games. But given the design of the game it is necessary and most players will find a little order writing worthwhile.

Power/drive factors are allocated to the various weapon systems, screens and tactical movement on a one for one basis. That is, each allocated factor powers one screen, beam or moves the ship one speed higher. If tubes are used, screens and beams may not be; if a system ship is to be dropped movement and screens are restricted. Players also record their current speed for each ship and the target vessel for any fire. In addition a combat tactic is chosen from either Attack, Dodge or Retreat. Orders are simultaneously revealed for all ships involved. To resolve a given fire, the combat tactic of the attacker is compared to that of the defender and then the difference in speed is determined. The result will either read miss, hit (sometimes with bonus adds) or in the case of one ship choosing Retreat, escape.

The matrix is *not* a guessing game and a shrewd player may be able to analyze his opponent's situation and take advantage if it. Missiles are especially flexible as their speed is set independent of the firing ship. The right pick of the matrix might allow a weaker ship to wear down and even defeat a much more superior craft by simply *outfighting*. A nice touch and damned intriguing!

Damage is resolved as follows: the total of all beam factors that hit the target are added to their respective tech levels; missiles (basic damage of two plus any tech bonus) are added to the beam total. The final number of hits is compared to the current screen value of the target. Any damage unblocked by screens is applied to any ships systems as the defender sees fit. The ship then fights at the new level. Damaged ships may be repaired up to their original specifications by expending the needed build points while at a friendly star.

WARP WAR is a very interesting game, full of fascinating ideas and concepts. The play doesn't become stereotyped as the forces involved and tactics used always change. Players are allowed to come up with their own ideas of sound ship design and enjoy the satisfaction of outwitting their opponents on the combat matrix. Those that constantly complain about getting the short end of the die rolling will have no recourse after losing this game!

WARP WAR, designed by Howard Thompson, art work by Winchell Chung is available from Metagaming for \$2.95.

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