

MULTIVERSA

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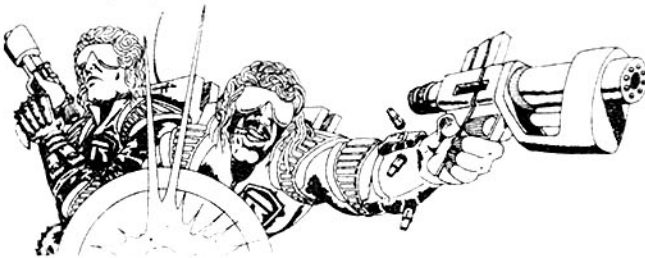
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Editorial

Welcome to the third issue of Multiverse. The magazine is continuing to grow in response to your submissions, and it will continue to do so with your support (January 31st is the deadline for the next issue). With this issue we have increased the size of the magazine to 40 pages, and reduced the size of the typeface. This means that though the articles look smaller, they are actually larger.

It can be seen that we are branching out and covering more of the newer game systems as well as the older more familiar systems. This issue's module is for Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu, it is the module that was enjoyed by many at Phantastacon 84. The number of regular columns in the magazine is still increasing, we now have: 'Adventure Module'; 'How to get more from your game'; 'Kelestine'; 'News' and the Stormbringer Scribe'.

We offer our apologies to those who had some difficulty in obtaining a copy of issue two. The problem lay in the fact that Jedko decided not to distribute the magazine, this action being due to a dispute Jedko is having with a member of the Multiverse staff, but then we are not the only company that is having problems with Jedko. The magazine is now being distributed by Ventura, so no such problems are anticipated in the future.

As well, I am pleased to announce that subscriptions to Multiverse are now available. This is in response to a number of requests, and so that you can ensure that you get your copy of Multiverse. For details of the subscription rates, see the bottom of this page.

It was a pleasant task reading the letters that you sent in response to the last issue. Unfortunately, due to page count restrictions we were unable to produce a letters column for this issue. We still welcome any comments on the magazine, and hopefully a letters column will appear in the next issue.

Our own staff have been working hard on several other projects as well as Multiverse, and the fruits of our labour will soon appear. This includes the organisation of Phantastacon, and modules and supplements for Super Squadron. The latter were due for release by Christmas, but due to the work load, the release date has been put back a month.

Two new Australian play-by-mail companies have emerged. The first, called 'PBM Games' is based in Victoria and offers a fantasy PBM called 'Ringquest'. The other is 'The Missing Tiger', a Tasmanian company. They offer a very popular PBM, 'Return from Sirius'. They are also planning on producing several fantasy boardgames (which I believe are now being playtested) and other gaming material, such as supplements. Within this issue is an article that explains how PBM's work, and shows that they too are an avenue for creative roleplayers to expend their energy on.

An unfortunate occurrence in the gaming scene is that Jedko has seen fit to withdraw their sponsorship of Phantastacon, this being due to the above mentioned dispute. However, Phantastacon will not be reduced in scale due to the generous assistance of Model Master; in fact, a Runequest Tournament has been added to the list of major tournaments to be run. If any of you wish to be DM's at Phantastacon, please write to us. Don't forget that we also need DM's for the mini-tournaments, and that it is quite possible to play in a major tournament and DM a mini-tournament.

The Australian convention season is definitely open, with many conventions occurring in the next few months, namely: Canberra Wargames Convention, KingCon, Necronomicon, Phantastacon '85, Summer Games I and Wargames '85. The attendance at these conventions is continuing to grow, testifying to the real growth of roleplaying in Australia. The staff of Multiverse hopes to see you at these conventions.

Robert Mun

 ADVENTURE SIMULATIONS

Subscriptions: (For four issues) Australia: \$10.00; New Zealand and Australia A\$11.00 for surface mail and A\$12.50 for airmail; America A\$11.00 for surface mail and A\$21.00 for airmail; rates to other countries available on request.

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Contributors: in this issue are: Mark Angeli; William Burton; Martin Dick; Brad Ellis; Peter Hughes; Greg Ingham; Joseph Italiano; Robert Jan; Mark Morrison; Gauth Nix; Mark Robins; Ted Ryan and A. D. Young.

Super Squadron Variant

One of the characteristics that all role-playing games possess in common is the existence of a multitude of variations on the basic rules. Of course, Super Squadron is no different in this respect from any other RPG. Over the past two years or so, I and a fellow GM decided to try our hand at running a Super Squadron campaign, and branched away from the rules as written in several areas. The following article is a summary of some of the major rule variants we used. They are presented for the consideration of all Super Squadron GMs — if you like them, you might like to use them.

Taking Powers Multiple Times

Under the Super Squadron rules, it is permissible during character generation to take all remaining powers as re-rolls of the first power the character rolls. For instance, if a character has four powers, and rolls enhanced strength for his/her first power, then he/she could choose to take enhanced strength four times rather than rolling for the three remaining powers.

This will often create powerful characters, but they usually lack interest unless the player is willing to take a chance and swap a power for a defect. Some interesting problems are also raised when we begin talking about comic-book characters. How did Spiderman roll up enhanced agility so many times, when he obviously also has enhanced strength, organic powers, and a special weapon? He doesn't have that many defects. One might postulate that he simply got lucky, but for the existence of a multitude of other comic-book characters who must be similarly explained.

We decided to introduce a rule that goes some way towards explaining such discrepancies, as well as adding some spice to the characters that we created (around which the game undeniably revolves). Instead of insisting that all remaining powers be taken as re-rolls of the first power rolled, we permitted the player to specify how many of the remaining powers were to be taken as re-rolls of the first roll. For instance, in the example given earlier (where a character possessed four powers and rolled enhanced strength first), he/she could end up possessing enhanced strength one, two, three, or four times, at the discretion of the person rolling up the character. This offers considerably more scope than merely choosing between taking the power once, or taking it four times.

If you use this rule, you will probably find that almost everyone ends up taking their first power more than once. However, there is no reason why this is necessarily a bad thing. The powers not used as re-rolls greatly help in defining the character. Besides, even a cursory examination of any comic book will reveal that there are many characters who can be explained quite well under this rule.

Other Aspects of Character Generation

The character generation system of Super Squadron is random in nature, rather than designed as in the case of Champions. This does have certain strong points. For instance, there are exceedingly powerful characters in comicdom that simply cannot be created using a design-based generation system, or everybody would end up with a monster like Magneto. Using a random generation system, creation of such characters is at least theoretically possible, even if not terribly probable.

However, the system does have its drawbacks. In our view, the random element in Super Squadron's character generation system must be carefully controlled. Unless this is done, it is only too easy to generate a character that is a mish-mash of incompatible powers. The rules mention this possibility, but probably do not emphasise it sufficiently. It is **essential** to consider how well a character's powers fit together. The player and the GM should work closely together, and try to develop a character which makes sense. Throw out characters and/or re-roll powers as necessary until you achieve this. It is probably better to throw out several characters than to end up stuck with one that doesn't



fit together.

Bear in mind that merely because a character is powerful, does not mean that it will also be worth keeping. It is probably better to play a weaker character with consistent background and powers, than a super-tough thing with seven powers, none of which have a sensible basis. Naturally, this will depend to some extent on your personal preferences, but in our view the former is infinitely preferable.

Luck Rolls

This is another area of Super Squadron which has some problems. The concept of luck rolls is a good one — anyone who reads comics will be aware of the way certain characters (usually the writer's favorites) keep coming back, against all odds. It is good that, no matter what the heroes do, there is always a chance that the villain will come back, possibly even stronger than ever. Problems arise because a luck roll is incredibly hard to make successfully. And even assuming that the luck roll is successful, the chance of gaining new powers (which happens all the time in comics) is infinitesimally small.

We suggest that all superbeings have a $(LK \times 5)\%$ chance of surviving death (minimum of 5%). If the roll is less than the superbeing's LK% (minimum of 1%), then the character survives and also gains new powers. One roll is made for **both** chances under this system, not one for **each** chance as under the rules (which compounds the unfavorable probabilities and is therefore highly undesirable). This system gives all characters a better chance of survival, and a much better chance of gaining new powers. All in all, it should add quite a bit of spice to the game.

Critical Hits

The critical hit system as described in the Super Squadron rules is probably somewhat unclear. Where two superbeings are involved, it can be best summarised in a table such as is shown.

Defender's LK Factor	Attacker's LK Factor																				
	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
00	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%	7%	8%	8%
01	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%
02	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%
03	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%
04	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%
05	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%
06	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%
07	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%
08	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%
09	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%
10	--	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%
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15	--	--	--	--	--	--	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%
16	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%
17	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%
18	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%
19	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%
20	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

We decided to use an entirely different system for determining whether a critical hit had occurred. Ours is based on the hit chance of the attacker, after all modifications have been taken into consideration (e.g. defender's defense bonus, weapon bonuses, and so on). For every 30% of modified hit chance an attacking superbeing has, we give a 1% critical hit chance. The luck factors of the attacker and defender play no part at all in this system except indirectly, since they modify an attacker's hit chance and may therefore also influence his/her critical hit chance. The following table summarises our alternative system.

Modified Hit Chance of Attacker					
01-29	30-59	60-89	90-119	120-149	150-179
1%	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%

Use of this system has several major effects. It significantly reduces the impact of having a high luck factor, which in our view is probably a good thing. Instead, the superbeings with high critical hit chances will be those with good hit chances. In particular, superbeings with heightened expertise, heightened attack, and very high experience become more fearsome opponents. Presumably, however, such superbeings are aware of the body's vulnerable points and/or can fight with a greater degree of skill, so increasing their critical hit chance makes some kind of sense.

Overall, critical hit chances are not increased greatly by the use of the system. A superbeing with a luck factor of 10 under the old system (a very exceptional superbeing indeed) has the same critical hit chance as a superbeing with a modified 150% hit chance under the new system (also a very exceptional superbeing). However, under this system it is not merely the privileged few superbeings with luck factors that are to be feared.

Training Bonuses for NPC's

The Super Squadron rules cover training for improvement of characteristics in considerable depth. Most player characters in a Super Squadron campaign generally end up doing considerable training. However, there are few guidelines for deciding whether an NPC superbeing trains, and if so, what the extent of his or her training is. In our campaign, we struck upon the following rules of thumb for determination of these questions.

NPC Origin	Type	Chance of Training	Points of Training
Self-Developed		[10 x EXP] + LK%	2 x EXP
Other		[5 x EXP] + LK%	1 x EXP

The method used was as follows. First, see whether the NPC does in fact train by rolling percentile dice and comparing the result with the chance given above. As usual, an 01-02 is always a success, and a 99-00 is always a failure. If the NPC does train, then the GM may allocate the specified number of characteristic points due to training as he or she sees fit. The usual limitations on training apply to NPCs just as much as to PCs. Therefore, self-developed characters are limited to a maximum of 25, and other characters are limited

to 20. Also bear in mind that most training only lasts for a certain period of time, and this therefore limits the maximum number of points that can be allocated to any one characteristic. If these limits mean that there is nowhere for the NPC to allocate his or her training bonuses, then any benefit is lost.

An NPC can also decide to start training after he or she has entered the campaign. If he or she goes up an EXP level then there is a chance equal to [5 x EXP] + LK% (or [10 x EXP] + LK% for self-developed characters) that the character will decide to begin training. Naturally, this will depend somewhat on the past fortunes of the character — if he or she has been successful, then it is probable that overconfidence will reduce the above chance. On the other hand, if he or she has been continually beaten, then the above chance given could be increased, given that the NPC will probably want to do something about it. And, of course, there is nothing to prevent a player character from convincing an NPC of the virtues of training...

Hit Point and Action Point Recovery

The system of hit point and action point recovery used in the rules is relatively simple — 2 HT and 8 AP are recovered each day by an ailing superbeing. We found this to be unsatisfactory where superbeings with high HT and AP values were concerned. Such characters can take weeks to fully recover from utter exhaustion. The use of drugs such as Helous does go some way to solving this problem, but the idea of superheroes being dependent on illegal drugs has always seemed somewhat absurd to me.

The new hit point recovery system we developed was also relatively simple, but enabled characters with very high HT values to recover in a more reasonable length of time. It basically involves recovering 1 HT on the first day after injury, 2 HT on the second day, 3 HT on the third day, and so on until all HT have been recovered. If another injury occurs during this time, recovery progression starts from the beginning again. Long periods of rest can be of great benefit under this system.

This hit point recovery system seemed to work fairly well during play. As of now, we have not playtested a new system for action point recover. Nonetheless, this area is a problem. It is unreasonable to assume that a superbeing, over the course of a mere minute or so, could exert him or herself sufficiently to remain exhausted for up to two weeks. Yet anyone who has played a character with heavy AP-draining powers will realise that this can easily be done under the present recovery rules. I would like to present an alternate system of action point recovery, which goes some way towards correcting this problem. Under this system, the number of AP a superbeing recovers each day is equal to one-third of the number he or she has yet to recover, or 8, whichever is greater. This provides for faster recovery of the body's short-term energy reserves (which is how I view action points) at the start of a recovery period.

If you decide to implement one or either of these recovery systems, then you will probably need to reconsider the power fast recovery. This power must be boosted somewhat, or it begins to pale by comparison with the norm. If our hit point recovery rules are used, then the 8 HT-a-day recovery limit for characters with this power could be either totally abolished, or lifted to 12 HT per day, as you see fit. If you use the new action point recovery system, then you should allow a character with fast recovery to daily regain half of the AP he or she has lost, or 16, whichever is greater.

This is the extent of the major variations to the basic rules used in our campaign. We also made many rule additions (in the form of new spells, new powers, and so forth), some of which are described in Multiverse #1. We welcome any comments from other Super Squadron GMs and players, either on the points brought forward above, or anything they would like to reveal to use concerning their own game.

by Andrew South

'Return from Sirius'



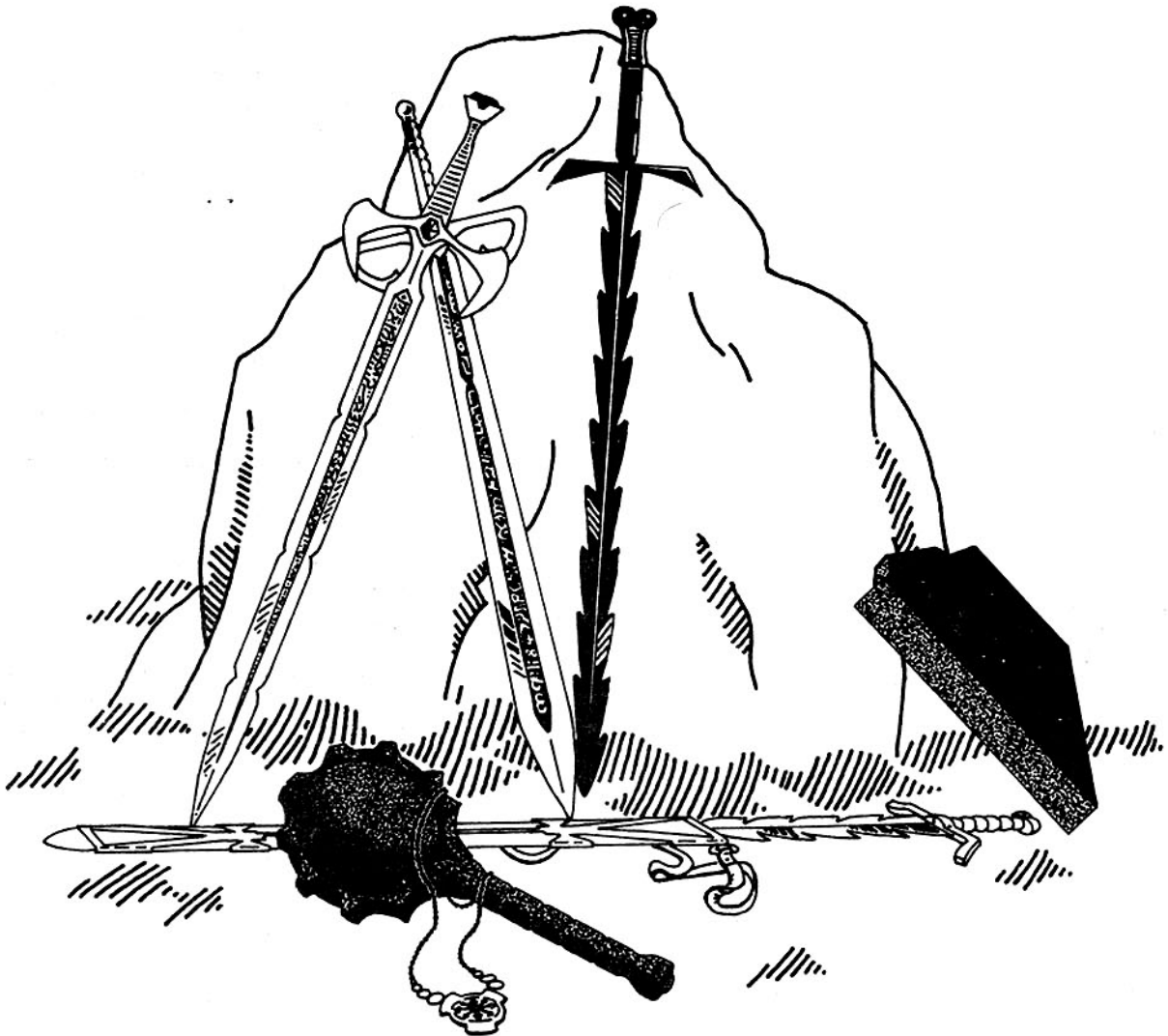
"PLAY BY MAIL",
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Magic Weapons and Armour for AD&D



One of the problems with magic weapons and armour, is the limited scope given in the rules. With the exception of swords, which are fairly well covered, special or unusual exotic weapons are not normally available. Why shouldn't a cleric have a +5 mace? Fighters are not the only characters that can get magic weapons made, and even if they were, they would not stick solely to swords. Therefore, there should be some chance at obtaining exotic magic weapons in various treasure hoards and in the hands of NPC's.

Obviously as the Fighter class has the greatest need for weapons, and swords are always preferred, swords should still be more common. However, the miscellaneous weapons table should have greater scope to allow a greater variety of weapons. After all, according to the miscellaneous weapons table, most AD&D weapons do not have magical counterparts. What is the point of assigning weapons proficiencies to **any** character, if the only real chance of obtaining any magic weapon is a sword or a few others listed. Almost every character will simply take swords as their major proficiency and other possible magic weapons as their secondary weapons. Not only is this very dull, having almost every character in the campaign running around with a sword, dagger or mace, but it certainly lacks the flavour of individualised cultural zones.

Characters should be encouraged to take more exotic weapons, which could be based on their origin city or race. In this manner, the DM can base many of his cities based on different cultural locations, each specialising in their own favourite weapon types. One city may be based on the 'Arabian Knights' of Egypt, where the most common

weapons are the scimitar and giant scimitar. Another city could be based on medieval England, where two-handed swords and lances were favoured. Yet another city could be based on India, where the more subtle assassin-like weapons were preferred. Each race in AD&D already has a series of preferred weapons, but how many player character dwarven fighters actually take any form of axe as a major weapon. After all, they can not get a +5 Defender intelligent axe, but can do so with a sword. Having specific areas of preferred weapons, also adds more individuality to each character. Each one will have something less similar. Having cultural weapon zones, also allows the players to 'hunt' for their magic weapons in known zones.

The actual list of weapons given in the miscellaneous table, **only** reflects the preferred weapons used in my campaign. You may wish to use some weapons I have omitted, or simply substitute others you prefer. The major point being, that the list of magic weapons available should be reduced to a practical number, and known to the players. The players will then choose their weapon proficiencies from the list available in that campaign. Just to keep players on their toes, a 'special type' of weapon is listed on the miscellaneous weapons table. The special weapon is actually any **other** AD&D weapon which is not in common use in your campaign. For example, if you roll up this special weapon, you may decide to make it a glaive. Although the glaive is not a weapon in standard use in your campaign, you can easily explain its presence, as either being from another distant land, or from an earlier period in the campaign history. Players that discover a +5 glaive will use it, even at non-proficiency penalty, (providing some use of this rule).

When the players gain their next weapon proficiency, they should obviously take glaive. Non-standard weapons such as a glaive will of course, be worth much less if sold. Who is going to buy a weapon that they can not use?

Another basic problem with the rules, is that they only allow for swords to be intelligent. This is not only bias, but a silly concept to assume. High level Magic-Users make magic weapons, they can't use swords, why would they then specialise in manufacturing **only** swords. Surely they would make themselves an intelligent dagger, or a high level cleric an intelligent mace? Every weapon armour or shield that is magical, (excluding projectiles but including bows), should have the same chance of being intelligent just as a sword might be. Simply use the DMG rules for intelligent swords determination, for all magic weapons, armour and shields. You may wish however, to expand or alter the existing abilities given to magical swords. Each magic weapon is an individual work of art, not a mass produced production line, assembly job. They should all be different.

The various tables presented, cover miscellaneous weapons, swords, armour and shields and exceptional properties. Although a table is given to determine the value of various weapons, this value is modified by the multiples given for each specific type of weapon or armour.

How to Use the Tables

The magic items determination table in the DMG is still applicable. However, whenever a Miscellaneous Weapon, Swords or Armour and Shields are indicated, use the tables provided here.

MISCELLANEOUS WEAPONS

Step 1: Roll percentile die, to determine what type of weapon is to be used, on table I. If the weapon is a projectile (arrows, bolts or darts), go to table II and determine the number appearing. If the weapon is a 'special type', choose another weapon that does not normally appear in your campaign. Then proceed to table III.

Step 2a: Roll on table III to determine the basic plus of the weapon, from +1 to +5. If a cursed weapon is rolled, reroll on table III for the basic negative, from -1 to -5, (reading all signs as negatives instead of positive). Then proceed to table IV.

Step 2b: If a special magic weapon is rolled, go to table VIII. The weapons basic plus is then the minimum indicated for the specific property. If a cursed special weapon is rolled, then reroll on table VIII taking the cursed equivalent. Then proceed to table IV.

Step 3a: Roll percentile die on table IV, if the roll is above 60%, then the weapon has a special additional plus or pluses versus specific creatures. The number rolled, indicates the number of additional pluses. For each additional extra plus, roll once on table III and once on table V. (Note that the additional plus must be **added** to the basic weapon bonus. Therefor if a weapon is a base +2, and the special plus rolled on table III is +3, the weapon has a **total** of +5 versus that creature). Repeat this procedure for **each** additional plus.

Step 3b: If a special bonus or special magic property is rolled for an extra plus, roll the property on table VIII. The weapon then has this property versus a specific creature. The minimum magical bonus of the weapon is used as the additional plus bonus for the specific creature.

Step 4: Once the full bonuses are determined, roll percentile die to determine if the item is intelligent, as per magic swords on page 166 in the DMG.

SWORDS

When a magic sword is indicated, roll on table VI to determine the specific type. Then repeat all steps from 1 to 5 as per miscellaneous weapons.

ARMOUR AND SHIELDS

When armour or shields are indicated, roll on table VII to determine the specific item and its type. Then repeat steps 2a, 3a and 4 as per miscellaneous weapons. If a special magic property or a special cursed property is rolled, it is up to the

DM to determine what this should be.



Examples

A miscellaneous weapon is rolled. The DM rolls percentile die on table I to determine the specific weapon type. He rolls 78%, so the magic weapon is a Morning Star. The DM then proceeds to table III to determine the basic plus of the weapon, rolling 72% making it a +2 Morning Star. The DM then proceeds to table IV to determine if the Morning Star has any extra pluses. He rolls 91% so the Morning Star has 3 extra pluses. He then rolls on table III to determine the extra plus bonuses and on table V to determine what the extra pluses are against. On table III he rolls 43%; 86% and 65%, giving the Morning Star an additional plus of +1, +3 and +2. He then rolls on table V to determine what these additional pluses are against, rolling 75%; 05% and 95%, these being vs Regenerating creatures; Arachnids and Undead respectively.

The weapon is then a +2 Morning Star, +3 vs regenerating creatures, +5 vs arachnids, +4 vs undead. Lastly the DM rolls to see if the Morning Star is intelligent. He rolls 61% so it isn't. The value of the Morning Star is calculated as follows. 4000gp for being a +2 weapon, plus 500gp for each extra plus (taking the maximum one), which is +3, adding an extra 1500gp. This gives a base value of 5500. Multiply the base value by the Morning Star value multiple of 1.1 gives the weapon a total value of 6050gp.

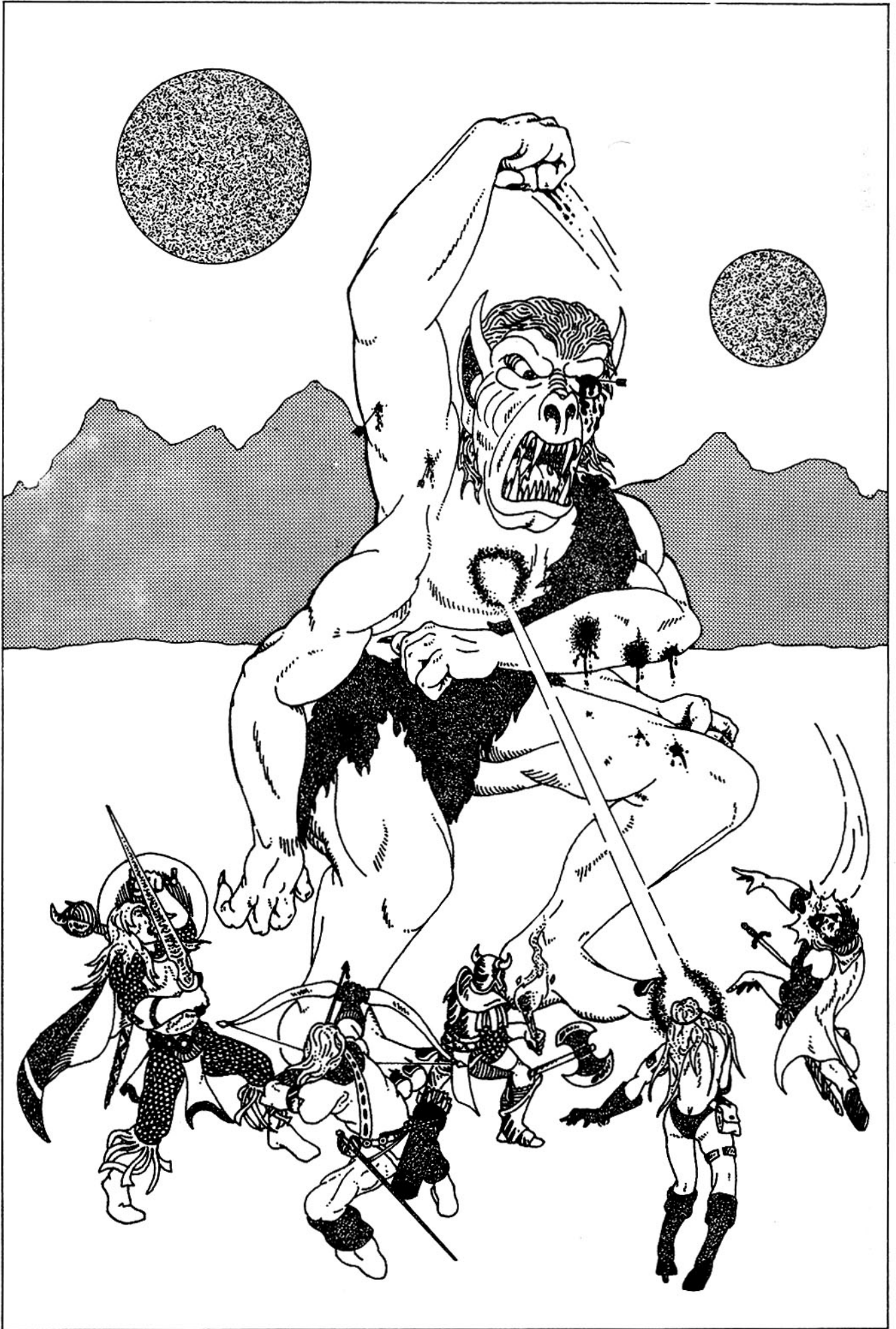
A miscellaneous weapon is rolled. The DM rolls percentile die on table I to determine the specific weapon type. He rolls 57%, so the magic weapon is a Halberd. The DM then proceed to table III to determine the basic plus of the weapon, rolling 83%, making it +3. The DM then rolls on table IV to determine if the Halberd has any extra pluses. He rolls 21% giving it one extra plus. He then rolls on table III to determine what the extra plus is and on table V to determine what the extra plus is and on table V to determine what it is against. On table III he rolls 62% giving it an extra +2. The DM then rolls on table V to determine what this plus is against, rolling 45% making it a Flame Tongue. As the DM has already determined that the Halberd is a base +3 with its next additional plus beginning at +5, the Halberd's Flame Tongue abilities begin at +5.

The weapon is then a +3 Halberd, Flame Tongue, +5 vs regenerating creatures, +6 vs cold using, inflammable or avien creatures, +7 vs undead

Lastly the DM rolls to see if the Halberd is intelligent. He rolls 11% so it isn't. The value of the Halberd is calculated as follows. 7000gp for being a +3 weapon. The base value of the Halberd is multiplied by 1.5 because it is a Flame Tongue giving a total base value of 10500gp. Multiply the base value by the Halberd value multiple of 1.5 gives the weapon a total value of 15750gp.

A sword is rolled. The DM rolls on table VI to determine what type of sword it is, rolling 55% making it a long sword. The DM then rolls on table III to determine the basic plus, rolling 86% making it +4. He then rolls on table IV to determine if the sword has any extra pluses. He rolls 61% giving it two extra pluses. He then rolls on table III to determine the extra pluses and on table V to determine what they are against. On table II he rolls 31% and 51% giving it an additional +1 and +1. On table V he rolls 91% and 49%, these being vs snakes and making it a Frost Brand. As the minimum extra plus for a Frost Brand, is double the basic plus, the second extra plus is altered to +4.

The weapon is then a +4 Long Sword, +5 vs snakes, +8 vs fire using/dwelling creatures



Lastly the DM rolls to see if the Long Sword is intelligent. He rolls 02% so it isn't. The value of the Long Sword is calculated as follows. The value of the Long Sword is calculated as follows. 10000gp for being a +4 weapon. The base value of the Long Sword is multiplied by 2.5 because it is a Frost Brand, (the greatest plus), giving a total value of 25000gp. Multiply the base value by the Long Sword multiple of 1.0 gives the weapon a total value of 25000gp.

A miscellaneous weapon is rolled. The DM rolls percentile die on table I to determine the specific weapon type. He rolls 98% making it a Trident. He then proceeds to table III to determine the basic plus of the weapon, rolling 45% making it +1. He then rolls on table IV to determine if the Trident has any extra pluses, rolling 73% giving it 2 extra pluses. He then rolls on table III to determine what the extra pluses are and on table V to determine what they are against. On table III he rolls 71% and 99%, giving it an extra +2 and a special property. The actual plus of the special property must be rolled again on table III, rolling 17% making it +1. On table V, the DM rolls 35% and 59% respectively, making it +3 vs enchanted creatures, and giving it a special property vs lycanthropes. The DM then rolls on table VI to determine what the special property vs lycanthropes is. He rolls a 7, making it a Defender vs lycanthropes. As the minimum plus for a Defender is +4, the extra plus for the special property is increased from +1 to +4.

The weapon is then a +1 Trident, +3 vs enchanted creatures, +5 Defender vs lycanthropes

Lastly the DM rolls to see if the Trident is intelligent. He rolls 44% so it isn't. The value of the Trident is calculated as follows. 2000gp for being a +1 weapon, plus 500gp for each extra plus (taking the maximum one) which is +4, adding an extra 2000gp. This gives a base value of 4000gp. Multiply the base value by the Trident value multiple of 1.3 gives the weapon a total value of 5200gp. (The value of the special weapon "Defender" is not assigned, as that value is only added to the base value if the weapon is always a Defender).

A miscellaneous weapon is rolled. The DM rolls percentile die on table I to determine the specific weapon type. He rolls 22% making it Bolts. He then proceeds to table II to determine the number of Bolts in the treasure. He rolls 78% so two to twelve (2d6) Bolts are available. Rolling 2d6, the DM determines that 7 Bolts are in the treasure. He then rolls on table III to determine their basic plus, rolling 74% making them +2. He then rolls on table IV to determine if the Bolts have any extra pluses, rolling 61% giving them one extra plus. He then rolls on table III to determine what the extra plus is and on table V to determine what it is against. On table III he rolls 90%, giving the Bolts an extra +5. On table V he rolls 55% being versus Insects.

The projectile weapons are then 7+2 Bolts, +7 vs Insects

The DM does not roll to see if the Bolts are intelligent, as this is not really applicable. The value of each Bolt is calculated as follows. 300gp for being a +2 projectile, plus 30gp for each extra plus, which is +5, adding an extra 150gp. This gives a base value of 450gp each. Multiply the base value by the Bolt value multiple of 0.9, gives the Bolt a total value of 405gp each.

Armour or Shields are rolled. The DM rolls percentile die on table VII to determine the specific type. He rolls 18% making it Leather Armour. He then proceeds to table III to determine the basic plus, rolling 33% making it +1. He then rolls on table IV to determine if the armour has any extra pluses. He rolls 80% giving it two extra pluses. He then rolls on table III to determine what the extra pluses are and on table V to determine what they are against. On table III he rolls 58% and 86% giving the armour an additional +1 and +4 protection. On table V he rolls 50% and 83%, these being vs giant and reptiles respectively.

The Armour is then +1 Leather, +2 vs giants +5 vs reptiles

Lastly the DM rolls to see if the Leather Armour is intelligent. He rolls 56% so it isn't. The value of the Leather

Armour is calculated as follows. 3000gp for being +1 armour, plus 750gp for each extra plus (taking the maximum one), which is +5, adding an extra 3750gp. This gives a base value of 6750gp. Multiply the base value by the Leather Armour multiple of 0.65 gives the armour a total value of 2437.5gp.

There will be some combinations of properties that will not work, or some that are repeated. If the weapons extra bonuses don't work, simply reroll them. If the same 'victim' is rolled for the extra pluses, you may either reroll the repeated victims, or simply add the two or more extra pluses versus that creature. For example, if three extra pluses of +2, +4 and +3 are rolled, and all are rolled against Avians, you may simply give the weapon an extra +9 vs Avians.



Magic Weapons Generation Tables

Table I - Miscellaneous Weapons

Value		Value			
%Roll	Weapon	Multiple	%Roll	Weapon	Multiple
01-08	Arrows	1.0	59-60	Hammer, Lucern	1.0
09-10	Axe, Hand	0.8	61-62	Hammer	0.9
11-16	Battleaxe	1.2	63-64	Javelin	1.0
17-19	Bardiche	1.3	65-66	Lance	1.2
20-24	Bolts	0.9	67-74	Mace, Footmans	1.3
25-27	Bo Stick	0.8	75-76	Military Pick	1.0
28-32	Bow	1.4	77-78	Morning Star	1.0
33-34	Club	0.8	79-83	Scimitar	1.0
35-39	Crossbow	1.5	84-85	Sling	1.3
40-49	Dagger	0.4	86-91	Spear	1.1
50-51	Darts	0.5	92-97	Staff	0.8
52-56	Flail	1.1	98-99	Trident	1.3
57-58	Halberd	1.5	00-00	Special Weapon Type	?

Table II - Projectile Quantities

%Roll	Quantity
01-46	One to Six
41-60	Two to Eight
61-80	Two to Twelve
81-95	Two to Sixteen
96-98	Three to Twenty-Four
99-99	Four to Thirty-Two
00-00	Five to Fifty

Table III - Basic Weapon Plus

%Roll	Weapon Plus
01-60	Plus One
61-80	Plus Two
81-85	Plus Three
86-89	Plus Four
91-96	Cursed - reroll
97-00	Special Magical Bonus

Table IV - Extra Pluses

%Roll	Additional Plus
01-60	None
61-80	One
81-90	Two
91-97	Three
98-99	Four
00-00	Special Bonus

Table VI - Sword Type

%Roll	Sword Type
01-20	Bastard Sword
21-30	Broadsword
31-80	Longsword
81-95	Short Sword
96-99	Two Handed Sword
00-00	Other

Table VII - Armour and Shield Types

Value		
%Roll	Type	Multiple
01-04	Banded Armour	1.1
05-16	Chainmail Armour	1.0
17-25	Leather Armour	0.65
26-43	Platemail Armour	1.25
44-50	Ringmail Armour	0.8
51-59	Scalemail Armour	1.0
60-79	Shield	1.0
80-81	Shield - Extra Bonus vs Missiles	1.1
82-91	Splintmail Armour	1.1
92-95	Studded Leather Armour	0.8
96-98	Cursed - reroll	-
99-99	Ethereal Armour - reroll type	*
00-00	Special Type	?

* To calculate the additional value of Ethereal Armour, add 0.1 to the base armour value multiple.

Table V - Extra Bonus versus

%Roll	Type of Creature
01-03	Amphibians
04-08	Arachnids
09-14	Avians
15-20	Cold-Using Creatures
21-23	Crustaceans
24-28	Demons or Devils
29-34	Dragon Slayer*
35-44	Enchanted Creatures
45-47	Flame Tongue
48-49	Frost Brand*
50-53	Giant Slayer
54-57	Insects
58-65	Lycanthropes
66-73	Magic-Using Creatures
74-80	Regenerating Creatures
81-84	Reptiles
85-89	Shapechangers
90-92	Snakes
93-94	Slayer - reroll for type*
95-99	Undead
00-00	Special - reroll

* The minimum extra pluses for these weapons must be at least double the basic plus.

Table VIII - Special Properties

Roll	Property	Extra Value	Cursed Equivalent
1	Dancing Weapon (min +1 to +4)	20000	Restraining Weapon (min -1 to -4)
2	Wounding Weapon (min +1)	20000	Restoring Weapon (min -1)
3	Life Stealing Weapon (min +2)	20000	Life Giving Weapon (min -2)
4	Weapon of Sharpness	32000	Weapon of Clumsiness (min -1)
5	Vorpal Weapon (min +2)	42000	Weapon of Suicide (min -3)
6	Holy Avenger Weapon (min +2)	36000	Abysmal Weapon (min -2)
7	Defender (min +4)	10000	Attractor (min -4)
8	Luck Weapon (min +1)	15000*	Jinxed Weapon (min -1)
9	Weapon of Disruption (min +1)	20000	Dead Weapon (min -1)
0	Weapon of Venom (min +1)	5000	Healing Weapon (min -1)

* Value per Wish.

Explanation of Special Cursed Weapons:

Restraining Weapon: This weapon hinders the characters hit chance. It starts at a base -1 and each round thereafter goes down another one until it is -4. It then begins from -1 again. The negative bonus affects both the hit chance and damage. Although the damage can be reduced below zero, zero damage is the minimum the weapon can inflict.

Restoring Weapon: Every hit by the weapon, does the standard weapon damage minus the weapons bonus. After the first successful hit, the wounds inflicted regenerate at the rate of +1 per round up to a maximum of 10pts per hit. It will affect friends normally however.

Life Giving Weapon: on a natural roll of one, the weapon drains the wielder of one level, and gives it temporarily to the opponent.

Weapon of Clumsiness: On a natural roll of 1-3, the weapon will sever an extremity from the wielder's body.

Weapon of Suicide: On a natural roll of 1-5, the weapon will sever the wielder's head, resulting in instant death.

Abysmal Weapon: This weapon is an additional -3 if wielded by Paladins. It does no damage at all to CE creatures. In the hands of a Paladin, it increases the effect of all harmful spells (against the wielder) by 50% in a 5' radius.

Attractor: This weapon increases the wielders armour class by its negative factor, as well as reducing their hit chance and damage inflicted.

Jinxed Weapon: This cursed weapon will modify all the wielders rolls for anything, by its negative bonus. This weapon requires a wish to be removed.

Dead Weapon: This weapon will do no damage to undead of any type. However, upon striking any undead creature, the undead creature must save. If they do, the weapon will instantly restore them to full hit points.

Healing Weapon: On a natural of one, the weapon will instantly heal the wielders opponent as a Heal spell. The weapon has six charges, and after that time, becomes non-magical.

All special cursed Weapons, require the use of at least a limited wish to be removed.

Table IX - Value Determination Table

Property	Value of			
	Weapon	Projectile	Shield	Armour
For a plus one	2000	120	2500	3000
For a plus two	4000	300	5000	7500
For a plus three	7000	450	8000	12500
For a plus four	10000	650	12000	16500
For a plus five	15000	950	17500	22000
For intelligent items:				
Each primary ability*	1000	N.A.	1250	1500
Each extraordinary power**	2000	N.A.	2500	3000
Special purpose power	5000	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Each language known	100	N.A.	100	100
For each extra plus add to the base value	500	30	600	750

A Dragon Slayer and a Frost Brand weapon has its base value multiplied by 2.5.

A Flame Tongue has its base value multiplied by 1.5.

A Giant Slayer has its base value multiplied by 2.0.

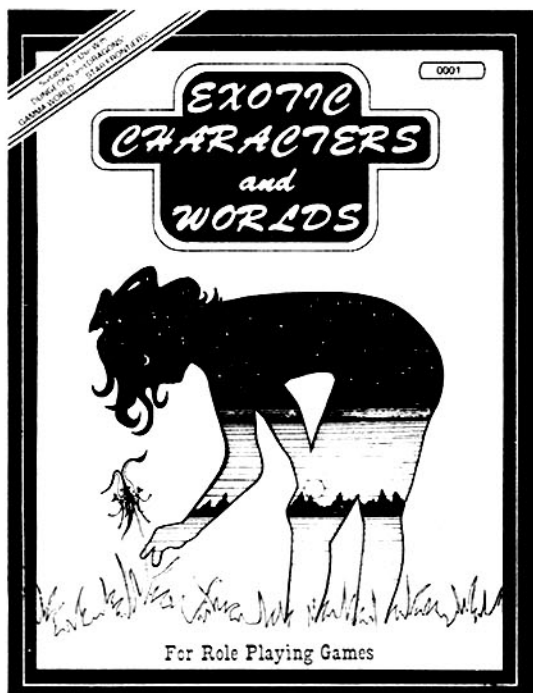
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As role-playing games are largely contained within the mind, it is possible to play them with a minimum of equipment — pens, paper and dice. Stir in the requisite imagination, and both players and referee can be transported to a realm of fantasy, a science-fictional universe, or wherever. Yet, there is often something lacking, and the game bogs down into dice-rolling and boredom.

Ref: You are confronted by a Squamous Vegebelly.

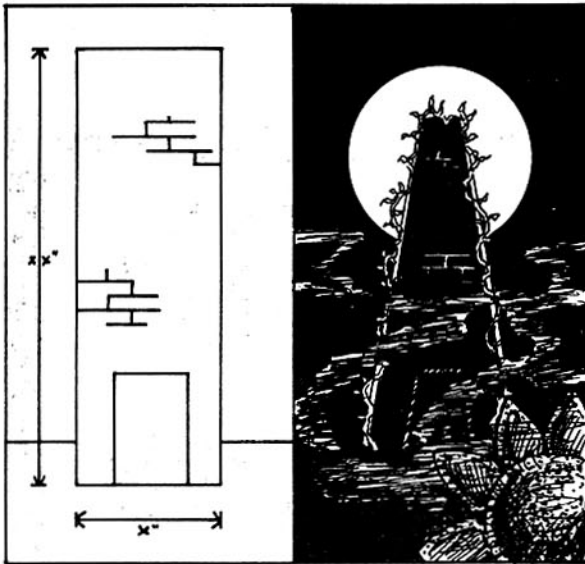
Player: I attack it. 17 — I hit. 8 points of damage.

Ref: It's dead. Another Squamous Vegebelly quickly steps forward and . . .

This is an extreme example, but games like that can, and do occur. So, what can be done about it?

Atmosphere and Props

Atmosphere is a difficult thing to generate. Much of it depends on the referee, and his/her storytelling ability and imagery. Referees should try to develop an ability to describe places, things and people with interest rather than accuracy. Accuracy can be delivered when the situation requires tactical thinking, atmosphere cannot. Here are some examples:



Accurate & Dull: The tower is sixty feet high, twenty feet in diameter and made of stone. There's a wooden door at the base.

Imaginative: The tower looms up before you, a harsh silhouette against the red sun. Wild vines grow madly up the black stone, their flowers filling the air with a heady scent . . .

But not all the generation of atmosphere rests with the referee. The players can also immerse themselves in the world they are jointly creating. It is important to call everyone by their character names (the referee should follow suit), and when telling the referee about some action, state: "I will do this . . ." not "My cleric will do this . . ."

Atmosphere cannot develop if the players consider their characters as puppets, rather than alter-egos of themselves. This can be taken too far of course — if a player goes berserk on a bus because his character is a claustrophobic barbarian, it's time to lay off D & D for a while.

Props can also be useful in generating the right atmosphere. Props include such items as costume (beware of weapons!), candlelight, music and many other things. For example, if the characters are in a tavern, put on some harp music — that's the minstrel in the corner.

Props can also include things like maps and messages. Don't read out a written message to players — prepare an aged scroll, and hand it to them. Similarly, Commissions, Patents

of Knighthood, Charters and Licences can actually be made up for the players, just to add that special touch.

Acting

Basically, all role-players are acting a character — the one they play in their game. However, many players don't really get into acting their character — they simply play themselves in armour, or themselves with magic, and so on. Also, referees hardly ever act out the non-player characters the players are interacting with, saying: "X tells you he will, Y tells you she won't . . ."

A better effect is obtained if the referee actually acts the NPC or monster the players are talking to, changing voices and patterns of speech accordingly. Admittedly, this is rather difficult, but very worthwhile if it can be done.

Ref (acting as town guardsman): Nay, sorr. You'd best not go out tonight. There's a terrible lot o' orcs about . . .

Players can also adopt the speech of their character to some extent (trying to avoid Disneyesque medieval speech), or at least adopt some speech habits their character might have. An example of this is the foppish character, all lace and perfume, and supposedly harmless:

Player (as fop): Don't wowwy my good man, I have three bwace of daggers up my sleeves, and will be vewy cautious (player mimes taking snuff, sneezes) tewwible stuff, snuff . . .

Whilst this sort of thing often leads to hilarious mirth, it does build up an atmosphere. Everyone playing becomes more ready to suspend their disbelief, and move into unreal worlds.

Realism and Continuity

Realism is a tricky thing in role-playing. It doesn't mean that a role-playing game has to be as real as your local supermarket, it means that the game or campaign must have its own internal reality. That is, it must have its own set of logic, natural laws and cause and effect. For example, a fireball always has the same basic effect — it doesn't fluctuate between a hot cinder and a thermonuclear bomb. A +3 sword will not suddenly turn into a warthog steak for no reason. No game can be enjoyable if it doesn't have its own reality. Basically, this means that the referee must not arbitrarily make things change or happen — there must be a reason.

Continuity is an important part of that game reality. If one playing session ends with everyone just outside the dungeon, the next should begin at the same place. If the players are outlawed in a particular town, they still will be if they go back a month later — unless something has happened to make it otherwise.

One of the best things about role-playing is the creation of a 'world' — be it a town and a dungeon, a detailed continent, or an entire seven-continent pancake. If the atmosphere in playing sessions is great enough, the world will become far more real. Places will become 'home', legends will be started, friends made and lost, and enemies made and destroyed and made again . . .

It is the continuity and internal realism that changes a role-playing game into what it is. A good campaign has these elements, and atmosphere, or it degenerates — an expensive and complicated equivalent of Monopoly.

Interest

Of course, the adventures within the overall campaign have to be interesting and exciting. But adventures aren't isolated affairs. Don't just play out the dungeon scenes, have a two-week 'nothing happens' rest period and start again. Play out the links between adventures as well, and establish more of the campaign's and the character's backgrounds. Even transform the lull into an adventure itself, perhaps of a different kind than the formally organised dungeon or wilderness expeditions.

So, what makes an interesting and exciting adventure? Is it a Balrog guarding every gold piece in existence?

In many ways, adventures/scenarios resemble literature, and many actually are based on published fantasy or science fiction novels or stories. Many of the elements that make up a good book also make up a good adventure.

The elements that apply to both are essentially characters, plot, story and background (or setting).

Characters include both the Players and the NPC's. Naturally, the players are the main characters, the stars of the adventure. Like all heroes in books and films, player characters are admirably suited to lives of danger and adventure, with abilities far above the ordinary person. Non-player characters are also important however, and should be fitted carefully into the adventure, rather than just rolled at random. They are the secondary characters in the book allegory, but nonetheless essential. Where would Tarzan be without the apes, or Sherlock Holmes without the bumbling detectives of Scotland Yard?

Plot is the basic mechanics of who does what, and why. An adventure with no plot is merely a random collection of problems, tactical or otherwise. Plots make everything far more interesting — there are still the problems, the dangers, but there is also the mental problem of the overall situation.



The story is the flesh of the plot. Much of the story is provided by players and referee. What the players do, and what the referee does, will in effect be the story. If the atmosphere is good, everybody acts, and the referee uses his or her story-telling ability to the full, the chances are that it will be a good story and a good adventure.

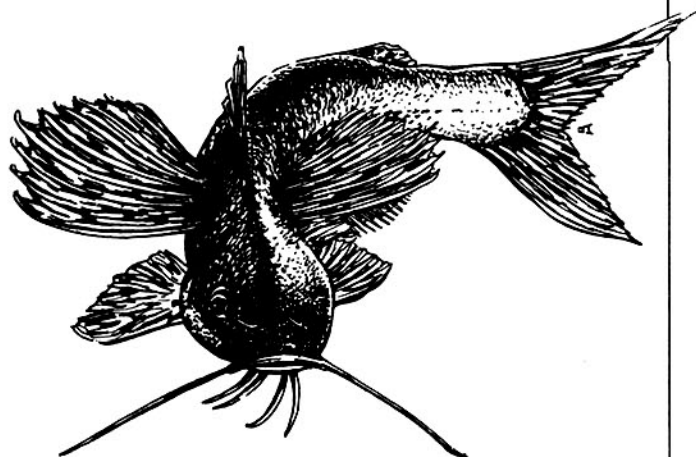
The background, or setting, is the environment(s) in which the adventure runs its course. Think of the setting as a film, made up of hundreds of different scenes. Typical settings are a town or dungeon, each composed of many different scenes, such as inns and markets, lava pools and chasms. Here is an example of a background scene, which would be read to the players:

"The market is a large expanse of dirt, decorated with hundreds of tents and tables. Everywhere there are tightly-clothed Selussi, their hoarse whisperings filling the air, mixed with the beat of tambors, and the melancholy wail of begging singers. The stench of camels pervades the place, as do the camels themselves — trains of camels passing through, camels being unloaded, camels being loaded and camels just tied up in the way.

Merchandise from the four quarters of Selussia comes here. On the trade table are silks and furs, incense and smoking weeds, ivory and peacocks. Others sell curved swords, or the spiked helmets of the Yawizary . . ."

Background descriptions such as this are the canvas the adventure is painted on. The higher grade of canvas, the better the painting. With adventures, the better the background, probably the better the adventure.


Hopefully, these suggestions will help some roll-players become role-players, and have more feeling for their alter-existence, some of the suggestions contained herein will doubtless be disagreed with, so please disagree in writing — I'm told **Multiverse** needs more articles.



The Sage laid down his pen, and carefully cast sand on the parchment to dry the ink. He whistled once, and a small winged fish flew in through the window, carefully avoiding the mirror that reflected sunlight into the room.


"Take this to **Multiverse**," commanded the Sage, rolling the parchment and placing it in the fish's mouth. "And no drinking on the way . . ."

by Garth Nix



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News and Rumours

FASA is currently working on a Dr. Who role-playing game, designed by Mike Bledsoe, for release early in 1985. Also in the works for next year are: a **Ground Forces Manual for Star Trek: The Role Playing Game**, designed by William Barton. It will include character generation for Star Fleet Marines and military weapons, vehicles and equipment for the Federation, Klingons, Romulans and the Gorn. FASA also plans a supplement for generating diplomats and espionage agents for Star Trek. A **Battlestar Galactica** board game has just been released in the USA. They have just released **The Romulans** supplement, being two books in a folder.

West End Games, publishers of such items as **Bug Eyed Monsters** and the recently released bizarre RPG **Paranoia**, will be producing licensed Star Trek board games. The first is scheduled for early next year, based on the Federation/Klingon competition for new worlds near the Organian Treaty Zone, (more economic development and trickery than combat, I hear).

Mayfair Games should have the DC Superheroes RPG out sometime soon. It will apparently include information and character statistics on most of the Justice League and the New Teen Titans. They are also working on an Ellery Queen Mystery Game — a boardgame approach, similar to some of their other boardgame items.

Sleuth Publications Ltd., publishers of **Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective** game, have just finished another supplement for that game, **The Queen's Park Affair**. They also plan for release, sometime next year, **Gumshoe**, a game of hardboiled '30s detectives, similar to Sherlock Holmes. They are also negotiating for a **Nero Wolf** mystery game.

Timeline Ltd., publishers of **The Morrow Project**, has just released a time travel game called **Time and Time Again**. It tends towards simpler play mechanics and more background information than Pacesetter's **Timemaster** game — more realism too! The game system is sort of a cross between the Morrow Project system and the Chaosium Basic Role Playing system. The two books include character generation and background on time travel, the World Government and the Bureau of Temporal Affairs, (formed from the nucleus of the old French Foreign Legion), and GM information on history, world weather, money, etc., plus three short scenarios involved with the Viking, Ancient Egypt and Vietnam eras.

Chaosium has just released an adventure book for **Superworld** called **Havoc**. It has three scenarios, plus generated heroes and villains, and deals with an invasion from space. It is cross-stated for **Champions** and **Villains and Vigilantes**. Due out before the end of the year are; **Trial for Tsathogghua** and **Masks of Nylarathotep for Call of Cthulhu**, (the latter being a boxed module with plans of several cities around the world); the **Superworld Companion** with new superpowers and rule additions, an article on weather in the game and conversion guidelines for **Champions** and **V&V**. Scheduled for early next year are; **Pendragon**, (a King Arthur RPG), a book of Cthulhu solo adventures, and a book on running **Call of Cthulhu** in London during the 1980's, with the working title of **Cthulhu by Gaslight** by William Barton.

Hero Games has several titles planned for **Champions**, including a scenario based on an orbiting satellite that will include game statistics for **Superworld**, **V&V**, **Mercenaries**, **Spies and Private Eyes** and **Space Opera**. These are being edited by former **Space Gamer** editor, Aalon Allston. They are apparently also working on a new edition of their **Espionage** RPG, to be retitled **Danger Unlimited**.

Fantasy Games Unlimited is working on a Victorian RPG called **Mad Dogs & Englishmen**, which will cover historical scenarios plus those in the spirit of Doyle, Wells and Verne. Also on their future release list are two time travel RPGs; a revised version of the old **Elementary, Watson** Sherlockian RPG, and an alien invasion RPG (similar to the US series **V** and **V-The final Battle**), Designed by veteran **Traveller** designer, J. Andrew Keith. Plus scenarios for **Daredevils**,

V&V, **C&S** and **Space Opera**. Just recently released is **Psi World**, an PRG of conflict between psionics and normals, in which players can be either, (somewhat like **Scanners?**).

Rumour has it that **TSR** has obtained the gaming rights to the movie **Ghostbusters**, and will be using it as the basis for a role-playing game.

Pacesetter has just released **Star Ace**, a Science Fiction role playing game, using the same basic systems as in **Chill** and **Timemaster**.

Tri. Tac, Inc., has recently released expanded, second editions of its **Fringeworthy** interdimensional RPG and **Stalking the Night Fantastic** supernatural RPG, plus an after-the-holocaust supplement, **Rogue 417**, and a **Red Dawn**-type supplement, **Invasion US**, for **Fringeworthy** and two scenario packs, **Hellsnight** and **Haunts for Stalking**. Soon out will be an expanded, second edition of its **FTL: 2448 SF RPG**. In the works is a galactic empire supplement for **Fringeworthy** and **FTL: 2448**.

A new company, **Winterhawk Games**, has just been formed in Indianapolis, with William Barton as executive editor. They plan to produce licensed adventure supplements for: **Call of Cthulhu**; **Fringeworthy**; **FTL: 2448**; **Stalking the Night Fantastic** and perhaps **Mercenaries**, **Spies and Private Eyes**. Their initial CoC release will probably be **The Web of Atlach-Nacha**. They also intend to publish a supernatural RPG, **Dark Worlds** by Kurt Lortz, and are negotiating with a designer on a Mark Bolan RPG. They intend to publish a number of other original games in the near future.

Special thanks to William Barton for providing our overseas news material.

MAGinc now plans to release **THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE** internationally, changing the name to **NARGUN**. The actual publication of the magazine is still not finalised and will depend on the financial position of the club. The first issue is due to be released by the end of January in time for their convention **SUMMER GAMES I**. If the magazine costs too much, it is likely that the convention will be cancelled. For those who are curious, **THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE** has been reduced to the name of their newsletter.

MODEL MASTER is reported to be taking action against **JEDKO**, for it appears that **JEDKO** is refusing to supply **MODEL MASTER** with the products that they distribute.

Still on action against **JEDKO**, **ADVENTURE SIMULATIONS** through Joseph Itallano is suing **JEDKO** for various breaches of contract, including failure to pay for artwork and advertisements, failure to honour their contract for **Super Squadron** and failure to fulfill their contract with regards to sponsoring **Phantasticon**.

It is rumoured that **BREAKOUT** is altering its production schedule so that their release dates coincide with those of **MULTIVERSE**. (How odd)

AUSTRALIAN DESIGN GROUP (EMPIRE AT ARMS) are putting the final touches on their **World War Two Pacific** boardgame. It should be finished by Christmas. At this point in time they will not be publishing the game themselves, but are negotiating with **AVALON HILL** for publishing rights, with no Australian Edition planned. If the negotiations fail, it is likely that they will publish the game themselves.

STRATEGIC STUDIES GROUP have just released **CARRIERS AT WAR**, a computer game simulating the Pacific War of 1941-45. The game is quite comprehensive, with many play options, including the creation of your own scenarios. It was researched by Ian Trout and written by Roger Keating. They are currently working on three more games, but they have no planned production order or scheduled release dates. All of them are to be written by Roger Keating, SSG does not plan on producing material from other writers in the foreseeable future.

CONVENTION LISTINGS

DECEMBER 8th-9th. King Con is to be held at Moe High School, Lord Street, Moe, Victoria. Major competitions are a free-form AD&D, Kingmaker and Ace of Aces. Other activities include videos and a barbecue. Contact Ian Harrison, 47 Vale Street, Moe, Victoria, 3825; or Megan Watts on (056) 33-1918 AH.

JANUARY 18th-20th. Summer Games I, a MAGinc convention, to be held at University High School, Parkville. The major tournaments are to be AD&D, Call of Cthulhu, Runequest and a free-form Traveller. Other activities include videos, movies, a treasure hunt and a spit roast. Enquiries may be directed to PO Box 379, Sunshine 3020, Victoria.

JANUARY 26th-28th. Canberra Wargames Convention, and is to be held at Phillip College, Woden, ACT. Major tournaments include free-form AD&D and Traveller, Trillion Credit Squadron and miniatures of all types. They are also holding many other activities. Contact Canberra Wargames Society, GPO Box 1016, Canberra, ACT, 2601.

FEBRUARY 25th-26th. Wargames '85, which will be held at Nunawading High School in Forest Hills (off Canterbury Road). The major tournaments are World War Two and Napoleonic miniatures. It will also have introductory sessions in miniatures and role playing games. The entrance fee is \$1.00. Contact Model Master (03) 277 2218 Saturday 10am-4pm, Sunday 9am-4pm.

MARCH 8th-10th. Necronomicon. No further details available.

Contact C/-GPO Box 204D, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001.

APRIL 5th-8th. Phantastacon 85, which is once again being held at the Diplomat Motor Inn, 13 Acland Street, St Kilda. The major tournaments will be AD&D, Runequest and Traveller. The mini-tournaments will include: AD&D Solo; AD&D WhoDunt; Boardgames; Bunnies and Burrows; Call of Cthulhu; Car Wars; Computer Monster Bash; DragonQuest; James Bond; Runequest; Super Squadron and Traveller free-form. Costs (Adult/Student and Concession): Membership \$15/12; Major Tournament \$4/4; Mini-tournaments @\$1/1; Dinner \$14/14. There is a late fee of \$3 for entries after the 5th March. A Conpak is offered at \$32/30 which includes membership, a major tournament, two mini-tournaments, and entrance to the dinner. Contact C/- PO Box 45, Mitcham, Victoria, 3132, or phone Joe (03) 874 7475.

MAY 24th-26th. Cauldracon, venue yet to be announced. The major tournament will be AD&D and minor tournaments will be Traveller and Runequest. Contact Matthew Cohn, 1 Manor Street Brighton, 3186, Victoria, or Matthew on (03) 592 5620 or Scott on (03) 592 9034.

Star Trek Variant

Star Trek the role-playing game has been available for sale in Australia for over a year now. Over this period of time it has experienced relatively slow growth. There are two major reasons for this. The first being the price of \$50 which is high for any game, especially high for a role-playing game. The second is the lack of development done on the game by FASA. The game as it now stands in the boxed edition is very poorly developed, it lacks embellishment and suffers badly from a lack of proofreading. This allowed several major typographical errors, which slipped by, to affect the balance of play in the game. The purpose of this article is to clear up some of these grey areas and make the game more playable.

The best way to run a game of Star Trek is to have between four to six players, with each player taking two characters each. This allows the players to participate in different types of adventures. ie. The ship to ship combat requires that the people be department heads. However boarding party actions and planetary expeditions require the party to be composed of mainly enlisted men and low ranked officers with one highly ranked officer. This also allows for maximum role-playing in the game system.

The first major problem with the system is the action point expenditure table. This suffers from several deficiencies. The first one is if you do a flying tackle it costs the phasing player all his action points while it costs the non-phasing player no action points at all, to exit this hex. All it requires is a dexterity roll. The same is true for Hand to Hand Combat, where it costs the phasing player all his action points while the non-phasing player pays nothing. As the system stands, when it is the non-phasing players turn to use his action points, he can leave that square, draw a gun, and fire at the person who just engaged him in close combat. To eliminate this, I recommend that it should cost 6Aps to disengage from close combat or a flying tackle, in addition to the dexterity roll. This restricts some of the actions that a player can perform to a more realistic number.

The next problem with the system is the ship to ship combat. In the system that has been developed by FASA, the ships are just too powerful. The ship system ends up with the person with the higher tactical ability, having the first move and shot, generally resulting in their ship winning the combat, as the other ship doesn't get a chance to retaliate. In the interest of making the game much more playable, I suggest that all damage that is inflicted, be halved (fractions rounded up). This brings the combat down to a more playable level which requires the players to use some tactical skill.

In the rule book, it states that the percentage addition for an aimed shot is 25%, however in the tables in the rule book and in the tables on the gamemasters screen it is listed as being +10%. I believe that the +25% is the correct addition for an

aimed shot. This is a more reasonable value for that type of action in the Star Trek system.

The best way to run a campaign in Star Trek is use both the Merchants and the Federation, or Klingons. This allows the players to experience the full system with all its interactions. The supplement "Trader Captains and Merchant Princes" is probably one of the best supplements of the system and should not be left out. Another problem in Star Trek is the mapping for star systems. For this I recommend the use of another game system, "Universe", as its planetary generation system is the best I have encountered.



KIRK WE
CAN ALMOST
FIGHT, BUT
THOSE
DESIGNERS..
UGH!

Overall, the game Star Trek is possibly too faithful to the television series, and this tends to limit the scope of the game. If these limitations are broken down, and some common sense is used in the system, the game can actually work. It is a pity that FASA have rushed this product out. With some more development it would have been the best science fiction role-playing game on the market. The only other complaint I have about the system is the never ending stream of additions which should have been included in the basic game. ie. such things as Klingon character generation, Starship construction and the trading rules. But I do realise that this is the way to make money, as the full Star Trek system now costs a total of \$210.

by Greg Ingram

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CRACK'D AND CROOK'D MANSE

A Thing for Call of Cthulhu

by Mark Morrison

Originally used as the Call of Cthulhu tournament at Phantastacon 84.

It crouched in the dark, comforted by the nearness of that which it cradled in its arms. Murmuring happily, it traced a finger along the blade - it was still slick. Absently it put its finger in its mouth and licked it - too salty. It spat. Peering around in the lightless room, it paused to listen, head cocked to one side in a horrific parody of an animal. No sounds. They had gone. It chuckled. It did not think they could find it, not in here... it could still remember the gasps, when they discovered its handiwork in the kitchen... and the dining room... and the bedroom... on the walls, and over the ceiling, and over the furniture... It chuckled again. Serves them right, tricking it with that woman, it knew she was a spy... and those children; little brats. How they squealed.... It chuckled again, a hollow sound in its parched throat.

Time to go. It stood up, stretched, listened again. Nothing. It moved to the panel, and felt along for the crack. It should be here... where is it? Where's the gap? The false wall from the fireplace, it should be here... Gone! They'd taken weapon, splinters flew, and again; felt the dent; minimal; trapped, no no no, again it swung the weapon, the handle was slick with brains, it flew off into the darkness.... Must get out... Must use hands... no no no no no... after all they had done to it, now this... must... dig... out...

Oblivious to the splinters driving in under its fingernails, it howled as it scabbled at the walls.

The man flung open the door and rushed into the bedroom, his dressing gown flapping wildly, his slippers slapping on the wooden floors. Hurriedly he knelt down and emptied his pockets, the shotgun cartridges tumbling out onto the hearth. Quickly he started scooping them out - after all this time, the solution was finally in his grasp. For the first time in months, he was truly happy - soon he would be free. He whistled as he worked at emptying the shells, sitting on the bricks of the cold fireplace.

He was so engrossed he did not hear the gurgling behind him until it was too late.

Players' Introduction

(From the Winsbury Weekly, January 10th, 1925)

Winsbury Millionaire Vanishes

by Joseph Virelli

Winsbury police were today investigating the disappearance of millionaire explorer, scholar and landowner Arthur Cornthwaite. Mr Cornthwaite was last seen on his estate by his solicitor, Mr Reginald Dodge, on January 7th. Mr Cornthwaite has not been seen since, and a search of the grounds of his property by Sheriff Whitford has revealed nothing.

However, Sheriff Whitford does not see undue cause for alarm, as Mr Cornthwaite was in the habit of leaving on international expeditions on the spur of the moment. A widower and an only child, the Sheriff cannot think of anyone Mr Cornthwaite would have seen necessary to inform of his departure. The fact that he had fired his staff one by one in the preceding weeks is further indication that he is spending time abroad. Besides, as the Sheriff rightfully pointed out, he's only been gone three days. Winsbury locals need no reminder of who Mr Cornthwaite is, as his generous donations to local charities have been bountiful and constant since his arrival in the area in 1919. We hope that he will hurry back soon.

(Correspondence to one of the Player Characters, preferably a Private investigator)

Dodge, Grabbit & Runn
Attorneys at Law
Main Street
WINSBURY

January 30th, 1925

Dear

I have heard of your considerable abilities as an investigator of strange occurrences by means of a mutual acquaintance, and am writing to you in the hope that you will take such a case on my behalf - not that the circumstances may warrant an investigation of your particular persuasion, but as the missing gentleman in question is a scholar of antiquities, I feel the case may be of interest to you.

I am a partner of an established legal firm in Winsbury, a town north of Boston. Mr Arthur Cornthwaite is one of our clients, and as his solicitors we hold certain documents in trust for him. It would appear that Mr Cornthwaite has departed without apparent trace, and this has left us in a quandary as to how to manage his estate in his absence without his authority on such matters. We would like you to determine Mr Cornthwaite's whereabouts, and obtain from him his wishes in respect of this matter, or better still request that he contact us. We have already sought to ensure that the grounds of his property are maintained in his absence, but efforts in this regard have been a complete debacle, and thus we would prefer to await word from Mr Cornthwaite before further action. Also, if it should - heaven forbid - transpire that Mr Cornthwaite is no longer with us, then we will need evidence of same to proceed with his wishes as outlined in his Last Will and Testament. Hopefully, this is an unnecessary contingency, but one which we must consider in the light of Mr Cornthwaite's mysterious departure.

I hope that you will consider these matters, and would like to extend an invitation to you to attend an interview at our offices as soon as is convenient, to discuss both the details of the case and your professional fees.

*Anticipating a prompt reply,
Yours faithfully,
Reginald Dodge*

The Real Story

In the heart of rural New England stands the Fitzgerald Manse, a large property with a history of misfortune. The house in itself is not evil, but has been the victim of unfortunate circumstances, the latest of which is terminal - it has become a crack'd and crook'd manse, and its destruction is imminent.

The house's history prior to the events concerning this scenario has been violent enough; the original owners and builders, the Fitzgeralds, were all slain during the Civil War. Years later, at the turn of the century, the house endured its most tragic phase when a later owner, unable to cope with the loneliness and peacefulness of the countryside after making his fortune in the city, became first paranoid, then schizophrenic, and finally psychopathic, murdering his young family. Seeking to evade pursuit, he concealed himself in a monk-hole on the second floor of the house, but discovered that he was unable to escape - his sad remains still lie sealed within the walls.

The present events were set in motion when Arthur Cornthwaite, millionaire explorer and archaeologist, purchased the dwelling in 1919. Here Cornthwaite spent many a happy hour researching for what he planned to be his greatest expedition - to discover the final secrets of a Lost Tribe in South America.

Cornthwaite departed for the jungles in 1923, fully sane and

expectant of great revelations. The expedition travelled to the appropriate area, and set to work locating the huge stone structure which was the tribe's temple. The team was constantly harassed by the present-day natives of the area, who perceived that a great taboo was about to be breached. Pressing on regardless, Cornthwaite and his men entered the temple. Hieroglyphs and strange carvings told the story of a people who worshipped something from beyond the stars—the Old Ones. The carvings detailed their efforts to call down their gods to dwell amongst them, which came to pass. Later carvings told of a fierce battle between the people and that which they had summoned, and the further struggles between the summoned and their servants, the grotesque Shoggoth. The final hasty carvings recorded the victory of the God's servants, and the abandonment of the temple by the people, who perished namelessly in the jungle.

Sadly, Cornthwaite was unaware of the Cthulhoid significance of the carvings, treating them rather as quaint local legends. They ventured deeper, to discover to their lasting horror and ultimate damnation that the "servant" was still alive - centuries of festering had moulded the Shoggoth into one single massive entity, a huge pulsing pool of corpulent organic horror. Cornthwaite alone escaped the carnage.

Fleeing back to New England, he delved into studies which he had previously shunned as "crack-pot", researching into arcane books and forbidden rituals, awaiting the day when he could use the terrible magic to remove the malignancy from the face of the planet, hurling it far back out into the stars from whence it came so long ago. However, a tragically simple oversight in his watching of the stars became a fatal flaw and instead of sending it forth, he summoned it hence—to Winsbury. It flowed into the cavities in the walls of his house, oozing forth at night to feed on the servants and animals, becoming so bloated on its charnal diet that it now completely fills the cellar, and all of the wall space on the ground floor — hence the house cracks, gradually worked asunder by the shifting bulk of the horror that lurks within. Cornthwaite was beside himself with terror when he learned that his nemesis had come to him, and frantically he sought a way to destroy it. Purely by accident he discovered a weakness in the thing, but before he could remove it for good it snaked out and snatched him through the fireplace in his bedroom, dragging his body down, breaking his bones as it pulled him with unbelievable strength down the narrow chimney, down into the cellar, where it fed on his mashed corpse.

The house is now dark and quiet, except for the occasional creak and twinge as the plaster loosens and drifts to the floor. The house is now dark and quiet, and waiting....

Winsbury

Winsbury is in rural New England - huge dew-soaked properties sprawl across the countryside in an idyllic rustic vista. Winsbury is a smallish town, primarily existing to serve the needs of the farmers. Buildings of interest include a boarding house, a town hall, a police station, an asylum, a newspaper office, a town library, and the offices of Messrs Dodge, Grabbit & Runn.

Boarding House

This neat and scrubbed building is run by Miss Edith Haggarty, as it was run by her mother before her, and her mother before her, etc. Miss Haggarty maintains a clean house: no chewing tobacco, no smoking, no alcohol, no unmarried couples and no nonsense. Despite her puritan disposition she is a kindly old soul, with half-moon spectacles and silver hair. Her primary interest in life at her advanced age is gossip — she knows everything about everybody, and will gladly discuss them; in fact, the investigators will find that once they start her talking, it will be extremely hard to get a word in edgewise, but if they manage to steer her towards whatever topic they wish to discuss, she will be more than willing to divulge everything she knows. She will describe Cornthwaite (accurately) as a most thoughtful and generous gentleman. The rest of her conversation can tend to be quite inane at times ("Did you know that F. Scott Fitzgerald once

drove past, right out front of this very house? Indeed!") The investigators can board here while they complete their investigations in town.

Dodge, Grabbit & Runn

These respectable gentlemen were Cornthwaite's solicitors in all matters. Three very washed-out looking little men in washed-out looking little grey suits, they are fundamentally timid, so much so that they have called in investigators rather than look into Cornthwaite's disappearance themselves, so that if anything is amiss, they can safely wash their hands of the matter. However, they are anxious to find Mr Cornthwaite (so pathetic are they that they haven't actually been into his house, simply spent hours standing out front calling "Anybody home?").

The solicitors kept Mr Cornthwaite's books, accounts, and will. Ethics prevent them from disclosing the contents of the latter document, but the investigators are welcome to inspect the ledgers. These will reveal that Arthur Cornthwaite was a millionaire explorer, with many investments to buy up his financial reserves. An **Accounting** roll will reveal that Cornthwaite's last major expedition was to South America in 1923. Various entries record the hiring of men and the transport of equipment, but an **Idea** roll will reveal that passage for only one person was booked out of South America.

Another interesting fact to be found in the ledger, on either an **Accounting** roll or a **Spot Hidden** roll (Hey, that's odd!), is the last entry in the ledger: on January 7th 1925 Cornthwaite requested that a dump truck full of salt be delivered to his property. This order was not filled (Cornthwaite's disappearance occurred while Dodge was still lining it up). If the investigators ask for the order to be filled later on, he will grudgingly oblige.

The ledgers do not include staff - Dodge will explain that Cornthwaite liked to "hire and fire" himself, and the solicitors simply made a payroll available which Cornthwaite divided and distributed himself.

Mr Dodge will give the investigators two keys, explaining that one is the house key and one is the key to a bungalow on the property. He will explain that this bungalow has been specifically cleaned out for the investigators, so that they might be able to conduct their hunt on the property itself. He will further point out that they have been booked into the boarding house until such time as they are ready to move out to the mansion. Overall, the solicitors will help the investigators in any way they can. They are very anxious that their most prestigious client be located.

As a final note, Mr Dodge will mention their efforts to keep the garden trim, but point out that this was a complete disaster. If pressed to elaborate, he will say that a gardener was hired - Mr Sidney Mescott - but the man lost his mind; "too much moonshine". He was found on the property by the sheriff, muttering and babbling to himself.

The solicitors will pay the investigators \$100 each to locate Mr Cornthwaite, with a \$150 bonus for the team if they have an answer within the week. **Bargaining** may be used to drive them up in price, at the Keeper's discretion.

Town Hall

Here a **Law** roll is needed to persuade the dusty little clerk of their worth ("Can't talk to you now, put in a request fill out this form, has to go upstairs for approval... where are the Form 17B's?"), but once they have negotiated with him they may have access to any legal documents that the Keeper thinks it reasonable for them to find - birth & death certificates, etc. They will doubtless look for the Title Deed, which is to be found on a high shelf, tied with a faded red ribbon, with an enormous Huntsman living in it which will crawl ever so slowly down the investigator's arm when he reaches out to take the document... The Deed records the house's original builders and owners, the Fitzgeralds, in 1805. Little else can be found, apart from Cornthwaite's ownership of the property since 1919. Note that they will **not** be able to

find plans of the house! (Where's the fun in that?)

County Sheriff's Office

The sheriff is Will Whitford, a jolly man with white sideburns, in his mid-fifties. A boisterous character, he's willing to talk and he's willing to help, but he won't take no shit from anybody - if he's harassed he will start by clammung up, and if pushed further he can make life very difficult for the out-of-towners.

He suspects no foul play in the Cornthwaite case. The man was known to march 'off on expeditions at short notice, particularly hinted at by his dismissal of his servants, all of whom were folk from Boston, and who didn't do their shopping in Winsbury.

An **Oratory** or **Debate** roll will get Whitford to state (truthfully) that this is all he knows. He will mention the animal disappearances if pressed ("here's a weird case for y'all.") Cattle and stock have been vanishing - and leaving no evidence of blood, fur or feathers. The range of animals rule out rustlers - horses, cows, donkeys, cats, geese, chickens, dogs, etc. All of the disappearances seem to occur on nights just before a heavy dew - Whitford will mention that the grass has been moist and shiny right up until mid-morning, when he has been called out to look into yet another animal gone missing. The local theory is wild dogs, but Whitford feels they would tend to leave tracks. He honestly doesn't know what to think.

The story about the animals can be backed up by the local farmers, some of whom could have some quaint theories about the phenomenon, at the Keeper's option. Mostly, they will spend their time scratching their beards, chewing on their corncob pipes, and moaning about losing "Ol' Jessie, the best milker fer miles around." The investigators will hear of about half a dozen Ol' Jessies if they do the rounds of the farmers.

Town Library

The library has a goodly range of books and periodicals. The librarian is Susan Arwell, a bespectacled women in her mid-twenties. She will be friendly and helpful, however, if Arthur Cornthwaite is mentioned she will roll up her eyes and exclaim "Arthur Cornthwaite. Arthur Cornthwaite! Don't talk to me about Arthur Cornthwaite!" If pressed for details she will explain that Cornthwaite has a large number of overdue books, mainly historical, geographical and religious texts. One book in particular she will mention is "The Missing People" by Thomas Pratt, which Cornthwaite took out in 1922. (An **Anthropolgy** roll will reveal that Pratt is a noted but somewhat off-beat anthropologist).

There is nothing of interest to be found in the library, except books by Cornthwaite himself, of Archaeology and Ancient Religion, all of which are pretty tame, the latest of which was published in 1921. If players are interested in local news and lore the librarian will refer them to the Winsbury Weekly, where all of the old editions of that illustrious publication are stored.

Happy Daze Rest Home

In this sunny and well-kept sanitorium is to be found Sid Mescott, the ill-fated gardener. (Mescott went up to the manse to start work. He managed to restore to working order all of the tools in the shed, but before he could start work he was unlucky enough to glimpse the Shoggoth oozing out of the house on one of its nightly forays; this sight has left him deranged, unstable, and dangerous).

At the reception desk, the secretary will be able to confirm that Mescott is in fact an inmate — Oh, I beg your pardon, patient — but should the investigators wish to speak with him they will have to convince Dr Bruce McIvor of their sincerity and professionalism: this can be done via a **Psychology**, **Credit Rating**, or **Debate** roll. If they succeed, a single investigator will be allowed to see Mescott, who is currently out in the grounds.

He will be found in the garden, digging holes and planting acorns. He is vague and confused, and a **Psychology** roll will

reveal that he is deranged, his personality shattered by a massive shock. A **Psychoanalysis** will make him lucid (briefly):

"I went there.... to dig.... but the bones and the slime and screaming and oh god oh god oh god THE BONES!" He will then leap for the investigator's throat. It will take the orderlies 3 rounds to arrive and forcibly restrain him, during which time the investigator will have to fend for himself. If either of them is killed, the murderer will be arrested. If Mescott is killed, the charge will be manslaughter, but the legal processes will effectively remove that investigator from this scenario.

Whatever the outcome, it will not be possible to visit Mescott again.

Sid Mescott
STR 13 CON 10 SIZ 8 INT 7 POW 9
DEX 15 CHA 10 SAN 25 EDU 11 HP 9
Throttle 55% 1D4 damage

The Winsbury Weekly

The offices for this respected Winsbury periodical are to be found on the second floor of a building in the centre of town (a frosted glass door bears the lettering: "Winsbury Weekly — Established 1887). The editor is Stan Artemis, a gregarious man in his late thirties. When first seen (roll SAN) he is wearing a bright red & green check suit and a panama hat. He is a nauseatingly friendly person, and will gladly allow the investigators to look through the old files of newspapers.

A **Library Use** roll on the files will reveal various articles mentioning Cornthwaite, stretching back to 1919; opening fetes, attending tea parties, donating to the church, winning at bridge nights, etc. There is nothing untoward printed about him. The following two articles are of special interest to the investigators, and a **Library Use** roll is needed to locate each:

(From the Winsbury Weekly, May 17th, 1906)

New England Family Slain in Bizarre Attack

By Miles Stanford

Mrs Gloria Curwen and her three children (Harold 10, Sarah 7, and Susan 5) were today found brutally murdered on their estate north of Winsbury, the Fitzgerald Manse, Deputy Whitford of the Winsbury County Sheriff's Office discovered the crime while making a routine inspection. He reported that the family had all been struck down by a number of blows from an axe. No murder weapon has been discovered, but a servant has been detained in relation to the incident. Mr Arthur Curwen is still wanted by Sheriff for questioning.

Animal Disappearances Continue

By Joseph Virelli

Farmers and residents of the Winsbury district have been reporting an unnaturally high degree of loss of stock and pets. The authorities are baffled by the fact that there has been no trace of the missing beasts — it is clear that professional rustlers are at work. The first recorded disappearance of this nature occurred on December 13th 1924, when one farmer reported losing all of his donkeys.

Until the mystery is solved, the County Sheriff is asking all farmers and animal owners to ensure that their animals are kept in their pens at night. Investigations are continuing.

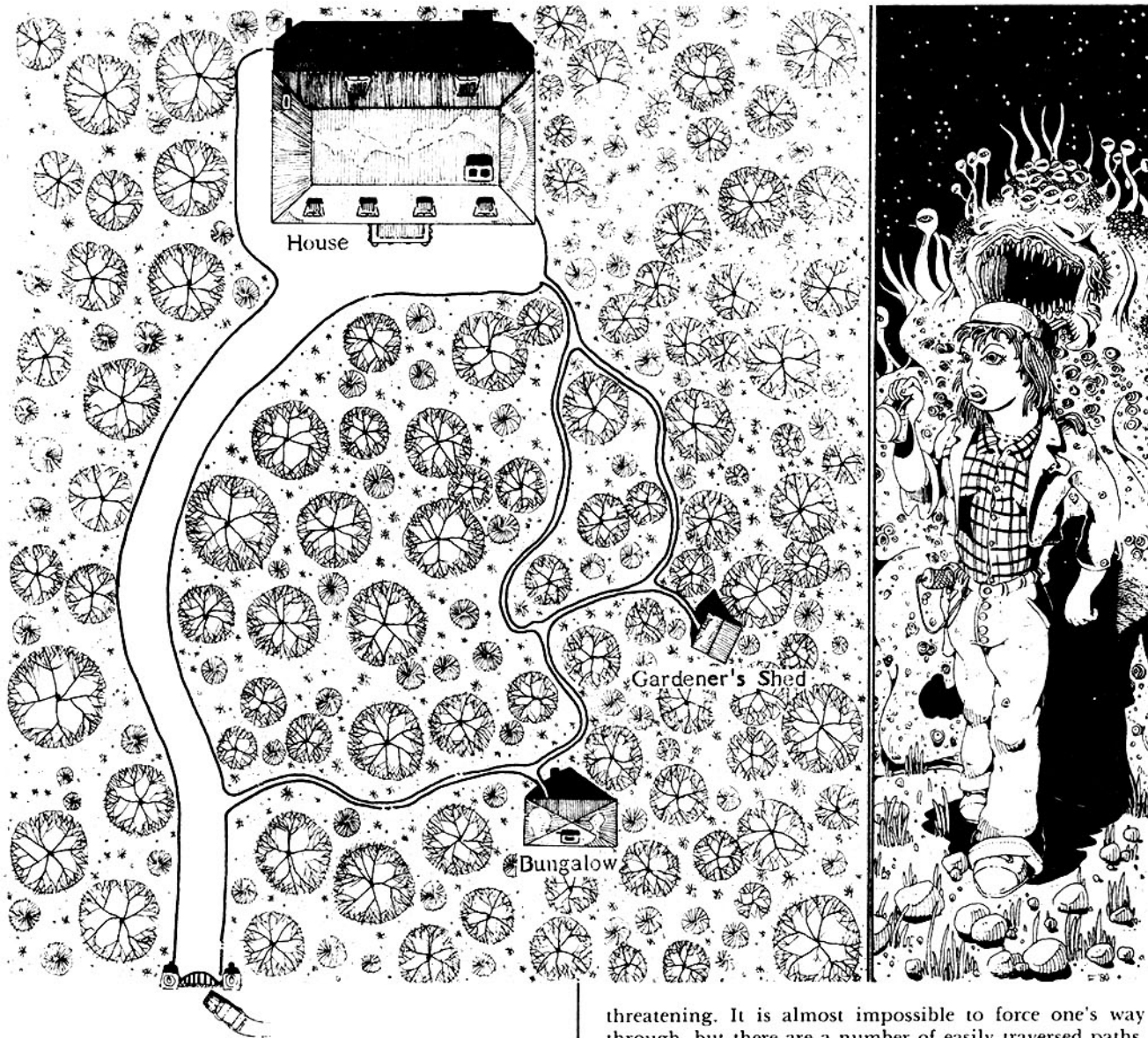
If the investigators ask about Joe Virelli, Stan will explain that Joe is a reporter and photographer with the Weekly, but that he is presently out of town for a few days covering an important baseball match up north.

This concludes the information to be discovered in Winsbury. The investigators should now be ready to take up residence at the Fitzgerald Manse.

The Fitzgerald Manse

The Estate

The house is ten miles out of Winsbury, in a peaceful but isolated district. As the investigators are driving out to it, they will see huge and ominous clouds gathering on the horizon.



The house is surrounded by a tangled garden, which in turn is bordered by a high stone spiked wall. There is a locked iron gate, for which the solicitors have neglected to give the investigators the key. They must break the chain, use **Mechanical Repair** to pick the lock, or abandon their vehicles and clamber over the gate. Within, a wide driveway leads to the house, off which branches a path leading to the bungalow. A **Spot Hidden** roll will give the investigators a glimpse of the bungalow's roof through the trees.

The ideal sequence for the investigators to explore the property is to first find the bungalow, unpack, and choose beds. They will then no doubt venture into the garden, wherein they should be encouraged to seek out the gardener's shed. Soon after they leave this, the storm will hit, driving them back to the bungalow for the night. This sequence is by no means compulsory, and in fact difficult to impose, but during play-testing proved to be the most exciting and tension building introduction. Usually, if given a glimpse of the bungalow, players will head for it (if not, remind them of their heavy bags and suitcases); once they depart from the bungalow, when given the choice of going back towards the driveway or "up the garden path" they will choose the path; and once again, if given a glimpse of the roof of the gardener's shed at the appropriate junction, most players will tend to want to explore it.

In any case, the storm should be used to prevent them from exploring the house first.

The Garden

This expanse of runaway foliage is overgrown, and

threatening. It is almost impossible to force one's way through, but there are a number of easily traversed paths. Several encounters and happenings can occur in the garden: an investigator could be tripped up by a tree root, which he will swear was not in his way when he first stode forth; similarly, an investigator may be struck on the head by an overhanging branch, for which there seemed to be enough clearance; In another place a huge fungi encrusted log has fallen over the path in a particularly damp area, which should provide an amusing diversion as the party try to clamber or jump across it without getting their clothes filthy; and in another place on the path there is a huge and slippery mud patch, which may send some of them sprawling full length, necessitating a complete change of clothes. These and other ideas can be used to make their journeys through the garden interesting, as well as to heighten paranoia.

A **Zoology** roll in the gardens will reveal a complete absence of animal life; a **Tracking** roll will uncover at some point a beautifully preserved boot print, in a patch of mud which was subsequently draped with a fern, thus protected. The boot print is recent, and the boot in question belonged to someone with large feet — **Anthropology** would allow the investigator to estimate the wearer to be of SIZ 16-18. No other tracks will be found.

The Shed

The door to the gardener's shed is slightly ajar. Within it is dark, and there is a litter of waste around the floor. There are many tools: a wheelbarrow, a pick, a shovel, some hedge-clippers, an axe, an axe, an axe, an axe, an axe, an axe, an axe... There is in fact a rack of eight axes, with one missing.

When someone moves into the shed to explore, he will bump

into the various tools, and receive a cut to the shins from a shovel, a slash to the cheek from a rake, etc.; all of the tools are extra sharp, and it may seem to the paranoid as they stumble around in the bad light that the implements are animating themselves.

Finally, there is a garden variety poisonous snake coiled up in the litter, which will rear up and sink its fangs into anybody who treads on it.

Garden Snake
STR 4 CON 7 SIZ 3 POW 9 DEX 17 HP 5
Bite 35% IDS + Poison POT 4

In short, try to make this whole building threatening!

The Storm

This should hit as soon as the investigators have experienced the shed, or in any case before they reach the house. The storm is of unprecedented savagery, and will be talked of in Winsbury for years to come (not that they have all that much to talk about in Winsbury at the best of times). The wind will howl and roar, hurling trees around and driving sheets of blinding rain. Thunder detonates explosively directly overhead as lightning carves the sky asunder: in short, the storm is as violent as you can describe it. It continues well into the night, occasionally calming down to periods normal rain. It will have lessened to a drizzle just before dawn, and ceases not long after sunrise. The garden will be clean, dripping, and very muddy.

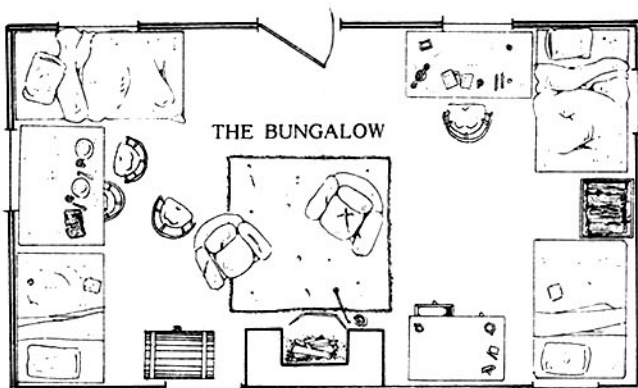
The Bungalow

Nice, warm and dry (heh heh). There is furniture, food supplies, a fireplace, freshly chopped wood, in short plenty of comfort. Investigators should be asked to indicate where they are sleeping.

Hiding under one of the beds is a horrific black beast, two feet long, with red-rimmed eyes: it is a raccoon that fell down the chimney, and has not been able to escape. If not discovered, it will make its presence felt at night, furtively scratching under someone's bed.

Late at night, at the height of the storm, there will be a flurry of pounding at the door. It is too dark to see who is outside, and the storm is too loud to shout. The pounding will continue. If the door is opened a crack, the wind will tear it open with a bang; a whoosh of air will scream in and snuff out the lantern. At that moment the hugest bolt of lightning will burst. Etched against the door is a SIZ 18 figure — with an axe!

Although their reaction will most probably be spontaneous, and violent, this is in fact neither a crazed axe murderer nor the ghost of Arthur Curwen; it is merely Joe Virelli, on his guard against snakes (the reason he took the axe from the shed). He is dressed in a lumber jacket, and has a notebook and camera. He was passing the manse when his car broke down, so he sought shelter from the storm, whilst hoping to do some follow-up work on his story. He was unable to get into the house. He will join the investigators, taking notes, photos, etc. His real purpose in this scenario is to "show how the monster works", use him as the Shoggoth's first victim in the climactic confrontation. Happily, Joe is quite unaware of this!



Joe Virelli
STR 14 CON 10 SIZ 18 INT 14 POW 8
DEX 10 CHA 5 SAN 40 EDU 12 HP 11
Photography 75% Fast Talk 60% Credit Rating 50% Hide 30% Sneak 25%

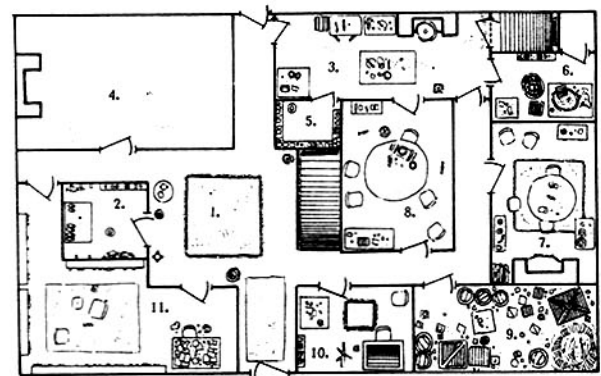
The House

The Fitzgerald Manse is a sprawling exercise in gothic architecture, shuttered and brooding. It is two-storeyed, and can be entered by either the front door (for which the investigators have the key) or the back. There is also a pair of wooden hatches giving access to the cellar. A Tracking roll will reveal wheel ruts leading to this — trucks would pull up to this hatchway so that wood and coal could be unloaded directly to the cellar, without having to tramp through the house. There is a hole in one of the hatchways, and vines protude from it. The hatchway opens directly onto the wood cellar.

Unlike the rest of this scenario, which tends to be excruciatingly wordy at times, interior descriptions have been kept to a minimum, especially in rooms in which there is nothing of interest. The important thing to remember is: On the ground floor, there are many cracks, and vast quantities of fallen plaster. On the ground floor, the floorboards do not creak at all; on the upper floor, they creak as per normal (this effect is due to the Shoggoth insulation below). These points should be inconspicuously (ha ha) added to each room description.

The objective for this section is for the investigators to explore the house, guess at some of its secrets, recognise the threat and learn of how to deal with it, and then to leave to arrange said solution. There are certain doors which cannot be opened (due to the wall-to-wall Shoggoth behind them), and it is up to you to see they stay that way until the time is right. Over-zealous players (read morons) may wish to chop these doors down; remind them via **Idea** and **Know** rolls that such vandalism is not in keeping with their employment, and would not be tolerated by the solicitors. If they go ahead anyway, hopefully the few survivors will flee and devise a better plan ... to face the Thing that lurks within before being fully prepared is certain death.

The house is dark and dingy throughout.



DOWNSTAIRS

Downstairs

1. The Hall: nothing of note. There is an elephant-foot umbrella stand.
2. Cloakroom: there is a huge dark figure with an axe — no, it's just a cloak. Nothing of interest.
3. Kitchen: all the necessary utensils and furnishings, including plenty of sharp things. There is no salt to be found in here. The door to the cellar (23) will **not** open. A Tracking roll along the base of the door reveals a line of white crystals (salt).
4. Empty Hall: a big open area, devoid of furnishings, with a polished wooden floor (dance floor). Empty.
5. Pantry: Wall to wall food. No salt.
6. Laundry: Disused tubs, etc. When the linen closet is opened the investigator will be suddenly showered with towels, bedding, etc.
7. Parlour: very tasteful. Nothing of note.

8. Dining Room: there is a silver service, the table is laid for one: knives, forks, spoons, wine glass, carafe, pepper shaker, ice bucket. (No salt)

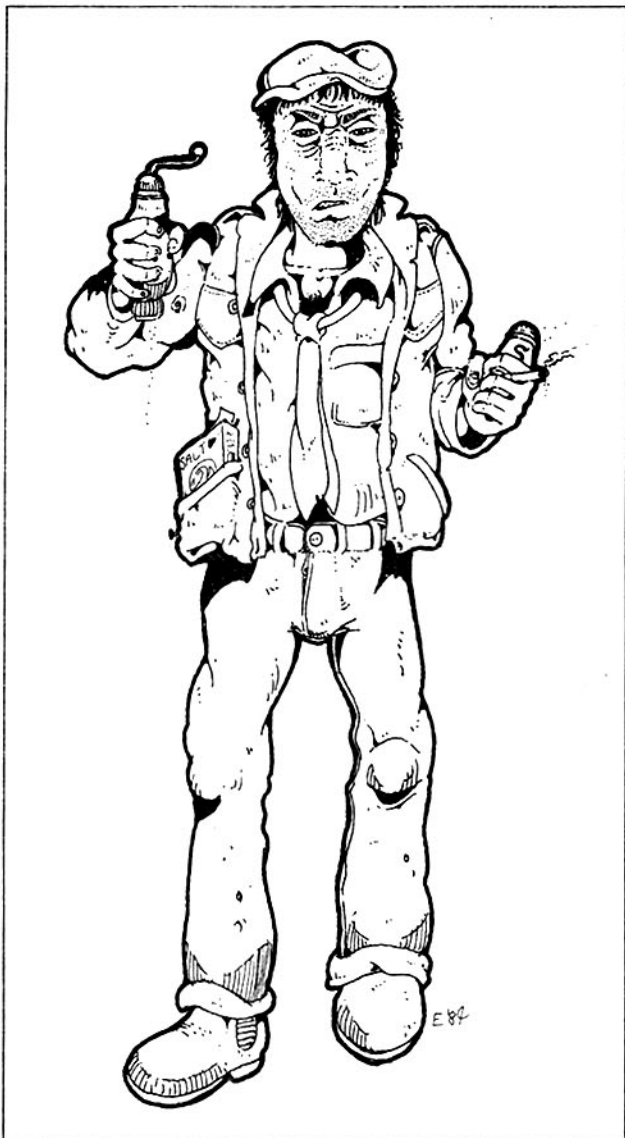
9. Store Room: filled with junk. Boxes, barrels, crates, etc. There is nothing of interest, but a patch of weak floor will give way, dropping the character into the coal cellar (21). Damage is 1D6, 1D3 on a **Jump** roll. Any light will be extinguished, and the character will be alone in the dark, possibly with IT: roll SAN or lose it.

10. Study: There is a locked rolltop desk, and by the window stands a telescope on a tripod, pointing up. In the desk are strange charts of dots and numbers — a **Know** roll at 1/2 chance (automatic for any character with **Astronomy** skill) will reveal them to be star charts.

Perusal of the charts (N.B. The author would like to acknowledge at this point that he knows absolutely nothing of astronomy, but has bastardized the science to a simplistic degree for the purposes of his scenario; apologies to stargazers everywhere) combined with a roll of **Astronomy** will reveal that someone has been waiting for three particular stars to be in a certain formation. These stars are differentiated by a numerical system; however, at one point two stars were confused and subsequently mislabelled. The net effect was that when the formation did occur, the stars were out of sequence (I told you I know nothing of astronomy — author).

The sequence should be sketched and passed to the players:

Intended	Actual
Line-up	Line-up
500	500
64	230
230	64



There are also notes scattered amongst the star-charts, most of which are simply technical astral observations, but one of which should attract their interest:

(Found in study desk; hand-written)

*"When two stars join and a third is extracted, and the total be right, and if the row be straight, then this is the time of reckoning" D1M
— it is almost here! I can succeed!*

By applying this formula to the line-ups, and then using **Astronomy** to work out what the dates would have been when the stars were in that position, one can learn the following:
The right line-up (334): is February 27th, 1925
The wrong line-up (666): is December 13th, 1924
An **Occult** roll will reveal that 666 is very bad, so bad in fact that if the starwatcher was awaiting a date for magical reasons, but performed his ritual on that date instead, the results could be so affected that the desired effect may have been completely reversed.

11. Library: Full of books on exploring, archaeology, history, anthropology, and more. There is a cluttered writing desk on which a **Spot Hidden** roll will uncover the following letter:

(Found in library desk; letter, in German)

Dear Arthur,

Thank you for your recent correspondence. I have examined both the photographs and the descriptions of the structure. I have interpreted the carvings, to the best of my ability. I think that the structure is an abandoned temple — i.e. abandoned even before its final win.

The religious carvings tell of the arrival of the "Gods" from the heavens, odd little barrel-shaped beings. The later, hurried carvings, tell of the "Gods" struggling with their "Servants", and seem to indicate that the "Gods" warred with their worshippers also. The final carvings tell of the "Servants" being the victor, and of the worshippers fleeing the temple — doubtlessly perishing in the jungle, as Pratt suggests.

I will send a detailed transcription when ready.

*Yours respectfully,
Dr. Wilfred Stein*

A **Cthulhu Mythos** (aieeee!) roll will reveal the "barrel-shaped creatures" to sound remarkably like Old Ones. On the wall above the fireplace is a 20 guage shotgun. There is no ammunition.

A **Library Use** amongst the bookshelves will uncover two interesting texts: "De Vermiss Mysteriis" (Latin) and "The Missing People" (English). The following is a summary of the contents of these books, and is gained only if the investigators sit down to read them; the English text can be skimmed through in an hour or so, but the Latin work would take a few nail-chewing days to complete.

The Missing People

Summary

by Thomas Pratt

This is a book concerning the Ho-dacha people, a South American tribe in ancient times, whose existence is testified to by various ruins, but of whose demise nothing is known. The book is based on legends about the tribe, and archaeological discovery. Pratt notes the religious mania of the tribe and believes they may have wiped themselves out in a civil war. Their passing was marked with relief by the other tribes — the Ho-dacha were considered evil, and to this day their territory remains taboo. Pratt mentions in particular a Great Dome depicted in carvings and on vases. He believes that this was an actual stone structure, and that it may quite possibly still stand, perhaps even housing the last secrets of the sinister missing people.

The information from the other book cannot be gained until the reader has survived the rigours of reading it: the SAN loss for this Mythos text is 2D6, and it confers + 12% **Cthulhu Mythos**. Assuming that the reader has not joined Mescott at the rest home, the following is learned:

Summary

by Ludvig Prinn

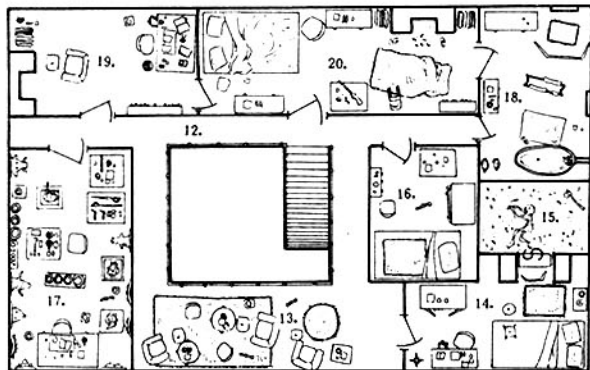
This particularly grisly and horrific work deals with the concept that man was created for the amusement of a race of Outer Beings. One particular passage reads "and although man is one servant, there are others, sometimes less pliable than man. They are of such power that if they can break the bonds of slavery they can threaten their masters. If this be true, the Banishment magic is needed."

In addition to text of a similar nature to the preceding, the book also describes nameless rituals and blasphemous incantations.

These "blasphemous incantations" include the spells Contact Old One, Brew Space-Mead, and Elder Sign. Note that these will take too long to learn to be used here. There is another highly relevant ritual in the book, i.e. "the Banishment magic". This ritual is useful purely for the purpose of this scenario (the stars will not be "right" again until 1993); however, the investigators may certainly wish to attempt to succeed where Cornthwaite failed, and attempt the process on February 27th 1925:

The Ritual of Banishment

This ritual is a process by which a non-summoned creature can nevertheless be cast back from whence it came, the ritual is only performable on a certain night. It is chanted by a group of people, each of whom must expend Magic Points. The total number of Points expended is then compared against the POW of the creature in a POW vs POW attack; however, the POW of the character with the highest POW in the group is the maximum amount for attack purposes (i.e. if a group were to expend 18 Magic Points, but the highest POW was a character of POW 16, then 16 would be the number used to resolve the POW vs POW roll). The ritual takes two rounds to complete, during which time the chanters can neither attack nor defend. If the ritual fails, it may be attempted again.



UPSTAIRS

Upstairs

12. Balcony: boring. There is a weak rail which might cause trouble.

13. Lounge: huge bay windows (now shuttered) give a nice view out over the grounds. Nothing of interest.

14. Guest Bedroom: very nicely decorated. The back of the fireplace pushes in (only discovered by applying pressure, not by **Spot Hidden**) to reveal...

15. Monk Hole: here lie the pitiful mortal remains of Arthur Curwen. The corpse has no toes, nor fingers on the left hand. SAN loss is 1D3. The rusted remains of the axe lie in the corner, and the dents in the wall signify his attempts to get out. The fireplace door is sprung in such a way that it is impossible to get out once in — the actual means of exit are via a trapdoor in the roof, of which Curwen was unaware.

16. Bedroom: boring.

17. Trophy Room: stuffed heads on the walls, shelves with pots and vases, small statues and idols, etc. An **Archaeology** roll will reveal the the items are mostly South American; an **Occult** roll will reveal that they are mostly religious items; and a **Spot Hidden** roll will attract the viewer's attention

towards a five-pointed star made of jade (This is an Elder Sign; whilst it is in place, it cannot be crossed by Outer Gods, Elder Gods, and their minions).

18. Bathroom: boring. The Shoggoth has not yet found a way to get into the pipes.

19. Den: otherwise known as Cornthwaite's upstairs study, there is a desk, a few books, and a fireplace. In the fireplace (**Spot Hidden**, but automatic if someone specifically sifts through the grate) a leather-bound diary lies among the ashes, mostly burnt; however, a few entries (or parts thereof) are legible:

(Found in upstairs study fireplace: Semi-burnt diary)

"...after pushing on through the jungle for many days (and constantly harassed by those goddamn natives — Plenty of times I had to use my Remington, but I fear the moisture has gotten into her now) we reached the structure. It was huge.....and when we finished recording the carvings in the area Daniels named the Hall of Figures we moved on to.....we found a strange fossil. It was apparently some sort of plant or creature, totally unlike anything I've encountered in any of my studies. Most curious of all, it was similar to the depiction of deities in the carvings and statues.....until we descended to the base of the ruin where.....but I cannot and will not accept that their fate was natural. All I know is that IT HAS SURVIVED, and that it slew my comrades. I shall now turn to the book that Stein sent me — yes, I shall sink to those depths, for I must rid the continent of that which I inadvertently unearthed.....progressing well, I have almost mastered it. All I need do now is await the day.....it is done! I did it flawlessly, without stammering or pausing. It must surely now be gone. I shall wire Carruthers, and get him to send out a party to confirm it. I can now rest.....oh god, the horror! The horror! I meant to send it forth but I have BROUGHT IT HERE! The Cook is missing — I know the signs only too well. I must find another way, and soon.....will kill us all.....NaCl..Happy fortune! It is so simple — the failure of the ritual does not matter now! I am saved! I can defeat it! First I shall destroy this diary, thid record of evil, and then put into motion the plan. I AM FREE!

Arthur James Cornthwaite,
January 7th, 1925

The desk contains nothing of interest — indeed, it seems as though someone specifically rifled it, tearing off certain notes and letters.

20. Master Bedroom: stately and elegant. In front of the fireplace are nine partially disassembled shotgun cartridges the powder and the shot has been scooped out, and stands in neat little piles. A **Spot Hidden** roll will turn up a silver salt-shaker under the rug. A **Tracking** roll on the fireplace will reveal some sort of translucent stain. Directly in front of the fireplace are scattered a pair of fluffy blue slippers.



ATTIC

The Attic

This open space contains lots of junk — old chests, rocking horses, tailor's dummies, etc. There is a trapdoor, covered in dust (**Spot Hidden** to notice) leading to the monk-hole (15) and this trapdoor has weakened with age — if stepped upon, the investigator will crash through the floor, taking 1D6

damage, 1D3 on a **Jump** roll. The investigator will plummet into the dark, straight into Curwen's dead embrace — the SAN loss for encountering the corpse this manner is 1D6.

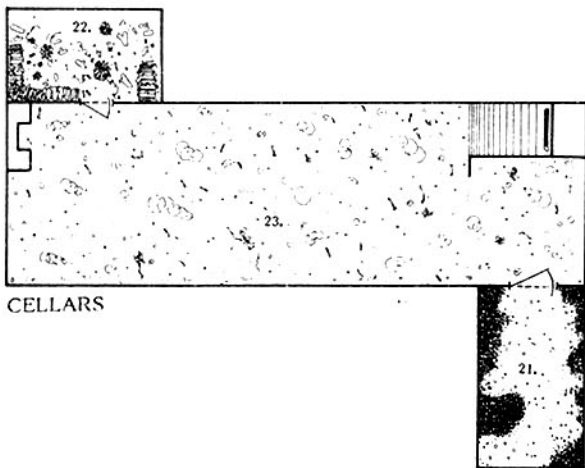
Cellars

21. Coal Cellar: this is full of coal. The door leading out will not budge.

22. Wood Cellar: access is gained from outside by the wooden hatches. There is a hole in one. Inside is a great mound of wood and sawdust, on which vines and creepers grow — a **Botany** roll will reveal that they are South American in origin. The door leading into the cellar will not budge.

23. General Cellar: wall to wall Shoggoth! This cellar cannot be entered unless the Shoggoth wills it, by creating a bubble of air around the door. Once the door is opened, it can then use the force coiled to make the bubble to smash forward with a sledgehammering pseudopod...

To coin an Americanism, this is one mother of a Shoggoth. A shifting gel with a thousand golden eyes, suspended within are the swirling bones and decaying flesh of its victims, including the half-dissolved head of Arthur Cornthwaite.



CELLARS

SHOGGOTH
STR 50 CON Lots SIZ real big INT 12 POW 17 DEX 6 HP 30
Suck 65% 6D6
All physical weapons do minimum damage
SAN loss: 1D20, 1D6 if SAN roll is made

The Shoggoth hits with a pseudopod and engulfs the victim — if he opens his mouth to scream, it pours itself straight down his throat. The following round it sucks the victim apart with terrific force — first the clothing shreds, then the flesh ruptures, the eyes explode outwards, then the layers of flesh, muscle and fat are pulled clear of the skeleton, all in the space of a few seconds.

The thing does have a weakness, peculiar to this particular specimen: it is extremely susceptible to salt, table variety, which dissolves it. A salt shaker full does 1D3 damage; a handful does 1D6 damage; a shovelful does 1D10; a truckload does 4D10. Shotguns packed with salt do normal shotgun damage.

This explains why there are no Shoggoths in Utah.

The Finale

The Keeper should hold this off as long as possible, i.e. until the players are ready; the intervening time builds tension. When the Shoggoth is roused to do battle, it will suddenly explode forwards, catching them off guard. For example, if they are waiting for it to emerge from the wood-hutch, they will be expecting it to suddenly flow upwards in a tidal wave. As it fights, huge fissures will be rent in the walls, through which it will pour itself; all over the house, bricks will be hurled outwards and timber cracked as the titan shakes. If defeated, in its death throes it will hurl rubble and glass hundreds of feet in to the air, before collapsing inwards as a spray of steam, salt and smoke blossoms outwards.

The investigators can just walk away; perhaps thinking of something to tell Dodge.

And that Spring in Winsbury, the bees will find a strange new pollen in the wreckage of the Crack'd and Crook'd Manse....

by Mark Morrison



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Role-Playing is pure imagination. It consists of placing oneself, or an adopted persona, in an invented scenario and imagining the consequences. The purpose of RP is to experience the psyche of a character operating in an environment which is ordinarily denied us. PBM gaming requires a close personal identification with a character, and this involvement is constantly reinforced by the necessity of communicating with the GM and other players as that character. It is therefore not surprising that many PBM games lean heavily towards RP.

In PBM, it is not so much that one is acting out a part of a character, as that we are the character. There is a distinction between this state of being a character and that of simply playing a role. It comes about largely through the need to conduct the character's affairs over a lengthy period of time, either with a GM, or via diplomacy with other players. Players of Diplomacy should understand what I mean, for to succeed at that game requires active negotiations with real, living and highly motivated individuals. Whether we like it or not (and presumably we do), to play the game is to play a role. This is also the case in PBM games. However, in PBM the role may be developed over many months or even years. This can lead to deep intertwining of the player and character personalities.

It is this development of character personality and its merging with that of the player which marks RP off from adventure gaming in general. Curiously enough, although lengthy play times may be involved, the ostensibly pure RP games which are conducted face to face tend to be more situation than personality oriented. There has been a good deal written over the years on the need for GMs in RP games to conduct their campaign, scenario or whatever, with a cohesive personality developing atmosphere. Time and again we see authors condemning the hack & slash mentality and plumping for a modicum of meaningfulness in campaigns. No doubt in the best run groups this ideal is often achieved, but it does require a good deal of conscious effort by all concerned and a considerable amount of hard work on the part of the GM.

In a sense it is not 'natural' in that many RP games are structured so as to pit the players against the GM and his inventions. The characters certainly develop, in the sense of gaining experience and/or attributes, but this does not necessarily imply that their personalities are being uncovered and strengthened. These games do, of course, involve player interactions, but these are usually directed towards team play or the interaction of particular groups under the umbrella of the GMs control. In contrast to this, a PBM gamer is essentially playing in isolation and thus needs to inject much more of his own personality into the proceedings.

I suspect that part of the motivation for the development of 'free form' RP has been an attempt to free face to face play from the strictures alluded to above. Not only does it allow far more participants but it departs from the 'us against the GM' mentality which has dominated RP games for so long. The direct interaction of many more diverse groups and individuals provides far more freedom for character development than has hitherto been the case. In a similar manner, PBM gaming derives this free flowing interactive structure from its very mode of operation and thus incorporates RP quite naturally into play.

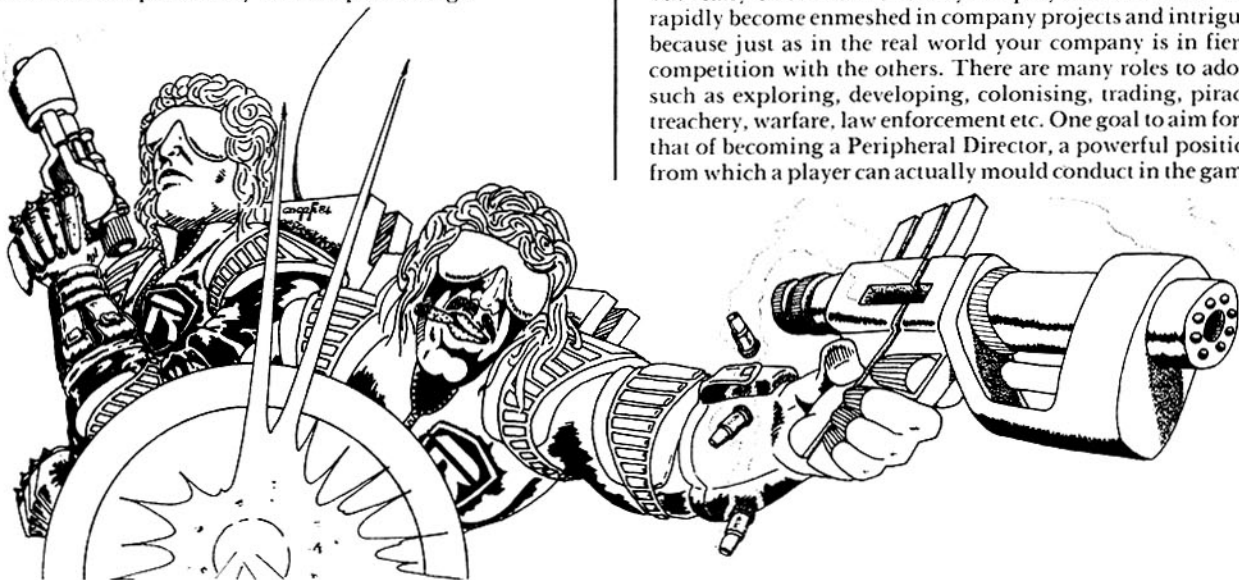
Most commercial PBM games require a certain degree of RP, but there is a considerable range of such involvement. There are those games, such as *Silverdawn*; *The Tribes of Crane*; *The Keys of Bled* and *Beyond the Stellar Empire* which are heavily dependent upon RP. There are those such as *Warboid World* (ABM) and *Zorphwar* (ZE) which prohibit player communication and concentrate solely on the mechanics of the game. Between these extremes lie the majority of PBM games in which a player can practice RP to a greater or lesser extent.

True Role-Playing Games

These games incorporate RP to such an extent that it is an integral part of the game structure. Thus it is simply impossible to play them without adopting some role or characterisation. In the most extreme cases the action all revolves about a central character (or group) who are positively encouraged to exhibit personality traits which then form a vital part of the play.

The most outstanding examples of this type of game are *Silverdawn*, *Star Trek* and *Starquest*, all from ECI. The former is a FRP game in which the player describes in detailed narrative form the motives, desires, hates, loves etc of a single character and then translates these into action according to the circumstances of the turn. As each new batch of problems are met and overcome the character grows from an abstract set of attribute ratings into a fully rounded person. My own Miphlwanae (a beautiful but treacherous Elven bitch) is as real to me as my wife - well almost. *Star Trek* employs a similar narrative style but this game allows free play with the personalities and actions of 400 fully documented starship crew (I kid you not). *Starquest* combines both approaches.

Only slightly less personalised is *Beyond the Stellar Empire* (from ABM) in which the player begins with a single starship and attempts to make his way in one of the many business corporations which are competing in the galactic periphery. This all sounds like standard stuff until you realise that the corporations are not just figments of the GMs imagination but really exist and are run by the players themselves. You rapidly become enmeshed in company projects and intrigues because just as in the real world your company is in fierce competition with the others. There are many roles to adopt such as exploring, developing, colonising, trading, piracy, treachery, warfare, law enforcement etc. One goal to aim for is that of becoming a Peripheral Director, a powerful position from which a player can actually mould conduct in the game.



It would be impractical to give even a brief description of other games in this category, but a list of the major RP PBM games grouped broadly into fantasy, science fiction and other may be of interest. In the list which follows the RP elements may not be as overwhelming as in the four games described above but they are nevertheless very much to the fore.

Fantasy Role-Playing:

Catacombs of Shaos (S&S); Crasimov's World (KJC); Darkworld (MW); Earthwood (GSI); Keys of Bled (MG); Lords of the Dark Horse (ADG); Realms of Sword & Thunder (EGJ); Ringquest (PBM); Terra II (CG); Tribes of Crane (S&S)

Science Fiction Role-Playing:

Cluster (OS); Cluster III (GS); Logan's Run (SG); Return from Sirius (MT); Space Empires (Te); Starmaster (S&S); Universe II (CG); Vorcon Wars (CG);

Realistic Role-Playing:

Ganglords (BC); Moncylender (RB)



And Then, Them Others.

I have intimated that the above list is by no means exhaustive. There are other games which could claim to incorporate many RP elements, but they are either little known or in a special category. In particular, I would like to draw your attention to certain games which have a strong RP component, the very existence of which may lead the unwary sadly astray when playing them.

I refer here to grand strategic games such as StarWeb and Feudal Lords (both from FBI), whose RP aspects are manifest, but whose play must be hardheaded and rigorous. Of course, there is no reason why a true RP game may not be played with precision. It is followed to their logical conclusion will lead to strategic errors.

When playing rigorously competitive games I am always on the lookout for a bunny. There is no greater bunny than the role-player! Nothing brings me more joy when contacting a new player in one of these games than to receive reams of imaginative drivel concerning their 'Empire'. This stuff usually presents some fanciful name for 'our peoples' and blathers on in a descriptive manner about their holdings. When any concrete matters are discussed they are inconsequential schemes and woolly minded projects with little firm detail. Perhaps I exaggerate a trifle, but the point is that rigorous strategic games are about cold hard facts and numbers. Only when you have got them under control can you afford to introduce romance. It is simply a question of priorities.

A few examples will illustrate the point. In SW the Apostle character is a religious or political fanatic whose mission is to convert the Web's population to his persuasion. The Apostle is also a pacifist who is positively dissuaded from fighting

because he loses points if he does. This is SW's most difficult position. Many players conclude that the correct approach is to avoid conflict while cheerfully sailing about 'converting'. An objective assessment of the scoring modes tells us that it is totally incorrect and that, on the contrary, the Apostle must be very aggressive. By contrast, a Berserker gains points from killing population. This leads many players to adopt a highly gung-ho attitude. Yet a close examination of the game indicated that this will often lead to disaster and that, in reality, the last thing that a Berserker should see is a hot fight.

Feudal Lords presents similar difficulties for the unthinking role-player. The trick in this game (as in Diplomacy) is to convince a sufficient number of your opponents to let you win. This is no mean con, especially since they are trying to bring off precisely the same coup themselves. Thus, although there is plenty of scope for poncing about as a Baron, Duchess or whatever, the guy who makes it to King will have to do a hell of a lot of hardheaded negotiating and more than a little fighting.

Another example that I encountered recently was in the locally run Star Empires. A guy contacted me about trading Pyramid artifacts. Now these items were worth not more to him than to me but he was willing to make it worth my while just because he has a liking for Egyptian architecture! In other words, he was willing to concede me points because he wanted to role-play.

*In rigorous games, Role-Players get rolled!

Those of us who wish to take on the persona of other beings, in another time and space, can find a considerable variety of opportunity in PBM gaming. The mode lends itself to RP due to a number of factors. There is the need for isolated individuals to reach out into 'otherness'. There is the multiplayer interactive nature of PBM, and lastly, the extended period of play during which much personalised character development may take place. If you are into RP, there is almost certainly a game scenario awaiting you in PBM.

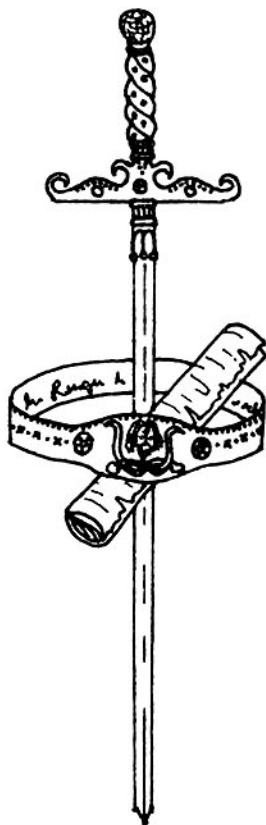
PBM Company Listing

- ABM: Adventures by Mail; P.O. Box 424 Cohoes, NY 12047, USA
- ADG: Adventure Design Group; P.O. Box 821072 Dallas, TX 75382, USA
- BC: Big City; P.O. Box 1804 Eugene, OR 97449, USA
- CG: Chameleon Games; P.O. Box 2302, Sydney, Australia
- ECI: Entertainment Concepts; P.O. Box 609 Cornelius, NC 28031, USA
- EGJ: Empire Games Inc.; P.O. Box 6181 Denver, CO 80206, USA
- FBI: Flying Buffalo Inc.; P.O. Box 1467 Scottsdale, AZ 85252, USA
- GS: Games Systems; P.O. Box 1733, G.P.O. Canberra 2601 Act, Australia
- GSI: Games Systems Inc.; P.O. Box 431166 Miami, FL 332443, USA
- KJC: K.J.C. Games; 5 Vicarage Ave, Cleveleys, Lancs FY5 2BD, UK
- MG: Mitregames; Lothiorian, 77 Burntwood Grange, Wandsworth Common, London SW18, UK
- MW: Mike Williams; #4 Pleasant Ridge, Box 802, LaFollette, TN 37766 USA
- MT: Missing Tiger; G.P.O. Box 268C, Hobart 7000, Australia
- OS: Otto Schmidt II; R.D.4, Box 381 Newton, NJ 07860, USA
- PBM: PBM Games, 60 Winona Rd. Mt. Eliza, Australia, 3930
- RB: Rich Barr; P.O. Box 1873 Cave CK, AZ 85331, USA
- SG: Sanctuary Games; P.O. Box 10576 Santa Ana, CA 92711, USA
- S & S: Schubel & Son; P.O. Box 214848 Sacramento, CA 95821, USA
- Te: Telebraille; Mills Ave, Sussafra, 3787 Victoria Australia
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by **A. D. Young**

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THE REGULAR REGIMENTS OF THE LUNAR EMPIRE

Introduction

The Lunar Army, was, prior to the Hero-Wars, the most effective military force to be seen in Glorantha. Its troops were well disciplined and equipped, the officers being carefully selected and trained for command. However the discipline of the Lunar regiments, would drop when beyond the Glowline and their officers would lose their flare in foreign lands, thus the conquests of the Lunar Army were more limited than they would have otherwise been. It was not until the advent of the Free Army under Argrath, that the Lunar Army met a similarly equipped and trained force.

Basic Formations and Organization:

The Lunar Army was organized along numerical lines of seven, thus virtually every facet of military activity was easy to understand and control — a Lunar Colonel could easily locate virtually every man and section at any moment of the day.

The basic period of enlistment was two cycles, each of seven years. After the first seven year cycle, troops ceased to be known as Recruits and were considered to be Veterans, a status bringing increased pay, but more dangerous tasks. At the end of the 14 years, a soldier would have two choices, he could accept a plot of land in conquered territory and be paid a pension for life (which amounted to about 50L per annum) or he could re-enlist. Troops who enlisted for a second term of 14 years were known as 'Scarlet Companions', so named because of the twin scarlet feathers stuck on either side of the central horse-hair plume of their helmets and the scarlet cloaks which they wore. Scarlet Companions were better paid and more economically employed than their comrades serving the first 14 year term and were the most feared branch of the Lunar Army. The Scarlet Companions were usually deployed on the right flank of the Lunar Regiments, the right flank being traditionally the one which required the most bolstering whilst Recruits and Veterans were organized into sections and divided amongst the formation.

The fundamental unit of the army was the seven man Section (this was composed of six soldiers and one corporal). Single Sections often being used for deployment during sieges and scouting missions, though a single section was rarely strong enough to be fielded without support on the field.

Seven Sections came together to form a Company. A Company also had an additional Leading Section (composed of a Subaltern, a Company-Sergeant-Major/CSM, three Sergeants, a Medical Aid and a Courier), which provided leadership and command skills for the company, the CSM was its senior NCO, the Sergeants providing leadership and administrative skills, the Medical Aid usually had at least Healing VI and some Pow Storage capacity (via potion, crystal or familiar) and the Courier was a lightly armoured messenger, fleet of foot, used to carry orders to and from the Regimental Colonel. A Company was the standard peacetime unit, being given garrison and escort duty as well as policing tasks.

A Regiment was composed of seven Companies, a normal seven man section of Engineers, (six soldiers and a corporal used to direct the construction of siege works and engines) and a Command Section (composed of the Regimental Colonel, two Majors, three Captains and the Regimental-Sergeant-Major/RSM). The Colonel was usually of Rune Level capability, the Majors served as his adjutants and gave tactical command to groups of companies. The Captains provided similar services to that supplied by Majors and the RSM was the senior NCO of the regiment, in charge of discipline and the training of recruits. A full strength Regiment would have 406 men, not including camp followers, auxiliaries and quarter-masters' staff.

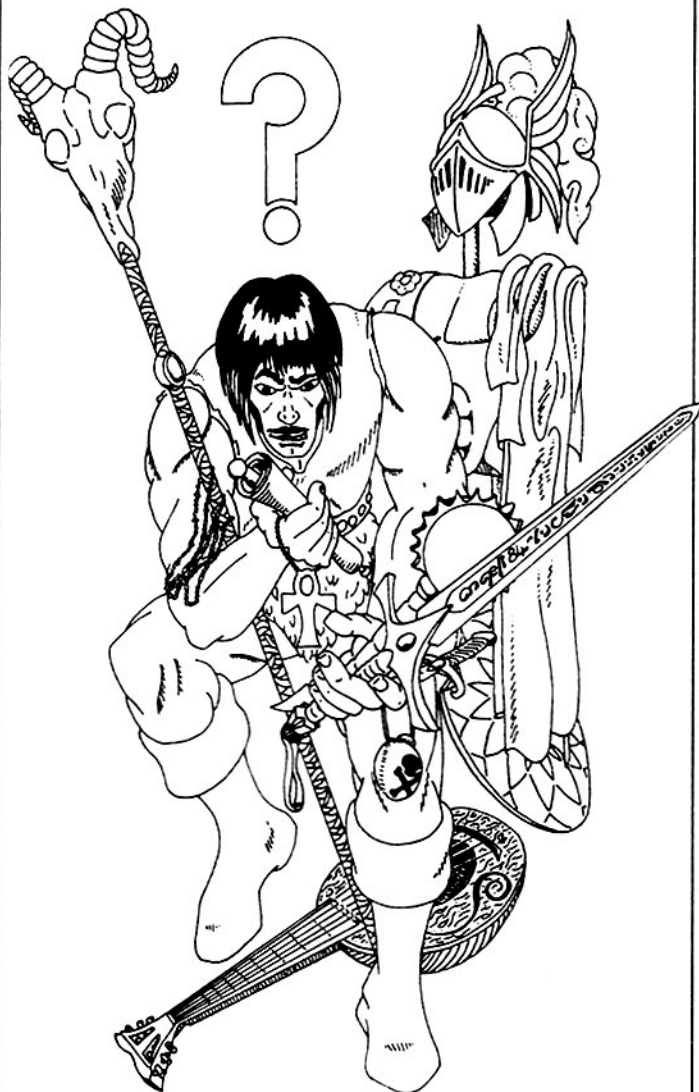
Types of Troops:

The Lunar army had seven major divisions of troop types (usually organized by the regiment):

i) Priests — These shan't be dealt with in this article, for the full effects of Lunar Priests in combat, see the Cradle scenario from PAVIS. They provide major spell and arcane support for the more mundane troops. The Cult of the Red Bat is a good example of Lunar Military Priests.

ii) Lancers — Lancers are the heavy shock troops of the Empire, being mounted on heavy war trained mounts, often recruited from the ranks of the Lunar and Subject nobility. They are mainly used for field duties and the escort of Lunar VIPs and treasure caravans.

iii) Scouts — Scouts are lightly armoured and equipped cavalry used for skirmishing and as their name suggests, scouting functions. They are mounted on smaller but faster mounts than those of the Lancers and the troops for these regiments were often drawn from subject and allied peoples. They were extensively used in peace and war time for escort, police and patrol duties.



iv) Phalangites — Phalangites are heavily equipped, pike infantry. They are the foot equivalent of the Lancers, providing much of the foot based shock. They employ the Yelmalian spear/shield technique. Phalangites were usually employed in garrison and escort duties in peace-time and were almost exclusively field troops in time of war. Their main drawback was that they were difficult to manoeuvre and deploy swiftly.

v) **Hoplites** — Hoplites were heavy infantry armed with one-handed long spears and were used to support the Phalangites. Hoplites being less encumbered without pikes were able to deploy more quickly than Phalangites and thus were positioned on the flanks of Phalanxes to avoid the pike hedge being destroyed from the side.

iv) **Peltasts** — Peltasts were the lighter equipped skirmishing foot of the Empire. They supported the slowly moving Phalangites and Hoplites in the open, coming into their own over broken terrain. They were more versatile than the heavy infantry but could be broken by more heavily armed opponents. Peltasts were widely used in Peace or War.

vii) **Archers** — Archers are the main skirmishing body for the Imperial Army. Whilst Peltasts were only equipped with javelins, Archers were armed with Crossbow (both Heavy and Light), Composite Bows and Arbalests. 60% of a regiment would be equipped with composite bows, 20% light crossbows, 15% heavy crossbows and 5% arbalests. Archers were largely used as garrison troops and to give covering fire, being unable to stand alone in close combat.

Other types of troops are covered by the term Auxiliaries, and were largely drawn from Allied nations, their troops and armament being more diverse than that of regular Imperial soldiers.

Regimental Identities:

Each regiment was fundamentally similar to the others of its type, though there were minor differences. Largely stemming from the frequency of recruitment and the amount of combat seen by the troops. The code x/y/z following a Regiment's identity describes the number of Scarlet Companion companies (x), Veteran companies (y) and Recruit companies (z).

LANCER REGTs: Bloodspillers 6/1/0, Hellsisters 5/1/1, Standfast 4/2/1, Antelopelancers 3/2/2, Charun 3/2/2, Belltemple 3/2/2, Hadrin Dragoons 2/3/2, Red Dragoons 2/3 2, Mothers Guard 1/4/2, Queens 1/3/3, Starkin 1/3/3, Moonarrow 1/3/3, Whipstock 1/3/3, Arrowstone 1/3/3, Uplands 1/3 3, Yelmese 1/2/4, Jintori 1/2/4, Lost Sky 1/2/4.

SCOUT REGTs: Unriver 1/3/3, Kingtemple 1/3/3, Riverfork 1/2/4, Winedance 1/3/4.

PHALANGITE REGTs: Steel-Spear Legion 3/3/1, Household Foot 2/3/2, Jasper Phalans 1/3/3, Marble Phalanx 1/3/3, Granite Phalanx 1/3/3.

HOPLITE REGTs: Feathered-Axe 1/3/3, Grim Soldiers 1/3/3, Twobanner* 1/3/3, Tallport* 1/3/3

PELTAST REGTs: Thunder Dart Slingers 1/3/3, Surecast* 1/3/3, Greysields* 1/3/3.

ARCHER REGTs: Longeye* 1/3/3, Hornbows* 1/3/3, Seasuns* 1/3/3, Deathshots* 1/3/3.

* = These regiments didn't participate in the Hero Wars fought against Sartar, but they did see some service prior to the Hero Wars in Dragon Pass and Prax.

Armour & Equipment:

The superior equipment of the Lunar Army was a significant factor in most of its victories, most of its opponents being armed with makeshift or even captured Lunar equipment. Each regiment had a standard amount of equipment, so certain elite units would supplement the standard types with more exotic items. The basic equipment was:

Lancers: Full Helm, Chain Hauberk, Plate Greaves & Vambraces, full 1 point Leather, War-Horses (with Cuirboilli Barding on Head and Fore-Quarters, with 2 point leather padding everywhere), lance, scimitar, heavy mace, medium shield. The lance was their primary weapon, the scimitar being secondary and the mace tertiary.

Scouts: Composite Helm, Cuirboilli Greaves & Vambraces, Linen Hauberk, full 1 point leather, cavalry horses (with 1 point leather barding on the Quarters), self bow/composite bow (only elite regiments being trained to use Kuschile

Composite Bow), scimitar, dagger and small shield. The bow was their primary weapon, the scimitar being secondary and the dagger tertiary.

Phalangites: Closed Helm, Plate Greaves & Vambraces, Ringmail Hauberk 2/1 point leather padding, Pike, Scimitar, Dagger and Large Shield. The Pike was their primary weapon, the scimitar being secondary and the dagger tertiary.

Hoplites: Closed Helm, Plate Greaves & Vambraces, Ringmail Hauberk, 1 point Leather padding, 3 javelins, One-Handed Short Spear, Scimitar, Dagger and Medium Shield. The spear was their primary weapon, the scimitar secondary and the dagger tertiary.

Peltasts: Open Helm, Cuirboilli Greaves & Vambraces, Linen Hauberk, 2/1 Point Leather padding, 3 javelins, One-Handed Short Spear, Scimitar and Medium Shield. The Javelin was their primary weapon, the spear secondary and the scimitar tertiary.

Archers: Composite Helm, Cuirboilli Greaves & Vambraces, Linen Hauberk, 1 point Leather padding, bow, scimitar, dagger and small shield. The bow was their primary weapon, the scimitar secondary and the dagger tertiary.



Skill Levels:

The skill levels of each regiment varied from company to company, usually the skills increasing from the recruits through to the veterans up to the Scarlet Companions. NCOs and Officers would tend to have skill levels at 5 to 20% higher than the rank and file.

Skill Type	Recruit	Veteran	Scarlet Companion
Primary Weapon	35-50	55-70	75+
Secondary Weapon	30-45	50-65	60+
Tertiary Weapon	25-40	45-60	50+
Shield Parry*	40-50	55-60	65+

* = Phalangites due to their use of the Yelmalian Spear/Shield technique have only half this level of skill and only when their pike is unhooked from their shield.

Spells:

Each soldier in the Lunar Army was carefully trained in the use of spells to aid his regiment and himself in combat. The extent of this training largely relied on the length of service of the soldier and his regimental type. The units of Priests and Allied Shaman provided the 'heavy artillery' backing whilst regimental magicks were more mundane.

LANCERS

Recruit	Veteran	Companion
Mobility	Mobility	Mobility
Bladesharp 1	Bladesharp 2	Bladesharp 3
Healing 1-2	Healing 2-3	Healing 3+
Xenoheal 1-2	Xenoheal 1-2	Xenoheal 2+
Defence* 1	Defence* 2	Defence* 2+
		Repair

SCOUTS

Recruit	Veteran	Companion
Farsee	Farsee	Farsee
Speedart	Speedart	Speedart
Healing 1-2	Healing 2-3	Healing 3+
Xenoheal 1-2	Xenoheal 1-2	Xenoheal 2+
	Defence** 1	Defence** 2+
	Multimiss. 1	Multimiss. 2+
		Detect Enemies

PHALANGITES/HOPLITES

Recruit	Veteran	Companion
Healing 1-2	Healing 2-3	Healing 3+
Defence* 1-2	Defence* 2-3	Defence* 3+
Bladesharp 1-2	Bladesharp 2-3	Bladesharp† 4
	Fanaticism 1	Fanaticism 1
		Repair

PELTASTS

Recruit	Veteran	Companion
Healing 1-2	Healing 2-3	Healing 3+
Defence**1	Defence** 2	Defence** 3+
Bladesharp 1	Bladesharp 1	Bladesharp 2+
Speedart	Speedart	Speedart
	Mobility	Mobility
	Farsee	Farsee
		Detect Enemies
		Demoralise

ARCHERS

Recruit	Veteran	Companion
Healing 1-2	Healing 2-3	Healing 3+
Defence** 1-2	Defence** 2-3	Defence** 3-4
Speedart	Speedart	Speedart
Multimiss. 1	Multimiss. 2	Multimiss. 3+
	Firearrow	Firearrow
		Farsee

Defence* = Either Countermagic or Protection (mostly Protection).

Defence** = One of Countermagic, Protection or Shimmer (usually Protection or Shimmer).

Bladesharp† some units, (up to 50%) were given Fireblade. This is so the second rank could cast it on the weapons of the first rank.

Specialists' Spells:

The Specialists, NCOs and Officers of a Regiment tend to have Spells as if they were Veterans with the following additions or changes:

CORPORALS: Dispel Magic 1, Demoralise

SERGEANTS/SUBALTERNs: Dispel Magic 2, Demoralise

CSMs/CAPTAINS: Dispel Magic 2, Demoralise, Healing 4

RSMs/MAJORS: Dispel Magic 2, Demoralise, Healing 6

MEDICS: (spells limited to these only) Countermagic 4, Healing 6, Dispel Magic 2.

COLONELS: As Runelord or Runepriest!

Note: Soldiers almost never had magical items or familiars. 5% of Corporals, 10% of Sergeants, 15% of Subalterns, 20% of CSMs, 30% of Captains, 40% of RSMs, 50% of Majors and 100% of Colonels did. Medical Aids were always given a Pow Restoring Potion and usually a Familiar of Pow 18 to enable multiple castings of Healing 6.

Epilogue:

I don't expect most campaigns will see more than three or four sections of Lunar troops at any one time, as larger formations would not only be difficult to handle but would article dealing with the units of the Sartar Free Army. The most reaction to this article, I might try to follow it with a further dealing with the units of the Sartar Free Army. The most important thing to remember about Lunars is that they are slaves to routine and discipline, clever referees should use this to their advantage and sometimes to their detriment, clever players should try to exploit it. Some basic peace-time formations are described below (these formations are usually 50% Recruit and 50% Veteran. Companions are rarely wasted on such tasks).

Supply Wagon duty (Supplies for a regiment or Garrison): 1 Section of Scouts, 2-3 Sections of Phalangites/Hoplites, 0-2 Sections of Archers/Peltasts.

Pay Wagon (enough for a Regiment for one fortnight, usually circa 25,000 Lunars).

1-2 Sections of Lancers, 1-3 Sections of Scouts, 3-4 Sections of Phalangites/Hoplites, 1-2 Sections of Peltasts/Archers.

Tax Collection (for an amount up to 10,000 Lunars).

0-1 Sections of Lancers, 1 Section of Scouts, 2 sections of Phalangites/Hoplites, 0-1 Sections of Peltasts/Archers.

VIP Escort Duty (for a VIP up to the level of Provincial Governor).

2-4 Sections of Lancers, 0-2 Sections of Scouts. Note — these are usually either Veterans (67% of the time) or Scarlet Companions (33% of the time).



Explanatory Note

Captain Ralf Rochester was an ACE OF ACES character of some repute here in Melbourne, amassing a total of 15 confirmed victories whilst surviving no fewer than five crashes.

Over a year ago he disappeared without trace whilst patrolling towards Lille. The War Office must now, regretfully presume him to be dead. His Majesty, King George V described this loss as "a great blow to the Empire and all of Christendom."

— Ralph, we shan't forget you —

by Mark Robins

THE ADVENTURES OF

by: JOSEPH ITALIANO
and
PETER HUGHES

KELESTINE

© 1984

OF EARTH



FURTHER ON INTO THE DUNGEON



WOULD YOU PLEASE STOP
YELLING, HALF BREED!

AWA... SORRY.

I'll save you?

DON'T YOU
BLOODY DARE!!

SUCK



LAST TIME YOU
"SAVEDUS" YOU
ZAPPED US AS
WELL...

...WE'RE QUITE CAPABLE
OF HANDLING THIS
SITUATION OURSELVES,
RIGHT JOLINE?

SPLASH!



UH... MAYBE WE COULD USE
A BIT OF HELP AFTER ALL!

SLURP

SLURP

SLURP



HEY, LOOK AT THIS!

WHAT? OH THEY'RE BACK!

THEY?!

YEAH, THE SEWER INSPECTORS.

PUSH!!

I'M PUSHING
ALREADY

NEVER MIND

SEWER INSPECTORS?

BOY, WHATEVER THEY
DO DOWN THERE, IT'S
DAMN EXHAUSTING!



BACK AT MILD'S
PALACIAL UP-WIND
APARTMENT...



WHERE'S ALL THE
FURNITURE?

I'VE GOT ALL I NEED!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING
TO DO WITH IT?

IT'S A HE-RAT AND I'M
GOING TO TRAIN HIM.



OOSH-SHMULLA-
MAGAR-EE-BAR-
GOOM-POOM-
ANIMAL FRIENDSHIP!



HOW IS IT GOING, YOU'VE
BEEN AT IT FOR DAYS!

HE'S THE LEADER OF THE PACK..

HE'S VERY INTELLIGENT
AND I'VE TAUGHT HIM
LOTS OF TRICKS... HMMM,
WHAT'S A GOOD NAME FOR A
HEAD RAT?



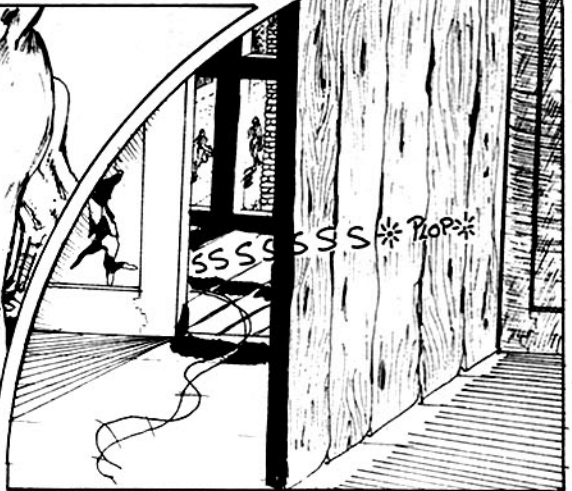
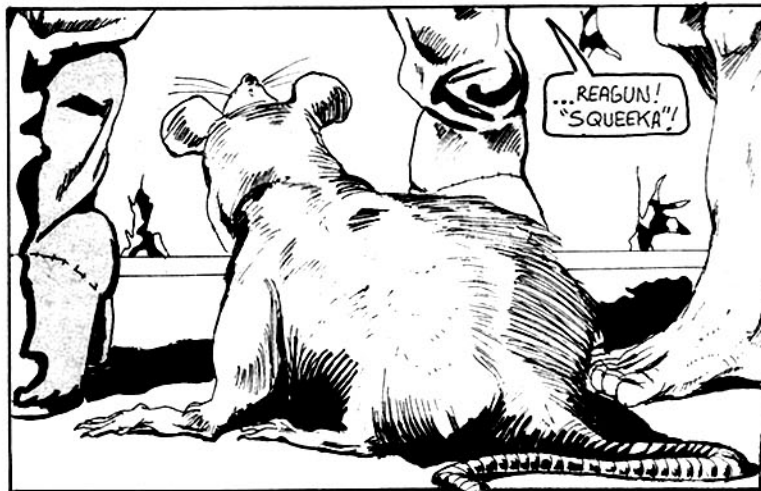
WAS THE LEADER!

REAGUN!?



LATER THAT NIGHT

OUCH! — KELESTINE? — KELESTINE!



TO BE CONTINUED SOMEWHERE IN THE MULTIVERSE!

PHANTASTACON

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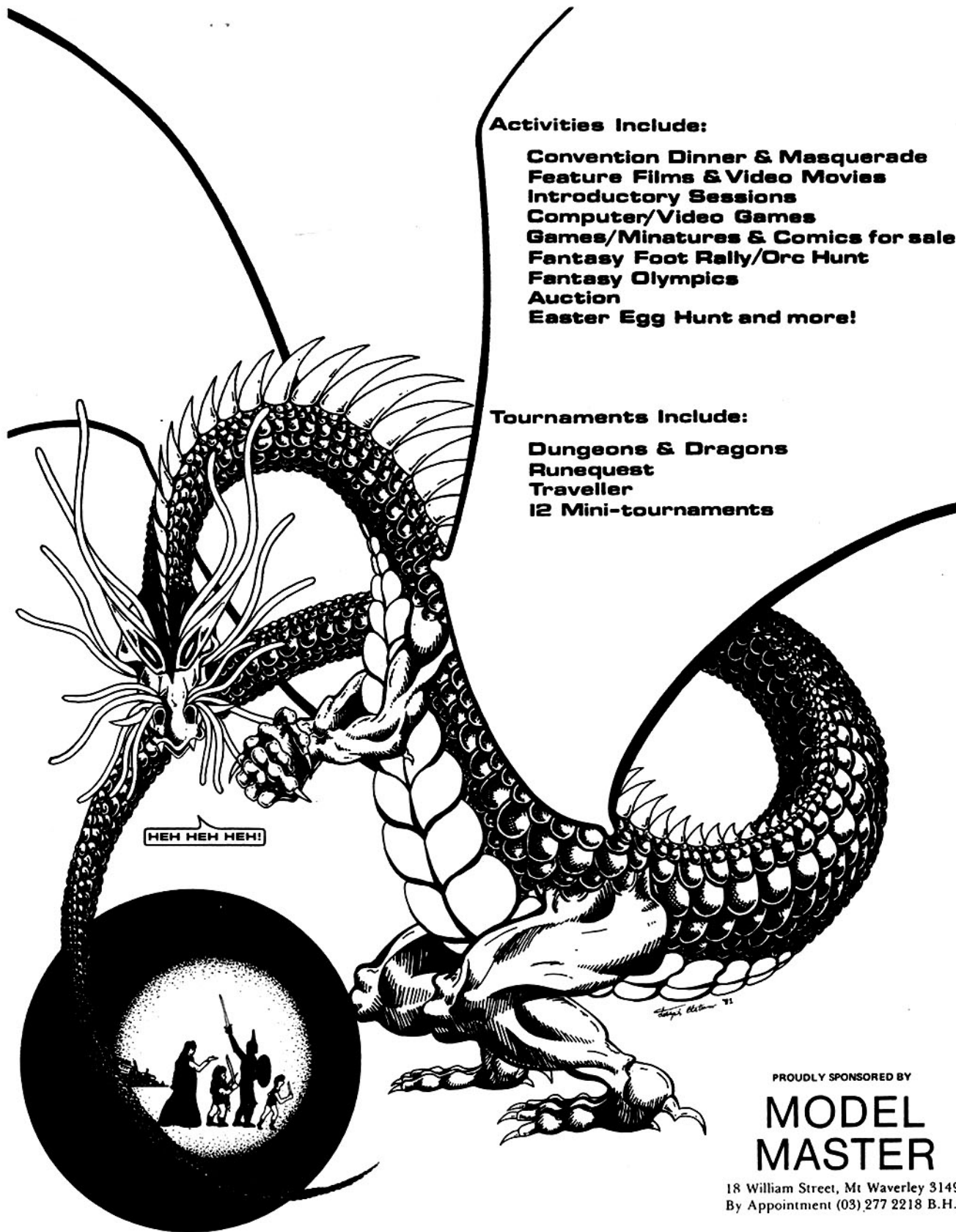
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DEFECTS

Defects in Super Squadron can be obtained in two major ways. Either the character wishes to have more powers other than those originally rolled or the player has begun with such an extremely powerful character that some form of terminal defect is given to the character for some form of game balance. (Green Sting is this type of character).

The standard form of defect, and the easiest to designate when beginning the game, is a basic multiple or intensified effect from a specific source. This being either a power or substance, such as double damage from an attack form, or power loss due to a specific substance.

Although this works well and is relatively easy to designate, it does lack creativity and possible avenues for character development. After all, many specific powers themselves have these types of inherent defects; Robotic Body is vulnerable to Lightning/Electrical attacks; Force Fields don't stop Air, Light and Sound based attacks and Invulnerability is always vulnerable to an attack type. To simply duplicate these principles without consideration for the specific character, lacks so much potential lustre. This type of defect is only the tip of the Ice Berg.

Defects are meant to be inherent problems that a super powered character has, which should relate to their Powers, Origin or Background, or a combination of these. Many of these types of defects, which do not relate to powers, can be utilised to create more interesting characters.

It is impossible to embellish on even one series of defects based on one option, as there are so many variables. This series of examples is only designed to show you some aspects of the various options.

Power Based Defects

Related Powers

Although this is a relatively easy form of defect to assign to a character, it is much harder to determine why the character should have the 'defect' power affect them so. If a logical reason can be established for the defect power's intensified effect, it will add to game believability. This will also create a firmer foundation for character development and a more substantial base for role playing. After all, why should a character with Flame Generation be susceptible to Gravity Control, or some other randomly determined power? The specific defect assigned should relate to the character in some way. In this specific case, a logical defect could be based on the powers alone. A character which can generate flame would probably be susceptible to Ice Generation.

Powers which have opposites such as: Air Generation-Terra Generation; Light Control-Darkness Generation; Revivication-Death Touch, or powers which have an effective relationship such as; Non Requirement of Air but need to be immersed in Water periodically; Magnetic Manipulation polarization effects disturbed by Lightning/Electrical influences, are the simplest and most basic forms of related power defects.

Derivative Powers

The other major type of power based defects, are defects that are side effects or derivatives of the actual powers the character possesses. Characters who have a power multiple times fit very well into this category. Marvels X-Men character "Rogue" has this type of defect. She has mimic multiple times. This not only allows her to absorb other characters' powers, but also their memories. While she possesses these mimiced abilities, her victim is rendered unconscious without any memories or powers. However, if she maintains someone elses powers for too long a period, she permanently absorbs her victim's memories. Eventually the character would totally lose their own identity and become someone else, an NPC. As it is now, she has permanently absorbed the abilities of only one character and is suffering periods of schizophrenia due to

a now permanent dual personality.

A character with Energy Absorption, translated into a related defect could not only allow the character to absorb various energy forms, but force them to become dependant on them. The character might 'burn' up their own energies at a higher rate, and actually need to supplement themselves with external energy sources, or suffer various consequences. Consequences could range from physical (if not visual) ageing at an accelerated rate, (one month per day), to power ability reductions.

A character with size change smaller might permanently shrink a small amount, (say 1 cm), every time the power was used. This would not make the power useless, but more restrained. It would only be used in dire emergencies, once the character with the power became aware of it!

Organic Powers are usually very easy to derive defects from. Powers based on animals or plants usually require some research into the specific abilities of the creature, which should also provide some insight to the basic problems the creatures have. These problems range from natural enemies, natural defects or environmental conditions. For example, creatures that live in extreme conditions such as the tropics/artic could be sensitive to opposite temperature variations. Defects could range from power ability loss, increased power effects to just straight Action Point or Hit Point loss. Characters with Bear based powers might need longer periods of sleep or may become dormant during winter. Characters with reptilian based powers may be cold blooded, and therefore lose Agility points in cold weather or environments.

Characters with beam weapons could have a chance of their beam weapon backfiring or rebounding uncontrollably. Numerous derivative defects can be created with a bit of thought.

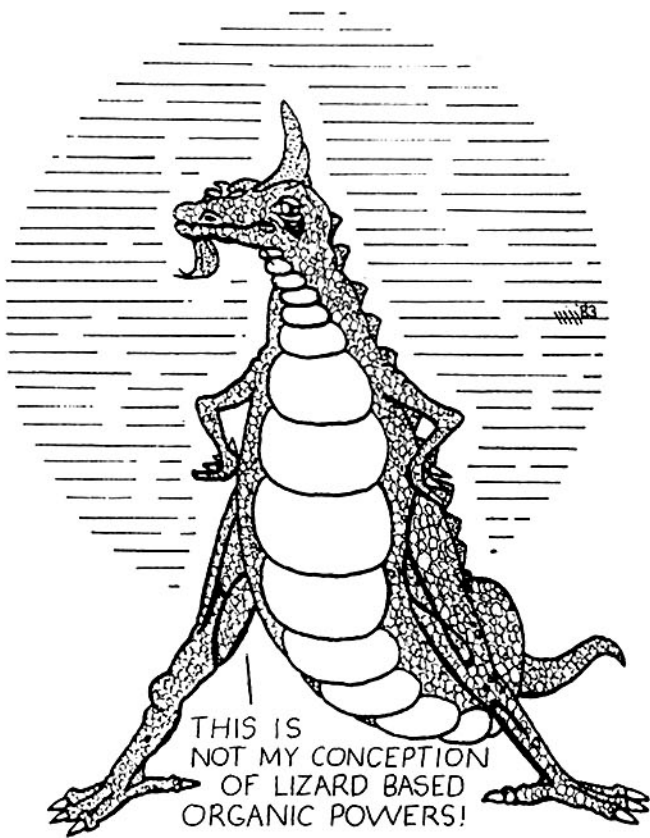
Power based defects are very rarely applicable as terminal defects, as they are usually almost impossible to logically overcome, or would be very difficult to counteract.

Background Based Defects

Background based defects require more thought on both the player's and GM's part. It is wise to allow the player some input into the type of character they wish to play and then rationalise an origin and background. The background can then be based and modified to suit some appropriate form of defect for the character, which is not dependant on, but may be modified by powers.

We will assume that a character "Empath" has Emotion Control as a primary power. The character is a young female Mutant. The player wishes to role play Empath as a sweet lost child who only wishes to help anyone she encounters, and since discovering her powers now intends to use them for this purpose. With this basic character outline from the player, the GM can flesh out an applicable defect.

Using the basic outline so far, the GM rationalises Empath's attitude as a reaction based on her homelife. The GM decides that her parents were an unhappy couple. They were constantly fighting, with one parent constantly becoming drunk and violent. (Which specific parent was the cause would depend on the character's family details as determined by the basic background tables). Empaths actual homelife was the original problem which sprouted the characters desire to help others. Also taking into account her primary power, Emotion Control, (although this is not essential), the GM obviously feels that Empath is also sensitive to some specific emotions in specific conditions. Particularly those that relate to her original homelife situations. The defect is then based on empathic reactions Empath picks up in cases that mimic or relate to her upbringing. Whenever Empath comes across an encounter which bears some relationship to this, she is affected in some way, such as power ability loss. Such encounters could include wife beating, alcoholic derelicts, etc..



In this case, the GM may also wish to modify some of the primary background facts, to promote the role playing aspect and background of the character. Such changes could include, reducing Empath's age to her early teens (even below starting age), and assuming Empath left or ran away from home due to all her homelife problems. Perhaps have one of her parents die or have died due to these problems, such as a suicide or murder while intoxicated and violent.

This defect could easily be adapted as a terminal defect. It could be overcome in two main ways. The player could either solve her homelife problems, or she could simply grow out of it as she matures, at a proportionately reducing rate.

In cases where no one power can be used as any base for a defect, other totally new background history can be incorporated to introduce a defect.

A family conflict situation can be introduced with some GM manipulation to produce a defect. For example, a player's family may disapprove of their actions, or being a superbeing. Other family members may be superpowered, beings on the opposite side of the law to the player. A sibling may be a Superhero and is dedicated to removing the black sheep from the family tree. A player Superhero may have a homicidal maniac as a close relative that hates them for no apparent reason. The specific power ability of the 'defect' (enemy superbeing), should be very carefully controlled. In almost all cases, the Superhero character should be more powerful, particularly if the player is a Villian. Super-Villians in these cases, tend to kill defeated heroes. Exactly how much difference the two characters should have in power ability will depend on the specific background situation, and whether the defect is terminal and therefore can be resolved. If this is used as a terminal defect, the power difference will probably be smaller. If the defect is terminal, the situation can be resolved by the elimination of one character, or both characters actually settling their differences, and becoming friendly again. Note, that the GM will probably need to specifically design the player's antagonist, as opposed to random generation. Marvel's Master of Kung Fu character has this type of permanent defect. His father hates him and may kill him. He is a powerful Super-Villian in many ways, but does not actually outclass the character in physical power.

Origin Based Defects

The basic origin type and the specific origin experience can both be used to develop defects

Origin Type

The six primary origin types themselves can provide the basis for some defects. Aliens may have physical variations of extreme nature. They could be hunted by anti-alien groups of either military or civilian nature. (Mutants can also be hunted by similar groups). Sponsored characters could be hunted by their ex-benefactors. Aliens may be totally naive or unfamiliar with terran law, customs and culture. These problems can also include being totally unable to communicate in any terran language.

Sponsored characters may be forced to do things that they are against, which may cause them problems with either the law and Superheroes if they do anything illegal or even Super-Villains if they are constantly forced to intervene in their actions.

Scientifically created or based characters (such as robots) might be susceptible to some Supernatural based items or powers.

Many defects of this kind can be adopted with some modifications as either permanent or terminal defects. Terminal defects can end when the anti-whatever group is eliminated/disbanded or the prejudice is settled. Sponsored characters can regain their place with their benefactors or eliminate them altogether. Characters forced to serve may only need to do so for a limited time.

Origin Experience

A character's specific origin situation can also provide a cohesive defect. Characters who experience difficult and horrible situations while obtaining their powers may have defects based on that experience. Once an origin base has been established, a defective property can usually be derived from it.

If a character gained their powers from a nuclear accident, the character could be terrified by any nuclear threat, whether or not they can be directly affected by it. They would operate at a reduced power ability in these cases.

Supernatural characters who are bestowed their powers by entities may be forced to do things they do not want to, or are constantly called upon leaving them little or no real freedom.

Marvel's Hulk character obtained his powers from a Gamma Bomb explosion, giving him Shape Shift into Superbeing identity and numerous other powers. However, he cannot actually control the trigger into his Hulk identity, which is based on external causes of fear or anxiety.

A character who gains a Mind Power, after testing an experimental 'instant education device', can also have their mind affected in other less beneficial ways. These can include various insanities to strange brainwashed beliefs. Insanities such as dual personalities (good and evil) are amusing. The GM may wish to only allow the character to play one personality. Affected minds can develop strange ideas, such as "I must do something or I will die".

Some origin experiences are so horrifying, that a character may blot them out, resulting in amnesia. In this case, the player would not even know what powers, characteristics or even background they have. (These would be determined by the GM).

In many cases, the distinction of the basis for the defect is unclear. However, this is not important, in fact it is preferable. Combining as many of these properties to produce a cohesive character is more important. It is up to the GM and player to develop the best combination of circumstances for suitable defects.

by Joseph Italiano

CLOUD WARRIOR

Cloud Warriors are a Fighter sub-class limited to Avian races, Elves and Half-Elves. Elves only have a 25% chance of being 'gifted' with the ability and both Elves and Half-Elves are limited to the 5th level of experience.

Cloud Warriors attack as a Magic-User equivalent to twice their level of experience and they save as for Clerics in this manner. Cloud Warriors must have ability scores of at least 13 Strength and at least 14 Wisdom, Dexterity, and Constitution. Their alignment must be lawful.

Cloud Warriors cannot use armour heavier than leather. The only weapons they may use are javelins, spears, bows and other projectile-type weapons. Any magic items not restricted above may be used by the Cloud Warrior but they may only keep one of each of these items in their possession.

Cloud Warriors may be multi-classed but only Cloud Warrior/Thief, Cloud Warrior/Assassin, or Cloud Warrior/Illusionist combinations are possible.

This Class is also psionically gifted gaining 1-2 attacks and 2-5 defenses. Cloud Warriors have no disciplines except 'cloud walk' gained at 2nd level requiring 5 psionic strength points per turn to maintain. Cloud Warriors use a 12-sided hit dice, per level.

Cloud Warrior Experience Table

Experience Points	Exp Lvl	*AC Adjust	Special Ability	Level Title
0-4500	1	-1	A	Mist Maker
4501-18000	2	-1	B	Cloud Walker
18001-60000	3	-1	C	Cloud Conjurer
60001-145000	4	-2	D	Cloud Enchanter
145001-440000	5	-2	E	Cloud Scout
440001-880000	6	-2	F	Cloud Warrior
880001-1130000	7	-3	G	Cloud Warrior Lord
1130001-1380000	8	-3	H	Master Cloud Lord
1380001-1630000	9	-4	-	Master Cloud Lord

250,000 experience points per level for each additional level above the 9th.

* This armour class adjustment only applies when the character is somewhat concealed by cloud cover.

Exp Lvl	Air Spells usable per day per level								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
5	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
6	4	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
7	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	-	-
8	5	5	4	4	4	3	1	1	-
9	5	5	4	4	4	4	2	1	1
10	5	5	5	4	4	4	2	2	1
11	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	2	2
12	6	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	2

EXPLANATION OF SPECIAL ABILITIES

A — Summon mists 3/day that are so dense as to obscure vision for 2-8 rounds.

B — Psionic ability cloud walk (useable on non-turbulent clouds). Predict weather at will.

C — Control temperatures 10' radius.

D — Summon snow storm 1/day. 75% resistance to lightning.

E — Transport via clouds 2/day lasting one turn per level of EXP. (No attacking while using ability).

F — Able to use weapons and spells while transporting via

clouds. Call lightning 1/day.

G — Summon and control weather at will.

H — Summon a cloud chariot 1/day capable of carrying three man-sized creatures (or equivalent weight) lasting for one hour + one turn for every level of experience.

Air Spells Description

Purify Air (Alteration) Reversible

Level 1
Range: 1"/Level
Duration: 5 rounds/LVL
Area of Effect: 1" radius globe/Level
Components: V,S,M
Casting Time: 1 segment
Saving Throw: Nil

When this spell is used, the caster causes the air in the area of effect to become purified. This will remove any impurities and cause gases that might be poisonous to become non-poisonous. The reverse of this spell causes the air in the area of effect to become stale and it will also have a cumulative +03%/level of the spell caster, chance of becoming poisonous.

Create Air (Alteration)

Level: 2
Range: 1"
Duration: Special
Area of Effect: 1/2" radius globe/2 levels.
Components: V,S,M
Casting Time: 2 segments
Saving Throw: Nil

When this spell is used, the caster creates a globe of air in the desired area. The globe will remain where it is placed until it is forced away. Otherwise it will last until it dissipated or converted to some other form of gas. The air type created will depend upon the atmosphere type of the nearest world to the spell caster. Breathing will be possible for one creature for one hour/level of the spell caster before the supply is exhausted.

Resist Poison Gases (Abjuration)

Level: 2
Range: Touch
Duration: 1 turn/level
Area of Effect: Creature Touched.
Components: V,S,M
Casting time: 2-8 rounds.
Saving Throw: Nil

When this spell is cast on any creature, that creature will have a resistance to any type of poison gas that might enter their body. For every two levels of the spell caster's experience the creature affected will have a +1 bonus on all saves vs. poison gases.

Produce Wind (Conjuration/Summoning)

Level: 3
Range: 1"/Level
Duration: 1 round/level
Area of Effect: Special.
Components: V,S
Casting Time: 1 round
Saving Throw: Nil

When this spell is used, the spell caster can summon winds from 5-30 m.p.h. These winds can be directed in any direction desired by the spell caster. The wind brought forth will blow away most small items that are not secured and larger objects can also be moved if the force of the wind is concentrated in one area.

Assume Air Elemental Form (Alteration)

Level: 4
Range: 0
Duration: 5 turns/2 LVL
Area of Effect: Personal.
Components: V,S,M
Casting Time: 4 segments
Saving Throw: Nil

When this spell is used, the spell caster is able to change their form to that of an Air Elemental. They will have the abilities and appear exactly as an Air Elemental. The spell caster will, however, retain their own mind and also operate as they would normally.

Direct Wind (Alteration)

Level: 5
Range: 0
Duration: 1 turn/2 LVL
Area of Effect: 1" radius/level.
Components: V,S
Casting Time: 1 round
Saving Throw: Nil

When this spell is cast, the caster can direct any winds within

the spell's radius. The caster can cause them to go in any direction that they so choose. Also, for every two levels of experience the spell caster can increase or decrease the force of the available wind by a cumulative rate of 5 miles per hour.

Summon Air Elemental (Conjuration/Summoning)

Level: 5 Components: V,S,M
 Range: 1" Casting Time: 5 rounds
 Duration: Special Saving Throw: Nil
 Area of Effect: Special.

When this spell is used, the spell caster is able to summon an Air Elemental creature from its plane. After casting the spell, the Air Elemental will be standing before the spell caster. The Elemental's hit die will be equivalent to the level of the spell caster. There is also a (+05% cumulative chance/2 levels of the spell caster) + 10% that an Air Elemental Lord can be summoned. When the summoned creature has arrived, it will remain for the time it takes to perform one service for the spell caster, and then return home to its own plane.

Summon/Control Weather (Conjuration/Summoning)

Level: 6 Components: V,S
 Range: 1/2 mile/level Casting Time: 6 rounds
 Duration: 1 round/LVL. Saving Throw: Nil
 Area of Effect: 1/2 mile square/level.

When this spell is used, the spell caster can call forth various kinds of weather at their disposal. More violent forms of weather can only be summoned with a 50% chance. Once summoned the spell caster has absolute control over such and the spell can also be used to control weather that is already available. Weather types that are indigenous to that climate/season may also remain for a certain period of time (75% chance) until they dwindle off.

Wind Barrier (Abjuration-Evocation)

Level: 6 Components: V,S,M
 Range: 1/2"/Level Casting Time: 6 segments
 Duration: Permanent Saving Throw: Nil
 Area of Effect: 1 cubic ft./level.

This spell will cause any creature attempting passage to be caught by a whirling vortex and thrown back out in the direction that they entered from. This will cause 1-10 points of damage/10 feet that the creature is thrown. Creatures ejected from the barrier will be thrown from 10-20 feet away.

Cloud Sail (Alteration)

Level: 7 Components: V,S,M
 Range: 0 Casting Time: 1 round
 Duration: 1 hour/LVL Saving Throw: Nil
 Area of Effect: Personal.

When this spell is cast, the caster is able to transport themselves through the sky on a cloud. The spell caster will be able to travel at twice their normal movement rate and continue such as long as their spell lasts. Near the end of the spell's duration, the cloud will automatically begin to lower towards the ground where it will dissipate. Other spells and attacks can be used while cloud sailing, but the cloud must remain motionless at these times.

Sky Vision (Divination)

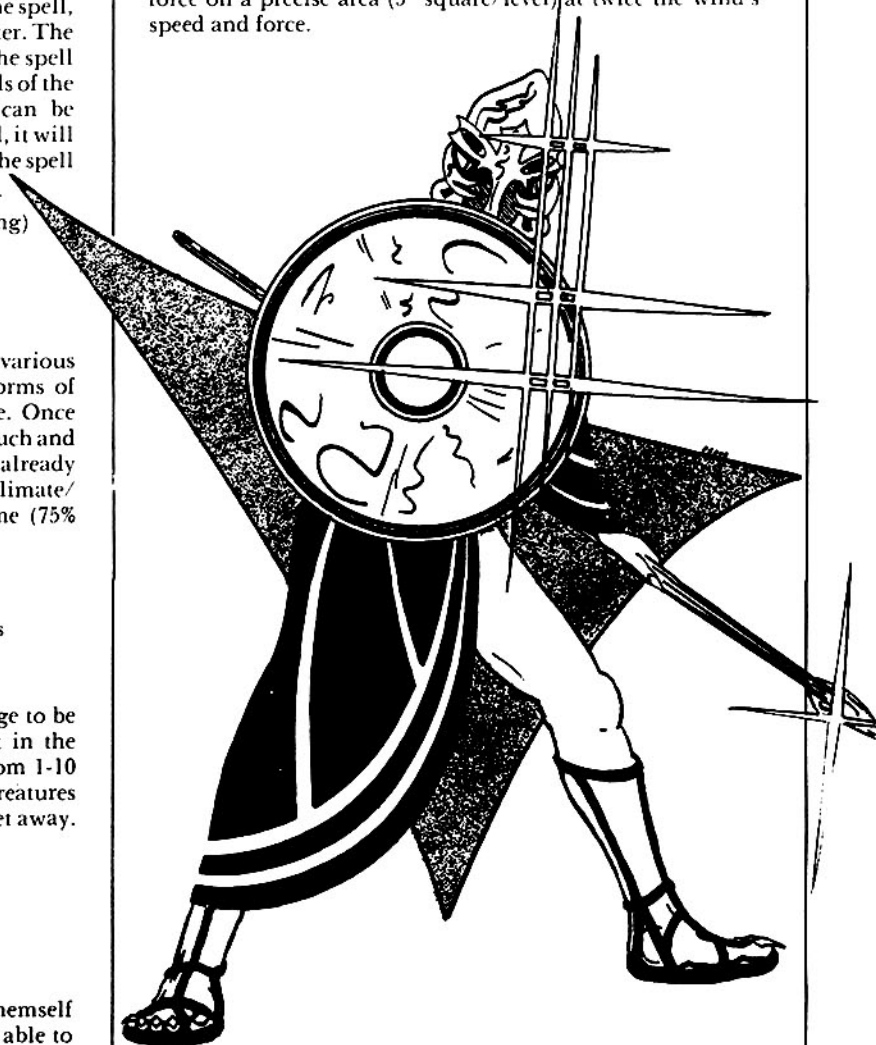
Level: 7 Components: V,S
 Range: 0 Casting Time: 1 turn
 Duration: Special Saving Throw: Nil
 Area of Effect: Special.

When this spell is cast, the spell caster can evoke powers that will grant a vision, in the sky that will answer any question or portray any person, place, thing, or event that the spell caster wishes to gain knowledge about. There is only a 70% chance that the vision will be portrayed completely in a clear picture. If so it will manifest itself in the form of a mental picture, a thought, a dream, or perhaps even a holographic image/picture. If the vision is not clear it will be incomplete or maybe even misleading. The probability of a vision coming in clear will increase by +05% per every other level above 14th. Note that the skies must be clear for the spell to work.

Gale (Conjuration/Summoning)

Level: 8 Components: V,S
 Range: 1/2 mile/Level Casting Time: 1 turn
 Duration: 1 round/LVL. Saving Throw: Nil
 Area of Effect: 1/2 mile square/2 Levels.

When cast, this spell will bring forth a gale force wind that will blow in the area and direction that the spell caster so desires. The winds will reach a speed of from 30-60 m.p.h. and will definitely blow away anything that is not firmly secured. If so desired, the spell caster can even concentrate the wind force on a precise area (5" square/level) at twice the wind's speed and force.



Air Sphere (Abjuration-Alteration)

Level: 9 Components: V,S,M
 Range: Special Casting Time: 1 day
 Duration: Special Saving Throw: Nil
 Area of Effect: Personal.

When this spell is cast, the spell caster will create a globe of air on its corresponding Elemental Plane. This globe will remain there until the latter part of the spell is used. The preparation of this spell may only be performed once per year but the last part of such may not even be used for some time after that. Once the sphere is finished, if the spell caster is about to suffer a fatal occurrence, they will be immediately transported to their sphere in safety. After this second part of the spell has occurred, the sphere will cease to exist once the spell caster has prepared for survival in that Elemental Plane that they have been transferred to.

The Cloud Warrior class has been reprinted from Gamemaster Guides "EXOTIC CHARACTERS and WORLDS for Role Playing Games", with permission.

by Ted C. Ryan

JAMES BOND 007

"James Bond 007" is the first role-playing game to be produced by the Victory Games company. Victory Games has previously been producing boardgames, although quite a few of their design staff have had experience with role-playing games while working at SPI. SPI's two role-playing games were Universe and DragonQuest. The co-designer of these two games, Gerard Klug, is the designer of "James Bond 007." He worked on all three projects with Michael Moore, Robert Ryer, and Ted Koller. This tends to explain many of the similarities between these game systems.

A character can start at one of three rank levels. These are Rookie, Agent, and "00" status. Unfortunately you can only be a character with MI6 in the basic game, however this is expanded in the Game Master's supplement "For Your Information." You have the option to choose which rank you wish to be, which also determines the amount of generation points you obtain with which to create your character. There is no random die generation for statistics. The generation points are used to buy your characteristic levels, skill levels and physical attributes. The game uses five main characteristics: strength, perception, willpower, dexterity and intelligence. There are also twenty-four different skills in the game.

The problems in the game begin when you wish to use a skill. This requires a skill roll, which is a complicated procedure. To calculate whether your skill attempt is successful requires the use of a primary chance figure and an ease factor, which are multiplied to give a base percentage success chance. The primary chance is obtained by a combination of your skill levels and your characteristics that are used for that skill, i.e. driving relies on perception and dexterity, therefore the primary chance is $(Dex + Per)/2 + \text{driving skill level}$. The result is then given a quality rating between 1 and 4. The other problem in this section is with the characteristic rolls, in that this ignores the characteristic ratings and uses a flat rate of 20 as the primary chance.

A major part of the game is "hero" points. These allow you to recreate all the impossible actions that happen in the movies and in the books, by using the hero points to alter the quality rating result and therefore allowing you to turn failure into success. This part of the system works well, however the method used for obtaining hero points is poor. I believe a system based on purchasing hero points with experience points would have been better. Experience points in the game are given in the same manner as DragonQuest. They are assigned by the Game Master with bonuses or penalties for role-playing and successfully completing the mission. The purchase cost for skills and characteristic points is well balanced. The experience points can also be used to purchase equipment from Q-branch.

Combat is one of the better sections of the game. It gives the characters a better than even chance of surviving most encounters. There are two types of combat in James Bond. They are hand-to-hand combat and fire combat. Hand-to-hand combat is less lethal, but more useful for getting out of tight situations. Combat is resolved by performing a skill roll and then cross-referencing this with the damage class, (which is assigned by the weapon type), giving the amount of damage inflicted.

Chases have always been an important part of James Bond movies and books, and any game on the subject should include them. "James Bond 007" the role-playing game does just that. The chases in the game are run by bidding ease factors against the Game Master, who bids for the NPCs. The winner performs his manoeuvre first. The manoeuvres can be any one of five types: pursue/flee, force, quickturn, doubleback and trick. This section works very well. The chases turn out to be quite exciting and action-packed.

There are several other aspects of the game which are quite important for the recreation of the James Bond world. These are the night life and interaction with NPCs. The Night Life section is quite interesting and very useful for gaining hero points. However, the interaction with NPCs is less comprehensive. This section appears to have been rushed as even the reaction table does not have any modifiers based on your physical appearance.

All of the Q Branch equipment is listed in one chapter of the rulebook, which is far from complete. To complement this, they have released another book, the "Q Manual." This book makes very novel reading, as there are comments on every piece of equipment by a number of Q Branch scientific staff. These comments are quite amusing and give various

examples of when the equipment was used and by whom. There is a section on each item describing how it fits into the game, and a large set of tables at the end of the book that list all the information needed to use the items in the game.



The Game Master's section is good, but some important aspects of the game are missing. They are, however, covered in a later Game Master's supplement, "For Your Information." Chapters in the basic rulebooks' Game Masters' section cover: how to be a Game Master, the use of Non-Player Characters, NPC encounters, M.L.G., Tarot, allies and enemies, and thrilling cities. The areas which are covered in the Game Masters' supplement and which should have been in the basic rulebook are: creating campaigns, adventure generation, travel, undercover work, and imposters. These sections are essential if you wish to play the game properly. I understand the business sense in doing this, but it is really just "ripping" off the public!

I have some other complaints with regards to the adventures. All of the adventures have a varying level of omissions, with Octopussy being the worst. Octopussy lacks definition and requires an excess of random die-rolling, making it difficult to play. In most of the James Bond adventures continuity is difficult to maintain as the sections which bridge the adventure components together are missing and very little time is allowed for the characters to role-play in the game. For example, in Goldfinger, there is no time allowed for aircraft flights. This proves to be very awkward, as it leaves the characters little game time to play out the important sections in the module. As far as the modules go, "Doctor No" is by far the best being almost playable.

Overall, the game is one of the better role-playing games on the market and is very enjoyable. The main faults are small but very awkward. The game does work out to be rather expensive, as you need all the extras to play it properly.

The boxed set contains a basic rulebook (160 pgs), a pad of character sheets, two 10 and two 6-sided dice, retailing for \$26.00. The basic rulebook on its own retails for \$15.00. The Q Manual is 137 pages and retails for \$15.00. The Game Master pack includes an 11' x 32' Game Master screen, a pad of 40 character record sheets, 23 cardboard sculptured and cut figures and bases and a grid sheet for movement and combat, retailing at \$18.00. "For Your Information" contains a 72 page rulebook, 12 M.L.G. dossier sheets, 12 M.L.G. document sheets, and 30 NPC cards. This will retail at around \$18.00. The adventures "Doctor No", "Goldfinger" and "Octopussy" all include a 48 page adventure book and a briefing dossier retailing at \$10.50.

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by Greg Ingram

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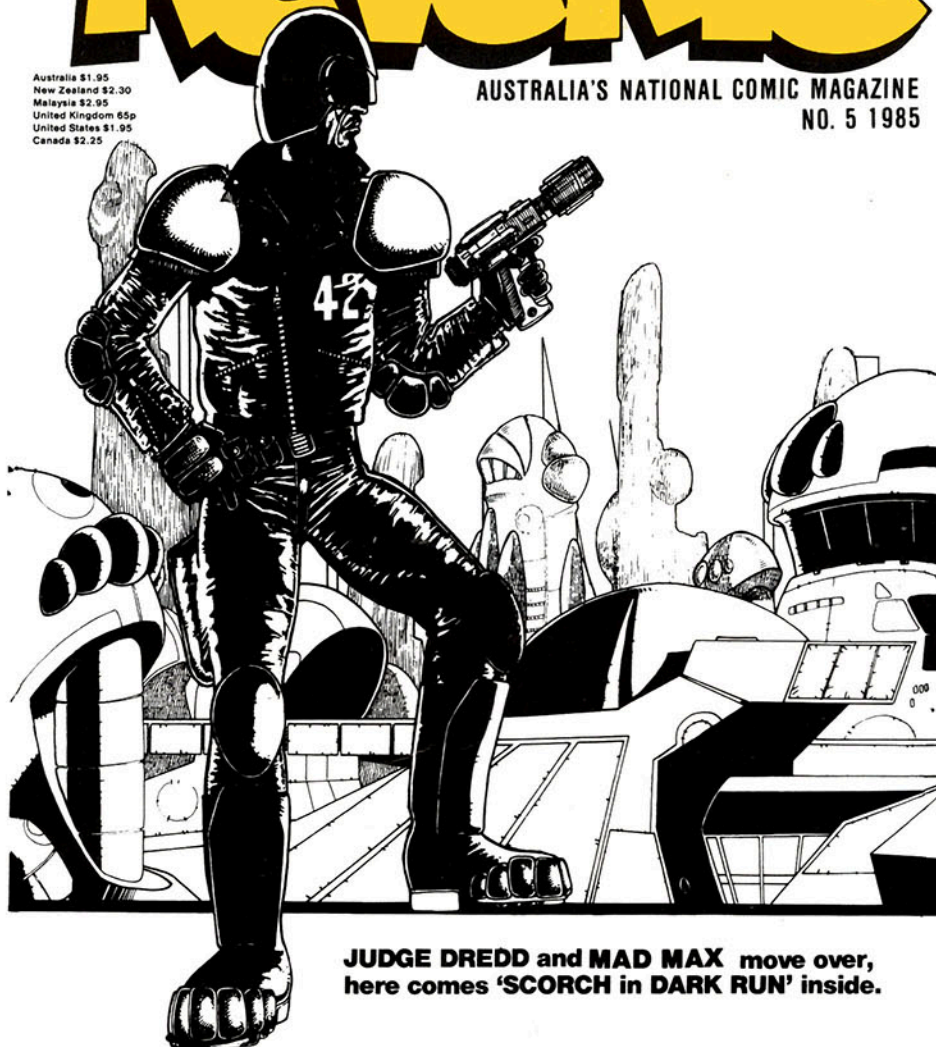
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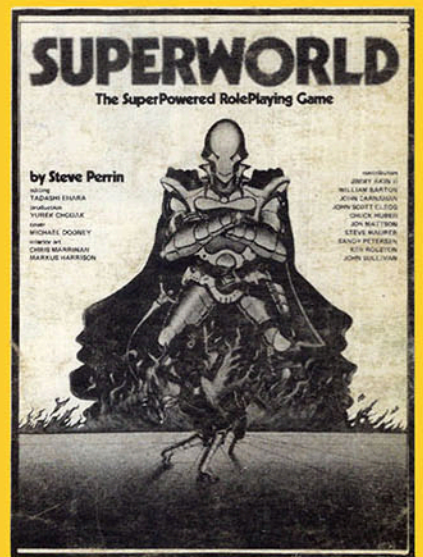
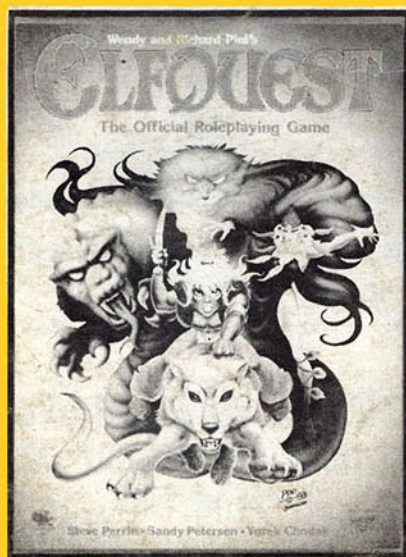
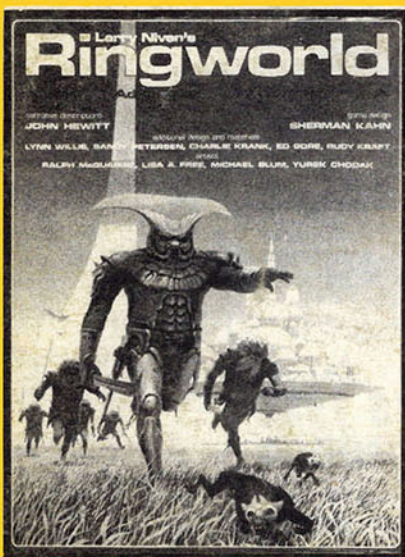
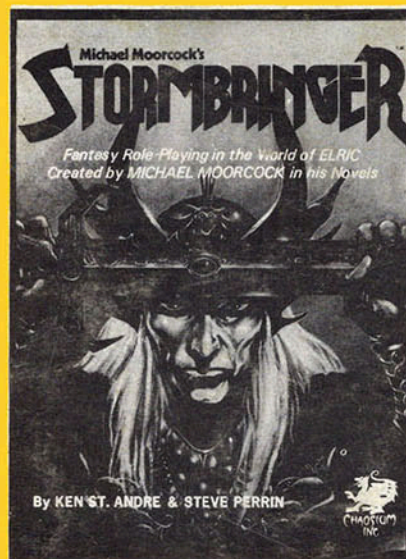
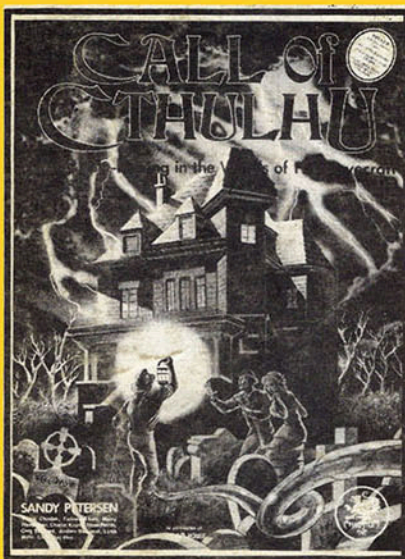
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