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June

The magazine of Fantasy, Swords & Sorcery and Science Fiction Gaming

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It's an extraordinary experience to be writing this, on the start of our second year of publication. THE DRAGON has come a long way from Vol. I, No. 1, and-the-less than excellent cover that "adorned" it. (The trouble with that first cover was not the original black and white rendering of our logo, but rather with the wretched lithes cut by our old printer.) The overall average on our artwork has improved dramatically. The increased circulation is elequent testimony to the improvement of the material presented herein. What editor can be displeased by 300% growth in a year's span? Not yours truly, certainly.

I fully intend to someday say again that I've achieved 300% growth, so don't assume that THE DRAGON will grow complacent, or become stagnant. Such an assumption would be far off of the mark. TD will continue to bring you the best in gaming material. Even now, plans are underway to broaden the scope of coverage in TD; while it is true that TSR created the field of Fantasy gaming with first ***Chainmail*** and then D&D, it has never been the policy of THE DRAGON to be a house-organ. The overwhelming preponderance of material dealing with TSR games is the result of one of the unwritten maxims of publishing: you can only publish what is submitted. I have been soliciting material on non-TSR games for some time now and only recently have received any material of quality.

While it is true that the readers have increased threefold, and our schedule for TD has been increased to eight times yearly, the staff remains the same: me. I have received invaluable help from Gary Jaquet, as best as he has been able to assist, but he lives four hours away, and therefore serves to help me weed out the junk and locate the good articles. Dave Sutherland is so busy with work for TSR Hobbies that I don't get access to nearly as much of his time as I'd like, nor do I get to use as much of his work as I'd like to use. Submissions have increased, and I'm seldom caught up with all of them. A good rule of thumb if you choose to submit an article is this; if you don't get it back right away, it has passed first reading, and is being further evaluated for possible publication. I have finally found someone that can transcribe letters from tape, so my correspondence is getting faster. I try to answer as much of the mail as possible; I ALWAYS read every single piece. I read and mentally file every complaint, as well as the compliments, which are far more numerous than the former, so we must be doing something right. I have resisted using form letters far longer than I should have, but no more.

One recurring theme in the letters we receive bothers us. There is a misconception that publication in THE DRAGON makes something "official", whatever that means. PUBLICATION BY THE DRAGON DOES NOT BESTOW ANY SANCTION OR APPROVAL TO ANY VARIANTS, VARIATIONS OR RULES INTERPRETATION.

The purpose of this magazine is the dissemination of information. THE DRAGON serves the field of Fantasy, Science Fiction, and Swords & Sorcery Gaming and the enthusiasts of same, in the capacity of information source. If an article is to be considered "official", it will be marked as such. There are many forms of designation: DESIGNERS FORUM is one such, an Editor's Note is another. Common sense will tell you that if a piece is written by an author of a game, the game being discussed in the article, you can assume it to be "official".

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THIRD ANNUAL *STRATEGISTS CLUB* AWARDS

The Nominees

■ **OUTSTANDING GAME OF 1976**

CAESAR (at Alesia) — AH
FIGHT IN THE SKIES — TSR
KINGMAKER — AH
LANKHMAR — TSR
METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA — TSR
RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR — SPI
STARSHIP TROOPERS — AH
SORCEROR — SPI
TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD — SPI
WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR *1066* — TSR

■ **OUTSTANDING GAME DESIGN — 1976**

Richard Berg **(TERRIBLE SWIFT SWORD)**
E. Gary Gygax **(SWORDS & SPELLS)**
Fritz Leiber & Harry Fischer **(LANKHMAR)**
James McMillan & John Clemente **(WM. THE CONQUEROR — 1066)**
James Ward **(METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA)**

■ **OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL WARGAMING PUBLICATION**

vote for any one publication

■ **OUTSTANDING MINIATURES RULES — 1976**

CLASSIC WARFARE — TSR
LEGION — FGU
ROYAL ARMIES OF THE HYBOREAN AGE — FGU
SWORDS & SPELLS — TSR
VALLEY FORGE — TSR

■ **OUTSTANDING MINIATURE SERIES — 1976**

FIGHTING SAIL — Valiant
NORMAN/SAXON — MiniFigs
PANZERTROOPS — Heritage/Der Kreigspeilers
STARDATE 3000 — Valiant
WIZZARDS & WARRIORS — Grenadier

■ **FANTASY GAMING HALL OF FAME**

posthumous induction

Lord Dunsanay
C.S. Lewis
A. Merritt
Fletcher Pratt
Clark Ashton Smith

living authors

Poul Anderson
M.A.R. Barker
Lin Carter
L. Sprague DeCamp
Gardner F. Fox
Katherine Kurtz
Fritz Leiber
Michael Moorcock
Andre Norton
Jack Vance
Roger Zelazny

HOW TO VOTE ON THE THIRD ANNUAL SC AWARDS FOR *CREATIVITY IN WARGAMING*

The SC Awards started a couple of years ago, and were solely the function of the SC (STRATEGISTS CLUB). The presentation of the awards was an excuse for the club to get together at the banquet each year. Details on this year's bash are elsewhere in this issue.

This year it was decided that the awards would be more meaningful if the balloting was open to more people, so we decided to offer the opportunity to the readers of LITTLE WARS and THE DRAGON. This is your best chance to tell the producers of the games what you think, to honor those deserving of recognition for an outstanding contribution to wargaming.

The nominees on this ballot were selected from a much larger list of possibles sent to and compiled by the members of the Club. They are listed in alphabetical order. Those that failed to make the final ballot, due to insufficient nominating votes are as follows:
GAME — *Battle For Midway* (GDW), *Russian Campaign* (AH), *Citadel* (FGU), *Bunnies& Burrows* (FGU), and *War In the West* (SPI).
DESIGN — Jim Dunnigan (Russian Civil War), and Andrew Baird (Lords of Valetia)
MINIATURES SERIES — *NAPOLEONETTES, AIRPOWER, CHIVALRY, WESTERN GUNFIGHTER,*
GHQ — *Modern Micro* — and CinC — *Modern* Micro
RULES — WRG Ancients (5th Ed.) and AIRPOWER

RULES FOR VOTING

Any reader of LW or TD is eligible. You are asked to cast one vote in each category. The Publication category is left open so that you may select any publication of your choice. *(I also didn't want the flack that would surround nominations on this award).* All ballots must be on either a 9 c postcard, or an index card. All ballots must be sent to the address listed *by themselves:* ballots sent with orders or other correspondence will not be counted. Simply list your choices in a column on the post/index card. To prevent multiple voting, we ask that you include your return address on the card or envelope. All ballots must be in our hands by June 30th, 1977. The awards will be presented at the SC Banquet (details elsewhere in this issue).
DO NOT SEND IN THIS BALLOT. DO NOT XEROX THIS FORM.

FANTASY GAMING HALL OF FAME

This is a brand new innovation by TSR (Hobbies and Periodicals) in recognition of the contributions by the inducted members to the field of fantasy gaming — they make our intangible worlds tangible. The Hall of Fame has two categories for induction: Posthumous, and, Living Authors. In recognition of their positions in the pantheon of fantasy pioneers, we have inducted Robert E. Howard, Edgar Rice Burroughs, H.P. Lovecraft and J.R.R. Tolkein. You are asked to vote for one in each category.

Mail all ballots to:
"SC" Awards
c/o The Dragon
POB 756
Lake Geneva, WI 53147

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE DOG EATS YOUR DICE,

or Some Other Calamity Befalls you Twenty Minutes Before the Game Club Gets To your Place

Omar Kwalish

As anyone that has ever played D&D or EPT can tell you, you must have dice, *lots* of dice to do the job efficiently.

It's twenty minutes before the members of the U.B.A. (Union of Bold Adventurers) are due to arrive on your doorstep, fully primed for a rousing adventure in your ruins. The fridge is full of soda and beer, the kitchen table is groaning under the weight of a veritable horde of munchies, the chairs are all set out, Rick Wakeman's ***Journey to the Center of the Earth*** *and* ***Myths and Legends . . . of King Arthur*** *. . . albums are cued on the stereo, all your rules and levels are neatly arranged behind your screen of WS&IM boards (best use found for them to date), when that first flash of panic sets in — your brand new chamois/suede/velvet/whatever bag containing all your dice is missing! Your shouts of anguish elicit from your wife/mother/roomie/whatever the horrendous news that they were last seen in the slobbering jaws of Rover/Fido/Spot/Killer/whatever, and he was last seen heading for his favorite spot under/behind/in back of/the stairs/-stove/couch/porch/whatever. After locating the miscreant, and dragging him forth from his lair, you are horrified to find shards of dice-plastic all over his face, and an unrecognizable pile of multi-colored plastic junk amidst the remains of your bag, which seems to have been mistaken for his chew-toy.*

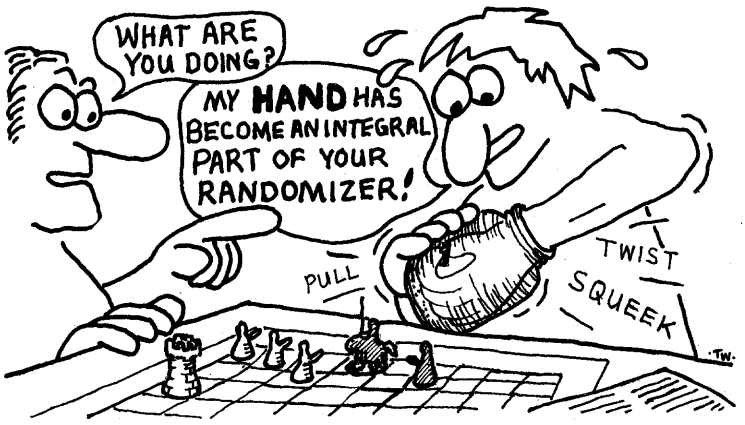
After the air changes back from blue to invisible, and you've already considered and rejected at least three dozen fiendish and hideous indignities that could be committed to/on a dog, the real horror sets in. At any minute, 4/7/9/however — many fully primed UBA members will be clamoring to explore your ruins. The mere thought of having to tell them that the game is off would have caused Audie Murphy to pause and consider the possibilities — a group of rampaging UBAers could make the group that stormed Baron Frankenstein's castle look like a Sunday Tea at the Methodist Ladies Club.

If the preceding tale of woe sounds familiar then this article is for you. After months of painstaking research, a number of alternatives to dice have been compiled. Herewith are a few of them:

PERCENTAGES GENERATED WITH TWO STANDARD DICE (D6)

The following table is from FIGHT IN THE SKIES. The column on the left is percentages and numbers needed to get them, while the figures on the right are the actual probabilities. (I.E., if there is a 10% chance of an encounter, a roll of "9" indicates that it occurs. The actual percentage chance of rolling a "9" with two standard dice is 11.1% .)

5%	11	5.6%
10%	9	11.1%
15%	6	13.9%
20%	7,12	19.4%
25%	4,7	25.0%
30%	7,8	30.6%
35%	2,4,5,6	36.1%
40%	5,6,8	38.9%
45%	6,7,8	44.4%
50%	4,5,6 7	50.0%
55%	5,6,7,8	55.6%
60%	3,5,6,7,8	61.6%
65%	4,5,6,7,8	63.9%
70%	3,4,5,6,7,8	69.4%
75%	all except 2,3,4,10	75.0%
80%	all except 2,4,10	80.6%
85%	all except 3, 11, 12	86.1%
90%	all except 9	88.9%
95%	all except 11	94.4%



CHITS IN A JAR

All that is needed is a jar with a wide mouth, (lest we find ourselves in the position of Aesop's monkey and the coconut) or some other suitable container, and the appropriate number of blank counters, poker chips or slips of paper marked with the numbers you need to generate. Players blind-draw for results.

CALCULATORS

Many of the newer and more complex calculators, such as the TI-SR51-A have various function switches that will display random numbers when pressed either singly or in certain combinations. Because of the great diversity in calculators, you are advised to check the instructions to determine how, or if, yours will do it.

CUTTING CARDS

A standard deck of playing cards can be used to generate nearly any number; 1-4(suits) 1-12(ace low and Kings draw again), 1-6(same as preceding, divided by two), 1-10(faces don't count), and so on.

NUMBERED STRAWS

Rather self-explanatory, don't you think?

WATCH WITH SECOND HAND

A watch with a second hand can generate the following sequences: 1-4(quadrant method), 1-6(divide by 10), 1-12(read numeral that second hand is closest to), 1-15(divide minutes by four), 1-20(divide by three), 1-30(divide by two), and 1-60. A stopwatch is even better for this purpose.

SPINNERS

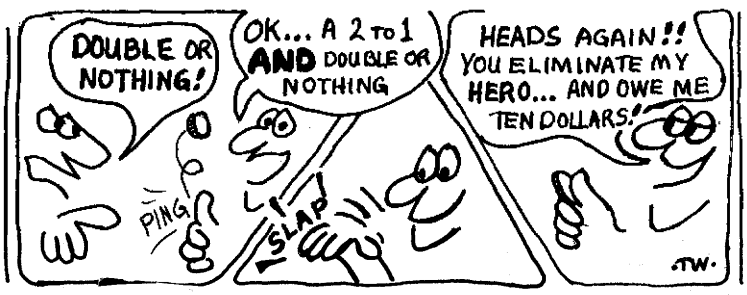
There are any number of children's and family games that use a spinner, using many different ranges.

USING SIX-SIDERS FOR HIGHER NUMBERS

One six-sided die can be used to determine any number range divisible by two, three or six. (I.E., for 1-100, first roll determines if it is between 1 and 50, or 51-100, the second 1-25 or 26-50 (assuming first roll indicates 1-50), the third determines in which group of five (discarding rolls of "6"), and the last the actual number.)

COIN FLIPPING

Similar to the preceding. NOTE: in an obscure study financed by a government grant, it was conclusively proven that the dime is the ideal coin to flip. The heavier coins have a greater incidence of injuries to the nail-bed on the thumb after 40,000 flips or more. Of course. this excludes the silver and half dollar. which can bung-up your thumb much sooner than that.



PHONE BOOK AND BLINDFOLD

The player/judge covers his eyes and opens a copy of his phone book and points his finger. Some house rules prevent the use of address numbers, while others recognize both address and phone numbers.

LAZY SUSAN DARTBOARD

A wooden Lazy Susan is required, as well as darts and several sheets of stock listings from a newspaper. To use this method, affix one of the stock listings to the surface of the Lazy Susan. There are two methods of using a Lazy Susan in this manner; one requires that it be fixed to the wall, the other doesn't. In any event, the L-S is spun, and a dart either thrown at, or dropped on, it; the number skewered is your number.

CLASSIC GRECO-ROMAN AUGURY METHOD

This system counts the birds that fly by. It is NOT useful in areas having large concentrations of starlings, or in waterfowl flyway areas in spring and autumn. It is also inconvenient after dark.

MOUSE IN A MAZE

This system uses mice in a maze, with numbered reward areas. All you need is a little plywood and a couple dozen half starved mice or rats. (If you make the reward too large, each mouse or rat is only good for one or two trips before satiation. If you use too little, the mice will just say to hell with it.

MASO/MACHO DELIGHT

This system requires that the players all be males with hirsute chests. Using this system, the players snatch hairs from each other's chests, using the number of hairs as the number generated. If the number snatched exceeds the top of the range, use the remainder as the number. Using this system, when your opponent gets all the lucky numbers necessary to completely destroy your army, it REALLY hurts.

NUMBERED JUMPING BEANS

This system uses Mexican jumping beans as number generators. Each bean is marked, and all the beans are chilled to precisely 47 °F. At the start of the game, the beans are dropped into an aluminum pan on top of a hotplate. When a number is needed, the next bean that jumps is it.

This practice was finally discredited by an organization known as "Frijoles Nacionale", an obscure collection of misfits, misanthropes and bean freaks formed in the late 1930's in Mexico to stop bean jokes, considering them offensive to beans. Prior to their success, yet another pressure group tried to outlaw the use of jumping beans. Calling themselves the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Larvae, they spent thousands of dollars in their futile efforts. Think about it; would you listen to someone that represented a group such as the SPCL? (Well, you **have** read this far, so don't be too smug.)

The practice has died out in all but two areas; the northeastern US and among the Vapid Indians of the Mojave Desert. The former is considered a local, cultural aberration, while the latter is attributed to the low average IQ of a Vapid Indian.

In answer to your next question: "Why is it there if it's not official?" — all I can say has already been said many times before. Fantasy gaming, whatever the generic form, is just that — Fantasy. The majority of the articles presented are alternatives to existing rules and interpretations. If you like one of them better than the original, well and good. If not, TD has still served another purpose: it has caused you to think about it — it has stimulated your thought processes. Either way, the information has been disseminated, and TD has served its purpose.

Nowhere can you find two D&D campaigns completely identical. Not even identical twins have identical fantasies. Knowing this, we don't expect every reader to like every article or every interpretation. I'd be appalled if I discovered anything to the contrary: that discovery would spell the doom of free thought and fantasizing. We don't want to dictate how you play your games, we just want to expose you to as many alternatives as feasible.

Not only has it been one year since we started publishing, it has also been nearly a year since we applied for our Second Class mailing permits. I thought that four years in the service had prepared me for the snail's pace speed of governmental processing, but I never dreamed of all the hassles that this would entail. The Post Office and I have written letter after letter to each other; they keep asking the same questions, and I just rephrase the same answers time and time again. The postal service we have experienced in the mailing of our magazines has been abominable. Not on the local level, mind you, but all throughout the country at one time or another. Whole bags of magazines go astray, or are lost in some sort of time warp. Individual copies get "lost" between the time that WE bag them and they get to your local mailman. As long as we are unable to get Second Class mailing, and the better handling that that entails, I'm afraid that things won't get any better in that respect. We do all that is humanly possible to see that each and every subscription copy gets sent out of Lake Geneva; we can't assume the liabilities of the US Post Office beyond that.

What can you expect in THE DRAGON's second year? We have a game kicking around, and when our print run gets big enough to afford the extra component pages, it will appear&here. For want of a better title, we call it DIRT. Coverage of games other than TSR's will increase significantly. In #8, we will have the first of two parts of a short novel by Harry Fischer, longtime friend of and collaborator with, Fritz Leiber. It is a tale of modern day magic, and very well done. The story is so fine that we have commissioned a special cover for #8 featuring it. Fritz Leiber has promised us an original Fafhrd and The Grey Mouser yarn, and even now is working on it. Gardner Fox has promised more tales of Niall, and a new satire featuring Ralph, Dimwit and Lumbo is in work. Fineious Fingers has become a resident for as long as JD wants to keep doing him. #8 will also have a pre-printing preview of MUTANT, a new role-playing game on a Post Cataclysmic world sometime in the future, ***ala*** Sterling Lanier's ***Heiro's Journey.*** THE DRAGON is also glad to announce that Tom Wham will be doing screwy things for us on a semi-regular basis, as he has joined the staff of TSR Hobbies, Inc. Some of you should recognize his name from the PANZERFAUST of years ago, where he reviewed games, wrote articles, and expounded on nonexistent AFV's of WWII. He is also the creator of the Westfinster Wargamers, who have already debuted in these pages. We are very pleased to have him.

All in all, it's been one hell of a fine year. It is my intent that the next be even finer . . .

▲ **In TD8...** a fantasy story by Harry Fischer, citizen of NewLon —
THE FINZER FAMILY pt 1
▲ The Many Planes of D&D by E. Gary Gygax
▲ More MA goodies from the author

Coming . . .

InTD11 — A New Fathrd & The Gray Mouser saga:
Sea Magic, by Fritz Leiber
&
A complete fantasy boardgame.

Designers Forum

GARY GYGAX ON DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

Origins of the Game

The most frequently asked question at seminars which I have given on DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is: "How did the game originate?". Because of the frequency of this question, and the involved nature of the reply required, I thought it a good idea to once again put it in writing. The Forward in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS contains most of what follows, but I will go into greater detail here.

When the International Federation of Wargaming was at its peak, it contained many special interest groups. I founded one of these, the "Castle & Crusade Society". All members of this sub-group were interested in things medieval and I began publishing a magazine for them entitled **Domesday Book.** In an early issue, I drew up a map of the "Great Kingdon". Members of the society could then establish their holdings on the map, and we planned to sponsor campaign-type gaming at some point. Dave Arneson was a member of the C&C Society, and he established a barony, Blackmoor, to the northeast of the map, just above the Great Kingdom. He began a local medieval campaign for the Twin Cities gamers and used this area.

The medieval rules, CHAINMAIL (Gygax and Perren) were published in **Domesday Book** prior to publication by Guidon Games. Of course, they were in a less developed state, and were only for a 1:20 figure scale. Between the time they appeared in **Domesday Book** and their publication by Guidon Games, I revised and expanded the rules for 1:20 and added 1:1 scale games, jousting, and fantasy. Rob Kuntz and I had acquired a large number of 40mm figures, and many of them were so heroic looking that it seemed a good idea to play some games which would reflect the action of the great swords and sorcery yarns. So I devised such rules, and the Lake Geneva Tactical Studies Association proceeded to play-test them. When the whole appeared as CHAINMAIL, Dave began using the fantasy rules for his campaign, and he reported a number of these actions to the C&C Society by way of articles.

I thought that this usage was quite interesting, and a few months later when Dave came down to visit me we played a game of his amended CHAINMAIL fantasy campaign. Dave had taken the man-to-man and fantasy rules and modified them for his campaign. Players began as Heroes or Wizards. With sufficient success they could become Superheroes. In a similar fashion, Wizards could become more powerful. Additionally, he had added equipment for players to purchase and expanded the characters descriptions considerably — even adding several new monsters to the rather short CHAINMAIL line-up.

The idea of measured progression (experience points) and the addition of games taking place in a dungeon maze struck me as being very desireable. However, that did not really fit in the framework of CHAINMAIL. I asked Dave to please send me his rules additions, for I thought a whole new system should be developed. A few weeks after his visit I received 18 or so handwritten pages of rules and notes pertaining to his campaign, and I immediately began work on a brand new manuscript. "Greyhawk" campaign started —the first D&D campaign!

About three weeks later, I had some 100 typewritten pages, and we began serious play-testing in Lake Geneva, while copies were sent to the Twin Cities and to several other groups for comment. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS had been born. Its final form came over a year later and consisted of nearly 300 manuscript pages which I wrote during the wee hours of many a morning and on weekends.

The first D&D (as opposed to variant CHAINMAIL) dungeon adventurers were: Ernie Gygax, Don Kaye, Rob Kuntz and Terry Kuntz. They were soon joined by Don Arndt, Brian Blume, Tom Champeny, Bill Corey, Bob Dale, Mary Dale, Chip Mornard, Mike Mornard, and Tim Wilson. All of these gamers — as well as the other play-testers — contributed to the final form of the game.

There were then three character classes, with players beginning at first level (rather than as 4th level Hero-types or relatively powerful Wizards), and each level was given a heroic or otherwise descriptive name. The actions that they could follow were outlined. Spells were expanded. The list of monsters was broadened again, and a complete listing of magical items and treasures was given. The reaction to the manuscript was instant enthusiasm. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS differed considerably from Dave's "Blackmoor" campaign, just as the latter differed from CHAINMAIL: but, based on the reception given to the game by the others testing it, he had to agree that it was acceptable. Although D&D was not Dave's game system by any form or measure, he was given co-billing as author for his valuable idea kernels. He complained bitterly that the game wasn't right, but the other readers/players loved it. In fact, the fellows playing the manuscript version were so enthusiastic that they demanded publication of the rules as soon as possible. Thus, D&D was released long before I was satisfied that it was actually ready. I am not sorry that we decided to publish then instead of later, even though I've often been taken to task about it since, and I hope all of you feel the same way too. You can, however, rest assured that work on a complete revision of the game is in progress, and I promise a far better product.

MAPPING THE DUNGEON

All listings are for D&D, unless otherwise noted.

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MYSTERY HILL — AMERICA'S STONEHENGE?

by Lynn Harpold

On England's Salisbury Plain, south and west of London, stand the enigmatic monolithic structures known as Stonehenge (meaning, "Hanging Stones"). No one can say for sure who constructed these massive stone pillars and arches, set in concentric circles, but it is believed the work was accomplished by an unknown method some time before 1500 B.C.

Among the ideas put forward over the centuries as to the purpose of Stonehenge are that it was a Roman monument, a Danish inaugural site, a Saxon tomb, or that it was a temple to the gods used as a meeting place for the performance of sacred rites by Celts, Druids, Picts, or other assorted early English tribal societies. But by the Seventeenth Century, some had become aware of the astronomical alignments of the stones and they concluded that Stonehenge was used for calendrical calculations.

An intensive study of the site was begun in 1964 and collected data was fed into a computer. Now after years of continuing research, it has been decided that Stonehenge itself is a giant computer, built by an early, star-oriented society that was unbelievably sophisticated in engineering, mathematics and astronomy.

With its precise circular placement of markers, Stonehenge could have been used to indicate the summer and winter solstices, vernal and autumnal equinoxes, eclipses of the moon, a fifty-six year cycle of moon motion which modern astronomers had not been aware of, and possibly even the precession of the equinoxes caused by a subtle motion of the earth, a wobble on its axis. One such "wobble" requires 26,000 years, wherein our pole star changes from the present Polaris, in the constellation Ursa Minor, around through the Cepheus constellation, near Deneb in the constellation Cygnus, near the constellation Vega, to Thuban in Draco, and circles back to Polaris.

All this can be deduced from the positioning of Stonehenge's immense formations. Just who had the skill, the mechanical and technical abilities to quarry, transport, and set such monoliths is still unknown.

Stonehenge gave an insight into a puzzle on our side of the Atlantic, for in southern New Hampshire, near North Salem, there is a similar construction of stones. Although Mystery Hill does not feature the huge monoliths of Stonehenge, nonetheless, native fieldstone was piled in perceptible groupings to obtain the same results.

Who stacked these rocks in such a fashion? Again, there are uncertainties; however, radiocarbon testing of the sport gives a date of approximately 2000 B.C., and it is considered to be older than Stonehenge.

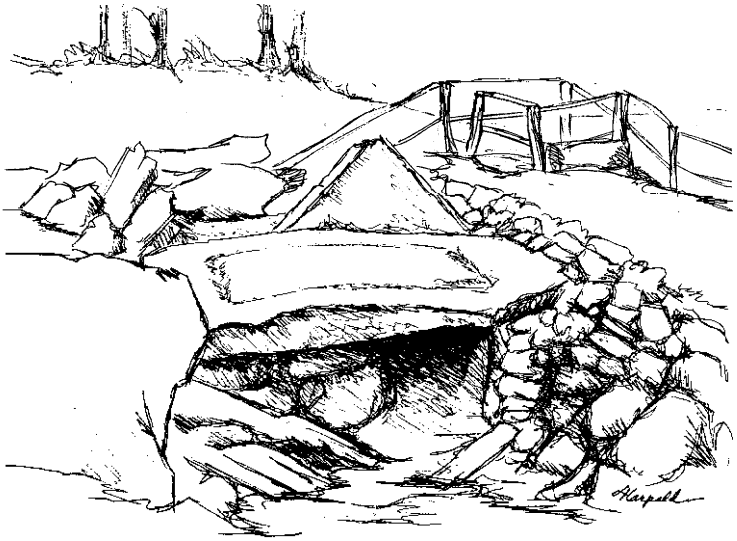
Mystery Hill is a 200 foot natural prominence, crowned by a large circular stone wall. In the exact center of this circle, and from this point, one can look out along lines of sight to the several, oversized, pointed stones set in the wall which line up with Polaris, the other cardinal directions, the solstice and equinox points, and again, possible markers for the eclipses of the moon.

Although Mystery Hill is of obscure origin, some conclusions may be drawn about its builders. Besides, or rather along with, their star gazing and following of the seasons, they probably indulged in human sacrifice. The construction at the very center of the stone circle is capped by a flat rock weighing 4½ tons. This slab is grooved around the edge in such a manner that it appears immolations were performed on its surface and the blood flowed off in the trough. One can picture such rites at the exact moments of solstice and equinox as the solar disk topped the appropriate marker and bloodletting was demanded to propitiate the sun god.

Under the sacrificial stone, there is a speaking tube that connects with a subterranean chamber, reached by a stairway. It may be supposed that priests or oracles hid within to speak with the voice of the gods during religious ceremonies.

Among the 22 interesting stoneworks scattered over the top of Mystery Hill is the "Tomb of Lost Souls." This enclosure is very similar to those built by ancient Mediterranean peoples for interment of cremated ashes.

There is a swampy area outside the entrance to Mystery Hill and



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the remains of a fire-pit of considerable size. During the site's occupancy, yellow clay was obtained from the swamp and worked into pottery which was fired in the pit. Remains of this earthenware resemble Bronze Age Mediterranean vessels, rather than that of American Indians.

There are at least three theories concerning the undeniable similarities between such places as Stonehenge and Mystery Hill. One is that there were extensive Phoenician colonies along our Eastern Seaboard, and even as far south as Brazil.

Supporting this is the carving of a Phoenician or Minoan ship found in 1957, on a boulder below the waterline in Lake Assawompset, Massachusetts. The petroglyph was revealed only when the water level was abnormally low because of a drought, as were the seas lowered thousands of years ago when more of the world's water was locked in glacial ice.

This is not an isolated instance, for hundred of constructions and inscriptions, of probable Mediterranean origin are to be found underwater off the Atlantic coast and for miles inland.

In line with another idea, many believe Mystery Hill to be the work of an early Indian culture that flowered before 4000 B.C. when these people crossed the north Atlantic to bring their technology to the Scots and Irish of prehistory. The great megalithic complex at New Grange in Ireland has been dated at 3300 B.C., 700 years before the accepted date of the Great Pyramid of Egypt and 1800 years before the Minoan sea empire of Crete.

Inland and southeastward from New Grange, megalithic sites become progressively younger with more advanced workmanship. Stonehenge was built between 2200 B.C. and 1700 B.C., during a late, declining period of the civilization.

By 2000 B.C., voyagers, descendants of the original emigrants, returned to the American shores and it was they who built Mystery Hill.

Yet another theory holds that there was an Atlantean center of culture, Atlantic — a brilliant, advanced technological society that existed for thousands of years. It was from this focal point that civilization diffused throughout the entire perimeter of the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean.

This would explain certain similarities of language, architecture, pottery, religious worship, and huge stone constructions such as pyramids and earth mounds and standing monoliths between such diverse peoples as Greeks and Mayans, Egyptians and Toltecs, Phoenicians and New Hampshire Indians.

A credible feature of this idea is that American Indians insist their ancestors came from the east, rather than from Asia over a land possage of what is now the Bering Straits.

Atlantis was fully described in the famous Dialogues of Plato in the Fifth Century B.C. Plato maintained that his work was based on his study of written records kept by Egyptian priests.

In their writings and oral traditions, other civilizations on both sides of the Atlantic "remember" Atlantis, its golden cities and glittering sophistication, which was said to be drowned by cataclysmic downwarping of the ocean floor about 11,000 years ago. This corresponds nicely with the great glacial meltings from the last ice age, which caused the level of the oceans to rise more than 600 feet.

Undersea archaeologists are becoming aware of many sunken cities off the present shorelines of the Mediterranean and the Aegean Seas, both coasts of the Atlantic Ocean, and around mid ocean islands, such as the Azores, Bahamas, and the Canaries. Other ancient metropolitan centers are sure to be discovered in the future.

Mystery Hill and Stonehenge are not isolated examples of the work of megolithis societies. In New England and New York State, at least two hundred sites of ancient stoneworks are recorded, including one on a mountaintop in the Berkshires that features standing monoliths and Pole Star orientation. Beyond the scope of this writing, deserving mention, are the hundreds of mounds and pyramids dotting the United States, Mexico, Central and South America, all of which require further study.

The British Isles abound with stone constructions, including Glastonbury, near Stonehenge, with its stone circle of 30 miles in circumference. Brittany in France has miles of stones, many rows deep, standing in straight lines, extending even out under the sea. Other related works extend down through Europe and eastward to Russia's Ural Mountains.

So Mystery Hill is but a part of a world-wide mystery, a vast space/time continuum of ancient knowledge undeciphered by our present day civilization.

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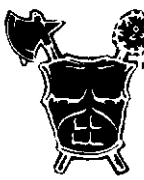

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Darkness came to Elmyr on the wings of a gryphon.

Cool billows of cloud in grey and umber followed the beast as its great wings furrowed the heavens; obscured the opalescent skies and cast shadows on impossible peaks in the far below. The gryphon soared, nearing Overos.

Above the gate of Ynar-on-Overos stood Visaque with his wysard's staff in hand. His eyes — piercing but distant — scanned the glowing heavens for a sign of the comer; on his left hand gleamed Elmyr's ocean of singing, unmoving foam wherein the heads of legendary beasts now and then appeared. As he cast his gaze there, eastwards, the mageling saw several tritons battling some unknown creature below the elemental water. Blood misted the foam as one of the hydrodaemons disappeared.

Clouds appeared over the foothills to the West and South. Impatiently, the wysard tapped a booted foot and waited.

The timeless plane of Elmyr pulsated around him; with magesight he shifted his glance to several other planes, observing as the gryphon beat its wings through each in turn, nearing Visaque in Elmyr. It flew over fire in the halls of Alfanar, then a green twilight on a lifeless world. It became clearer to him as the aethyrs narrowed between them. Visaque returned his gaze to the tritons, finding two still alive and in the act of slaying their prey. The clouds thickened as the gryphon neared, now in view in the Elmyric sky. It hovered and lit on the gate-lintel of Ynar, the citadel on Overos.

"It went well?" asked Visaque of the creature.

His reply was a mind-image of the gryphon's hunt and its conclusion. It savored the flesh of certain beasts of another plane and, hungry, had sought them while the wysard searched Ynar.

For while in his initiation Visaque had mastered Fire in the form of an unleashed elemental spirit, the three remaining elements of planetary reality remained yet closed to him. Fire was the least reliable of the elements — a dangerous ally — and he fain would have assimilated the others as well. Unknown, they remained a possible hazard to him. The path he followed made it necessary to know all of these.

Now, endowed with more personal power than at that other time (and therein lies a mighty jest) he had sought out a place of elemental power: fabled Elmyr. Here he meant to confront elemental water and see the way of that meeting.

The gryphon presented what might be described as a question in mind-image concerning Visaque's own hunting. The wysard smiled.

"I also have hunted well, in the halls of Ynar. Here are the annals of Elmyr kept and its maps, inasmuch as it can be mapped. We go north, with your grace, to find Olyn and ask of him a rune."

The gryphon perceived several memory-images of the wysard's search, of things found in dark places and sought in light. Visaque mounted the beast's bare back and unfastened his cloak. The gryphon's white wings beat at the thick air, and a strong wind blew the long dark hair of the wysard across his mustached face. They rose, master and master, as the plane-rift clouds thinned and the skies glowed. Northward, they flew.

***

The sky had several times changed hue during their flight; the foothills below had crouched into plains and gullies where nymphs of great loveliness disported in ponds and rivers. From the plains' edge crept the beginnings of a dark, marshy wood in whose depths moved vast shapeless things, and the skies cried scarlet. Out of the wood rose great fingers of stone as the mountains of Oredd cast out hills and vales. A pearly lake rolled beneath them, encircled by thorny trees and cave-ridden cliffs. Steppes arose from its shores. Now far ahead Visaque beheld a distant plateau, violet against the turquoise heavens. The gryphon crowed a challenge.

Huge mosses and ferns blanketed the lands about the plateau. It seemed as though a dense green pillow had tried to surround the place. And from its rearing edges water flowed in fall and stream, cataract and droplet. As they winged nearer Visaque saw the place as a mountaintop lake spilling forth idly on every side. He examined the place from the back of his high flying steed. In the lake rose one small isle, a lonely grey peak in the ever-changing reflection of the sky. "There", he said, and the gryphon winged down to that tooth-like spur of rock. They landed on a broad surface facing a huge Gate. Before them loomed a double row of eleven columns carven with sigils both known and unguessed. It formed a path leading to the Gate.

Knowing the way of such structures, the wysard walked to one side and approached, away from the pillared path. Where the Gate had been he found a solid wall of stone. Tapping it with his staff, he found it as sound as the rest of the cliff. He paced off the width of the Gate, to no avail. Turning he observed the pillars. "Indeed", said he, and returned to his mount.

From that point he saw the Gate as he had before. He smiled a mirthless smile and approached the path. Unseen, the gryphon followed.

He passed the first pillar.

Immediately the skies grew black and red, and he heard the roar of a distant gong. Strange shapes appeared above. A beam of black light scorched the earth beside him.

He kept walking, and came to the second pillar.

The world grew quiet. Trees appeared around him, and dear, and many wondrous things. Birds sang and ancient foes sat peaceably together in the shade. Beside him a small bird struck the ground with a tiny cry of pain; Visaque almost stooped to cradle it and speak a Word of healing, but only paused before continuing his walk. He passed the third pillar.

As each pillar in turn was passed he observed scenes of increasingly gripping horror or compelling beauty. The wysard reluctantly refused the invitations of dryads; walked through unguarded gardens of mist-crowned poppies; witnessed several curses and various dooms. Behind him, the gryphon remained in an eyrie of his reality, where he found a lissome mate and ruled the heavens. Visaque walked on, and came to the twenty-first pillar.

There he paused in wonder.

Before him he saw the vistas of a wide universe from the height of a splendid cliff. Awaiting him was a massive throne of silver and of tortoiseshell, metalwork twining like vinery around the dark surfaces of the seat. Leaf and stem of silver entwined in ecstatic embrace, and here, upon the highlights, and there, among the shadows, gleamed jet and onyx, lapis and obsidian, nested like gleaming grapes in beds of many other stones. From this pinnacle Visaque beheld the five extremities of his cosmos and the many marvels therein; beheld amber castles and perilous beasts, paradise and power to his world's edge. At the foot of the throne knelt spirits of the four elements and one awaiting his ascension. Tiny heralds on elven birds trumpeted a fanfare at his coming.

This vision was far more tempting than any of the others, for it proclaimed him master of his universe, and this in truth was part of his goal: he saw himself Lord of all within eye's reach, ear's hearing, and the touch of his omnipotent hand.

Yet the mageling remembered that this was not the only reality and recalled his call to the Whole. Meditating, he witnessed the marvels he could create and what empires were his inheritance.

And he passed beyond.

As he came to the final pillar, mist dissolved the worldview and as the fanfare of tiny trumpets faded he saw the Gate once more. But between himself and the portal gaped the maw of a fearful Abyss. He steeled himself, gauged the distance, knew he could leap it. He tensed and sprang — full into the Abyss.

Knowing, he perceived the Light as he fell.

Slowly the chaos that surrounded him took form as he lay spent on the flagged floor. Subliminal lights blinked and flickered on the borders of his reality. A Presence sat silent in darkness waiting. Visaque gathered his strength. When ready, he spoke:

"You are Olyn, of whom I have read."

"I am."

"I hight Visaque of Northumber on the fifth plane of Earths, as we reckon them. I seek the answer to a question."

"The darkness trembled as the being laughed. "I never cease to marvel at the doing of Men," Olyn said, "Each purposeless quest a headlong rush to Death; and also a misguided attempt to flee it. Journeys, quests, epic adventures! You amuse me, Visaque of Northumher."

Visaque rose. "I do not flee Death, creature: She is a maiden, to be courted at a decorous distance. I shall embrace Her one day as I embrace life, without evaluation. My quest — and my life — is born not of fear, but of Power."

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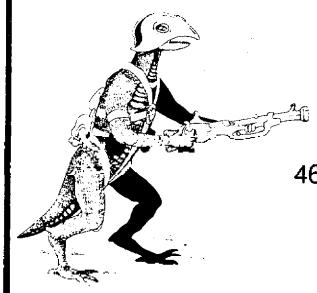

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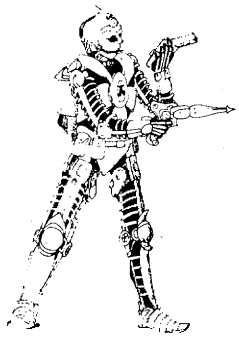


"I would have said energy," responded Olyn, "but I think that I know what it is you seek. First you found the maps of Elmyr, and knew them unsuited to your task. Now you seek Elmyr's guide. Ask away."

"Is it true that this is the realm of aethyric water?"

"In one of its forms, aye."

"And that I may seek an ally here, to master and assimilate into my nature?"

"It has been said, aye."

Visaque grimaced in the dark; then asked, "And is it true?"

"Inasmuch as a truth can be twice the same, aye."

"Then where am I to seek?"

"Anywhere and everywhere. In nowhere it will be found."

"That is as clear an answer as I might have expected. One thing more, I pray: if I had chosen the High Seat, would all have been as it seemed?"

Olyn laughed again: it seemed more with pity than rancor. "That question was less wise than even the third. It would have been true indeed, and you a god. But there are paradoxes even in the infinite: eventually your quest would have continued. Peace to you."

And again Visaque stood on the plateau beneath the turbulent sky. Looking around, he saw no sigh of the gryphon.

The sky was a violent orange as Visaque climbed through the low, dense wildwood at water's edge, peering across the wide lake. Across the water he saw the plateau's brink and the mosses beyond. Wondering where the gryphon had gone, he stood still. **As** he had descended from the Place of Pillars, he had watched the water recede from the point he approached. Even now, fifty feet offshore, it rolled in oily slow waves, revealing the lakebed.

Visaque saw a brick-bordered gap in the pockmarked ground out there, perhaps thirty feet from where he stood. With a thoughtful glance at the receding lake, he walked out for a closer look. Standing above the opening, he saw a long stair disappearing into the dark; he held his staff above the tunnel, spoke a Word and began the descent. Such magicks as might hold back the returning lake now held the passage against his retreat. He wondered briefly why the stairs were not wet: was this a new manifestation of Elmyr, or was it simply made of the same element as the lake — merely interpreting the aethyr in a different form? He gave up that train of thought as fruitless.

Long and long he walked down; the walls, at first stone but roughly formed, became smooth and decorated with alien frescoes and reliefs. A strange illumination showed that their motifs were sea-creatures and symbols, many runes half-familiar to Visaque's wysard schooling. As the sky's light winked out behind him Visaque perceived that the sourceless light showed his way before him. His staff trembled of itself within his hand. He knew there was Power here.

Finally the stair ended in an arras of a deep, damp-ceilinged hall; over the entrance Visaque read "Logos" in clear-carved runes. Entering the gallery, the wysard beheld ten doors leading into ten magelit corridors. Choosing one, he began to walk its length.

Two hours later he stood in the centre of the hall. Each door he had tried in turn, and each had led him back to the gallery; though none branched or forked, the door he returned through was never the door by which he had left. He had tried going straight back into the maze the way he had come, and found the gallery again through still another door: the halls were never twice the same. The mageling saw a mystery here, but all his speculations failed to give it meaning. His mind led him in the same strange passages, and always returned with no explanation.

He turned to climb the stair, and found that it now led downwards, deeper into Elmyr. Again he descended.

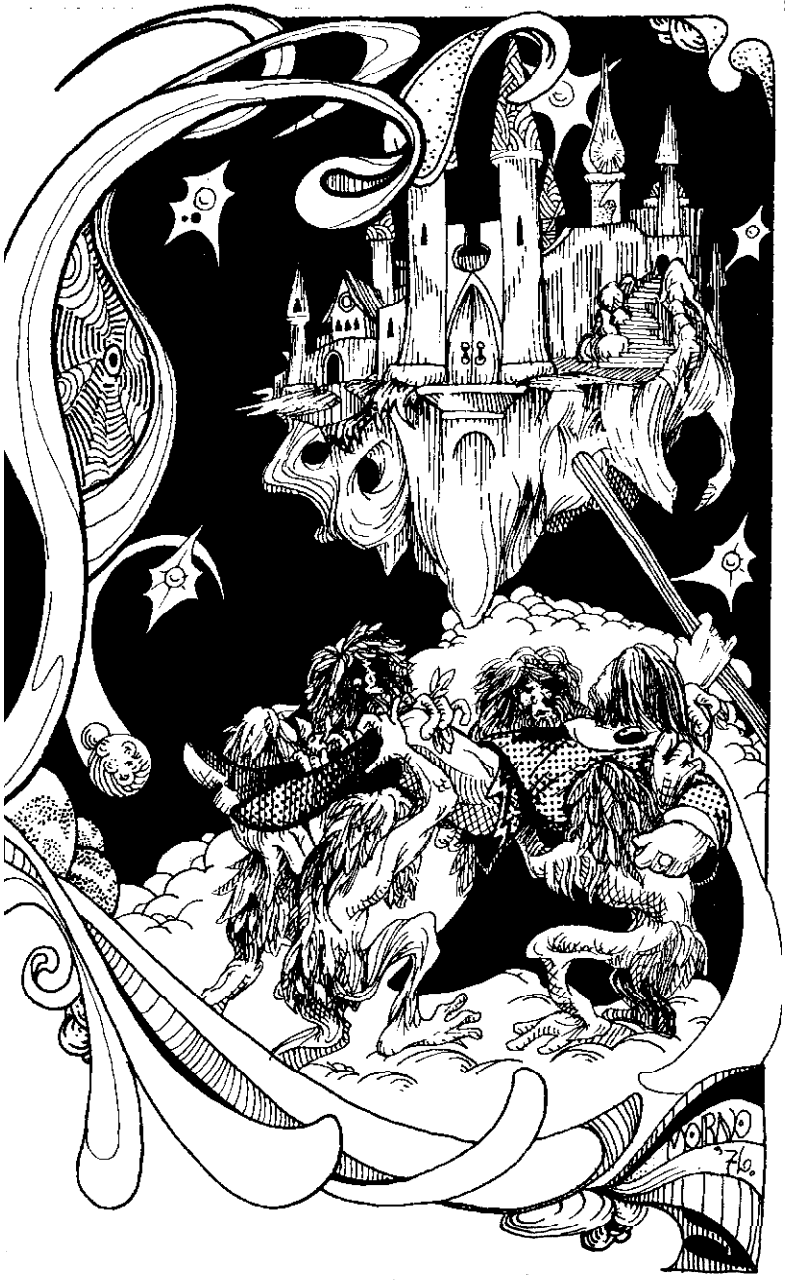
Now the walls once more were only roughly hewn. Strangely, he was unworried about the loss of return, lost in his selfless self-search. He felt no animosity here: only power. ***Well enough, the young wysard thought, for while I follow my path I am one with the flow of realities: one even with this place. I have the momentum of the Cosmos behind me.. . .*** He smiled and thought no more in words.

The glow of the passage was growing . . . thicker. There was an odd difraction in Visaque's eyes, a subliminal strangeness. Things seemed odd in texture, and the angles of the steps became unpredictable. Visaque held his staff slightly before him, for he was unsure of his step.

Again the stairs led to a laid-stone foyer in which was a door. As Visaque scanned the runes this time they seemed eager to reform ere he had finished reading them: in many tongues they said Mythos. Won-

deringly, the wysard stepped to the threshold.

He stepped into a mist of royal purple, which carried him up and beyond; behind him the doorway glowed abstactly, sinking slowly out of sight. The mist formed in many shapes before his marveling eyes, revealing aery mysteries and discords. His mind bemused by this shifting shadowplay, he relaxed into pure perception, pure feeling: pure experience. For seconds or centuries he drifted, fogborne.



A mantra from his apprenticeship haunted the fringes of his awareness. Its rythms echoed in the mistshapes, which molded to its vibration like moss to stone. Either the chanting intensified, or he concentrated more strongly on it: which, he could not be sure, but he was hearing it more clearly. Soon — as the mantra's reverberation marched through the cosmos — Visaque realised that he was chanting it himself. The heavy syllables formed bubbles of sound, which swiftly became more numerous. He knew that he was creating the bubbles with his words. And as he heard himself chanting, his mind fixed upon the meaning of the words; the mantra's profundity washed over him, bore heavily down on him. The weight of the bubbles clustering around him increased. The wysard felt himself sinking back into the mist, deeply into the swirling mist. Suddenly he felt stone beneath his feet and knew he had returned to the doorway.

A longing was on him to return into the purple fog; yet he felt a half-formed thought in the back of his mind and felt he needed a few moments' meditation. Perhaps he would return . . .

The bubbles began to burst in the thinner air, and the angles of the steps were those he knew. They led upwards. Visaque began to ascend as the runes over the door translated themselves into a script of the V'roi'aleg.

The mageling counted seven hundred seventy seven steps to the plateau under the many-colored sky.

He paused on the shore as the slow waves reclaimed the lakebed, sitting still on a grassy dune. He pondered, now in conscious thought, the things he had seen. He thought much on the words of Olyn. He considered the vacant space where the fluid element water would be a part of him. He remembered certain other days: and he had a thought; and as he thought it to be true, he knew.

As slow realisation coursed through his consciousness, Visaque half-perceived the elusive outline of a manlike figure to his right. He turned and viewed it from many angles, attempting to make definite its shifting form. It shifted in unique ways under his glance. As the excitation of rationalisation took him its angles became more oblique, until it had unraveled itself; it disappeared. Visaque wondered and throught that somehow he had lost something.

As Visaque walked up to the tangled madness that was the isle's leafy robe he felt he was seeing with very different eyes. His mind raced at a different pace; all he beheld was significant. He saw rocks reform as the Flow reconsidered their outlines and knew himself to be a part of that Flow as well. Eagerly the young Wysard looked ahead to the twisted bushes, expectant of unforseen marvels. He watched them writhe breezelessly.

He approached and passed the first sparse few of them, pausing to watch them alter. Gnarled, twisted, they began to move in conscious ways; Visaque observed them grow near-human faces and limbs. Their rough-textured bark flexed as they clenched newborn fingers. They tore up their now disturbing root-feet; they walked like leaf-bearded gnomes. Visaque laughed at the incongruity of their consciousness. He laughed at the incongruity of their consciousness. He laughed, until they seized him.

Away they bore him, away from the Place of Pillars by devious, ill-lit caves the mage had not seen before. Spearlike columns hung from the unseen roofs of those ancient galleries, others rising from the floor to meet them and (mayhap) converse in a tongue of the primal ages, old lava-brothers well-met in a later world. Visaque struggled in their rough-skinned hands as the tree-gnomes bore him darkly downward into deeps where only foul-smelling fungi lit their way. The tree-things answered to no language Visaque knew, and he tried many.

At first Visaque bethought him that he was grown dizzy when he saw the lights; then that he had fallen asleep in that unnatural place and dreamed. But they flickered quite convincingly. He finally knew that they were stars. Below — under the shuffling feet of his bearers — rolled layers of cloud. He knew not when or where they had left the caverns. Hope drained from him. He strove to recapture the kairos he had but lately known, in vain. He could not forget nor ignore the steady march of Elmyr's ungainly brood, and merely watched in horror as they bore him on.

Certain stars ahead seemed to be the destination of the cloud-bridge. Roughly bounced by his captors, Visaque counted five equidistant stars in that constellation. They made for the centre of that configuration: after and aeon or an hour, they reached that place.

There the young mage looked upon a floating piece of earth on which in mysterious black and silver was made a palace. Extending into the void was a large, quaylike porch of flagged stone, and beyond that a cyclopean gate. The tree-gnomes dropped their exhausted captive there, turned, and walked back on the dwindling bridge. Spent, Visaque saw them and their ethereal road vanish in the void. Eventually he arose and entered the gargoyled gate.

He learned in its voiceless halls that this castle was called Tonal. In its many elaborate libraries were volumes both ancient and contemporary, beginning and ending with questions. To each was a sequel, and for many years where Time had no dominion Visaque read each, and its sequel, and on, and on . . .

He noticed that a beard had grown on his cheeks, but worried not. Otherwise he showed no signs of age. Eventually, after reading countless tomes, he decided to wander and think.

Many more years passed. He had long ago forgotten his name and purpose, thinking interdependent thoughts which led only to others much like him.

It happened that while he pondered the arrangement of the five

suns (speculating in at least seven possible geometries) he perceived an extending cloudpath in the distance. That rang an unsettling chord in him. For then on erratic images of what had gone before came to him at odd intervals. They slowly began to irritate him: he attempted to lose himself again in his surroundings. He noticed after many monologues that certain tapestries in the halls bore scenes familiar to him. He took to studying them. Painfully, slowly; he began to understand. At length he meditated for an ageless time. He knew again who he was and what had happened, and saw the mindless folly of his many games of mind-play. Once more he thought no more in words.

He recalled the events on the Isle and near it; saw again the shifting shape he had examined and lost, re-lived the birth of the gnomes and knew the part his mind had played therein. Understanding he did not mourn.

He looked with magesight into many planes before he found Elmyr. He waited several centuries of perceptual time until the two planes converged in the proper places, and stepped onto a mountain on the waterworld.

By his timing Visaque knew he could not be too far from the plateau. He determined to scale the peak on which he stood, the better to get his bearings. And so he climbed. At first mountains were mountains, then they were no longer mountains; and at last, when he reached the summit, they were mountains again. Visaque looked round about him. He saw that he had far to go to the west and south; but the plateau was in sight, if faintly. He considered the distance and conceived a plan.

He cast his magesight into various places and found what he sought. Stepping into that reality, he slew by sorcery the thing he found there and bore it back to Elmyr with him. As he remembered skies shot out pseudopods of scarlet and amber, he cast blood to the four quarters and watched it disperse far beyond. He seated himself and waited.

Soon Visaque heard the beating of great wings. A leonine feathered form landed across the carcass from the wysard. It looked questioningly at him, sitting there cross-legged. He did not move. The gryphon feasted; it tore at the alien mean while Visaque sang songs of cosmic travel, of deeds remembered and more especially deeds forgotten. It fed well on its favorite meat while the wysard sang his songs.

It sated itself. The taste of fabulous beasts and the songs of Visaque had awoken its memories of those other days and far venturing; had woken the thirst for new adventures. Greetings of their sort passed between them, and erelong they were flying once more to the Place of Pillars.

This time Visaque paused not in the Pillarworlds: he walked unheeding even past the High Seat, and came to the Abyss. He stood leaning on his staff and watched the outline form again on the other side. As his memory of the Tonal had guided his past the Pillars it now taught him the proper course. He let the form become itself without evaulating. The mage watched in a state of pure experience while his image took form on the opposite brink.

Together, they said: I know you.

Together, throwing aside their staves, they leaped to the centre of the abyss.

Together, they grappled.

Each was perfectly matched, of course. The struggle was long. The sky assumed uncounted colors as they strove for mastery of their fate.

Visaque's opponent was reciting the most beguiling discourses of the Tonal; but the wysard was no longer willing to consider them. The arguments intensified, grew in pitch with the other's desperation. All of Elmyr seemed to hold its breath.

The other was gasping now, spent by his fruitless debate. Visaque took the advantage. Then there was only one above the Abyss, though neither had died. Then he was once more in the lightless place of Olyn.

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more Con info on pg. 26

He spoke a new Word, and the place blazed with magelight.

He stood in a natural cavern, doorless but adorned with reliefs like those under the lake. Before him stood Olyn: a grey being thrice the height of a man whose ankles and powerful wrists were merged with the floor and ceiling of the place. Prisoner, Visaque wondered, or Mainmast? He thought he knew yet forebore to mention it.

Olyn's unblinking eyes met Visaque's grey-green ones. "And we meet," said he.

"Well met," Visaque replied.

Strange things squatted in the recesses of the cave — their presence was distracting if not dangerous.

"You have succeeded," Olyn continued, "and Elmyr and you are united; that is neither altogether a good nor a bad thing. It is pleasant, for me, to hold converse with you."

"You know that your quest is not yet finished. Consider yourself — in your owne terms — half complete. Though I am entire As i am, you need each of the elements . . . in a way I am the lesser part of you. I do not think that you will again lose this understanding; yet you must traverse your path as far as it leads you."

"That is known to me, friend Olyn," quoth Visaque. "Where do I next seek?"

The being smiled. "In everywhere and anywhere. In nowhere will it be found."

Long they laughed together.

MILITARY FORMATIONS OF THE NATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE

By M.A.R. Barker

The following material is translated and adapted from the works of two of the great ancient strategists of Tekumel, Ssamiren of Kheiris, and Sa'alur of Jakalla. Both of these men lived during the First Imperium, the Dynasty of the Bednalljan Kings, and their strategic and tactical manuals have become standard among all of the nations of Tekumel. Time, unfortunately, does not permit the inclusion of material from the other two major battle manuals, those of Liyurain of Tsamra, and Hirkkulmeshmru the Dwarf.

Both Ssamiren and Sa'alur divide their works into discussions of (a) the army as a whole, and (b) units within an army. Under the former heading they include the functions and limitations of each section of a military "task force" (e.g. the establishment of chains of command, the roles played by various officers, signalling and trumpet calls, messengers, the use of magic as a weapon of attack and defense, the various troop types, the nature and optimal employment of the nonhuman races, etc. etc.). In this section also, both authors provide a longish list (Ssamiren gives 112, Sa'alur 123) of "basic battle formations." These are battle plans tested by one or more commanders throughout the long centuries of Tekumel's history. Ssamiren describes each formation in detail and discusses its general qualities; Sa'alur, however, goes further and suggests counter formations for each, together with descriptions of battles in which each was used and the factors accounting (in his view) for each win or loss.

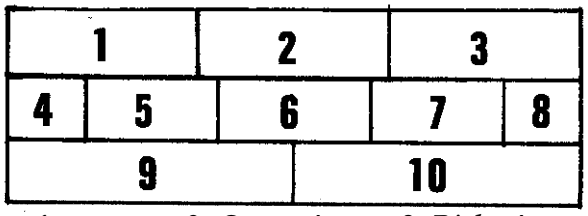
Under "unit formations," both authors discuss various types of organisation, the nature of sub-units, the use of officers, procedures for marching and countermarching, etc. They also provide descriptions of "basic tactical formations" in which units can be deployed upon the battlefield. Both manuals then go on to analyse matters of supply, the provision and maintenance of arms, the merits of various types of weapons and armour, entrenchments, fortifications, use of terrain, scouting and many other military factors. It must suffice here, however, to describe some of these authors' "army formations" and give the more useful of their "unit formations."

Ssamiren divided every battlefield army into "sword units" and "shield units": the former are those meant to attack, to break through enemy ranks, and to be the centre of strength; the latter are those units ordered to hold the enemy, to keep him from breaking through, to harass him and prevent him from committing valuable troops elsewhere. Every battlefield army must have one major "sword unit," and all others then function as "shield units." Very large armies, Ssamiren continues, may have more than one "sword," major and minor "swords." (He is here speaking of open field battles, rather than of defensive positions, sieges, special units charged with particular missions, etc.)

The positioning of one's "sword unit(s)" occupies much of Ssamiren's chapter on field tactics. Should this striking force be placed upon one's flank, upon both flanks, or in one's centre? Should it consist of one heavy unit (e.g. a phalanx), or should it be divided into smaller units? What are the optimal attack formations for these units? Where should secondary "sword" units be emplaced, and what are their logical objectives? What formations are useful for "shield units?" Ssamiren proceeds to answer these questions by describing the multiplicity of formations used by his predecessors and contemporaries. Borrowing terms from the fencing masters of his time, he discusses these in terms of "attack flank, shield centre" or "attack centre, shield flank." The former denotes a powerful striking force placed on one or both flanks and a weak centre ordered to hold. The latter signifies a strong centre planned to carry the main attack, with weaker holding forces on the flanks.

Sa'alur, who wrote some five hundred years after Ssamiren, accepts his predecessor's basic definitions and arguments but goes on to elaborate upon these, discussing special hidden "sword" units, complex formations which changed to some other formation after their arrival on the field, the use of extremely fast bands of missile troops as skirmishers, the deployment of the flying Hlaka scouts as additional harassment, and many other such features. Sa'alur also wrote extensively of defensive field formations, entrenchments, abattis, and other holding tactics.

Both authors divide each army's side of a battlefield into ten subsections and go on to indicate the sorts of units which should be placed in each, depending upon available troops and the terrain. These subareas are:



1. Left Arrow; 2. Centre Arrow; 3. Right Arrow; 4. Left Gauntlet; 5. Left Arm; 6. Central Helm; 7. Right Arm; 8. Right Gauntlet; 9. Left Greave; 10. Right Greave.

Numbers 1-3 are far forward areas, to be filled with light skirmishers, missile troops, and other harassing units; nos. 4 and 8 are the far flanks, to be occupied (depending upon the availability of troops and the basic battle plan) with further light units, heavier missile troops, artillery set up on high terrain, or special "sword" units; nos. 5 and 7 are the inner flanks, to be occupied by heavier units, "sword" units, or good holding units, depending upon the formation used; no. 6 is the main centre, filled with troops appropriate to the formation chosen; nos. 9 and 10 are the rear flanks and reserve areas, held by one's remaining forces and troops planned to enter the battle later.

Sa'alur added two more rear areas to this scheme: the baggage camp, with its protecting troops, and the general's command post. Most tacticians emphasize that the proper place for the Kerdu (the senior general) and his staff is upon some eminence behind his troops, from which he can see and direct the engagement. His army's magic-using forces are usually deployed with him, partly to provide cover for him from enemy sorcery or long-range artillery, and partly to give them a vantage point from which they can direct their spells against the enemy or to protect their own men. Since the exact positioning of the baggage camp and the command post depends largely upon terrain and other factors, most later tacticians have ignored Sa'alur's precise instructions for the placing of these units.

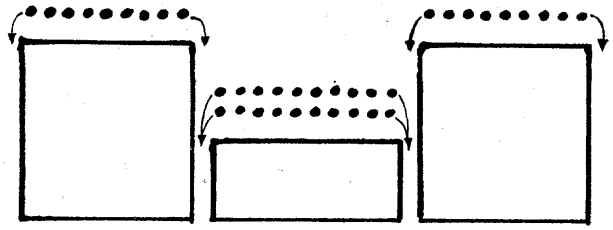
It is now useful to take Ssamiren's basic formations and deal with the more important ones, adding details from Sa'alur wherever feasible, and also commenting upon the modern employment of these by the various nations of Tekumel. The following are just a few of his "attack flank, shield centre" battle plans.

N.B. = *light skirmishers/missile troops*

= *regular medium or heavy troops not further distinguished and dependent upon availability and other factors)*

= *special units (to be described below). Since these formations have been much simplified heavy missle troops, artillery, etc. have not been separately indicated.*

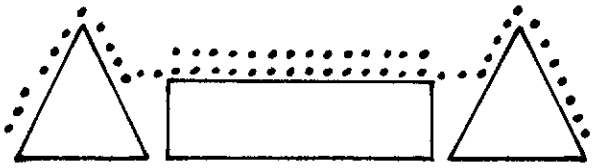
1. The Invincible Glory of Hnau Tektis:



This ancient formation is named after a semi-legendary general of the Three States of the Triangle. It consists of two heavy units (phalanxes, squares, etc.) and a weak centre designed only to hold. Light

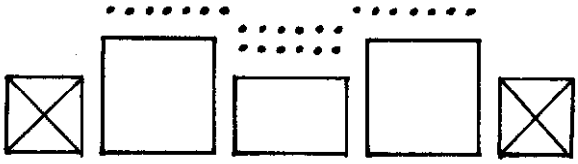
missile troops occupy the Centre Arrow position, and these have orders to fall back through the flank-centre gaps before the enemy can come within charge range. It is still a popular formation among the Salarvyani, the Yan Koryani, and the Pechani. The Mu'ugalavyani rarely use a weak centre formation, and the Livyani also do not employ it. The Tsolyani tend to disdain it because of its simplicity, although it has indeed been used in recent times by them. Either or both of the two heavy flanks may be composed of such powerful units as Shen, Ahoggya, or Pe Choi, if these are available.

2. The Two Peaks of Tso'o Kinel:



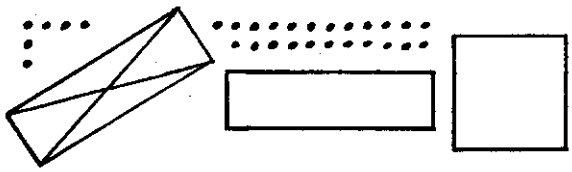
This formation is favoured by the Livyani. It consists of a weak centre but has two powerful wedges (or diamonds) cf. below) in the two inner flank positions. Again, the forward missile troops are programmed to retreat through the gaps and to the sides of the formation as the enemy advances. In a larger battle, the Left and Right Gauntlet positions may be occupied by two more wedge or diamond-shaped units, usually made up of Shen mercenaries. The Tsolyani used this formation at the Battle of Chene Ho in 2,019 against the Mu'ugalavyani. They lost, due to powerful enemy flank defences and an unexpectedly strong centre which split their army in half. The Salarvyani have also experimented with this battle plan against the Pechani with reasonably good results. The Yan Koryani and Mu'ugalavyani have never used it.

3. The Two Mighty Gauntlets of Hrugga:



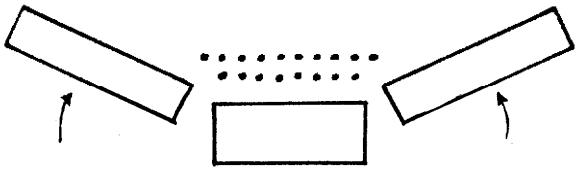
This formation is commonly employed by both the Tsolyani and the Salarvyani, and occasionally by the Yan Koryani. Its main feature is the presence of two powerful (or very fast moving) units in the Left and Right Gauntlet positions; these often have semi-independent commanders (Dritlan) and are ordered to hit enemy flanks, take advantage of gaps in the enemy line, and use considerable personal initiative. It has been used with great success in many battles, and it is the one weak centre formation which is occasionally adopted by the Mu'ugalavyani.

4. The Mace of Karakan:



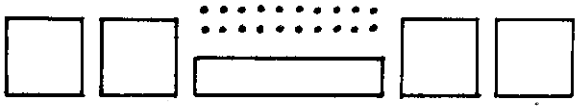
This formation has its most powerful and heaviest unit in the inner right flank position; the centre is ordered simply to hold, and the left flank consists of some specially strong unit, or a unit which is also commanded to hold, although it may have further orders to exploit enemy weaknesses. If this formation is reversed (i.e. if the heavy unit is placed on the left flank instead), it is called the Mace of Vimuhla. It has been used with success by the Yan Koryani against the Tsolyani in 2,347 A.S., and it is a favoured formation also amongst the Tsolyani tacticians. The Salarvyani have occasionally employed it, but the Mu'ugalavyani and the Livyani seem to prefer more balanced lines.

5. The Claw of the Krua:



This formation may begin with an advanced centre and one or both flanks refused, and only after the two flanks have advanced does it become obvious to the foe that this is the Claw of the Krua formation. The flanks are, of course, intended to push back the enemy's flank troops and crush his centre in upon itself. This battle plan is frequently used by all of the nations of Tekumel.

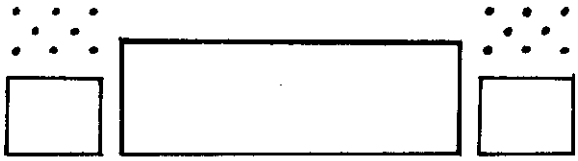
6. The Five Fingers of Death:



This is simply a variant of the Two Mighty Gauntlets of Hrugga; its flanks are composed of more equally balanced units, however. Some of these flank units may begin behind the centre (i.e. in the Left and/or Right Greave positions), and the commander may also opt to change to the Claw of the Krua formation either as a pre-battle decision or by trumpet call during the engagement. This formation is used by all of the major nations except the Mu'ugalavyani, who, as said above, do not prefer centre formations.

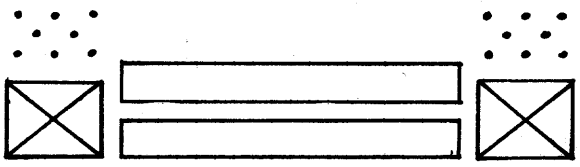
Space does not permit a discussion of Ssamiren's or Sa'alur's preferences for the reserve areas, their choices for the placement of artillery, or such "frills" as especially fast "sword" units ordered to conceal themselves behind one of the front line units and then appear through pre-planned gaps in the latter's ranks, or around one flank. These last are called "warhammer" units, and their use is favoured by the Tsolyani, the Yan Koryani, and the Salarvyani. These special units are almost always made up of Shen, Ahoggya, Pachi Lei, or some other powerful and speedy race. The following are some common "attack centre, shield flank" formations:

7. The Inexorable Sea:



In its simplest form, this formation consists of a central heavy unit (phalanx, deep rectangle, closely arrayed columns, etc.), with weaker holding units on its flanks. The latter may, of course, be special heavy troops, usually accompanied by lighter missile units to provide flanking fire. This formation is frequently used by all of the major nations of Tekumel, and it (or some more complex variant) is almost the only formation employed by the Shen.

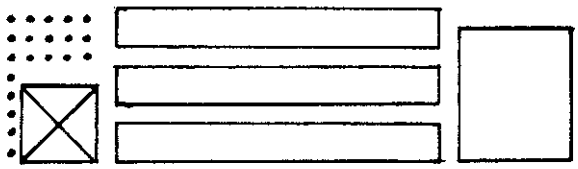
8. The Two Gates of Wuru, the Many-Legged Serpent of Gloom:



This battle plan consists of two strong central units, one behind the

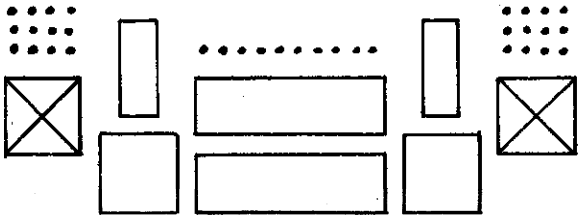
other, with two comparatively strong flanking units and accompanying missile troops. A larger variant, the "Five Feshenga of Wuru," has two further units in the Left and Right Gauntlet positions on the extreme flanks. Missile troops may also be concealed behind the first heavy phalanx, with the ranks of the latter ordered to open up to permit the former to advance, fire, and retreat again; Sa'alur calls this the "Teeth of the Feshenga" variant. All of these formations are frequently used by the Mu'ugalavyani, who occasionally also conceal special "warhammer" units behind either or both flanks — although this is considered rather innovative and daring by them. The Tsolyani, Yan Koryani, and Salarvyani also utilise this deployment occasionally.

9. The Triple Palace of Skulls:



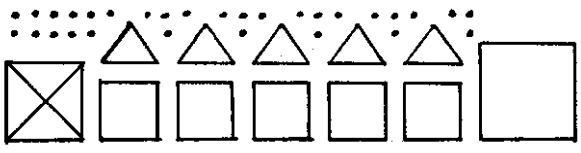
This formation is a favourite with the Mu'ugalavyani for larger battles. For some reason not clear to the author, both of the great tacticians suggest using unbalanced flanks: a stronger unit in either the Left or Right Arm position, with a concentration of light missile troops and/or skirmishers on the weaker flank. Sa'alur also proposes to break up the three great phalanxes into squares, rectangles, or columns in a staggered pattern, with units of light missile troops functioning almost independently between these groups. The Yan Koryani and Tsolyani have used this formation from time to time, and the Salarvyani also employed it successfully against the Tsolyani in 1,218 A.S.

10. The Many Doors of Destiny:



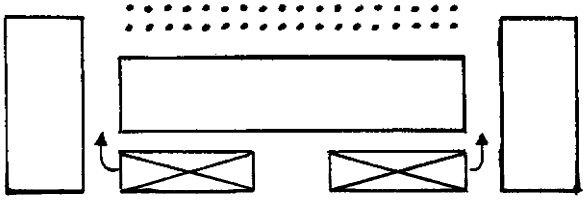
This formation consists of one, two, or three heavy phalanxes in the centre (two being the number favoured by the Mu'ugalavyani); there are then two units in each of the Arm positions, one deployed far forward, and the other held back behind; the Left and Right Gauntlet positions are then occupied by one or more special "warhammer" units. Missile troops are concentrated in the gaps between these and also in the Left and Right Arrow positions. In very large battles the Arm and Gauntlet positions may be filled with several separate units, and as the great central phalanx rolls inexorably forward, the army commander can push forward first one and then another of these flanking units in an attempt to draw his opposite number off balance and thus gain the advantage. This was the formation used by the Mu'ugalavyani at the Battle of the Temple of Chanis in 2,020 A.S., but the Tsolyani outflanked the Mu'ugalavyani left and destroyed the best units on the right before the two great phalanxes could complete the annihilation of the weaker Tsolyani phalanx in the latter's centre. The Mu'ugalavyani commander also failed to deploy sufficient missile troops on his flanks but instead concentrated them in front of his centre, where they were disorganised by Tsolyani light skirmishers and a small unit of archers.

11. The Toothed Jaw of Mighty Qame'el:



As the name indicates, this is primarily a Livyani variant. Both Ssamiren and Sa'alur describe this formation as being common to most of the armies of their time, and their name for it was the "Jaws of the Sro." (N.B. Several of the formation names given herein are those in current use, rather than the names originally provided by the ancient strategists: e.g. only a scholar of Bednalljan Salarvyani would be able to identify the "Two Gates of Wuru" deployment as Ssamiren's "Two Walls of Brass" and Sa'alur's "Ranks of Illimitable Might" formations.) This battle plan consists of a strong centre divided into the wedges and squares of the "Teeth of Kra" formation (cf. below), with weaker flanking units in wedges or diamonds. Missile troops are usually concentrated on the flanks but may also be deployed through gaps in the centre to fire and retreat. The Tsolyani and the Yan Koryani have employed variants of this plan from time to time.

12. The Oncoming Wings of the Hereafter:



This battle plan consists of a strong centre (variously divided into phalanxes, squares, wedges, etc.) and two long, fast-moving columns of lighter troops on the flanks, sometimes with "warhammer" units in concealment in one or both of the Greave positions behind. As the centre meets the foe, one or both of these columns may attempt to cut off enemy flanking units for annihilation by the concealed "warhammer" units coming along behind, or they may swing out like great wings to try to outflank the enemy and attack him from the rear. This is particularly favoured by the Yan Koryani, the Pechani, and the Salarvyani, although the Tsolyani have also used it in a few instances. Missile troops may be concentrated in the Centre Arrow position, or they may be posted on either flank in the Left or Right Arrow positions.

Both Ssamiren and Sa'alur go on to list a great many more formations and to discuss the advantages of advancing or refusing the centre or the flanks, the practice of advancing units, halting them, and then advancing others in order to gain ground and beneficial field position, the various means of catching an opponent off balance by utilising units as feints, decoys, and even sacrifices, and many other features. The above must suffice, however, for a brief introductory article such as this.

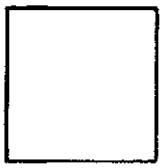
Sa'alur also discusses defensive field positions: e.g. the "Clawed Hands of Mnakhis" (named after another ancient strategician, Mnakhis of Purdimal, most of whose works are now lost). This consists of protecting both flanks (usually missile troops) with rows of protecting sharpened stakes so that they can enfilade an advancing enemy line and cannot themselves easily be charged or outflanked. All of the armies of Tekumel use field entrenchments and fortifications, if time and terrain permit, and Sa'alur categorises some forty-five types of entrenchments, traps, etc. for use by commanders forced into defensive positions.

It only remains to give a brief list of the unit formations employed on Tekumel. Ssamiren provides descriptions of twenty-two separate deployments for individual units, while Sa'alur names seventy-three (many of which are redundant or highly fanciful: e.g. he even gives a name to a disorganised band of troops in no discernible formation: the "Joyous Heroes" pattern!). The more useful unit deployments are:

1. The Stone Mountain:

This consists of a phalanx (or body of other types of troops) in a horizontal rectangle. This is especially favoured for pikemen, spearmen, halberdiers, or even swordsmen. It is employed by all of the nations of Tekumel. The Tsolyani favour phalanxes of ten or twenty men deep; the Mu'ugalavyani organise theirs into units fifteen men deep, and the other nations vary theirs according to the availability of troops and the preference of the commander.

2. The Mighty Block.



This is a body of heavy or medium troops organised in a solid square or a long rectangle. There are no particular limitations on the numbers of men in the ranks or in the files. All of the nations of Teku-me1 make use of this deployment. This name is also given to a march column.

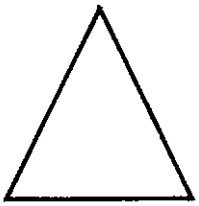
3. The Blade of the Sword:

This is a formation consisting of one, two, or three ranks of men in lines. It is frequently used for skirmishers and missile troops, as well as for the deployment of medium or heavy troops through woods or other difficult terrain.

4. The Serpent:

This is simply a column of men in single file.

5. The Divider of Foes:



This is the wedge, favoured by the Livyani and also a component of many other formations.

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sliced breast of turkey
assortment of sliced wisconsin sausages

salads
sliced beefsteak tomatoes
mixed garden greens
wisconsin cream cole slaw
potato salad

hot dishes
roast strip sirloin of beef
capon and shrimp creole
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rice pilaff

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assorted layer cakes
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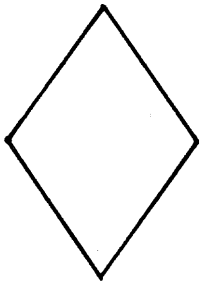
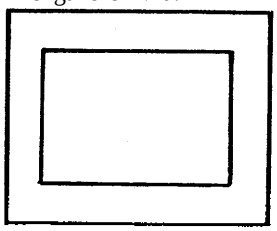


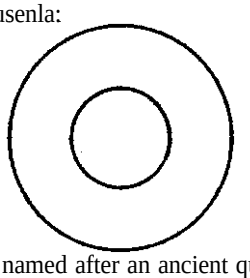
This is a diamond-shaped wedge. The men in the rear are often trained to fight facing away from the front, so that this formation has no real flanks. This is also popular with the Livyani, but it is used by many other nations as well.

7. The Fortress of Milengano of Vra:



This is a hollow square. As with the wedge, men in the sides and rear of this formation are trained to fight facing directly outward, and this deployment thus has no flanks or rear. It moves at a slower pace than purely forward-facing formations, of course, but it is sometimes used to escort a commander or a group of priests away from a pursuing foe. Only the Yan Koryani are really skilled in manoeuvring in this pattern, although other nations use it as well.

8. The Bracelet of Kurusenla:

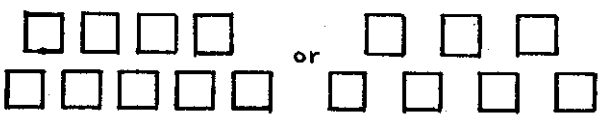


This is a hollow circle, named after an ancient queen of the time of the Dragon Lords. It is used primarily by troops who are surrounded and who would rather die in place than be taken for sacrifice. It is employed by all of the peoples of Tekumel and is a favourite defensive posture of the Pe Choi.

9. The Embrace of Nayari:

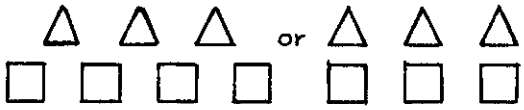
This formation may be used by a phalanx or by other troop types. It consists of a solid rectangle with two forward-projecting "arms" which are used to outflank or to penetrate into an enemy unit. The Tsolyani have developed this deployment to a fine art and can shorten or elongate the "arms" as needed. The Mu'ugalavyani, Salarvyani, and Yan Koryani also use this pattern occasionally with some success.

10. The Garment of Idessa:



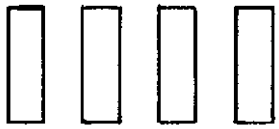
This is a checkerboard pattern, used by heavy and medium troops of all of Tekumel's nations. The size of each of the squares may be varied by the commander as he sees fit. This requires prior training, of course, but many good units are taught to change from the Stone Mountain into this formation, then back again or into some other pattern. It may be noted that on those rare occasions when the Ssu have fought pitched battles, they have adopted checkerboard patterns. The Shen, on the other hand, can hardly be got to drill in this formation, much less fight in it. The Ahoggya also prefer solid blocks or phalanxes and hate what they call "human folkdancing," while the Pe Choi, Pachi Lei, and Tinaliya all favour complex patterns.

11. The Teeth of Kra:



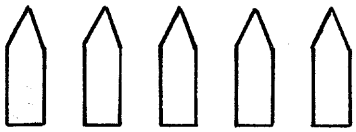
This formation consists of small wedges followed by squares in staggered rows or in columns. It is used by all of the armies of Tekumel, although the Mu'ugalavyani do not favour it.

12. The Towers of Purdanim:



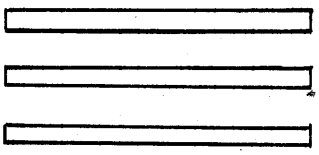
This is a series of columns. A solid line or phalanx is often opened out into this pattern in order that missile troops can run forward, fire, and retreat. The Tsolyani have also trained heavy Shen mercenary units to race forward through these gaps and then reform into a solid phalanx just in front of a surprised enemy. Mu'ugalavyani generals also favour this pattern, and other nations of Tekumel also use it but less frequently. It should be noted that this is a pre-contact formation, and a unit is rarely ordered to hit the enemy line in this pattern.

13. The Palisades of Murudani:



This is similar to the preceding deployment. Each column has a wedge-shaped end, however, and each such sub-unit is ordered to advance and strike the enemy line semi-independently. These columns then function as long wedges initially; after contact has been made, the troops from the rear of each column are trained to wheel to the left or right upon a signal and engage the enemy between the "teeth" of the palisade. This is a common Yan Koryani formation, but it is not much used elsewhere.

14. The Waves of Chanayaga:



This is a series of lines with spaces between them. This is a common formation everywhere for light troops, missile troops, and other troop types in open order. Orders can be given to this pattern to close up into the Stone Mountain formation or to regroup into the Garment of Idessa.

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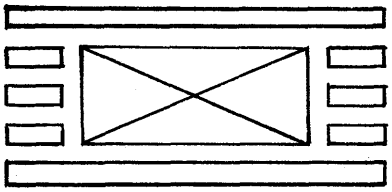
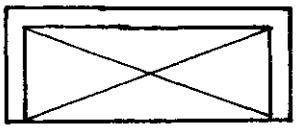
15. The Krua Beneath the Sea:



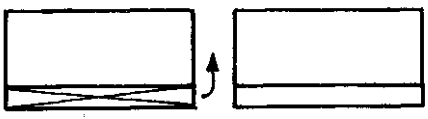
This is a series of lines similar to the preceding, but with a solid, heavy unit (often of Ahoggya or Shen) concealed within the formation. As the human troops reach the enemy, those in front of the concealed unit are trained to run back between their lines and reveal the "warhammer" unit — the deadly Krua. This is a common Salarvyani deployment, and it is occasionally used by the Yan Koryani and Tsolyani as well. The Mu'ugalavyani and the Livyani tend to disdain it.

16. The Gift of Nayari:

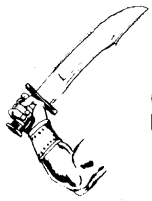


Named after the ancient, evil queen of the Bednalljan Dynasty, this formation consists of medium or even heavy human troops deployed to conceal a powerful Shen or Ahoggya unit within their "phalanx." As contact nears, the human screening troops are trained to run to the sides and then back, while the nonhuman unit strikes the astonished enemy as hard as it can. This is also a Salarvyani strategem rarely practiced by other armies. The success of this and the preceding formation depends upon the inability of the enemy to discern the concealed "warhammer" unit. This is often achieved by raising clouds of dust (cf. no. 21 below) or by magical spells of non-seeing. Concealment is especially difficult if the enemy have flying Hlaka scouts or a command post situated high above the battlefield. Even so, the Salarvyani succeeded with this deployment in 1,219 A.S. by providing the concealed unit, a small phalanx of Ahoggya, with large shields similar to those used by the concealing unit (a body of heavy infantry). Holding these over their carapaces in the "Ghar of the Deeps" formation (cf. no. 20 below), the Ahoggya deceived the Hlaka scouts of the Tsolyani into believing that the entire group was composed of human troops.

17. The Bow of Hrugga:



This formation consists of two phalanxes with a narrow gap between them. A special unit of crack troops is poised at the rear of one (or both) of the phalanxes, and at the moment contact is made, these picked troops race down the lane between their two phalanxes and hit the foe in a powerful wedge formation. The objective is to split the enemy in two and force a gap which can be exploited by further troops from the rear ranks. This is much favoured by Sa'alur, and the Salarvyani (who prefer his manual to all others) often use it. The Bow of Hrugga is known to other nations, of course, and it was even used once — rather improbably — by the N'lyss against a punitive Mu'ugalavyani expedition sent against them. The scarlet-clad battalions of the Four Palaces of the Square were so surprised that they would have lost the battle, had it not been for their superior magic.



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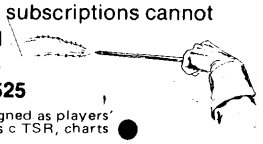

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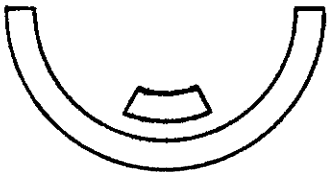
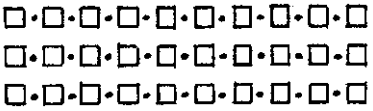
18. The Two Moons:



This is essentially a positional defensive stance. It consists of a large semi-circle of troops with a smaller and more compact semi-circle in the centre. If the two flanks can be anchoured against suitable terrain features (e.g. the walls of a mountain pass), this formation is a difficult one to overcome. Sa'alur also lists this as a defensive army formation, calling it the "Pupil of the Eye," and suggests that the outer semi-circle be composed of lighter troops (preferably with missiles) and the inner one of a dense body of heavy infantry. This deployment is used by many nations, including the smaller ones (e.g. the Ghatoni, Pijjenani, N'lyss, etc.). It was also adopted by the ill-fated Gurek of the White Sun, a Yan Koryani legion, when it was trapped by a greatly superior force of Shunned Ones at the base of Pachalim Cliff in 1,783 A.S. Although the Yan Koryani were eventually slain to the last warrior, they managed to slay nearly triple their numbers of Shunned Ones.

19. The Meadow of Death:



This formation consists of two interpenetrating units trained to work together: a unit of medium troops (usually halberdiers, axemen, or two-handed swordsmen) is interspersed with a unit of missile troops. As the two units advance in open order, the missile troops fire, while their comrades cover them and themselves with their shields. When contact is made with an enemy unit, the missile troops run back through the ranks and form up again elsewhere, preferably at a spot from which they can still pour fire into the rear ranks of the foe. If need be, these missile troops can also be ordered to run around to the rear of the engaging enemy unit and hack at its rear ranks with short swords, axes, etc. This is a typical Yan Koryani formation, since the missile unit is often composed of the younger sons, wives, and daughters of the halberdiers, swordsmen, etc. Other nations use this type of formation sparingly, although interpenetration of units in open order is not uncommon, and some special units are indeed used by various nations which consist of more than one troop type.

20. The Ghar of the Deeps:

This is not so much a separate formation as it is a defensive stance. Units in several of the preceding formations (especially the Stone Mountain, the Mighty Block, the Divider of Foes, the Crystal Square, the Towers of Purdanim, etc.) can be ordered to form a shield wall to their front and left; those in the centre hold their shields over their heads, and those on the right are either lefthanded men or else are ordered to sling their shields on their right sides. The formation then moves forward at a diagonal, as a Ghar does, almost totally shielded from enemy missile fire. This is a common deployment for troops attacking higher fortifications, or who are badly outmatched in missile capabilities. All of the five major nations use this formation, and many of the smaller ones are familiar with it as well.

21. The Curtain of Unseeing:

Again, this is not strictly a "formation" but rather a trick devised by Ssamiren. In order to create confusion and to prevent the enemy commander or his Hlaka scouts from discerning one's deployment, light troops in the forward Arrow positions are trained to stamp their feet and create a cloud of dust, if the weather and the chosen battleground permit. This has the disadvantage of concealing and discomfiting one's own troops, of course; yet in many battlefield situations it is the only means of maintaining secrecy for one's manouevres. It is indeed possible to maintain concealment with spells of non-seeing, although these are of little use on the ground where men are likely to move out of their area of protection, and where the foe are in such close proximity that they can perceive something amiss in the area covered. Spells of non-seeing are more useful, thus, against scouts flying at a distance overhead, but they require time and concentration to cast, and they must be maintained at the cost of efforts which can usually be better directed elsewhere. The "Curtain of Unseeing" is therefore a common defense against the Hlaka, and, as the Tsolyani adage has it, "The best answer to a Hlaka is a mouthful of dust — or an arrow in the belly."

The foregoing are only a few of the many formations and variants proposed by the great ancient strategists, but they should provide an idea of the complexities of warfare on Tekumel. Full translations of the works of Ssamiren and Sa'alur would require several volumes, and much of their content consists of "frills" — variations used perhaps once and then discarded — or of elaborate detailing of these basic patterns. Perhaps the main feature of warfare on Tekumel is the elaborate manouevrability of troops; all of the major nations maintain large standing armies, utilise efficient means of training, and have long traditions of military prowess. It is thus possible to achieve formations and shifts in deployment which would not be possible on this planet.

Continued from page 29

was eagerly pointing towards a moving group of tiny figures just going out of sight within the shadows.

"What caused your excitement?" Dunstan inquired with irritation. It surely couldn't have been those far off men . . .

Mellerd was clambering up on his mare as his master spoke, and he replied with amazement: "Didn't you see those things chasing that little lad yonder?"

"Your eyes must be sharp as a hawk's. I could make them out only as specks at that distance."

The boy nodded agreement: "I couldn't make them out too very well at first either, but when they crossed the top of the last hill there," and he indicated the elevation in the distance, "some trick of the light seemed to magnify them so that I could see as clearly as if they were only a few furlongs away!

At this moment the group topped a nearer hill. Dunstan strained his gaze in the failing light, and suddenly the figures seemed to grow larger, just as Mellerd had explained: "Great Gods!" expostulated the startled errant. "It is a dwarf being pursued by a pack of giant toads and weirdly hopping men!"

In the never-ending quest to expand your fantasy army, do you look at other figures? This painting, by Mike Gilbert, is inspired by the new Mini-Figs Carolingian line. With a touch of imagination, they fit into any fantasy army. Here they are painted historically — your imagination is the only limit on how you could paint them.

Hit Dice: 14
Movement: 12
A/C: 1
Align: Evil - Highly Intelligent
50% Magic Resistant
Attacks: Constriction, 4-48 hp/turn
Bite, 1-8
No. Apearing: 1

The Prowler

When looking into the eyes of the Prowler it is necessary to make a save vs magic or the victim will be irrevocably mind blanked, a zombei under the control of the Prowler. (Those that save the Prowler will attempt to crush within its powerful coils.) The zombeis then become the recipient of the monster's eggs which she carefully injects underneath the skin of the victims with the brown tentacles that line her mouth.* The Zombeis are then turned loose to wander aimlessly about for 2-8 days until the eggs hatch and disclose their wriggling contents, cute little baby prowlers. The zombei now becomes their first meal, he lays down calmly as the little devils pick his bones clean.

Some exceptionally intelligent prowlers have been known to form hatcheries. They charm large numbers of people and use them as guards and as hosts for their eggs. These hatching grounds will usually be found in abandoned caves or underground.

To restore the minds of the zombeis it is necessary to acquire the services of 3 Patriarchs, who simultaneously cast dispell evils upon the zombei who then regains his mind.

*However no matter how tenderly she does this the victim still takes 1-8 points of damage.

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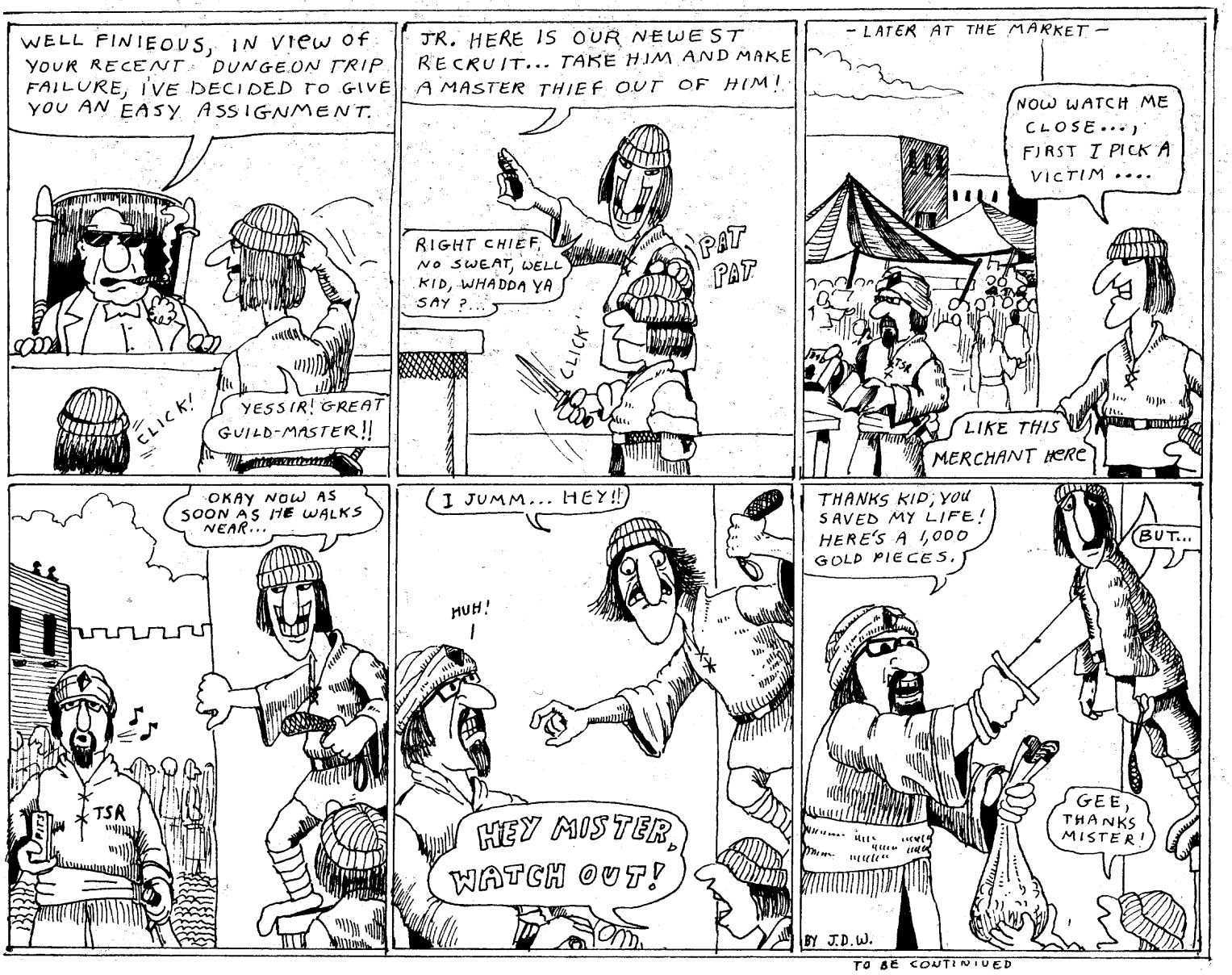

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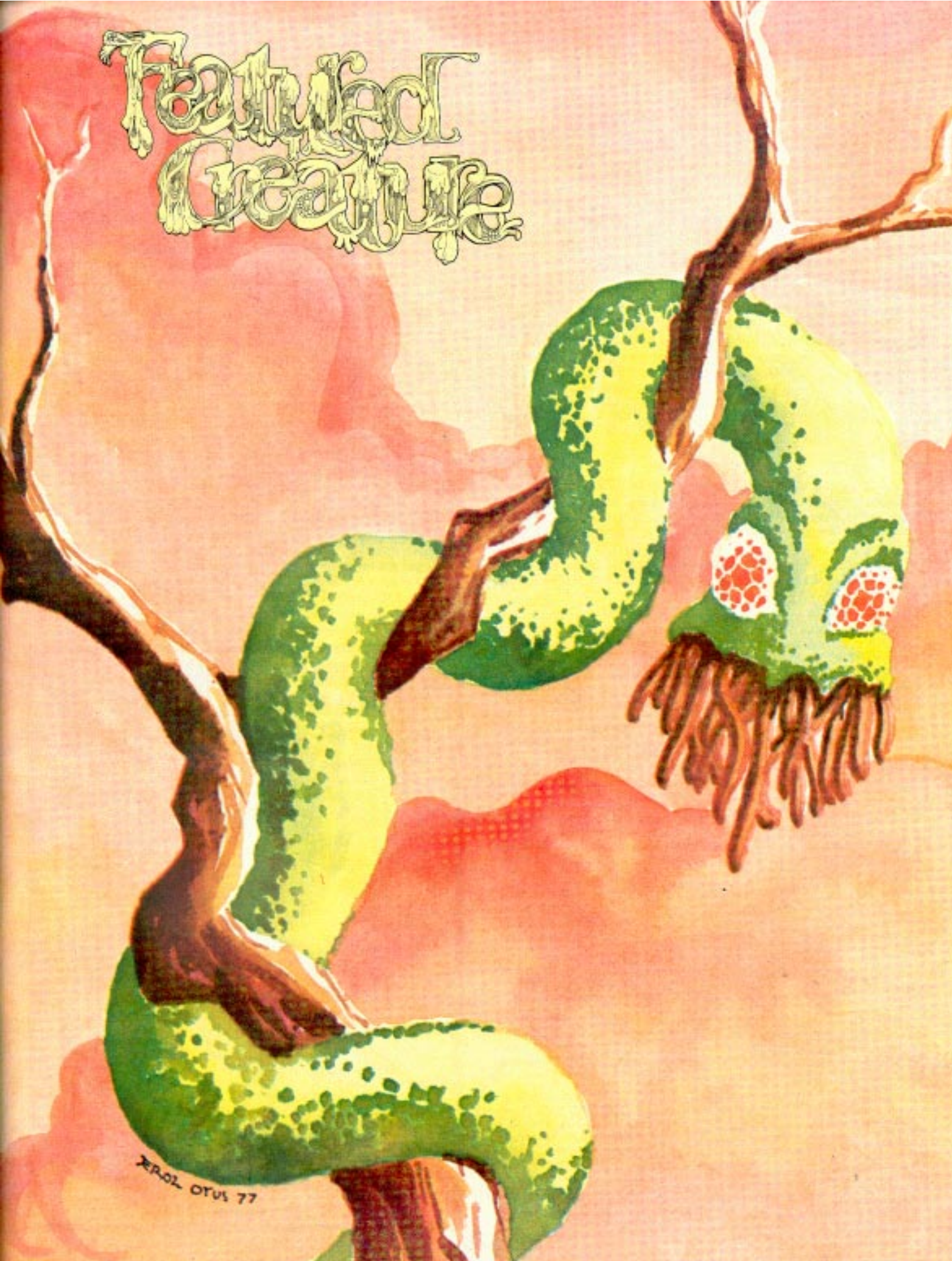

Featured Creature
JEROL OTUS 77

EDITOR'S LIBRARY

Metagaming Concepts, makers of STELLAR CONQUEST, the first good, playable space game, have scored another dandy. OGRE is what they promise will be the first of many "MicroGames".

OGRE simulates (if conjecture can be "simulated") ground combat towards the end of the 21st Century. It is named after the starring unit, an awesome, fully automated fighting machine some 50 meters long, possessing the firepower of an entire conventional armor company.

The author has provided a very plausible rationale, so that disbelief is easily suspended. The map is only 9"x14", and the game comes with 91 die-cut counters, and a 20 page, 4"x7" rules booklet. All this for only $2.95 would make it a good buy even if it was only a ***fair*** game. In fact, it is an outstanding game. Once it has been mastered, two proficient players can play out an entire scenario in under an hour. The game is very challenging; both as the OGRE playre, and as the defender. As the defender, even if you get wiped, it doesn't hurt a bit. The OGRE is so powerful, so awesome, that it is very simple to rationalize getting mopped up by it. As powerful as it is, it still remains a challenge to play the OGRE, as a bad move or miscalculation can easily tip the scales in favor of the defender. If the defender plans well, he has the firepower to take the OGRE out, regardless of how well the OGRE is played.

Plenty of extra counters allow all manner of scenarios to be set up. There are a number of optional rules that are very worthwhile. For fast gaming, a continuing challenge each time it's played, and the paltry price, OGRE is definitely the best buy currently available . . . I can't recommend this game highly enough. — TJK

For Metagaming's address, see their ad elsewhere this issue.

Ever since last year's GenCon, this magazine has had dozens of inquiries about **The Judges Guild,** but I put off answering them until I had more to go on.

The verdict is now in; they put out **great** stuff. I have to feel that if I was a regular subscriber, meaning that I had paid for a membership, I would certainly be getting my money's worth. As it stands, I look forward to getting the review copies with great anticipation.

TJG supplies all the necessary minutiae that mean the difference between a shallow campaign and one that is well founded and developed. Their CityState of the Overlord is absolutely fascinating; their outdoor material is simply fantastic.

TJG has something to offer every type of D&D player/DM. For the novice, they offer instant (or nearly so) playing as is. For the intermediate player, they offer new ideas and treatments of DMing hassles. For the long time D&Der, they offer a professional example with which to compare existing campaigns.

For many, they offer far more material than will ever see use by even the most detailed DM. Even if nothing is adopted, having read through it all can't help but make you reassess your campaign.

They have hundreds and hundreds of NPC all prepared for you; what you adopt becomes a matter of taste on the part of the DM.

TJG had a deadline problem one or two installments ago, but worked very hard at satisfying any complaints that arose from that hassle. THE DRAGON heartily recommends TJG for all D&Ders.

As an aside, we are in the process of starting up a brand new D&D campaign, coordinated and DM'ed by your editor, using a good deal of TJG material. For instance, the campaign now getting underway is utilizing the TJG outdoor map, with a good deal of the small towns/villages just the way they designed them.

TJG has an ad elsewhere this issue.

Convention Schedule '77

Minnesota Campaign — June 4 & 5 Olmsted Co. Fairgrounds, Rochester, MN. Many tourneys, from WWII to fantasy. Guest Speaker - dealer exhibits. $2.00/day, $3.00/weekend. Contact Brian Houston, POB 6603, Rochester, MN 55901

GLASC II — June 17-19 CSU Northridge campus. Boards, minia., D&D; dealers and publishers will be present. $3.00. Contact Jim Blancher, 19536 Minnehaha St., Northridge, CA 91326

Phil Con — June 24-26 Widener College, Chester, PA. 20+ tourneys - Giant D&D & WRG Ancients Events, Demos, Seminars, Auction, Figure painting competitions. Many manufacturer's reps. $2.00/day, $5.00/weekend. Contact Jay Hadley, 918 Harry St., Conshohocken, PA 19428

Can Con — July 1-3 #11-2415 South Vale, Ottawa, ONT K1B 4T9. Tournaments besides D&D, Gladiator & Western Gunfight not set at press time. Downtown Ottawa. Costs vary. Contact Can Con at above address.

WarCon VIII — July 1-3, Oklahoma City Univ, Smith Chapel (lower level), Okla. City, OK. Many tourneys — Star Guard, D&D, Star Trek, WRG Ancients, Medieval, Western Gunfight, Colonial Skirmish, Gladiators, Video Game competition on Advent Video Beam, more. $7 for weekend, $1 discount for pre-registration. Contact A.H. Albert, 3230-NW 50th St, Okla City, OK 73112

CinciCon VII — July 15-17, 1977. Junior Achievement Hall of Free Enterprise. Reservations to motels should be made early. CinciCon VII will have movies and computerized games, besides the not-so-normal spectrum of games, auctions and exhibitors. For info, write: ConciCon VII, c/o Boardwalk, 1032 Delta Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45208

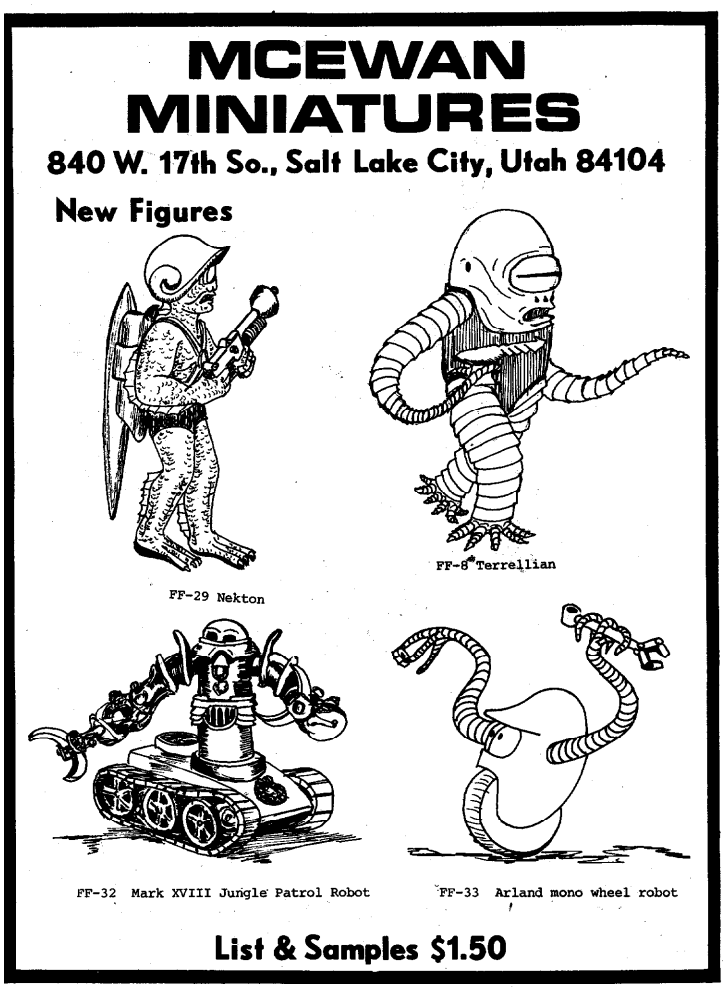
Midwest Military Historical Society — July 16 & 17, Commons Hall, Park Ridge Inn, Park Ridge, Ill. Sat. 9:00-8:00, Sun. 10:00-6:00. Ancient, Medieval, ACW, Napoleonic, WWII — Armor, Naval & Air — Fantasy & SF. Contact Tony Adams, 301-N. Wille St., Mount Prospect, IL 60056.

Origins III — July 22-24 Wagner College, Staten Isl., NYC. Boards, some minia. and fantasy, seminars, workshops, tourneys & exhibits. The East Coast Con, second in splendor only to Gen Con. Reservations, Origins '77; c/o SPI, 44-E 23rd St., NYC 10010

Gen Con X — August 18-21 Playboy Resort, Lake Geneva, WI. Hosting 10th Annual Diplomacy Con. Tourneys, open gaming, miniatures, boards, role-playing and more. Special guests include Gardner Fox, Fritz Leiber & Harry Fischer. Seminars, demos & discussions. America's Premier wargaming con, now in 10th consecutive year. Address inquiries to Gen Con X. POB 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147

Great Lakes Convention — Sheraton-Lockport Inn, 515 South Transit Street, Lockport, New York 14094, September 17-18. Tentative schedule of events
Opening ceremonies by local re-enactment group Boardgaming competition
Miniature competition Seminars & slide show presentation Modeling contest
Awards banquet. For more info: Richard J. D'Angelo, 395 South Shore Blvd., Lackawanna, New York 14218.

GenCon South — Feb. 9,10 & 11, 1978, Robert Meyer Hotel, Jacksonville, FL. Endorsed by TSR. Contact: Cowford Dragoons, 5333-Santa Monica Blvd., N. Jacksonville, FL 32207



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CHAPTER SEVEN

Summary:

Unable to resist the wanderlust any longer, Dunstan has robbed his father's strongbox and set forth on his quest for adventure and glory.

In his naivete, Dunstan casts his lot in with a band of scurrilous cutthroats, believing them to be adventurers sharing his noble pursuits.

Our hero learns the true nature of his erstwhile companions, and his pockets are the poorer for it. Dunstan parts company from the band, narrowly escaping apprehension by the Warders. In the confusion, he 'liberates' a horse, and sets off for Huddlefoot, there to spend the night in the stables.

Our would-be knight acquires a would-be squire, and strikes a bargain with Evan to travel with his caravan to Rheyton and Nehron. This arranged, he takes care of the incriminating horse, spinning a tall tale of being on official business. This done, they depart.

After many plodding days on the caravan track, the boredom is shattered by a group of Nehronlanders blocking the road, girded for war. Demanding a special tax, the Nehronlanders block the way to Weal. Determining to refuse the suspect taxation, the caravan determines to fight. Having killed his first foemen, Dunstan finds himself forced to flee the carnage, accompanied by his retainer.

It was a full league later that he allowed his panting destrier to slow to a walk. There was no enemy in sight, and for that matter there was no friend in sight either. Of Mellerd there was no sign, but Dunstan did not linger to see if he was yet back on the trail. Instead. he clambered down, wiped the horse down quickly with several handsful of long grass, and then led it off again at a brisk walk. They traveled thus for a spell; then Dunstan's legs began to ache from the pace he had set, so he thought to remount. Just as he was about to do so he heard a cry, but his anxious glance revealed Mellerd arriving, the mare spent and the boy pale and very frightened.

"About time you got here," Dunstan said with irritation. "I've had to see to my horse myself. It isn't enough that I must go around saving your worthless little neck from ravening Nehrons, I suppose I'm now to serve you and carry you around — why, you can't even keep up as ordered." Here he broke off a moment, for the lad had toppled from the saddle and now lay where he fell weeping in great sobs. Dunstan rushed to him: "Are you hurt?"

Mellerd shook his head, trying to stifle his slobbering: "I ain't — am not — hurt, (sob) it was the fighting and killing back there (sob) . . . I — I'm not used to such bloody dealings, and (sob) I think I'm going to be sick," and he was. At this Dunstan turned away in disgust. In a while the boy regained his composure a bit: "Did you see what happened to Vardobothet?"

"No," replied Dunstan, turning once more towards his small servant, "I lost sight of him in the press — when I ran that giant berserker through most neatly ere my lance shivered." Seeing that the boy was unable to properly appreciate his prowess, Dunstan asked: "Know you his fate?"

The reply was in the negative and barely audible. "I suppose that he fell in the charge when the Nehron came out of the forest. I think I glimpsed him near Captain Rufus, but then you took up the bridle of my horse, and we fled . . . "

Dunstan found himself feeling empty inside, and he liked it not: "Well, that's that. Get to your feet and rub down the mounts. Be quick about it too, for we must be clear of this area if we're not to fall into the hands of those buggerly Nehron bastards. O yes," he added as an afterthought, "I'll excuse you from preparing us a meal while the horses rest awhile yet and get it myself . . . will you have a heart-sausage or cheese and biscuit?"

The lad fell to his duties without reply. The stupid little clod, thought Dunstan, he'll need all the strength he can get for what's to come. Well, perhaps it was just as well, for he had been puking but a moment before, so Dunstan munched both cheese and sausage as he oversaw the care of their mounts. And, he mused, the work I give him keeps his mind off what transpired at the barricade. I have no such panacea for myself.

A column of dark smoke announced that they were approaching the castlewick of Blackmoor. It was the morning of an otherwise bright day not long since the slaughter took place on the narrow road to Weal. The two had traveled fast. Several times they had quickly left the lance for the safety of the surrounding wood as a band of Nehronland foot or a rare body of horse passed northwards laden with plunder and marching with much jesting and laughter. Each time Mellerd would salute their passing with various rude gestures, for he daily came to hate all Nehronlanders more passionately as he missed the Kimbri Vardobothet whose death came at their hands. There was now a particularly thorny problem facing them. They could not, of course, proceed directly through the place ahead, for it was obviously swarming with enemy soldiers. To the east was a jumble of broken terrain stretching away for endless leagues towards the sea. Worse, it was the home of many of the various bands of Nehron, so passage through that place would be nearly as dangerous as going straight along the road through Blackmoor. But to the west was a trackless forest which led to the slopes of the Senescent Hills, most inhospitable and the dwelling place of creatures who did not welcome men intruding upon their domain. The trick would be to swing wide enough to bypass the fortress un-

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seen by any of the numerous warriors thereabouts, and then come back onto a route south again. If they went east they would eventually make the road to Rheyton as they circled back. In the other direction they would strike the passage to the free city of Humpbridge which bent from southwest to south across the base of the Senescent range. Dunstan was faced with making a decision from what he remembered of maps and his experiences on the trek which brought them to these straits originally.

"Well, Mellerd," he spoke softly to the lad without really expecting any reply, "which way shall we go?"

"I don't want to go back to Rheyton," was his only reply.

That was a point so obvious that Dunstan had completely overlooked it in analyzing their situation. "You have profited greatly in your short service with me, boy, and some of my own wit seems to have rubbed off on you," and putting his arm about Mellerd's thin shoulders he continued: "Now see to the watering of our steeds and the filling of our own waterskins. I am going ahead to see what Blackmoor now looks like. When you've finished your chores saddle the beasts and wait my return."

In half an hour's travel through the evergreens paralleling the lane, Dunstan came to the foot of a steep hill. After ascending the eminence and finding the view still obstructed he climbed well up into a tall conifer and from this position both the village and the castle could be seen. While the village appeared to be little hurt, the fortress was partially ruined — evidently by fire, for the smoke they had seen emanated from the still smouldering rubble of what had been some of the lesser buildings within the place. The keep was intact, however, and it flew a green banner with a white wolf's head, the flag raised by the united bands of Nehronland. He sat quietly observing for some time, safe from detection himself in the shady cover of the pine boughs. Then he clambered down and trotted back to where Mellerd waited.

"You were gone so long, sir, I began to think that I'd lost you as I did . . ."

"Don't talk rubbish — we've no time for it." He looked hard at Mellerd, but could not read anything in the boy's expression. "I saw everything, and they somehow managed an intaking of the castle. My guess is that it was treachery. We never had a chance with the caravan. It must have been planned to waylay us in order to prevent any warning of the attack reaching the Overking. It seems every warrior hereabouts has gathered, and Blackmoor was just the opening battle, for there were streams of marching men choking the way to Rheyton. If that place falls Nehron will be master of the territory this side of the Aarn from the sea to the Kimbry Borders."

"Then we must ride for our lives and warn them," the boy interjected.

"A useless strategem, dullard. The enemy are already on the march, and we could never get ahead of them. Besides, it is unnecessary." At this Mellerd looked so taken aback that Dunstan could not refrain from smirking. "Think on it a minute. Rheyton has strong walls, and **that** place will not be had by enemies from within. The Nehronlanders will perforce have to sit down in siege. While these rude fellows are fierce warriors among the forests and rough hills here, in the open they are no match for the chivalry of Thall. My guess is that they'll be driven back from Rheyton and the moorlands, but hold long where the forest comes down towards the town. Eventually Blackmoor will be regained, and perhaps another few leagues of territory added to the Overking's march here. Mark my words."

His servant considered all this for a moment and finally saw the logic of what Dunstan had said: "Thank you for explaining all of this to me, master, for now I understand the folly of what I would have done but for your wise counsel." The strange look that passed over his master's face as he spoke did not miss Mellerd's attention either.

"You *do* mimick well," was all the reply his thanks received. With an irritated wave, Dunstan motioned for his mount to be brought to him: "Time we departed. It is slow going through the woodlands, and we must take care not to come upon any of the enemy. We have two or three days of hard riding before us, and standing here playing at oration will gain us naught towards their completion."

The very next day a handful of Nehronlanders had run into the two, and in the pursuit Dunstan and Mellerd had been forced to flee deeper and deeper into the forest. The woodland was primaeval, and because there was no underbrush to hinder the horses, they eventually outdistanced the men afoot. Although they were at a loss to determine where they were, Dunstan's sense of direction was good, and he was positive that they had kept generally westwards in their flight. If now they turned gradually southwards, they should have lost nothing save perhaps a day of time. The ground beneath the covering of massive evergreens rolled in hilly swells, making travel easier if the valley troughs were followed. This they did, although it led them more to the southwest than the young men desired, for if nothing else it would assure that any pursuit would be escaped. The Nehron, like the others who lived near the Senescent Hills, avoided going far into the country as superstition caused them to greatly fear the place.

Eventually their choice of a route brought them to the valley of a strange river, for the waters were exceedingly dark despite the brightness of the day. Both wanderers were unfamiliar with the phenomenon and did not approach it too closely at first, keeping at as great a distance as possible while taking advantage of its course to make their journey easier. The blackness of the water abated not the least after observing it at the end of the day, some miles ride downstream. Mellerd was frightened of the place anyway, for the breeze blew almost continually along the tops of the hills causing the boughs of the firs to give off an eerie whispering sound. The inky stream was too much to take when added to the former, and the lad was convinced that they would never leave the hills alive. As they were out of provisions and short of water, Dunstan was almost ready to agree, for they seemed to be progressing deeper and deeper still into a totally uninhabited region.

"I don't care if you are scared or not, boy," Dunstan replied to Mellerd's silent refusal to an order just given: "There's nothing for it but to start living off the land. You get busy and set your snares and traps!" Knowing that the lad was petrified of the stream of black water, Dunstan said magnanimously, "I'll relieve you of the duty of caring for the beasts — doesn't that please you." It somehow did, for Mellerd quickly went off to perform his task of visiting the small game trails without further complaint. His master led the horses down to the edge of the water to see if they would balk at quenching their thirst from such a strange river. The mounts snorted and refused to drink at first, but after a moment they plunged their muzzles into the ebon fluid. When they had finished Dunstan watched them closely for any sign that they had been harmed, but the beasts stood apparently unaffected, so he scooped up a handful of the water and cautiously tasted it. There was nothing from its taste that would distinguish it from any other water, and after another moment of hesitation Dunstan quaffed freely, filled their containers, and brought the two horses back to the spot selected for the night's camp. Some trick of nature had evidently colored the brook thus, thought the young man, without harming its properties at all — so much for peasants' superstitious fears . . .

A cry from somewhere behind broke his train of thought. It was Mellerd calling for him to come quickly! He hadn't unsaddled their steeds, so it was only a moment before he was mounted and riding off in the direction from which the boy had called. Dunstan topped the crest of the ridge sheltering the river valley when he heard the cry again, off to his left. What the hell can it be now? The rays of the setting sun revealed a lessening of the dense growth of trees from whence the sound had come, and he soon cleared the forest. There was the boy, and beyond stretched open, rolling hills. They had come to the western verge of the woodlands at last, but was that the reason for the boy's excitement? No. He

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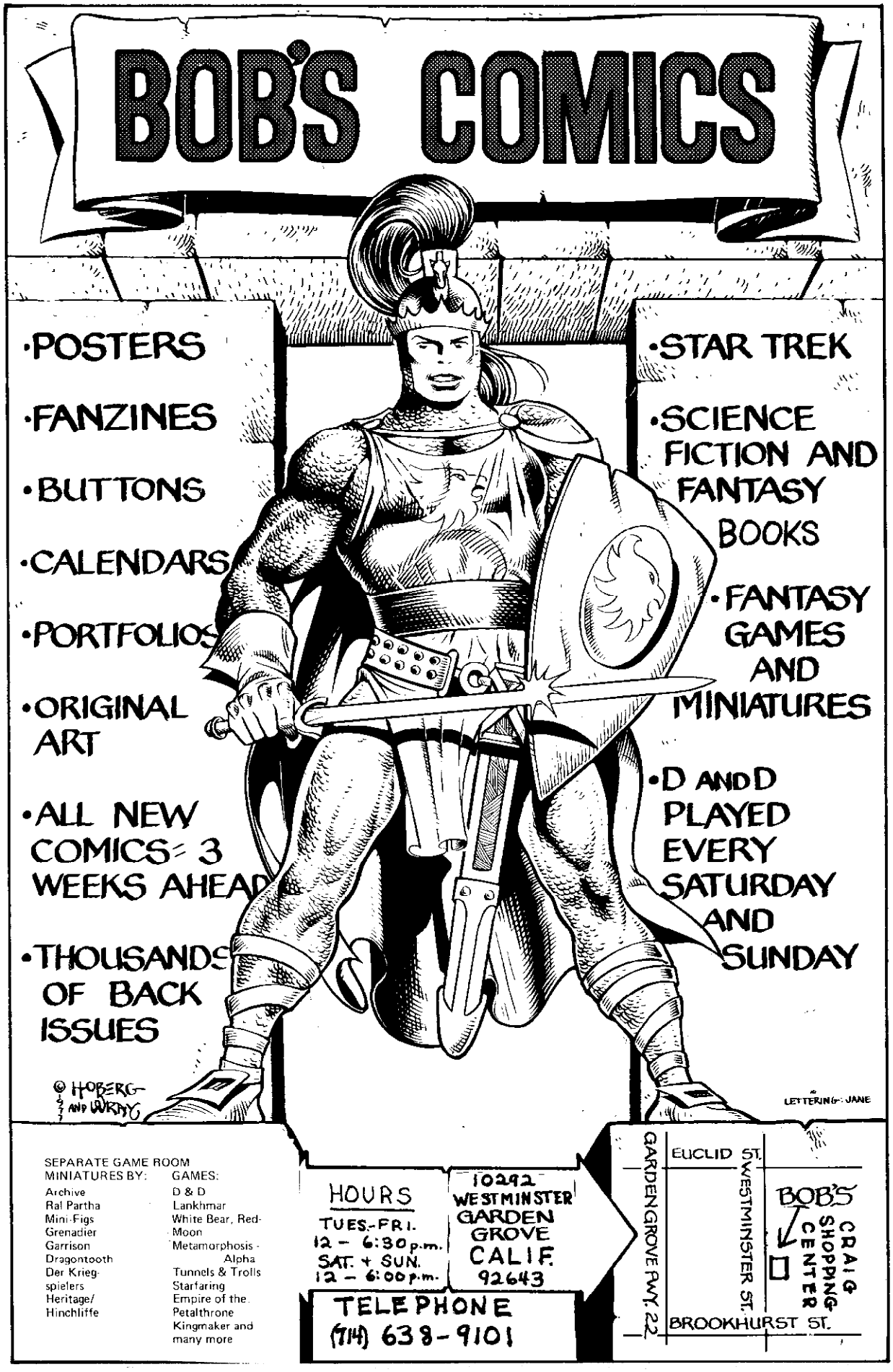
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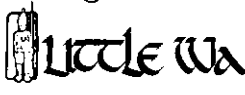

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