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judging by the number of mass combat fantasy battles, particularly Warhammer, being played at Dragonmeet, there is obviously a resurgence of interest in wargaming. However, the popularity of fantasy brought about by D&D means that armies are not led by generals but by chaotic goblin warlords and invincible champions. I must admit that vast and colourful armies of Citadel Miniatures marching across fantastic landscapes beats drab World War II infantrymen anytime. Wizards, flying creatures and fanatical undead add somewhat to the atmosphere and the rules reflect the excitement. But I wish I could learn not to keep marching my dwarves over invisible pits.

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OPEN BOX

In Open Box, science fiction and fantasy games and rulebooks currently in the shops are reviewed by independent authorities.

OPEN BOX

BATTLEDROIDS

Wargame

FASA

£16.95

Take one gimmick, knock up a game system to go with it and put the results into a pretty box. That's been a recipe for quick success in the games industry for some while now; the only problem has been finding an original and interesting gimmick. For this product, FASA have picked up on the current popularity of toy plastic robots. Being a great fan of these myself, I was really looking forward to this game.

First impressions were good. Inside the box you get a 32-page rulebook, two (identical) 17x22 inch terrain maps, sheets of terrain symbols and playing pieces, two small do-it-yourself model robots and, pleasantly surprising, a die. Unfortunately, the two 3" high plastic kits require glue, which is not provided. Although the game is intended for at least two players it works best with a number of robots; only two kits are provided which limits things rather. The counter sheets contain cut-out figures of droids, however, these sheets are of thin paper with the result that the counters blow all over the place at the slightest sneeze and get crumpled quickly. The rulebook suggests you glue the sheets onto cardboard, but some skimping on components is unnecessary and annoying.

So what of the game itself? Well, six pages of the rulebook contain 'background information'. This is just the sort of thing that is sadly missing from many role-playing games, although it adds nothing to what is fundamentally a one-off wargame.

The rest of the rules are split into four parts - the Basic and Advanced games, Expert and Optional rules. The rules are well written and clearly explained - perhaps too clearly. It can be a little irritating being told how to roll two dice!

The Basic game introduces the elementary rules and concepts fairly painlessly. The Advanced game brings in the important additions of heat build-up and droid record sheets.

Heat build-up occurs as a result of strenuous activity and can be offset by heat sinks on the droid's surface. When the internal temperature gets too high the droid begins to suffer; this affects movement and combat capabilities, and if the heat level gets too high the droid needs to shut down or risk having its ammunition explode!

The record sheets are used to keep track of a droid's status, damage, weapon, etc. The rulebook contains statistics for ten standard types of droid all having different characteristics.

The Expert game introduces still more rules, including critical hits. Finally we have the Optional rules, all of which should really be used. These include rules for clearing woods, starting fires (intentionally or otherwise!) as well as the intriguing prospect of using bits of other droids as clubs! Also included, somewhat predictably, are rules for designing your own droids using the record sheets.

Overall, this is a well-written, easy-to-understand set of rules. Much of the design is clearly specific to robot combat and succeeds in capturing the flavour of this sort of battle. As it stands, Battledroids is a very good robot combat system, but very little in terms of a 'game'. The production quality leads one to expect more.

Production: 7 Value: 4
Playability: 8 Complexity: 4 Overall: 7 Trevor Mendham

TALISMAN

Computer Game

Games Workshop Ltd

£7.95

Talisman is Games Workshop's version for the 48K Spectrum of the boardgame of the same name. Whilst many of the readers of White Dwarf will be familiar with the original, most of the purchasers will not, so it is with them in mind that this review is being written.

The game is for one to four players, each of which can either be a human player or controlled independently by the computer. The characters can be one of ten types, including Warrior, Wizard, Ghoul, etc. These vary in their initial requisites: these are Strength (physical fighting power), Craft (magical fighting power), Lives, and Gold. It is also possible to obtain various spells (of which there are 14), some of which can be cast on other players, some on creatures and some on yourself. The game can be played at one of three speeds, appropriately called 'Laid Back', 'Moderate' and 'Speedy'.

It's at this point that the major flaw with Talisman shows itself - the instructions. Up to this stage they are clearly laid out and take you through the initial process very well. But from here on they are skimpy in the extreme and it is up to the player to find out what to do rather than be told in the instructions: you are not even told explicitly the objective of the game. There are some narrative-style comments about a hidden source of power which you need the Talisman to reach, so one presumes the objective is to be the first to do so. Once the game commences, the players take turns to move their character about between various locations on the playing board. A picture of the location is drawn at the top of the screen and underneath are shown the objects and characters also present. These are very well drawn and make the game very pleasurable simply to sit back and watch.

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Each player has a certain amount of time – indicated graphically by an hourglass – in which to wander around exploring the locations. At the end of this time he must stop and have an ‘encounter’ in the area he occupies. This encounter may be a random event – either pleasant or otherwise! – or a fight.

Fights may either take place with Strength or Craft. Against another player, you may choose which of these to use, but against a creature you have no option. If the player loses, he loses one of his lives – when these are all gone he is out of the game. If he wins, the creature is removed from the game and he may pick up any items and followers in the area.

Although objects and followers are mentioned and the possible variations listed, their actual function is not explained. Most add to Strength or Craft, which can be ascertained from the screen display, but some of the other effects are less obvious. Also it is not always obvious what some of the graphics represent. The instruction book contains many pictures of Pixies, Crown, etc., but these bear no relation to the graphics used in the program. It might have been better to use the space to show the creature in the manner which they appear on the screen.

The ‘board’ has two main sections, and movement from one to the other is usually possible only when you have sufficient Strength or Money. It is then possible to embark on a series of ‘tests’, which again require lots of followers and items for you to pass through alive. If you do succeed, you obtain The Crown of Creation and win the game.

Overall, the presentation of Talisman is excellent and the graphics make it a pleasure to play. It will certainly appeal to those who like knitting objects and players, as the computer makes a very reasonable job of this.

**Programming:** 8 **Fun:** 7

**Graphics:** 9 **Instructions:** 3

**Skill:** 6 **Overall:** 7

Trevor Mendham

---

**THE HALLS OF THE DWARVEN KINGS**

RPG Play-Aid

Integrated Games £7.95

This weighty new play-aid is the first in the Complete Dungeon Master series by Integrated Games. It is a joint effort of Beast Enterprises (better known for their Tortured Souls magazine) and Alan Hickling, designer and owner of Endless Games.

Physically Halls consists of a 24-page scenario, 10 scenic illustrations on photograph quality paper, a three piece dungeonmaster’s screen, 12 sheets of A4 size pages, four pages of cut-out maps, scrolls, etc., and four large cards of NPC statistics.

The closest description of this product one can offer is that it is similar to GW’s Dungeon Planner series. Component quality is slightly lower, but it is here that the comparisons end. Halls represents a new concept in gaming, everything for the harassed DM is done, all cross-referenced, illustrated and explained. Although they carefully do not mention any specific game system in the text, it is obvious that it is intended for use with AD&D and RuneQuest in mind (just have a look at the stats).

The floor plans are of the standard Endless Plans type, and are a marked improvement on Alan Hickling’s earlier efforts. Useful though they are the ‘scenic illustrations’ are not up to normal artwork status, the incidental drawings are, by and large, better.

Most useful are the DM’s screens which have miniaturised floor plans on them with an ‘at a glance’ key, but the real bonus are the cut-out maps, scrolls and artefacts.

Halls of the Dwarven Kings is perfect as an illustration of how to set up an adventure; the DM need only read the background and then the characters can begin. This is the first of a new series and promises to be a worthwhile addition to any DM’s armoury of adventures.

**Ease of Use:** 6 **Production:** 6

**Value:** 7 **Usefulness:** 10

**Overall:** 8

BY Rowe

---

**WARHAMMER (2nd Edition)**

Wargame Rules

Citadel Miniatures £9.95

Physically, Warhammer II is a vast improvement upon the original, with three sizeable rulebooks sporting full-colour John Blanche artwork. Also included are colour cut-out figures to use in the Magnificent Sven scenario (a new twelve page pull-out in the Battle Magic book), and a very useful ready reference chart and order sheet.

The rules themselves run to 150 pages, split between the Combat, Battle Magic and Battle Bestiary books. Essentially, there are few changes from the first edition, however, certain major clarifications and expansions have been included to make the new version somewhat more useful.

Notable additions are uses and effects of standards and musicians, and new rules for flying, fortifications, fire, artillery, chariots, reserves units, specialist magic-users, and poison. All of the characteristics of characters and monsters are now numerical rather than the old mixture of letters and numbers previously in force.

The photographs are profusely illustrated with some very useful diagrams explaining how certain of the rules involving manoeuvring actually work. The photographs of scenery look like those cut out of a 1980s’ Donald Featherstone book, but luckily the poor quality of these are an exception rather than a rule.

The development of ‘The Known World’ provides a useful anchor for the wide variety of creatures and cultures. The world is based on our own with certain modifications, thus reminiscent of an old F&G set of rules, Archworld. Aztec has become Slann, and the far east is called Cathay: viking types, arab and old world all have roughly historical backgrounds and tropes.

Warhammer II is a predictable expansion of the original, although it has not ironed out all the problems; personally I do not like throwing a bucket full of dice to cause casualties and then find that your opponent can put them back with a saving throw. However, Warhammer does remain the only viable set of fantasy mass battle rules; the continued flippant attitude of the mainstream historical wargame establishment to fantasy gaming has made this so.

**Complexity:** 6 **Production:** 6

**Ease of Use:** 7 **Value:** 8

**Overall:** 8

Robert Alcock

---

The character is killed, he is resurrected by the gods and returned to the beginning. The idea wears off after two or three reincarnations.

The artwork in both books are of very good quality, the price is reasonable. These are two worthy additions to the collection, and I hope to see more of John Blanche’s and Mark Smith’s work soon.

**House of Talisman**

Overall: 9

Chris Mitchell

---

**£9.95**
Critical Mass is a regular fantasy and science fiction book review column by Dave Langford, now in hiding from...

**THE FANTASY EXPLOSION**

SF is my true love, what with my degree in physics and former nuclear research job. Fire on fantasy: for me the highest literary values consist of megalomaniac computers, hyperspatial leaps and colliding black holes. Hence the need for Alka-Seltzer when, as this month, the fantasies are consistently better than the SF. Subversive, I call it.

Geoff Ryman's first novel *The Warrior Who Carried Life* [Unwin 173pp £7.95], horrible binding] crackles like an unshelled power line with energy and originality. The disfigured heroine Cara learns witchery, becoming a man to wreak revenge on the noxious Galu; success fails since the Galu turn defeat to victory through their stomach-turning mystery of the Secret Rose. New ideas keep coming strange lexicons like the Men who have been Baked or Men who Advance like Spiders; the atrocious fate of Cara's family, riddled with actually quite sympathetic worms; a nastily understated Land of the Dead; A Genesis rewrite providing cosmic rationale for the plot; we're barely halfway. For the climax Ryman goes for broke; a sad and gentle gods saves his theme from the common fault of being too big to care about. There are glitches (the appalling poetry of the Secret Rose crashes to earth when verbalized as 'humanity was in danger of being replaced'), but Ryman is an author to watch.

Piers Anthony I've watched despairingly, as he hammers ideas into the ground and decks competent prose with archness and cuteness. *On a Pale Horse* [Granada 352pp £2.50] is his best for years, first in the five-book 'Incarceration of Immortality'. The five 'incarcerations' (Death, Time, Fate, War, Nature) are spiritual Permanent Civil Servants, policing a world theoretically dominated by God and the disloyal Opposition. This volume's hero is newly appointed Death, learning the ropes (Yes, Minister) and worrying like other Anthony heroes about justice. One reason why this book works: matters of life and death deserve such agonizing — the Xanth books waste it on white lies or table manners. Another reason: the mechanics of magic and the after-life are fresh and inventive — whereas Xanth has been worn smooth. Not great literature, but good fun.

R A MacAvoy's *Damiano* [Bantam 288pp £1.95] opens a trilogy of gentler, more conventional fantasy (you can tell it's conventional — Anne McCaffrey and Andre Norton rave about it). Damiano is an unworldly, lute-playing alchemist of Renaissance Italy, on speaking terms with his dog and the archangel Raphael. When war touches his home town, he bumbles on an impossible quest to present the peculiars phlegm object for what it was — a door handle! Or, as we scientists say in films: 'Mad? I, who have discovered the secret of life! You call me mad? This book fills a much needed gap.

'Remember when humans were heroes, androids didn't have social graces and the open alien was a dead one?' *Not Ghastly Beyond Belief* but the slogan of Hamlyn's 'Science Fiction' series... Birmingham's Andromeda Bookshop has long complained that publishers don't package SF to sell. Andromeda is editing these 'right way', numbered for collectors, with identikit Eddie Jones jackets and an 'action adventure' policy. No 1 is *We All Died at Breakwater Station* by Richard C Meredith [244pp £1.95]; no 2, *Come, Hunt an Earthman* by Philip E High [176pp £1.75]. Both are pretty blood-thirsty — she turned on the laser scalpel and slowly lowered it toward his loins' (Meredith, opened at random). High's has the standard High plot of totally downtrodden but gutsy Earthmen resisting omnipotent aliens' machinations and raising a rebellion. In at least two High books handle this theme — such as it is — much better, while his punctuation still hasn't had the copyediting it desperately needs. Not the most promising series.

Even a series which opened promisingly, like E C Tubb's *Dumarest*, can wear thin after a dozen books. *The Terra Data* [Arrow 172pp £1.95] is no 22, and besides many readers have grown weary of a plot resembling the previous ones: hero Dumarest, tepidly pursued by omniscient yet inept Cybers, fights through unconquerable barriers of padding to obtain the secret whereabouts of lost Earth, only to suffer his 22nd failure.

*Soporific*.

*The Fungus* by Harry Adam Knight [Star 220pp £1.95] is a horror mastery versed with scientific fact plus a thread of a dreaded cross between dry rot and athlete's foot, which causes people's favourite parts to suffer spongy outgrowths or fail off — as when a rapist's fungus-riddled organ snaps at the cruising; ten-year-old girl. Nifty stuff.

What does SF offer? Reissues and rereleases. *The Sif and Fantasy Book of Quotations* [Arrow 344pp £2.50] thrill to golden prose which spatters your enrapured forebrain across the ceiling! Enjoy the greatest lines of the immortal Lionel Fanthorpe — 'What the devil could it be?' he asked himself over and over again... He drew closer, and closer still. Then he recognized the peculiar gleaming object for what it was — a door handle!' Or, as we scientists say in films: 'Mad? I, who have discovered the secret of life! You call me mad?!' This book fills a much needed gap.

In brief: *Asimov's The Robots of Dawn* [Granada 477pp £2.50] conceals beneath layers of flab and theses on the philosophy of toilets, a little SF detective tale: oh for an editor! Ballard's *Vermilion Sand* [Dent 208pp £2.95] now becomes more interesting... or at least two High books handle this theme — such as it is — much better, while his punctuation still hasn't had the copyediting it desperately needs. Not the most promising series.

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TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME

Please mention White Dwarf when replying to advertisements.
J.R.R. Tolkien invented a fantasy world which has long held a special fascination for me. I was enchanted from the time I first read *The Lord of the Rings*. If you have read Tolkien's works, you may well have experienced the same enjoyment, and when *Iron Crown* brought out Middle Earth Role-Playing to continue the story, I wondered just how good it could be. Tolkien laid his own ground rules for fantasy and I think that they are as relevant to any fantasy game based on Middle Earth as they were to the books themselves. Paul Kocher commented on these rules:

“*In 1938 when Tolkien was starting to write The Lord of the Rings he also delivered a lecture at the University of St Andrews in which he offered his views on the types of world that it is the office of fantasy to ‘sub-create’. Fantasy’s worlds must possess, he said, not only ‘internal consistency’ but also ‘strangeness and wonder’ arising from their ‘freedom from the domination of observed fact’. He added that a fantasy world must be ‘credible, commanding Secondary Belief’.*”

So how does Middle Earth Role-Playing measure up against Tolkien’s own standards, and how can we use it to ‘get inside’ Middle Earth?

One of the major criticisms of any fantasy based on known works is simply that too much is known by the players and that the GM and his imagination is limited to the published facts. In Tolkien one might think that this is truer than ever, as there is so much more known about his world. And yet the scope of the world is so vast that there is room for enormous expansion and a huge variety of settings: from the Sunless Years before the Sun rose in the sky, when Middle Earth was full of wild beasts and dangers lurking in the shadows, to the ascent of Man in the Fourth Age and the departure of the elves for good to the Blessed Realm. Then there are times of peace and war, there are countries of freezing cold and of burning heat, there are forests and rivers and mountains and lakes. *ICE* have not attempted to tie anyone down on the when or the where of the game. Having read as much Tolkien as you can beforehand, you will be itching to play, and will probably have many problems just thinking where to start.

However, *ICE* have decided in their modules to develop one time period more than others, so that players wanting a campaign setting in depth can see one ready-made. The era chosen is the troubled 17th Century Third Age. The choice is a good one: it is a time of stress and yet also balance, of evil influence and yet not open aggression or war. Sauron is apparently dead and almost forgotten by man, but there are the new evils of Angmar and the Necromancer. The One Ring is lost and will not be found again for several hundred years.

Iron Crown have done superb development work on areas that Tolkien neglected or left unspecified. They have mapped out the extent of Endor, the ‘Middle Earth’ of Arda, spreading it far to the east and south, and give details of the areas they cover in their modules for all Ages of Middle Earth. Whenever and wherever you choose to set your adventures you are almost bound to be able to find some reference to it in Tolkien’s works and can be sure that *ICE* will be producing a detailed module of it before long.

The supreme benefit of this game is surely the setting and the wealth of inherited material it rests on. So what of the game itself – the system? I found it an eminently suitable one, though not spectacularly original. It relies mainly on the Rolemaster system devised by *ICE* before they produced this game, and it is to a large extent just a simplification of it. One is confronted with this fact rather abruptly on first reading through a *MERP* module; the modules are all written directly for Rolemaster and have not been ‘translated’ into *MERP*. This seems a little strange as, for example, characters in Rolemaster and *MERP* do not have the same stats!

However, the *MERP* system stands up quite nicely on its own in almost every respect. It has a simple character ‘class’
system, with detailed notes on background for different races and sub-races (for example, three sorts of elves and fifteen sorts of men). There is a skill system which allows all classes to learn any skill (just about, anyway), with a varying cost in terms of initial points (which the characters start with) and extras gained by experience in the AD&D manner. This kind of informal ‘channelling’ of a character’s skills into certain areas still leaves the option of diverting them into the unusual areas, which is to be greatly appreciated points, for me, it ups the utility of AD&D, and yet is not so all-encompassing as RuneQuest.

The combat system can be rather bloody, which is no bad thing. AD&D provides power. It’s a good thing that the first time they meet orcs, as these are the real thing! Players give their characters skills in different weapon types and in defensive manœuvres and the combat resolution system gives a chance to hit and damage all in one roll, as well as allowing an opportunity for the player to exercise skill in assigning the character’s attacking bonus. All manner of attack modifications and critical hits are accounted for in the tables, the extra requiring an additional roll of D100.

The only facet of the MERP system I would quarrel with is the magic system. In AD&D, magic was a very rare thing when one considers it in the form of lightning bolt and fireball. Magic was present, but as a subtle and inherent quality of many things and people. Dwarves, elves, laymen, smiths, for example, might work magic into their creations. The healers of Lothlorien and Minas Tirith knew the powers of herbs and the penetrating powers of the wielding sword and armor used their palantiri or seeing-stones to keep an eye on each other and their kingdoms. But there are very few examples of spell-casting, particularly in an off-hand manner, and those that do exist tend to be exceptionally powerful, like Gandalf. The MERP system gives these sorts of powers to almost anyone after the acquisition of relatively few experience points, which lessens the quality of the game and its authenticity.

The parameters imposed by Tolkien’s world means that fortunately there are not endless hordes of monsters to inflict on the players and therefore a GM has to have a little more thought when designing scenarios and encounters. There are many ideas in his works and those of the ICE design team, and I hope that players and GMs will utilise some of the many hidden secrets for players to take more notice of the wide world around you and wonder what is happening out there — and you should be doing something about it.

The GMs are excellently produced and contain a wealth of detail for the MERP enthusiast. As mentioned earlier, the modules are all written using Rolemaster stats and these are not entirely relatable to AD&D. It means that some work is necessary before using them, but all are worth the effort. The first, Angmar, deals with the area in the north of the Misty Mountains and adjacent to the land currently under control of the Witch-King. The module is perhaps a little less professionally produced than those that followed, but it is imaginative that ICE were still finding their feet and one could anticipate this module being revised to fit the standard format they now use.

The second and third form a pair: North and South Mirkwood, once Greenwood the Great. The lurking menace of the forest make it an ideal setting for adventures and there are many ideas to be found in the provocation of the forest. Like all the other modules these have full colour pull-out maps which join to one another to form a vast mosaic of Middle Earth. These maps and the text are rife with detail and explanation, and contain many hidden secrets for players to discover.

To the south-west of Mirkwood lies Calenardh, the land that is now called Rohan. A module covers all this under the aegis of Isengard, and though as long as the others, refers to only half the land area. The land is detailed specifically for the time after the Great Plague in the 17th century when the noble land of Gondor is split by the Kin-Strife, but also has general outlines for all times. All these modules and those of the ICE design team, and I hope that they will be allowed to expand upon the bones provided by Tolkien in a work that must have been a labour of love — and one that makes me quite envious of the players and GMs who have had occasion to use these. Other modules include Umbart, the treacherous harbour of Corsairs of Black Numenorian descent; and the Court of Ardor, a realm far removed from northwest Middle Earth where all of Tolkien’s adventures take place.

In addition to the modules there are now shorter scenario packs, including the Barrow Downs, the Trolls, the Dead Marshes and Cirith Ungol. I have not had occasion to use these, but generally I have been impressed with my own detailed scenarios and adventures against the backdrop provided by the campaign modules. However, they are not really suitable for the GM who has little experience of how to start an adventure.

For more experienced GMs, MERP supplies systems which are more than adequate to fit the game in almost every aspect and which, though perhaps not ideal for completely novice gamers, are certainly easy to assimilate in small doses. More experienced GMs, MERP supplies systems which are more than adequate to fit the game in almost every aspect and which, though perhaps not ideal for completely novice gamers, are certainly easy to assimilate in small doses.

The Road Goes Ever On.

Bibliography and Sources of Inspiration

J R R Tolkien The Hobbit
The Lord of the Rings
The Silmarillion
Unfinished Tales
Lost Tales I and II
Paul Kocher Master of Middle Earth,
The Achievement of Middle Earth
J A E Tyler The New Tolkien Companion
Barbara Strachey Journeys of Frodo,
An Atlas of The Lord of the Rings
Part Four

"THrud has been enlisted as a mercenary by a group of villagers who have been attacked by an evil tyrant known as the Black Currant, after being introduced to his fellow soldiers on a mission. They have set off on their task... meanwhile in the Black Currant's castle..."

Welcome back, my Liege! A good day's rape and pillage, I trust?

I have some good news concerning my experiments... if you would care to follow me...

Regular readers may recognize this sinister figure as the evil necromancer to-m... (Well, you didn't really think he was killed in that explosion, did you?)

As you know, my liege, previously my experiments have been limited to the transformation of a single, immovable object, through time...

That is, until now, however, thanks to your generous financial support. My experiments have reached fruition... behold!

The essence of evil in human form, from throughout time - with a force such as this we can conquer this entire world!

This is all very well... but how are we going to get up those bloody stairs?
A WEB IN THE DARK
by Simon Burley

One of the problems with choosing to give a list of superpowers from which players can choose by rolling dice or some other means, is that it is difficult to come up with an exhaustive list. Sooner or later, someone is going to want a power which is not given in the rules. It seems likely that new powers for the various Superhero game systems are going to be designed and published from time to time in much the same way that new magic items or spells are produced for FRPs. Since the publication of Golden Heroes, we have received letters commenting on the absence of certain powers from the Superpower Generation Table in the game. Obviously we would like to hear from as many people as possible with regard to things like this, particularly as it is in our best interests to make the game as complete as possible.

However, there was a rationale behind our choice of powers for GH and there are specific reasons why certain powers were included rather than others that we think essential were omitted. The commonest powers from comics had the highest chance of appearing. Certain powers appeared so rarely that they were omitted. For example: only one character in comics (of which we are aware) has ‘Web-shooters’. We consider them to be unique items to be possessed by one character, not by lots of characters.

Additionally, certain comicbook superpowers have a potential far beyond their use in the stories. Whilst a writer can gloss over or ignore such powers in their story, the typically inventive role-player will always seek to get the most out of his superpowers. A hero with the ability to blind an opponent will only do so rarely in the comics. In an RPG it would become a standard tactic. Thus, superpowers whose use in the game would be at variance with their use in the comics either have to be omitted or handled extremely cautiously.

This said, however, we can use the Golden Heroes rules to simulate all superpowers found in the comics and you can expect to see new powers appearing from time to time.

Web-Slinging
Since there is only one character using such devices, we’ll list what he can do. He uses his webs as lines to swing on, as trampolines to catch him when he falls, as parachutes, to bind people, to parry attacks, to seal doors shut and to fire as ‘web-balls’ to control thugs etc. Now we look at the GH rules to decide if there are any numbers or rules which will help us rate the device. Here we find the parrying rules, the binding rules and the fact that Energy Attacks/Magic PSI are handled in groups of 15 points per 5 frames. Thus we can give the character 15 points worth of ‘Web Fluid’.

Allocation of Cost of Abilities
Lines: A fairly minor use, simulating a Line Slinger which any character can have for no cost. Minimal cost, ie 1 pt per line formed.

Parries: In the comic, the character spins a circle of web which catches the attacks. This is an Autoparry. It seems to be very effective, so we’ll say 1 d6 per point of fluid used. However, the webbing is not so good against energy so we’ll say that Energy does double damage to the Parry.

Web-balls: These are only used rarely and so don’t have a very effective, certainly not as good as an Energy Attack. So they should cost more, 2 pts per die damage which must be predominantly HTC. So to do 3d6 HTC (and 1d6 HTK) would cost 15 d6 points. Naturally two lines would be split between the HTC and HTK like Energy Attacks but the Web-balls have no effect on damage dividers.

Slinging: Looking at the comics we find that there is no one person but a certain green-skinned behemoth snaps it every time. Looking up his strength we find that he can inflict 50-60 HTK on the binding (in his passive state, of course). Thus the effects can inflict a binding of up to 60HTK. Conveniently the maximum for 10d6. If we use the Energy Attack rule of saying no more than 10 points can be used in any one shot, we find that the Web inflicts a binding damage of 1d6 per point of web fluid used.

All of the other effects listed above can be simulated by extrapolation of the above rulings during play. For example, let us suppose our web-slinger is facing off from a great height and uses the webs to make a mattress to soften his fall. This will absorb 1d6 per point put into the mattress from the damage he would otherwise incur. Alternatively, he could use the web to form a parachute which will slow his fall. The SS should calculate the damage he would take if he hit the ground at his current rate of fall and state the number of dice required to negate this.

Having set the main details, all we need are the mundane ones. The attack will obviously be WC2 and take an action to use. The range should be less than an Energy Attack, approximately 10m. Obviously we could give the lines a slightly longer range, so he does not need to hit with the lines, even at extreme range of 20m.

Finally, we have a problem in that the web-fluid is not like the webbing, unlike the comicbook energy attacks to which we have equated it. The character in the comics only rarely seems to run out. So we’ll give him two web-shooters each containing 15 points of fluid, but the cartridges will take a full round each to replace. He never replaces them during battles in comics. Some players might argue that 30 points of fluid is insufficient. In comics, it takes an entire day’s usage and a degree of forgetfulness to empty them. However, bear in mind that whilst a comicbook hero may forget to refill his cartridges, a role-player never does.

Black Outs
Another power missing from the Golden Heroes tables is Darkness Control. This is because it is possessed by only one main character in the comics and he is rarely seen due to the anti-social and anti-comic nature of his power. If he makes it dark not only can his associates not see what’s happening but neither can the reader. Black panels with speech balloons can be very boring.

In much the same way, Darkness Control can be boring in game terms. The effect of darkness is to make it harder to hit your opponent. One thing we are told to strike easily in an RPG. Darkness tends to make misses more common and, hence, slow the game down. From the comic the character appears to be an area effect which hits everyone inside it. In GH a similar effect is the Windstorm in Weather Control. So at Grade 1 Darkness Control to darkness effects to that: ie, it takes 1 action to create and a Frame per round thereafter to maintain.

Anyone in it strikes at -2 and moves at half speed. If they move at full speed, they risk tripping over. Each time they do so, they must roll a d20 and get equal to or less than their DEX or fall losing a Frame and spending another to get up. Higher grades of Darkness Field cannot reach the strike enhances, so at Grade 2 it will stay until disabled without needing to be maintained.

The character’s other powers can be simulated directly from ordinary GH superpowers. For example, he can form shapes out of darkness. We should make that equivalent to Cybernetics (hologram projector) except that the shapes formed can be any shape he desires but are always totally black. He can form black areas over a person’s eyes but must roll a d20 to strike as WC2 to do so otherwise it would be too effective an attack form.

Finally, remember that if you believed we left something out in this article, as we might, we’ve said, you’d end up with an impressively powerful character which would be nothing like the heroes really are! ☺
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ONCE RISEN, TWICE SHY

Crawling Chaos is a bi-monthly column for players of Call of Cthulhu. This month we present a baffling collection of letters, a notebook entry, and a map from an investigator's journal. Steve Williams and Barney Sloane have prepared the documents for your perusal.

These cuttings provide valuable clues to the riddle of Tempest Manor, and its mysterious inhabitants. These notes are designed as background/handout material to be used in conjunction with The Lurking Fear, H.P. Lovecraft's classic tale of terror. Even if investigators are familiar with the story, the clues are presented as the deceased reporter's "case file." Players could then have the enviable task of picking up the pieces (literally!).

ANCIEN INDIAN BURIAL CUSTOMS

The Season's Wheel is slowly turning, and the Mound Folk's Time is near. As the final days of summer fade into the mist of autumn, the ancient rituals of the indigenous peoples of New York begin to take shape. The Mound Folk, as they are known, are a secretive and mysterious group who have been living in the area for centuries. Their traditions are passed down through the generations, and their ceremonies are steeped in ancient knowledge.

The mound of Coveners is a sacred site, and each year the Mound Folk gather here to celebrate the coming of the New Year. They believe that the spirits of their ancestors watch over them, and that by honoring their traditions, they can ensure a good harvest for the coming year.

The ceremony begins with a purification ritual, where the Mound Folk dress in white robes and bathe in a sacred spring. They then gather around the mound, where they light a fire and offer sacrifices to the spirits. Finally, they dance around the mound, their feet pounding on the earth, as the sun sets in the west.

The Mound Folk believe that their ancestors are still with them, and that they can offer guidance and protection. They also believe that the spirits of the dead are watching over them, and that by honoring their traditions, they can ensure a good harvest for the coming year.

VAGRANTS ARE SAVAGED

In the late afternoon, the villagers of New York heard the sound of an approaching vehicle. As the car drew closer, they saw a group of vagrants huddled together, their clothing torn and dirty. Suddenly, a group of men jumped out of the car and began to attack the vagrants, using sticks and stones.

The men seemed to have no conscience, and they continued their violence even after the vagrants had surrendered. The villagers quickly intervened, and the men were arrested. The vagrants were taken to the hospital, where they were treated for their injuries.

The incident has sparked outrage in the community, and the villagers are demanding justice for the vagrants. They are calling for the arrest of the men who attacked them, and for the establishment of a sanctuary for the homeless in the area.

MAN IN SUBWAY INCIDENT

Today, a man entered the subway station at the 34th Street Station, and began to attack passengers with a knife. Police arrived quickly, and the man was detained. He later fled the scene, and was not found.

The man who attacked the passengers was described as being in his late thirties, and wearing a dark jacket. He was carrying a knife, and had a scar on his face. The police are still searching for him, and are asking anyone with information to come forward.

The subway station was evacuated, and the train service was disrupted for several hours. Passengers were left stranded, and many were injured in the chaos. The police are investigating the incident, and are appealing for witnesses to come forward.

NEW YORK TIMES 3RD JAN 1928

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'Blasted weather!' thought Captain Tell. This was the fourth patrol he had taken out in as many days and the grey drizzle had soaked him and his men each time. He turned in his saddle and looked at the line of horsemen stretching out behind him, each one huddled into the sparse protection afforded by their capes as their mounts weary picked a way through the quagmire of the track. A week ago an isolated homestead had been raided by a Drow war party and ever since his men had been put out on duty. 'No doubt they'll have scarpered by now,' he remarked to the corporal who had drawn level.

'No doubt,' mumbled the corporal in agreement.

Captain Tell sighed and rubbed a grimy hand over his face. 'We'll go as far as the next copse and then turn back. Tell the men.' His terse tone betrayed his weariness as he scanned the route ahead.

The track ran down the side of the hill into a lane between two thick hedgerows and then up to a small copse on the other side of the valley not a mile away. He reigned in his horse for a moment to allow half of his twelve troopers to pass, noting in each of them the same red-rimmed and grainy eyes.

He entered the lane just as the front man was reaching the far end and suddenly he felt the hairs on the nape of his neck bristle. 'Ought we not go back and see if the rest are all right?' asked the Yeoman.

At that moment a volley of arrows whistled out of the hedgerow into the unprotected right side of his men, sending three of them tumbling to the ground immediately, and turning the lane into a screaming confusion of bucking horses and shouting men. Seconds later the hedges erupted with Drow bursting from every bush, eager to take advantage of the confusion to win an easy victory.

Captain Tell drew his sword and wheeled his horse in one swift movement. 'Ambush! Ambush!' he cried, hoping that his men would hear him and respond to the drills he had taught them. Two of them, he noticed, had already spurred their horses out of the trap, while another was being pulled off his horse. 'Ambush! Ambush!' he called once more, and then spurred his horse directly at the hedgerow from which the enemy had emerged. Clearing the hedge in one mighty leap he galloped on for twenty or thirty yards before looking back. 'Good,' he thought, 'at least the corporal and Yeoman Fletcher had escaped.'

'How many did we lose?' gasped the corporal, as they spurred their horses on at a gallop.

'I saw Thompson and Crabtree get out,' said Fletcher equally breathless. 'And I think I cut one of those Drow pretty bad.'

'I saw three go down with the first volley and another go down after. Old Toby and Willem for sure, but I couldn’t see who the others were,' replied the Captain.

'Ought we not go back and see if the rest are all right?' asked the Yeoman.

'Not likely,' said Captain Tell. If they get out they know where the camp is. If not? Well that's just tough, he thought.
The ambush is perhaps the most exciting encounter in FRP. However, for Warhammer players it is also the most difficult to emulate. Actually setting up an ambush on an actual tabletop under normal circumstances is simply a waste of time. After all, if the opposing player can see the models attempting to hide behind walls and under piles of lichen, he is hardly likely to move his forces tamely into the pit dug for them in the middle of the room. In the tabletop roleplay game, however, the opposite is true; the GM is master of the ambush until the last possible minute, only to be placed when an enemy strays into the area, the opposing player will immediately smell a rat and take evasive action. In the event that the ambush is sprung successfully, then the whole affair is unrealistic (and unfair to the ambushers) because the player whose forces are ambushed are still able to function as normal (within the bounds of the psychology rules), thus negating the effect of surprise and loss of command and control. The turn sequence also works against the ambushers, the shooting phase occurs after the movement phase which means that the ambushed player is able to move his troops out of the ambush before the ambushers can get to grips. This makes a mockery of the classic ambush technique of ‘one round, then in’. To actually get a satisfactory ambush a rethink of the rules is needed, and a procedure worked out.

Ambushes are best used as part of a campaign for reasons which will become apparent. Ambushes are not an end in themselves. Rather they should be used as part of a wider policy in your campaign. They may be used to blind the enemy’s reserves or to confuse the enemy as to the true whereabouts of your own forces, or to deny access. They are most effective against smaller units such as patrols and supply columns.

AMBUSHES IN THE CAMPAIGN

The best format for a campaign is for the two opposing players and the GM to each have a map upon which to record their movements and their forces. The GM will, of course, have the disadvantage of having sides second only to his map along with any encounters he has prepared. This system, in effect, means that both players are blind as to their opponent’s whereabouts and must, therefore, carry out reconnaissance to ascertain the enemy’s strength and disposition. This in turn leads to the need of intelligence gathering being ahead of the main army to look for the enemy. Should the opposing player wish to keep his positions secret, then he must prevent the enemy from carrying out reconnaissance of his position. The best way to do this is by ambushing the enemy’s scouts.

To prepare for an ambush, the ambush can either be prepared by the GM (for convenience) must first move his force to the desired area and then notify, in secret, his intention to stage an ambush on any enemy that happen to chance upon that way. The GM then marks the position and strength of the ambush on his map for future reference.

THE AMBUSH ON THE TABLETOP

When an enemy strays within range of the ambush, the action is transferred to the tabletop. However, the victim (player B) does not automatically take control of his troops, instead the GM controls them. This prevents player B getting smart and avoiding the ambush altogether or ambushing the ambushers. The GM will then move player B’s forces along the course that they were heading until they enter the ambush.

At this point it is necessary to suspend the normal turn sequence. This is entirely at the option of player A; he may prefer to keep the normal sequence. He may spring his ambush at any time during his opponent’s movement phase. The result of this is to cancel the rest of players B’s turn, i.e. he has no shooting, hand-to-hand combat, reserves, magic, or rallying phase. It also cancels all player B’s remaining movement phase.

Player A springs his ambush by simply declaring ‘Ambush’. He then begins his turn with the shooting phase, followed by movement, hand-to-hand combat, reserves, magic, and rallying phases. On player B’s next turn, the sequence returns to normal.

Player A also receives two more advantages from his ambush. Firstly, he may retreat his troops a half move during the reserves phase. However, if he does take advantage of this rule, then he cannot subsequently turn his troops around on the next move. This represents the ‘hit-and-run’ aspect of the ambush.

Secondly, on the first round of combat, player B’s forces Weapon Skill is reduced to 1 to represent surprise and the time taken to draw weapons etc.

So what, then; is player B doing while his prize troops are being cut to pieces under the control of the GM? On each move, the ambush preferably, player B rolls 2d6. If he scores equal to the troops’ Int – 1 (or less) twice, he may regain control of his troops. For example, the GM declares an ambush to be imminent and the troops are placed on the table. Player B then rolls 2d6 and scores 7. His troops are Elves and their Int is 9 so the roll counts as a successful roll. On the next move he rolls 12, a failure, but on the next move he rolls 5. He has now successfully rolled Int – 1 twice and may regain control of his troops. This represents Captain Tell’s bristling hairs – the instinct that something is going to happen. Player B may then proceed as he sees fit – either to attack the ambushers, in which case a battle takes place along normal lines, or simply withdraw.

If, however, player B does not succeed in rolling his Int (note that it is the troops’ Int – 1 that is rolled, not the leader’s or character’s) and blunders straight into the ambush then the following procedure should be followed.

1. Player A completes his turn.
2. Player B rolls his Leadership or less. If successful, he may move his troops as he wishes. If unsuccessful he must roll his troops Cool or less. If this roll is successful, then they will react according to their Drill, if unsuccessful, they will move in a manner determined by rolling 2d6 and referring to the diagram given for the Ball and Chain. This process is repeated on player B’s next turn. On subsequent turns he regains control of his troops. Missile troops will fire according to Drill or not at all.

DRILL

Most armies have set procedures to deal with situations in which there is no time to give detailed orders; the reaction to an ambush is the classic case. A drill procedure should be simple enough to allow it to be carried out without thinking and should consist of two parts. Firstly, the immediate reaction, and secondly, the collective action. The first part refers to the individual’s task, and the second part refers to the regrouping of the unit and the possible retaliation. However these drills are formulated, they must be submitted to the GM at the beginning of the campaign and should remain constant throughout. Drills may be changed at the GM’s discretion, but I would recommend that the number of times that they are changed be limited, on the grounds that it is difficult for troops to adjust to new ways. Troops with low intelligence should never be allowed to change their drill, as they have difficulty remembering it anyway . . .

DRILLS AND TACTICS

The Ambush

When embarking on an ambush a player should bear two main things in mind. Firstly, he should aim to kill as many of the enemy in as short a time as possible, before making good his escape while the enemy are still in disarray. Secondly, he should take account of the possibility that he may be discovered and attacked himself.

Figure 1 Deployment of an Ambush Group

**FLANK GROUP**

**ATTACK GROUP**

**ARCHERS/MISSILE GROUP**

**REARGUARD GROUP**

**DIRECTION OF AMBUSH**

**THE KILLING GROUND**

An ambush group should be split into five parts: archers, attack group, two flanking groups and a rear guard, laid out as shown in Figure 1.

The first part of the ambush consists of the archers firing at close range into the enemy. In the movement phase, the attack group moves through the missile group to engage in hand-to-hand combat. This requires a rather liberal interpretation of the interpenetration rule, but I feel that skirmishers can move through a regular formation, then the reverse if also possible.

At the same time that the attack group moves in, so should the two flanking groups in order to prevent the enemy from escaping. They should not, however, attempt to encircle the
enemy, as this allows them to run away and, if higher than the
melee, allows the missile group to shoot at the fleeing rabble.

The rearguard group renders two services, firstly, if they are
armed with missile weapons they can pick off any enemy who
decide to charge through the ambush, and secondly, they pro-
vide a first line of defence should they be attacked from the
rear.

The size of force required for an ambush will vary consider-
ably according to what is available from campaign forces, and
what you expect to ambush. My favourite tactic is to use dark
ebles for the job, as a fairly small party can cause a lot of
mayhem. I use 3-4 crossbows as the missile group, 3-4 dark
eles mounted on old ones, for the attack group, and 1-2 on
foot as each flank group, with a rearguard group of two
crossbows.

If my ambush is discovered, depending on the size of the
enemy force of course, I will retreat hastily. I only attack if I
can get a three to one superiority.

If my own forces are ambushed, then there are a number of
options available. Firstly, I use my most intelligent troops for
reconnaissance and patrol work because they have the best
chance of avoiding an ambush. If they do roll a successful
Intelligence score, then I will only attack if there is the prospect
of an easy victory, or if it is vital that the recce proceeds. This
is because it is too easy to bleed away one's own forces in
small actions to the point that it will seriously weaken the army
when the main battle takes place.

The drill I use for protection is again based on dividing the
force into smaller parts. Figure 2 shows the order of march, a
forward or advance guard, a centre, and a rearguard. In an
ambush, the drill is aimed at removing your forces from
danger as quickly as possible. There are two ways of doing
this; firstly, on being ambushed, the advance guard and the
centre will attempt to move straight through the flanking

Figure 2

The actual strength of a patrol is debatable. They should be
strong enough to take on an ambush with a reasonable chance
of escape, without being so large that their loss would provide
a serious reduction in the army's fighting potential. I usually
use a troop of some nine mounted troops with an average sta-
ture leader. Elves are the best choice of troops due to their high
Intelligence, but they are also expensive to lose in terms of
Points Values. Half orcs, orcs and humans are a suitable alter-
native. Halflings are a possibility, but their poor fighting
capabilities mean that they are more likely to lose in an ambush.

Ambushes are highly entertaining small actions. They pro-
vide an ideal scenario when playing time is limited and several
battles may be fought in the space of time that it takes for one
large battle. These rules and hints can certainly help to make
them more realistic and add a touch of spice to any campaign.
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with Miss Hisgins or, for added tension, because one of the male investigators was himself nearly engaged to Miss Hisgins at some earlier date. (In the latter case the break-up of the romance will have been by mutual agreement, allowing a continued friendship.)

The Curse of Shalladholm
The curse of the White Horse of Shalladholm (the ancestral home of the Hisgins family for over six centuries) dates back nearly four hundred years. The curse arose out of a romance between the son of the village blacksmith and the only daughter of Vere d’Vere Hisgins in the 1530’s. Not surprisingly, Hisgins had no intention of seeing his daughter besmirch the family escutcheon by such a degrading liaison. Instead of simply sending her off to stay with relatives in London, however, he took the law into his own hands (he was, after all, the local magistrate), went into the village and beat the young swain within an inch of his life. The young man did, in fact, survive the beating, but at the price of irreparable physical damage. Ironically the exertion triggered a heart condition the Squire had been developing for some time past. Within a month of the beating Squire Hisgins was dead and buried.

In these circumstances the blacksmith expected that Miss Hisgins would prove her devotion to his son by marrying him. Yet Miss Hisgins chose, instead, to marry a distant cousin. What the enraged artisan did not know was that the dead squire had entirely squandered the family’s wealth and that the marriage was one of convenience rather than love. In his anger the blacksmith, with the help of a local occultist, caugh and slaughtered the late squire’s favourite horse—a white stallion—swearing that, whenever a female member of the Hisgins family were affected by the curse, the spirit of the stallion would return to destroy the match, and if possible, the girl herself.

In the first two hundred years following the raising of the curse five female members of the Hisgins family were affected by the curse. Two committed suicide, one ‘fell’ from an upper window, one died of a ‘broken heart’ (heart failure?), and the last died one evening in the manor grounds, apparently kicked by a horse (though no horse was known to be in the area except the two docile family horses safely stabled on the far side of the house).

Since that time some seven generations of Hisgins (the name was Anglicised at the time of the Napoleonic Wars) have passed without a single female child surviving beyond the age of ten. Thus the curse is now regarded as a quaint myth rather than a genuine danger. The investigators will need to make a successful Library roll within the next few hours of research. If they don’t find this record the Keeper must ensure that the investigators have every possible chance to interpret the hauntings as purely man-made phenomena, or at worst as the work of a poltergeist, whilst not deliberately obscuring the occasional hints that a far more terrible evil is involved.

INVESTIGATOR’S INTRODUCTION
The Hisgins family — Captain Saul Hisgins (Army, retired), his wife Emily, and their daughter Mary—live at Shalladholm, the manor house of the remote village of Lower Shallad in Norfolk (Map One). The family, and servants, are all aware of a family legend that no daughter of the family may ever survive long enough to get married. No-one knows where the legend comes from or whether it has any truth to it. Indeed, since there have been no female Hisgins who survived beyond the age of seven or eight (for entirely natural reasons—poor medical facilities, genuine accidents, etc) the legend has never been put to the test for over seven generations (about 180-200 years). It might not have been mentioned now but for some strange events which have occurred over the three week period since Mary Hisgins became engaged to Charles Beaumont who has been staying with the family for some time. The explanation for Beaumont’s extended presence will depend on the period in which the game is set. He may be convalescing, from a wound or an illness.
contracted in distant parts, between postings, etc.)

As soon as the investigators arrive at Shalladholm they will be told the three 'hauntings' which have occurred so far:

1. On the day of the engagement, before it had been officially announced, Mary and Beaumont were in the great corridor about dusk — before the lamps had been lighted. Without any warning they heard a grotesque sound like a horse neighing. The next moment Beaumont received a tremendous blow or kick which broke his right forearm. When servants responded to Miss Higgin's screams, with lamps of course, they could find nothing to explain the event either in the corridor itself or anywhere else in the house.

2. Three days after the engagement Beaumont and Captain Higgins were woken by the sound of terrified screams from Mary's bedroom. They both lit lamps and arrived at Mary's bedside almost simultaneously. The young woman claimed to have been woken by the sound of a horse neighing close beside her. Almost as soon as she awoke the sound stopped and there were no further phenomena. Beaumont then went and woke the butler and the three men made a thorough search of Mary's bedroom and the adjoining corridor. With no success.

Over the next couple of weeks both Beaumont and Mary, separately and together, heard the sound of hoofbeats and/or neighing on almost a daily basis — but always at a distance. The third 'threatening' event has occurred only two days before the investigators' arrival.

3. Again at dusk, whilst seated in a room off the main hall, both Beaumont and Mary heard the sound of hoofbeats approaching the front door. (If the period is suitable this will be the aunt's boudoir and the aunt will be chaperoning the couple.) Disregarding the notion that 'discretion is the better part of valour' Beaumont went out into the darkened hall, opened the front door and stepped outside. For a moment Beaumont felt relief as the hoofbeats had ceased and there was nothing to be seen in any direction. The next instant his apprehension was renewed and intensified as the front door crashed shut behind him and for several minutes resisted all his attempts to re-open it. And when it did open, as suddenly as it had closed, the situation got worse rather than better.

As Beaumont stepped back into the hall he naturally turned to close the front door. It was then that he heard a sound which he interpreted as that caused by his sweetheart blowing him a kiss from the far side of the hall. Turning back Beaumont began to raise his hand to return the kiss — and at the same time realised that there was, in fact, no one in the hall but himself — at least there was no other human being present! He immediately shouted to Mary to stay where she was, no matter what might happen, and started across the hall. By the light of a torch made of a bunch of matches Beaumont crossed the tiled floor, despite hearing a second kissing sound only a few feet away. Finally, as he reached the room where Mary
THE HORSE OF THE INVISIBLE

waited, they both heard the sound as of a great hooved animal galloping away down the drive.

Note: The Keeper may legitimately encourage, or even initiate, any discussion of the possibility that at least some of the events were entirely rational explanations—a draught blew the door shut, Beaumont may have been out to open the door simply because he was turning the handle the wrong way. etc. Nonetheless, neither Beaumont or Mary will accept such explanations and the Keeper must not force them on the investigators against their better judgement.

THE FIRST DAY

On the assumption that the investigators will spend a reasonable part of the first day of the adventure in preparation and travel, their arrival at Shalladholm should be timed for the late afternoon or early evening. What time remains to them should be taken up with meeting the family and servants, hearing the tales of the family legend and, if they take the opportunity, there is sufficient time to explore the library and discover the material on the Curse of Shalladholm.

There will be no untoward events during that day or the first night.

THE SECOND DAY

The investigators may do whatever they wish with one exception: they must agree in advance to make a thorough search of the cellars of the house. If necessary the Keeper may invent another appearance of the horse (preferably well away from the house), a visit by a local policeman or any other suitable means of heading the players off as subtly as possible. Floor plans should be made available to the players as and when they move into the relevant areas. No unnatural events occur until after dinner on the second day.

Enter the Horse

If the Keeper has been forced to introduce the horse already, as a diversion, he must ensure that the phenomenon ceases before any of the investigators have a chance to witness the alleged manifestation. Their first chance for a first-hand experience of the haunting may attempt a Spot Hidden roll. If they are successful they will notice that Parsket, Mary’s cousin, is expected to arrive before dinner. Only then will the investigators learn that Parsket has certain unconscious reservations about her cousin.

Alternatively, any investigators in the bedroom area in the early evening may attempt a Spot Hidden roll at 11.00pm. If successful they will notice a housemaid preparing one of the empty bedrooms for being struck across the forehead. He had less than ten minutes to regain his feet when the hoofbeats started to occur, and he only just regained his feet when a moment later, he only just regained his feet when a moment later.

Danger in the Park

Harry Parsket will arrive in Shalladholm not more than an hour before dinner (when members of the party are due to dress for dinner). If any investigator is close to the front door within ten minutes of Parsket’s arrival they may attempt a Spot Hidden roll and an Idea roll. If rolls are successful the player will notice that Parsket looks remarkably fresh for someone who is supposed to have travelled down from London by steam train, and it will occur to them that Parsket may actually have been in the area for at least 24 hours before his alleged arrival.

About ten minutes after he arrives Parsket will take his bags up to his room (he doesn’t bring any with him to prepare for dinner. Captain Hisgins will invite the investigators to take their place at the table with him for dinner. Only then will they discover that Mary and Beaumont are not present (in fact they left the house for a walk in the grounds!). Even if the investigators start after the lovers immediately, they will still be too late to prevent the events which follow.

Less than ten minutes after Parsket’s exit screams will be heard from the manor grounds. Captain Hisgins will immediately get his sabre and rush outside. The Butler will, quite independently, take up a shotgun and a lamp and also run out into the park, quite independently.

As first the situation will be total confusion, then the players will hear three sounds quite nearby, firstly a bloodcurdling, gobbling, groaning, sound, followed by Parsket, and then a pistol shot. The sounds will come at intervals of no more than one or two minutes each. Shortly after the last shot is fired, one of the investigators will find Parsket standing over the prostrate body of Mary Hisgins. Beaumont holds a smoking pistol (obviously he fired the shot) and has a deep cut across his forehead. Miss Hisgins has fainted.

If questioned by one of the investigators, Beaumont will explain that they felt a presence whilst walking in the park and began to walk briskly back to the house. After having gone on a long walk, some bushes, some bushes, some bushes, they heard what sounded like hoofbeats behind them. They began to run, but Mary tripped over a tree root—

No player making a Spot Hidden roll as soon as the couple are found (ie before any questions/discussions begin) will notice that Parsket seems to be sweating rather heavily, despite the chill mist.

HARRY PARSKET

It will be clear by now that Harry Parsket, cousin and friend (but from his point of view, rejected suitor), is out to break the romance between Beaumont and Mary Hisgins by resurrecting the legend of the White Horse of Shalladholm. As time passes he becomes more convinced that the idea that it might save a lot of time and trouble if he were to simply kill Beaumont. Parsket is, of course, quite mad, though still able to conceal this fact unless a skilled psychologist/psychiatrist makes a deliberate study of his behaviour over
chance rises to 100%, regardless of who else is present.

Sooner or later the investigators will surely wish to search the cellars. There are, in fact, three adjoining cellars, though only the second and third have any special significance.

Cellar 1—used for the storage of wine. The players may search high and low but they won’t find anything here.

Cellar 2—is used for storing odds and ends (mainly junk) which fills most of the area except a central aisle leading through to the third cellar. Any investigator making a Spot Hidden roll will find a pile of wood in one corner including several long poles, smallish blocks, and some odds and ends of string. A successful idea roll (if needed) will bring out the fact that a fair imitation of hoofbeats on the ground floor and part way up the stairs could be achieved by anyone hitting the cellar ceiling with wooden blocks tied to two of the poles. (Even if Parsket is using bard squard these clues should still be available—as a red herring!)

Cellar 3—is the danger area, as outlined above. There is more junk scattered around this cellar, though none of it is significant. There is, however, a hidden entrance to a tunnel leading into the manor grounds. Since the squash can pass through solid objects, and Parsket doesn’t know about the tunnel, the entrance has not been opened for over a hundred years (when it was used by the eldest son when he wished to slip down to the village undetected by his somewhat puritanical parents). Normally, then, a player would need to make a Spot Hidden roll of one-fifth of their normal percentage to find the entrance.

Harry Parsket
Age: 23.
STR: 11; CON: 11; SIZ: 13; INT: 14;
POW: 15; DEX: 9; APP: 12; EDU: 13;
SAN: 0; Hit Points: 12.
Skills: Debate 70%, Fast Talk 60%, Psychology 50%.
Weapons: Apart from his attacks on Beaumont, Parsket will only become violent if cornered. In this case Parsket will use any weapon that comes to hand. Even with his bare hands, and fingernails, he will do 1d8+1d6 damage.
Profile: Well-educated, physically healthy although used to easy living.

IN THE CELLARS
Events in the cellars of Shalladholm will depend entirely on who enters them, and when. On any occasion there is a 20% base chance that the squash will be loose either in the cellar or in the adjoining tunnel. Add 20% if an item male investigator enters the third cellar (30% for a female) or 10% in the case of two or
However, if a lone investigator enters the cellar and attempts to kill the squarch it will kill him/her and force the entrance open in order to drag the body through the tunnel. In this case small traces of brick dust, broken cobwebs, etc, will be scattered on a straightforward Spot Hidden roll.

If Mary Higgins enters this cellar alone (extremely unlikely!) the squarch will kill her. Otherwise it will merely make its presence known by the gobbling, neighing sound, and retreat into the tunnel. Anyone entering Cellar 3 must make their SAN roll or lose 1 point of SAN due to the miasma of evil that pervades it. Another hour or so will pass whilst here loses 13% points of SAN (without the option). If the party splits up whilst searching the cellars only those players in Cellar 3 will be able to hear the squarch if it turns up.

Notes: If a search of the cellars is arranged then, unless the players absolutely refuse it, the Keeper should ensure that Mary, Beaumont and Parsket are all included in the party. The threat of a lone player meeting any investigator into the third cellar. The hidden entrance can only be sealed using the Saaamaaa Ritual sign to be found in the Sigsand Manuscript, the Elder Sign is not sufficiently powerful to stop the squarch since it can project itself round the sign rather than having to pass through it.

The Tunnel
The tunnel from the third cellar is a fairly stable construction, despite having been built as far back as the time of the English Civil War. The fact that its exit into the grave of the dead stallion is actually pure coincidence. Since it has been used quite regularly by the squarch, it too has an atmosphere of evil about it so that players entering the tunnel from either end must make their SAN rolls or lose 1d4 SAN points. If, however, an investigator has been killed and dragged into the tunnel then the body — with the head and upper torso removed by a single, huge, semi-circular bite — will be found lying a few yards in from the mound end of the tunnel. Anyone finding a body in this state loses 1d6 SAN points with no chance of making a saving roll.

Finding the outer entrance to the tunnel will demand a successful Spot Hidden roll whilst in the area of the burial mound.

THE FOURTH DAY
Assuming that nothing has happened to precipitate events the climax of this adventure will occur around dusk on the fourth day. In the grounds that the daylight hours of the day, during which all is quiet, will be the last opportunity for the investigators to find the special materials in the library.

As the sun sets and its worth their salt will have impressed on their players by now, the only time of real danger (excluding trips to the cellar) is during the hours of darkness. It is to be expected, therefore, that the squarch will have adopted some kind of regular protection for Miss Higgins and Beaumont from sun-down to sun-up each night. They should also be ready to bring this case to a successful conclusion (especially if they’ve found the Sigsand Manuscript and studied it). The final confrontation, as described by Hodgson, takes place at a specific location and at a specific time. In practice, however, it would be fairly difficult to stage the events exactly as Hodgson describes them, so keepers may run the scene to suit themselves within the following guidelines:

1: The scene must be set after dark and will be preceded by sounds of hoofbeats in the night. The squarch must be present.
2: Parsket must be given a reasonable excuse for going off by himself shortly before the first event.
3: Within a few minutes of Parsket’s exit the squarch and hoofbeats will be heard close to the investigators and the lights will go out (except for any candles the investigators may have lit).
4: The sounds described above are being made by Parsket, who is now wearing a model of a horse’s head and carrying a weighted pole with an iron horseshoe at the end. His insanity has now taken over and his only interest is to reach the cellar and follow the squarch if it does turn up.
5: The Keeper may make the ensuing battle as violent or brief as he likes, but Parsket must not be killed. Once he is brought under control the investigators may question him for a few moments and the Keeper should encourage them to believe that the mystery is over.
6: After an appropriate interval the neighing sounds and hoofbeats will be heard again within the house, and getting closer. The Keeper may encourage the idea that Parsket is managing to produce sounds somehow, though Parsket himself will be absolutely terrified as he knows that this is the real horse approaching.
7: What happens next will be decided by previous events (and the Keeper). If the investigators have the Sigsand Manuscript, Parsket will be allowed to break free and place himself between the horse and Miss Higgins. This will result in his death (from a heart attack brought on by fear), but won’t solve the main problem — it will be up to the Keeper to decide whether to close the case here or give the players another chance to search the library.

If the players don’t have the manuscript, and haven’t taken adequate steps to protect Miss Higgins, then the squarch will destroy her, and then anyone else still capable of defending her. If Parsket manages to survive this onslaught should be penalised for bringing their profession into disrepute!

THE SIGSAND MANUSCRIPT
The Sigsand Manuscript will be more familiar to regular Cthulhu investigators under its other title — the Sussex Manuscript. As readers will, I’m sure, be well aware, the name Sussex is actually a corruption of South Saxon, whilst Sigsand is derived from the German words Sig (or sigu) and Sand. Taken literally Sigsand means ‘victory sand’, but is more correctly translated as ‘victory of the sand’. This rather cryptic title will not be found in any list of proper German names and is clearly a invention rather than a given name. The noted antiquarian Prof Wolf von Archenbaks has noted that the earliest known copies of the Sigsand Manuscript can be dated to the time when the Sigsand name was relatively common in most of Southern Europe. On this basis he suggests that the author (or authors) of the manuscript had close contact with Arab mystics and that the ‘sand’ part of the name is a thinly-veiled reference to the true origin of much of the arcane knowledge contained within the document.

For the purposes of this investigation the manuscript will be found to contain two spells — bind squarch (cost 1 POW point), and dispel squarch (total cost 4 POW points from one or more players). Although the contents of the Sigsand Manuscript are ‘positive’ — as distinct from the decidey negative or evil tone of, say, the Necronomicon — much of its subject matter is quite horrific and Keepers should apply the statistics given for the Squisition on any player who reads this document.

The Squarch — and Saiiti Manifestations
The ‘monster’ in this investigation is a manifestation of one of the Lesser Servitor Races believed to be vaguely related to the shantaks. It is not, however, truly autonomous in the way that most creatures of the Mythos are since it can only enter our part of the time-consequence at the express command of a human agent.

The squarch which manifests itself as the White Horse of Shalladholm is, in fact, a saiiti being summoned by the occultist during the ceremony conducted over the dead stallion and bound by him to the Manor House and its occupants. It acquired a rather tenous other for a few moments — for example, the blacksmith’s hatred, and the fibrous substance of this form was succoured by the terror of the various girls whose deaths it caused. The subsequent death of a female victim has drained the squarch of some of its power otherwise the dispel squarch spell could only be affected at greater (possibly fatal) cost to the person or persons casting the spell. Because saiti manifestations do not conform to any standard Cthulhuoid pattern no regular statistics can be supplied for them other than those given in the body of the text.

Signs of the Saaamaa Ritual
The First and Eighth signs of the Saaamaa Ritual (see below), when connected by a triple line, will effectively seal any opening in much the same way as the Elder Sign.

In the case of the squarch, this creature can render itself immune to the effects of certain sigils, e.g. assuming a ring-shaped appearance so as to pass by the sign in all directions at once. It cannot pass any sign on one side only, nor can it divide in two, and therefore it cannot cross any opening totally bisected like the Saaamaa symbol.

26
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Do you have the courage and a mind sharp enough to complete:

THE TASKS OF TANTALON?
An AD&D Scenario for a Party of 1st-2nd Level Characters, by David Whiteland

PLAYERS’ INTRODUCTION
It is late winter, and your faces are stained with dirt, dust, and rain. After a long trek, you have reached Ur, a small settlement on the edge of the mountains. The streets are damp with recent rain. The bedraggled gateman directs you to the Dancing Bear Inn. As you march toward the tavern, an old man approaches you from a nearby cottage. The rain streams down his face and long black beard. He introduces himself as Homin the Seer.

"I need help. I have sensed ill in the mountains. Something has disturbed the hermit, and I feel sure. You must come at once."

Seeing that his explanation is incoherent, and noticing the weary manner of your party, glancing longingly at the Dancing Bear, the gateman directs you to the inn. "Ogrim was a recluse — a loner. I fear that his purpose, the fruit of his labors, is now lost. Unwholesome, I do not know what will happen if it falls into the wrong hands!"

He steps back, allowing you to continue toward the inn.

"I will meet you outside in one quarter of an hour," he says and hastens away.

Your soggy rain brings you back to your senses, and soon you are enjoying the warmth and welcoming atmosphere of the Dancing Bear.

DM’S INFORMATION
Ur (Map 1). The whole settlement is surrounded by water, on the east by a stream, and by a ditch to the west. The ditch is about 5' deep and 10' wide, with mud bottom. The stream. The earth removed during the excavation has been piled on the north side of the stream as a protective rampart. At all times the place will be guarded by a man in each watchtower, one also serving as gateman. The town has a strong outer armour and are armed with shortbows and hunting knives.

Cottages. All are low single-storey buildings with thatched or turfed roofs. The windows have wooden shutters which are kept bolted at night.

Dancing Bear Inn. This warm and friendly inn serves the usual drinks at standard PH prices. There are 6-8 local locals (one with a lute) singing and laughing, with 2-4 women playing the harp and singing. The barman, Toff, keeps a longsword under the counter. The inhabitants of Ur are mostly farmers and traders. If questioned about Homin the Seer, the locals will tell (with reservations) that he is a bear-eyed, accurate foresight; he warned the settlement of an attack from wolves two years ago. Ogrim, however, is harder to elicit. All the herdsmen know is that he is the herdsman who comes from the mountains with the herd every day. The men will also speak of Comoran Crowdfriend, the outlaw, who attacks lone herdsmen with the foul crebin - cruel and giant crows — and of the Shadow, a cunning outlaw. He knows the land well and is allied with the winter kobolds, the crebin and lesser crows. If he is crebin which have informed him of the hermit’s death, and he has gathered a band of winter kobolds to loot the place, where he hopes to find the power of transmutation.

If the party is observed by any crebin or crows, they are a 3 in 6 likelihood of Comoran being informed of their strength and position.

Elsar, the ‘Shadow’; human; AC6; HTK11; LV4; CE; Assassin; STR12; INT15; Wis12; DEX17; CON8; CHR15; 2 daggers, longsword, shortbow, leather armour.

Elsar is not local and is Comoran’s companion. She sometimes sneaks into Ur for loot or provisions. She will accompany Comoran to the hermitage and try to enter alone and unnoticed to get the choice items before the winter kobolds enter. She will avoid open confrontations.

CREATURES
LASHBRIAR
No Appearing: 1/4
Armor Class: 6/9/5
Movement: 6
Hit Dice: See below
Treasure: Victims’ belongings
Attack: 2-5 fords for 1d3, sleep and runners
(see below)
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Non

A lashbriar is a dangerous plant resembling a giant form of bramble. It consists of three stems, 2d8hp, 2-5 thorny spines each with 1d4hp and AC6, and 2-5 runners each with 1d4hp and AC9. The lashbriar senses any creature in the ground around it and will strike suddenly at any creature within 10’. One or two of its thorns will latch at such targets, each inflicting 1-3hp with its thorns. Any character must hit save vs. poison (1+2 on save) or else swoon for 1-4 rounds. If the victim falls within 10’ of the stem, he will be attacked by the plant runners. Each hit indicates that a limb (or neck) has been entangled. These tighten their grip whenever the plant retains damage from any hit for 1HP for every 2 the plant receives.

Each friend or runner fights until reduced to 0 HP, but the whole plant dies if the stem is killed. The runners are also capable of catching fleeing feet with the same effect of a trip spell, so approaching the stem is difficult. Fire damage causes the runners to constrict at twice the usual rate — i.e. 1HP per hit.

Invisibility and silence do not affect the plant’s attack, although pass without trace will. Thieves can attempt to pass the briar without causing vibrations in the ground by moving very slowly and making their Move Silently roll.

In combat, the victim is treated as being prone and partially bound, and himself attacked at 2 or 3. There are two ways to break free from a runner: reducing its hit points to below 1, or pulling away with a sheer strength. The chance of the latter is in 6, adjusted by damage bonus.

RANdom ENCOUNTERS
In the wilderness there is a 1 in 12 chance of an encounter. If the party is carrying light sources of any description and being relatively unlikely, checks should be made once every 6 turns on Table 1.

WEATHER AND FATIGUE
The hard rain and strong winds, as well as the bitter cold, will not subside during the adventure. Exposed torches have a 60% chance of being extinguished per round, but all the most alert creatures will be easy to surprise — increased by 50% with a flash of light.

Exposed flesh will become numb; under such conditions any ‘hit score of 1 indicates a fumble and the weapon is dropped. Any spells cast by affected creatures will fail. The senses are so affected that skills are performed at -10%. Winter kobolds, bears and wolves are not affected. All movement and ranges should be considered the same as underground. Mapping and scroll use, etc., is impossible. There is a 2% chance per hour outside of catching a cold, adjusted by CON hit point adjustment. Treat +1 as +2 and vice versa. Rain and snow at the end of the day. The majority of NPCs will take shelter as frequently as possible.
sible whenever practical. The weather also affects visibility consider-ably. On the wilderness map, sightings are only possible if the observed is in the same hex as the observer. Undetailed sightings are possible into all adjacent hexes.

TIMELINE
The party arrive in Ur at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The first 12 miles of their journey, in Hom- lin's wagon, take roughly 3 hours. Sunset is at 7 o'clock. The water kobolds begin their raid on the hermitage 1d6 turns after halfpast seven that night.
Ogrim was killed by the ss at midnight (the previous evening) and Homlin was woken by a particularly vivid vision in his dreams at 4 o'clock in the morning.

THE WILDERNESS (MAP 2)
The terrain is rocky and treacherous. The woods are mostly con-iferous and have rough, scrub-like undergrowth. The stream is swollen due to the heavy rain and is very fast-flowing. Except where indicated, it is between 3' and 8' deep (1d4-5) and between 6' and 15' wide (1d10+5). Crossing any stream will be dangerous and a character wading through must check for mishaps:
(1) Save vs STR. Any score less than or equal to the character's STR indicates a successful crossing, although peripheral equipment may still have been soaked or swept away. Otherwise the character has been caught by the current and must take check (2).
(2) Save vs DEX. A score greater than the character's DEX indicates a loss of footing and a stumble, falling into the water and taking 1-3HP damage on the rocky stream bed — followed by check (3). Otherwise the character manages to struggle ashore very wet but otherwise safe, but the probability of catching a cold is doubled.
(3) Save vs CON. The character struggles to get ashore and must score equal to or less than his/her CON to do so. If the saving throw is missed, the character is swept downstream 0.1 mile per round, taking 1HP damage each round. Each round the character can attempt to save vs DEX but each round in the water gives a cumulative -2 penalty. Metal armour and or heavy equipment will lessen the character's chance of survival as the DM sees fit. A successful save shows that a rock or overhanging branch has been grabbed, and the character can try to get ashore again from (1) again. A 'natural' 1 on the dice indicates the character has been caught and held underwater, taking 3d4HP per round until death or rescue.
There is a 10% chance of a small cave being found in any 'broken ground' hex searched by the party. Climbing rock faces is extremely dangerous and there is always a minimum 25% chance of a fall.
Features
1. After 12 miles in the wagon Homlin stops and tells the party to disembark and that they will find the hermitage by following the stream.
2. This area is a treacherous rocky quagmire; among the small pools are patches of sucking mud, and many of the rocks will shift if any weight is put on them. There will be 1-4 will-o-wisps in the area which will attack when the party gets into difficulty.
3. At the top of this cliff (35'-40' high) is a mountain ogre (as normal ogre except AC0, attacks with fists for 1-8, throws stones which will hurl rocks at anyone passing below. The rocks inflict 2-8HP damage; the ogre can throw 1 rock per round. The boulders beneath the cliff provide suitable cover for anyone crouching behind them.
The mountain ogre will continue to cast rocks at the characters until they move out of range or he can throw the rocks, roughly 2' across, up to 20'.
4. The trees conceal 1d4+5 large spiders [MM]. They will usually be in the boles of the trees and are only 20% likely to notice an intrusion; unless their webs are disturbed or fire is lit in the area. The chance of a web being disturbed is 1 in 6 for each member of the party.
5. A dead tree has fallen across the stream; it is about 4' wide but rotten. Each character that crosses it will succeed unless the tree breaks and collapses into the water 5' below. The % chance of the tree breaking is the total gp weight on it divided by 50.
6. Beneath the stone carved lies the old alchemist, left to rest by Ogrim. There is no inscription or plaque.
7. There are 1-3 Ishbrairs (qv) in the hex. These will be amongst normal briar patches, so will surprise 1-4 times in 6. Druids and Rangers might notice that these plants are unusual before coming within their lashing range.
8. The stream is joined by another brook, now dry apart from the 6 inches of rainwater flowing over its rocky bed. This was the old course of the stream before Ogrim rechanneled it.
9. This hex contains the hermitage. The stream can be crossed by the stepping stones as shown on the map. Treat as a normal stream crossing, but take test (2) at -5 before test (1).

THE HERMITAGE
The hermitage is built from cut stone blocks, and has a turfed roof supported by wooden beams and a round 25' tower. The hermitage has 5 stoves, 4 stoves tunnelled out of the rock beneath. The lowest floor is level with the ground at the foot of the cliff. The windows in the rock-face are about 21/2' high and 1' wide, have no glass, and can be sealed using the interior wooden shutter. All the shutters will be latched shut unless stated otherwise. The two outside doors can be forced; the fourth successful Open Doors roll will make them crash open.

There are five laboratories in the hermitage, the most important being the hermit's own study, with the laboratory. The number shown is the number of such pieces present.
The Hermitage

**MAP 3**

**The Hermitage**

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**1A.** The top door is made of stout oak and is locked. The key is hanging on the back (inside) of the door. There is also a wooden beam and it may be removed and replaced with a 180° turn across the door from inside. Outside, in the corner against the tower, is a lashbriar: stem 14HP, 4 fronds with 3, 4, 3 and 2HP respectively, and 5 runners with 4, 4, 3 and 1HP each. Ogrim was able to pass it because of his Boots of ELvenkind.

**1B.** This 'lumber room' is very untidy. There are large piles of broken glass and earthenware here and there and are also old rags, 60' of rope, 3 large sacks, an old mining pick and other useless rubbish. The window shutters are double-bolted.

**1C.** In the centre of the tower’s interior are steep, spiralling stone stairs leading to an iron-bound trapdoor (with 3 heavy but rusty bolts firmly shut) which opens into the tower’s flat roof, 1D. There are three wooden cages here containing a badge (MM), a wolf cub (AC10, HTK2, bite 1-2HP), and two small black squirrels. The animals were tended by Ogrim who intended to test the Stone's effect on them.

**1D.** The alchemist used to watch the stars from the tower roof, although Ogrim rarely did so. The roof is mostly covered in a layer of dead leaves and twigs, and conceals 4 large spiders (MM) AC9: HTK2,6,7,8. They surround 4 in 6. The roof is sur- rounded by a 2' parapet, and has astronomical signs engraved on it.

**1E.** This is a laboratory. In the southern corner there is a stone missing in the wall, under the roof eaves. This allows Ogrim's 'familiars', a jackdaw, AC6: HTK5, to come and go as desired. The jackdaw has high animal intelligence and can mimic three understandable phrases. Whenever he thinks he is being spoken to, he will respond according to the score of 1d6:

- 1,2: silence or incomprehensible croak; 3, 4: 'Clever Jack'; 5: 'Bring Gold'; 6: 'Lead to Gold'. The jackdaw's nest is amongst the rafters and has a 1 gem (10gp), a silver pin (2gp), a shiny Bauble of Curing (treat as a Bead of Curing from a Necklace of Prayer Beads [DMG]), a fragment of a mirror, 1 shiny pebble, and a small shard of tin. He will attack anyone who tries to steal from him, but will otherwise observe intruders with curiosity. Ogrim used him to collect gold and silver for his experiments.

The laboratory also contains 6 containers (qv), 1-6. In the centre of the room is the downward flight of stone stairs.

**2A.** This chamber has a low vaulted roof; nothing else of interest.

**2B.** The corridors and passages are smooth stone and have a 6' high curved ceiling. Hanging on the east wall near the window is a short hunting bow, and opposite it is a round wooden table with an oil burner and a length of hose. There is also a wooden bench which may be dropped through the window to the roof rafters and contains 1 gem (10gp), 1-6 containers (qv), and 2HP. There are 2 vials of aqua vitae (almost neat alcohol)!

The bench is laden with glassware, and there are two earthenware demi-johns containing aqua vitae (each demi-john contains 7 'doses'; aqua vitae: type I).

**3D.** Empty domed chamber, ceiling 15' high centrally.

**3E.** In the centre of this room is a round wooden table with an oil reading lamp in its centre, and a low stool. On each of the four walls hangs a picture.

The first shows an egg being smitten by a sword, the second a map showing the various entrances and exits of the tower, the third shows a man holding a large stone, and the fourth shows another man holding a smaller stone.

**3F.** The windows are all sealed, and there are no broken glass or earthenware. The room contains 6 containers (qv), 7-12.

**4A.** The windows are all sealed, and there are no broken glass or earthenware. The room contains 6 containers (qv), 1-6.

**4B.** This is a laboratory - this is in fact a distillery producing aqua vitae (almost neat alcohol!). The bench is laden with glassware, and there are two earthenware demi-johns containing aqua vitae (each demi-john contains 7 'doses'; aqua vitae: type I).

**4C.** This is a spare room, ceiling 15' high centrally.

**TABLE 2: LABORATORY EQUIPMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apparatus</th>
<th>Laboratory</th>
<th>Is it a 'Sealed Container'?**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alimelic, glass</td>
<td>1E</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance and weights, or scales</td>
<td>2C</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellows, hand, leather</td>
<td>3C</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellows, foot, leather</td>
<td>4C</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book, empty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauldron, iron</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candle</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decanter</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furnace, large, stone</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furnace, small, brick</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourglass</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil burner, ceramic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parchment, blank, sheet*</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quill and ink</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retort, clay or glass</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rod, stirring, glass</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rod, stirring, iron, long</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatula or small spoon</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoon, measuring</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tong, iron</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tube, glass (piping), total length:</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vessel of Hermes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbench</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contents**

- Bottles, jugs, pots
- Bottles, flagons, flasks, vials

**NOTES**

*1 in 6 are Faal Runes (see Table 6, item 8) depicting an old man (the alchemist) smiling, waving, etc. The image is very hazy; these are the alchemist's prototypes.

**"Yes" indicates that the container is typically sealed, but as this is due to a lid of some description it may be possible to treat it as 'No' if the lid is not used (this is only true if the opening of the container is not very small). The vessel of Hermes is totally sealed in normal use. For more information see Reactions."
circular tail-eating serpent, the third two knights fighting, with 
their swords crossing in front of the sun, and the fourth shows an 
old serious-looking man; unlike the others this is an ancestor of the 
alchemist and not alchemical 
symbolism. 
The picture on the NW conceals 
a large keyhole cut into the stone. If 
it is unlocked, the wall between 
3E and 3D can be pushed, with some 
difficulty, up to 10' NE revealing 
the library beyond. 
3F. Washroom. The window in 
this room opens directly behind 
the bath. There are a few wooden jugs and bowls, etc. The 
shutter is open. 
3G. The Library. Three-tiered 
shelving is on the NW and NE 
walls, loaded with many different 
books. Most of them are dusty, or damp and rotting. 
There is also a tall stack of loose 
 parchments in one corner. 
There is much information to be 
gleaned from the library; the 
majority of the writings are in 
strange symbols and marks. The amount of worthwhile information 
discovered is determined 
according to the number of turns 
spent poring over the tomes or 
notes. 
Table 3 is used to determine 
whether any information is found, and Tables 4, 5 and 6 show what 
that information is; this may be 
the meaning of a symbol, or for 
mules or similar. The loose parchments 
are in fact notes taken by 
Ogrim, and are mostly written in his 
upright, runic hand, whereas the books tend to be 
written in a variety of styles. 
4A. After two full revolutions, 
the spiral stairs straighten out. 
See 3B. 
4B. Fuel store. In here are 4 kegs of 
coal, a few wooden jugs and bowls, 
and two sacks of charcoal and coal. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4 (Type of information learnt)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D100 Parchment Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-70 Symbol (5) General (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-00 General (6) Symbol (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The players will discover the information in the order it appears in the tables, so no more dice need be rolled. Once all the symbols have been learnt, any more discovered will be obscure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5 Symbols and their meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Symbol Meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Philosopher's Stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steel; iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosopher's/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sophic sulphur;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quicksilver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosopher's/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sophic mercury;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quicksilver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poison, poisonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aqua fortis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aqua vitae</td>
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<tr>
<td>To purify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit of wine or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vinegar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aqua regia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soap</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| SPECIAL CASE: The players may choose to search for the meaning of one particular symbol. The % chance of finding the meaning of the symbol required is shown alongside in Table 5. If the score is equal to or less than this value, the meaning has been learnt. If it is | |
| 50 of the required score the next (sequential) symbol will be understood instead, otherwise nothing of interest is found. Likewise, the players may choose not to waste time on a symbol that they believe they already know. If the table indicates that the discoverer of such a symbol may | |
| pass onto the next one instead. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6 (General Information; bracketed information is for DM only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (Two equations which occur frequently)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. All things are of the One Matter; even fire, men and souls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(With an illustration of the tail-eating serpent - symbol of Unity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (Another notable exception)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. (A narrative extracted from historical writings describing an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alchemist who became rich by 'projecting Lead into Gold with the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosopher's Stone')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sophic sulphur and sophic mercury in the Life Menstruum, in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Philosopher's Egg, forms the basis of The Great Work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Egg is the vessel of Hermes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. (Aqua vitae was believed to be notable because of its combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>properties of Water and Fire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. 'How to Make Faerul Runes' (Faerul Runes are special sigils which,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when inscribed upon pure parchment, store an image which will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>only be released when the parchment is burnt. The book is too</td>
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<tr>
<td>large and complicated to be used during the adventure, but the</td>
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<tr>
<td>nature of Faerul Runes can quickly be learnt. The manufacture of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faerul Runes requires magic, but the image is stored chemically so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the result will be destroyed (blank parchment) will not radiate magic. The</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>image will continue to be visible for as long as the parchment takes</td>
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<tr>
<td>to burn completely, and is described by the shape of the invisible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faerul Runes written upon it. Of course, the chemical and magical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>components required are expensive.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The Philosopher's Stone is the Elixir of Life. It will purify the One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matter; base metal or man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The Philosopher's Stone in its greatest form - a reddish powder -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can project lead into gold. (The Stone being a red powder is, of course, just the alchemist's guess.)</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>TABLE 7: CONTAINERS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<4C Of all the laboratories, this one is the best equipped. On the furnace is a vessel of Hermes into which Ogrim was about to put a potion when he was slain. 1 of the 6 candles is still lit, the others have been blown out.

Ogrim the hermit's body lies sprawled in front of the furnace. There is a claw scratch on the side of the hearth, and his throat has been cruelly bitten; there is a pool of dried blood on the floor beneath him. If the room is searched, the following will be found: tunica, belt, large belt pouch, soft boots (Boots of Elvenkind), the large key for the large door, a comb, pieces of string and a flint and steel tinderbox. Nearby lies a spatula and a scattering of the ruby powder.

The vessel of Hermes contains a poisonous gas which will spread as usual if the vessel is opened.

In the laboratory are 6 containers of chemicals.

The storeroom to the east of the laboratory is wrecked; the two shelves have fallen and the containers are smashes. There are the remnants of their chemical contents amongst the debris. A examination will show that some of the liquids on the floor have been splashed by feet (smaller than human-sized). In fact, Ogrim's killer is responsible for this and can be found, initially, in the laboratory.

The container labeled "Hallucinator's Mix" (MM), was sent by a demon lord to discover the Philosopher's Stone. However, it has been baffled by the sheer numbers of containers that could be hiding the stone — and succeeded in bringing down two shelf-fulls on top of itself. Since then it has been waiting for some sign from its demon lord that it may return to the task when the proper time arrives. When it is placed under the sun, it will emit an opportunity to kill any evil, evil human and take him or her back to the laboratory. If any member of the party is a suitable legal evil, the quest will attempt to demand the location of the stone. When the party enters the storehouse, the quest will try to observe the party's actions without getting involved.

**Table 9: Alchemical Reactions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Description/Type</th>
<th>(Code)</th>
<th>Reacting with Type Code:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acid (I)</td>
<td>As203</td>
<td>4231</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crystals</td>
<td>G5001</td>
<td>4231</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dust or powder</td>
<td>D6304</td>
<td>5432</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gum (I)</td>
<td>G3004</td>
<td>10003</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Water (I)</td>
<td>H4000</td>
<td>11003</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflammable liquid</td>
<td>E5000</td>
<td>4231</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic infusion</td>
<td>O4022</td>
<td>4231</td>
<td>J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poison (I)</td>
<td>P8000</td>
<td>10003</td>
<td>K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Othersolids</td>
<td>S9004</td>
<td>4002</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxic liquid</td>
<td>T5000</td>
<td>10003</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very reactive solid</td>
<td>V5000</td>
<td>10003</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**

- Chance is for neutralising toxic/poisonous substances, or poisoning potions.
- Solid dissolves to form L.
- If Water is spilled, it will not react.
- The 'metals' silver, gold, etc., will not usually react.
- Dissolves all metals, including the 'noble' metals.
- If G does not react, blade venom has been made (ingestive and insulative). The chance of reaction: 1003.

**Explanations:**

- Any chemical reactions pose similar 'game' balance problems to those seen in the D&D game. Once the party is discovered, it could be ignored, or it could be used as a hook to bring the party back into the game. The player can be told that the D&D alchemists have no way to purify the majority of substances.
choose if the DM considers the result to be beyond doubt. Starting from the left side of the code, count upwards, adding each digit to the previous one, to find the range on the die which indicates the particular result. For instance, if the first digit in the number code is 4, then a score of 1,2,3 or 4 indicates combustion. If the first digit in the number code is 3, then a score of 5,6 or 7 means an explosion has occurred, and so on.

Speed of Reactions.
In general, reactions will take 1-6 rounds to develop, and smaller quantities will react faster than powers which will react faster than lumps, as a rule of thumb. Two solids will not react together unless heat is applied. Heat decreases reaction time by the following percentages:
- 1-6 STR loss for 1-6 turns
- 1-2 CON points lost for 1-6 rounds

Gases. Explosive gases are the result of reactions with inflammable liquids, and any liquid will react with them. In effect, with explosive for 1-6HP damage on all within 5'. There is a 75% likelihood of this extinguishing the dangerous gas. The reaction probability to 50% for torch-sized fires, about 25% for bonfire-sized, and less for larger fires. If extinguished, it may explode again on subsequent rounds (allow 1-2 round delay). If the gas is lethal, explosions will take the form of sheets of flame inflicting 2-12HP damage on all within 10'. A save vs breath weapon is allowed for both types of these gases; success indicates half damage. 5 out of 6 or more for breath weapons only, 2 out of 6 are odourless, but only in 5 are heavier than air.

Poison gases occur when a gas is 1-6.5 times more volatile than the original pot. Poison gases, which have proper there is no difficulty with the original potion. Poison gases may or may not be present in the original potion. Poison gases have proper there is no difficulty with the original potion. Poison gases have proper there is no difficulty with the original potion. Poison gases have proper there is no difficulty with the original potion. Poison gases have proper there is no difficulty with the original potion. Poison gases have proper there is no difficulty with the original potion.

Common Substances

Combustion. One, if not both of the substances ignite, spilling both. If this occurs in a 'sealed container', treat as an explosion instead.

Explosion. If the chance of explosion is 1-6, a small explosion will occur on 1-6 roll. If the explosion involves inflammables, the explosion will occur. In general, reactions will take 1-6 rounds to develop, and smaller quantities will react faster than lumps, as a rule of thumb. Two solids will not react together unless heat is applied. Heat decreases reaction time by the following percentages:
- 1-6 STR loss for 1-6 turns
- 1-2 CON points lost for 1-6 rounds

Toxic liquids (from a poison gas) will kill unless a save vs poison is successful. Small amounts allow a save vs poison. Large amounts will succeed against the poison if consumed. Some poisons may only be reacted with the next save vs poison will be successful.

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Note. Toxic liquids will never reduce a character's hit points to below 1; for each point of damage inflicted that would normally reduce hit points, the character is unconscious for 1 turn. If a system shock roll is failed when the character is about to come round, then death will occur. If any characteristic should fall below 3, unconsciousness will likewise occur and the system shock roll is made at -10% per point below 3.
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Please mention White Dwarf when replying to advertisements.
Dear WD,

I have been collecting WD since the 'roaring twenties' (those were the days, when adventurers were real adventurers. Later, apart from Thrud and Dave Langford, it has been Tabletop Heroes that has caught my attention and the work of Messrs Dever and Chalk. So far they have yet to raise my pet goldfish about figure scale. By this I mean the alarming tendency for fantasy humans to exceed 30mm, especially in the case of the new Lord of the Rings figures. It appears that some gamers and others delight in making their fighters larger to be more impressive. This continues and the figures get bigger and wider and bigger still. My poor old 'normal' wargames figures shrink into the nothingness of the true 25mm scale.

Are there any two departments that are more enjoyable than either of these, and I will read it and then laugh quite a bit at the jokes, they are the first things I read on each issue. Also, I have been collecting from issue 52 and it has been improving greatly over the months as have the regular departments like Fiend Factory and Tabletop Heroes. I would like you to print this letter to show adults that children of 11 and 12 do play role-playing games.

Yours hopefully,
Darren Hair, Roxburgh, Scotland.

Dear WD,

My first bone to pick is with the selfishly dammed people who want WD to devote precious pagespace to insignificantly obscure games that they just happen to be interested in. This space would have to come from somewhere, so they suggest less room for the RPG giants and it has been improving greatly over the months as have the regular departments like Fiend Factory and Tabletop Heroes. I would like you to print this letter to show adults that children of 11 and 12 do play role-playing games.

Yours faithfully,
Andrew Cannon, Perisher.

Confused Warhammer fans will no doubt be happy to know that Slotta-Bases do conform to Warhammer frontages, they are in several sizes, including the standard 20mm x 20mm and 25mm x 25mm. As for figure size, the 25mm scale has long been treated differently by manufacturers. Larger figures do have advantages though: they're easier to paint, convert and characterise and have more detail, facts which I'm sure are appreciated by many gamers.

Dear WD,

Firstly, may I mention Thrud and his space-faring counterparts, The Travellers. These are the first things I read on each issue, having played very little fantasy and mainly SHRPGs for the last couple of years. As such, I have a vested interest in freeform gaming and the Champions rules (when I've played under rules) since this predates the general release of Golden Heroes.

Personally, I don't find Golden Heroes to my taste - I don't get on with the concept of rolling random characters when I have a perfectly good imagination of my own, so I've not made any serious study of the mechanics of the game. The person who can claim to be the expert on any game, however, is its designer (or designers). In their column in WD4, Simon and Peter dealt with an important aspect of the Superhero genre, the powerful single arch-villain. To do so, they not only have to use the necessary fudges of the rules to allow free choice of a larger number of powers at once, but also to cheat in allowing the NPC an arbitrary number of actions per round beyond the strictures of the initiative rules, which would not be open to the highly-experienced PC. Rules which would allow the architect of the initiative rules to produce credible opposition, just because they are to be high powered NPCs are the nadir of the GM's art, on a level with critical hit systems that can only be used by PCs to hurt monsters.

Steve Gilham, Stevenage.

NPC design is one of the interesting facets of a GM's work. By ignoring the 'rules' does a GM necessarily 'cheat'? If he creates an interesting and special NPC ingardes depending on elements of fantasy and the creation of an atmosphere, if the end result is challenging and/or fun in play, how much does the route taken to attain this matter? I suspect the point is more a question of GMing style but I'd be interested to hear of other opinions.

Dear WD,

I should like to argue a point with adult readers (I'm twelve) about the Dark Usurper. I think it is a good thing for beginners like myself (I also play D&D) because it helps to understand role-playing games, just like the bestselling Fighting Fantasy books. Although it is not good fun for adult gamers, the less experienced players can get the gist of the game. As I would like to you print more Basic D&D scenarios for youngsters to play and learn from. I have been collecting from issue 52 and it has been improving greatly over the months as have the regular departments like Fiend Factory and Tabletop Heroes. I would like you to print this letter to show adults that children of 11 and 12 do play role-playing games.

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NPC design is one of the interesting facets of a GM's work. By ignoring the 'rules' does a GM necessarily 'cheat'? If he creates an interesting and special NPC in games depending on elements of fantasy and the creation of an atmosphere, if the end result is challenging and/or fun in play, how much does the route taken to attain this matter? I suspect the point is more a question of GMing style but I'd be interested to hear of other opinions.

Dear WD,

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Yours hopefully,
Darren Hair, Roxburgh, Scotland.

Dear WD,

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Confused Warhammer fans will no doubt be happy to know that Slotta-Bases do conform to Warhammer frontages, they are in several sizes, including the standard 20mm x 20mm and 25mm x 25mm. As for figure size, the 25mm scale has long been treated differently by manufacturers. Larger figures do have advantages though: they're easier to paint, convert and characterise and have more detail, facts which I'm sure are appreciated by many gamers.

Dear WD,

Firstly, may I mention Thrud and his space-faring counterparts, The Travellers. These are the first things I read on each issue, having played very little fantasy and mainly SHRPGs for the last couple of years. As such, I have a vested interest in freeform gaming and the Champions rules (when I've played under rules) since this predates the general release of Golden Heroes.

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Inside the complex... things are nearing a climax...

**Travellers**

**DINALT-**
**PLANET FALL NOW!**

You got it, Cap'n!

But I was only doing Sub-Light!

COMMANDER ELSON!
ON TIME! DUTY WILL DO!
AND PRAY THEY DON'T
INCREASE MY BURDEN!
UNGOODY HEARING.

CHAPTER 13
COME IN NO. 3
YOUR TIME IS
UP?

Just get down here!

**RUMP-THUMP-SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS
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OLD POLICE STATION, HIGH STREET,
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THE SILENT HATER
Monsters and a Short Scenario for AD&D

The adventure ideas in this Fiend Factory would be ideally suited for operations based in a marsh-side village such as Blackmarsh (detailed in Dungeon Planner II).

The outer reaches of any empire are always the most dangerous places to be; a village on the banks of a river which borders a vast uninhabited swamp doubly so. The balance between man and nature continually hangs by a thread, the slightest alteration to the ecology of the area can mean disaster.

The village that the adventurers find themselves in is on the verge of such a disaster. Notable extraordinary denizens that are now under control are the gachragi and the strong toad, both of which still present a slight danger to the fishermen.

GACHRAGAR
by Anthony Howcroft

No Appearing: 2-8
Armour Class: 5
Movement: 1-8
Hit Dice: 6
Treasure: J,K,L,M,N,Q,V
Attack: 4-16
Alignment: Lawful evil
Intelligence: Semi-intelligent

Gachragi (plural of gachragar) are a fero-
cious species of fresh water snake. They are found in tarns, lakes, rivers, and occasionally in large, deep wells or pools. Mauve in colour, except for a turquoise fin on the rear of the head and luminous red eyes, they present a foreboding visage. Gachragi group together in small, supportive family groups. However, in times of hardship they will have no scruples about devouring each other.

When in combat a gachragar will begin the fight by using its gaze weapon, a ray of enfeeblement, unless it has already exhausted this power (10% chance). The ray has the effect of reducing the strength of the victim by 50% with all consumate results, unless the victim saves by rolling under its wisdom on a d20. The weakness lasts for 5 hours, but the gachragar can only use this gaze weapon once an hour. Following the attack with the ray of enfeeblement the gachragar attacks with a savage bite from its many-toothed jaw.

Gachragi are territorial animals and defend their waters with ferocity. Beyond the boundaries of its territory a gachragar will withdraw if seriously wounded, whereas in its domain the creature will fight to the death.

STRONG TOAD
by Phil Masters

No Appearing: 1
Armour Class: 0
Movement: 6"
Hit Dice: 1-1
Treasure: Nil
Attack: Gaze, special
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Animal

The strong toad is a large toad which bears a tortoise-like shell of incredible toughness. It radiates a strange, shimmering glow that makes it extremely difficult to focus on its exact position, as well as negating faerie fire and darkness spells; after each four rounds spent in melee with the strong toad, opponents will become dazzled and confused, attacking at -2 to hit for 3-12 turns subsequently; this effect is cumulative. This glow, combined with the toughness of the creature's shell and its high level of agility, allow it 3 on all saves vs attacks that cause physical damage or death. In any case, the strong toad can regenerate up to 2 points of damage per round, even when dead, unless the wounds were caused by fire or heat.

Sporadic hunts have forced these creatures further away from the settlement, and recently, therefore, the village has become relatively prosperous. Green salamanders, the latest creatures to rise to dominance across the river, have not as yet presented any problems for the village.

GREEN SALAMANDER
by Trevor M French

No Appearing: 2-20
Armour Class: 5"/9"
Movement: 3d8
Treasure: Nil
Attack: 1 bite (1-6) and 2 claws (1-4, 1-4) plus special
Alignment: Neutral evil
Intelligence: Average

Green salamanders are humanoid lizard-like creatures, whose slimy blue-black skin is covered in purple spots. They are amphibious and are usually found in swamps or large lakes.

In combat the green salamander will become enraged and secrete acid through its skin-pores. Its whole body will be affected and thus anyone bitten or struck with its claws will also suffer 1-4 additional points of damage and are 50% likely to have the area affected made useless in 1-4 rounds; it will last until healed. Once a green salamander has been killed the acid will remain on the skin-surface for 1-4 hours afterwards and can be extracted at a rate of two flasks per round.

Green salamanders are relatives of...
the normal red salamanders and are believed to come from the Elemental Plane of Earth.

Some three days before the party arrived, several fishing boats began. The first attack left few clues save huge claw marks on the remains of the hull. The second encounter left one man alive who described the creatures responsible; since then they have been called swamp lurkers.

**SWAMP LURKER**
by Stuart Burch

**No Appearing:** 1-4/10-20  
**Armour Class:** 7  
**Movement:** 9'  
**Hit Dice:** Depends on age (see below)  
**Treasure:** Nil  
**Attacks:** 2 claw 2-12 each, paralysis  
**Alignment:** Neutral  
**Intelligence:** Animal

Swamp lurkers are mainly found in swamps but sometimes at night they travel to villages. It has been known that sometimes these creatures raid farms attacking livestock for food.

Swamp lurkers are humanoid in shape and about 9-10 feet tall. They have snakelike bodies covered in a mass of slimy green hair. Females are about 7-8 feet tall. Young are born from giant frog-like spawn, and are serpentine in shape, green in color. Their hit dice depend on their age; 1 year 1d6+1; 2 years 2d6+2; 3 years 3d6+3; 4 years 4d6+4; 5 years 5d6+4.

Swamp lurkers will live together as a small tribe of about 10-20 creatures. Although they are of animal intelligence, communicating in grunts and howls, characters of 18+ intelligence could try and communicate using sign language with a 60% chance of success. When encountered as wandering monsters they will usually be a hunting party. A common habitat is caves especially if they are near a swamp. When attacking prey, they first use their claws. The poison is made by an organ in their body which after 1-6 uses takes 12 turns to replenish. A saving throw will show that there is either immune to the poison or will die in 1-6 turns. The paralysing stings are caused by their 2 red eyes which will hold still any victim unless a saving throw is made. If the victim fails its saving throw it will be held still but will be able to see and hear what is going on around him. For every 2% chance per turn to look away. Any victims can be bought back to normal when the lurker has been killed.

Because of their colour and likelihood of rising out of the swamp suddenly (able to breathe underwater as well as on land) they are considered 1-4. The strength of these creatures is 16 plus. When travelling through swamps it is possible to see a small current of water and air bubbles indicating these creatures walking along the bottom of the swamp.

As yet the motive for these attacks is still unknown. The reason behind the lurkers' actions are twofold, both are a result of one creature's arrival in the area. The silent hater has driven off the more stupid lurkers by preying on their young and killing the natural food of the creatures. The lurkers are simply responding to it by migrating and finding new sources of food—the villagers.

**SILENT HATER**
by John R Gordon

**No Appearing:** 1-8  
**Armour Class:** 8  
**Movement:** 12'  
**Hit Dice:** 1-1  
**Treasure:** Variable  
**Attack:** 1-3, 1-3, sting 1-4 plus paralysis  
**Alignment:** Chaotic evil  
**Intelligence:** Low-average

Silent haters inhabit dark, dank places. They hate all light and goodness, and despise all life. They seek to ambush and kill creatures, and then to suck their corpses dry of blood. The hater has a point on the top of its tail containing a weak paralysing potion which is effective for 1-12 turns. Haters are small, being only 3' tall, and are revolting in appearance. Their bodies are thin and seem emaciated, their skin is pallid and virtually transparent. The head is lumpy and bald with sharp, pointed ears and large white, watery eyes. Haters have limbless, shrivelled mouths, containing a single hollow tooth with which they suck blood. All have 120° iridescence and a keen sense of smell. Hands and feet are webbed, which allows the hater to cross impassable marshes at only half speed. If three or more haters concentrate together for 3 rounds, then a fear spell will be spontaneously generated.

Haters can cast a silence spell at will, in one segment, which will endure for as long as the creature desires, or until it is killed. Dispel magic breaks the silence for at least 1 round, (after which time it can be resumed). Haters can 'talk' telepathically to each other, as well as using the common tongue. Silence prevents the casting of most spells and obviously prevents speech.

The adventurers may wish to assist the villagers, but if they do the reward in cash will be small. The solutions could be to either eliminate the swamp lurkers, or to attempt communication with them (see under swamp lurker) and act in concert with them. The party should not know of the existence of the silent hater unless the lurkers tell them or they encounter one. The other inhabitants of the swamp will take a gastronomic interest in humans entering their domain. □
According to legend, the Gods of Neutrality once forged five great rings of power to bestow upon their chosen ones to help them rule the Earth and its surrounding planes. The rings represented each type of ethos: law, chaos, good, evil and neutrality and while one ring has enough power to hold at bay any other alignment, two rings wielded together by one alignment could be devastating.

All the rings are simple bands of the finestmithril and are perfect in all respects, being of godly rather than mortal manufacture. They radiate magic if detected for and all act as +4 Rings of Protection and may be combined with magical armour as well. Their locations on the Astral Material Plane are unknown but all are guarded by the souls of their previous owners.

The Ring Of Good (Foebane)
Foebane was previously owned by King Angarad, The Lion. The ring is so powerful that any evil or neutral person touching it will be transformed to neutral good in three melee rounds (no save). It can detect evil in a 20' radius and will always guide its possessor to the most powerful opponent in combat. When in combat the ring glows as a continual light spell. If the command word is spoken the wearer's ring hand. This force can be used while worn; it can cast up to two d8 points of damage; any non-magical weapon touched by it turns to dust (no save). The ring gives the wearer a permanent 75% magic resistance while worn; it can cast up to two d8 lightning bolts per melee round (when not using the sword), up to five a day, and gives double protection from evil on the wielder.

King Angarad (Guardian of the Ring of Good); AC-6; HTK95; LV14; NG; Ranger; STR:18/52; INT:16; WIS:17; CHA:18; Ring of Good; +2 Plate Mail; +3 Medium Shield. Spels: (Druide) Speak with animals, detect magic, cure light wounds. (Magic-User) Charm person, ventriliquism, invisibility.

The Ring Of Evil (Soulseer)
Once owned by the Lord of Darkness, Souleater is utterly evil and corrupt. Unlike its rival, Foebane, any non-evil person touching it must save vs magic or have its soul eaten by the ring; affected characters may never be resurrected, raised or reincarnated. If the character makes their save, the ring will drain 2 energy levels. The ring can cast 5 darkness 15' per day and produce a Sphere of Annihilation once per month. The ring may produce a forcefield the shape of a longsword from the wielder's ring hand, if the command word is known. The sword is +5 and does 1-12 (+5) points of damage. If non-magical armour or weapons are touched by the weapon, they smoulder, blacken, and fall to dust. The ring gives a 60% magic resistance to the wearer and infravision to 90'. The wielder can also cast eight magic missiles per round up to a total of forty missiles per day or up to two fireball strikes per day. The sword must not be in use for this function.

The Lord of Darkness (Guardian of the Ring of Evil); AC-6; HTK45; LV13; NE; MU; TR:12; INT:18; WIS:15; CON:15; DEX:18; CHA:14; Ring of Evil; Bracers of Defence AC2. The DM should determine the spells he has memorised.

The Ring Of Chaos (Freebearer)
Freebearer once belonged to the Princess of Meldevor, Celadon the Fair, a female elf of immense beauty and power. At a command it sprouts magical fire from the wielder's hands as an 11th level burning hands spell, twice per day. It can also detect law in a 20' radius. Any person touching it immediately becomes chaotic but retains their original prime ethos. The ring can produce a force field in the shape of a longsword, emanating from the wearer's ring hand. This force can be used as a +5 Longsword which does 1-12 (+5) points of damage; any non-magical weapon touched by it turns to dust (no save). The ring gives the wearer a permanent 75% magic resistance while worn; it can cast up to two d8 lightning bolts per melee round (when not using the sword), up to five a day, and gives double protection from evil on the wielder.

Celadon the Fair (Guardian of the Ring of Chaos); AC-9; HTK50; LV11/5; CN; MU/ Fighter; Elf; TR:16 (18/00); INT:18; WIS:11; CON:15; DEX:19; CHA:18; Ring of Good; +2 Plate Mail; +3 Medium Shield. Spels: (Druid) Speak with animals, detect magic, cure light wounds. (Magic-User) Charm person, ventriliquism, invisibility.

The Ring Of Law
The Ring of Law has no name. It was owned by Beraphon of the Bell. Those of an alignment other than lawful will be changed to law from its touch in three turns. The ring enables the wearer to detect lies. It can also detect chaos in a 20' radius. At a command it will glow so brightly that any looking upon it (120' radius) must save vs magic or be blinded for 1-4 rounds. Its major powers allow it to produce a force field in the shape of a longsword emitting from the wielder's ring hand. The sword is +4 and does 1-10 (+4) points of damage. It glows white in combat and the wielder can use it to direct a cone of cold cast by an 8th level Magic-User but only once per day. The ring conveys a 65% magic resistance on the wearer and +4 on saving throws vs cold. The wielder may also cast an ice storm per melee round, for a maximum of five a day to transform any 1-6 living person to ice if they are touched (a saving throw vs petrification prevents this).

Beraphon of the Bell (Guardian of the Ring of Law); AC-7; HTK45; LV13; LN; Monk (Master of Winter); TR:17; INT:12; WIS:19; CON:15; DEX:17; CHA:12; Ring of Law; Cloak of Protection +3.

The Ring Of Neutrality
At its time of loss, the Ring of Neutrality was in the hands of Arvo the Oaken, one of the few Archdruids. This ring is probably the most important: it sustains equilibrium. Any being touching it must save vs magic or be gated to another plane (without the ring). Only absolute neutrals can wear it and use its full powers. It has the following powers only, though it is extremely powerful. Any being of any alignment who comes within a 30' radius of the wearer, whether invisible or on another plane, is totally immobilised and unable to move (no saving throw). The ring wielder may then question the individual. If he thinks that the person intended no harm, he may let him go. If the person intends otherwise, the ring wearer may do as he thinks fit to restore equilibrium. The main concern of the ring wearer is that of keeping neutrality whole. However, although it also gives a 75% magic resistance to the wearer, the ring only operates when the owner is awake. Whilst asleep the wearer will have many guards to make attack difficult, but not impossible.

Arvo the Oaken (Guardian of the Ring of Neutrality); AC-9; HTK95; LV15; NE; Archdruid; TR:12; INT:15; WIS:20; CON:16; DEX:16; CHA:17; Ring of Neutrality; +5 Leather Armour, +2 Cloak of Protection. Spells and guards should be determined by the DM.

Combining Two Rings
If two rings are combined, the following happens: not only does the person gain full benefits from both rings, but the power of each ring doubles. As this is combined with another ring of similar powers, the person becomes four times more powerful than if he had one ring. It is strongly suggested that you, as the DM, ensure that this does not happen. If it does, then it is up to you to destroy the person concerned, as they represent a danger to mankind.

When two opposing rings are combined (good/evil; law/chaos), then a mighty explosion will create a void in the Prime Material Plane where all the rings and the life forces of those owning them will be sucked in and lost for a great time. Those who owned them will become spirits who will protect the rings from new adventurers, should they ever be found again.

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Tabletop Heroes is a regular feature covering figures, modelling and painting tips by Joe Dever and Gary Chalk.

OPEN HOUSE

March 16th/17th, 1985, saw the second of Citadel Miniatures' 'Open Days', held at their spacious factory in Eastwood, Notts. The event attracted well over 2,000 gamers who witnessed and took part in a myriad of activities including Warhammer battles, painting competitions, fancy dress and combat displays. Citadel took the opportunity to unveil new ranges and products, many of which are innovative developments in a hobby that appears (despite recent price increases) to be going from strength to strength.

The first of the official Lord of the Rings figures were on show in the now familiar blister packs. Many of the new range are available as mounted and foot figures which allows for their use in both dungeon and wilderness/campaign settings. They are exceptionally fine castings, leaning more towards a classical interpretation of Tolkien's characters rather than the featureless cartoon-like figures of previous LOTR ranges by other manufacturers. Prices start at around £1.15 per pack (foot figure, mounted figure and horse) - expensive by most standards, but inescapable due to high licensing royalties.

One of the more controversial developments at Citadel is their production of 60mm plastic models. The Fighting Fantasy range of fighters and monsters, moulded in hard polythene, come with a selection of heads, shields and weapons, and are designed to the same high standard as Citadel's 25mm lead ranges. Plastic fantasy models have had a poor reputation in the past, and deservedly so, but these new 60mm's are in a class of their own and will undoubtedly encourage youngsters to take up role-playing or fantasy wargaming as a hobby. For us old lags, the introduction of plastics will have many advantageous spin-offs. Citadel plan to make full use of their injection-moulding equipment to produce plastic shields, weapons and possibly flags and standards for existing 25mm ranges. New 25mm's will be moulded with lugs on their left arms to accept press-on plastic shields, the shields being plain on one side and featuring a device on the other. The permutations then become endless when you wish to form armies; figures with totally different arms and armour can be given identical shields to regiment them into one unit, or the arm lug can be filed off to depict a figure without a shield. Consider the work involved when you want to remove a shield from a figure where the shield is an integral part of the miniature's arm, and you can appreciate the flexibility of the new system.

Painted shields and banner devices are often the most eye-catching feature of a well-painted miniature, but few of us have the artistic flair or steady hand needed to produce stunning miniatures here. In response to this frustration, Citadel are to bring out sheets of coloured shield and banner transfers specifically designed to be compatible with their figures and their Warhammer regiments, the first of which should be available as you read this. The recent introduction of Slotta-Bases was met with mixed feelings by many figure gamers; the most common criticism being the problems of integrating the new larger bases with existing figure collections. In response to this, Citadel have produced a variety of additional Slotta-Bases for cavalry and monsters as well as round and hexagonal bases, which will enable figures to be grouped together differently for different basing needs or used instead of counters in certain board-games. The event also saw the launch of a new magazine - The Citadel Journal - devoted almost exclusively to fantasy models and modelling. The first issue of this quarterly magazine included full colour photographs, articles on painting by Simon Cass and John Blanche, Warhammer amendments, a reader's page and a competition. The covers include a full colour card-cut-out building in 25mm scale for use with tabletop gaming, and at £1.50 it is very good value for money.

This Month's Photographs

The standard of entries submitted to the Open Day painting competition was exceptionally high which made our task of judging the winners in each category very difficult. However, winners were chosen, some of which we are featuring in this month's photo page.

Fig 1 shows the winning entry in Sunday's Best Diorama class. Those of you who wish to construct your own diorama would do well to examine the detail put into this 'Goblin Chariot' scene, and take note of the realistic plant life (wire and Milliput bullrushes), muddy pond (fibre glass resin) and strip of untamed grass and mud (Meadowsweet). It is this attention to detail that won Kevin Adams first prize.

Fig 2. This is the trophy that we awarded for the figures we judged to be best at the Show. These are Citadel's latest chaos warriors in combat with dwarfs in the grounds of a ruined church. All the figures were painted with enamels and acrylics, with the ruined walls scratch-built from polystyrene, masonry scratch-built from Milliput, ceiling tile and plaster squares.

Fig 3. The winner of the Best of the Show trophy was Nick Sewell for his Warhammer regiment of goblins. Note here in particular the bases. This unit was one of many entries that Nick submitted, all of which were of exceptionally high standard, securing for him a well-deserved win.

Fig 4 shows the winner of the Best Diorama class on the first day of the show. Bill Sprink's 'Barrow-Wights' were well painted and imaginatively based on a group of 'standing stones', which consisted of polished pebbles set into a torn wall base and decorated with treasure chests (note the hobbit in the foreground). Of all the new Lord of the Rings figures, the barrow-wights proved to be a definite popular favourite at the Open Day, snatched up by fantasy wargamers and role-players alike.

Fig 5. The Overall Winner of the show for a consistently high standard of work was Simon Cass, whose 'Dark Elves' are shown here. One of the most common faults that spoiled many well-painted entries was the conspicuous lack of attention paid to bases. However well both Simon and Nick finished the bases of their two prize-winning units.

Fig 6. Here we see one of the new 60mm Fighting Fantasy plastic figures, painted and converted by Citadel staff artist David Andrews. Not bad for a toy, eh! Fantasy modellers may well find this new range to be a source of fresh inspiration as the larger scale and 'soft' material offers greater potential for conversion and elaborate decoration than is possible with the smaller 25mm lead ranges. Figs 7 and 8 were not among the prize winners, but P Benson's 'Rohan Lancer' (Fig 7) and Pete Muller's 'Gandalf on Shadowfax' (ME 11) illustrate the detail and animation that makes Citadel's new LOTR range something special.
BRITAIN'S BIGGEST!

CRASIMOFF'S WORLD is a Play-By-Mail game of exploration and adventure. As a player you assume the role of leader of a band of brave adventurers set out from a small town knowing little about the surrounding countryside apart from a few rumours. As you travel you will learn more about the land and it's secrets, encountering other parties, races and creatures. To survive you must rely on your wits and swords.

Our team of professional gamesmasters have developed and run the world for over five years, constantly updating and improving. Over 1000 player parties currently operate in this ongoing fantasy campaign making Crasimoff's World the most popular Play-By-Mail game in the UK.

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To enrol in Crasimoff's World send £5.00 cheque/PO/international money order payable to KJC Games. For this you will receive the rulebook, set-up material, first three turns and a copy of our latest newsletter. Future turns are £1.50. Send to KJC Games, 5 Vicarage Avenue, Cleveleys, Blackpool, Lancashire. FY5 2BD. European players welcome, rates are same as for the UK.

In EARTHWOOD, twenty-five players compete to be the ultimate ruler by controlling all the developed cities, either singularly or with an alliance. A typical game will last about 18 months with the first knockouts usually starting after six months.

Each player is either a king of a fantasy race or powerful charismatic character. Your character or king controls several groups each of which is totally independent of each other. You can recruit trolls, wildmen and others into your armies, and even control powerful creatures such as dragons. Your characters will capture and control cities, upon which you can spend gold to improve security, increase your workshop's production, build defences and maintain and enlarge your army. With gold your wizards undertake magical research, learning new spells. Spies search out enemy strongholds and then attempt acts of sabotage, theft and assassination. These are just a few options available to a player in EARTHWOOD.

EARTHWOOD is computer moderated but the turn sheets and replies are written in plain English so that you can easily understand them. No need to look through complex charts and code books to understand this game.

To enrol in Earthwood send £5.00 cheque/PO payable to KJC Games. For this you receive the rulebook, setup and first three turns. Future turns are £1.50. Send to KJC Games, 5 Vicarage Avenue, Cleveleys, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY5 2BD.
This Month's New Releases
From Games Workshop comes Legacy Of Eagles, a new adventure for Golden Heroes, and the first of many scenarios to come. The Charon's Arm is a three new products: Masks of Narsu, Aphabet, and the Superworld Companion. GW's Traveler range is expanded by the adventure Signal KX and the alien supplement Zodani. Free City of Krakow (£7.95) supports the company's only other major system, Twilight 2000. Iron Crown is about to expand into their RPG system (basically a set of rules and a set of adventures) with their new system, Rolemaster. While many current roleplayers find that this is a bit too much like the old system to the point of being a complete overhaul, others find that it's just what they were looking for in a new system. The latter will form the basis of a new series, the Ronin Series. The first issue of the Ronin Series, Ronin's World, has a cover price of £11.95. The series will be available in both blister packs and boxed sets.

Getting Venturesome
Runestone is the latest computer adventure game to be produced by Games Workshop. It incorporates Elements of the old Sensory Spectrum technique called "terrain". The whole game is about creating a new world and developing the technology to explore it. The player must choose which path to take, and the outcome will depend on the player's decisions. The game is full of surprises and challenges, making it an exciting and rewarding experience.

KJC's New Capital
KJC Games have acquired another major PBM to join their already popular Capital World and Earthward games. Capital World is a space warfare game, and Earthward is a battle for control of the universe. The new game, Capital World, is available in 32-player editions, with 3 to 18 months to spare! The game is packaged in a box and includes a starter pack and two free turns will be available.

The British Grenadier
Grenadier Models UK are now in full production. Their first addition to the range is the Call of Cthulhu range, which includes figures of the various characters from the stories. The figures are available in blister packs and can be found in local stores. The figures are well-detailed and make a great addition to any collection.

Next Issue
Stand back! You'll need plenty of Who to join in Peking Duck, a tasty adventure for Golden Heroes and Champions. ADD&D players will be kept on their toes by A Murder at Flaxton, and tied up for hours in Parlor Game - a devious device about the various manifestations of ghosts. Social customs in Traveller are covered in Starbase, whilst RuneRites gets involved with barbarian magic and clarifies some points about RO3. With all our regular features as well, it's not an issue to be missed!

Important Announcement
We wish to apologise for the slightly misleading nature of our advertisement that appeared in issue 66 announcing the opening of our shops in Newcastle and York. Unfortunately - in the rush to meet printer's deadlines - the copy was not proofed properly.

We must state categorically it was never our intention to mislead our customers and we are deeply sorry for any inconvenience caused.

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