

# OD&DITIES

THE ORIGINAL DUNGEONS & DRAGONS FANZINE

ISSUE 10

JULY 2003



# CONTENTS

3	Editorial	
4	Letters	
6	The World of Herol (Part II)	Carl Quaif
21	Some Enchanted Item	Erin D. Smale
23	Compendium of Characters	R. E. B. Tongue
24	Battlefield Fashions	Erin D. Smale
29	The Bestiary	Jeff Chislett
30	Original Dungeons and Dragons: Analysis and Beauty	Jason L. Garner
32	Fairies or the Fay	Michael Stewart
33	OD&D Encumbrance for Common (or not so common) items	Derrick A. Landwehr
35	Another Truth	Chris Nix
37	An Interview with Gary Gygax, Part II	Ciro Alessandro Sacco

Issue 10

July 2003

## OD&DITIES

THE ORIGINAL DUNGEONS & DRAGONS MAGAZINE

ISSUE 10 JULY 2003

Editor: R.E.B. Tongue  
Cover: Enrico Penaglia

### Contributors

Carl Quaif  
Erin D. Smale  
Jeff Chislett  
Jason L. Garner  
Ciro Alessandro Sacco  
Michael Stewart  
R.E.B. Tongue  
Derrick A. Landwehr  
Chris Nix

### Art

Dan Parry  
Daoul

# Almanac

Almanac Issue One is now available, for only \$5 through RPGNow! This issue, themed around 'Dungeons' is packed with ideas and inspiration for your campaign. Rules are kept to the minimum - in Almanac the idea is king!

Lavishly illustrated, yet printer friendly, Almanac offers a great deal for only \$5!

**TRANSFINITE  
PUBLICATIONS**

# EDITORIAL

This issue marks a turning point in the history of OD&DITIES. Finally, we have reached double figures. When I look back three years to what this magazine once was, it seems amazing that it can have changed so much in so short a time, and yet here we are. But what is to become of OD&DITIES, now? Where do we go next? Largely, that is up to you, but there are some changes in the wind.

As some of you know, I have just founded a publishing company, Transfinite Publications. Before I say anything else, let me assure you that OD&DITIES will continue to run, so long as submissions are received. There will be some changes, but I assure you, nothing bad. Quite the reverse! For one, I plan to bring out OD&DITIES on a more regular basis. I will announce now that Issue 11 will be available on August 1<sup>st</sup>, and I plan to have Issue 12 out in November, submissions permitting.

What is Transfinite Publications? Transfinite Publications is a company, run by myself, that will be producing PDF magazines of a similar style to OD&DITIES. They will be larger, and will cost \$5 each (but OD&DITIES will continue to be free). These magazines will cover Third Edition D&D, in three different forms.

*Almanack* is a general magazine, covering a wide variety of topics. An analogy would be OD&DITIES for Third Edition, and that is basically what I intend to do. *Royal Griffon* will publish adventures, and *Lemurian Dreams* will publish fantasy short stories, but with additional notes, statistics and information provided, to aid a DM in using those stories in his own campaign. The general style of these magazines, as stated, will be similar to OD&DITIES. Basically, if you want OD&DITIES for Third Edition, these magazines will be it. More information is available on the Transfinite Publications website: <http://www.transfinitepublications.com>, and Issue One of Almanac is now available for sale at RPGNow.com for \$5 ( at the following URL: [http://www.rpgnow.com/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=1856](http://www.rpgnow.com/product_info.php?products_id=1856) )

Submissions of both articles and artwork are of course needed for all these magazines, and unlike OD&DITIES, there will be payment for these submissions, of 2 cents a word. We've had some great pieces in OD&DITIES in the past, and it is my hope that some of those writers will submit things for the new magazines, as well as those of you who haven't before.

What else is going on in the D&D world at the moment? Well, news has come through that James Mishler, a contributor to OD&DITIES in the past, and one of our best, is writing a new sourcebook for Mystara under the auspices of the Hackmaster line. Many have qualms over the new material, but I welcome it, for two reasons. One: James has proved in the past that he understands Mystara, and has authored some of the best fan material in the past, and two: any new published material for Mystara has to be welcomed. I'll certainly be picking up the new material myself, and I urge everyone to reserve judgment until they see what I'm sure will be an excellent piece of work.

Well, this Editorial has gone on longer than usual, I fear. Don't worry though, you're past the boring bit and can get on to the good stuff. See you on August 1<sup>st</sup>!

Richard Tongue,  
Editor, OD&DITIES

# LETTERS

Please keep these letters coming in, to [Methuslah@tongue.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:Methuslah@tongue.fsnet.co.uk)

Dear Richard,

Yay! It's out!! Seriously, this the best news I've had in ages and after the day I've just had, the perfect pick-me-up! I downloaded it and printed it (I confess, I prefer a paper copy) immediately. Here's my first impressions:

- I loved Guy Robinson's "Governing Gods"! I laughed out loud at "the Iron Lady" (ah, those "halcyon" childhood days of the Conservative Government!) and "Hatton" in particular. I'm sure our non-British friends won't get some of the in jokes, sadly, but for we of the "known world" ;-), it's perfect! (I wonder - does the Iron Lady have Specialty Priests known as "Milk Snatchers"? :-)) - "okay, anyone born after 1975, see me later for an explanation of that joke...")

- "Martigan's Rest" by Geoff is superb. I'm a huge fan of Geoff's work, and have been for years (I'm dying to run an adventure with an Outer Being or two in it - if I only had the players...<sigh>) He produces very evocative, powerful articles.

- The interview with Gary Gygax is just fascinating; I'm always interested to hear more about our hobby from the "horse's mouth(es)", so this drew my eye immediately. Well done, Caro; Can't wait for part 2!

- Erin's "Some Enchanted Item" article is great! Anyone who knows me, knows that spells and magic items are my passion, so it's a delight to see someone who takes such great care over their creations. Hither & Yon are terrific! I enjoyed "First Strike" and "Combat Sans Matrix", too - both very useful, interesting, and highly readable articles. Nice one!

- Both "Getting Started" and "Compendium of Characters" were, as I'd expect, of excellent quality, Richard I always turn to "Getting Started" first in every issue (I do so wish we'd had something as good as this back in the Eighties...ah, well), and the characters in "Compendium" are just wonderful. Good work.

- And of course, seeing part 1 of my article in print is a tremendous kick! The title is just lovely (you create fantastic titles in this magazine, Richard - how do you do it?); actually, the look of the whole piece is wonderfully enhanced from my original. I love Jesse Walker's artwork it complements the details wonderfully. Actually, I think his work throughout the issue is outstanding. I'm not ignoring Jeremy's cover I think it's very beautiful but I do love Jesse's work. A truly excellent issue, Richard! Congratulations!

Cheers,  
Carl.

Hi Richard - I just stumbled on your OD&DITIES website yesterday and would like to congratulate you on the 'zine. There's some really good stuff in there, and useful for other editions as well (I currently play in a 3rd ed campaign and am starting up a 2nd ed PBEM for a friend). The Getting Started articles and the adventures have been particularly good! Although I play later editions, I still strive for "First Edition Feel" in my games - and not just because I miss rules sets that do not require a 4 week sabbatical just to read through once. I also strongly empathize with your efforts to hoist the flag and attract new OD&D recruits to the fold. I've been on mailing lists for both Gamma World and Star Frontiers for a number of years and folks from both lists have been doing their level bests to attract new players as well. Some steps we've taken on the Star Frontiers listserv include: organizing mini-conventions for fellow listserv members (5 so far in the last 4 years, from Tennessee to Colorado); running PBEM (Play By Email) games to interest new players; and running "Parasitecons" - basically, getting some listserv members together at a regular gaming convention and running tournaments, with free rules giveaways to new players who try playing. I've found I can consistently grab bargain-priced rules sets off eBay and stockpile them against when I can hand them out next. Amusingly, some SF listserv members have kids or nephews / nieces and have taken your advice by introducing them to gaming as you suggested to OD&Ders in OD&DITIES 8. Keep up the excellent work and best of luck!

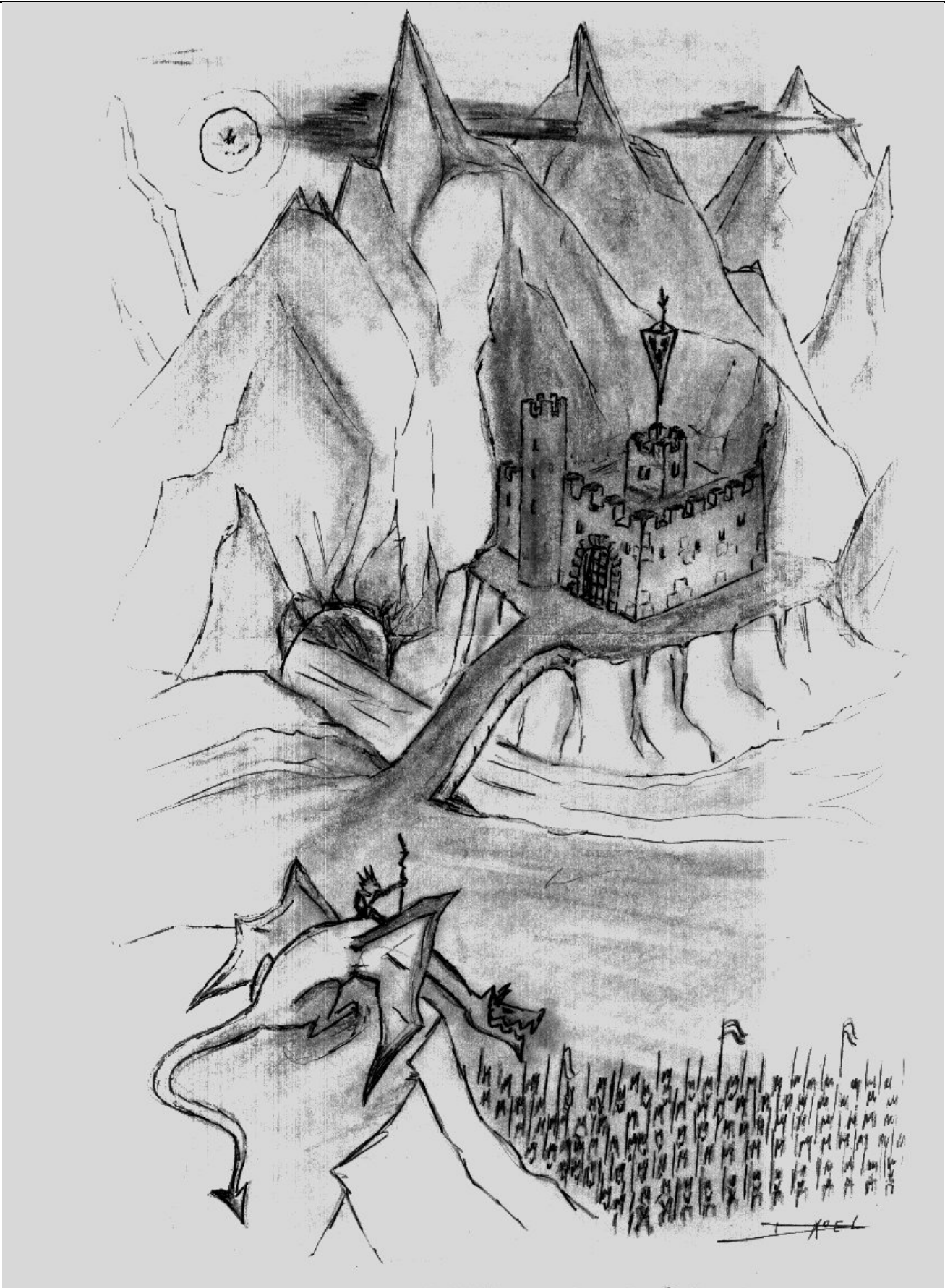
Andy Campbell

Hello Richard,

I get very happy when I found your web page. I thought that OD&D was completely forgotten by everybody after all this years. I was a DM for OD&D some time ago, but not a very good one. I prepared stories for low level characters (I've never gone beyond player characters of 5th level) and after a long time I've not played anymore. Until now that I've recover the interest on it. Now, I'm preparing a short history for a group of colleagues, and I hope they like it and want to play other adventure before this first. So that's why I'm so glad of read your pages. I hope to contribute to your site with something soon. Receive all my support, and from the rest of my players.

Best Regards,  
Jesús Carmona Esteban. Spain.





# THE WORLD OF HEROL

CARL QUAIF

PART II

A new campaign world for OD&D, in two parts...

## Monsters:

Many of the “standard” monsters are known to exist on Herol; those that are not could still be found there in the unexplored continents. The following is a list of monsters from the Rules Cyclopedia and Creature Catalogue (both oD&D and AD&D versions), which are *known* to dwell on Herol – many more could be found there, awaiting discovery. Likewise, locations given are where that creature is *most likely* to be encountered; most can be found almost anywhere, in small numbers. Comments are given where appropriate.

## Rules Cyclopedia:

Actaeon – Gileme.  
 Aerial Servant – a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Animal Herd – anywhere.  
 Ant, Giant – Northwestern Territories.  
 Ape, Snow – Northwestern Territories.  
 Ape, White – Northwestern Territories.  
 Baboon, Rock – Northwestern Territories.  
 Bandit – wherever there are people to prey on.  
 Bat, Normal/Bat, Giant – Northwestern Territories, also anywhere there are caves on Draman.  
 Bear, Black/Grizzly – Forested areas, esp. Gileme.  
 Bear, Polar – polar areas (naturally).  
 Beetle, Giant – anywhere on Draman or Gileme.  
 Black Pudding – Old Countries.  
 Blink Dog – Old Countries, Gileme.  
 Boar – all over Draman and Gileme.  
 Bugbear – mostly near One Thousand Cities’ Northernmost reaches.  
 Camel – Uran’Dar.  
 Cat, Great – all over Draman and Gileme (excluding Sabre-Tooth Tiger).  
 Centipede, Giant – all over Draman and Gileme.  
 Chimera – in Herol, actually a *Construct* (see *Golems and other Constructs*, below), rather than a living creature. Found infrequently.  
 Cockatrice – a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Crocodile – Empire of Jael, Gileme, Uran’Dar.  
 Crab, Giant – found on Southern Dramani coasts.  
 Cyclops – in the Northwestern Territories.

Diabolus – native to Maybe, or the Nightmare Dimension; found rarely on Herol.  
 Dinosaur, all types – Gileme, possibly Uran’Dar. Very few left on or around Draman.  
 Displacer Beast – Old Countries, Gileme.  
 Djinni – a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Dolphin – any coastal area.  
 Doppelganger – see *Lycanthropes*, below.  
 Dragon, all types – native to Galeia; the few found on Herol have migrated here over millennia via intermittent *Gate-magics*. An “Isle of Dragons” is rumoured to exist somewhere on Herol.  
 Drake, all types – see *Lycanthropes*, below.  
 Dryad – Gileme. The physical representations of the wood-spirits worshipped by the Elves.  
 Efreeti – a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Elemental, all types – a summoned, elemental monster (of course).  
 Elephant – Empire of Jael.  
 Ferret, Giant – Old Countries, Gileme.  
 Fish, Giant – any aquatic environment of sufficient size.  
 Gargoyle – see *Golems and other Constructs*, below.  
 Ghoul – see *Undead*, below.  
 Giant – all available, but very rare, on Draman; perhaps more common on Uran’Dar.  
 Gnoll – mostly near One Thousand Cities’ Northernmost reaches.  
 Goblin – mostly near One Thousand Cities’ Northernmost reaches.  
 Golem, all types – see *Golems and other Constructs*, below.  
 Gorgon – a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Grab Grass – Empire of Jael, Old Countries, Gileme.  
 Gray Ooze – the Old Countries.  
 Green Slime – the Old Countries.  
 Griffon – Empire of Jael, Northwestern Territories.  
 Harpy – Empire of Jael.  
 Hellhound – Old Countries, One Thousand Cities.  
 Hippogriff – Empire of Jael, Northwestern Territories.  
 Hobgoblin – mostly near One Thousand Cities’ Northernmost reaches.  
 Horse, all types – anywhere.  
 Insect Swarm – anywhere.  
 Invisible Stalker – a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Kobold – mostly near One Thousand Cities’ Northernmost reaches.

Leech, Giant – Gileme.  
 Lizard, Giant – Old Countries.  
 Lycanthrope – see *Lycanthropes*, below.  
 Malfera – native to Maybe, or the Nightmare Dimension; found rarely on Herol.  
 Manscorpion – Empire of Jael, One Thousand Cities.  
 Manta Ray – Oceans.  
 Manticore – Empire of Jael, Northwestern Territories.  
 Medusa - a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Minotaur – Empire of Jael.  
 Mule – anywhere.  
 Mujina - native to Maybe, or the Nightmare Dimension; found rarely on Herol.  
 Ochre Jelly - the Old Countries.  
 Ogre – Old Countries, One Thousand Cities, occasionally in the Empire of Jael.  
 Orc – anywhere.  
 Owl Bear – Old Countries, Empire of Jael.  
 Pegasus - Empire of Jael.  
 Pixie – Gileme.  
 Rat – anywhere.  
 Roc - Uran'Dar.  
 Salamander - a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Sasquatch – Old Countries.  
 Scorpion, Giant – Empire of Jael.  
 Shark – Oceans.  
 Shrew, Giant - Old Countries.  
 Skeleton – see *Undead*, below.  
 Slug, Giant - Old Countries.  
 Snake – anywhere.  
 Spectre - see *Undead*, below.  
 Sphinx – Uran'Dar.  
 Spider, Giant – anywhere.  
 Sprite – Gileme.  
 Statue, Living – see *Golems and other Constructs*, below.  
 Thoul - mostly near One Thousand Cities' Northernmost reaches. A Fiend-enhanced race.  
 Treant – mostly Gileme; some on Draman.  
 Troll - One Thousand Cities, Old Countries.  
 Undine - a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Unicorn – Old Countries, Gileme.  
 Vampire - see *Undead*, below.  
 Weasel, Giant – Old Countries.  
 Wight - see *Undead*, below.  
 Whale – Oceans.  
 Wolf – anywhere.  
 Wraith - see *Undead*, below.  
 Yellow Mold – Old Countries.  
 Zombie - see *Undead*, below.

### *Creature Catalogue:*

Amber Lotus Flower – Gileme.  
 Animal, Prehistoric, all types - Gileme, possibly Uran'Dar. Very few left on or around Draman.  
 Aranea – Gileme, some in Old Countries. Note: these are "basic" Aranea, not Herath -types.  
 Archer Bush – Gileme.  
 Baldanar - native to Maybe, or the Nightmare Dimension; found rarely on Herol.

Bargda – Northwestern Territories, Northernmost reaches.  
 Fiend-altered species.  
 Bhut – see below.  
 Brain Collector (Neh-Thalggu) – an extradimensional monster.  
 Brownie/Redcap – Old Countries.  
 Cay-Man/Cayma – Gileme, possibly Uran'Dar.  
 Chameleon Man – Uran'Dar.  
 Cryion – Northwestern Territories, One Thousand Cities.  
 Dark Wing – mortal, Entropic minion. Found serving Fiends and goblinoid tribes.  
 Death Fiend (Ostego) - mortal, Entropic minion. Found serving Fiends and goblinoid tribes.  
 Decapus – Old Countries, Gileme.  
 Decapus, Marine – Oceans.  
 Deep Glaurant – Northwestern Territories.  
 Desert Ghost - a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Dog/War Dog – anywhere.  
 Dragon, Pocket – the only "native" Herolian Dragon. Found nearly anywhere.  
 Dragon, Undead – actually a Construct (see *Golems and other Constructs*). Only three known to exist.  
 Dragonfly – Empire of Jael.  
 Dragonne - Empire of Jael.  
 Eagle – anywhere on Draman, esp. Northwestern Territories.  
 Eel – any aquatic environment of sufficient size.  
 Flitterling – Old Countries.  
 Fundamental - a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Fungoid – One Thousand Cities.  
 Gakarak – mostly Gileme; some on Draman.  
 Gargoyle, Iron - see *Golems and other Constructs*, below.  
 Garl – Uran'Dar. Possibly Galeia, having devolved from more advanced races.  
 Gator Man - Gileme, possibly Uran'Dar.  
 Geonid - Northwestern Territories.  
 Ghoul, Elder – see *Undead*, below.  
 Grey Philosopher - see *Undead*, below.  
 Guardian Warrior and Horse - see *Golems and other Constructs*, below.  
 Gyerian – Uran'Dar.  
 Hawk - anywhere on Draman, esp. Northwestern Territories.  
 Hephaeston - available, but very rare, on Draman; perhaps more common on Uran'Dar.  
 Herex - anywhere on Draman or Gileme.  
 Homunculus – found anywhere; usually a Fiend or other Exalted being on a special mission.  
 Hook Beast, all types - Empire of Jael, One Thousand Cities.  
 Hypnosnake – Gileme.  
 Ice Wolf - mostly near One Thousand Cities' Northernmost reaches.  
 Jellyfish, Giant - any aquatic environment of sufficient size.  
 Juggernaut - see *Golems and other Constructs*, below.  
 Killer Tree – Old Countries, Gileme.  
 Kna – Oceans.  
 Kopru – Oceans, particularly around Uran'Dar.  
 Kraken – Deep Oceans.  
 Living Statue - see *Golems and other Constructs*, below.  
 Lizard, Giant Foot-Pad - Northwestern Territories.  
 Lizard, Rockhome - Northwestern Territories.  
 Magen - see *Golems and other Constructs*, below.  
 Magpie – anywhere.

Nagpa – native only to Galeia.  
 Nightmare - a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Octopus, Giant - Deep Oceans.  
 Owl, Giant – Old Countries, Empire of Jael.  
 Oyster, Giant – Oceans.  
 Pachydermion - native only to Galeia.  
 Phanaton – Gileme.  
 Piranha Bird - Gileme.  
 Porcupine, Giant - Old Countries.  
 Raven/Crow – anywhere.  
 Rhinoceros – Uran'Dar.  
 Rock Man - Northwestern Territories.  
 Roper - Northwestern Territories.  
 Scorpion - Uran'Dar.  
 Sea Serpent - Deep Oceans.  
 Shargugh – Old Countries.  
 Shark, Vamora – Oceans.  
 Shark-Kin – Oceans, coastal waters.  
 Skunk – anywhere.  
 Snapper – Uran'Dar.  
 Squid, Giant - Deep Oceans.  
 Strangle Vine – Gileme, Old Countries.  
 Strangleweed – coastal waters.  
 Surtaki - Northwestern Territories.  
 Tabi – Empire of Jael.  
 Thunderhead - Northwestern Territories, or anywhere there are storms.  
 Turtle - Uran'Dar.  
 Vampire Rose – Gileme.  
 Water Weird - a summoned, elemental monster.  
 Whipweed – Gileme.  
 Winged Warrior - see *Golems and other Constructs*, below.  
 Wychglow – Old Countries.  
 Xytar – Uran'Dar.

The following list covers broad groupings of “monsters” which are in some way different in origin or nature to their Mystaran equivalents.

*Undead*: Any intelligent, humanoid creature - Human, Demi-Human, Goblinoid, even monsters - can be transformed into an intelligent Undead on Herol; *Zombies* and *Skeletons*, of course, can be animated from any dead body.

*Zombies and Skeletons* - the spell *Animate Dead* is available to both Clerics and Magi on Herol; however, Undead created by this spell are often weak, pathetic things, easily destroyed. Most “permanent” Undead of this type are created by Branding dead bodies (for *Zombies*) or etching a Brand-like sigil into the skulls of *Skeletons*. In the former case, the *Zombie* gains the ability to *regenerate* (as per a *Brand of Recovery*, see above), returning to unlife even if slain, unless it is either reduced to -10 hp or more or the Brand is destroyed (which triggers a small explosion of negative energy, causing 1d4 hp damage to all within 5'). In the latter case, the Brand lets the *Skeleton* reassemble itself when destroyed - adding bones from other (non-magical) skeletons, if necessary - a process which takes about 24 hours. The Brand can reanimate the *Skeleton* upto 1d4+5 times before the magic expires. The Brands used to create these constructs were originally

designed by followers of Govenai, but knowledge of their design has passed into common lore.

*Ghouls* - lesser followers of Govenai, these creatures are reanimated by a weaker variant of the *Vivicant Brand*, developed by Govenai's Priests, which must be placed on their chests before death. They retain some memories from their mortal lives, and are capable of some coherent thought, although their Undead state eventually causes most of them to go insane. Heroli *Ghouls* are otherwise identical to their Mystaran equivalents.

*Elder Ghouls* – greater than the poor weak things who become *Ghouls*, but nevertheless far below *Vampires* on the pecking order. Apart from their greater powers (most Greater *Ghouls* were *Mages* in life), they are treated identically to normal *Ghouls*.

*Grey Philosophers* - not truly “Undead” in the normal sense, these strange manifestations are reflections of the *Immortals* on Herol, and as such may appear nearly anywhere, with any alignment; all Heroli *Immortals* tend to produce at least some of these creatures. They manifest from the *Immortal-enriched* essences of once-powerful dead Clerics, and usually haunt the tombs or other much-frequented locales of those Clerics during their lifetimes. They may not be Turned.

*Wraiths and Spectres* - unlike most corporeal Undead, these monsters do not owe their existence to Govenai; most are ancient, created thousands of ago in a ritual employing the lost spell *Unquiet Guardian* (see *Spells*). Those created since were made by the Undead themselves, since those slain by a *Wraith* or *Spectre* will rise again as the same sort of Undead which killed them. They are otherwise identical to their Mystaran equivalents.

*Mummies* - like *Wraiths* and *Spectres*, most ancient *Mummies* owe their existence to a variation of the *Unquiet Guardian* spell, and were created during the era of the *Lost Empires*; however, the mummification process is also known to occur when powerful worshippers of *Entropic Immortals* (other than Govenai) die a natural death; the power residing within them both corrupts and preserves them in a withered, desiccated husk. Those who achieve the state in this fashion retain much of their magic, in the manner of *Liches* (see below).

*Vampires* - the most favoured followers of the *Immortal* Govenai, Herolian *Vampires* are former NPCs who received the *Vivicant Brand* in life; once killed - either in the course of their lives, or via suicide - the Brand activated, returning them to Unlife as *Vampires*. The majority of Herol's *Vampires* possess high-level Clerical or Magical abilities, in addition to their *Vampiric* powers - which do not include the ability to turn their victims into lesser *Vampires*, unless the *Vampire* himself has the *Branding* skill; those who do can use that skill on *Charmed* slaves before killing them, transforming them into *Ghouls* or lesser *Vampires*, if desired.



*Liches* - Lichdom is achieved in the same manner on Herol as it is on Mystara; only high-level Magi can use this method. Heroli Liches are not generally followers of Govenai - their route to Undeath predates the ascension of that Immortal - and they tend to despise his worshippers, the far-more-numerous Vampires. Liches keep a low profile, devoting much of their Unlife to eradicating the threat posed by the Vampires, and accumulating power to use against them. Many a dedicated Vampire-hunter is secretly backed and supported by a Lich, via complicated chains of subordinates.

*Lycanthropes*: On Herol, lycanthropy is not a disease, and cannot be transmitted through the bite of a werebeast. The Lycanthropic Orders are ancient, widespread societies, who hold the secret of creating Brands which allow the bearer to transform into a specific animal and back, at will, during the hours of darkness. As with Undead, lycanthropy is not restricted to Humans - Elvish Werebears, Dwarfish Weresharks and Halfling Werebats (of all alignments, and with or without character classes) are all possible here. In recent centuries, many Lycanthropes living in the Empire of Jael have taken up worship of Ranya, the Moon Queen; some females have even become Clerics in her church. Consequently, the Church of Ranya is the only group outside the Orders to share the knowledge of making Lycanthropic Brands.

All known Mystaran variants of lycanthropy are found somewhere on Herol. Lycanthropes may be discerned by the beast-shaped Brand they wear somewhere on their bodies (unlike most Brands, the Lycanthrope Brand subset may be tattooed anywhere the Brand-maker chooses). No Lycanthrope can possess more than one of this type of Brand at any one time; if permitted to switch to another Order (a very rare occurrence), the original Brand must be erased before the new one can be created.

There are other, variant groups who come under the general heading of "Lycanthrope", as follows: -

*Bhuts* - Lycanthropes who turned to the worship of Entropy, long ago. They cannot control their transformation, assuming bestial form at the setting of the Sun and returning to their human(oid) state at dawn. Most Bhuts are insane as a consequence of their transformations. They may be found almost anywhere on Draman, in small numbers.

*Doppelgangers* - a particularly evil group of breakaway Lycanthropes who devised a Brand capable of turning them into any humanoid they saw; a side-effect makes the bearer assume an "unfinished" grey, hairless form when at rest. Doppelgangers and Lycanthropes particularly hate each other, and will attack one another on sight. They may be found anywhere on Draman.

*Drakes* - variant Lycanthropes, using Brands that allow transformation into dragon-like forms. The three Brotherhoods - Mandrake, Wooddrake, Colddrake - owe allegiance to the ancient Dragons who provided them with their Brands. Originating in the Northwestern territories, they range across Draman on various missions. Note that,

unlike their Mystaran equivalents, Colddrakes can only assume Dwarf-form (there are no Gnomes on Herol), and Wooddrakes can assume either Elf-form *or* Halfling-form - not both - according to what race they originally came from. Drakes may be found anywhere. Elemental Drakes are currently unknown on Herol.

*Golems and other Constructs*: Unsurprisingly, the animation of the artificial beings called Golems (and their many derivatives) requires the creation of Brands (or Forge-Marks) which are etched, carved, or otherwise marked in or on the unliving substance. To activate a Golem, a living being of some kind must be sacrificed and its life-force channelled into the Golem via the Brand. The sacrifice must have at least as many HD as the intended Golem-type, or the ritual fails. For particularly large or powerful Constructs, several sacrifices may be used to make up the total HD. While this process usually creates a mindless construct, there is a minuscule chance (2%, plus 1% per 2HD of the sacrifice) that the consciousness of the sacrificial being inhabits the Golem, making it free-willed - particularly dangerous if the sacrifice was a sapient being, although this does render the construct both able to obey complicated commands and susceptible to *Charm* spells. Using intelligent beings to activate a construct is an Evil act.

### *Skills:*

**Branding** (Intelligence): Most of Herol's Brand Masters receive their skills automatically when they are marked with the Overbrand. However, Mages, Clerics and Druids may gain a similar ability through training, if skilled enough in magic.

The process of Branding is akin to the tattooist's art; it requires special dyes, created using expensive and difficult-to-obtain ingredients, and a fine needle of solid gold to prick the skin and implant the dye beneath it. Once the tattoo is in place, an extensive ritual (equivalent to a 6th-level spell, and memorised in a suitable slot - each different Brand requires a separate ritual, which must be taught or researched) is performed to enchant the Brand.

The user of this skill may research new Brands (akin, in time and monetary costs, to spell-research), choosing where on the body to put them and what form they take; or he may reproduce any Brand he has ever previously created or been taught. A newly-acquired Branding skill comes with the knowledge and skill to implant and enchant two Brands (DM's choice), taught during the apprenticeship.

**This skill requires 3 slots to learn, and 2 to improve.**

**Forge-Mastery** (Intelligence): The Dwarven equivalent to Branding, the skill of Forge-Mastery has been practised by the Dwarves of Draman for tens of thousands of years; many of the magical weapons found on Herol owe their existence to its practitioners. Legend has it that the skill was a gift from Iroin to his first Clerics, and it is true that the greatest living Forge-Masters are members of that Order, but it is no longer necessary to worship the Immortal in order to learn this skill;

many “cosmopolitan” Dwarves, as well as human smiths, have developed aspects of the craft.

Forge-Masters learn or develop magical sigils, called *Forge-Marks*, which are carved or engraved into weapons or armour. This need not be an item created by the Forge-Master himself, although most Dwarven Forge-Masters are also smiths of considerable skill, but must be an item of high quality *commissioned* by the Forge-Master. If the Forge-Master wishes to create his own items for enchantment, he must acquire the relevant craftsman’s Skill (weaponsmith, armourer, jeweller etc.).

Once the Forge-Mark is carved, and inlaid with a suitable material (usually a precious metal, or even mithril – the more costly the material, the more powerful the enchantment

which may be cast), the Forge-Master performs a difficult and extensive ritual (equivalent to a 6<sup>th</sup>-level or higher spell) in order to empower the item. This ritual will involve a number of Skill checks – one for success of enchantment, *plus* one for each “plus” the weapon/armour is to hold, *plus* one per special power of the item – and failure of any of these will result in either an item of lesser power; complete failure of the ritual (and destruction of the item); or a random result, creating a “cursed” item or an unexpected enchantment (DM’s choice).

Examples of items which may be created by this skill are as follows:-

<i>Item:</i>	<b>Minimum Inlay:</b>	<b>Spell Level of Ritual:</b>	<b>No. of Skill Rolls:</b>
<i>Dagger +1</i>	Copper	6 <sup>th</sup>	2
<b>Shield +2</b>	Silver	6 <sup>th</sup>	3
<i>Sword +1, Flames on Command</i>	Electrum	7 <sup>th</sup>	3
<i>Chain Mail +3 of Flying**</i>	Gold	7 <sup>th</sup>	5
<i>2-Handed Sword +2, +5 vs. Dragons</i>	Platinum	8 <sup>th</sup>	6*
<i>Field Plate +4 of Gaseous Form**</i>	Mithril	9 <sup>th</sup>	6

**Notes:**

- \*Items with extra damage vs. specific types of foe require the normal number of Skill rolls for the “standard” plusses, and *half* the number of rolls (rounded up) for the “special purpose” plusses. In the example above, the total number of Skill rolls is 6 (1 for the item + 2 for the standard enchantment + 3 (half of 5, rounded up) for the special purpose enchantment).
- \*\*Items which include a spell-like ability or power must have that spell cast into the Forge-Mark during the ritual, either by the Forge-Master himself or by an assistant who knows the spell, as many times as the power in question is to be used (for instance, if the *Chain Mail +3 of Flying*, above, may be used to fly 3 times per day, the *Fly* spell must be cast into it 3 times during the ritual). In the case of the *Field Plate +4 of Gaseous Form*, above, 1 dose of *Potion of Gaseous Form* (per daily use of the ability) must be poured on the Forge-Mark at the correct time. To create an item which duplicates the spell-like abilities of a monster, a suitable portion of that creature must be included in the construction of the item.
- “Temporary” magic items – those with charges, or which are one-use (Wands, Staves, Potions etc.) cannot be created by this skill. However, items useable a certain number of times per day – for example, a *Wand of Magic Missiles*, which fires 2 bursts of 3 missiles per day – may be created if the DM permits.
- In order to enchant “soft” goods – items made of non-metallic substances such as wood, leather, etc. – the item must have a metal object as an integral part of the construction; for example, a *Displacer Cloak* must have a platinum clasp to hold it closed, or a *Staff +1* must have a copper haft.
- Deliberate creation of “intelligent” weapons is impossible by use of this skill. Such items occur rarely (1% chance), and are the result of an Immortal’s interference in the process – the intelligence comes from the spirit of a dead worshipper, or perhaps of an Exalted Servant, who has been placed in the weapon to serve a particular purpose.

**This skill requires 3 slots to learn (2, if the character is a Dwarf Cleric of Iroin), and 2 to improve.**

**Spells:**

The following spells are unique to Herol:

### *Clerical (and Druidic) Spells:*

#### **Galgallan:**

##### Bloodseek

Level: 3

Range: touch

Duration: 1 Turn

Effect: enchants blade

The worship of Galgallan is typified in the battle-fury of the berserks, Fighters and Clerics who enter battle consumed by a frenzy which makes them practically unstoppable. This spell is only one of the ways in which that state is achieved.

The caster must grip the blade to be enchanted throughout the casting, his hand tight around the edge so that blood from his wounds flows down its length (costs the caster 1-3 hp per casting, curable by normal or magical means). This instills the blade with the desire to "seek blood", hence the spell's name. In battle, the enchanted sword mists its bearer's mind with red haze, and fills his nostrils with the scent of hot blood. This grants the bearer a berserk fervour which provides +1 to hit and damage rolls, but also worsens AC by 1, reflecting the bearer's disregard for personal safety.

If, for some reason, no combat occurs during the spell's duration, the spell causes a magical backlash on the bearer of the blade, causing 1d6 hp damage. This can *only* be cured by natural rest.

##### Warfear

Level: 5

Range: special

Duration: 1d3 Turns

Effect: affects morale

This spell is the source of many legends about Galgallan's legions, citing their ability to terrorise their foes in battle.

*Warfear* must be cast by a suitably-powerful Cleric before a battle. It may encompass any one group or army, of whatever size, *who must all have been psyched up for battle beforehand* - the spell cannot create fervour, merely enhance and sustain it; a skilled demagogue must be employed to first prime the troops.

The *Warfear*-enchanted troops gain an additional 1d3 points of morale during the next battle, for the duration of the spell - although their natural fervour may carry this boost on past the spell's expiry. In addition, the opposing army *loses* an equal number of morale points, unless they outnumber the enchanted troops by at least two to one. The reduced morale does not continue past the spell's expiry, however.

*Warfear* has been responsible for numerous battles where Galgallan's forces have beaten vastly superior foes. As a consequence, his mercenaries are much in demand during the regular Summer wars between different cities.

A variant of this spell is also granted to the Clerics of Kromus; their version is called *Rage of War*.

#### **Senyanna:**

##### Gentle Passing

Level: 2

Range: touch

Duration: see below

Effect: eases passage to the afterlife

This spell is much appreciated by those who suffer mortal wounds in battle; as the name suggests, it grants the dying an easy and painless death.

The spell requires a few drops of plain water as a focus; this is dripped gently on the target's forehead and mouth (assuming she has both, or either). The spell negates the subject's ability to feel pain, and causes an aura of peace and quiet acceptance to wash over her. Those granted this spell are generally beyond help, or at least beyond the Cleric's ability to help, and die soon after. The body of the deceased is rendered forever immune to attempts to animate it as an Undead, by whatever means. Conversely, the time allowed to make *Raise Dead* attempts is doubled for a body treated with *Gentle passing*.

This spell has some uses against Undead; if cast upon the body or other remains of a newly-slain Undead, it sends the soul of that being to its afterlife (assuming the soul is still present) and prevents those remains from ever being reanimated. This spell can even interfere with a Govenai-worshipper's attempt to become a Vampire (5% chance of failure per level of the Senyanna-Cleric *below* the Govenai-worshipper's level; Clerics of equal or greater level always succeed). As a consequence, Govenai's children hate Senyanna's worshippers with a passion.

Those Clerics who worship Senyanna as Comforter of the Slain are often to be seen on a battlefield after the fighting is done, easing the passage of the dying into the peace of the afterlife. The "Sisters of Mercy" (as they are unofficially known) are easily recognised, as they wear white robes and wimples - although, with spilt blood and mud, they rarely remain so for long. The Sisters will minister to both friend and foe in this fashion; by long custom, no warrior will harm a Sister on a battlefield.

##### Maiden's Might

Level: 4

Range: 15' radius

Duration: 1 Turn

Effect: boosts strength

In many parts of Draman - in particular, several of the 1,000 Cities - women are considered to be second-class warriors, due to the fact that, on average, men are physically stronger than women. This spell does much to redress the balance.

*Maiden's Might* requires a single hair from a woman's head as the focus; this must be bound around the caster's right wrist before the spell is begun, and is consumed during casting. It can only be cast during combat. The caster chooses a single

woman within range and lays an enchantment upon her; for the spell's duration, her strength is increased. This spell *only* affects females.

The level of the increase depends on the caster's experience. At 8th level or above, the recipient's strength increases by one point; at 16th or above, two points; and at 24th or above, three points - the maximum increase provided by this spell. *Maiden's Might* cannot raise a woman's strength above racial maximums, nor can any one woman receive two or more castings at the same time - the second will fail if this is attempted.

Since all Clerics of Senyanna (in her Lady of Battle aspect) receive a personal form of *Maiden's Might* as a special power at 3rd level, they are invariably considered valuable warriors in the Empire of Jael, and are treated with the utmost respect.

#### **Derelion:**

##### Migrant

Level: 3

Range: 10'

Duration: 1d6+6 Turns

Effect: grants the power of flight

This spell provides the target with what is considered to be the greatest of Derelion's gifts: the power to soar through the air. In order to function properly, the spell must be cast when there are birds nearby (within 360'); if no birds are within range, the recipient cannot fly, although he will float gently to the ground if caught in mid-air (or if he jumps from a high cliff) at a constant speed of 10' per round.

The spell otherwise functions similarly to a Mage's *Fly* spell, save that the recipient's speed is dependent on how many birds remain within range:-

0 birds - cannot fly.

1-10 birds - one-quarter speed (90'/Turn)

11-30 birds - one-half speed (180'/Turn)

31-50 birds - three-quarter speed (270'/Turn)

50+ birds - full speed (360'/Turn)

Flight-speed can therefore vary wildly, as birds enter or leave maximum range; the DM should decide how many avians are around at any one time. Many of Derelion's Clerics are known to train companion-birds (such as hawks or falcons) to fly with them, ensuring they can always reach at least minimum speed. At the spell's expiry, the recipient floats gently to the ground, as if in a birdless sky.

[NB: at the DM's option, giant or fantastic birds - or non-bird avians, such as Skinwings or their equivalent - might count as more than one for the purposes of this spell; one such creature might be equivalent to between 5-10 normal birds.]

##### Windbreak

Level: 5

Range: 90'x90'x90' area

Duration: 3 Turns

Effect: negates flight within affected area

As Immortal master of the air, Derelion may determine who may, or may not, fly through his skies. By granting this spell, he passes that ability on to his Clerics.

When cast, the *Windbreak* spell creates a zone of turbulent, disruptive winds which, as a side effect, also weakens magics which provide flight or levitation within the area of effect. Consequently, any flying creature or object which enters the zone will swiftly lose that ability - winged creatures will find the air does not support them, while magical fliers will experience their power swiftly draining away. The zone takes 3 rounds to completely negate the power of flight; those who skirt the edge of it, or who cannonball through at high speed (at least 360'/Turn), may be able to escape before they crash to earth (save vs. spells at -2). Otherwise, they take full falling damage. If the zone is above ground level (with at least 40' of unaffected air below it), winged creatures can attempt to minimise the damage by gliding into a controlled crash-landing, in which case they take only 1 hp of damage per 10' fallen.

The *Windbreak* zone may be created in any open area up to 360' from the caster. It cannot be created within an enclosed space, even if there is sufficient room to encompass it.

#### **Lomor:**

##### Greed

Level: 3

Range: touch

Duration: 1 day

Effect: causes avarice

A relatively simple spell, *Greed* imbues any single item the caster touches with an empathic aura, which triggers overwhelming avarice in those who view it. A saving throw vs. spells is permitted upon first viewing the item, but if that fails, the observer will do or say *anything* to gain ownership of it, depending on their alignment - a Lawful (or Good) character will trade for it, paying far more than its worth, or perform some service; a Chaotic (or Evil) being might attempt theft or even murder to obtain the item. Note: the more expensive (or flashy) the object, the less chance the victim has of resisting its allure - a gold statuette might incur a -2 to the saving throw, while a torn dishrag could permit a +3 chance to ignore the spell.

This potent enchantment has multiple uses, from simple trade to international diplomacy - for instance, a foreign potentate might be convinced to grant trade concessions, or an enemy commander to take his troops away from the city walls, for a *Greed*-enhanced item. Because of its power - and because those affected by it are likely to harbour resentment for the Cleric when the spell expires - this spell is employed rarely, and usually at the direct command of the Immortal Lomor or his Church.

##### Haggler's Guide

Level: 4

Range: 30'

Duration: 1d6 Turns

Effect: detects untruths



The Clerics of Lomor are often considered to be the canniest traders on Herol; few people can get the better of them in trade. This spell goes a long way towards explaining that reputation.

*Haggler's Guide* is a variation on the standard *Detect Lie* spell, tuned particularly towards commercial haggling (hence the name). It provides the recipient with an almost infallible ability to sense if he is being cheated by another when making a trade or sale, manifesting as an itch between the shoulder blades; the stronger the itch, the worse he is being cheated. The recipient cannot read minds while using this spell, but can use the knowledge provided to force a fairer bargain, if he chooses - or not, if losing in the trade provides some other advantage.

*Haggler's Guide* has also found some uses in gambling, particularly card games; the recipient knows if another player is cheating, although he will not know which player. For this reason, some professional gamblers will pay small fortunes to the Church of Lomor to receive the blessings of this spell.

#### Merelith:

##### Nature's Warmth

Level: 5

Range: touch

Duration: 6 days

Effect: regeneration

Those who worship the Empress of the Sun know that the Sun's power is vital for growth and healing; this spell employs that power in a more direct fashion.

The spell requires some form of amulet or talisman - usually bearing the image of the Sun on its face - as the focus; this must be consecrated to Merelith beforehand. The spell must be cast beneath a sunny sky at midday, when the Immortal's powers are strongest; it channels the power of the Sun into the amulet, making it shine brightly before dimming into a soft glow.

The amulet must be worn visibly by the bearer (who need not be the caster); its powers automatically come into play whenever she is wounded. The amulet functions as a Ring of Regeneration, healing 1hp of damage per Turn - but *only* during daylight hours. *Nature's Warmth*-enchanted talismans go dormant at night, losing their glow, but regain their powers at daybreak.

This spell's effects will function even underground, so long as the sun is in the sky above. Many bearers use these amulets as crude timekeeping devices, to tell whether it is day or night above. *Nature's Warmth* expires at midday on the sixth day after it was cast; the amulet pulses three times before going dark. A consecrated amulet may be used for this purpose an unlimited number of times.

This spell is also available to Merelith's Druidic followers.

##### Daystaff

Level: 6

Range: special

Duration: see below

Effect: enchants staff with Sun's power

This potent enchantment, like *Nature's Warmth* above, draws on the power of the Sun to imbue a material object with power.

In order to cast this spell, the Cleric must manufacture a 6'-tall staff of birchwood, carving it with solar symbols and other markings of Merelith's religion, and inlaying it with other rare woods, precious metals, and cut gemstones. This staff takes up to 8 weeks to complete, and costs a total of 10,000gp to make. Once completed, it must be consecrated to Merelith, thereby making it a suitable receptacle for her power.

To charge the staff, the Cleric must hold it beneath the midday Sun for one hour while intoning the *Daystaff* spell; this gives the staff a single charge. A typical *Daystaff* can hold a maximum of 2d6+5 charges gained in this manner, and can be recharged in the same way whenever it is exhausted. The wielder of the *Daystaff* may use it to generate three different spell-like effects, one at a time:

- *Light*: the *Daystaff* can create a golden glow from its tip, equivalent in brilliance and duration to a standard *Light* spell. Alternatively, the effect can be cast on another object within 15' of the *Daystaff*. Either use costs 1 charge.

- *Sunbolt*: the wielder may fire bolts of concentrated sunlight from the *Daystaff*, equivalent to *Magic Missiles* in range, damage, and effect. These are released in batches of two missiles, which may be fired at separate targets, if desired. Due to the solar origin of these bolts, Vampires take an additional 2hp damage from a. Each pair of *Sunbolts* costs 1 charge.

- *Sunfire*: the bearer of the *Daystaff* can generate a bolt of golden flame which explodes when reaching its destination, equivalent to a *Fireball* spell in all respects. However, *Sunfire* usually deals only 5d6 damage, no matter what level the caster is. This effect costs two charges. The damage may be boosted by spending additional charges, with a 1d6 damage increase per additional charge, but this is dangerous; each additional charge used gives a cumulative 5% chance that the *Daystaff* will explode, causing 20d6 damage to all within 15' (no matter how many charges are left).

A 3rd level variant of this spell exists, known as *Daywand*; this requires the shaping of a wand of birchwood, carved and decorated as per the *Daystaff*, above, and charged in the same way - this item costs 3,000 gp to make. The major differences between the items are that the *Daywand* can hold only 1d6+2 charges, and can only be enchanted to cast a single spell effect (so there are *Daywands of Light*, *of Sunbolt*, or *of Sunfire*, but not of all three). Like the *Daystaff*, this item can be recharged.

Anyone may use a *Daystaff* or *Daywand*, provided they know the command words (chosen by the creator of the item when it is consecrated). High-level Sun Priests wield their *Daystaves* as badges of office. The *Daystaff of Therobin*, the first High Priest of Merelith, is a treasured Relic, passed down from each High Priest to his or her successor.

Both *Daywand* and *Daystaff* are also available to Merelith's Druidic followers.

#### **Kromus:**

##### Red Rain

Level: 7

Range: special

Duration: 2d3 Turns

Effect: affects morale

This spell is an enhanced version of the spell *Rage of War* (see *Warfear*, under Galgallan), granted only to the Warfather's most favoured worshippers.

The spell provides *either* a 1d6 bonus to morale for the Cleric's army, *or* a similar penalty for the opposing side, but not both. Unlike *Warfear*, the target army (if friendly) does not require psyching up before battle; the spell provides all the motivation needed. In addition, a friendly side may continue to fight until they reach -5 hp; unless healed, however, they will die quickly from their mortal wounds. If the spell is used to affect the opposing side, there is a chance each round that they will break off combat and flee the field of battle (depending on the losses sustained; e.g. if 15% of troops are slain, there is a 15% chance per round of a rout).

*Red Rain's* name comes from the unsettling visual effects of the spell; when cast, the skies over the battlefield darken with looming black clouds, from which pour torrents of blood-red raindrops. This "red rain" is entirely illusionary, however, and causes no damage or disruption to combat (by flooding the battlefield, for example). It does reduce vision to about 30' for all participants, however. When the spell expires, all traces of the rain vanish immediately.

##### Thundercry

Level: 3

Range: 200'

Duration: instantaneous

Effect: sonic explosion

This personal attack-spell is much favoured by adventuring Clerics of the Lord of Storms.

When casting, the Cleric must shout the invocation - the spell cannot be cast quietly or subtly - which means that the element of surprise is impossible to retain when using *Thundercry*. As the spell continues, the caster's voice grows magically louder and louder; on the last word, he cries out wordlessly with a sound like a thunderclap, causing a sonic explosion at the chosen site.

The spell's effects may be centred on any target within range, and has the same damage-quotient and area of effect as the mage-spell *Fireball*; in addition, those within the area of effect

(if not slain outright) are *stunned* for 1d6 rounds afterwards. Separate saving throws against physical damage (half damage if successful) and *stun*-damage (no effect if successful) are permitted.

Due to the vocal strain involved, no Cleric may cast this spell more than once per day, whatever his level; casting it more than three times in a week causes permanent damage to the vocal cords of the Cleric, preventing speech or spellcasting until the damage is repaired (which requires a *Cure Critical Wounds* or *Heal* spell, or equivalent).

#### **Ranya:**

##### Weresister

Level: 4

Range: 0' (caster only)

Duration: see below

Effect: Lycanthropic shapechange

This spell was devised by non-lycanthropic Moondaughters of Ranya, in order to allow them to share their shape-shifting sisters' night-time revels. It has also proved useful for travel and combat purposes, however.

When the spell is first granted, the Moondaughter must choose an Avatar - a particular lycanthropic form - which will be the animal they become whenever *Weresister* is cast. Occasionally, this form is dictated by Ranya herself, when the spell is first provided; only Ranya's edict can alter the chosen form in future.

The spell must be cast at midnight, and the moon must be at least half-full for it to function. A cloudy night will not affect the success of the spell, however. While *Weresister* is in effect, the caster may change between human and animal forms at will, gaining all relevant powers, immunities and vulnerabilities of the werebeast for the duration. No armour may be worn while shapeshifting, although normal clothing will magically transform with the caster. The spell ends at daybreak; if the caster is in beast-form when the Sun's rays strike her, she suffers 1d4 hp damage from the strain of transformation.

Those powerful enough to cast this spell are known by the honorific "Weresister" by their fellow Clerics as a mark of respect, and are considered honorary members of the particular Order whose form they mimic. A few such Weresisters have even acquired the Brand of their adopted Order, becoming true Lycanthropes (a Weresister cannot choose to join a different Order, or the ability to cast *Weresister* is lost forever).

##### Moonsight

Level: 3

Range: touch

Duration: 1 night

Effect: grants night-vision

Those Moondaughters who worship Ranya in her aspect as Queen of the Moon automatically gain the ability to see

normally on a moonlit night; this spell allows them to grant that selfsame gift to others whom they deem worthy.

*Moonsight* must be cast at night, and requires the caster to place drops of holy water on the eyes of the recipient while intoning the spell; for the spell's duration, the *Moonsight*-enchanted person can see in the dark as clearly as if it were daytime. Entering a building - even one without windows - will not affect sight, but going more than 10' into a cave, or travelling underground, will render the recipient as blind as if the spell were not in effect.

The spell lasts until the duration expires at daybreak, a *Dispel Magic* is cast, or the recipient is subject to an area of illumination (a torch, a bonfire, a *Light* spell, etc) for 1d6 rounds, at which point her eyesight returns to normal.

### Iroin:

#### Battlehammer

Level: 2

Range: touch

Duration: 1 Turn

Effect: temporarily enchants weapon

This is a popular spell amongst the more militant members of Iroin's clergy, and has earned them a reputation as fearsome fighters across the continent.

The spell requires an unenchanted warhammer or battleaxe as the focus. This weapon must first be consecrated to Iroin, but since most Clerics consecrate their weapons as a matter of course, this is not a problematical restriction. The chosen weapon is lifted above the Cleric's head and a prayer to Iroin is spoken; at the spell's conclusion, the weapon shines with pure white light for a few moments, signifying a successful casting. This spell takes 1d3 rounds to cast.

The power of the enchantment varies, depending on the casting Cleric's level. At level 4 and above, the Cleric may enchant a weapon with +1 to hit and damage; at 9th level and above, +2; and at 14th level and above, +3 - this is the maximum enchantment the spell can provide. The spell-effect lasts for 1 Turn.

#### Seek the Vein

Level: 3

Range: 90'

Duration: 1 Turn

Effect: locates unworked metal

A commonly-requested spell within the Strongholds of the Dwarf Territories, this prayer (and its higher-level variant, see below) is becoming increasingly popular elsewhere, especially with miners and adventuring parties.

The spell requires a small, token piece of the chosen metal (a suitable coin will do, for precious metals) as a focus. The caster holds the token in his left hand, at arm's length, and spins slowly three times in an anticlockwise direction while intoning the spell. Once casting is complete, if there is unworked metal of the correct type within range, the caster will feel the token tugging him towards it - the stronger the

tug, the more dense the deposit. Even if there is no metal within range, the caster can move around for the duration of the spell, hoping for a reaction from the token. Dwarf miners usually have a Cleric of sufficient level with them when looking for new sites to excavate.

Adventuring Clerics have devised a 4th-level variant of this spell, called *Treasure-Seeker*; Where *Seek the Vein* finds only material in its virgin state, *Treasure-Seeker* reveals worked metals - coins and other treasure. This spell, naturally, is very popular amongst adventurers. Unfortunately, the presence of any enchanted metal (a sword, a ring, etc) - whether or not of the material sought - within the spell's range will confuse and disrupt the spell, making it useless; those seeking to use this spell to find a hoard of coins must first leave their magical implements somewhere distant (where there is always the chance that they might get stolen by someone else...).

### Varalle:

#### Song for All Seasons

Level: 5

Range: 10' radius + 5' per level

Duration: 1d6 hours (and see below)

Effect: seasonal shift

This potent nature-spell is available to all Clerics of Varalle, whether Seasonal or Annual, although its effects vary depending on the ethos of the priest.

*Song for All Seasons* allows the caster to temporarily change the season within a limited area. For instance, an orchard during the depths of Winter could be shifted to Summer, creating warmth and greenery for freezing villagers; or to Autumn, to provide ripe fruit for hungry folk. A lake in Summer could be plunged into freezing Winter to allow troops to walk across its frozen surface.

As the name suggests, the spell is cast in song-form, the song in question varying according to the season required. The spell takes almost an hour to cast, and requires both a good singing voice and considerable stamina (15+ Constitution), or the spell cannot be cast. However, certain Priests of lesser endurance or vocal ability employ a chorus of willing, trained singers to offset their shortfalls; the spell will function under these circumstances. The caster forms the centre of the spell effect. The area affected is 60' radius at 10th level, growing to a maximum of 190' radius at 36th level.

When the spell expires, the affected area cycles swiftly through the seasons to reach its natural state; this takes one Turn. It can be dangerous for living beings (other than the caster and his helpers) to remain in the area when this happens; although it does not always occur, it is not unknown for unfortunate souls to age as the seasons turn, starving to death as their bodies rapidly consume their reserves. Conversely, things taken out of the area of effect remain in their current state, so fruit picked in a magical Autumn will remain sweet and fresh.

Annual (all-season) Priests may select whichever season they wish to create, so long as they know the appropriate song for

that season. Seasonal Priests may only shift to the season whose Immortal aspect they worship, but the spell's duration is 1d4 +3 hours.

*Song for All Seasons* cannot be cast more than once per month at most, either by a particular Cleric, or on a particular region - altering the seasons is an affront to nature if done too often, and Varalle's Priests risk having the power withdrawn permanently if they abuse it.

This spell is also available to Varalle's Druidic followers.

### Wintertree

Level: 3

Range: touch

Duration: special

Effect: accelerated development

This spell is available only to Annual or Winter Priests; it functions in a manner similar to *Song for All Seasons* (see above), but on a more limited scale.

Cast usually in the coldest part of Winter, this spell lets the Priest accelerate one particular tree or bush through a whole year of growth in a single hour, causing it to grow leaves, blossom, grow fruit, drop that fruit, and go dormant again. The fallen fruit remains ripe, and ceases to age when it drops from the tree. This spell is most often employed to provide fresh fruit in a hard Winter, and makes the Priests of Varalle very popular as a consequence.

Unlike *Song for All Seasons*, there is no limit to the number of times a Cleric can cast this spell, although it should be noted that casting too frequently on the same tree will cause it to age and die very quickly. It has been known for repeated castings of this spell to be used to provide lumber very quickly, for building or burning purposes, but many Priests are uncomfortable about abusing the spell this way - however, Varalle herself does not appear to take offence.

Note: *Wintertree* may be used as an attack against living plant-beings such as Treants or Gakarak (but *not* Shambling Mounds), causing 1d6 damage from fast ageing and *paralysing* the creature for 1d6 rounds (after which it is acclimatised to the effect).

This spell is also available to Varalle's Druidic followers.

### Midwinter's Grasp

Level: 3

Range: touch

Duration: 2 rounds

Effect: chilling touch

This spell is available only to Winter Priests; Annual Priests cannot use it.

*Midwinter's Grasp* imbues one of the Cleric's hands with the burning cold of an arctic blizzard. the affected limb turns

blue for the duration. If touched to a living being (to hit roll applies), it causes 2d6 chill damage (3d6 to heat-using creatures, 1d6 to cold-users) and drains them of 1d2 points of Strength for the next hour (cold-users are immune to this part of the spell). No saving throw is allowed to resist the effect, which is cumulative.

A Priest using *Midwinter's Grasp* cannot hold a metal weapon in the affected hand; anything metal picked up by a frozen hand must save vs. dragon breath or shatter, causing 2d6 damage to all within 5' radius.

### Quickening

Level: 2

Range: 10'

Duration: 1 Turn

Effect: enhances physical capability

This spell is available only to Annual and Spring Priests.

*Quickening* may be cast at any time, but is best employed just before a battle. It triggers a potent rush of adrenaline in a single target within range, granting her boundless energy and adding +1 to all to hit and damage rolls made by that person for the duration of the spell. This is in addition to any other such bonuses (but does not allow the recipient to hit creatures which are only struck by magical weapons).

The downside of this energy surge is apparent when the spell expires; the recipient will be exhausted and weak, unable to fight or move at more than half speed until she can rest for at least one hour.

### Hibernation

Level: 3

Range: touch

Duration: see below

Effect: suspended animation

This spell is available only to Annual and Autumn Priests.

Designed to mimic the natural autumnal function after which it was named, *Hibernation* allows the recipient to survive extreme conditions by sleeping right through them.

The words of this spell are an ancient lullaby; the person touched while this is sung will drift off into a dreamless sleep as his bodily processes slow to a fraction of their normal speed. While under the spell's effects, the subject is resistant to starvation and dehydration (1 year = 1 day, in terms of food and water consumption) and needs no air. Extreme natural (as opposed to magical) cold may be ignored by a sleeper, and a poison victim will have the poison's progression halted for the duration of the spell.

The spell may not be cast on an unwilling target, but it *may* be used to preserve a newly-dead body - i.e. one that is still warm - to prevent decay and extend the time available to cast *Raise Dead*.

The duration of the *Hibernation* is dependent on the level of the caster and the Constitution of the target; at 6th-11th level, the subject can remain in suspension for as many days as he



has Constitution points; at 12th-23rd level, the time is measured in months; and at 24th-36th level, the time is measured in years. For a dead person, the time allowed depends on the *caster's* Constitution. Only *Dispel Magic*, or suffering over half of his hit points in damage, can awaken a subject from his *Hibernation* prematurely. If the caster himself is the target, he may set the spell to expire at a certain time, or under particular circumstances.

This spell is also available to Varalle's Druidic followers.

#### Midnight Sun

Level: 2

Range: touch

Duration: special

Effect: stores sunlight

This spell is available only to Annual and Summer Priests.

Based as it is in nature, the Church of Varalle abhors the unnatural state of Govenai's children, the Vampires. This spell is designed to combat the Entropic Immortal's night-dwelling worshippers.

*Midnight Sun* must be cast in daylight, in order to draw the Sun's power into the caster. A Cleric using this spell may hold up to one-third of his Constitution score in "charges", rounded down; additional castings cannot increase this number. This energy may be held, unused, within the Cleric's body for a maximum of 24 hours before dissipating harmlessly. The spell takes one hour to cast properly; if interrupted, the Cleric only stores 1d4 charges (or less, if he has a very low Constitution).

At any time during the spell's duration, the caster may choose to expel one of his charges by touching a Vampire - this counts as an attack, and requires a to-hit roll to achieve. If successful, the touch causes 1d8+2 damage to the Vampire - non-regeneratable until it sleeps again - and drains a charge from the caster. If the blow misses, the charge is drained anyway.

Because of this spell, the followers of Varalle are considered particular enemies of Govenai; his Clerics, and their minions, will always attack a Priest of Varalle before any other foe, if they recognise him as such.

This spell is also available to Varalle's Druidic followers.

#### **Govenai:**

#### Daylight Shroud

Level: 3

Range: touch

Duration: 6 Turns + 1 Turn per level of caster

Effect: protects Undead from sunlight

The Vampires, mightiest of Govenai's revived "children", have vast powers - but they suffer one major setback by virtue of their nature; they cannot withstand the light of day. This spell, granted by Govenai to his most favoured servants,

allows them (and other daylight-sensitive Undead) to negate this limitation - for a while, at least.

When cast, the spell creates a protective, skintight barrier of shade about the caster or target, which prevents the Sun's rays from touching the skin. This causes the recipient's skin to appear dusky and shadowed (which is an additional benefit for Vampires, giving their pale skin a slightly more natural cast). For the duration of the spell, the recipient can walk freely in the brightest sunlight, and gains some resistance (+1 to saving throws) to light- and sun-related attacks (including the Clerical *Midnight Sun* spell used by Varalle's Priests).

Those using this spell must take care to keep track of time, however; when the duration ends, the spell fails instantly. If the recipient is caught abroad when that happens, the effects are immediate - and deadly.

#### Awakened Army

Level: 6

Range: 90' radius

Duration: one night

Effect: summons Undead horde

This mighty enchantment is only available to the most powerful of Govenai's Clerics Vampire or otherwise - who must be in good standing with their Immortal, as it allows them to directly channel his Immortal essence on this Plane.

The spell requires a moonless night to function, and must be cast in an area of death; a battlefield or cemetery is ideal. The spell is normally started shortly after sunset, to maximise the time available. The caster must invoke the power of Govenai, beseeching him to raise up the dead to serve the caster's will; this can take an hour or more. If successful, all dead bodies within 90' of the caster will jerk into a mockery of life, digging themselves out of their own graves if necessary. The strain of channelling Immortal power causes 2d6 hp of damage the caster at this point, which may be healed normally (but not magically); a Vampire caster cannot regenerate this damage until he sleeps again. Conversely, a mortal caster gains the ability to regenerate any further damage received, at the rate of 1 hp per Turn, for the duration of the spell.

The size of the *Awakened Army* is dependent on both the number of corpses available, and on the caster's level - use the "Undead Liege" rules in the RC to determine how many Undead the Cleric can command. Vampire casters, who may already function as Lieges, can command 50% more HD of Undead than living casters when using this spell. The animated corpses will be either Zombies or Skeletons, with the lowest possible HD for their type. They will obey the spoken or mental commands of the caster, no matter how complicated, but may move no further than 500' from the caster without collapsing; however, if the caster moves back into range, they reanimate immediately. If slain in combat, they do not reanimate. *Awakened Army* Undead cannot be Turned at all for the duration of the spell.

If the caster is slain, the spell is immediately broken, and the *Awakened Army* collapses. Even if not interrupted, the spell lasts only until the first rays of dawn strike the *Awakened Army*, at which point they crumble into dust, like a Vampire. This spell is not often used, both because of the damage it causes to the caster and because of the wholesale destruction of "raw materials" that results. The occasions when *Awakened Army* has been employed, over the centuries, have gone into folklore and legend; indeed, in parts of the Old Countries, an ancient and popular Autumnal festival has been based around the "night of the walking dead".

### *Mage/Cleric Spells:*

#### Unquiet Guardian

Level: 7

Range: 10'

Duration: permanent

Effect: creates Undead being

This spell is ancient, and believed lost by those few who know of it. It was created many thousands of years in the past, in a period now known as the "Lost Empire" Era (the "Lost Empire", actually several such empires which succeeded each other over a period of nearly 5,000 years, occupied the area of Draman now known as the Old Countries).

*Unquiet Guardian* was originally devised to provide untiring, deathless protectors for the tombs of the great kings. It required the sacrifice of an intelligent being in a long, dangerous ritual lasting up to three days, during which the still-living victim was chained to an altar and had slender needles of silver pushed slowly into different parts of his body.

The ritual has several variations depending on the type of Undead to be created. In order to create a Mummy, for instance, the body is drained slowly of blood, creating a desiccated husk; to create a Spectre or Wraith, the heart must be cut from the body and burnt, and the feet removed (to free the spirit from earthly ties). Both these procedures require constant, droning chants to be performed for the entire duration, invoking Entropic powers (both magical and clerical versions invoke the same powers, although the former command, while the latter beseech). Most casters used a succession of trained slaves to do the chanting, rather than risk faltering by themselves; this meant they could catch a few hours of sleep during the spell's duration.

To determine whether the spell has been cast successfully, the caster must make three successive Saves vs. Death Ray. If creating a Mummy, all three saves must succeed. When creating an incorporeal Undead, however, three successful saves transforms the victim into a Spectre, while two successes and one failure creates a Wraith. More than a single failure will ruin the spell, either destroying the victim (with a magical backlash which deals 6d6 damage to the caster and either infects him with Mummy Rot or drains a level from him, depending on the type of Undead that was being

created), or creating a free-willed Undead which immediately attacks to caster and those with him.

If the spell is successful, the resulting Undead must obey the first command given by the caster as if *Geased* - usually to guard a tomb, treasure-house, or other location from intruders, but possibly to hunt down and slay a particular foe. If the task is completed, the Undead becomes free-willed.

If the spell were to be rediscovered (or granted anew by one of the current Immortals), it might easily be adapted to create other forms of Undead - perhaps even new forms never seen before.

### *Mage Spells:*

#### Concealed Brand

Level: 2

Range: touch

Duration: see below

Effect: turns a single Brand invisible

This simple *Invisibility* variant was first devised by Kalaphon, a Brand-Master from the Old Countries, nearly three centuries ago. It allows the caster to negate one of the few downfalls of Branding - the fact that a visible Brand immediately gives away the bearer's class or abilities, which in some circumstances may not be desirable.

Each casting of this spell can conceal a single Brand; if a bearer has more than one, she will require several castings to conceal them all. *Concealed Brand* also confuses the *Detect Magic* spell, which normally reveals the presence of a Brand - the recipient of the spell will show a faint magical trace, but it will not be focused on the Brand.

*Concealed Brand* will remain in effect indefinitely unless *Dispelled*, or until the affected Brand's magic is employed - a Warlock Brand is drawn on to cast a Mage-spell, for example, or a Fighter-Thief draws upon his *Hide in Shadows* ability - at which point the spell is cancelled.

## Characters:

**Ledendran**, Master of Brands. Male Human Brand-Master/MU5. Age 63. AC 6, hp 30, STR 10, DEX 8, CON 12, INT 17, WIS 15, CHA 7. AL C (CN). Dmg 1d6 (Staff). Skills: Branding +1, Knowledge (Dwarf Lore), Mysticism. Languages: Trade Talk (1,000 Cities), Dwarf (Stronghold dialect), Goblinoid Patois.

**Appearance:** Ledendran is short (5'4") and slight (110 pounds); his eyes are blue, and his hair - what remains of it - is pure white (formerly light brown). He wears a neatly-trimmed white beard, half-moon glasses, and an abstracted expression, most of the time; in short, he looks exactly like the common folks' idea of a Master of Brands.

**History:** Born in the City-State of Jalakka, Ledendran received his Overbrand at the age of 14. He was already a studious boy, given to reading whatever he could get his hands on, and took to his new profession with a will; during his apprentice years, he learnt to reproduce every Brand his master knew. Once he reached Journeyman rank, Ledendran left Jalakka and travelled across the continent, learning additional Brands from whatever Masters he could find to teach him, and even creating a few of his own. During this period, he also learnt a handful of magical spells.

After twenty years on the road, Ledendran returned to the city of his birth, just in time to take over from his former Master. Since then, he has served Jalakka faithfully as a Brand-Master, and is commonly considered to be one of the best in the business.

In addition to his Brand-Mastery, Ledendran's lifelong thirst for knowledge has made him a Sage and historian of great skill; he is often consulted by merchants, adventurers, treasure-seekers and nobles on a variety of subjects. He rarely leaves home now - time has made him frail, and unsuited to the rigours of the travelling life - so he has been known to pay others for new sources of lore, or to hire travellers and adventurers to obtain rare books and maps from far-distant places. He will gladly accept rare tomes or even tales of high adventure in place of payment for his Branding services.

A few years ago, Ledendran played host to a powerful female Mage, who claimed to come from a different universe; she bore no Brand, yet she possessed tremendous magical powers. In exchange for information about this alien realm,

he taught her the skill of Branding and a smattering of Brands. Since the Mage returned home, Ledendran has spent much of his time attempting to create a Brand capable of letting the bearer travel to other realms; he is determined to visit this distant world - this "Mystara" - in person, before he dies.

### Magic Items:

**Known Brands:** *Priest Brand, Warlock Brand, Druid Brand, Thief Suite, Brand of Prophecy, Beastmaster Brand, Tale-Weaver's Brand, Brands of Holding* (normal and regenerating), *Attribute Brands, Brand of the Alter Ego+*. Ledendran may have many more Brands available to him than this, if the DM chooses.

(+ - see below)

### Spells:

1st Level: *Analyse, Detect Magic.*

2nd Level: *ESP, Locate Object.*

3rd Level: *Dispel Magic.*

### Ledendran's Brand:

*Brand of Alter Ego:* a rough humanoid figure, tattooed over the heart; one half is black, the other white. Devised years ago by Ledendran, this Brand is as close to a Lycanthropic Brand as anyone not of the Orders can obtain. It grants the bearer the ability to change his race (but not his sex or relative age) for a maximum of three hours per day - a human can become an Elf, a Dwarf can become a human, etc. Only one alternate is possible for each bearer; for instance, a Dwarf bearer could become an Elf *or* a Halfling, but not both.

While in alternate form, the bearer of this Brand does not detect as magical (or at least, no more than normal - the Brand itself shows up under *Detect Magic*). The bearer's class(es), level, hp etc. do not change while the *Alter Ego* is active; however, inherent special abilities of the new form (demi-human *Infravision*, for instance) is acquired. Anyone using this Brand will be fertile with another member of their "adopted" race for the duration of the effect - the only known method of cross-fertility between species - although only male bearers can take proper advantage of this, as a fertilised female bearer will no longer be capable of carrying the child when she changes back.







*Some Enchanted Item* features a unique magic item in each issue of OD&DITIES, complete with a loose historical context that may be adapted easily to any OD&D campaign and adventure hooks wherein the item itself can be central to game play. In this, our second instalment, we'll learn about *Quiverbane*, a knight's shield offering no small protection on the battlefield.

# SOME ENCHANTED ITEM...

## ERIN D. SMALE

### *QUIVERBANE: A SHIELD OF WONDROUS PROTECTION*

#### History

*Quiverbane* was fashioned some six centuries ago by The Esteemed Order of the Protectors of the Northern Havens, a knightly brotherhood pledged to the service of Duke Fregest of Esobran. At that time, Esobran was still one of many duchies within the now dispersed kingdom of Leodwored, and the Order's charge then, as it is now, was to ward the northern approaches to the Esonian lowlands against incursion from the orc tribes of Leodwored's northern frontier.

Marhared, Champion and First Sword of the Order, bore both the shield *Quiverbane* and the blade *Greywand*<sup>1</sup>, in battle; he used the enchanted armour to great effect by closing with Orcish war bands whilst their arrows bounced harmlessly away. For his prowess in combat and the fearsome efficiency of his five score-strong cadre of elite knights, Marhared earned a valiant reputation both for his Duke and, perhaps more significantly, amongst his orc foes.

After nearly a decade of defensive skirmishes and warding manoeuvres, Fregest bade the Order to carry the battle to the orc warrens of the northern frontier, believing that a forceful penetration into Orcish territory would deliver a stinging lesson against the folly of violating Esonia's borders. Obediently, Marhared led the Order through the dismal hills and into the broken pits overlooked by Shagramul, an orcish-raiding stronghold where the orc king, Shurkúl, held sway. From Shagramul, the orc king hurled humanoid fodder at the knights while Marhared and his brethren slew hundreds of the brutish humanoids without loss. But Marhared's otherwise brilliant offensive engagements fell short of overtaking the orc king's position. As dusk fell, the humanoids fell into defensive positions; before midnight, scouts of the Order discerned that the orcs, under cover of darkness, had encircled the knights. Marhared, ever with an eye toward the offensive, planned a break out at first light in an effort to capture Shagramul. It is little known what happened during those scant hours between midnight and dawn, for by the sun's rise,

Marhared's force was no more—the only testament to this grim fact was delivered to the Duke by a company of the Order's scouts, who, acting as a rear guard, happened upon the twisted, burned, and bleeding corpses of the knights on the field early that morning. Most disturbing was that Marhared's body—stripped and dismembered—had been drawn and quartered, and his remains, piled singularly in a glistening crimson heap on the ruined plain under Shagramul, were without trace of *Quiverbane* or of his enchanted blade.

#### Appearance and Powers

*Quiverbane* is a **shield +0, +2 vs. humanoids** fashioned of polished steel and adorned with iron studs with worn leather arm straps. A runic inscription appears on the inside and reads, in Auld Leodworian, the command words for the device. When invoked, the command words activate a defence similar to that manifested via the 3rd-level Magical spell **Protection from Normal Missiles** (RC/49). If only the bearer is protected, *Quiverbane's* enchantment lasts for a total of 12 turns. At the bearer's command, *Quiverbane's* protection can extend to additional combatants within ten feet, but for a proportionately lesser duration per individual thus secured (i.e., two combatants for six turns, three individuals for four turns, etc.). Regardless of the number of combatants protected at a time, *Quiverbane's* power against normal missiles may be used only once per day.

#### Adventure Hooks

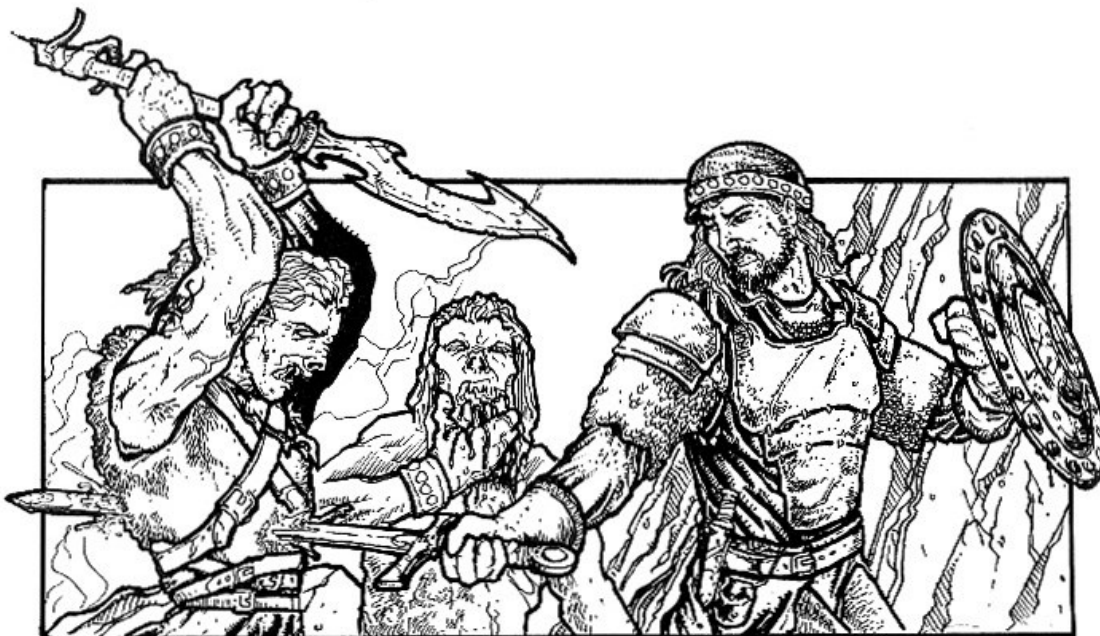
The shield *Quiverbane* may spawn any of the following adventures:

- The Kingdom of Esobran (independent after the fall of Leodwored some two hundred years ago) deems *Quiverbane* to be a national treasure and commissions the party to recover the enchanted shield. The PCs' logical starting place is the (greatly depleted) Orcish kingdom beyond Esobran's northern border. Shagramul, the southernmost fortress of the orc realm, probably still stands, and is likely to feature a few "dungeon" levels above and below ground. If *Quiverbane* is not within, clues to its whereabouts may still be found, possibly leading

<sup>1</sup> *Greywand* is a magicked blade crafted against humanoids, to be discussed in the next instalment of *Some Enchanted Item*.

the party deep within Orcish territory. Alternately, the commission might come from The Esteemed Order of the Protectors of the Northern Havens, which still exists as Esobran's elite military guard.

- Knights of the Order have crossed Esobran's northern border in quest of *Quiverbane* and have been surrounded by humanoids; a scout hurriedly delivers this dire message to Esobran's court, where the PCs are conveniently located. If the party, through its exploits, has gained a favourable reputation with the Esonian court, the king of Esobran will naturally entreat the PCs' aid.
- Leodwored, though factionalised as a solitary power two centuries ago, is a name remembered by political traditionalists who dwell in neighbouring kingdoms that were once part of its grand protectorate. These folk recognise Esobran's sovereignty but refuse to accept that *Quiverbane* is Esobran's sole property. If Esobran commissions the PCs to locate the enchanted shield, factions from other realms that *used* to be part ofLeodwored's kingdom may work to stop them. Alternately, these other realms might commission the party to recover the shield for their own use (conquest, propaganda, leverage, political gain, etc.).
- Esobran would like nothing more than to overcome the orcs once and for all, but has halted any organised invasion for fear of whatever power Shurkúl released all those centuries ago. The king of Esobran wants the PCs to discover what, if any, power protects the orcs and, naturally, to overcome it as a pre-emptive strike against the humanoids. If successful, the party's mission could very well usher in a rapid Esonian conquest over the orc host.
- Shurkúl did indeed summon a fell being to defeat the Order all those years ago. This Power, probably some demon or devil, or perhaps an immortal of Entropy, holds *Quiverbane* "hostage" in exchange for propitiation from the orcs. The orcs, for their part, have established a religious sect to this Power, believing (correctly) that appeasement prevents *Quiverbane* from being used against them again. The PCs, on a quest to recover the enchanted shield, must defeat not only Orcish worshippers, but also the Power itself.
- The PCs find themselves travelling close to or through the orc borders on the way to some other destination. Along the journey, the party locates a secret, but forgotten, entrance into the orc warrens. Adventuring within the caverns, the party stumbles upon *Quiverbane*, inexplicably unguarded and apparently free for the taking. Any encounter with orcs reveals the seizure of the shield, bringing down the wrath of the orc community. If the party manages to escape and return to civilisation, it's likely (certain, in fact, if the party crosses Esobran's borders) that *Quiverbane* will be recognised. At best, the party will be pressed to explain how they came across the artefact; at worst, it will be impressed into the king's service to fight against the orcs who are undoubtedly massing to regain their stolen property.



# COMPENDIUM OF CHARACTERS

## R.E.B. TONGUE

This issue continues our theme of bringing unusual NPC's for your game. This issue has a theme connected to religion, but neither of the NPC's is a Cleric. In this, we are attempting to illustrate that a character does not need to be a Cleric in order to have a religious connection.

Adriel (3<sup>rd</sup>-level Lawful Fighter)  
Str: 12, Dex: 9, Con: 13, Int: 10, Wis: 18, Cha: 12, HP: 16, AC: 3, Mace, Plate Mail Armour, Holy Symbol of Rathanon, *Holy Texts of Rathanon*

Adriel was born in a small farming town, a town that was formerly a bustling city but which had since fallen on hard times. The principle reason for the town's failing fortunes is that its patron god, Rathanon, has vanished. His clergy died out in a plague, and no new prayers to his blessing have been answered. After hearing rumours of a surviving sect of priests of Rathanon somewhere in the wilder reaches of the land, the Town Council picked ten men, men who would ordinarily have been ordained, to go out and find them if they can. Adriel was one of them. He has spent three years looking for any sign of the lost god, and is rapidly beginning to lose hope, but continues to trace any leads he can find. The PC's will probably meet him in his quest. He may be exploring an ancient dungeon, or in the middle of a dusty old library. The story of Rathanon should be placed in the campaign to match the specifics of the setting, but a brief

description of his would be a Lawful God of Honour – and Adriel should be played accordingly.

Burdoyne (6<sup>th</sup>-level Chaotic Thief)  
Str: 8, Dex: 14, Con: 9, Int: 12, Wis: 10, Cha: 15, HP: 21, AC: 6, *Dagger +1, Leather Armour, Ring of Fire Protection*

Burdoyne was raised in a village near a monastery. The monks were granted a tithe from the village in exchange for protection, and the best children of the village would be trained as clerics. The village had been peaceful for over a century, but one day a group of bandits arrived and lay waste to the town. The monastery refused to help, and the village was destroyed along with many of the villagers. Burdoyne survived the attack, and as a result changed from a fanatical believer to an atheist. He has since devoted his life to proving that all religion is false, and all clerics are fakes. His first goal was the dissolution of the monastery, which he accomplished – ironically, by hiring the same raider gang that destroyed his village. Since he began this quest, he has become totally single-minded, ignoring everything other than this goal. The PC's may meet him at a religious festival, trying to convert the faithful, or more interestingly, he may be encountered away from civilization, giving the PC's a great surprise when they visit a church. For another interesting twist, the monastery could be the last outpost of Rathanon that Adriel is seeking.

# LEMURIAN DREAMS

Lemurian Dreams, the new magazine from Transfinite Publications, launches in August!

In each issue will be found fantasy short stories, designed to be of extra value to your campaigns. As well as the stories themselves, each issue will include 'Author's Notes', providing valuable conversion information.

Only \$5!

LEMURIAN DREAMS 1:  
August 1st!

**TRANSFINITE  
PUBLICATIONS**

## What are the best dressed heroes wearing this season?



### Introduction

Compared to the volume of historical fantasy media upon which many OD&D games are based, the official rules offer surprisingly few choices of armour and protective gear: six armour types and a generic, all-purpose shield. Where are the greaves, the different types of shields, the breastplates, helms, and studded leather jacks of old?

They're here, within the pages that follow.

This article attempts to fulfil two needs that I perceived in my own OD&D campaigns: 1) the addition of varied armour types and protective gear, and 2) the use of protective items that, while not full suits of armour, nevertheless provided the wearer some cover in a fight.

That said, two important notes need to be made: First, the armour types cited herein are neither precise representations of their historical counterparts, nor are they meant to be. The OD&D game is best served when playability is paramount, and, during the development of this piece, when real-world accuracy conflicted with game mechanics, the latter always won out.

Second, the armour statistics below are geared for use with the alternate armour class system outlined in my earlier piece, *Combat sans Matrix*. In this system, high AC values are better than the low values used in the official game. The worst armour class possible is AC 11, and the addition of armour and other protective gear improves this value. The degree of improvement depends on the armour worn. For example, chain mail armour provides AC 5 in the official rules; this is four points better than the worst armour class of AC 9. In the new armour class system, chain mail's protective quality is reflected as a +4 modifier to the combatant's base AC. Lacking any other AC adjustments, then, a character wearing chain mail with the new AC system would have an AC of 15. In combat, "to-hit" rolls are made normally; if the modified "to-hit" result is equal to or greater than the AC value, the attack succeeds. If this alternate AC system is not used, simply add the AC Modifiers of all protective gear worn and subtract this total from AC 9 to determine the official OD&D armour class.

### Armour Types

As mentioned, one of the goals of this piece is to provide more varied armour types to game combatants, as well as permit "accessorising" standard armour with bits and pieces

of other protective gear. Instead of merely wearing chain mail, for example, a character could don a chain mail shirt, plate greaves, and a plate helm. The additional protections are reflected in the character's improved AC (and increased encumbrance). With the hundreds of armour combinations that can result, players and DMs may further customise their PCs and campaigns.

To prevent players from "layering" armour types and abusing the system, no more than one protective device may cover a single body location. For simplicity, there are four body locations: Head, Torso (waist to neck), Arm (shoulder to wrist), and Leg (thigh to shin); the location covered by each piece is included in the various item descriptions and on the master Armour Table on page 26.

#### Armour Suits

The following represent complete or near-complete suits of armour purchased as a single unit.

**Banded Mail:** A suit of heavy leather to which is affixed metal strips or studs. A suit of banded mail covers the Torso and Arms.

**Chain Mail:** A shirt of interlocking metal rings, typically worn over a padded shirt (to prevent weapon blows from driving ripped metal rings into flesh). A suit of chain mail covers the Torso and Arms, though it is often accessorised with a chain hood and leggings (see below).

**Full Plate:** Consists of stout steel plate over a thick chain mail suit that covers all body locations. Full plate must be custom fitted for a specific individual's body measurements, necessitating the services of a tailor (this is not included in the armour's cost). In addition to a high AC modifier, those wearing full plate gain a +2 bonus against all saves against non-gaseous, area-of-effect attacks (e.g., the bonus applies to a red dragon's breath or an insect swarm spell, but not a green dragon's breath or a cloudkill spell). Full plate does impose some limitations, however: while wearing full plate, the wearer suffers a -4 penalty to all DEX-based ability checks and general skills, or any skills dealing with vision, hearing, or mobility.

**Half Plate:** Half plate consists of thin steel plates over light chain mail that covers all body locations. Like full plate, half plate must be tailored for a specific individual (this is not included in the armour's cost). Half plate provides a +1 bonus against any non-gaseous, area-of-effect attack (see Full Plate, above, for examples). However, certain movement and



perception is limited; those wearing half plate suffer a -2 penalty to all DEX-based ability checks and general skills, or any skills dealing with vision, hearing, or mobility.

**Lamellar Armour:** Common among the nomadic horse warriors of the steppe, lamellar is fashioned from thin strips of metal fastened together with leather thongs. It is not normally available for purchase, though it is highly favoured for its superb, lightweight protective qualities. Lamellar covers the Torso and Arms.

**Leather Armour:** A suit of thin leather toughened and shaped by boiling hides in wax. Favoured by thief-types, leather armour is very common for its affordability and covers the Torso and Arms.

**Plate Mail:** A suit of light chain to which is affixed a metal breastplate, bracers, and greaves. Like chain mail, it is worn over a padded shirt and its construction typically ensures that it is well-balanced over the wearer's frame. Plate mail covers the Torso, Arms, and Legs; a full- or half-helm (see below) often accompanies such armour.

**Scale Mail:** A light suit of leather to which is riveted an array of light metal strips or scales. While conceptually similar to lamellar armour (q.v.), scale mail's reliance on rivets make the wearer far less mobile for the relative protection offered. Scale mail covers the Torso and Arms.

**Studded Leather Armour:** A suit of boiled leather to which is attached a series of well-spaced metal studs. Studded leather is also used by thief-types, though it is significantly more restrictive than a suit of normal leather and so imposes a uniform -15% modifier to all thieving abilities. Studded leather armour covers the Torso and Arms.

### Shields

With the exception of size, all shields are generally identical in form and function: they are worn and wielded on the defender's arm to add increased cover and protection from blows.

**Shield, Large:** Also called a kite shield, a large shield is firmly attached to a combatant via several arm straps; it is effective against up to three attacks per combat round.

**Shield, Medium:** A medium, or round, shield is held by a combatant via a pair of forearm and upper arm straps; it is useful against two attacks per combat round.

**Shield, Small:** Also called a target shield or buckler, a small shield is held by a combatant by a single hand-strap; it is effective against one attack per combat round.

**Shield, Tower:** A tower, or wall, shield can be as large as its wielder. It is not meant for melee combat, but instead is firmly planted into the ground to protect a non-mobile combatant (typically an archer or crossbowman who needs cover whilst reloading). So long as the wielder is stationary, a tower shield is effective against all attacks during a given

combat round; if the attacker moves (e.g., to attack), the shield protects against up to four attacks in a single round.

### Armour Accessories

Armour accessories are essentially parts of armour suits designed to protect specific body locations. Combatants are free to wear whatever armour accessories they desire, so long as no body location is covered by more than one protective device.

**Chain Hood:** A light hood of interlocking metal rings that covers the Head.

**Chain Leggings/Skirt:** Chain mail leg protection consisting of interlocking metal rings fashioned into pants or a skirt. Both offer the same protection to the Legs, though chain leggings are more suited to mounted troops while chain skirts are fitted for infantry.

**Fur Cap (heavy):** A heavy cap sewn from thick pelts to cover the Head. A fur cap thick enough to provide protection affects the wearer's perception, and surprise checks are penalised by -1.

**Fur Wrappings:** A swaddling bunch of thick pelts twined with leather to protect the Torso.

**Fur Leggings:** Heavy fur pelts stitched together in a form of trousers that protect the Legs.

**Leather Bracers:** A pair of light leather patches designed to protect the upper and lower Arms. Bracers impose a -1 initiative modifier to any melee attack.

**Leather Breastplate:** A breastplate of light, boiled leather that covers the Torso.

**Leather Greaves:** A pair of light leather patches designed to protect the upper and lower Legs. Greaves of this sort impose a -1 initiative modifier to any melee attack.

**Leather Leggings:** Similar in protective value to a pair of leather greaves (q.v.), leather leggings are essentially leather trousers. While they impose no movement penalty, they are trademark wear of rogues, so wearers are warned that donning such garb may cause an observer to assume the worst. . .

**Plate Bracers:** A pair of metal plates protecting the upper and lower Arms. Plate bracers impose a -2 initiative modifier to any melee attack.

**Plate Breastplate:** A steel breastplate covering the Torso; such does not typically cover the wearer's back.

**Plate Greaves:** A pair of thick metal plates protecting the upper and lower Legs. Plate greaves impose a -2 initiative modifier to any attack.

**Plate Helm (full):** A steel helm covering the entire Head. While highly protective, a full-helm limits the wearer' s perception, imposing a -2 penalty to all surprise checks.

**Plate Helm (half):** A steel helm covering the top (and maybe back and sides) of the Head. A half-helm limits somewhat the wearer' s perception, and all surprise checks are penalised by -1.

**Master Armour Table**

Table 1 should be used as a replacement for the *Armour Table* provided on RC/67; note the altered cost and weight figures for certain types of existing armour:

**Table 1: Master Armour Table**

<b>Armour Suits</b>	<b>AC Mod</b>	<b>Cost (gp)</b>	<b>Enc (cn)</b>	<b>Body Location(s)</b>
Banded Mail	+5	60	450	Torso, Arms
Chain Mail	+4	40	400	Torso, Arms
Full Plate Armour	+10	140	800	Head, Torso, Arms, Legs
Half Plate Armour	+8	110	650	Head, Torso, Arms, Legs
Lamellar Armour	+5	70	400	Torso, Arms
Leather Armour	+1	10	100	Torso, Arms
Plate Mail	+6	80	500	Torso, Arms, Legs
Scale Mail	+3	30	300	Torso, Arms
Studded Leather Armour	+2	20	200	Torso, Arms
<b>Shields</b>				
Shield, Large	+3	30	375	N/A
Shield, Medium	+2	20	250	N/A
Shield, Small	+1	10	125	N/A
Shield, Tower	+4	40	500	N/A
<b>Armour Accessories</b>				
Chain Hood	+1	20	100	Head
Chain Leggings/Skirt	+2	20	200	Legs
Fur Cap (heavy)	+1	10	150	Head
Fur Wrappings	+1	5	175	Torso
Fur Leggings	+1	10	100	Legs
Leather Bracers	+1	15	50	Arms
Leather Breastplate	+1	10	150	Torso
Leather Greaves	+1	20	50	Legs
Leather Leggings	+1	10	100	Legs
Plate Bracers	+2	30	100	Arms
Plate Breastplate	+3	40	400	Torso
Plate Greaves	+2	40	100	Legs
Plate Helm (full)	+2	50	150	Head
Plate Helm (half)	+1	10	150	Head



*Creating New Armour Types*

Using a simple set of formulae to ensure consistency, it is easy to create new armour suits, shields, and accessories for use in your campaign. The first step is to determine the desired AC modifier of the item; the second is to assign cost and weight figures from the base values on Table 2:

**Table 2: Protective Gear Cost and Weight by AC Bonus**

Protective Device	Base Cost (gp/+1 AC)	Base Enc. (cn/+1 AC)
Armour (suit)	10	100
Shield	10	125
Accessory	See Table 3	See Table 3

Encumbrance variations indicate differences in design and use. Armour suits are composed of multiple pieces designed to fit together such that, in concert, they perform well. Shields must be carried and can be bulky or unwieldy outside of combat. Accessories, while useful, are by definition disparate, so they rarely fit together as a well-balanced whole (as seen below, a single suit of plate mail covering the Torso, Arms, and Legs is better balanced than a breastplate, bracers, and greaves made as separate pieces of plate).

If the armour incorporates special construction materials, workmanship, or other innovations, cost and weight should be adjusted instead of the initial AC modifier desired. A ratio of +5gp for every -25cn of weight is recommended.

Conversely, weight increases reduce cost in like proportions (i.e., subtract 5gp for each additional 25cn of encumbrance).

For example, plate mail grants a +6 AC; it follows that it costs 60gp and weighs 600cn. However, plate mail is well balanced: this is reflected by exchanging 100cn of weight for a price tag of an additional 20gp. If a suit of plate mail were made of some heavier grade of steel, its weight could be increased to 650cn, for example, for a cost reduction of 10gp.

Creating new armour accessories (or piecemeal armour) follows the process above, though any accessory can cover only one body location (unlike armour suits above). The creation process is the same, though the base cost and encumbrance values are cited on Table 3:

**Table 3: Armour Accessory Cost and Weight by AC Bonus**

Accessory Covers	Base Cost (gp/+1 AC)	Base Enc. (cn/+1 AC)
Head	20	100
Torso	10	150
Arms	5	100
Legs	10	100

Any modifications to the accessory should be indicated as encumbrance adjustments, followed by price changes using the inverse cost-to-weight ratio as above (i.e., +5gp:-25cn).

For example, the DM creates a stout leather cap that affords a +1 AC bonus and covers the Head. Using the AC modifier as a base on the table above, the DM determines that the accessory costs 20gp and weighs 100cn. For the same price, a suit of leather armour (AC +2) is available, though at a weight of 200cn. In essence, the cap (without further modification) offers half the protection of full leather, at equal the cost but one-half the weight.

This example helps illustrate the inefficiency of trying to "dovetail" separate accessories when a whole armour suit might be more practical. To see this more acutely, a comparison between a suit of plate mail and its component accessories is shown in Table 4:

Table 4: Example Cost Comparison of Armour Suit and Accessorised Plate

Type	AC Mod	Cost	Enc
Plate Mail:	<b>+6</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>500</b>
Plate Bracers	+2	30	100
Plate Breastplate	+3	40	400
Plate Greaves	+2	40	100
Accessorised Plate:	<b>+7</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>600</b>

Clearly, the players must evaluate carefully the worth of such tradeoffs.

To ease the task of creating new armour types, a small VB program called The Armour Type Generator (v0.9.2) is available for download at: <http://dnd.welshpiper.com/download/armour.zip>.

### Conclusion

This article provides both new and varied types of armour for use in any OD&D campaign, as well as the means to create even more protective items on a consistent basis. With a little customisation, your world's barbarians can have armour indicative of their environment, and your arena's gladiators can now fight in armour types suitable to their unique fighting styles. It's a fair conclusion that your campaign's PCs will wish to follow (ahem) suit. Bedeck your campaign's combatants with these battlefield fashions, and enjoy the show!

# Royal Griffon

Royal Griffon is coming in November!!!!

This revolutionary adventure magazine is a concept never before tried. We take a module, a full-length module, and wrap a magazine around it - additional short adventures, articles adding to the main adventure, and more!

Issue 1 will feature 'Mystery of the Lost Lake', an adventure by the renowned writer Jeffrey Quinn!

**ONLY \$5!**

**TRANSFINITE  
PUBLICATIONS**

# THE BESTIARY

## JEFF CHISLETT

An occasional feature in OD&DITIES, this issue we feature three unusual creatures from Jeff Chislett. I suspect more than a few groups of adventures will have trouble with these beasts in the near future!

### Caterpiggy (Glorm.)

AC: 7  
 HD: 1 per segment, See below.  
 Move: 60' (20')  
 Attacks: Headbutt, confuse  
 Damage: 1-4, see below.  
 No. Appearing: 2-12 segments per Caterpiggy, 1-4 Caterpiggyes  
 Save As: F4.  
 Morale: 10  
 Alignment: Lawful  
 Intelligence: 16  
 Treasure: 10% chance of magic item

Caterpiggyes, or Glorms are very intelligent creatures. They resemble massive caterpillars with pig-like facial features. They are composed of large segments, each being 10' in diameter. They can *confuse* creatures, as per the magical spell, at normal chances for success. This spell-like ability can be used once per segment, with three uses for the creature's head. They speak Common, and their own tongue. They can carry a maximum of 10,000 coins weight, and are often hired by farmers to till their fields with their hard snouts. A lost bodily segment will regenerate within 6 turns of its loss, at full HP. If left for 6 turns, any Caterpiggy segment will regenerate into a new Caterpiggy, with 1-4 segments at ½ HD. The head of a Caterpiggy has 1-4 Hit Dice.

### Rock Monkey

AC: 7  
 HD: 1+1  
 Move: 90' (30')  
 Attacks: 1 claw or 1 thrown rock  
 Damage: 1-4/ 1-3  
 No. Appearing: 1-6  
 Save As: NM  
 Morale: 7  
 Intelligence: 4  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Treasure: Nil

Rock Monkeys are chubby, carnivorous primates measuring in at about 1' in diameter. They are often mistaken for the rocky areas in which they make their homes. There is a 17% chance that for every 6 Rock Monkeys, that there will be one White Ape.

### Gorend

AC: 5  
 HD: 1-4  
 Move: 30' (10')  
 Attacks: Intestine whip, engulf.  
 Damage: 1-2 + Paralysis, 1-8.  
 No. Appearing: 1-4.  
 Save As: E1.  
 Morale: 12.  
 Intelligence: 0  
 Alignment: Chaotic.  
 Treasure: I.

Gorends are horrid undead constructs, made from the fleshy tissue of unfortunate elves.

These piles of gore are often 10' in diameter, and 3' at the top of the heap. They are immune to fire, both normal and magical, and they weigh 100 lbs. per Hit dice. If given six turns, uninterrupted, a Gorend can squeeze into cracks 1" in height, as they contain only fleshy tissue. If *Flesh to Stone* is cast upon one of these, and succeeds, it doesn't die, rather, it will only be reduced in movement to 3' "running", and 1' encounter speed, and they lose the ability to slip into cracks, although they become immune to non-magical wooden and bladed weapons, although normal blunt and piercing melee weapons, such as picks and hammers will do damage, but only half. They attack by way of whips made from the intestines of elves, which then draw inwards with whatever victims they catch, who will be engulfed for 1-4 rounds, doing a total of 1-8 damage in that time.

# ORIGINAL DUNGEONS & DRAGONS ANALYSIS AND BEAUTY

JASON L. GARNER

Having just read Erin D. Smale's article in issue #9, I am filled with a few concerns. First, I do believe that new ideas are good and should be circulated. I also like the idea of changing the official AC's of creatures in the game. This makes things different and exciting. Second, I want to say that using Erin's method of calculating AC is, in reality, just 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. But that's cool. I mean, in my opinion 3<sup>rd</sup> edition is a good game, and better than 2<sup>nd</sup> in many respects. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson both play 3e themselves, that is when they have time.

For us to really understand how the rules work in OD&D we have to analyse the rules. If you want to change how you play, please do it. But first understand how things work and why. In the very old days, there was just one determining factor that dominated the game. It was called Hit Dice, or HD. This term meant a lot of stuff. For a monster, it determined their Hit Points and their THAC0. It did the same for characters too, but with a different ratio. Though HD is still used, and is still the primary statistic, other factors of importance have also arisen to prominence.

After this prehistory, there came Armor Class. So now there was Hit Points, THAC0, Armor Class, and Damage. These four values are the skeleton of Original Dungeons and Dragons. If you want to make things real simple, you can actually run a game on just these four statistics. Later, to make things more complex Ability Scores and Saving Throws were created. And while these last two are important to balancing the game and making characters specialized and unique, the true meat is what I have mentioned before.

At this point, I must agree with Erin, in realizing that combat in the game can be super-complex. I mean, combat is the reason that Dungeons and Dragons first got created. Gygax was a wargamer and developed fighting rules. Role-playing in a dungeon without fighting something seems to have little purpose and Dave Arneson realized this. So combat is necessary. Using the 3e setup is fast and streamlined, but I don't think that it is what the designers had in mind. The reason, in my opinion, that a low AC is good, is that they were probably thinking that first class was the best, thus first Armor class, thus Armor Class 1. It is merely a natural progression of thought. I always thought of AC of my opponent as the number that I subtracted from my THAC0. So I always wanted my enemies to have a high AC.

I think we really need to look at how the game has changed in its stages. Back in the day, everything had the same HD, which was a d6. It seems kind of silly now in retrospect. But the classes (Fighting-Man, Magic-User and Cleric) were balanced. To make things fair, the Fighter progressed at a

faster rate. The magic-user progressed the slowest. Something else that is also interesting to note is that at first, you didn't get better in your ability to hit. That is to say, your THAC0 didn't improve!

Later on this was changed. Before, you just got tougher, and able to sustain more damage. Then, as you gained in level you got better with your swordplay. So THAC0 came about. Fighters not only progressed faster, but they had a better THAC0 per level of advancement. This served to further balance the game and was seen in its public release. However, upon examining some very early copies of the game, I came upon something startling. The damage caused by most successful attacks was a d6! It didn't make much sense, so they added variant damage for bigger weapons. Again, another advantage for fighters. There was also another class added to the game, the thief.

So we see some conceptual thought in the structure of the game, let's look at how it all works. When thinking about AC, you need to remember the numbers: 3, 5 and 7. These numbers are the AC's of PC's wearing Full Plate, Chainmail and Leather. You can lower the AC's as needed for the values of a shield or bonuses, etc. Knowing this, it doesn't seem complex. Noting the confusion over the number of a "good" AC being a "low" number, remember that it is the number that a foe will either add to his die roll, or subtract from his THAC0 depending on how you roll dice. Knowing this, it seems natural to want the number to be low.

Understanding the THAC0 is a different situation, but the same methodology. All you need to remember are the numbers: 3, 4 and 5. The THAC0 of a fighter goes down every three levels, a cleric/thief goes down every four levels, and a magic-user's every five levels. Knowing this, it becomes instantly simple to calculate the die roll needed by any character. I understand that you will have to take into consideration bonuses and penalties and such, but the DM should jot a simple list down before any game begins. On this list, the DM should list all the character's names as well as their total modified THAC0 (even taking into consideration magic weapons and such). DM's using 3e do the same thing; only the number is the total attack bonus.

Rules are not the game itself. Rules are just the playground where the imagination is meant to play. My favourite version of D&D rules was the ones in the red box. I love the artwork and imagery in that game. As stated before, a DM should feel free to change the rules if they are slowing the game down. In the beginning, D&D was more of a tabletop strategy game than a role-playing game. The rules serve more for combat of the wargame/tabletop nature than the

true role-playing. The dungeon-crawl was really the first type of D&D adventure. The role-playing aspects of the game came about later.

When role-playing, the OD&D rules are the most divergent rules that I have ever encountered. I am a D&D player, meaning that I play both 3e and OD&D. I feel that these games are so different that it is different to compare them. The beauty of the OD&D game lies in its simplicity. In 3e, a character is pretty much defined by their skills and feats. The skills and feats structure what the character can do, and what the character is good at. And while this system is realistic and detailed, it can also become cumbersome. In 3e, all characters advance at the same rate, and so the skills and feats system serves to balance the game. In OD&D, the characters can be described and defined through the narrative of the DM and the player.

OD&D makes no assumptions based on its rules. It takes place in a generic fantasy world. That's why there were so many campaign settings for AD&D that popped up in the late 70's and early 80's. 3e is a little different. It makes many assumptions on its campaign setting. It assumes that a world can exist where Sorcerers are descended from Dragons, followers of different deities war with one another, and Dwarves can cast arcane spells. OD&D was just concerned with the basics, free of limitations. 3e, through its limitations

defines its characters in very precise terms. But this is the strength of OD&D, and what allows it to grow and change to fit the mould of its players.

I am a purist when it comes to gaming. I like Erin's ideas on speeding game play, but I don't think I can use it unless I am playing 3e. In designing 3e, WotC writers paid careful attention to the rules and feel of OD&D. I know that they wanted to get back to basics (from the complicated and ugly 2<sup>nd</sup>), but they wanted to make a different game. The beauty of OD&D has never been replicated and it never could be. In my eyes, I consider 3e to be a hybrid of OD&D, Palladium, and Warhammer FRP. I say this because I see elements of all those games in 3e. I don't say that one is actually better than the other, but I feel the need to play both and use both systems. I love 3e, but I will never stop playing OD&D. The actual rules are not as important as the general feel and flow of the game. As previously stated, the rules are just a frame on which you build the story. However, for myself, I will stick to the basic rules as they are stated. I am a purist, and I don't like changing something that is so intrinsic to the game's mechanics and history. I do encourage other players to change the rules if they see the need, but I also implore them to examine them closely before doing so. Don't let the rules hinder your enjoyment of the game, unless you play 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, in which case you deserve to be miserable.

# Concept Horizons

This new magazine, launching in September, will be covering the RPG scene in general and D20 in particular. Look for ideas, rules and adventures galore in this publication!

**Only \$2.50!**

**TRANSFINITE  
PUBLICATIONS**

# FAIRIES OR THE FEY

## MICHAEL STEWART

The Fairies, or Fay as some know them, are a strange woodland race akin to the Elves. They share many of the physical aspects of the Elves such as sharply elegant features, lithe forms and pointed ears, but their sizes range from 1-2 feet in height. They also have iridescent wings on their backs for flight and antennae emerging from their foreheads, with one above each eye. They are fair of complexion, though their hair and wings may be of any of the colours of the rainbow, and those Fairies with bright colours take inordinate pride in their appearance.

Fairy society is divided into two camps, the Seelie and Unseelie courts. These courts exist in pocket dimensions that have access to the Prime Material Plane but are not part of it. Fairies owing fealty to the Seelie court are mostly Lawful in alignment, while those choosing to be part of the Unseelie court are usually Chaotic. There are Neutral Fairies in each court, but they are few, as the gnosis of the courts tend to draw most Fay to either Law or Chaos. A very small number of Fairies wander the Prime Material Plane, seeking new experiences and comrades in the world.

Prime Requisites: Intelligence, Dexterity

Initial Languages: Common, elvish, gnomish, insect, bird, pixie, fairy

Racial Bonuses:

- \* Fly at 180' per turn
- \* a +2 bonus to hit in flying combat (both combatants flying)
- \* -4 to AC when fighting M or L creatures (not applicable for area effect attacks)
- \* Surprised only on a 1 in 8
- \* Turn invisible once/day, increasing to twice at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, three times at 6<sup>th</sup>, and four at 9<sup>th</sup>.
- \* Shapechange to any non-fantastic creature of equal mass once per day, increasing to twice at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, three times at 6<sup>th</sup>, and four at 9<sup>th</sup>
- \* Use the Elf table for combat and saving throws

Restrictions:

- \* Cannot have a strength greater than 9
- \* Due to their small size, fairies cannot use shields
- \* Fairies cannot carry more than 800 gp in encumbrance allowance, though fairy sized gear will weigh 1/3<sup>rd</sup> its normal weight.
- \* Fairies must pay 2 times the listed cost for replacement gear (not at character generation) due to their small size.
- Can only attain the 10<sup>th</sup> level of experience.
- Fairy weapons do ½ damage as normally listed for weapons in the D&D rulebook (i.e. a sword 1d8 would do 1d4 damage, a dagger 1d4 would do 1d2 damage, etc.)
- Fairies cannot wear armour greater than chain mail.

Experience Points	Level	Hit Points (d4)	Level Title	Spells: 1 2 3 4 5 6
0	1	1 + 1	Mossfern	2 - - - -
4,200	2	2 + 2	Wildwood/Wildflower	3 - - - -
8,400	3	3 + 3	Brightleaf/Brightflower	3 1 - - -
16,800	4	4 + 4	Brightwood/Starflower	3 2 - - -
33,600	5	5 + 5	Oakenroot/Rowanroot	3 2 1 - -
67,200	6	6 + 6	Oakleaf/Rowanleaf	3 2 2 - -
138,400	7	7 + 7	Oakenwood/Rowanwood	4 2 2 1 - -
276,800	8	8 + 8	Oakenheart/Rowanheart	4 3 2 2 1 -
553,600	9	9 + 9	Fairy Lord/Lady	4 4 3 2 2 -
1,107,200	10	10 + 10	Master/Mistress of the Fay	4 4 3 3 2 1



# OD&D ENCUMBRANCE FOR COMMON (OR NOT-SO-COMMON) ITEMS.

## DERRICK A. LANDWEHR

In my opinion, the encumbrance system used in OD&D (as presented in Basic D&D and the Rules Cyclopedia) is too often overlooked as one of the premier gauges of character carrying capacity in fantasy role-playing today. The system, in its simplicity is realistic and detailed enough to be an accurate representation of what a character can possibly carry as compared to his overall movement. Without being bogged down by endless rules, charts and quirky judgment calls, as used in other rules sets, the OD&D encumbrance system is easy to calculate for both player and DM alike.

*Remember: OD&D encumbrance is not simply a measurement of weight, but also a measurement of "bulk," and ease of carrying.* This is the best way to describe encumbrance. The idea that every two-pound sack of feathers encumbers the same is ludicrous. A two-pound feather pillow and a small sock stuffed and compressed with two pounds of feathers is not the same, encumbrance wise. Situations like this don't occur often, but when they do it may be important to note that the feather pillow encumbers 25 cn while the sock of feathers only 20 cn.

The above example is a situation where a DM may have to make a judgment call, but for the OD&D system, it's a snap!

As characters should be accountable for what they carry, OD&D encumbrance does a nice job of keeping those PCs from carrying 20,000 gold pieces, plate-mail armour, a shield and three swords. I always found it annoying when a character would carry around too much stuff – its unrealistic. Since players never made it a top priority to tally the weight of the equipment they were carrying, I found OD&D encumbrance to be a happy medium. Encumbrance weight in coin (cn) measurement is light on paperwork and the perfect amalgamation of rules in an RPG environment with player participation.

For some reason players in my campaign found it necessary to pick up and carry every item they thought may be a clue or an interesting trinket. This led to multiple character sheets of endless equipment and most players asking: "Derrick, how much does this way? How much does that weigh?" It often does not describe in the rules the encumbrance of many types of items in the OD&D game. To keep it simple for all players involved, I have used the following encumbrance values in many of my campaigns. I hope this too can help you in your games as well!

### Coins

Coinage throughout the Known World varies greatly from place to place, however the difference is most likely negligible. Some special coinage may weigh more. For example, an ancient civilization of frost giants may use large,

magically frozen ice coins that weigh 10 cn or more each. In general though most coins weigh the same.

Coins 1 cn / Coin

### Gems

As noted above with the encumbrance for coins, as a convenience assume all gems weigh 1 cn each. Whenever a damaged or unusual size gem (within reason) is encountered, presume that the gem does not exceed the 1-cn encumbrance figure.

Gems 1 cn / Gem

### Jewellery (various)

The weights of certain pieces of jewelry can vary substantially from item to item, especially due to the value of the jewelry itself. Feel free to use the chart listed on page 227 of the *Dungeons & Dragons Rules Cyclopedia*. However, that chart assumes that the value of the Jewelry ranges from 100gp to 50,000gp! You may wish to use the encumbrances listed below for more "common types" of jewelry items that characters could have easy access to.

### Common

Anklet	5 cn
Beads	5 cn
Bracelet	5 cn
Broach	5 cn
Buckle	5 cn
Cameo	5 cn
Chain	5 cn
Clasp	5 cn
Locket	5 cn
Pin	5 cn

### Uncommon

Armband	10 cn
Collar	10 cn
Earring	1 cn
Four-Leaf Clover	5 cn
Heart	5 cn
Leaf	5 cn
Necklace	10 cn
Pendant	5 cn
Rabbit's Foot	10 cn

### Rare

Amulet	10 cn
Crown	15 cn
Diadem	20 cn
Medallion	10 cn
Orb	10 cn
Ring	1 cn

Scarab	5 cn
Sceptre	20 cn
Talisman	10 cn
Tiara	10 cn

**Potions**

Potions	10 cn
Potion Vial (empty)	1 cn

**Scrolls**

Scroll (paper)	5 cn
Scroll (w/case)	10 cn

**Wands, Staves & Rods**

Wands, staves and rods could vary greatly from type to type. However, you could use the following encumbrances for the "typical" type of device:

**Wands**

Wand	10 cn
------	-------

**Staves**

Staff	40 cn
-------	-------

**Rods**

Rod	20 cn
-----	-------

**Rings**

Ring	1 cn
------	------

**Miscellaneous**

Barrel, small	30 cn
Basket, large	10 cn
Basket, small	5 cn
Belt pouch, large	10 cn

Belt pouch, small	5 cn
Book, small	50 cn
Book, standard	100 cn
Book, large	150 cn
Book, spell	200 cn
Bucket	30 cn
Candle	1 cn
Flint & steel	5 cn
Grappling hook	40 cn
Parchment	1 cn / sheet
Quarrel case	10 cn
Quiver	10 cn
Tent, large	200 cn
Tent, small	100 cn

It is safe to assume that much of a character's miscellaneous carried equipment is light and typically weighs 1 pound (10 cn) or less. Common items such as utensils, cups, cookware, socks, orc teeth, cookies, flowers, handkerchiefs, lint balls, notes, spectacles, knick-knacks, trinkets, etc. can be viewed as having an encumbrance value of 10 or less. I like to make cn values for these types of items 1, 5 or 10. This keeps encumbrance tracking to a minimum while at the same time easy to calculate. With encumbrance values this small it does not matter how accurate the cn value is. For example, to keep things within the rules and easy to record, I would say that a pair of musty old socks weigh 1 cn, a small bag of orc teeth 5 cn, and a standard clay mug 10 cn. Of course heavier items can be easily measured in pounds at the DMs discretion. As another example the DM can simply say that a metal lockbox one of the characters is trying to carry weighs 15 pounds - which easily translates into 150 cn.

As with everything OD&D, rules are generally kept to minimum. That of course is part of the charm to this classic game. Sometimes rules have to be introduced to clarify certain situations - that is the reason I have put my thoughts to paper. Encumbrance should never in any way be a main focus of your game, especially if it detracts from the fun of a session. None-the-less, encumbrance is indeed a factor of your character and a part of the game.

# ANOTHER TRUTH

## CHRIS NIX

"Father, have you heard what the Thyatian adventurers say about the rebellions?"

"Lena, my daughter, I Brosnocovu Ineu, Defender of Achelos, hear all! Well, most of the time. Does their truth disturb you my daughter?" he said smiling at his youngest.

"Yes father it does", she said flatly.

"Well, I had better tell you our truth" he smiled wolfishly.

"Thirty years ago, unknown ships sailed up the Achelos and moored here in Achelos town. Over a hundred Thyatians there were, all under the two, in the time of your grandfather Gustov", he paused as if to consider the past.

"They said that the Thyatian willed us to be ruled by them in his name, and proclaimed it in each village. They made a fortified camp on the craggy hill overlooking Oradea village, and called it Quasqueton"

"The caves there, as you know, are home to the Kulkan tribe of kobolds. The Thyatians made peace with them and traded food for iron ore. At first there were no demands, only the removal of the menaces, the nosferatu, the weres and the goblinoids", before he could continue, a dark look of pain crossed his face.

"The collectors came, half our produce to the two, we had barely enough for ourselves, so rebellion! Your grandfather, Gustov, as the Defender led the host, five hundred men with shield and spear, against the Thyatians with their mail and sword. I being only thirteen was considered too young, so I followed at a distance".

Deep sadness filled his voice, "Gustov demanded the end of the taxes. Rogahn said no, Gustov attacked. It was slaughter, their mage, Zelligar appeared from nowhere; with his magic the host were incinerated. Only a few escaped."

"Once night fell, I tried to take fathers body, but the wolves came. Fang and claw drove me from the field, defeated, wounded, only surviving due to the feast of roasted traladarans"

"After that I took to the forests, gathering the like minded youths, especially when the two paraded Gustov' s head, and killed the town and village leaders and families. It was a dark time for us, the people suffering, I living on the edges."

A smile returns to his face "Then it happened, Koscu appeared in the middle of our den, my brother returned from the north, a mighty wizard, we could counter their mage. We planned, we raided, we planned more, we assaulted, until the day came when we could gather the host. They came from all over the northwest, a thousand we were and we marched. Oh the joy, we fought, we won, Rogahn and Zelligar no more, liberation from the two, but sadness, Koscu and many friends no longer with us."

"That is our truth".

Lena smiled, replaced quickly by worry, "But father what of the future, are we to drive all the Thyatians back and free Traladar?"

"No my daughter", again sadly, "I have been to Marilenev, our capital. Our leaders play games for the favour of the Thyatian, they say freedom, yet none will try for it. The Black Eagle pushes our cousins into our land or takes them as slaves. If the Hin knew of the Kulkan mine, we would be up to our knees in them."

"Let the Thyatians come and look for their Quasqueton, the Kulkan or the wolves will have them."

"But daughter know this, when the time comes, I will bow to the Thyatian, but I will be my own master, as will our people"

"Father!" she exclaimed.

"Lena, learn this lesson and learn it well. You have to run WITH the pack."



# AN INTERVIEW WITH GARY GYGAX

PART II

*COURTESY OF CIRO ALESSANDRO SACCO*

## TSR'S INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

How much better these could have been I often wondered back then. I had plans for European operations that the Blumes quashed...

**It seems to me that the burgeoning TSR Hobbies/TSR Inc. international operations developed in three main directions: the English-speaking world (Canada, Australia and New Zealand, United Kingdom), Japan and continental Europe. I'd like to know more European operations. In Europe I suppose the first company to do business with (then) fledgling TSR Hobbies was Games Workshop, the British company started by Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone. How was born this relationship?**

The initial expansion into Europe, that into the UK, occurred while I was still in effective charge of things at TSR. I went to England and interviewed a number of candidates for exclusive distributor status there. In the end, and much against the advice of the consultant TSR had hired, I selected Games Workshop, for I was convinced that Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson were dedicated gamers and knew their market. I liked them, as a matter of fact, so GW was given the exclusive, and that proved to be a good thing.

After that we went on to the Continent, where a couple of other prospects for distribution there were interviewed. This part of my trip was less successful.

**Games Workshop was licensed to print UK editions of various D&D and AD&D titles. I remember softback books of the AD&D core rulebooks (PHB, DMG, MM), some more or less original accessories such as "Dungeon Floor Plans", an UK printing of the D&D B1 module and so on. Were such projects motivated by the need to avoid high import costs or to meet a growing demand in the most satisfying and quickest way possible?**

You have it. Ian and Steve spoke to me at length about their market, the resistance to the price of imported game products and I listened and agreed. Thus, they were granted a license to produce TSR products in the UK, even print their own material unique to the UK. The lower cost of products then brought greater demand.

**Games Workshop printed in 1978 (there is a photo in "White Dwarf" #5 of some guests of Games Day III having in their hands brand new copies) an entirely original D&D Basic rulebook, using the original US text but with entirely**

**new art and book design. It's one of the rarest D&D titles in existence, long thought a myth by American collectors... Did you ever see it? What was your opinion at the time?**

That's going back a ways! Yes, I saw the work, and I approved. Ian and Steve convinced me that their audience didn't like the illustrations used in American versions of the game, so I gave them the okay to produce their own. I had a copy of the Basic Set rules, but it was lost when Lorraine Williams took over TSR, locked me out of my office, and seized and never returned most of the games and books I had collected and stored therein.

**An advertisement in "White Dwarf" #18 informs the British public that TSR Hobbies has opened a branch in the United Kingdom, aptly named TSR UK, that will be open for business from March, 31 1980. This branch, with ups and lows, will endure till the final days of the company. Why TSR Hobbies decided to distribute itself in the UK and, I suppose, Europe? Did you think the British market deserved a direct intervention, having grown large enough, or were there disagreements with Games Workshop?**

The UK marketplace was an excellent one for TSR. When it became clear that we could not reach agreement with GW in regards a merger and Games Workshop was moving to develop and market its own product line, the only logical step was to create a subsidiary operation in the UK. This was again my purview and during a trip to England I hired Don Turnbull to head up the new operation. TSR UK would also serve as the clearing house for business in Europe until further development could be accomplished.

**Outside the UK, continental Europe started to be receptive to D&D. I remember seeing articles on the game in a now defunct Italian magazine, "Pergiooco", published (I think) in 1981-82, similar articles in the French magazine "Jeux & Strategie" during the same period and I have heard of similar articles in Germany too. Publishing in a foreign language is of course a difficult operation. What was the first foreign (for English speakers...) language in which D&D was translated and why?**

Copies of the D&D game and then the AD&D line were sent to various Continental game dealers from about 1976 onwards, some by TSR, some by its distributors. There were strong followings for the games in many European nations, D&D being the established one, AD&D not as popular. As far as I can recall, the first translation was into French, that because of the very large audience for the game in that

country and because of my relationship with Francois Marcela Froideval, who could oversee the checking of the translated product. Of course even as that was going forward we were working towards other translations — German, Spanish, Swedish, Italian, etc. A little later the arrangement was concluded for translation into Japanese.

**When (did) TSR started to think about an Italian edition of D&D? I remember an interview to Don Turnbull in "Pergiooco" about a possible Italian edition "not before 1984" (if I recall correctly) but D&D Basic was translated into Italian only in 1986. Was Editrice Giochi involved in this project from the beginning or were there other companies interested?**

I was eager to get the D&D game translated into as many different languages as possible, as many non-English-speaking gamers wrote or spoke to me about this, the need for having the game in their native tongue in order for its audience to grow to a proper size. Finding the correct publisher for such an undertaking, striking an agreement and then getting the work of translation done takes time. As I recall, I had meetings in Germany, Italy and Spain in 1983 where the President of TSR International, Andre Moullin and me interviewed a number of publishers. After that, in 1984, agreements were signed. Getting the Italian translation done by 1986 is not actually untimely, considering the nature of translation and publishing. Why Don Turnbull was commenting on this matter though, one in which he was not actually concerned, I cannot speak to.

**I suppose TSR UK was charged to develop not only the British market but the European one too. How important was Europe, United Kingdom included, for TSR Hobbies operations? Were there any plans to open further TSR branches in Europe along the TSR UK model? I have heard rumours about an aborted TSR France to be lead by Francois Marcela Froideval.**

First, no, TSR UK was *not* given charge of the Continental market. They were to facilitate export of English language products to the Continent, but the management of business there was in the hands of TSR, Inc., and then TSR International. There was some resistance to this arrangement from TSR UK, but that did not change the nature of its mission statement.

When I visited the UK to set up the basis for that branch, I also visited Paris, met with Francois Marcela Froideval and set up the beginnings of TSR France. We had been in correspondence prior to my visit and Francois had already done well in my view. He had found an excellent location for a TSR game shop, was ready to launch a magazine, made contact with translators and printers and I approved. This process went forward with great resistance from the Blumes. They soon hired a brother-in-law of theirs, Dick Gleason, to head up international business. With their approval, Gleason quashed the French subsidiary. I was absolutely beside myself upon hearing this, but there was nothing I could do except to hire Francois on to my personal staff at TSR, for I valued his business ideas and creative talent. Gleason's tenure at TSR was thankfully brief, as he was an

embarrassment and I somehow managed to prevail in regards the hiring of Andre Moullin to fill the vacancy. Francois' creative talent has since proven to be rather considerable and I am certain had he been allowed to head up and form the French subsidiary, it would have been a success. We agreed that a model based around company-owned or franchised game shops was the best way to develop and support the market. Here the success of Games Workshop supports this concept.

I also visited Switzerland to meet with someone there in regards the German-language market. We set up a distribution arrangement with him, but that proved less successful than was hoped for and the arrangement was changed in relatively short order.

**TSR UK became quickly much more than a sales office for British customers: they produced an excellent range of modules, the U and UK series for AD&D, B/X1 and X8 for D&D, some really fine accessories such as AC 9 and so on. Was this creative activity a result of requests from the Lake Geneva offices for more products or an idea of TSR UK management approved by TSR US managers?**

The initial concept, part of Don Turnbull's mission, was to develop the British market. That included creating unique new product material. By no means did I ever think that the gamers in the United States had a corner on creativity. When arranging for the aborted French subsidiary, Francois was likewise charged with creating new material for the French audience. Had I been involved later on, I assure you that in arranging for other subsidiaries, which I intended to do, these would also have been given the latitude to develop such products. National tastes tend to differ and such products not only encourage creative work in the gaming audience there, but also solidify the general following for the underlying game system, their own number now having a part in its creation. As an added benefit, at least some of the material produced thus could also serve as support for the US game, that from non-English-speaking nations translated into English. It seemed a winning situation all round.

**The highest and for many British gamers the most painful moment of TSR UK's activity was Imagine magazine. The magazine was launched as a competitor for Games Workshop's White Dwarf and, presumably, as a 'mouthpiece' for TSR products. It enjoyed a large following, seriously threatening White Dwarf's grip on the British market, but with issue #31 it was closed down. When some disgruntled staffers left TSR UK and started a new publication, "Game Master", to attempt to preserve the Imagine's experience (they kept various popular features as Pelinore, reviews, letters page, comic strips and so on), the magazine ran various articles with behind the scene details of Imagine's closure. Their pieces explicitly accused you of having never believed in the usefulness of an independent magazine for TSR UK, that you couldn't stand the freedom enjoyed by Imagine's writers to disapprove 'crappy' TSR products and to feature in approving terms competitors' titles and so having decreed, once back at the helm of TSR, Imagine's demise due to financial reasons. Perhaps these were only ex employees'**



**poisoned arrows, but I'd like to know your opinion in this subject (and many old British fans too!).**

It was my plan for TSR UK to publish a UK version of "Dragon" magazine. This I meant to be named "Royal Dragon" and its content were to be about 50% that taken from "Dragon" the balance, and all ad space, coming from contributors and advertisers in the UK. Don Turnbull did not favour this plan and eventually he convinced the Board of Directors that his "Imagine" magazine was a superior idea. I was dubious, but I agreed. As a matter of fact, the magazine never showed a substantial profit, generally ran at a loss from a purely financial standpoint. Of course, the advertising and promotion of the TSR line and the goodwill the publication generated, justified its continuation for the time. Had the expense of half the content, general layout too, been absorbed by "Dragon" magazine, which was then generating a profit of something like a million dollars annually, and the name I urged been used so as to make it clear that it was tied to the D&D game, I believe the publication would have made a profit, been more effective and still satisfied the individual tastes of the British gaming audience. That is a moot question now, certainly.

As for lower echelon staffers believing that they were paid to be independent critics of TSR products, somehow being given free rein to exercise their budding critical talents, I can only shake my head in wonderment at such hubris. Biting the hand that feeds one has always been considered in bad taste. If such persons felt so overwhelming an urge to be independent, they should have sought employment elsewhere or struck out on their own. In short, I have absolutely no sympathy for such views. The very reason for their employment was to promote the TSR line and its success paid the wages for their livelihood.

As a matter of fact, though, their misguided aims were not of the least consideration when I was again serving as the CEO of the corporation after the Blumes were removed from management roles. With other corporate officers assisting, we held a series of meetings to determine what steps were needed to bring TSR out of its debt position, have it again generate a positive cash flow, show a profit from sales. Of course some of these meetings were with Don Turnbull, he bringing full financial reports of the TSR UK operation to us for review. As we made drastic changes and cuts in the US operation, we also took a hard look at things in the UK. The magazine was costing money and we could not afford that, so it was cut. That's the story, pure and simple. Had the Blumes not so mismanaged TSR, such drastic action would not have been necessary. They had and I had no choice but to make unpalatable decisions. Better a magazine in the UK cease operation than the parent company go under, right? We had the bank breathing down our necks, of course, and excision as that of a losing operation of a subsidiary went a long way to demonstrate that we were serious about righting the TSR ship. By such means we kept the bank from calling in its loans.

Another parenthetical note: I was very much against borrowing as the Blumes had done, and as far as the bank

they chose to do business with, I was absolutely opposed to it. That bank did not even vaguely understand our business, had no liaison officer who would work with us, and I hated having to deal with them. Only by the most rigorous means was I able to hold them off in their desire to perfect their security and begin collecting—forcing TSR into receivership thus, of course.

Had I remained in control of TSR, it is nearly certain that "Imagine" magazine would have resumed publication in due time, as the finances of TSR and TSR UK allowed. After all, "Dragon" magazine was my conception and I was likewise convinced that a similar publication in the UK subsidiary was needed for long-term success. Of course had I in the interim learned of the staffers' attitude, I would have directed Don Turnbull to move the would-be independent journalists to positions in the warehouse or to janitorial and tea service ones and required him to hire more mature and reasoning replacements for them on the editorial staff.

Lest the readers think I am too harsh in my dismissal of the "Imagine" Magazine's staff in regards to their efforts to become 'independent journalists', allow me to assure you that prior to that there were a few persons on the staff of "Dragon" magazine that had the same delusions. I personally spoke to them at length to disabuse them of their fond notions and there were changes made in personnel.

**Why had TSR US refused to distribute Imagine magazine in the US? I noticed the magazine did make an appearance in Mail Order Hobby Shops catalogues, but only in 1989, various years after the magazine's closure.**

That question I cannot answer. I was unaware that any refusal of distribution ever occurred. I can speculate on the matter for readers, though, thusly. As TSR did not distribute to shops, only to the book trade and to distributors, such sales were the only option in regard to "Imagine" magazine. Discounts to such trade on all products was in the range of 60%. Thus, to manage even a break-even on the magazine, do nothing but cover cost, TSR would have had to acquire it from TSR UK at about 20% of its cover price. Frankly, TSR UK would have lost money in such an arrangement, with shipping costs for airmail delivery to keep things timely and for it not gained much in circulation.

### **TSR FOR SALE?**

I first heard of this, TSR being on the block, whilst in California. A friend and business associate called from New York, warned me that "Kevin Blume was shopping TSR on the city streets" and demanded that I get back to Lake Geneva as quickly as possible to find out what was wrong. The repute of the corporation was, of course, being destroyed by this willy-nilly attempt to sell it of.

Leaving California with two major projects left up in the air — a new D&D cartoon show and the major theatrical motion picture — I flew back to Lake Geneva and spent a full week investigating the state of TSR finances, questioning officers

and key management personnel under the Blumes. On the following week, as the monthly meeting of the Board of Directors, I presented a rather lengthy paper dealing with the sorry state of corporate finances, the clear mismanagement of TSR by Kevin Blume and concluding with a demand for his resignation. Kevin was livid. Brian demanded how I proposed the company could run without Kevin and I told him the same way it did prior to Kevin's elevation to senior management, by him and me. Brian retorted hotly he could not run the company any more. At that I shrugged and said, «Very well, in that case I will run it alone because Kevin has proven himself totally incompetent». In closing, I assured the assembled members of the board that I could certainly turn things around in a few months were I given the authority of CEO.

I fully expected to be dismissed at that time. Instead the 'outside directors' were forced to agree, as there was no question that the corporation was in debt to the bank for about \$1.5 million and there appeared to be no way to repay the loan. In the final vote, Kevin voted against my motion for his removal, Brian abstained (which speaks volumes) and the stooges voted for it, so the motion carried four to one. However, the stooges were not about to put me in charge of company. They insisted on hiring a 'qualified person' from outside (that TSR was in terrible financial condition seemed not to matter to those three) and so a pro-tempore president was found from the ranks of AMA candidates, then put into office in a week's time. Meantime, I was active in the corporate management, this de-facto role enabled by means which will be elucidated when I answer the next question. In that time I managed to prevail against a suggestion from the stooges that the corporation sell "Dragon" magazine and a suggestion from the head of sales and marketing — who I had dismissed thereafter — that we cut the RPGA to save money.

**A major article in The Space Gamer #74 (May/June 1985) mentioned the 'possible' sale of TSR, Inc. to a 'Beverly Hills investment group' that had filed a letter of intent for such purpose. Incidentally, you were located in Beverly Hills during the D&D Entertainment Corporation life. Were you involved in this potential sale?**

One of the very strangest things I can say about TSR was the intransigence of the Blumes in regards to seizing opportunity. Earlier on, whilst they were assuredly fully aware that the corporation was in trouble, I brought them an offer from a wealthy entrepreneur in Beverly Hills. This person offered the Blumes \$7,500 per share for their stock. He planned to buy them out, manage the finances of the company and leave my in charge of marketing and creative. That offer would have provided Brian with over \$5 million, Kevin with \$1.5 million and escape from impending doom. They made no response to the offer.

When the Board of Directors removed Kevin and hired on their AMA-related temporary president, the stooges also asserted that the only hope for TSR was to have a 'white knight' coming to its rescue, but it out. That was utter nonsense, of course, but I played a card that they thought a trump. I knew of a potential investor and I would see if that

person would be interested in 'saving' the company. This gave me a de-facto power of considerable sort, because that investor, the one who had made the previous buyout offer to the Blumes, did indeed respond positively, furnishing the noted letter of intent. Meantime, hoping to not have to deal thus, I paid a call upon the bank to see if a small (\$50,000) short-term loan could be furnished so as to enable TSR to begin production of product bound to make money (I had instructed creative staff to begin putting together the material from "Dragon" magazine while I wrote additional work, so the book that was published as "Unearthed Arcana" was in progress then). The bank refused so I went ahead and urged the outside group to move forward. I was indeed playing both ends against the middle.

This three-man group then sent its most astute financial member into TSR and a massive auditing of TSR's operations began. This uncovered the major areas of mismanagement I noted earlier in this interview and a good deal more. As this lengthy process went on, the investment group kept lowering its per share offer, thinking that they were in a position to literally steal the company. The stooge directors wrung their hands and did nothing. Meantime the work for "Unearthed Arcana" was finished and we managed to publish the book, despite the finances. The "Oriental Adventures" book was also in process, its writing a top priority. I was taking no salary and I deferred royalties to an indefinite time. All officers were taking only 50% of their normal salary.

Reception of "Unearthed Arcana" was excellent. At that point I exercised my stock option. With the new shares, those owned by family members, I could count on just over 50% of all shares voting in my favour. Recognizing that, the stooges did not object when I called a board meeting and took some bold steps. It must be noted that Brian Blume also held a like option and, had he exercised it, control would have reverted to him and Kevin. He did not believe in TSR, so he would not risk the \$70,000 cost for option exercise. That said, back to the board meeting!

First I told them that I was assuming the role of CEO. The pro-tem president in an earlier meeting informed me he would stay on if his salary was increased to \$80,000 annually, he received a five-year contract, and that he be given 10% of the corporate stock. On hearing that, I gave him the news that he must seek employment elsewhere, as his position with TSR was no longer available.

Next I informed the board that I was going to decline the latest offer from the investment group and inform them that we were no longer interested in dealing with them.

Lastly I stated that I planned to call a shareholders' meeting soon and at that time there would certainly be a considerable change in the composition of the board. That was an error, certainly, But I was so full of indignation at how the stooges had facilitated the near-ruin of the company I could not restrain my better judgement.

Shortly after this came my downfall.

Of course, as "The Space Gamer" #75 (July/August 1985) reported, TSR was not sold and the mysterious investment group withdrew its offer, you were back in control as Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Blumes "had left the company". But in your FAQ you state: "Three sterling individuals [TSR's board other members beyond the Blumes and Gary Gygax?] were aligned with Williams and the Blumes in the dispute over whether or not the latter could sell their shares, and an additional 700 they secretly purchased by option exercise to thus allow Lorraine Williams majority control of TSR". Does this mean that the Blume were still TSR shareholders and so able to influence the company's direction and future? And when and how did Lorraine Dille Williams enter the picture?

This is indeed a most poignant question for me. The Blumes were out of management roles, but they did, of course, retain their shareholdings. As I took control of TSR, the Blumes made a tender of their shares, per the Shareholder's Agreement in place, this being made to all other shareholders, but the amount demanded per share was not in compliance with the agreement, so I ignored the offer, stating that it was not in compliance.

Lorraine Dille Williams had been brought into TSR by me. Her brother, Flint Dille, was a friend of mine. He and I had co-authored four multi-path fantasy adventure game books and he was the co-creator of the film script mentioned earlier. Thus I had met his sister, Lorraine, her husband Jim and considered her a trustworthy person. When I learned of TSR's financial difficulties and told Flint of the situation, he suggested that his sister might be willing to invest in the company. So I contacted her, went into Chicago where she resided, to meet with Lorraine. She demurred in regard to immediate investment, but suggested that she could perhaps help. After some discussion, she made a trip to Lake Geneva, looked at financial information and then proposed she be given an officer's position in the corporation and from that position she could both assist in restoring the financial stability of TSR and be in better position to know what sort of investment in the corporation she could make.

Lorraine seemed to be effective in her role as a sort of general manager, this allowing me more time to oversee the critical creative matters, for successful new product was the only means by which TSR could get out of depth and begin generating a profit once again. She was in my confidence, but I began to become uneasy about her after two incidents. In one she stated that she held gamers in contempt, that they were socially beneath her. In the other, when I stated that I planned to see that the employees gained share ownership when the corporate crises were passed in recognition of their loyalty, Lorraine had turned to my personal assistant Gail Carpenter (now Gail Gygax, my wife) and said: «Over my dead body!».

Shortly thereafter, the Blumes made a second tender offer of their shares in TSR. In discussing this with Lorraine Williams, it became evident to me that she desired to acquire all of their shareholding, not a part as I offered to her. This

disturbed me, so I checked her personnel file and discovered that she, as general manager, had arbitrarily increased her salary by some \$10,000 annually. At that point I was ready to discharge her immediately, but I was advised against it, for the company was still very shaky. I decided to wait and that was a gross error indeed. Meantime, a third tender offer from the Blumes was presented.

In a few days time I heard of secret negotiations between Williams and the Blumes. I immediately acquired legal counsel, the main law firm in conjunction with another in Wisconsin prepared an injunction, while I delivered an offer to purchase all Blume-owned shares in TSR to Brian at his home late in the evening. My position was, and is, that the buy-sell agreement for shareholders of TSR stock was violated by the deal between the Blumes and Williams. Without going into details, I can relate that the board member who was an attorney was apparently working on behalf of the Blumes and Williams and that the CFO of TSR was also doing so, as the stock book showed some strange entries. To cut to the chase, the matter went to court. A local judge who clearly did not understand contract law ruled in favour of Williams. This particular judge was the most appealed one in the state, and he lost the next election, never returned to the bench. That is no consolation. My attorneys wanted a huge sum to appeal, so in a very turbulent mental state I decided to sell out. In retrospect, I should have instituted a new, federal lawsuit over copyright and trade mark issues, but I was heartily sick of courts and of TSR, so I just wanted to get away from the whole mess.

It is of possible interest to readers to learn that the sum paid for the Blume-held shares was in the neighbourhood of \$300 per share, not the \$7,500 that they could have received had they accepted the buyout offer I brought to them about a year and a half before. To the best of my knowledge and belief, later legal problems enabled Williams to claw back a good deal of the sums due to Kevin and Brian, so that in the end it is possible that both came out of their treacherous dealings with very little to show for it indeed.

**In November 1985, reports the British magazine "Game Master" (issue #2, December 1985) "Gary Gygax is no longer in control of the destiny of TSR Inc. having been replaced as President and C.E.O. by Lorraine Williams" but the news item intriguingly states "EGG will be retained in a 'creative capacity'": Were you really planning to stay after Lorraine Dille Williams took control of the company?**

No, I was certainly not planning anything of the sort. The information, properly *disinformation*, was most likely furnished to the publication in question by Lorraine Williams through some spokesperson. I know that TSR was silent in regards the matter of my separation and would not inform any callers of my no longer being associated with the company.

**In "GameMaster" issue #3 (March 1986) I have discovered a really intriguing mention of a TSR 1986 catalogue with a preview of a book named Unearthed Arcana II: could you tell us something more about this project?**

No, I have no idea as to what was then being planned by TSR. From a speculative standpoint, I would suggest that TSR was then seeking another hit with a hardbound supplement to AD&D, but before it was completed Williams directed that AD&D Second Edition be done instead. As she was much opposed to me, she undoubtedly wanted to stop production of the original books, as I received royalties from their sale.

It is worth mentioning here that Williams was warned by a knowledgeable employee that releasing a second edition of the game as she planned to do would lose a large portion of the existing audience. This individual estimated the loss at about 50%. Subsequent analysis proved him to absolutely on target. The loss of audience explains the spate of new products following the release of Second Edition and the growing debt, as more and more products chased a shrinking market.

## AFTER TSR

While I had thought to proceed as a competitor of TSR, Lorraine Williams had other ideas...

**In 1986 you are “Chairman of the Board of Directors, New Infinities Productions, Inc.”. This company published, if I recall correctly, a complete RPG, “Cyborg Commando” (written by you, Frank Mentzer and Kim Mohan!) and two supplements in the “Fantasy Master – Gary Gygax presents...” line. Were these efforts successful in sales terms? Why was N.I.P. closed down?**

I invested a substantial amount in New Infinities Productions, Inc. — as did a number of other persons, although none to the extent I did. This I was convinced to do by a fellow I knew, a wargamer named Forrest Baker who was at the time working as a consultant for a major accounting firm, that firm and he having been called in by the TSR Board of Directors during the 1984-5 crisis there. When Baker learned of my separation from TSR, he called upon me, urging me to start a new company. I assured him I had no interest in managing another game company, that all I desired was to concentrate on creative work. Baker prepared a plan, complete with banking and legal counsel components, accounting and assurance of investment capital to the tune of \$1 - \$2 million whenever needed. I was skeptical, but I accompanied Baker to a series of meetings in Chicago. These were impressive and the only hitch came when the investors’ representative failed to meet with us in the offices of the law firm that was to serve as counsel. While in their presence, Baker made a phone call to the investors, spoke at length for all to hear, so we understood it was an oversight, but that all was in line.

It was at that point I was convinced to go with the formation of a company, with Baker as the CEO. Once the new operation was running, some product on line, he would bring in the investment capital. I would be the Chairman of the Board, but most of my time could be spent writing books

and designing games. I had an idea for a new RPG that I wished to begin on as soon as possible. I assisted Baker in getting other investors. In due course I told him that it was time for outside investment. He stalled for a month. When finally I demanded he produce as he had promised, he informed us all that it was time for him to move on, as he had done all he could for NIPI — mainly draw down a large salary for doing virtually nothing except perpetrate what I consider a fraud. I was astonished, then irate, but too late.

For those wondering about Mr. Baker, he almost immediately disappeared from his residence in the area, he and his wife evidently in process of divorce. A local bank contacted me, for it seems he had some considerable debt with them and could not be found. When by happenstance I later discovered the whereabouts of Mr. Baker, I passed along his new address to the bank. They said that the person living there denied being Forrest Baker, and asked if I had a photograph of him. As fate would have it, I did indeed, and furnished that to the bank as well. The resident was indeed said Baked. What happened after that I do not know?

Anyway, after Baker departed I thought that bringing Don Turnbull to serve as the CEO might right matters, but that did not pan out. Eventually the investors in the corporation, at Turnbull’s instigation, forced it into bankruptcy, which was in my considered opinion a huge error. I had used my last available funds to pay off vendors, and planned to keep the operation running on a marginal basis while I completed the new RPG and published it, the income from that then likely getting the company back into full operation.

As for the “Cyborg Commando” RPG, it was designed by Frank Mentzer and Kim Mohan based on my outline, it being the initial part of a three-part SF RPG. As I was then immersed in writing the last five Gord the Rogue novels so as to have product for NIPI to sell and generate income, I could not spend any real design time on the CC RPG and I know it suffered thus. The best selling NIPI products were my novels. The other game products did marginally well, as did the other novels NIPI published. What was really needed was the major new RPG system I was developing—slowly because of the novel writing. That pretty well sums up the NIPI fiasco, for that is the most apt description I can think of for the whole matter.

**After the New Infinities Productions’ demise you started to work on “Dangerous Dimensions”, a new fantasy RPG to be published by GDW, but the name was quickly changed to Dangerous Journeys because the DD acronym ran afoul of TSR. Despite the change of the name, TSR sued. What were the official reasons for suing GDW? Did you suspect that the last thing TSR wanted was a successful fantasy RPG with your name attached?**

What I worked on then was the game I had wanted to do while New Infinities was extant. When I began work the genre was horror and Mike McCulley joined me as co-author to produce an RPG I named “Unhallowed” (here I must say that McCulley was a really excellent writer and I am sad to have totally lost touch with him: I fear that the experience

with the TSR suit embittered him thus gaming has lost a potentially influential designer). As this was developing, NEC and JVC became interested in the game, licensed the system in fantasy, so I had to switch gears and rush into development of that genre. Here I enlisted the creative talents of Dave Newton, and between us we produced the "Mythus" RPG, the second genre of the umbrella system then named "Dangerous Dimensions" — the choice of NEC and JVC from several suggestions I provided. During the process a publisher for a fiction line was lined up and negotiations for other licenses were in progress. Game Designers Workshop was on board as the publisher of the paper RPG. The prototype of the game was shown at the GAMA show in Las Vegas. At that point Williams was informed by her staff at the show that I was about to release a new fantasy RPG.

When we heard that TSR objected to the umbrella title, I immediately contacted NEC and JVC to determine if they would object to a name change to avoid a lawsuit — one likely to have little merit, but costly. They agreed with my assessment and I changed the umbrella title to *Dangerous Journeys*. Despite that, TSR sued, attempting to get a temporary injunction preventing release and sale of the new game products. In this they failed.

GDW and the rest involved in the project, the big companies plainly excluded, were sued for copyright infringement of the AD&D and D&D games. At this point the 'biggies' dropped out of things, not wanting to become in the lawsuit. This was devastating to us, of course, because we were certain that if they joined us, TSR would have had no recourse but to drop the action, as the corporation was not financially able to fight against powerful corporations. The TSR complaint was patently ridiculous, of course, but to a court totally unfamiliar with RPGs, not worthy of dismissal before proceeding. Imagine someone not familiar with either chess or checkers. So the publisher of the checkers game goes to court claiming chess infringes on checkers. «Your Honor, look at the similarities: the board is exactly the same, the game is played by two opponents, each side has pieces called 'men' and there are kings in play. Moves alternate and are varied and, as in checkers, chess pieces can promote to be more powerful. To top that off there are captures, and one side eliminates the other to win!». That was the sort of thing we were facing.

For the interested reader, there is available somewhere online a copy of the original TSR motion put before the court in Peoria, Illinois. Many a person who has read and analyzed its contents will attest to its lack of merit. As noted, however, the court allowed TSR to proceed and so many months went by in which documents were turned over to them, depositions taken, and so forth. The cost of this was very considerable for us, the defendants, and for TSR the legal expense likely ran to something well over a million dollars. Three separate law firms reviewed the complaint filed by TSR and assessed it as one of the sort used by a larger company to force a smaller one out of business.

At the point where it was the turn of the defendants to begin their discovery and take depositions, our legal counsel asked for a great deal of additional money to carry on. Even though they believed we would prevail and knowing that TSR was in financial trouble and was running short of funds, no further work would be done without such advances. I had no choice but to play the hand dealt. Without letting TSR know that we were in a corner, I suggested that as the court was urging, we should discuss possible settlement before trial. That Williams readily agreed indicated to me that we had been correct in assessing TSR's financial position as weak, but as our lawyers were not interested in that, it made no difference. After many meetings and days of negotiations, a settlement was agreed to. TSR got the game system, GDW was paid costs of production for its inventory and we received a *large* cash sum to be paid in installments.

**The DJ game was literally strangled in its infancy, so it never had truly a chance to establish itself despite having some real sales potential – I bought it too at the time of its release! I understand that this series of bad experiences could have a big part in your decision "to turn to computer RPGs" to quote your FAQ again (not to mention the huge market for them, of course!). After two botched deals, not for your fault, you went back to paper RPGs with the Lejendary Adventure game. Why did you decide to write another fantasy RPG in a market seemingly saturated by fantasy titles?**

It is essentially correct that the "Mythus" game was killed before it had a chance. Because it was a complex one, I had urged GDW to release the "Mythus Prime" material as an introductory book, then produce the remainder of the game system — "Mythus", "Mythus Magic", "Mythus Bestiary", "Epic of Aerth" and "Necropolis" — all of which had been completed and turned over to GDW at the conclusion of the publishing agreement. My advice was not taken, so initial sales were somewhat slow. Realizing that a low-cost introductory book for a large and complex system was a good idea after all, GDW then published the primer book, and at that point sales began to increase substantially. Sadly, that was just before we were forced to settle the lawsuit.

It is also correct that I was disgusted with things, angry that NEC and JVC had not stuck with us. Someone who I knew from my time on the West Coast approached me for a computer RPG and that determined things. As noted, I spent the next two years writing game proposals and games aimed at the computer. Two were sold, neither went into production. Tired of that sort of thing, I returned to writing paper games once again.

There is no question that the fantasy RPG commands the great majority of consumer interest. I'm in the process of developing RPG-like games for the computer, I had devised a simple and rules-light system based on skill-bundles. This approach was so different from any existing paper games that I determined to employ it in that field. So I set to work writing the "Lejendary Adventure" game system, the first genre developed being that of "Fantastical Science," as found in the initial beta-test version of the "Lejendary AsteRogues" RPG that is posted online. As the market is



most interested in pure fantasy, however, I then went on to do the "Lejendary Adventure" fantasy RPG, much of that work not in print, with the balance slated for release later this year, in 2003, and possibly going on into 2004. As the LA game is not like any other in print and very different indeed from D&D Third Edition, I am confident it will establish its place over time, grow as gamers play the system and find it to their liking, for it covers all elements of the RPG form, does not focus on combat or on theatrics and acting, but handles those features and others equally well. Only rules lawyers are likely to find the "Lejendary Adventure" game unsuitable. That the LA game has the 'spirit and soul' of my earlier efforts should be evident and even though it is not class based, it does manage archetypes well even as it allows free rein to players in building unique avatars as they envisage their game character should be. For all those reasons I determined to publish in the fantasy RPG arena.

#### How is game the going, in sales and popularity terms?

As of now it seems certain that a vast number of FRPG fans have no inkling that the "Lejendary Adventure" game system exists. Launching in the face of the release of D&D Third Edition, that done without much in the way of advertising and promotion, has been an uphill struggle. As one fellow said to me: «It must be tough wrestling with a 500-pound gorilla you created». Despite that, we have managed to build a solid core of devotees and the audience is growing, slowly, even without advertising. The interested reader should visit [www.lejendary.com](http://www.lejendary.com), that website being the place where the hardcore participants are most active and all having to do with the LA game system can be found through postings and links.

The publisher, Hekaforge Productions, is regularly releasing support material. Sometime next year we expect to begin running regular advertisements for the game system and when the LA MMPOROG being done by Dreams-Interactive goes forward, it is certain that many more people will become aware of the paper game, begin playing it.

#### Do you have any foreign translation deals?

There have been inquiries from several countries about translations, but as of now only one prospective deal has been made and that depends on the translators finding a publisher for their efforts. Realistically, what this means is nothing solid is in place.

### GARY GYGAX AND D20 SYSTEM

Heh, D20, the one ring to rule them all...

#### When TSR Inc. was bought by Wizards of the Coast, what was your reaction?

For about a year prior to the acquisition of TSR by Wizards of the Coast, I was aware of the extreme financial difficulties that Williams had gotten TSR into. Numbers of employees there would speak to me surreptitiously — to do so openly

would have meant their dismissal, they assured me. About six months prior to the sale, one such person told me that Williams announced to all staff that she had sold the headquarters building and the accounting department of TSR to the printer who was doing the majority of that work for the company. I could hardly contain myself, but I managed to say nothing that would give things away. When my wife and I were alone, I pointed out that an accounting department can't be sold thus. What had happened was that the printer had foreclosed, taken control of the building undoubtedly pledged as security against money owed to him and also acted to secure TSR's income and was in control of their receipts.

At that point I was extremely concerned. Bankruptcy loomed and if TSR went into receivership, then the D&D game could be tied up, out of production, for a long period of time. That would certainly have a very adverse affect on the whole of the hobby gaming field.

When eventually I heard that WotC was involved, making efforts to acquire TSR, I was pleased. A successful gaming company like that seemed the perfect solution to the dilemma. When Peter Adkison was in Lake Geneva, I spoke with him several times and the first thing I said were words of congratulations. Later on I also gave him congratulations after he and I had defeated my son Luke in a long and hard-fought game of "Operation Overlord", where he played the British and I the US forces in the invasion of Normandy.

#### When Ryan Dancey announced that the TSR name and logo would have been suppressed, what was your sentiment?

That news saddened me in a way. Although I had come to dislike the name, TSR, I thought that it was an established brand and dropping it seemed an error. I still hold that opinion, as I do the one that WotC should have re-released original AD&D. I urged that and not from any self-interested standpoint either, as I had divested my residual rights in the game, so its renewed publication would have brought me no financial gain.

**The Third Edition of Advanced Dungeons & Dragons (named Dungeons & Dragons by the all knowing business minds at Wizards of the Coast – scratch another valuable brand...) and most important the d20 license has taken the gaming world literally by storm. There are now tens of companies and hundreds of products and it seems that more are released every week. What do you think about this huge publishing phenomenon?**

In some ways the OGL and D20 mark are excellent marketing devices. WotC need not worry about support for the D&D Third Edition game system and the whole promotes not only that core work but spreads the system's rules and mechanics into many new areas. It has made D&D Third Edition the master of RPGs thus. The drawbacks I see are these: there is no product quality control. The D&D mark is not gaining recognition on support material produced under the OGL. WotC is not gaining any licensing income. Over-use of the D20 mark might hurt the base system,



through application where it does not work well and by sheer over-exposure.

As of this time there is a considerable contraction of the D20 product popularity, this caused by saturation and through some less than quality material being released under the mark. The bloom is off the rose. Those in the gaming field are predicting the demise of many of the new D20 publishers, but only time will tell how accurate such predictions are.

**Do you think that, retroactively, something similar could have been used in the past by TSR, Inc.? At the time of TSR's acquisition by Wizards of the Coast Ryan Dancey stated in a famous letter that he couldn't see any reason for TSR's creating countless gaming systems instead of using the only true successful one.**

How strongly I disagree with Mr. Dancy in this and many other regards. I shall put it this way: does everybody want only one sort of food? Will one brand of soft drink satisfy all tastes? If not, why should one game system suit all gamers? The concept is in my opinion absolutely absurd. That being said, the answer to your first question is covered. Never I'd assume that a single approach to the RPG would please everyone. While I did plan to make AD&D into a multi-genre game, that planned expansion would have been limited and aimed only at the game's audience so as to expand their vistas. Furthermore, I would not ever institute anything similar to the OGL. Rather I would expand licensing, doing so at a very reasonable royalty, with licensees granted use of the main trademarks of AD&D and D&D.

**You have written various books for the d20 system published by Troll Lord Games, Mongoose Publishing and most recently Necromancer Games/Sword & Sorcery Studios. This is a lot of work... not to mention long interviews! What has been the critical and sales success of these products? Do you still plan to write support material the "Legendary Adventures" game system?**

Interviews take up some time, yes...especially this one! Especially of late, between them, board postings and e-mails about half of every day is spent. Of course, when I am hard at work on a project with a deadline, the time devoted to doing non-creative work of that sort is cut back drastically. Now to the main thrust of your questions:

Rest assured that I am first and foremost dedicated to the support and expansion of the "Legendary Adventure" game system. At this time there are awaiting in the production queue at Hekaforge several of my designs: two sourcebooks, and an adventure. They are in process of completing the books that comprise my "Legendary Earth" world setting and when called for I have on hand the "Legendary Pantheons" book surveying the 20 pantheons of deities active on that world. Also in process of final development here are the genre expansion rules for the "Legendary AsteRogues" Fantastical Science RPG and its campaign base sourcebook and adventure module. Additionally, I am actively writing articles and new game material for the

"Lejends" Magazine periodical. I love the LA game system, enjoy creating for it as well as playing it.

Meantime I am still working on some titles that have the D20 logo. Troll Lord Games is in process of publishing the 'Gygaxian' "Fantasy World" series of reference books. These are basically generic works meant to assist GMs and authors in creating fantasy world settings and stories set in them. The initial book, "The Canting Crew", has been released and it is doing quite well. Following it will be: "World Builder", a 'descriptive' of terms and useful facts for creating a world setting. Then "Living Fantasy", a work dealing with the socioeconomic classes, from nobles to knaves, secular and ecclesiastic government and interaction, everyday life and the who, what, where, when, why and how of it in the late medieval/renaissance fantasy milieu. Also in progress are "Essential Places", "Fantasy Names", "Nation Builder" and possibly other titles as well.

Troll Lord Games has released "The Hermit" module, a dual system adventure for both the D20 and LA game systems. I have completed another like module, a super-length one, "The Hall of Many Panes", the manuscript for which is currently in the hands of Jon Creffield who is editing it for continuity and adding the D20 portions. The work should be completed soon and I will then turn it over to TLG for their editing and layout. We had hoped to have it in their hands by this time, but the module is so long that we fell behind schedule by two months.

Mongoose has done quite well with the "Slayer's Guide to Dragons", it being co-authored by Jon Creffield. Jon, whom I regard as a truly creative author and designer, has also co-authored with me the "Slayer's Guide to Undead", the manuscript for which is now at the publisher's offices.

Necromancer licensed the rights to my original module, "Necropolis", written for the "Mythus" game. They converted it to the D20 system with only minimal input from me, expanded it somewhat and all together did a superb job of it. I understand it is doing very well. I have been asked by Necromancer to write a sequel to "Necropolis". I am considering that, but to be in a position to give a firm answer one way or another, I need to be able to transfer files from an old Mac+ disk. That is proving to be something of a problem, but we now have a Power Mac and it should be set up and operating in month or so: thereafter, if we have success I will be in a position to act on the offer. I can say that the material I have is being designed for a computer adventure that follows the action in "Necropolis" and that the setting and encounters are a step above the perils presented in the initial adventure.

Rob Kuntz and I are currently agreed in regards to designing a castle and dungeons that will be based on my original work begun in 1972, to which Rob added considerably when he joined me as co-DM of my Greyhawk campaign in 1975. While we would far prefer to write the material in a system as close as possible to original AD&D, and are thus considering "HackMaster", we have not ruled out D20 or some generic fantasy RPG system. As this project is massive,

it would require some two years for us to complete, we project its publication in separate parts, the first being complete in itself, but expandable to include the further parts, likely six or seven in toto, if desired. We have not yet made any formal proposals to potential publishers, but there seems to be considerable resistance to a multi-part product from those publishers we have tentatively approached. This project might not go forward, as we cannot spend two years writing time without some income for such efforts, of course.

As for sales, other than what I noted above and the fact that the concerned publishers are generally interested in having me write more material, that's all I can supply. For additional input you will need to contact them.

**Do you still have plans to work in the computer RPGs industry? What are your projects in this field now?**

As of now I am not doing any work on designs for PCs and dedicated machines. I do have several builder/strategy and tactical historical games around that I would love to see as computer ones, but...

What I am working on is the development of MMPO LA RPG. The design is being done by Dreams-Interactive, <http://www.dreams-interactive.com/> They will have a special website dedicated to the project up soon, I am working closely with them and a complete demo version of the game will be shown at Comdex in Las Vegas this November. Sometime relatively early in 2003 the alpha test should be running, followed as soon as possible thereafter by a first closed, then open beta test.

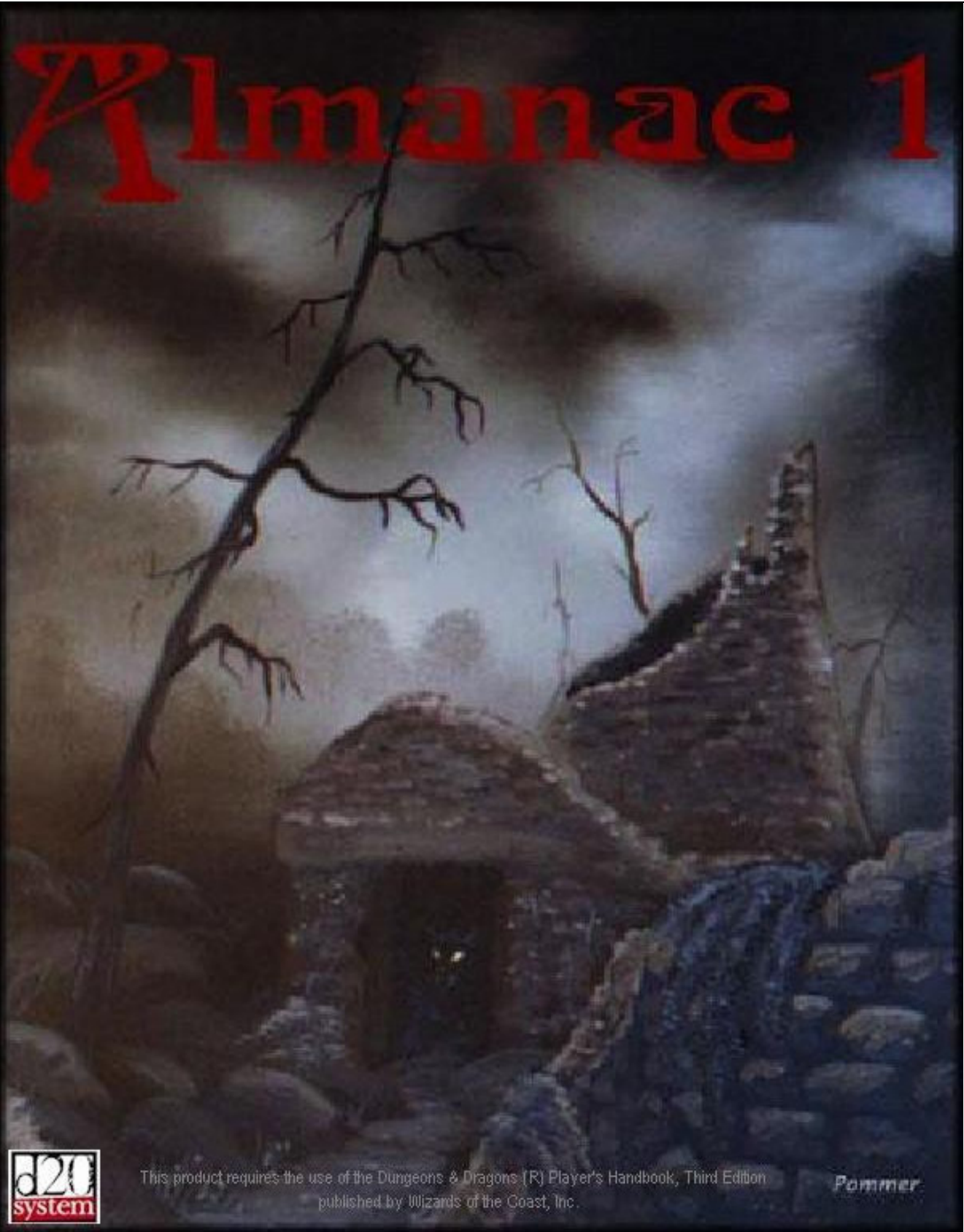
**Have you stayed in contact with the old TSR staffers?**

No, not with those who remained on for long after I left the company. This is not to intimate that there are not some of the former staffers with whom I am not on most amicable terms, more that I am closeted much of the time writing and they are generally now removed from this area. For example, Frank Mentzer is living in the far north of the state and I haven't seen him since we took a trip up there before last summer. His wife runs a bakery, The Baker's House in Minoqua: anyone in that area is advised to stop and sample the wares there!

So we come to the end at last;) and I do hope that my responses are informative and not overly long or dull.

A lso A vailable . . . . .

# Almanac 1



This product requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons (R) Player's Handbook, Third Edition published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

*Pommer*