

THE BEHOLDER

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EDITORIAL

Dammit! This is going to be the first late issue of "The Beholder", an amateur British (English) D&D 'zine. You probably know by now that D&D stands for Dungeons and Dragons, produced by TSR Hobbies Inc, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147, AMERICA. Their British subsidiary is TSR (UK) at The Mill, Rathmore Road, Cambridge CB1 4AD. TBH is the creation of the following illustrious (?) pair:

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The mild outburst that started this editorial is caused, as you may have guessed, by the fact that this issue of TBH is going to be late, maybe by as much as two weeks. The delay is caused by our holidays overlapping, meaning we can't put the mag together until both have finished, which is late August. Then it has to be printed, collated, stapled, etc which probably brings us to around 10th September before copies are finally ready to be posted out. Hopefully to make up for this TBH19 will be a bit early (ready in time for Games Day '80).

Mentioning conventions there, Dragonmeet III was an enjoyable affair, and quite profitable for us, gaining several new subscribers and retail outlets. Nice to meet a few friends (and rivals) there. Full report next issue.

Some of you may have noticed that there was an omission in "The Alchemist" last issue. Namely the map wasn't labelled. We discovered this in time to correct all of the DM III copies but if you didn't get one of these and can't figure out which room should be where give Mike a ring and it'll all be cleared up.

Sorry, but we've no news of the reprints of TBH8 to 11 yet. Problems with this issue have had top priority, but we still hope to have at least some done in time for Games Day. Please note that we are sold out of all back issues now, other than a few TBH15 and 17.

This issue brings the long-awaited results of the GCC. Many thanks to all of you who entered, it's been great to get such a large response.

Mike and Guy

BH18: C O N T E N T S

Page 2....Editorial & Contents	Page 14....17 Wharf-Rat Road (map)
Page 3....ToT Playtest	Page 16....17 Wharf-Rat Road (detail)
Page 6....Review	Page 22....Thoughts on...The Hobby
Page 7....Fali-Ur	Page 24....Kicking the Bucket
Page 8....GCC + Fali-Ur	Page 26....Everlasting Armour?
Page 9....The Dripping Chasm	Page 27....Monster Summoning

P.S. Don't forget Games Day '80! Held on Saturday 27th September at the Royal Horticultural Hall in London it promises to be just about the biggest and best con this country has ever seen. Be there!

TUNNELS OF TUNGAN PLAYERS

By DAVE DAVIES

STARRING:

- 'Joe Gormless', Level 3, C/G. Renowned for his outstanding wit and intelligence? Fighter.
- 'Dunc the Monk' Level 3, N. Eric the Cleric's brother perhaps?
- 'Flin Brisoyowe' Level 3, N/E. An expert dart-thrower. Assassin.
- 'The Illusionist' Level 2, N Originally named?

A day in the life of the Keynsham Gnoll Bashers, (KGB?) and not a typical example, I might add.

"Aha! a hatch." gesticulates Bristowe, "open it up, Joe."

"Uh uh," replies Joe, (not as gormless as he looks).

"OK" continues the assassin, "Illusionist, prepare something. Dunc, stand next to the hatch, mace in hand. Joe, open it up carefully, keep a knife in your other hand. I'll bring up the rear if there's any aggro."

"No way," argues the monk, "you go in first."

"After Joe." adds the illusionist, (DM snores).

"God, just open it will you Joe."

"OK!"

"NOT YET!" Too late.

"Oh sorry," apologises the fighter, closing the hatch. (The KGB are real role-players!) Verbally chastising the opener, they descend the short stairs. Entering room one and failing to open the two doors they consider:

"Look for secret panels," suggests the monk. None of them want to be channeled down the West corridor.

"GOOD GOD! WHAT'S THAT?!!" Large mean-looking gethrix advances along the west corridor, more than a moment of panic follows.

"Prepare something Illusionist!" yells Bristowe, throwing a dart at it, (very effective, chortles the DM!) The cleric hurls his mace at the thing, gaining precious time while the gethrix hesitates to consider its wounded leg. Angriily it turns back to the party, they have not been idle. The illusionist casts 'Blindness', good work, the gethrix stumbles, dropping its scythe. Fast thinking Duncan hurls his leather cap behind the creature. Startled, it turns, thus allowing Joe the opportunity to mash its skull, Joe takes the opportunity. Cautiously the party proceed, entering the gethrix's room they gather up some weapons and look around. Moving the slab they decide to descend, not liking the 'obvious' exit.

Half an hour is wasted in room twenty-eight, ("they're piercers, I tell you!") until the party move on to twenty-nine. Bristowe enters, seeing the geurans hiding shyly in a corner he decides on a new approach:

"Hullo?"

"Greetings," hazards a 'wierd leggy thing', "you come in peace?"

"Uh.....yeah."

"Very well, enter and be seated." After the party have done so the thing continues, "what is your business here?"

"We're geographers," says Bristowe, "we've come to...uh...map the dungeon, (DM sniggers, very convincing!) Now enter the personality, Joe Gormless. Removes pipe, sticks barrel in mouth and attempts to light mouthpiece, 'wierd leggy things' snigger. Remembering tobacco, Joe gives up lighting the mouthpiece and looks for some. Ignoring Joe's attempts to stuff tobacco down the wrong end, Bristowe continues:

"Perhaps you could give us some....uh....information?"

"We can do more than that," he winks, "you know, nudge, nudge?" Bristowe does not know, ignoring the creature he continues:

"Perhaps we can....umm....complete a task for you?"

"Indeed," says the thing, "Skulluets, we hate them, you kill them all and we give you informatin and..."

"OK," says Bristowe, wondering what they're going to give him, "Uh... where are they?"

"Follow," instructs the thing. It leads them along a short passage that eventually opens out at the base of a large crater. "Up there," gestures the thing, indicating the cliffs above. Undercover of the passage, the party can see black shapes moving on the cliffs. "Kill them all," says the thing. The creature tells them that the only way up to their level was through the 'upper complex'. He escorts them to the gethrix's room and bids them good luck. Narrowly avoiding a falling axe (which served its purpose admirably) they wander through the hall of statues, halting momentarily at the fountain they continue carefully down the lower west passage. Reaching the cliff-opening they decide to return to the fountain, on the way they meet a dwarf.

"Halt!" cries the dwarf, "what do you here?"

"We seek the skulluets," says Bristowe truthfully, wishing to make friends with the dwarf.

"Ah," grins the dwarf, "come, I will summon Grimbari."

"What?" says Bristowe, mishearing him.

"I said, I will summon Grimbari, come."

"Are you sure you didn't say goblin?"

"I said Grimbari, come."

"I swear he said goblin," whispers Bristowe to the monk as they follow, "watch out for goblins." They follow the dwarf around a corner, he knocks on a large door.

"I warn you," says Bristowe, "if there's a goblin in there..." The dwarf grins, enter Grimbari, the dwarf, sighs from the party.

"Ah," grunts Grimbari, "come in." They enter, seating themselves on the unkept floor they explain that they are 'pest controllers', that the skulluets have to be dealt with, and that they are there to make sure not one escapes alive. Grimbari nods, "You are payed for this?"

"Indeed," says Bristowe.

"How much?"

"Uh...200 gol pieces," says Bristowe, inventing a figure.

"Hmm" considers the dwarf, "I have a pest you might dispose of." he suggests, "I can only pay 1500sp, but it is only one beast, far easier than the skulluets, (lie)."

Always open to suggestions the party agrees. Grimbari explains that the thing hides somewhere in the fountain-complex; that no one has ever lived to describe it and that it only attacks lone adventurers. The party considers:

"We need something that looks human to lure it out," suggests the illusionist, "a dummy perhaps, once it exposes itself by attacking the dummy, we move out from behind a corner and nab it."

"Dummy wouldn't work," says the monk, "it wouldn't smell like meat, we need a corpse..."

"The gethrix!" explodes Bristowe. Nervously the party stalk back to the gethrix's room, and return, with the corpse. Now follows gethrix humanisation attempts:

"Use some lipstick and eyeshadow from your assassin's disguise kit." suggests the monk, he remembers it hasn't got a head...

Illusionist asks the dwarves if they have a wide-brim hat (raucous laughter in the party). Bristowe makes serious suggestion:

"Shove a pole in its back and walk it along in front," (more raucous laughter).

"It'd look like the damn Hunchback of Notre Dame," jokes the monk.

"Quasimodo had a hunch, not a pole," snaps Bristowe, "damn silly calling him the pole-back of Notre-Dame."

"Not quite the same," agrees the monk, "nevertheless, we'll try it, it might just work!"

Equipped with a suitable pole the party set off towards the fountain. Brisoywe silences the comical monk who suggests they'll kill the beast easily through laughter at the mess on the end of the pole that masquerades as a 'trap'.

Having wandered about for a bit, gethrix pole-back idea becoming more and more unpopular, they stop at the fountain.

"I've got a better idea," says the monk, "Bristowe, you sit here and talk to the gethrix, sooner or later the thing'll attack and we, hidden round the corner, will get it."

"OK," surrenders Bristowe, having decided the non-existence of the thing some time ago. He sits down by the fountain and waits. He doesn't have to wait long, after ten minutes the zyllyk reveals itself. Exploding through a wall the creature tears Bristowe limb from limb. Horrified, the party act. Sensibly, the monk hurls a hammer at the creatures mucus pouch. Joe finishes it off with his longsword, hacking it to pieces, Flin Bristowe has not survived the ordeal. He gets an honourable burial ("dump him in the fountain, Joe, he was an awkward bugger anyway") and the party move on.

Collecting their reward from the dwarves they decide to forget the skulls for a while and try to oust one of their favourite creatures, the giant spider. Gathering some torches and dry straw they approach the spider's passage, light it and run. Fifteen minutes later the spider, webs and all have gone, only a fine black dust remains.

"Must have run up the passage," suggests the monk, not realising that it had been burnt to a crisp, "let's go get it." Cautiously, they advance, bursting into a room they find no spider.

"Nothing here.," states the illusionist, "careful, it's probably behind the drapes, not much point taking these weapons, corpses look harmless."

Carefully, the monk pulls back the drapes, no spider, a passage, they advance, (checking the ceiling). They enter, a beautiful sword lies upon a marble slab, Joe wants it. The illusionist also wants it. A short conversation takes place, followed by a short period of chaos in which an illusionist becomes a smear on the south wall and the monk becomes very worried. Joe gets the sword. Joe and the worried monk return to the dwarves. Grimbari, distressed by Joe's possession, greets them. Talking to Grimbari in private reveals the monks fears to be true. The sword manipulates its owner.

"Had I known, I would have stopped you," says Grimbari, "It was a foolish deed, we must recover the blade and return it, find a new guardian."

"The old one wasn't much cop." replies the monk. "Nevertheless, it's death and chaos in Joe's hands, how do we recover it?" At that moment a young dwarf enters.

"He is asleep." says the youth.

"Good." Grimbari and the monk leave the room. They open the door to the adjacent room silently, and enter. Joe is asleep upon his sword.

"OK." whispers the monk, "I'll hit him quite hard in the temple with my spiked mace to knock him out. ("You'll kill me stone dead." rages the player, "I'm a bad judge." replies the monk. "Aaaagh you b@!?*+d. I demand to wake up!")

"Blast." curses the monk, (convincingly?) "I've killed him."

"A pity." says Grimbari, (equally convincingly?). The monk decides to exit the complex while he still has the chance. (leaving the sword behind)yes folks, this is real role-playing!

STOP-PRESS:- We've just heard that OGScon III has been CANCELLED.

TFG REVIEW

Valkenburg Castle is another in the series of excellent simulations produced by the American company, Task Force Games.

For your \$2.75 you get a 16x20 inch mapsheet, a set of 54 counters and a twenty-six page book of rules.

The board is in fact a plan of the dungeons (haven't I heard that term somewhere before?) beneath Valkenburg Castle. It is printed in black and red on thin card which does tend to wear away along the folds.

Pieces come in several types: good/evil squads (cannon fodder), magic-users, leaders (who improve a squads fighting ability), a hardy dwarf (who always aids the good side), burglars (useful only for opening locks and detecting traps), several types of monsters (which you randomly meet and get killed by), special equipment counters (explosives, used only by the dwarf, and climbing gear, to descend into the dreaded pit), magical weapons and a couple of modern troop squads (wielding the mystic sub-machine gun) who are supposed to have fallen through a time warp.

The game's rationale explains that a descendant of the castle's original owner has gathered together his trusty (but expendable) troops for a foray into the castle's dungeons for the purpose of (depending on the scenario) orc/dragon slaying, maiden rescuing or treasure seeking.

Before the game can start each player must note how many men/orcs there are in each of his squads (up to a maximum of 12 people). The evil player (nothing personal) then places his orc squads in guard rooms (face down to confuse the forces of good) where they sit waiting to be attacked and distributes the monsters (berserker, spider, shaman etc), either randomly or as part of the defending, evil force.

Now the game commences, the good player's forces burst into the dungeon marching steadfastly, singing bravely and generally alerting anything and everything within the dungeon. The heroic avengers roam the winding passages searching for orcs, and as the orcs are, by now, roaming the passages searching for heroic avengers they tend to encounter each other almost immediately, which introduces what I feel is the most disappointing aspect of this game, combat.

Combat is fought on two 'scales', individual (man vs man or man vs squad) and squad (squad vs squad or squad vs one man). Individual combat uses a single d6 roll adjusted by certain factors (type of armour worn, class of attacker etc) to determine the number of wounds inflicted on the defender.

Squad combat is also based on the humble d6, but the amount of damage done is heavily dependent upon the 'aspect' of the battle. Aspect is either narrow, wide or open, depending on the width of the area the combat is taking place in. A narrow aspect is used when the fighting is in a thin corridor or through a doorway where the actual number of men that can confront each other is small and thus a low number of wounds are inflicted. Conversely, with an open aspect, and a large number of men able to involve themselves in the conflict a large number of wounds are caused. One wound will either kill a squad member or reduce the number of wounds an individual or monster has left.

The, as far as I know, unique and somewhat odd thing about the combat results table is that it is non-linear, ie. damage does not increase in relation to the number rolled on the dice. For example, in individual combat it is not necessarily the highest result that is the best, a result of 4 inflicts more damage than a 6. This leads to some situations where a man in heavy armour (getting a die modifier of -1, seemingly an advantage) will take more damage than his unarmoured squad-mate.

My main complaint about combat is that it tends to stagnate. Unless the good force splits up at an early point in the game as soon as it meets its

first group of orcs they tend just to stand where ever they met and slog it out. The designer says in the rulebook that he wanted to create a system of combat that involved the terrain of the dungeon and combat in three dimensions, and yet whenever I have played this game it seems to contain a minimum of movement except for rapid advancement of orc reinforcements from the guardrooms on the lower levels.

It is a pity that the combat system is disappointing, for apart from this the game is well balanced with player skill the deciding factor.

The use of magic is fairly limited due to the low number of magic-users, but even so a single spell can change the course of the game if cast at the right moment, with a spell point system being used to determine the number of spells a magic-user may cast (the choice must be made between one strong offensive spell, such as Fireball or several less powerful ones which use far fewer spell points).

Finally, there are a large number of optional/general rules which cover a variety of topics: the placement of random treasure and searching for the same, the use of explosives or sleep gas, special rules concerning the dragon and his lair, the use of modern weapons and the picking of locks are but a few examples.

Overall the game is well thought out and the rules are lucid, if a bit long-winded. The playing system is good and I'm sure the game would be a great success if combat was improved, not necessarily by Task Force Games for most wargamers should be able to adapt (or completely replace) the system to give an enjoyable game, although I feel it would be without the lasting quality of the earlier Task Force games such as Star Fleet Battles.



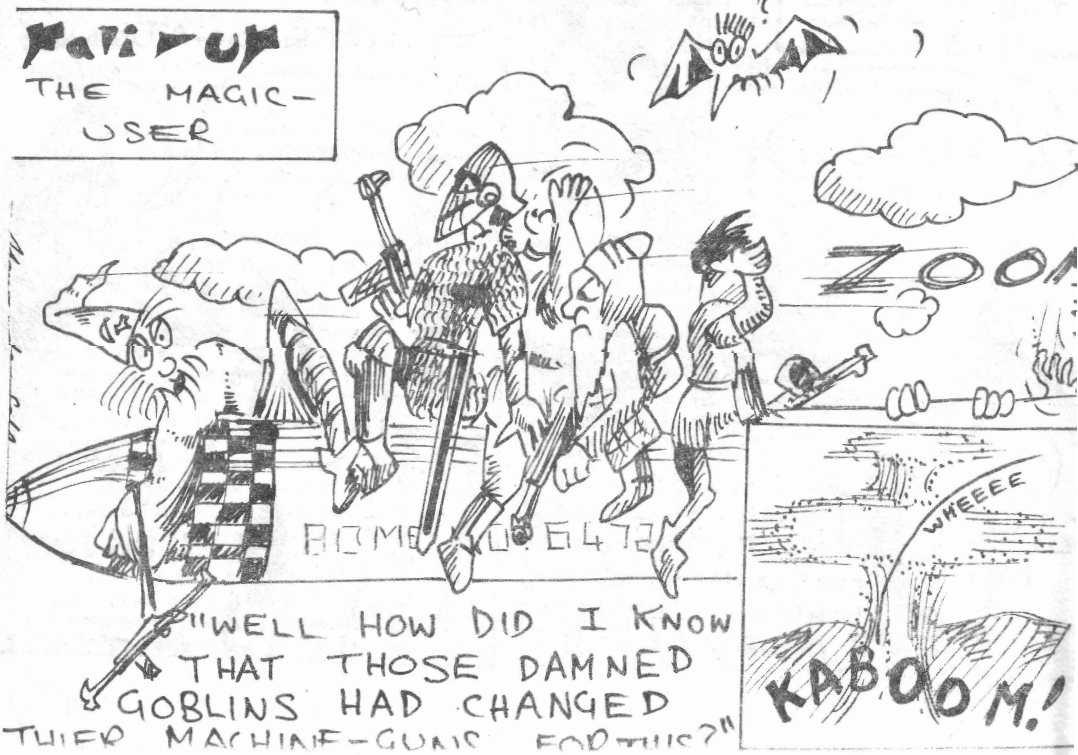
At last we are able to announce the name of the winners of the GCC, our biggest competition to date. Our congratulations go to the following three people (they're NOT in reverse order):-

- 1st: Graham Staplehurst (Life after Death, Wordsearch, 17 Wharf Rat Road)
2nd: Dave Davies (Tunnels of Tungan, ToFT Playtest)
3rd: Mark Allen (The Alchemist)

Graham wins £5, a pack of dungeon floorplans and 10 issues of TBH. Dave gets £3 and 6 issues of TBH while Mark has six issues added to his sub.

Back luck to the rest of you, but don't despair your articles may still see the light of day in a future issue of TBH and get you standard contributors rate (roughly 1 free issue per page of material).

MINI-INFO:- D&D of all varieties is played every Saturday from 2 to 9 o'clock at the Merseyside Games Association, 46 Manchester Street, Liverpool, (next door but one to "Games"). Other FRP and boardgames too (8'44, Traveller, C.E.) Board wargames club meets Sunday 3 to 9. Figures and board wargames club on Thursdays from 6 to 10. Enquire at "Games" or ask for Paul Oakes at the club.



THE DRIPPING CHASM

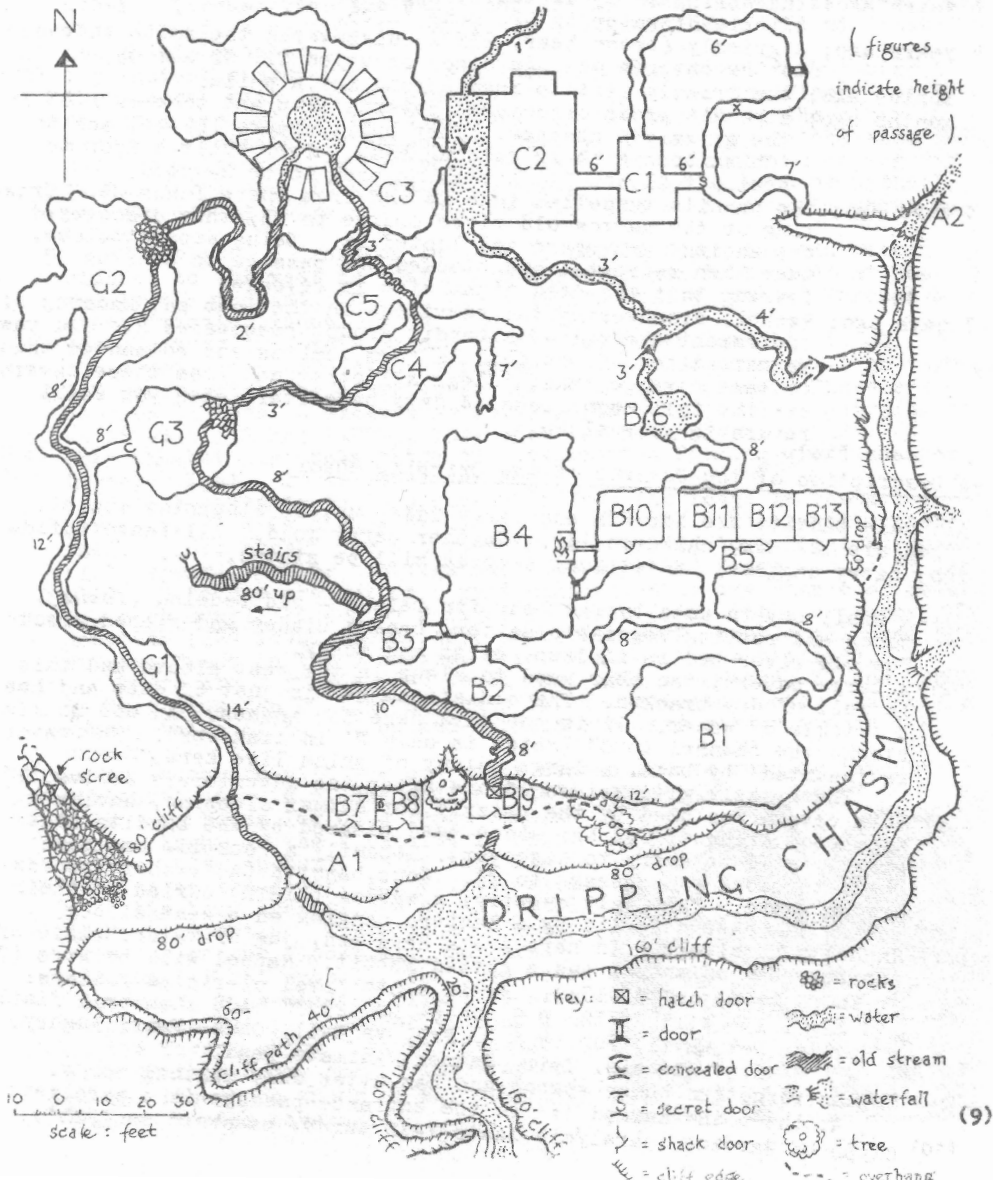
by G. Duke

-Background for the DM

This scenario is designed for about six 2nd level characters. The Dripping Chasm lies at the head of the River Underpine (or any river in your campaign), deep in pine forest. The adventurers will only find it by following the river upstream.

-Background for the Players

Local foresters and travellers have been complaining of raids from bandits. They are thought to be lairing somewhere up the River Underpine, though exactly where none have determined for the bandits have left no trackable trails. Due to the many raids, the wealth of these bandits must now be considerable.



-The Recent History of the Dripping Chasm (for the DM only)

- 30 years ago; the 'Chasm was unknown to civilised man, when the good cleric Raphael came across it and found the north entrance leading to caverns C1 and C2. Since then he has remained a hermit, enlarging these two chambers.
- 8 years ago; Raphael accidentally discovered C3, an ancient graveyard where bodies lay around a central spring (the waters of which left the cavern via two tunnels (to G2 and C5)). He vowed to protect them but hurriedly retreated to his shrine (C2), hoping the running water here would offer him sanctuary against the souls of the dead.
- 6 years ago; the spring in C3 virtually dried up and now sends only a trickle of water to G2, none to C5.
- 5 years ago; a grizzly (brown bear, 23HTK) discovered the south entrance to the caverns and has since occupied G1, G2 and G3.
- 3 months ago; the grizzly left to roam abroad for a while.
- 2 months ago; a bandit group discovered caverns B1-6 and took over G3 in the grizzly's absence. They built shacks (B7-13) and the 'Chasm became their raiding base. They built a door to seal off G1 and G2, believing them to be haunted.
- 4 days ago; the bandits tunneled into C4 and from there found C5. Crawling up the narrow old river course to C3, they discovered the ancient graveyard and looted it. Being superstitious, they then retreated and blocked the passage to C4 from G3 fearing that the dead might rise in revenge.
- 3 days ago; Raphael, discovering the sacrilege in the tomb and knowing of the recent arrival of a bandit group, remembered his old vow. He raised ten of the dead to form zombies and commanded them to take revenge thus; 'Clear all other men from these caverns ere the full moon rises (4 days hereafter) when you shall return to your sleep.'

-A Description of the Caverns of the Dripping Chasm

All male bandits are 1d6 HTK and carry 2d4gp unless otherwise stated. Women are 1d4 HTK, children 1d2. Neither carry gold. All (save children) carry daggers. Additional weapons will be stated.

- (G1) - A small cavern used by the bear for refuse - old bedding (ferns), bones and rotting vegetable matter, broken blades and ripped armour. The old river bed is 1' deep, moist and mossy.
- (G2) - A large cavern; the bear used to sleep in the west alcove and this is full of dry bracken. The old stream bed is just 6" deep and has a trickle of water. It is too dark here for mosses. An old rockfall blocks the channel to C3 (which is only 2' in diameter). The cavern is 'haunted' by bats, a large colony of which live here.
The grizzly will return 1d6hrs after the adventurers arrive.
- (G3) - This cavern was used by the grizzly for summer sleeping, having a nice cool draught. It has since been cleared by the bandits (the grizzly will be angry to discover). Recently a rockpile has been built to block the passage to C4. Four bandits (AC7, short swords) are on guard. They talk quietly, a wardog (1LHTK) curled at their feet. The cavern is lit by a lantern hanging on a central peg.
- (C1) - Raphael's hermitage. In here are a hard bed, jug of water, plate of berries, box of snares and a gutted rabbit. Raphael will be here (25%) or in C2 (60%) or C3 (15%). He is a 5th level cleric as follows:
S 12 I 13 W 13 C 10 D 9 Ch 6 LG 29HTK AC8 hammer & flail
Spells: Det. Evil, Pur. F & D, Pro. vs Evil, Cause Fear; Augury, S. w Animals, Spir. Hammer; Animate Dead.

He has forgotten human speech and can utter only magical words.

At the point marked 'x' in the entrance passage is a paralysis

- (10) Glyph of warding (paralysis lasts 7-10 turns, password is 'Peh').

Behind the door just beyond this glyph is a small bell. When the door is opened, the ringing can be heard as far as C2. On hearing it, Raphael will cast a Detect Evil. He will attempt to be friendly towards good characters.

- C2—Raphael's shrine. A stream, 3" deep and 10' wide runs down the west side of this chamber. Any of the animated dead take d8 damage per segment in this or any other running water. In the north alcove is an altar covered in a gold-laced cloth (68gp) on which are two silver candlesticks (24gp each). Laid below the candlesticks is an old sword which Raphael may bequeath to any lawful good character. It is +1, 12 intelligence, neutral good; detect evil 1" radius.

When in here, Raphael kneels praying on a mat before the altar, a bowl of nuts and berries in one hand, a stick of incense in the other. Torches line the walls and are lit when Raphael is here. His only friend, a canary, flies freely around in here. It will not leave this chamber.

- C3—The ancient graveyard. It is a large cavern, domed to 50' high in the centre, with 15 flat stone slabs 8' by 4' on the floor. On 5 of these lie bodies, all disturbed (by the bandits); the other 10 have been animated by Raphael who may, if necessary, do the same for the 5 remaining. The central pool is still, the spring having virtually dried up. It contains 10 angular rocks, pieces of mithril ore containing 500gp worth of mithril. The rocks sparkle under water.

There are 2 zombies in here (5 and 11HTK). The old river channel to the west is just 2' in diameter and is blocked at the far end by the rockfall in G2. The southern channel passes through a steep twisting tunnel to C5.

- C4—The south exit of this cavern is blocked by the bandits in G3. Thus the zombies are excavating a passage towards B4 which will go through 2-4 hours after the adventurers arrive at the 'Chasm. There are 8 zombies in here, 6 excavating (3,4,7,9,10,15HTK) and 2 guarding the south exit (12 and 14HTK). They work relentlessly.

- C5—This chamber has stalagmites and stalactites forming wierd shadows in torchlight. It is otherwise empty.

- B1—The south entrance to this cavern is from the ledge A1 (detailed hereafter) and is hidden by trees from outside. The bandits stable their horses here. The 5 horses in here belong to 2 light horsemen (AC7, spear), Kregor the Vagabond (see B10) and Krarc and Zorft (see B12). 3 horses are out on a raid (10% accumulative chance of returning each hour), ridden by 2 light horsemen (AC8, light crossbow) and Hornbeam (2nd level Druid, AC8, scimitar, 8HTK, spells all used (Pass Without Trace on the 3 horses, Trip in ambushing a victim)).

There are 2 guards (2nd level FMs, AC7, longsword, 11 and 12HTK) in here plus the 2 light horsemen first mentioned above. Buckets of water, bales of hay, tack and harness etc. are strewn around the cavern.

- B2—An empty cavern with the now empty stream course running through it. The north door is of oak and is locked.

- B3—A lantern burns low on a ledge casting meagre light on the 4 bandits in this cavern (AC8, spetum). 3 of them lie snoring on the floor, the fourth sits with his back against the south wall smoking silently. There is an empty wine jug on the floor; all four are drunken (-1 hit prob.). The west door leads to a long winding flight of steps which open out in a concealed rock door in the forest above. Raphael does not know of this door, nor of the trapdoor in B9, though he knows of all other entrances to the caverns.



B4—A huge cavern with a rough arched ceiling between 20' and 50' high. It has been enlarged into an approximate rectangle by rough excavation. Towards the south end are 3 basic wooden tables with benches. On each table are cheeses, jugs of milk and wine, and wooden platters of nuts and berries. Over the eastern fire, a deer is being roasted (smoke exits via a flue to B5 and thence outside).

At the tables sit 10 women (young wenches, unarmed) and 9 bandits (5x AC7, short sword; 4x AC8, light crossbow) eating and making merry. A tenth bandit, Brandish (4th level FM, 16 strength, AC6, long sword, 17HTK, potion of strength on belt) reclines with 2 serving wenches on the soft furs (bear and fox pelts in bad condition - worth 12gp in all) at the north end of the cavern. He is the bandit lieutenant.

B5—A cavern that has been greatly excavated and now has nearly smooth walls. The east end is open, looking out on the Dripping Chasm; there is a sheer drop to rapids 50' below. An overhang blocks the view above. 4 lean-to shacks have been built here of stone.

It is smoky due to the fire in B4.

B6—A spring where the bandits get their water. The water flows out northwards through a 3' tunnel; it is possible to crawl along here to C2 (by turning left) or to a 40' waterfall into the 'Chasm (by turning right).

B7—A lean-to shack of stone built under the overhang above A1. It has a single door and no windows. An evil stench is emitted from the hovel. It contains 4 old women all lying on bracken beds covered in filth. They are very dirty and one has an acute skin disease (13% chance of contraction for all who enter this hovel). They will wail loudly if anyone enters.

B8—A similar shack to B7, though it has a window. It is much cleaner and there are 3 younger women with two children in here. There is a jug of water and a churn of goats' milk in the north-east corner. Over the west fire, they are cooking 2 hedgehogs (!). One woman wears a silver bracelet (12gp).

B9—Another stone hovel with a single door (open). A single woman is churning sour goats' milk to make cheese, on a central table. She will fight intruders with a meat cleaver (as hand-axe). Also in here are 3 churns of milk, 4 picks, mallets and chisels and a 10' ladder.

The ceiling of this hovel is formed by the overhang. There is an inlaid hatch door where the waters of the old stream used to pour out. This leads to an 8' high passage to B2. A guard (2nd level FM AC7, longsword, 16HTK, opal ring (35gp) on left hand) stands just above this hatch sharpening his dagger (a noisy operation).

B10—A stone lean-to shack in the cavern B5, 10' in height with a wooden roof. It is lit by a lantern hung centrally. There are 2 wooden beds covered in furs (15gp worth), a round table on which are a keg of ale (6gp) and a jewelled dagger (45gp), 3 spetums against the north wall, a light crossbow and a box of 20 bolts (3 are +2) on one bed, and a locked chest beneath the same bed (key on chain round Kregor's neck). This contains 580gp, 4100sp and 3160cp, 15 silver arm and anklebands (looted from the bodies in O3; worth 15x30gp and 15x10gp - if the zombies sense anyone with these (1" range) they will attack at +2 to hit and +1 damage) and a potion of levitation. On the other bed is Kregor's aged mother (1HTK, incapacitated). Kregor himself is as follows, being a 5th level FM:

S 16 I 12 W 15 C 15 D 11 Ch 15 NE 27HTK AC5 bastard sword (the sword is +1, 12 intelligence, chaotic evil; detect invisible objects 1" radius). He sleeps on his bed (crossbow and sword at his side) with his pet, a neutral evil blink dog (16HTK) curled at his feet; though its eyes are closed, it is very much awake.



B11—This is a shack similar to B10. The lantern is out and on the bare floor sleep 5 bandits (AC7, short sword). Each has a potion flask; all contained wine, four are now empty, the fifth is full of urine!

Lying around the floor are some gnawed bones and a gnarled stick. B12—The door to this shack is locked. Inside, Krarc and Zorft (3rd level FMs, AC6, 18 and 20HTK armed with longswords and hand axes) pore over a map, by the light of a candle, on a central table. The map shows all the secret trails to the nearby villages and traderoutes from the Dripping Chasm. Sleeping beneath the table are 2 wardogs (7 and 13HTK). On the floor are 3 large furs (6,4 and 3gp) on which Krarc, Zorft and Hornbeam (see B1) sleep by night. Built on to the north wall is a reinforced oak chest. It is locked (Zorft has the key) and contains, beneath a load of sacking, 240sp. It has a false back which covers a niche in the wall containing 105gp, a small fox fur jacket (200gp) and a weak poison potion (d8 damage, +2 save).

Krarc has a jar of Keoghtom's Ointment in his belt pouch, of which he has used 1 application. 'Keoghtom's cure' is inscribed on the jar.

B13—Another shack similar to B10. The door to this one is open and occasional raucous laughter may be heard from within. Here sit 6 bandits (2x AC7, short sword; 2x AC8, spetum; 2x AC8, short bow), one of whom is telling a tale. He sits beneath the central lantern with the others grouped around him. One is dying of a bad wound (1HTK) and is non-combatant.

Rough rags and cloaks are strewn on the floor among which are scattered: a tinder box, a broken wine jug, a small wooden statuette (carved by a bandit) and bone case containing a blank piece of parchment.

At the time that the adventurers arrive at the 'Chasm, 4 of the bandits (apart from those mentioned in B1) are off on a raid on foot. They are: 2x AC8, spetum; 2x AC8, short bow. They will return in 5-10 hours and go to B4, with the following spoils: 43gp, 131sp and a dagger +1, +2 vs creatures smaller than man-sized.

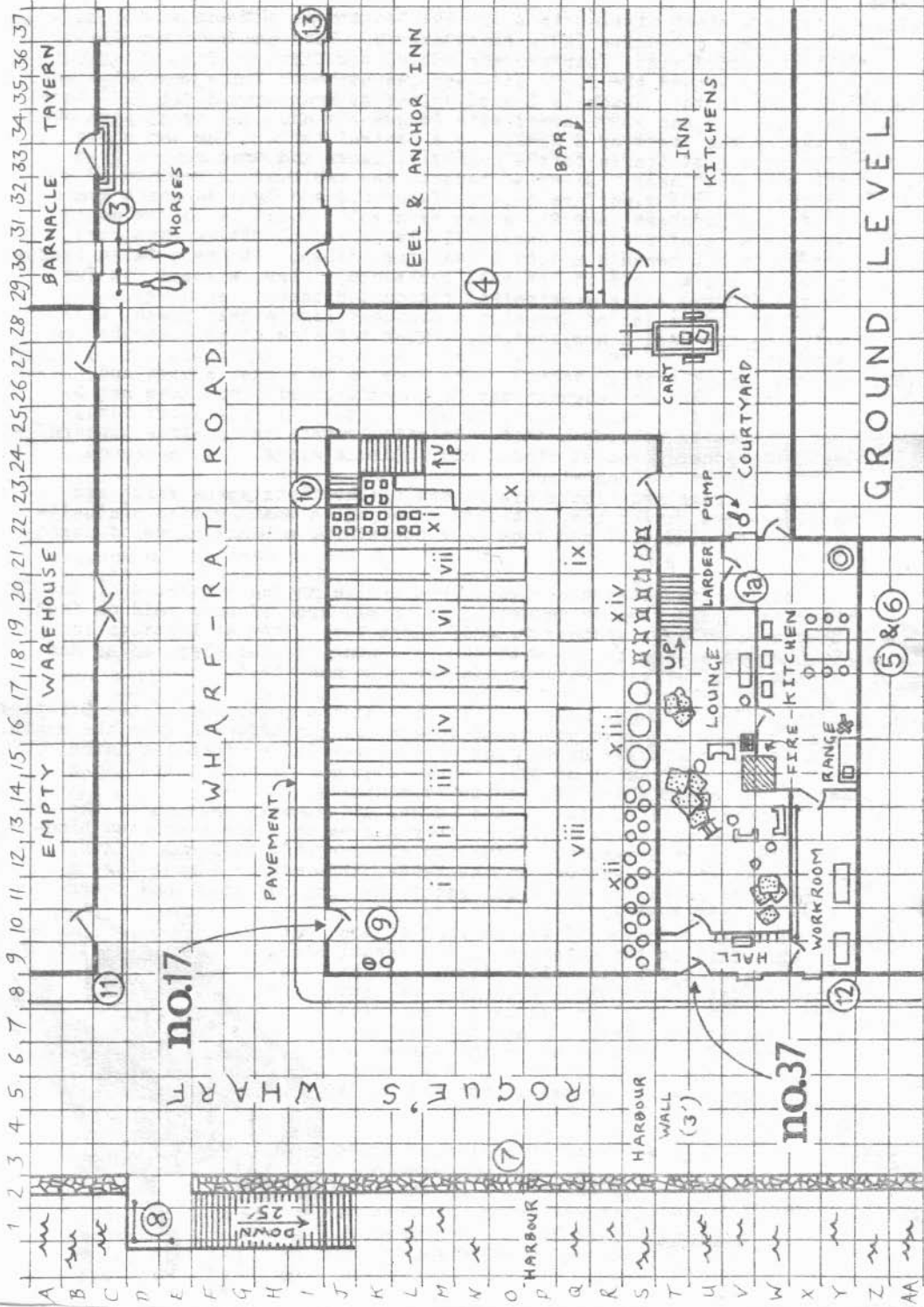
A1—A flat ledge half-way up the cliff-face at the south end of the Dripping Chasm. There are five points of access; by a cliff-path from the south, by a steep rock scree at the west end of the ledge, from the hatch door in B9, or from G1 or B1. There is an 80' drop from the ledge and an 80' cliff above it, partly overhanging.

6 dirty children play on the ledge, and 5 goats have eaten the 4 trees bare of leaves as far as they can reach. There are two bandits (AC8, light crossbow) at the top of the cliff path and 2 (AC8, short bow) at the east end of the ledge. If under a threat (eg; a large party coming up the cliff path) they may run to B1 and thereafter to B4 for help.

A2—The northern entrance to the caverns of the 'Chasm. This is the entrance that Raphael always uses, and it is well hidden. The approach path runs down the course of the stream (thus hiding any trails), then turns right beneath the overhang at the extreme north end of the 'Chasm where the stream plunges to the ravine floor. It then turns north through a narrow crack into the cliff face.

Note to DM: This is essentially a livingdungeon ie; its occupants are not static. Also, ensure that the bandits react with intelligence to any intrusion. **ESSENTIAL:** read the whole scenario thoroughly before running it.

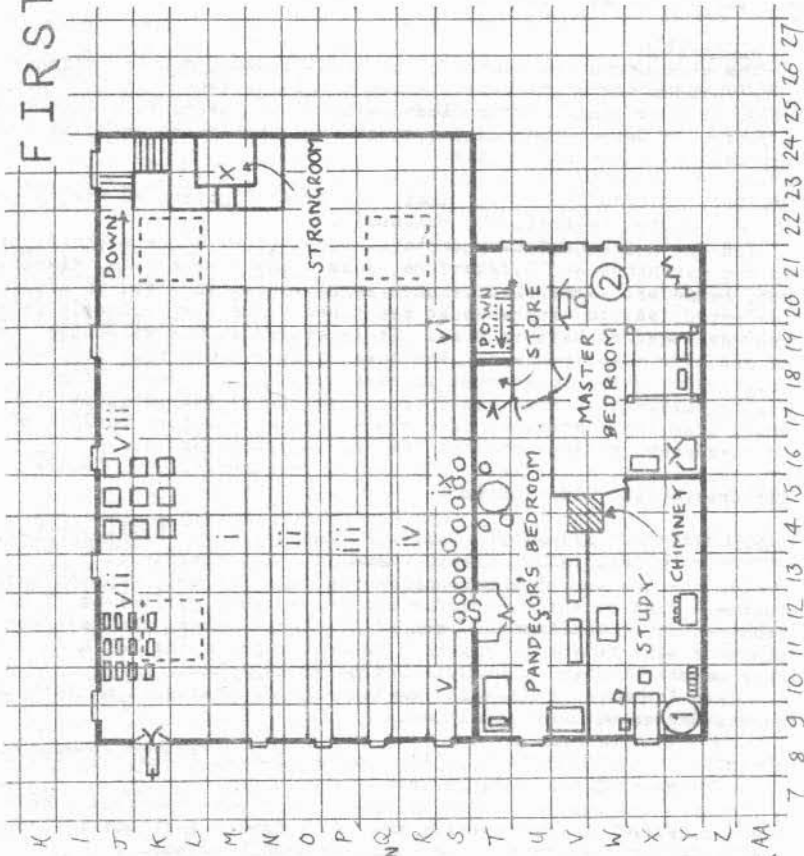




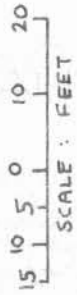
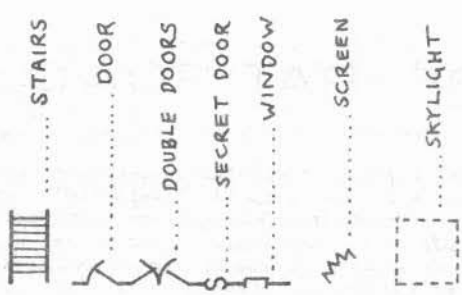
17 WHARF-RAT ROAD



- ① ... HAFNOR
- ② ... HAFNOR'S WIFE
- ③ ... PANDEGOR
- ④ ... APTAMI
- ⑤ ... PRINCESS GILLIAN
- ⑥ ... MYSTIOR
- ⑦ ... ELKENTIM
- ⑧ ... BWANEFFT
- ⑨ ... O'NACKETT
- ⑩ ... CRITHOR the EYED
- ⑪ ... JINTZAN
- ⑫ ... CRUISIS
- ⑬ ... ZLOTYR
- ⑭ ... FINNSNATCH the



FIRST FLOOR



17 WHARF-RAT ROAD

By GRAHAM STAPLEHURST

This is a fun D&D scenario along the lines of the Bar-room Brawl in White Dwarf 11. It needs a DM and up to 13 players (DM's may add more characters if they wish). Movement and combat are simultaneous but otherwise normal AD&D rules are to be followed. Provided are a list of characters with aims and reasons enough to make Arthur Hailey look like Enid Blyton! There are also rules for any odd situations that may occur, like pillow fights or hurling pots of bubbling stew. Finally, detailed plans of the warehouse at 17, Wharf-rat Road and Hafnor's house at 37 Rogue's Wharf are included, so that players may enjoy the game as fully as possible, and the DM has as little to do as possible.

CHARACTERS

The characters are described in the following manner: strength/intelligence/wisdom/dexterity/constitution/charisma, race, level, class, hits to kill, hits to stun, armour class, alignment, movement, armour type. Then a paragraph description of the characters background and aims and finally any magical items he/she has.

- (1) HAFNOR: 17/12/10/15/14/17, Human, 6th level Fighter, 45 Htk, 30 Hts, AC 4 Lawful Neutral, 9", chainmail.

You are a merchant navy captain, owner of 37 Rogue's Wharf, next door to the warehouse at 17, Wharf-rat Road. You have a wife, Misseel and a son, Pandecor. A merchant, known to have been involved in shady deals, has entrusted you with what he described as "a very valuable object" that you must take to Daffjon City. It is stored in the warehouse, but you do not know exactly where. You have heard rumours that some enterprising thieves are going to attempt to steal it, but you dare not go to the police, since they also would be suspicious of the merchant, thus you would lose the commission. Since you need this rather badly (being a compulsive gambler) you must not let the object be stolen.

Magic Items: +2 cutlass, Potions of Invulnerability, Neutralise Poison, Diminuation and Clairaudience.

- (2) PANDECOR: 13/11/8/16/11/6, Half-Elf, 2nd/3rd level Fighter/Thief, 12 Htk, 24 Hts, AC 2, Chaotic Neutral, 12", chainmail.

You are the son of a merchantman captain, Hafnor, who you despise and loathe. Just recently, someone has stolen your girlfriend, Frithsli. On finding out it was Aptamni, son of the local baker, you have sent him an old note sent to you by Frithsli to meet outside the Eel & Anchor Inn one hour before sundown, where you intend to kill him.

Magic Items: +1 chainmail, magic main-gauche-fights in left hand as normal dagger with no penalties.

- (3) APTAMNI: 11/17/13/13/11/15, Elf, 5th level M-U, 8 Htk, 10 Hts, AC 10 Neutral, 12", unarmoured.

You are the son of the local baker. You have received a note from your new girlfriend to meet outside the Eel & Anchor Inn, but it looked somewhat faded and wasn't scented with her usual perfume...

Magic Items: Ring of Amplification (TBH 9): Blue Coral, Jasper, Beryl. Scroll of Extension III.

- (4) GILLIAN: 16/13/17/18/10/17, Human, 6th level Monk, 22 Htk, 30 Hts, AC 3, Lawful Neutral, 20", unarmoured.

You are the Princess Gillian of Shematt, legal owner of the Star of Shematt, a huge star sapphire. The Star was stolen some months ago and you are travelling incognito trying to trace it. Staying at the Eel & Anchor Inn prior to going home you were startled to hear it mentioned.

You then overheard two men at a corner table planning to steal it from the warehouse at 17, Wharf-rat Road. You plan to attack them after they have stolen it to retrieve it.

Magic Items: Ring of Protection +1, Bracers of Defense: AC 4, Necklace of Adaptation, Potions of Invisibility & Water Breathing.

- (5) MYSTIOR: 13/15/10/17/8/9, Halfling, 4th level Thief, 12 Htk, 15 Hts, AC 5, Neutral Evil, 12", leather armour.

Hearing of the theft of the marvellous Star of Shematt, a star sapphire belonging to Princess Gillian of Shematt, you have learnt that it is to be sold to a merchant in Daffjon City, being taken aboard a ship tomorrow. You plan to raid the warehouse at 17, Wharf-rat Road tonight. You have planned this job with your comrade, Elkentin, but even so you do not trust him.

Magic Items: +2 Sling of Seeking

- (6) ELKENTIN: 8/15/10/16/12/10, Half-Elf, 3rd/4th level M-U/Thief, 12 Htk, 18Hts, AC 6, Neutral Evil, 10", leather armour.

You have planned to steal the Star of Shematt, a star sapphire of great value from the warehouse at 17, Wharf-rat Road tonight, with your comrade Mystior, and have got into position on the roof of 35, Rogue's Wharf already. You know that there is a night watchman, but hopefully he will not be expecting anyone this early in the evening.

Magic Items: Potions of Fire Resistance & Clairvoyance, Scroll of Shield and Fire Shield.

- (7) BWANEFFT: 16/12/14/8/16/12, Female Half-Orc, 4th level Cleric, 27 Htk, 35 Hts, AC 2, 9", Chaotic Evil, chainmail.

You are seeking the Idol of Bathsheeba, an evil goddess. Having found the Temple of Bathsheeba recently plundered, you traced the idol to a merchant who bought it as an interesting curio and then sold it to an island trader due to load and set sail from Rogue's Wharf tomorrow. Desperate to prevent it from falling into the hands of your religion's oppressors, you will do anything to obtain it, and plan to raid the warehouse at 17, Wharf-rat Road this evening. Anyone may be your enemy!

Magic Items: +3 chainmail, Potions of Gaseous Form & Extra-Healing.

- (8) O'NACKETT: 18(59)/8/13/10/15/10, Dwarf, 5th level Fighter, 34 Htk, 30 Hts, AC 4, Lawful Good, 8", banded armour.

You are the harbour guardsman, your job being to patrol Rogue's Wharf and prevent crime. You must answer cries for help, especially from women.

Magic Items: Potions of Levitation & Mammal Control.

- (9) CRITHOR THE ONE EYED: 16/14/9/11/15/12. Human, 3rd level Fighter, 25 Htk, 20 Hts, AC 3, Neutral Good, 8", splint mail & shield

You are nightwatchman inside the warehouse at 17, Wharf-rat Road. You also own a guard dog who guards the back door. He is a wardog (2+2 HD, 14 Htk, AC 6, 12", bite 1/mr for 2-8) who obeys basic commands. You don't like fighting much since you were blinded in one eye, and will prefer to deal with or scare off anyone threatening you.

Magic Items: +1 bastard sword, Potions of Plymorph (self) & growth.

- (10) ZLOTYR: 19/6/6/12/18/3, Hill Giant, 43 Htk, 60 Hts, AC 4, Chaotic Evil, 12"

You are a young hill giant looking for a brawl, but because you are drunk you fight at -2.

- 11) CRUISIS: 13/16/10/17/14/8, Human, 5th level Illusionist, 13 Htk, 15 Hts, AC 7, Lawful Evil, 12", unarmoured.

You are a merchant. Your astrologer has just informed you that something you value is about to be stolen. Since you are nearly broke and you are banking on selling your consignment of antique religious curios to the superstitious islanders of Rendwon for a huge profit, you are rushing to the warehouse at 17, Wharf-rat Road to make sure they are alright. If necessary you should take them home.

Magic Items: Scroll: Minor Creation, Detect Invisibility, Emotion, Paralysis, Shadow Door.

- 12) JINTZAN: 14/12/13/18/12/15. Human, 5th level Assassin, 20 Htk, 20 Hts, AC 2, Lawful Evil, 10", studded leather armour and buckler. Fine strand net, 8'x8'. 2 oil flasks, 2 vials of acid, tinderbox, torch.

You are a racketeer, and you are coming to bring Hafnor, the merchant navy captain who lives at 37 Rogue's Wharf, to account. You have been told to maim Hafnor and cause damage to property (without total destruction) since he has failed to pay his protection money.

Magic Items: Rope of Climbing, +4 longsword. Dagger coated with poison.

- 13) FINNSNATCH THE RAZOR: 18(21)/-/-/13/15/8. Human, lunatic, 12 Htk, 40 Hts, AC 5, nonaligned, 12", chainmail.

You are a 2nd level Cleric who has gone insane when your deity died. Totally given over to homicidal mania, you have just escaped from prison and have a long sword. You love killing women especially! You are reckless and have no more regard for your own life than you have for others.

RULES OF PLAY-use standard AD&D rules, plus...

Players each have a character with a brief reason for being in the vicinity. If wished, the DM can award points for objectives gained, people killed or overcome etc, and introduce a competitive air to the game. It can just as easily be played just for fun.

Starting positions for everyone are given, Simultaneous movement is achieved by everyone writing down moves on paper. Each square is the equivalent of 1". Players if moving at over half speed are running, and this results in the loss of 1 Hts per round it is continued. Picking up a light object is the equivalent of 1" of movement. Heavier objects take 2" or 3" and no running is possible. Combat lasts the equivalent of half the characters possible move, and if less than half is left then no strike is allowed that round. Note that characters do not have to write down grid references when moving; a move such as "follow Hafnor" is perfectly legal. Opening a door is 3".

Combat may be conducted in two ways; striking to kill or to subdue. Thus Htk means hits to kill and Hts means hits to subdue. Good characters will usually strike to subdue, whereas evil characters have no compunction either way. Characters may use weapons to fight in either way, doing the same damage in either type of combat. They may well also choose to use non-lethal combat as outlined in the DMG, and the DM should familiarise himself with these rules and work out any bonuses etc for players before the game if they will be using these rules. Lastly, DM's may well care to take note of these rules following about unusual combat situations, such as chairs, blankets and barrels being thrown around etc.

- a) Chairs, barrels, small tables: Roll d8 if light, d10 if medium, d12 if heavy for effects.
Range: below 9=2", 9-15 =3", 16-18 =5", 19 =10"
Hit probability-normal. If miss, roll a d6:
1-2=left, 3-4=front, 5-6=right.

DM'S NOTES

Hall: Front door locked and bolted. 5 pegs for coats with 2 capes hung up; chest containing 3 pairs of sandals, 1 pair of boots, 6 walking sticks.

Workroom: Two benches with carpenter's tools (saw, hammer, files, chisels etc) and small blocks of wood. There is sawdust all over the floor, 3 finished carved ships in a locker under the bench; a line for washing and peg bag; a keg of varnish (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ quarts); piece of leather 2'x3' and a woven basket (3'x2'x2') filled with washing.

Lounge: The fire shared with the kitchen is lit. A basket containing 9 logs is just by it. Also around the room are 3 large (8'x6') rugs, 3 low sofas, 12 large cushions (4'x4'), a rocking chair, 5 small low tables, and a chest with 13 tablecloths, 6 vases, and 3 wine flagons. Stairs lead up to the first floor.

Kitchen: A cast iron range, which is lit and 13 logs piled beside it. Other contents: large oak table with 6 chairs; washtub (4' dia, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' deep); cupboards with i) 8 cups, 6 wine goblets, 6 pewter tankards, 3 wine jugs, keg of brandy, 6 kegs of beer and 10 amphorae of mediocre wine ii) 10 wooden bowls, 10 wooden plates, 6 pewter bowls, 6 pewter plates, 3 fired clay casseroles, 12 long skewers, 4 copper saucepans, assorted blunt utensils, mortar & pestle, 2 chopping boards, 6 mixing bowls and a rolling pin. iii) 12 each pewter knife, fork, spoon and small fork, 6 ladles, 2 large knives, 4 small knives, chopper, hacksaw and a sack of potatoes. A pot of stew is bubbling on the range.

Larder: Crate of assorted vegetables; 3 sacks of apples; 2 amphorae best wine; half full keg of liquor; keg of mead; 2 sacks of flour; stone jars of: dried fruit (3), preserved fruit (13), salt (2), yeast (1), spice rack (16 bottles); 3 rabbits; side of pork; side of beef; 6 partridges; 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ rounds of cheese; 3 jars of honey; a bin with six loaves and a tin of cakes.

Stairs: At the end of the banister is a low table on which is a brass bowl which contains an aspidistra.

Master Bedroom: The room contains: a canopied double bed, a folding laquer screen, a dressing table with mirrors, a small chair and a wardrobe with Mrs. Hafnor's dresses. A glass window overlooks the yard. Against the wall are 3 chests i) Captain's clothes, including spare chainmail jerkin, leather armour, fancy hat etc. (ii) Mrs. Hafnor's underwear, capes, shoes, etc. (iii) washbasin, jug for hot water, 3 towels, 6 flannels, soap. There's a chamber pot under the bed and perfumes, jewelry worth 200gp in total are in the dressing table.

Study: Pine table, 5 chairs. Chest containing 1200 gp, 370 sp, 950 cp. Cupboard containing a keg of beer, 5 tankards, 10 sheets of paper, ink, quill, sealing wax, 3 torches, 24 candles, 3 candle sticks, tinderbox, knife and a scroll case containing 57 maps.

P's Bedroom: Single bed, wardrobe with cloaks, boots, a suit of leather armour and a secret door in the back to the warehouse that only Hafnor knows about. Circular table and 3 chairs, copper bathtub (4'x2'6"x3' deep), a chest of drawers with shirts, breeches and socks, a cupboard with doublets, tabards, caps etc, another cupboard with cakes, fruit, wine, mead and an ale keg.

Store: Bed linen (2 double bed, 2 single), mattress, 2 stools, 2 rugs, 4 blankets.

If hit, and both hands are empty, a defender can catch an object on a hit vs AC 2. If the defender is trying to ward off an object with an equally bulky object, the object being thrown is at -4 to hit.

- EFFECTS: 1= left arm struck, drop whatever holding.
2= right arm struck, drop whatever holding.
3= chest struck, save vs DEX on 4d6 or fall.
4= as 3 plus 1-3 damage.
5= legs struck, save vs DEX or fall, no movement for one round.
6= as 5, but no move for 2-5 rounds.
7= abdomen struck, treat as 4 and 6.
8= head hit, save vs wands or stunned for one round.
9= as 8, fall over (automatic) plus 1-3 damage.
10= as 8, stunned for 2-12 rounds, 10% chance of blinding for 2-12 rounds if stunned.
11= arm or leg hit, as 2 or 6 plus 20% chance of bone breakage.
12= chest hit, as 4 plus 25% chance of cracked ribs, further damage is x2, movement is halved, no picking up heavy objects.

NOTE: If engaged in some other activity a character cannot fend off or try to catch missiles.

If held or wielded, chairs and tables should be treated as a pummeling attack.

- b) varnish: thrown as barrel. If hit, 75% chance that it will split. People coated in varnish are incapacitated for 2-12 rounds (dependant on area hit), cannot cast spells, fight at -4 and lose 5 Hts. NB: varnish is highly inflammable.
- c) burning brands, torches: go out if thrown. If wielded, strike as clubs at -2, but have 25% of igniting clothes.
- d) rugs, blankets, mattresses: range 2" for everyone. If hit vs AC 0 indicated, the defender will fall beneath the rug (etc) and will be prone for 1-3 rds.
- e) vases, flacons, amphorae, tankards, plates, jugs, saucepans etc: all may be hurled as hammers for 1-2 to 1-6 damage. Wooden objects, unless large do no harm. All may be used for pummeling attacks.
- f) stew: thrown as barrel, but will always spill contents. The heavy pot strikes with a d10 for effects (above table). If contents thrown/tipped over someone, they are severely scalded, and will limp (half speed) if leg hit; fight at -3 if arm hit; blinded & cannot move or fight for 2-8 rounds if head hit. 1-3 damage is also done.
- g) sacks: thrown as table, roll d8 for effects but no damage done.
- h) plant pot: as barrel.
- i) stairs: falling down stairs is 1-3 damage and 1-4 rounds to recover.
- j) pillows, other fairly light but bulky objects: 15% chance of disarming, 15% chance of knocking over (hand held and wielded only).
- k) large tables: STR 19 to pick up (range 4")-thrown for 2-16 damage and save vs DEX on 4d6 or pinned beneath for 1-8 rounds. STR 10 to move easily/tip over-defender must save vs wands or be trapped for 1-3 rounds and 1-3 damage.
- l) brazier: can only be held for 2 rounds unless insulated. Thrown as barrel plus 1-3 burn damage whenever hit. Wielded as flail, plus 1-3 fire damage per hit.
- m) tuns: STR 19 required to throw (range 8") for 3-12 damage.
- n) windows: If thrown through a ground floor, glass window take 1-4 damage unless save vs wands made plus 10% chance of blinding.
- If thrown through upper floor glass window, as ground floor plus falling damage, 2-8 and 30% chance of sprained ankle. 1-6 rounds recovery time, if window is barred as above but also 30% chance sprained wrist.

If unsurprised, character may attempt to save vs DEX on 4d6 to grad sill.

- - o o o o - -

Note On Subduing: When all Hts are gone, the character must save vs CON on 3d6 or collapse, otherwise he will try to flee and keep out of combat. They fight at -4.

17 WHARF-RAT ROAD

Ground Floor: Brazier, bucket of coals, stool, low table for nightwatchman.

On the shelves are: (i) bales of cloth

- (ii) Kegs of pipeweed, crates of cocoa beans, boxes of wooden jewelry.
 - (iii) Mostly empty, except for 24 crates of tools (hammers etc.)
 - (iv) Animal skins, a wide variety of types.
 - (v) Crates of wooden goblets, wooden plates and wooden toys.
 - (vi) Packaged stone gargoyles for building and other carved pieces of stone.
 - (vii) Bowes of antiques, including the Idol of Bathsheeba.
 - (viii) Leather goods, including footballs, saddles, breeches, belts, sandals.
 - (ix) Stone jars with delicacies preserved and pickled. All sealed with beeswax.
 - (x) candles, torches, jars of oil (several leaking).
- Crates (xi), stacked up under the stairs. There are 44 in all, 20 are tea chests, 15 are cotton, 9 are clothing (all 4'x4'x3').

Barrels (xii), 17 in all, 11 are ale, 6 are butter (they are 2' dia, 3' tall).

Tuns (xiii), (4' diameter, 6' tall), all 3 are freshwater.

Sacks (xiv), 35 stacked here. Twenty-eight are corn, seven are mouse dwellings!

First Floor: Shelving: (i) Chainmail, studded leather armour, polearms, shields (wooden), shields (skin with wood frame).

- (ii) Sacks of rock salt, boxes of spice, boxes of nuts.
- (iii) Nets, sail-cloth, rope, barrels of pitch, pulleys, yarn, rigging anchors and chain.
- (iv) Crates of smoked, dried and burnt fish. Boxes of fake spell casting equipment and supplies (bat's wings, newt's eyes etc.)
- (v) Blacksmith's tools.
- (vi) Boxes of papyrus leaves, metal boxes with books, inscribed clay tablets, sealing wax, chisels, quills, ink, india-rubber erasers, gambling plaques and dice.

Barrels (vii) all containing goats milk, nine of them.

Crates (viii), a total of 9, 4 of oranges, 5 contain brass hemispheres.

Chests (ix), all 12 are locked, 5 contain glassware, 3 contain swords, axes and daggers made for the 3rd infantry, 2 contain cosmetics and perfumes.

Strongroom (x), walls are 3' thick, door has an unsmashable lock on it. Inside is a case with 5 gold statuettes @ 660 gp, a case with the Star of Shematt (9600 gp), 16 gold bars each worth 500 gp, 72 silver 'fingers' at 500 sp and a box of jewelry in emeralds and electrum, total value 3,705 gp.

There are three skylights set in the roof. The windows in the walls are all 3' wide crossed with two iron bars, except that with the crane. This is 5' wide with wooden shutters, both barred. The crane arm is 4' long, 1' thick and dangles 3' of rope with a hook. The floor is of old creaky floorboards.

The roof is flat and tarred straw/clay roofing material. Rats infest it.

INFORMATION FOR PLAYERS

All see the outer walls, street plan, upper storey windows and placement of people in the street.

Roof plans are shown to Mystior and Elkentin.

House plans are shown to Hafnor, Mrs Hafnor, Pandecor. Secret door is only known to Hafnor.

Warehouse plans (but not what goods are stored) are known to Hafnor, Crithor and Cruisid.

Those knowing plans should be given drawings. When two people not knowing an area enter it, the plan should be revealed to the whole party. It is suggested a full size board is drawn up and templates placed over the unknown areas.

READERS'

THOUGHTS ON...THE HOBBY

A selection of readers' thoughts springing from the response to the questionnaire (issue 14). The views expressed below are not necessarily held by me! I've omitted readers' names as some will no doubt not wish to be accredited with the following!

'There seems to be a general lack of cohesion between groups of players - everybody plays their own variation of the same game.'

This is of course inevitable as each group strives to attain its own ideals. This makes moving a character from one campaign to another difficult, or almost impossible where major changes in magic systems or combat are made. Where, however, only small changes are made (eg; in the interpretation of certain spells or the banning of certain magical items) then a copy of the extra rules may be given to a new player in order for him to become more familiar with them. Obviously a player must respect any new rules and not try to impose his own for this can upset the balance of a game. - GD

'I think many people will get bored of AD&D unless DMs continue to bring new situations in.'

Books and old maps are an inspirational source in this respect; the DMG gives a list of suitable literature and TBH aims to continue to bring you original and interesting scenarios. - GD

'Perhaps the postal side of the game should get a little more publicity.'

'I'd like to see more FRP conventions.'

Britain isn't short of club conventions though these require wider advertising. The biggies, Dragonmeet and Games Day are the highlights of the FRP year; why are they both late in the year? An early spring convention would help the year spin round. - GD

'I'd expect to see the appearance of another good amateur magazine or two, certainly the appearance of a number of bad ones.'

'I would like to see more people accepting D&Ders for normal people and not freaks.'



'I would like to see the hobby becoming more accepted by wargamers. I play both quite happily but some people object to D&Ders and don't want to be associated with us.'

Many of you commented on the numbers participating in the hobby; are these likely to rise or fall. Most foresaw a rise in numbers but thought that the game is not yet getting enough publicity:

'Our club is very short of members. In a game like AD&D, newcomers are vital yet no matter where we advertise, the response is minimal. I feel that FRP gaming should be more publicised by the media.'

'Such a small minority have ever heard of FRPs. As so few people play them, the prices are very high.'

I have no doubt that the hobby is growing. But what effects will this have on FRPs ? (GD):

'Its growing too large and professional. Whilst its great to get new addicts, its unfortunate that the hobby is losing some of its 'fan-nish' aspect and becoming big business.'

Never fear, the fanzine is here! Fanzines should help to preserve the individualism of FRPERS and prevent FRPs from becoming impersonal. The family-like grouping of FRPERS is, I think, essential to the hobby.

- GD

'Mass market production I don't think would be particularly good because not many people would become role playing addicts, which would put off those who are.'

I personally believe that AD&D is designed for, and played by addicts alone. Mass market production will probably be restricted to more commercial games. Those that play AD&D are almost all fans of the game; as one reader put it 'Once you're in, you're hooked!' - GD

'Too many game systems and general over-commercialisation will be confusing to the newcomer to the hobby.'

Many of you complained about the numerous D&D 'rip-offs'. However, through attracting a wider range of participants to the hobby, I think they can only benefit and complement D&D in the long run.

'I think that people are cashing in on games eg: how much of the £10 for the DMg is profit for TSR?'

Remember that role playing has a relatively small following, thus costs are bound to be high; also TSR (and other companies) are selling ideas - there is a lot of work that goes into each production. -GD



'While without the wargamers' interest D&D may well never have got off the ground, the wargamers' influence does tend to complicate and hence slows the activity. Greater general participation will undoubtedly balance the position.'

'I shall continue to buy TBH (and read it) with great enthusiasm and with the advent of more amateur 'zines (which, I think, is inevitable) I feel that all mags will get better and better because of the competition.' - which can only be good news for the hobby.

To close the questionnaire results, many of you made queries about contributions. To put you in the picture, we are pleased to accept virtually anything on D&D/AD&D or the other major FRP games. This includes playtests through TBH dungeons, contributions for 'Thoughts On...', 'Developing Campaign', artwork and anything else you might think of. Not that we're short on material at the moment - the GCC response was great! Nonetheless, the more material we receive, the higher will be the standard of The Beholder.

Many readers have expressed concern about the future of the fanzine under TSRs seemingly hard-line attitude. Here is a reassuring response from Don Turnbull (of TSR Hobbies (UK) Limited):

'I don't think the 'official TSR view' is that the game - either game - is immutable. All they ask is for a bit of reason. Despite arguments to the contrary which I have seen elsewhere, AD&D in particular was very carefully researched for balance etc. Minor changes/additions won't affect the enjoyment of the game as such one iota - indeed, I employ minor changes myself. However major changes will inevitably alter the game structure; that doesn't mean to say that the game in its new form is less enjoyable to the players, but it does mean that the game is no longer the original game. For instance I would cite combat/melee: if you accept the TSR concept of the one-minute melee round, the rest of the TSR combat rules fall into place and the thesis that melee is simply subordinate to 'the adventure' is established. If however you want a more detailed melee system, that's fine, but it won't structure particularly well with the rest of AD&D.

'Keep up a good quality and keep gamers interested in gaming (particularly D&D/AD&D of course!) and you won't get any attacks from me.'

KICKING THE BUCKET

by T. & G. Duke

Movement in melee is partly neglected by Gygax in the DMG in that he details movement into and out of combat and time required for specific actions (such as hurling a flask of oil), but ommits the importance of the melee setting (hereafter descibed as the locale).

For example, Crusty Cudgel, the Clumsy Cleric is laying into a few goblins with his mates:

"Right, I leap on to the table, from there on to the chandelier and swing to the balcony. Avoiding the onlooking balrog, I leap down behind the leader and, safe in my plate mail, bonk him over the head with my mace!"

In this case, the DM has not neglected the detail of the locale, but Crusty Cudgel has merely misjudged (!) his capabilities. Imagine a man in plate mail swinging on a chandelier. And think of the time involved for such a character, these movements would take a few miracles to complete by doomsday!

At the other extreme, the typical melee occurs in featureless surroundings. The DM might have included details of the locale but when melee commences, all is forgotten in the drama. Swords flash, bodies fall but our heroes stride on regardless. Who falls over dead monsters? They apparently disappear during melee only to reappear when our heroes set about searching them afterwards.

Consequently, I think that it is up to the DM:

- i) to prepare the melee locale. This means noting features affecting freedom of movement in combat. In indoor settings, these might include: tables, chairs and beds etc; steps, loose flagstones, ledges and slopes etc; windows, doorways, screens and curtains; fireplaces and logpiles; chandeliers and torches; jugs, bowls buckets and flowerpots; cupboards crates and (of course!) treasure chests.

In outdoor situations, obstacles comprise the like of:

fallen trees, stumps and boulders ; mud, gravel and bog; ditches, fences and hedges; streams and pot-holes ; inclines and cliffs; long grasses, nettles and scrub.

The DMG Appendix I; Dungeon Dressing is very helpful in this respect.

- ii) to describe this locale to the players, as they would see it, before melee is joined. Remember that in the excitement, characters may not observe that small rut or slippery patch of moss. Here, the monster(s) may have an advantage; if in its lair, it will know the terrain well and be able to drive intruders in to dead ends, over cliffs or in to patches of quicksand etc.

Characters may find out more details about the locale as melee progresses (sometimes the hard way! Crusty Cudgel would probably go straight through the table top).

- iii) to use floorplans on which to enact the combat. The locale can be laid out using small pieces of card to represent various obstacles. In this way it can be seen exactly where everything and everyone is, and their relative positions. (The TSR Dungeon Floorplans are very good for this).



Thus, when Crusty says he wants to chop the goblin from behind, it can be seen that it takes time and effort to first negotiate the table and that to swing on to the balcony is nigh impossible. Floorplans give the players a sense of time and space that is difficult to understand without visual aid.

- iv) finally to see that melee progresses with full account of the locale taken. As bodies fall they represent new obstacles - they don't disappear. Broken flasks (especially oil flasks) produce slippery patches. Those with bare feet, watch for fallen swords and torches!

Effects and uses of the background features

- a) Indoors; Firstly, the background features may impede melee. They must be avoided or climbed past. It might take one segment for an unencumbered MU to leap over a table, but five or six for Crusty to negotiate one.

If one is unaware of an obstacle, he is likely to be tripped or hampered in some way. For example, backing down steps is almost certain to cause a stumble during hand to hand combat.

A hefty blow is likely to force an opponent backwards. In this way, creatures may force their adversaries to stumble over obstacles. The chance that he will fall will depend on the force of the blow (calculated in hit points damage), the type of obstacle and the strength and dexterity of the defender. Once down, consider the difficulties in regaining one's feet. The Clumsy Cleric in his plate mail may require anything up to a round, and will most certainly be prone during this time; unless his mates should distract his assailant, he is in dire trouble.

Secondly, the background provides an extension of the combat area. Tables and window ledges provide relatively safe perches from where the enemy may be singled out and attacked with greater chances to hit. This is due to the advantage of height.

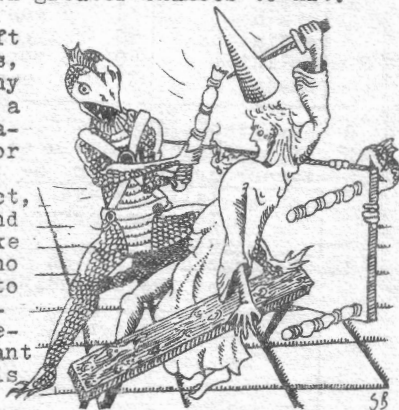
Thirdly, the background provides makeshift weapons or shields in the form of chair legs, burning logs, buckets and flower pots, balcony railings, table-tops and curtains. Consider a mischievous leprechaun emptying buckets of water from a balcony above a furious melee, or a log-pile rolling down a stairway.

- b) Outdoors; obstacles here have a similar effect, boulders and logs substituting for tables and benches. Long grass or slippery surfaces like mud or moss, will slow combatants or give no firm standing and thereby reduce the chance to hit. Bramble and nettles will deter most adventurers while thick-skinned trolls fight regardless. On steep hills, the higher combatant will have an advantage over the lower, who is likely to topple.

Outdoors, trees or large boulders provide advantageous positions. Leaping from these might give a bonus to hit, but a wary and intelligent monster might catch a character off-balance.

Makeshift weapons are innumerable; rocks may be thrown (size depending on strength), branches wielded, even snowballing resorted to. A fistful of sand or murky swamp water in the eyes is an effective distraction gaining vital seconds in which to fight or flee.

All DMs note: an interesting locale will lead to an interesting melee.



EVERLASTING ARMOUR ?

Ever considered the everlasting suit of armour that has done the adventurer for hundreds of adventures and still gives him the appropriate A.C.? Well, for all exasperated D/M's, here is a simple system to counter this.

- A Each armour type is given a defensive points value (DPV) representing the amount of damage that it can withstand before falling apart.
- B Each time a character takes damage, his armour has been penetrated and, regardless of the amount of damage done, one point is taken from the DPV of the armour.
- C When $\frac{1}{4}$ of the armour's points have been used lower the effective A.C. by 1, when $\frac{1}{2}$ have been used lower it by 2 and when $\frac{3}{4}$ have been used lower it by 3. When all the points have been used, the armour is of no further use (ie A.C.10). Don't tell the player that his A.C. has dropped, merely that it is ripped and torn etc.
- D All armour has an effective lifespan after which it is irreparable, despite the DPV remaining, due to normal 'wear and tear'.
- E Shields also have a DPV. When this has been used, the shield is no longer of any use (ie A.C. drops by 1).

ARMOUR TYPE	DPV	EFFECTIVE LIFE SPAN	ARMOUR TYPE	DPV	EFFECTIVE LIFE SPAN
padded	20	3 months	plate mail	70	15 months
leather	24	4 months	plate armour	90	2 years
studded	30	6 months			
ring	36	7 months	helmet, great	24	4 months
scale	38	7 months	helmet, small	20	3 months
chain	44	8 months	shield, large	24	4 months
elfin chain	60	3 years	shield, small	20	3 months
splint	50	9 months	shield, small wooden	4	1 month
banded	52	10 months	magic armour-multiply DPV/ELS by 2-5		

- G Any armour or shield may be repaired if it has at least 1DP left.
- H If a character has a secondary skill of tailor/weaver, leather worker/tanner or armorer, he may repair the following armour types:

tailor/weaver	studded, padded, ring, scale
leather worker/tanner	leather, scale, ring, studded
armorer	all except padded

- I The character, or an employed worker, can repair armour by a certain number of DPs depending on his skill:

tailor/weaver	01-20 fair	2-4
	21-50 good	2-8
	51-75 superior	2-12
	76-90 excellent	4-16
	91-00 masterful	6-24
leather worker/tanner	01-20 fair	2-8
	21-50 good	2-12
	51-75 superior	4-16
	76-90 excellent	6-24
	91-00 masterful	8-32
armorer	01-20 fair	2-12
	21-50 good	4-16
	51-75 superior	6-24
	76-90 excellent	8-32
	91-00 masterful	10-40

- J Each point repaired takes $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. and suitable supplies of thread etc.
- K Armour may only be repaired twice.

