

Autumn 2009
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Ordo Draconis

THE JOURNAL OF THE DRAGON WARRIORS ROLE-PLAYING GAME



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- ✦ Q&A with Dave Morris and James Wallis!



The first ever map of the Lands of Legend, as drawn by Leo Hartas in 1984.

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This e-Zine is a non-official journal dedicated to the Dragon Warriors roleplaying game, published by Magnum Opus Press and written by Dave Morris and Oliver Johnson. No copyright infringement is intended.

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Wow, was I naive.

When I casually mentioned on rpg.net that I wished there was a *Dragon Warriors* eZine, little did I expect that I would soon be volunteering myself to produce one. I thought all I would need to do was receive articles and artwork, do a spot of spell checking, and then format the whole thing into a tidy pdf. That was in April. It is now nearing the end of September and I can't count the number of hours I've put into this. From the surprising - and most welcome - amount of article submissions sent in, to the helpful feedback and slew of volunteers offering to do everything from proofread to graphic design, I've been very lucky to have been helped along by some very enthusiastic fans of such a great game.

Most surprising was the generous time both Dave Morris and James Wallis took to answer a hoard of questions put forth by small army of eager *Dragon Warriors* players. And I cannot forget to offer a sincere "thank you" to artist extraordinaire, Jon Hodgson, who kindly offered to provide *Ordo Draconis* with its first cover artwork as well as some interior art.

As this is only the first issue, I know there are bugs to be worked out. I'm sure there are spelling mistakes that have eluded my weary eyes and those of Cameron Smith. I know that some page formatting could be improved. Nevertheless, I'm quite pleased with what we've managed to include here. I hope you enjoy it and are eager for another issue. I know I am!

DRAGON WARRIORS

THE LEGEND CONTINUES

PRINCE OF DARKNESS

Oliver Johnson's classic one-book campaign has been revised and expanded by Ian Sturrock and Adrian Bott. *Prince of Darkness* contains complete background on the Fiefdom of Glissom, several pages of adventure seeds, and all-new art and maps by Jon Hodgson, Scott Neil and Andy Laws.

November 2009, 88 pages

FRIENDS OR FOES

Thirty-six of Legend's most colourful characters are here in all their glory, bound together in a weave of connections and conspiracies that spans the world. Each is ready to be used in your game, to set your players' characters off on adventure, help them in their hour of need—or stab them in the back.

January 2010, 64 pages

IN FROM THE COLD

In the early 1980s *Dragon Warriors* author Dave Morris was one of the foremost writers for *White Dwarf* magazine. *In From The Cold* collects his finest articles and adventures, updating and retooling them for *Dragon Warriors*.

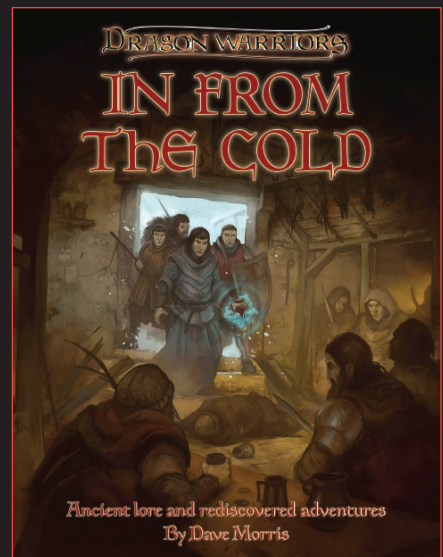
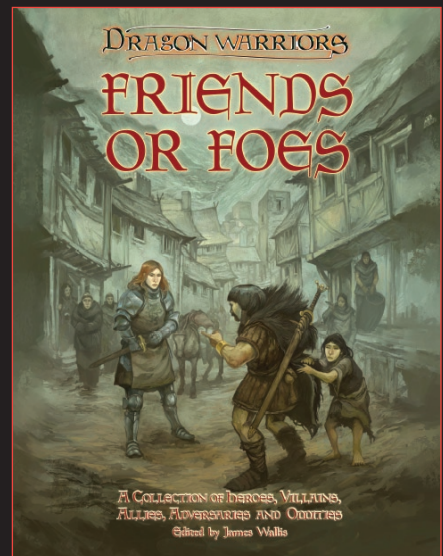
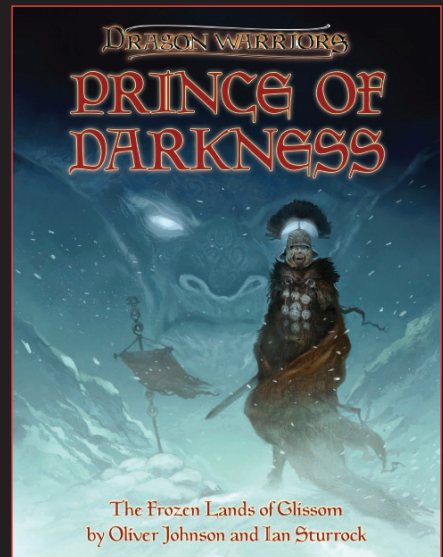
March 2010, 96 pages

Dragon Warriors books are available from good games shops, as well as direct from our partners at Mongoose Publishing or downloadable as PDFs from DriveThruRPG.com

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From the Horse's Mouth



ragon Warriors co-creator Dave Morris and Magnum Opus guru James Wallis answer a slew of questions posed by fans of the game from the Yahoo group as well as the terrific Dragon Warriors Wiki (<http://dragonwarriors.wetpaint.com>).

BLOOD SWORD

- With the Fighting Fantasy books getting a make-over lately, do you think that *Blood Sword* would ever be re-published?
- If you are to rework *Blood Sword* as a high level campaign would you change the finale?
- Will there ever be a *Blood Sword* campaign book, just like *Sleeping Gods* and *The Elven Crystals*?

James: A *Blood Sword* campaign book? Perhaps. There might well be. For various reasons the contract I signed with Dave and Oliver specifically excludes *Blood Sword* at the moment, which is why you won't see any Bloodsword characters cropping up in *Friends or Foes* (editor's note: forthcoming), for example. But there's no reason why we can't sign a codicil that'll bring the *Blood Sword* rights to Magnum Opus as well. For my money there's such a richness of ideas, of places and characters in *Blood Sword* that doing it as a single campaign book would be a shame. I think there's the potential to make a multi-volume series of adventures out of it, like the classic 'The Enemy Within' series for *Warhammer FRP*. A lot depends on how the game is selling, of course, because creating something as ambitious as that is a major investment, but it'd be great fun to do.

Dave: There's plenty of material in *Blood Sword* that could be extracted for future DW books. I'm not interested in republishing the gamebooks themselves, but I'm sure as James says that they will get used somehow.

DRAGON WARRIORS RPG

What inspired you to write *Dragon Warriors* in the first place. What TV programs and books provided the atmosphere?

Dave: Richard Carpenter's *Robin of Sherwood* was a big influence, of course. (As somebody on one of the forums pointed out, this was just after the Falklands War and I'm sure that zeitgeist can be seen in both DW and things like *Robin of Sherwood*.) Jack Vance's *Lyonesse* trilogy came out a little after the first DW books, but it certainly had a bearing on what we did later – as did almost everything Vance wrote. I got a lot of indirect inspiration from Italo Calvino, Michel Tournier and Jorge Luis Borges. Oliver got the original inspiration for the Ghosts of the Magi from Russell Hoban's Riddley Walker – and you would think from W B Yeats's poem "The Magi" though in fact I didn't come across it until I was writing the *Blood Sword* books, so that was just one of those little gifts of synchronicity. John Boorman's movie *Excalibur*, naturally. And British folklore and landscape, always and forever my biggest inspiration.

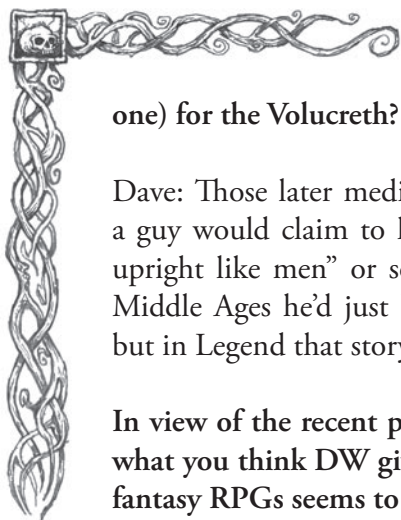
Why is the game called "*Dragon Warriors*?"

Dave: Umm... better ask Oliver. I think it was a good way to signal that it was about fantasy and adventure. Like "swords & sorcery", but Oliver suggested that putting "dragon" in the title would achieve that effect more poetically.

What came first - the Lands of Legend or the game itself?

Dave: The game and Ellesland grew together. The rest of Legend was only developed when we needed it for later books, and in fact our own campaigns have almost never needed to leave Ellesland. There's plenty there to keep a party occupied.

What was the source/inspiration (if there was



one) for the Volucreth?

Dave: Those later medieval travellers' tales, where a guy would claim to have seen "birds who walk upright like men" or something. And in the real Middle Ages he'd just be talking about ostriches, but in Legend that story would be true.

In view of the recent popularity of retro-gaming, what you think DW gives to players that modern fantasy RPGs seems to be lacking?

Dave: I don't have much idea what modern RPGs are like. Some that I've seen are too knowing and authorial for my taste – you don't play your character, you become a sort of author in control of the character. I'm not interested in that at all. I just like a system that won't get in the way while we act out our improvised dramas. The only reason that I bother with rules at all is that they are a court of appeal that prevents tyranny on the part of the GM. But the best games are those where nobody feels the need to invoke the rules. To answer your question, maybe older RPGs were more about the role-playing and less about USP-riddled game mechanics? In which case it's hardly surprising that people are turning to them, as far more people are interested in stories and character than are interested in gameplay and authorial control.

There are many mentions of wandering monks in the text, so why can't there be PC monks?

Dave: There can be! A friar does not need a novitiate. So it is possible that a dispossessed or disillusioned Knight, back from the Crusades, might become a friar. Some Mystics might become friars. Even a Sorcerer might be a friar (think of Roger Bacon).

Nine out of every ten monks or friars or priests that you meet are not going to be ranked characters with special adventuring abilities, of course. I think that the idea of monks or other clerics being adventuring classes comes from D&D, where of course priests have Biblical magic powers. That's

not the case in Legend. God never directly intervenes, but it is true that faith can give an individual the strength and focus to develop his own abilities to an extraordinary degree. You don't have to be a monk/friar to become a Mystic, nor are the majority of monks & friars Mystics (all "magic" using classes are much rarer than that) but it is certainly a possibility.

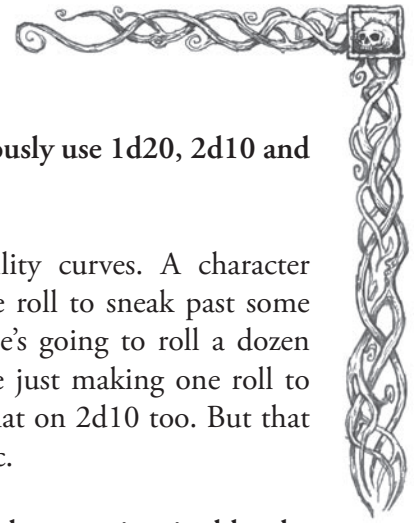
Sorcerers are completely different from Mystics. They use rituals that coerce pagan spirits to do their bidding. You can follow the True Faith and be a Sorcerer, but it's going to cause you a lot of sleepless nights.

The exception to all of this is saints. They're a whole other thing entirely. But "saint" isn't a profession. Anybody might end up a saint, and then they will work miracles just like you expect. And their remains have holy powers. I've never seen a player-character get close to sainthood.

Elementalists are overtly animistic priests. That's how most magic gets started, of course - it consists of rituals designed to persuade or coerce a deity into doing what you want. The "deity" in question might be a nature spirit, demon, whatever you want to call it. In the case of Elementalists it's the specific archetypal spirits of the elements. The True Faith (and Ta'ashim) differs from the earlier pagan religions because God won't intervene and there's no spell you can use to make Him. But He will guarantee your immortal soul, and He will give you the strength that comes with faith.

Fay creatures and the Unholy (vampires, etc) shun holy places and relics because they fear them. The True Faith has diminished these creatures' power and will eventually banish them from the world entirely.

You might ask about orcs and halflings too. Fact is, I've never used these creatures in real Legend. They were just in the original book because fantasy games of the time all had to have them. They really belong in Tolkien's Middle-Earth and nowhere else,



the same way that gnomes belong only in Dunsany's short story and should never have been appropriated by D&D. Steve Foster did a very clever scenario where we encountered a village right in the normal Albion countryside that may have been inhabited by orcs – but that was more Texas Chainsaw Massacre than the Inklings.

What is your favourite Legend character/creature, and why?

Dave: Tobias de Vantery, played by Steve Foster. He was exactly like he is in the Blood Sword books. Steve gave him that very distinctive speech pattern and everything.

What is your favourite memory from playing Dragon Warriors?

Dave: We were playing the scenario that later got written up as "The Greatest Prize" (write it up before playing it? Of course not..!) and the players insisted on exploring the castle well. Vangelis's Mask was playing and I improvised a nasty elfin manifestation to fit the music. Ever since we've called that "the Thing in the Well effect". That was also one of Cynewulf Magister's first adventures.

That's not necessarily my favourite Legend experience btw, just my favourite DW-playing experience. Tim Harford's GURPS Legend campaign has had so many fabulous moments that I can't ever begin to describe them here. Maybe some will find their way into the Jewelspider book.

Do you think the knight and barbarian receive too few abilities in comparison to other classes?

Dave: Maybe they do, but in "real" Legend anyone who demonstrates magical ability is so distrusted that it's a lot easier to get by if you're just a fighter. We have almost no PC sorcerers in our own games, and when they do appear (e.g. Tim's devious Krarthian scholar, Kal Ki-Lan Tor) their abilities are a bit more mysterious and weird than in the DW rules.

Why does the game variously use 1d20, 2d10 and 3d6 to make test rolls?

Dave: Different probability curves. A character might make a single dice roll to sneak past some sentries, but in a fight he's going to roll a dozen sword-blows. If you were just making one roll to decide a fight, I'd have that on 2d10 too. But that wouldn't be very dramatic.

Was the Assassin player-character inspired by the character of Nasir in the Robin Of Sherwood television series (1984-86)?

Dave: I think it was probably inspired by the Hashishin, though I can't deny Nasir must have influenced me also.

Why did you elect to use the metric system for DW? Do the inhabitants of the Lands of Legend employ metric measurement?

Dave: I think in metric because I trained as a physicist. Treat metres as yards if you prefer. That's purely for rules purposes, though – there's certainly no metric system in use in Ellesland.

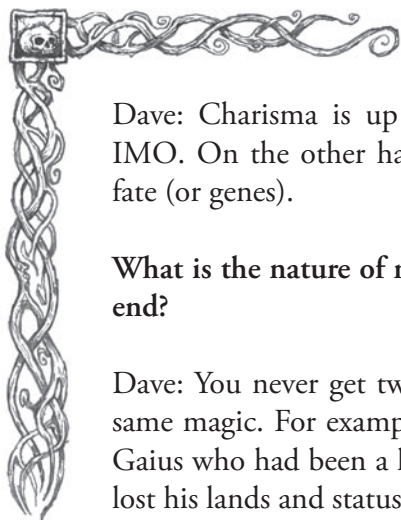
Do warlocks use a different kind of magic than sorcerers? If not, why do they have different spell lists, as opposed to shared ones with sorcerers?

Dave: It's certainly a different school of magic from regular sorcery. Players don't expect to encounter Sorcerers that often, but (in Ellesland, at any rate) you'd almost never meet a Warlock.

23 years later, what 'flaws' do you see in the DW system?

Dave: As we said in the introduction to the new edition, it should have just used d6. Oliver was so right and I was so wrong!

Why 'Looks' instead of 'Charisma' or 'Presence'?



Dave: Charisma is up to the player to provide, IMO. On the other hand, looks are dealt out by fate (or genes).

What is the nature of magic in the Lands of Legend?

Dave: You never get two people using exactly the same magic. For example, I had a character called Gaius who had been a knight of Montombre's but lost his lands and status and became a kind of "unpleasant chores" guy for the Elfin Earl. He dabbled a bit in sorcery, having studied under Cynewulf, and as a result had a blackened eye (scarred by contact with potion fumes) that allowed him to read auras, find lost objects or persons, and stare into darkness to get the answer to questions. Those were his magical powers, and I could have developed them further with the GM but I'd have had to keep those new powers in line with Gaius's schtick with the eye - no sudden spells of flying or whatever.

This approach means that you rarely see anything like the same magic being used by different characters. It feels like an art, not science. We tend to have only very limited use of magic by PCs anyway, so the magic of NPCs is largely at the whim of the GM. This makes fay creatures work a lot better because they don't need to be tied down to a set of restricted abilities. The players always get magic resistance rolls, after all, so the system is just as fair. But nobody can ever say, "Oh, that's a Warlock spell of level 4." In fact, the very concept of defining a person as a Warlock or a Sorcerer... I mean, look at Gaius. Was he a knight? An assassin? A wizard? A bit of all of them, really.

Would you say that having standard spell lists goes against the concept of mysterious and 'unknown' magic use? That no two sorcerers would be alike?

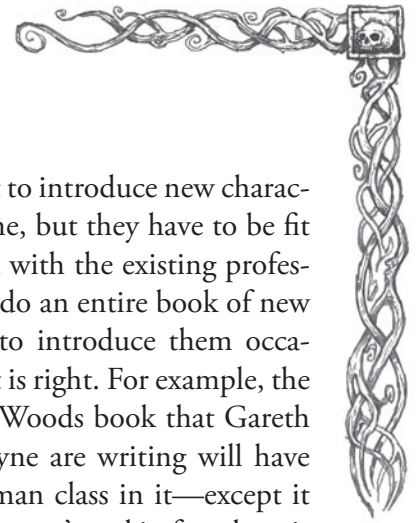
Dave: I guess I imagine it as there's this huge body of magic, but most sorcerers only get to learn a tiny part of that. Having a list of 60 spells or whatever it is is bound to reduce that - it doesn't really feel broad and mysterious enough to be magic. Nearest

to what I'm driving at in fiction is Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell. The two protagonists use often different spells to achieve the same effect, but they can and do sometimes cast the same spell.

Dave mentioned that he has been slowly developing a house system that is essentially *Dragon Warriors* v.2... what can he tell us about it?

Dave: It uses just d10. Each round, you decide whether to concentrate on attack or defence or a mixture of both. This actually leads to some very interesting tactical decisions, because the best way to fight a big armoured opponent is different from dealing with somebody who's faster and more agile. It's a very simple system and it also applies to non-combat skills. The whole system is skill-based, not class-based. Armour absorbs from damage. Taking more than a certain amount of damage in one go gives you penalties on all your skills. There's a lot of choice in the various magic systems, so no two sorcerers or mystics are going to be exactly alike. Warlocks don't exist as such, you just create your warlock by the emphasis you put on weapon skills vs magic, and the spells you specialize in. Tim Harford and I also started working out a system of Myth Levels, to reflect those great heroes like Hunguk who just seem to be a whole other breed. Not that most players would ever get within sniffing distance of that kind of Myth Level, but it's nice for them to see how such characters fit into the system.

The new rules are a different setting from Legend, so I'm not sure whether it would be meaningful to describe them as DW2. That might mislead people into thinking they were connected with Legend. They are only DW2 in the game designer's sense, i.e. they evolved out of DW1. Will I ever get them in an organized enough form to publish? I'd like to, but there's a difference between "complete enough for me to run a campaign" and "complete enough for someone else to use". It might not even appeal to many DW players, as the world is more of a science fantasy prehistoric continent thing. I have a lot of nice artwork and a map, so I ought to work



it up I suppose.

There's also the Invaders & Ancients book, which Oliver and I worked up nearly to completion and probably deserves to be called DW2. That concerns a group of people who sail off into the west to avoid the Apocalypse that (they believe) is coming in the year 1000, and arrive at a new continent far beyond Mungoda. A few hundred years later, their descendants live in uneasy truce with the natives of the land. It sounds like the discovery of America but it's a very skewed Legend-style variant. The natives ("Ancients") are a very sophisticated civilization in decline, for one thing. We had some interesting times with it as a setting, but it's separated from the rest of Legend by several centuries and a gulf of culture so I don't really feel it's essential to enjoying DW. What might be really worth doing is a Far East supplement for Legend. I have a lot of the material for that, but I need to go over it with James a decide (a) if it's something people would buy and (b) whether we can lick it into shape as a coherent book. Personally I don't feel you need much more than Ellesland - we've spent 90% of our adventures there (apart from a couple of short campaigns in Krarth and Ferromaine) and that's more than 20 years of gaming. Maybe we'll move over the Glaive soon!

Will you be contributing any new material for forthcoming DW books?

Dave: Frazer Payne is one of James's writers and he's in my and Oliver's gaming group, so I'm sure we'll be making lots of suggestions.

Any plans to expand the use of 'Legend' beyond the DW rpg, the Bloodsword Gamebooks and the Chronicles of the Magi novels? Where else would you like to see the world of Legend used?

Dave: My dream is that Uwe Boll will want to make the Jewelspider movie.

Are there any plans to introduce new classes? What will be their criterion for selecting the new

class to put in?

James: We definitely want to introduce new character professions to the game, but they have to be fit with the background and with the existing professions. We're not going to do an entire book of new professions, we're going to introduce them occasionally, when the context is right. For example, the forthcoming Jewelspider Woods book that Gareth Hanrahan and Frazer Payne are writing will have the long-awaited Woodsman class in it—except it won't be called the 'Woodsman', and in fact there is a lot of debate about what it should be called.

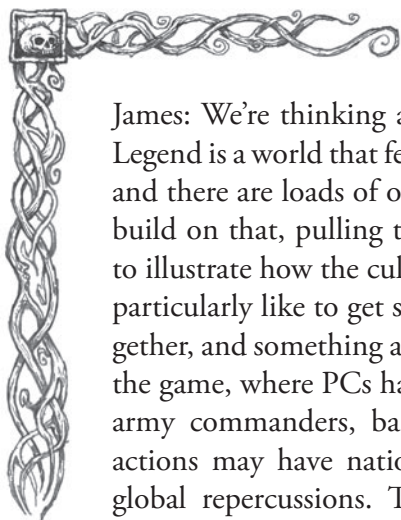
DW professions aren't simply a collection of numbers and skills. The player-characters in a DW games are heroes, or at least heroic, and the professions have to reflect that. Compare the pedestrian names of the D&D character classes ('Fighter', 'Magic User') to DW's Knights, Barbarians and Sorcerers. New classes have to follow in that heroic, archetypal tradition or they'll feel out of place.

As far as expanding and rationalizing the abilities of the existing classes, it's a possibility, and I'm certainly not deaf to people who say that Barbarians, for example, don't have enough abilities to be fun. I promise there'll never be a series of splat-books for each DW class, but I do think a single supplement that adds more options to character-building could do well. It's no more than an idea at the moment and I don't have an author in mind.

Dave: It's a shame that "Ranger" is so inextricably linked with Tolkien's world. I could live with "Forester" which has a ring of heroic myth to my ears, but I'm going to leave it up to Gar and James and Fraz as I'm sure they'll come up with the bon mot. I'm glad the emphasis is on non-magic professions for now. I prefer magic to be very rare in Legend.

When looking at Dragon Warriors, compared to recent games, are there any new areas they wish to explore (mass combat? fief management? social rules?)

(next page)



James: We're thinking about a lot of these things. Legend is a world that feels like it lives and breathes, and there are loads of opportunities for books that build on that, pulling together new rules as a way to illustrate how the cultures work and interact. I'd particularly like to get some mass-combat rules together, and something about the high-end aspect of the game, where PCs have to start interacting with army commanders, barons and kings, and their actions may have national, international or even global repercussions. The end of *Sleeping Gods* hints at something in that direction, and I'd like to take it further.

Dave: Again, I agree with James.

Do you have any plans to release sourcebooks detailing specific nations & cultures?

James: Yes.

Do you have any plans to release adventures for higher ranked characters?

James: We're throttling back on adventures a bit right now, since three of the first four supplements have been adventures: we'd like to concentrate on going deeper on the background and the rules for a bit. But yes, we'd like to do some high-level stuff. The problem is mostly economic. If you think of all the potential purchasers of DW material in the world on a graph, with numbers up the side and level of campaign at the bottom, then as the level of the campaign goes up, the number of potential purchasers goes down: most people play low- or mid-level campaigns, and only a few have high-level games. Add in the fact that only GMs buy adventures while a good sourcebook or rules expansion will be bought by players too, and you can see the problem with budgeting a high-level adventure. But I love that kind of thing, and there's definitely some people who would buy it.

Some published materials don't give Reflex scores for various monsters. Was this an oversight, or is there a formula for figuring these scores out?

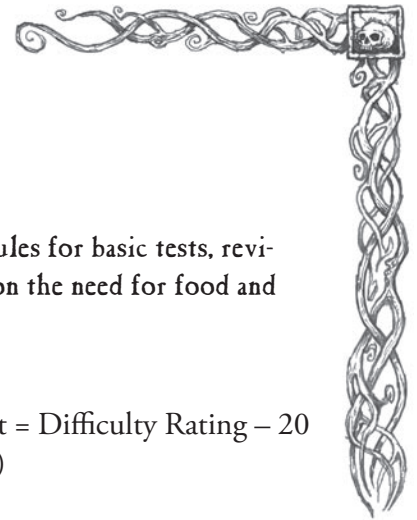
James: The lack of Reflex scores in some places is purely an oversight, and entirely my fault. I apologise. As for a formula, I usually stare hard at the stats, tilt, my head to one side, squint, and write down the first number that comes to mind. But then I've been writing RPG material for 25 years now, and after a while this stuff becomes almost instinctive.

Will you continue to release everything in both hardcopy and pdf form?

James: Unless there's a good reason arises for not publishing in both formats then yes, we'll keep doing things that way. The PDF market isn't huge yet, but it has clear advantages for small companies. And the RPG industry is far ahead of almost all areas of publishing in exploiting e-books. I was talking to a literary agent the other day and happened to mention how many PDFs we sell a month, and she was astonished: there are major authors with major publishing houses who don't shift as many e-books as we do. That's not a sign that we're getting rich, only that this is a very young market.

If/when *Dragon Warriors* goes to a second printing, will you update it with errata or any other changes/additions?

James: If a second printing of the rulebook happens then we'll certainly correct all the errata from the first printing—we've already done that for the PDF versions of the books. But to actually change material in a second printing means that two people who buy the rulebook a year apart may end up with incompatible versions of the game, and I'm absolutely against that. If sales allow then we may do a second edition at some point, which would give us the chance to overhaul the areas of the game that need work—and though I have enormous respect for any system that still has fans after two decades I'm not going to pretend DW is perfect and unalterable. So... it might happen.



Rules of the House

This first offering in a regular series of reader's contributions sees house rules for basic tests, revisions to the Knight, Barbarian, and Assassin classes., and some thoughts on the need for food and sleep.

MODULARIZING DRAGON WARRIORS BY CHOR KUN XIN

One of the quirks of *Dragon Warriors* is that there isn't a uniform system for "doing stuff". For example, Mystics use a percentile roll to determine whether their ESP works, an Assassin memorising something is also a percentile roll but everything else is a roll under the most relevant statistic. Even the dice used and mechanic differs from occasions to occasions – you use a D20 for most rolls, a couple of D6 for poisons and a D12 (plus some other steps) for fright attacks, and a completely different set of mechanics for gaze attacks.

All this can get quite taxing for the GM to remember; however, this is also one of the charms of *Dragon Warriors*. Yet for a programmer like me who likes everything to be standardised, I would rather have a "one-roll-fits-all" system. So this is what I come up with and hope it would be use to someone.

The Basic Check Roll

The basic check roll is a dice roll under the relevant stat. The dice to be rolled depends on circumstances – to succeed against a challenging obstacle is a D20, to resist poison is a number of D6 and so on.

As per the rules, each time a check is performed, a difficulty rating is assigned. If the total of the character's stat plus modifiers is higher than the difficulty rating, then it is an automatic success for the character. If not, the character must roll D20 and score below his stat plus modifiers.

However, if the Difficulty Rating of a check is above 20, it confers a penalty to the stat which is equal to its rating minus 20.

Penalty to Character's Stat = Difficulty Rating – 20
(if Difficulty Rating > 20)

For instance, Lei has a Reflexes of 16 and a Breakfall skill at Master (+6), which gives him a total of 22. He is falling from 25m, which has a difficulty rating of 25. This is 5 points above 20, hence Lei must subtract 5 from his total, which is 17. Hence, Lei must roll below 17 on 1D20 to survive the fall.

Mystic's Abilities

Mystics will have their 2 abilities represented as a stat. For ESP, it is: 7 + Mystic's Rank

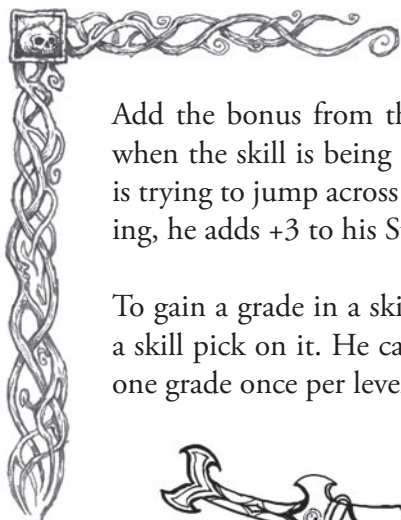
For Premonition, it is: 1 + (Mystic's Rank) / 2
[round up]

I always find it strange that a Mystic's Psychic Talent adds nothing to his Premonition or ESP abilities. As a house rule, add the Psychic Talent's bonus for Magical Attack to ESP and Premonition as well.

Assassin's Skills

The skills for Assassins are somewhat problematic for me. For example, they got a Jump skill – does it means they can leap across a pit without the need to roll at all while other classes need a D20 roll under their Strength? An alternate system for skills is to put them into four grades, with each grade providing a bonus:

| Grade | Bonus |
|-------------|-------|
| Novice | +1 |
| Expert | +3 |
| Master | +6 |
| Grandmaster | +10 |



Add the bonus from the skill to the relevant stat when the skill is being used. Hence, if an Assassin is trying to jump across a pit and has Expert Jumping, he adds +3 to his Strength in the attempt.

To gain a grade in a skill, the Assassin must spend a skill pick on it. He can only increase the skill by one grade once per level up.



Performing a Skill Check

Breakfall: To determine if the Assassin falls safely, match Breakfall + Reflexes against a difficulty rating equal to the number of metres fallen. If the difficulty rating is higher, then the Assassin must roll a D20 under Breakfall + Reflexes to escape unharmed.

Climb: The relevant stat for this skill is Strength. Climb is added to Strength before rolling and unlike the original rules, doesn't affect the Difficulty Rating of the climb.

Crafting Skills: Assassins, Mystics and Sorcerers all have the ability to craft items to a certain extent. The relevant stat for crafting items is Intelligence and to craft an item successfully requires a roll of 3d10 against Intelligence + Crafting skill vs. a difficulty equal to 10 plus the rank requirement of the item (a +1 sword requires the Mystic to be 4th rank, hence it has a difficulty rating of 14).

Jump (2 picks maximum): As per the rules, the first pick of jump (at Novice) allows the assassin to scale any obstacle 3m in height or width, while the second pick (at Expert) allows him to clear a width or height of 4.5m. Only add Jump to Strength for a roll if the jump is particularly challenging (maybe he is trying to leap onto a moving platform!)

Memorise: The ability to memorise details is governed by a roll of D20 under Intelligence + Memorise. If the roll is made successfully, he is able to

memorise the information with a "memory score" equal to his Intelligence + Memorise. For each month, subtract 2 from the "memory score". When the assassin attempts to recall the information, he needs to roll a D20 under the "memory score" to recall the information successfully.

Pilfer: Stealth + Pilfer skill vs. the target's Intelligence + Perception

Pick Lock (3 picks maximum): Roll Pick Lock + Intelligence vs. the lock's difficulty rating (remember, if the difficulty rating is above 20, the number of points above 20 is applied as a penalty to the character's total). An average lock should have a difficulty rating of 16, while an excellent one 20.

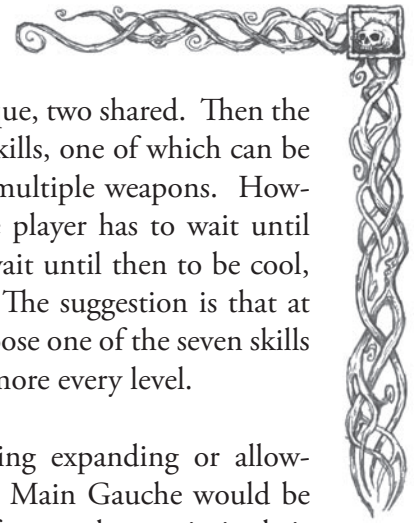
Track: Roll Track + Perception under d20 against a Difficulty Rating to successfully track a quarry. Apply the penalties for the passing period of time as in the rules.

Fright Attacks: Monsters capable of inflicting a fright attack should be assigned a Fright Attack score (12 + its Rank is a good number) and this is the difficulty rating which characters must beat with their Psychic Talent + Rank.

Morale Checks: It would be a good to pre-calculate a "Courage" score according to the rules (Strength + Intelligence + Rank) and use the monster's Attack score as the difficulty rating of the roll.

Gaze Attacks: The rules for gaze attacks are an oddball one (in my humble opinion) but they work well so I am not going to suggest any alternatives for it. One way to streamline it is instead of rolling a percentile every attack roll, lump it together with the Attack Roll. For example, if there's a 40% chance of catching the gaze of a medusa, it will happen if the player rolls a 17 to 20 on the D20. If it is 30%, then the range is from 18 to 20.

Poisons and Diseases: The rules for poisons and diseases are no different than in the *Dragon Warriors* rules..



Conclusion

Here's a summary of the various changes to the system.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| ESP | D20 under Mystic's Rank + 7 |
| Premonition | D20 under (Mystic's Rank)/2 + 1 |
| Breakfall | Reflexes + Breakfall vs. Metres fallen |
| Climb | Strength + Climb vs. Difficulty |
| Jump | Strength + Jump vs. Difficulty* |
| Memorize | D20 under Intelligence + Memorize |
| Pick Lock | Intelligence + Pick Lock vs. Difficulty |
| Track | D20 under Perception + Track |
| Poisons | 2d6 (weak) or 3d6 (strong) under STR |

* Only for extreme cases; there is no need to roll normally.

CHARACTER ASSASSINATIONS! BY CHRIS BRADY

One of the issues with the character classes is that, like the early versions of D&D, the fighting men get a limited run of special skills, or their abilities are back loaded meaning you have to wait a while to receive them, while the Thief gets all these goodies from the get go.

Originally the Knight and the Barbarian were the first classes described, then came the magic -users, and finally the Assassin. The progression clearly shows this sort of 'power creep', where the later classes get to be better because they've had more time to think on what the designers wanted.

So, what to do about levelling the playing field? Well there are a few ways of doing so, but today I'm going to focus on the one that shares abilities and add a few for a small cinematic touch, but nothing too overboard.

Right now, the Knight has a fair amount of abilities, but you have to wait until Rank 8 to access even one of them. I've decided to implement a progression similar to that of the Assassin.

The Knight

Slightly better off than the Barbarian, knights start

with three skills, one unique, two shared. Then the class gets another seven skills, one of which can be taken multiple times or multiple weapons. However, as stated above, the player has to wait until rank 8. Who wants to wait until then to be cool, and start being unique? The suggestion is that at rank 2, the player can choose one of the seven skills of their choice, and one more every level.

Also, I believe that adding expanding or allowing an additional skill to Main Gauche would be kind of cool, and allow for people to mimic their favourite twin swordsmen like Nazir of Robin of Sherwood T.V. show, or even Drizzt Do'Urden of the Forgotten Realms, or other two weapon specialists of literature and T.V.

Florentine: To choose this skill one must have Main Gauche (Dragon Warriors, pg. 27) These techniques add to Main Gauche and allows the following two abilities:

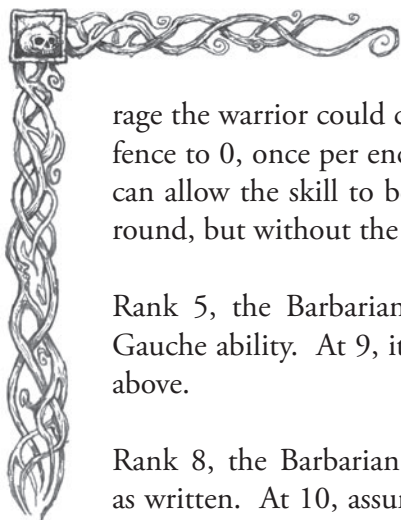
- The ability to wield two one handed weapons of choice, one in each hand.
- The wielder may also split his attack pool to attack two targets at the same time, but this cuts his Defence by half as he's splitting his attention among two enemies.

The Barbarian

The Barbarian has the advantage of having the best offence of any class in the game, and the second best defence, as well as the most health points of any character. Still the poor beast only gets about four skill/abilities, two of which are shared with the knight. So this one will require a bit more work.

The first solution is to give all Barbarians a version of the Assassin's Climb Skill at Rank 1. The second part of the skill is received at Rank 4.

At Rank 3 the Barbarian receives Leap Attack. This ability allows the Barbarian to run half his combat move to leap his Rank in meters towards an enemy, and get to attack once per encounter at half their defence. You can surprise most enemies just once before they catch on. At Rank 7, the skill and raw



rage the warrior could create lowers the enemy defence to 0, once per encounter. However the GM can allow the skill to be used more than once per round, but without the lowering of defence.

Rank 5, the Barbarian gains the Knight's Main Gauche ability. At 9, it upgrades to Florentine, as above.

Rank 8, the Barbarian gets his Bloodrage ability as written. At 10, assuming he survives that long, the Barbarian becomes a canny rager, and thus, although still unable to use ranged weapons, he gains a low, instinctive cunning that allows him to have enough of a mind to protect himself. He can put some of his heightened Attack score into his Defence, up to his base non-Bloodraged score, should the player desire it.

The Assassin

Dual Blades: As per the Knight's Main Gauche (DW pg. 27) but is limited to one handed blades (Dagger, Shortsword, Sword) otherwise as per the Knight's skill. And can be chosen as one of the Assassin's Combat Techniques, replacing one on their normal list.

PRIVATION **BY EDMUND WILFONG**

A character suffers one point of damage for every day they spend without food after the first. Assume that, after twelve hours without water a character will suffer one point of damage, followed by one point of damage every three hours thereafter. Magical healing will not restore Health lost to starvation or dehydration, and non magical healing will cease completely for as long as they are want for food or drink. If they get less than a day's food or water, then the clock starts again (two days until their next loss of Health to starvation, or twelve hours until dehydration), but they will not be able to start healing again until they've gotten a full day's food and water. (In reality, getting partial rations will slowly kill them, but this is outside of the scope of most games.)

A character who doesn't get sleep in 24 hours will have to make a roll of Strength against a difficulty equal to the number of hours they've remained awake. Failure means they pass out within 3d20 minutes. In addition, they'll suffer a -1 penalty to ATTACK, DEFENSE, MAGICAL ATTACK, and MAGICAL DEFENSE, and a -2 penalty to EVASION and PERCEPTION for as long as they are compelled to make these rolls.

BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH **BY EDMUND WILFONG**

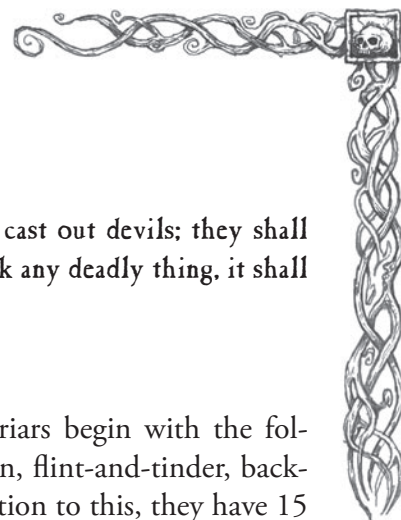
One of the curious features about *Dragon Warriors* is that there's never any uncertainty about the mortality of a character. They are either recovering safely or they're dead. Any character with 0, -1, or -2 Health Points will recover and awaken, but at -3 they die. There are some significant benefits to this system, and for many GMs this is a virtue. Some GMs, though, may prefer to introduce a note of uncertainty on the survival of the fallen. This optional rule provides that.

Any character at 0 Health Points will recover with no risk. However, if a character is at -1 or -2 Health Points, there's a chance that at the moment where they would normally awaken, they may lapse into death instead. Roll 1d6. On a roll of 1 (if the character is at -1 Health Points) or 1-2 (if the character is at -2), the character will die instead of awakening. A character who is healed to 0 or more Health Points before their normal recovery period has no risk of dying - the healing spell causes them to recover safely.

Characters with medical Skills (Friars with Chirurgery count, and some GMs may prefer to give Knights this ability as well) can spend a combat round and roll 1d100. If the result is equal to or less than their Intelligence, they'll have rescued the patient, healing them to 0 Health Points (not enough to awaken immediately, but enough to not die). This may be repeated combat round after combat round until it succeeds. Out of combat, the GM might just assume that such medical care can be successfully given.

The Friar

by Edmund Wilfong



And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; / They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

-Mark 16:17-18

A Friar is a mendicant priest or lay person, different from monks in that a monk is expected to live cloistered while a Friar lives out in the world, doing charities and good works and dealing closely with people. A Friar might even be a militant, and player character Friars might have taken up the mantle of a crusader or holy warrior, or may just be priests or lay persons doing their duty for church and parish. Just as Knights are not always Noble or Gentry (the Profession includes militia men and the like), Friars are not always priests. Many lay persons fill out the ranks, and the Friar could fill any number of those roles as well.

CHARACTER CREATION AND STARTING FACTORS

Although not heavily restrictive, this class is only available to characters with a Psychic Talent of at least 9. Friars require a certain basic spiritual strength - characters of lesser Talent might have considerable piety, but lack the spiritual resolve.

Health Points: 1D6+6

ATTACK: 12

DEFENSE: 6

MAGICAL DEFENSE: 5

EVASION: 4

STEALTH: 13

PERCEPTION: 6

Special Abilities at Rank 1: the Friar begins play with one Skill, one Combat Training, and one Charism, as well as the ability of Piety.

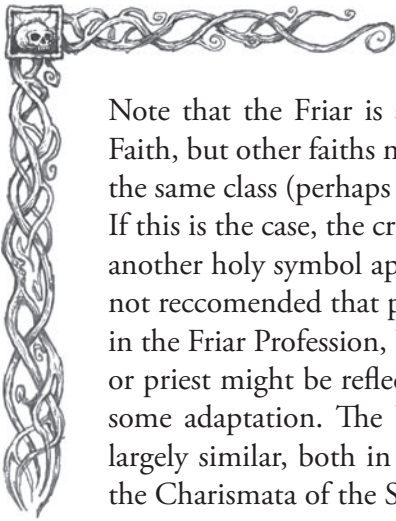
Starting Equipment: A Friar's starting equipment varies considerably depending on the order of which the Friar is a member (if any), if they are a lay person or a priest, how militant they are, where

their skills lie, etc. All Friars begin with the following equipment: lantern, flint-and-tinder, back-pack, and dagger. In addition to this, they have 15 florins towards armor and 10 florins towards one or more weapons. They have 6d6 additional florins, either "on hand" to spend towards more or better armour, weapons, shields, or other equipment. For these purposes, a shield counts neither as weapon nor as armor.

Friars will typically have at least a gambeson, but those who belong to Crusading orders will, if they are able, get a padded armor coat. Due to Selentine Church edicts, a member of the clergy is disallowed to draw blood. As a consequence, ordained ministers who are friars will bear maces or holy water sprinklers. Lay friars are more likely for spears, or if they choose to spend their money on weapon rather than armor they may wish for a sword. Non-militant orders will restrain themselves to gambesons and maces or flails, with the remaining money going towards less violent provisions.

Unless their Combat Techniques say otherwise, a Friar suffers a -2 penalty to ATTACK and DEFENSE for wearing full mail armor, and a -4 penalty for wearing plate armor.

It is worthy to keep in mind that, historically, a Friar is a mendicant and thus cannot claim wealth or income. Mendicants must live on the charity of the parish. However, many orders abused this to some degree or another, claiming that their wealth was not their own but rather the Church's (which is to say, their own order's). Thus, the issue of Friars carrying wealth is left up to the individual gaming group.



Note that the Friar is assumed to be of the True Faith, but other faiths might also be represented by the same class (perhaps with minor modifications). If this is the case, the crucifix will be exchanged for another holy symbol appropriate to that faith. It is not recommended that polytheist faiths be reflected in the Friar Profession, but a Ta'ashim holy warrior or priest might be reflected in this Profession with some adaptation. The baraka of the Ta'ashim are largely similar, both in theory and in function, to the Charismata of the Selentine Church.

SPECIAL ABILITIES OF A FRIAR

The special abilities of the Friar are summarized into three categories - Skills, Combat Trainings, and Charismata. Friars also receive the minor special ability of Piety.

Piety: When rolling to ward off creatures, like Vampires, who can be fended off by presentation of the crucifix, the Friar rolls an extra die. Thus, to ward off Vampires, the Friar rolls 4d6 plus his rank.

SKILLS

The Skills of a Friar are his basic noncombat abilities. These involve endurance, fortitude, knowledge, and discipline. A few of these technically also classify as Charismata in terms of the Church's definition of the term, but only as they are practiced. For example, the Skill of Chirurgy qualifies as a Charism of mercy. The Friar gains one Skill automatically at 1st Rank, but only gains additional Skills by "trading in" Combat Trainings or Charismata.

Skills marked with an asterisk ("") may be taken a second time. Skills marked with two asterisks ("**") may be taken many times.*

Chirurgy*: By attending the wounded, the Friar mends them. The Friar must have chirurgeon's tools (costing 40 florins) in order to practice this, and it requires 6d20 minutes of time. When this time is complete, the victim suffers one Health Point of damage. The Friar then makes a roll of Intelligence - on a success, the character will not be required to

wait four days before beginning to heal. Daily healing will begin immediately (24 hours later). This may be attempted but once per day on a single person normally, but if the victim is injured after this technique is successfully used the Friar may attempt it another time. This may be taken a second time, in which case attempting Chirurgy upon someone will only cause a Health Point of damage on a roll of 1-3 on 1d10 (success or failure). Note that if the patient has -2 HP and suffers damage from treatment, the patient will die. Medical craft is not especially advanced, and chirurgeons killed their patients unfortunately regularly.

Engineering: Friars often contribute to communities by assisting in the construction of fences, walls, and buildings. Friars who are skilled in this regard know their way around a building project, and can oversee many others. When they build something or oversee the building of something, the time required for the project is reduced by 10%. In addition, the Friar knows how things get built, and if within a castle, constructed underworld, mine, or similar environment he gains a +2 bonus to PERCEPTION and EVASION to notice (or dodge) fixtures, devices, and features of the artificial environment.

Folk Remedy*: Friars with this Skill are learned in time-honoured (some would say "superstitious") methods of dealing with arcane troubles, and carry around special, easy-to-gather trinkets and bits that are effective against the mystical when used properly. The Friar will personally gain a +1 bonus to his MAGICAL DEFENSE. This Skill may be taken a second time for an additional +1 bonus.

Herbalism:** If using the HERBALISM factor, the Friar gains an HERBALISM factor of 10 (modified by Intelligence, as usual). They do not gain points in this factor per Rank, but instead gain an additional +1 to this factor whenever they take this Skill another time, but may take it, at most, once per Rank.

Labor: The Friar might not be any stronger because

of his toil, but he is more enduring. Friars with this Skill may carry two additional items against their encumbrance limit.

Legend and Folklore: The Friar knows much of legends, folklore, and similar. Anything of legendary status (dragons, powers of very famous holy relics, etc.) will be basically known to the Friar, at least in passing. Details, and knowledge of less well-known subjects can be gained by a successful Intelligence roll, modified by how rare the knowledge is. With it, the character might identify the characteristics of a magical item, or might learn the powers and weaknesses of a particular kind of faerie creature.

Track*: This Friar may track foes or game across open country, as a Knight or Barbarian. This Skill may be taken a second time, giving the Friar a +2 bonus on all tracking-related PERCEPTION rolls.

Vigil: Friars with this Skill are accustomed to ascetic traditions, including self-flagellation, privation, and sleep deprivation. Friars are able to survive for twice as long without food or water (suffering only half the detriment of a normal person), and can remain in vigil for two or three days before the mandate of sleep (though a full half-day of sleep will be needed to recover from this privation). Friars with this Skill gain +1 Health Point, and gain a +2 bonus to their MAGICAL DEFENSE against any spell that would induce weakness, weariness, or sleep.

COMBAT TRAININGS

The True Faith is presently pursuing a Crusade against the infidel in the Holy Lands. As a consequence many Friars, including lay practitioners but also many priests, pursue careers as crusading priests. Others are merely trained in the arts of war as they are members of militant orders, or because they guard a community against some threat.

Consequent to this, Friars gain some Combat Trainings. They gain one at 1st Rank, another at 4th Rank, another at 7th Rank, and so on every

three Ranks thereafter. However, the Friar does have the option of, instead of taking a Combat Training, taking a Skill in its place.

Appraise Enemy: This functions as the Warlock ability of the same name. The Friar must have an Intelligence of 11 or more to take this ability. Despite being a "Combat Training", Friars often take this Training for reasons other than battle, representing the insight a Friar might have into the nature of others.

Armour Training: The Friar may wear armour up to a suit of full mail without suffering penalties to ATTACK or DEFENSE. He is still unused to fighting in plate armor, however, and suffers a -2 penalty to ATTACK and DEFENSE while in it.

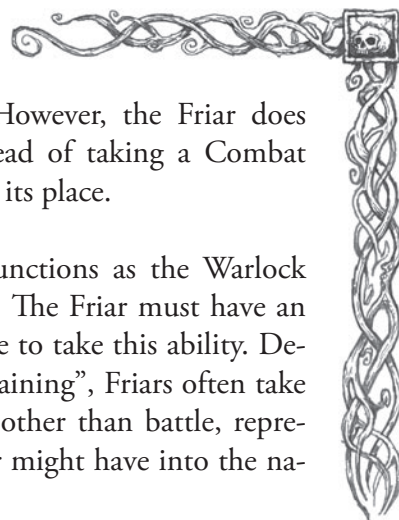
Expert Parry: This functions as the Knight ability of the same name. The Friar must have the ability of Armour Training to take this ability.

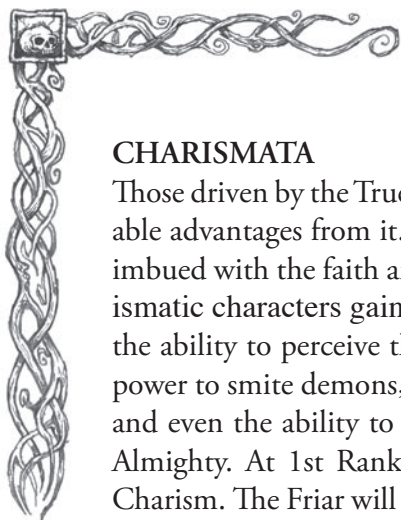
Master Bowman: This functions as the Knight ability of the same name, but requires that the Friar have Weapon Group Training for Weapon Group VI.

Ride Warhorse: The Friar is trained to ride a warhorse, the same as any Knight or Barbarian.

Weapon Group Training: The Friar chooses one of the Warlock Weapon Groups. When fighting using weapons in that group, he gains a +2 bonus to ATTACK. This Combat Training may be taken multiple times, and each time it counts for a different Weapon Group.

Weapon Skill: This functions as the Knight ability of the same name, but the Friar must choose a weapon that falls within his Weapon Group Training (and, in turn, must have a Weapon Group Training). This Combat Training may be taken multiple times, and each time it counts for a different weapon.





CHARISMATA

Those driven by the True Faith might gain considerable advantages from it. The spiritual gifts of those imbued with the faith are called Charismata. Charismatic characters gain many advantages, such as the ability to perceive things normally unseen, the power to smite demons, the ability to cure the sick, and even the ability to call down the Word of the Almighty. At 1st Rank, a Friar will gain a single Charism. The Friar will gain an additional Charism at 3rd Rank, then again at 5th Rank, and again every 2 Ranks thereafter. Instead of a Charism, the Friar has the option of taking a Skill in its place.

It must be emphasized that the True Faith rejects the notion of a mortal being having authority over the power of God on any level. The Charismata are gifts spoken of in holy texts that reflect the spiritual development of an individual. Only a person of great spiritual strength can wield them, the strength that comes from the powers of faith. However, they do not come from God - even the Charism of the working of miracles is merely the power to ask God for intervention. God decides what help He will give, and it is not the authority of the Friar to decree what the miracle shall be (and it might not be helpful to the Friar at all). Thus, it is inoffensive to the True Faith that a person of heathen faith might gain spiritual power from it - though misguided, such individuals obviously have some moral merit and spiritual discipline, despite their obvious religious inferiority.

Charismata generally cost nothing to use, and many are active all the time. In some cases, there are conditions for their use, such as Under The Cross requiring a cruciform standard to be wielded. Others can only be used actively, such as Word Of Wisdom (which occupies the full attention of the Friar). If not stated otherwise, assume that they are active even when the Friar is incapacitated (such as when they are asleep).

Charismata marked with an asterisk (“”) may be taken a second time. Charismata marked with two*

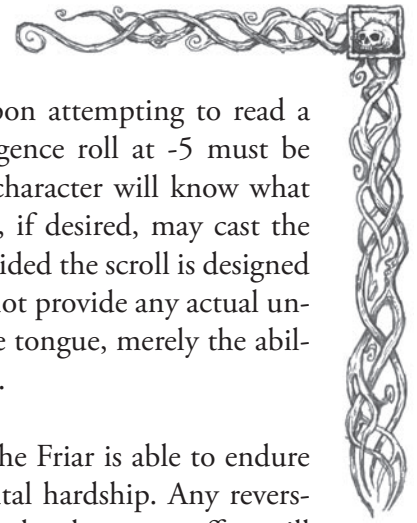
*asterisks (“**”) might be taken three or more times.*

Cast out Devils: The Friar is able to perform a direct magical attack upon infernal creatures and infernal spirits. This is treated as an ordinary attack action, pitting the Friar’s ATTACK against the demon’s MAGICAL DEFENSE, with a range of 10m. It inflicts 1d6 HP of damage. Armor does not help in any way, even if magical. This will function on any such creature, even if normally immune to harm from any but certain implements. It is also useful in destroying a possessing devil, since this power can do no harm to the possessed victim.

Discernment*: This power of the spirit is considered fundamental by many. With it, the Friar may see spirits as clearly as they see tangible, solid things. However, nothing will truly identify the spirit as immaterial unless it looks somehow unnatural - the spirit of a monk that continues to walk the grounds he maintained in life might look perfectly ordinary until another monk points out that he died thirty years hence. Taken a second time, the Friar’s eyes are now keen to the movements of the Celestial Host. He can tell if a spirit or creature is Angelic by nature or Infernal. Note that faerie creatures, hags, and most undead are neither Angelic nor Infernal.

Drink Any Deadly Thing:** The Friar rolls one fewer die when resisting poisons. Thus, to resist a weak poison the Friar need only roll 1d6 less than or equal to his Strength, while a strong poison is resisted on a roll of 3d6 less than or equal to his Strength. This may be taken a second time, removing another die (and immunizing the character to weaker poisons). If a Friar rolls no dice for a poison, then the venom cannot have any harmful effect, even if it would normally have an effect on a successful resistance. The Friar is considered totally immune. It can be taken a third time, in which case the character is totally immune to all poisons.

Exhortation: Friars bearing this Charism are able to bring encouragement to others. Those allied to the Friar (or those the Friar wishes to bolster) within 10m are made sterner by the presence of



the Friar. They gain a +2 bonus to their Rank for morale rolls and fright checks. Note that the Friar himself doesn't benefit from this Charism.

Lay Hands on the Sick*: The Friar no longer suffers from disease. Taken a second time, the Friar is also able to cure disease by touching the diseased individual.

Ministration: The Charism of ministry is considered very important by the Church. With it, the Friar is comfortable in many social settings. Although he might find certain environments distasteful (being among cannibals might leave them ill at ease), he is able to pass reasonably conversant among any group of creatures. This allows him to avoid minor gaffes and faux pas - they still happen, but are deemed "acceptable" and ignored. This even allows integration with intelligent nonhuman creatures, like Elves or Gnomes, provided they are not already hostile to the character. In these cases, if it is possible that a human might be "warned off" rather than attacked, it will happen that way to this character. Note that this only helps on "first impressions" - if the Friar is known to be a backstabber or criminal, he will be treated accordingly.

Prophecy: This Charism is one of the most commonly known outside the clergy. With it, the Friar gains wisdom from Heaven itself. Once per day, the Friar may roll 3d10. If the result is equal or less than his Psychic Talent, he will gain some insight into a distant event, something of the past, or perhaps some insight into the future. This functions as though it were the Oracle or Divination Sorcerer Spells, save that only one piece of information is granted and the Friar doesn't ask so much as passively receive. Essentially, this Charism is mostly under the GM's control.

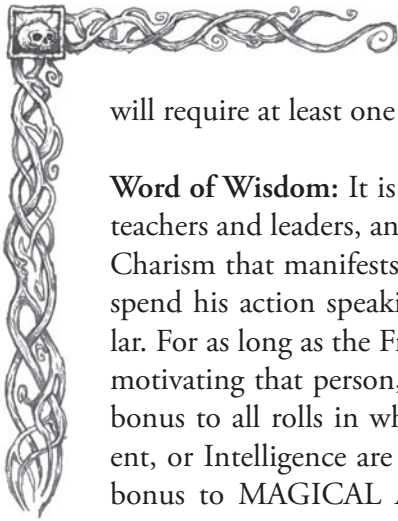
Speaking in New Tongues*: The Friar may make an Intelligence roll to speak a given language for one minute. The character's Intelligence is at -2 if the language is Complex, and -5 if it is Abstruse, but a Simple language grants a +3 bonus. If taken a second time, the Arcane language becomes avail-

able to the character. Upon attempting to read a magical scroll, an Intelligence roll at -5 must be made. If successful, the character will know what spell is on the scroll and, if desired, may cast the spell from the scroll (provided the scroll is designed to allow this). This does not provide any actual understanding of the Arcane tongue, merely the ability to emulate the powers.

Succour to the Weak*: The Friar is able to endure serious physical and mental hardship. Any reversible characteristic damage the character suffers will disappear the round after it is caused (irreversible characteristic damage is unaffected). Taken a second time, the Friar is able to heal others of reversible characteristic damage by touching them.

Taking up Serpents: The Friar will not be attacked by any beast unless the beast is threatened. He can even handle the creatures (or a creature's young), and provided this is done with care the creature will not be put ill at ease. Injuring or actively threatening a creature, its young, a member of its pack, or similar will break the effect, and creatures trained to attack may still attack (the creature gets a morale check to do so - failure means it will flee or otherwise fail to attack). Magical beasts might be susceptible to this, but if the GM rules that a particular beast is susceptible they will automatically get a morale roll to resist.

Under the Cross: A Charism often taken by the noble and gentle priests is leadership. This Charism allows the Friar to wield the cross as a standard. The Friar will be able to roll an additional die when warding off creatures with a crucifix (this is cumulative with Piety, so that the Friar will roll 5d6 plus rank). In addition, if the Friar holds aloft a large cruciform standard, he or she is considered to be "presenting" it as a crucifix towards any creature susceptible to it that is nearby. Finally, anyone within 10m of the Friar while he holds the standard aloft will gain a +1 bonus to morale rolls and fright checks. This is cumulative with Exhortation, and like Exhortation the Friar himself doesn't benefit from the bonus to morale or fright. The standard



will require at least one hand to carry.

Word of Wisdom: It is given to many Friars to be teachers and leaders, and the Word of Wisdom is a Charism that manifests these gifts. The Friar must spend his action speaking to someone in particular. For as long as the Friar continues speaking and motivating that person, that person will gain a +2 bonus to all rolls in which his Rank, Psychic Talent, or Intelligence are factors. He also gains a +2 bonus to MAGICAL ATTACK and MAGICAL DEFENSE.

Working of Miracles:** This Charism is particularly great, and is rarely used. Upon taking it, the Friar is able to call upon a single miracle. This cannot be purely for personal gain - although the Friar is not barred from gaining benefit from a miracle, it has to be to defend the weak or helpless, protect the faithful, hold back the infernal, or do something else the Good Lord would especially wish to see done. The exact nature of the miracle is up to the GM. The Friar must roll his Psychic Talent or less on 2d10. If it fails, the Friar can attempt to bring a miracle on subsequent rounds. If it succeeds, there is no resistance to it - whatever the Good Lord wishes to happen will happen, and all the players and the GM put their dice down while the GM narrates the miracle. Once used, this Charism cannot be used again without taking it as an Charism another time - each time it is taken grants only one miracle. Note that if it can be confirmed that the Friar has done this three times, this may qualify the character for canonization as a saint!

RANKS

The character gains the following benefits for gaining ranks.

+1 to both ATTACK and DEFENSE each time the character increases in rank.

+1 to the character's Health Points score each time he increases in rank.

+1 to MAGICAL DEFENSE each time the character increases in rank.

+1 to EVASION upon reaching 5th rank, then an-

other +1 on reaching 9th rank.

+1 to STEALTH upon reaching 4th rank, then another +1 on reaching 7th rank, then at 10th rank.

+1 to PERCEPTION when the character reaches 3rd rank, then +1 at 5th rank, +1 at 7th rank, etc.

BACKGROUND

Parent's Class 1d100

Nobility 01-05

Gentry 06-25

Townfolk: Craft 26-33

Townfolk: Profession 34-39

Townfolk: Trade 40-46

Townfolk: Menial 47-55

Townfolk: Riffraff 56-63

Merchant 64-68

Entertainer 69-72

Freeman 73-82

Serf 83-85

Cottar 86-91

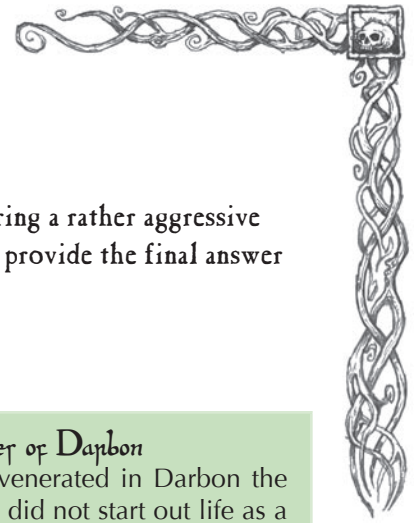
Slave 92-96

Charcoal Burner 97-98

Other 99-00

For the purposes of a Friar, add 10% to the base chance of the character being literate.

Along the Road



Damian May offers up a collection of short encounters set in Darbon, featuring a rather aggressive bovine, the search for a legendary sword, a sinister pool and cave that may provide the final answer to the mystery of some missing sailors...

THE DEVIL'S BULL

The cliffs at Port Chapel have always been an area of ill repute, ever since St. Agnes long ago tricked the love-struck jotun raider, Bolsre, into bleeding out in a vain attempt to win her love (see St. Agnes of Darbon sidebar). The red-hued earth about the sinkhole he died trying to fill gave rise to a lush meadow of rich, green growth, but St. Agnes herself had forbidden people to go up to the mist shrouded cliffs and no one dared to go against her wishes.

No one, except perhaps farmer Owen Webb. His father had discovered by chance that if the cattle were allowed to graze near the cliffs once a month they became ready for slaughter a full year before they normally would be; their growth rate increasing greatly. Webb, a far greedier man than his father, decided to take his herd up to the clifftops by night during the new moon, when no one would see him and perhaps increase his profits even further.

This scheme worked well for quite a few months, until one night, Owen accidentally left a young bull calf behind when he retrieved the rest of the herd. Feeding on the lush green growth the calf grew to adulthood over the next month and, waxing on the jotnblud infused fodder grew to dwarf even the giant aurochs that were once found in the mainland forests.

The enormous beast crashed out of the mist the next month Owen returned and crushed the farmer beneath its great hooves. In its fury it drove the other cattle careening through the village of Port Chapel and brought the inhabitants face to face with what has become known as the Devil's Bull.

Saint Agnes of Darbon

Like many of the saints venerated in Darbon the personage of Saint Agnes did not start out life as a paragon of the true faith. Indeed Annest the weaver died long before her namesake was slaughtered by a far away emperor.

When the jotun captain Bolsre was cast adrift on a barrel by a crew sick of his violent excesses he floated into the shores of Darbon and set about making the best of a bad situation. He cleared the area of possible rivals to his power, usually by luring the stupid beasts into traps, crushing their slack jawed heads from afar with a well aimed stone or challenging the few brave human chieftains willing to face him to single combat.

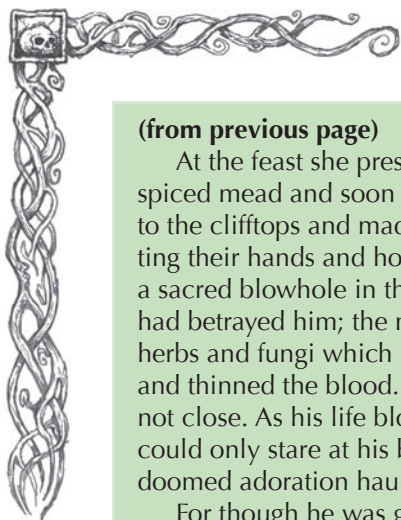
Things ran well for a half-year but soon his excesses began to creep back, taxes rose, daughters were taken as wives and herds were decimated in extravagant feasts. Many of the inhabitants of local settlements moved away, and Bolsre's anger grew....his fists flew faster.....his rage took longer to abate and the people suffered greatly.

Annest was a weaver and seer, who saw many things in the movements of the stars and sun and moon. She was a girl with old eyes, it was said, a girl who spoke with the gods. She lived on the edge of the woods in a small cottage with her aged mother and sold her wares at the monthly market.

She was making her way to the market one day when she was spied by the giant and he was lovestruck in an instant. He resolved to have her for his wife. To the surprise of her family, the young girl accepted his offer but set him a series of tasks to complete. Bolsre knew he could simply take her, but she reminded him of the tasks set by Freya for her suitors and a little of the jotun's inherent sense of honour returned to him.

She set him about a series of seemingly meaningless errands building piles of stone and digging enormous trenches and the like, many of these great works benefitted communities which had been hardest hit by the self-appointed jarl's excesses. At last after a spring of hard work Annest consented to marry him atop the cliffs where he had first arrived.

(continued next page)



(from previous page)

At the feast she presented him with a jug of spiced mead and soon after they made their way to the clifftops and made the bloodfast by cutting their hands and holding them together over a sacred blowhole in the limestone. But Annest had betrayed him; the mead was poisoned with herbs and fungi which produced a befuddled state and thinned the blood. Bolsre's wound would not close. As his life blood flooded out of him he could only stare at his beloved; his last look of doomed adoration haunted her 'til her dying day.

For though he was gentle and kind with her and was in all ways devoted to her, she saw at times the old wilful cruelty come back to him in his interactions with others and she knew that it would not be long before he was back to his old ways.

Though she was celebrated for delivering the region from Bolsre's predations, Annest's heart was broken and she spent the remainder of her days in seclusion. When stories of St Agnes of Selentine began to circulate, the legend of Annest/Agnes was grafted onto them and she became a saint of a religion she had never followed or heard word of.

A call has been put out to any who are willing to slay the beast and prevent its deadly rampages and the rampant destruction of innumerable vegetable plots.

The bull is a rhinoceros-sized bovine with anger management issues. If some way can be found to corral the beast and bring it to captivity, it will be highly sought after as a curiosity by a large number of nobles.

The area of the clifftops where the animal may be found is cloaked by great clouds of mist. The cream-colored hide of the creature affords it a high stealth score in the foggy conditions.

The Devils Bull (rank 6 equivalent)

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| ATTACK: 20 | Horns (d8, 5) |
| DEFENSE: 11 | Reflex: 12 |
| MAG DEF: 2 | Armour Factor: 1 |
| EVASION: 4 | Perception: 8 |
| Health: 27 | Stealth: 14 |

The Bull may charge as a normal Bull but adds +2 to all values.

Possible solutions: Luring the Bull over the sea-cliffs, a variation of boar spearing (inducing it to charge and raising a set lance to impale the beast), use a cow as bait to corral the animal etc.

If the clifftops are carefully searched, Owen's body will be discovered smashed and broken near the sinkhole. The villagers can scratch together 10 florins as a reward. Nobles may pay much more for a live animal, or even the hide or horns.

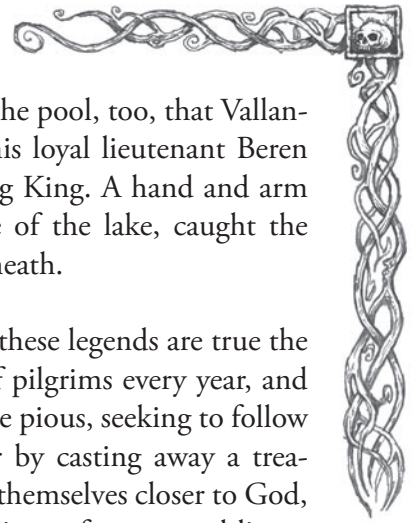
JONAS THE GIANT KILLER

In the days of Vallandar (see The King Under the Forest, Sleeping Gods) a folk hero rose among the people of Darbon. He grew famous on the tale of how he slew Cormor, a great Ogre which laired on St.. Michas' Mount. Legends say this hero went on to drive the wolves and reavers away from Darbon and to kill a number of other trolls and ogreish beasts.

In later years he travelled to the north of Albion where he was lost in battle with two of Vallandar's champions; Gwathain and Morel. A pit, where it was said he had buried Cormor was built over by the Chapel of St.. Jonas (a minor scandal as the folk-hero was, like many of Darbon's saints, never recognized by the church and indeed may never have existed....).

In recent months there have been noises reported at night by the local priest as if something is scratching at the floor from beneath. The man is terrified that the ancient creature is about to burst through his floor at anytime!

An enterprising local landholder, 'Guthben', has, after talking with a number of old crofters, decided that St.. Jonas' sword, a bejeweled masterpiece bestowed as a reward for bravery, is buried beneath the church. Guthben has hired a group of ne'er-dowells to unearth it and bring it to him.



The three men have been digging for 2 weeks now and, though they have discovered a few disturbingly large bones, have not discovered anything of value whatsoever and are beginning to consider robbing their patron and scarpering.

Bandy, Shanks, Nesbitt. Normal Humans

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| ATTACK: 11 | Cudgel (d3, 3) |
| DEFENSE: 5 | Reflex: 10, 8, 14 |
| MAG DEF: 3 | Armour Factor: 0 |
| EVASION: 3, 4, 6 | Perception: 4 |
| Health: 7 | Stealth: 12 |

Problems: the men are not trained sappers, though Bandy watched some at work one summer and thinks he remembers how to do it. This has left their tunnel in severe danger of collapse, a catastrophe which would bring the church down into the bargain.

If anyone finds the bones of Cormor (which do indeed lie here), they will find him to be a short man with bronze and bone grave decorations and a deep hole in the back of his head where the rival chieftain Jonar stove it in while he slept.

The large 'Ogre' bones the men have presented as proof to 'Guthben' belong to Cormor's chariot horses which were buried with him. There is no treasure of any sort within the grave.

THE LURE OF THE LAKE

Rosemary Pool is a natural moorland lake situated to the south of Balstaple on Bogrin Moor.

The pool is surrounded by strange circular impressions, and large piles of bleached white mussel shells. It is rumoured to be bottomless and the old folk say that in the early days of the church an evil man, Gulvin Trelwe roamed the area; raping and torturing, claiming to be the Devils Nephew. He was captured, tried and bound before being cast into the dark waters. As he sank beneath the waters, he yelled that he would return.

It was into the depths of the pool, too, that Vallandar's sword was cast by his loyal lieutenant Beren on the orders of the dying King. A hand and arm rose up from the surface of the lake, caught the sword and drew it underneath.

Whether or not either of these legends are true the pool attracts a number of pilgrims every year, and though they all claim to be pious, seeking to follow the example of Vallander by casting away a treasured possession to bring themselves closer to God, a number of them are sinister of aspect and linger after dark to perform strange rites.

The Mere-gaunt that haunts the lake cares little for their religious observances and will gladly feed on both the wicked and the pious alike if they linger after dark. It can be bribed with an especially shiny or expensive looking offering. In its own insane way the thing appreciates the 'gifts' that are thrown into the waters and has begun to return gifts in exchange throwing ancient bones, stones and the occasional valuable item onto the shoreline.

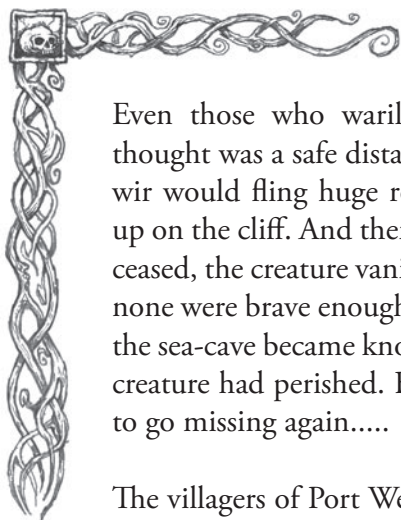
Whether the thing is Gulvin returned or if its arm held the ancient blade of a lost king is unknown. How to plumb the 'bottomless' depths to discover the truth, and the treasures thrown into them over the years, are questions best left to adventurers.

For statistics of Meregaunt see the *Dragon Warriors* Bestiary or Core Book. Its reflexes are 17.

THE OGRE'S CUPBOARD

Legends of fierce ogre-like beasts abound in Darbon, but surely one of the fiercest and most wicked was the creature known as Wrathwir of Port Weath.

Wrathwir lived in a huge sea-cavern, where it would lie in wait for passing boats, waded out into the sea and attack them, killing the sailors with a single blow from his huge fists. Then he would carefully select the better specimens for supper and, tying the boats up to his belt, he would tow his booty back to his cave.



Even those who warily sailed by at what they thought was a safe distance were in danger. Wrath-wir would fling huge rocks onto them from high up on the cliff. And then, centuries ago, the attacks ceased, the creature vanished overnight and though none were brave enough to enter the 'Cupboard' as the sea-cave became known it was assumed that the creature had perished. But now sailors have begun to go missing again.....

The villagers of Port Weath approach the companions with a paltry sum and a plea to go and see what has occurred within 'The Cupboard'.

The trek down to the beach is arduous and the cliffs unstable; any step may prove fatal. If the beach can be reached, the walk to the entrance to the sea-cave is quite easy (at low tide only).

The first signs of trouble are the great heaped and weathered wrecks of fishing boats piled within the cavern entrance, some look quite recent. The cave is extremely dark and the ceiling is low, the smell of rotting seaweed cloying.

Within the sea cave is a great deep pool, a small roughly built coracle floats upon it and beside it a fire has been built. There is no sign of life anywhere. Within the cave lies a pile of great yellowed bones centuries old. As the companions watch a man in a long white cloak emerges from a small alcove to the left and shuffles towards the fire. He sits and pokes forlornly at the flames....

Pleny Rathbone has recently arrived, in some hurry, from Gullet Hollow in Ereworn where his family was slain during their religious observances by a group of vicious foreigners. He has established himself in the out-of-the-way cavern after hearing of its reputation from a group of men in the local area and has set about trying to undertake his holy rituals in this new land.

To this end he has set about building a shrine to his god in the small side alcove, a small pile of rock covered in stingray hide and covered in interesting

shaped shells and stones. He has also set about ambushing and murdering a number of fishermen by dragging his coracle down to the bay and pretending to be in distress.

Pleny is a man even more unhinged than his departed kin and he will fight to the death, running into the water if badly wounded, and yelling 'You bastards will never have it.' As he clutches at his belt and dives in. His belt pouch contains a small carved wooden statuette of a finned snake with jasper eye-stones – worth about 1 florin.

The bottom of the pool is layered with the bones of hundreds of victims killed by the ancient beast that once dwelled here, though what manner of beast it was is hard to determine from the bones left behind. Plenys latest sacrifices have not been heard by his chthonic beast-god but the spilt blood and weighted bodies thrown into the pool have attracted a large number of hungry sentinel crabs to the area and they will attack anyone entering the pool.

The pool actually contains a large amount (250 florins) of gold and silver coins and other objects, as a number of the 'fishermen' killed in the old times were actually smugglers or freebooters. Retrieving the treasure from the pitch-black crab-haunted waters is another matter entirely: there are a dozen Sentinel Crabs in the pool. They will not leave the water. For stats see *Dragon Warriors* Core or Bestiary. Reflexes are 6x 10, 6x 14.

Pleny, Normal Human

| | |
|------------|------------------|
| ATTACK: 12 | Dagger (d4, 3) |
| DEFENSE: 5 | Reflex: 13 |
| MAG DEF: 5 | Armour Factor: 0 |
| EVASION: 2 | Perception: 4 |
| Health: 6 | Stealth: 12 |

The Thuland Campaign - Introduction

by Cameron Smith

Welcome to the first part in an occasional series charting the progress of an ongoing PBM campaign set in southern Thuland. Other groups who wish to use it as an adventure should be able to do so without much difficulty.

Why was Thuland chosen? Partly because it is the only part of Ellesland not already strongly covered by published DW material. Also because the apparent social structure provides the right context for the "political thriller" aspects of the adventure. Thuland is wild and free compared to Albion, but it is not a complete disaster like Ereworn or Glissom.

Ploh-Monath, 993 AS

In the rugged glens and fjords of Thuland live warriors and pillagers. Warring between each other at times, and raiding each others' cattle almost as a way of life, the jarls and their thanes settle down during winter, as the snow makes travel and war significantly harder.

In Southern Thuland, near the town of Brymstone, winter is slowly retreating under the sun now, and spring is about to settle in when this adventure begins. The melting snow reveals more than just the ground however and ancient evils stir as nature is awakened by spring.

Brymstone itself has, over the last decades, eked out a precarious independence from the age-old rule of the warriors. It has been granted the status of "Tun" by the King at Katorsheim, and may run its own affairs as long as it pays a regular tithe in gold and trade goods.

Beyond its walls, however, the lands lie, as they have for generations under the sway of the Jarl whose castle dominates the headland some days north of Brymstone, where the rocky coastline sweeps in to the west. For many years the Jarl was Helder, a craggy traditionalist. Firm and rigid but fair in his own way, and sensible enough to keep a

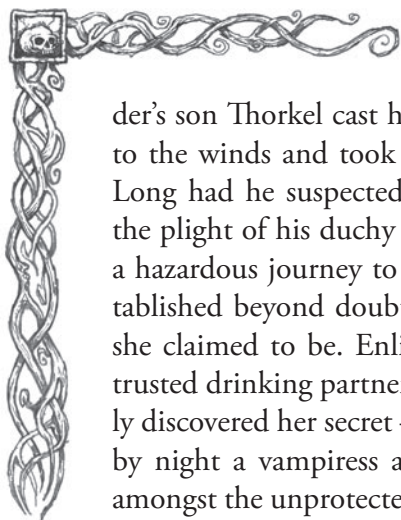
modicum of order among his Thanes, that his serfs might make him rich. Never really accepting the idea of Brymstone's independence, he nevertheless perceived that in this case, to move too strongly against Katorheim would lead to his undoing. So an uneasy live-and-let-live has grown up between the castle and its warriors, and the town and its merchants.

Some years back, however, this fragile peace was torn by a malevolent intrusion. Fjonya, the former wife of a Mercanian prince, who fled to Ellesland when her husband was murdered in a feud, set up house in Brymstone. Still a young woman in her prime, and sharp of mind with her comeliness, it did not take long for Helder's Thanes to come a-courting her hand. Fjonya did not appear in any hurry to choose a suitor and old rivalries between Thanes and their men jumped up to the surface as each jostled with his rivals.

In his younger years Helder would have wasted little time banging his henchmen's heads together. Now however, he was old and tired, slow to perceive the trouble and ginger of intervening once he did.

The rivalries grew worse and travel became perilous on any road. Goblins and wolves swelled in numbers and rumours abounded among the serfs of other, darker beings stalking among the livestock at night. Horses and cattle were found brutally slain in their stalls, the watchdogs whimpering in a corner. Then the serfs began to complain of missing children, and elderly parents mysteriously found dead in their blankets.

Finally, when not only serfs but noblemen began to suffer depredations, even in their homesteads, Hel-



der's son Thorkel cast his father's words of caution to the winds and took matters in his own hands. Long had he suspected that Fjonya's coming and the plight of his duchy were no coincidence. After a hazardous journey to Mercania and back, he established beyond doubt that Fjonya was not who she claimed to be. Enlisting the help of his most trusted drinking partners, he tracked her and finally discovered her secret – by day a beautiful widow, by night a vampiress and witch, roaming at will amongst the unprotected steadings and secretly encouraging the goblins to spread havoc among the populace.

In a vicious confrontation at Fjonya's lair, in the wildlands west of his fathers castle, Thorkel's band slew the witch but at great cost. Thorkel himself and many men were slain. Those who survived were cursed and lived on as weaklings and beggars.

Helder was broken by his son's death and died a few years later, the last of his line. Following Thulanian custom, the right falls to Katorheim to name a successor and some months later he came down the road from Beltayn, Siegfried the Just.

In the year since his arrival, Siegfried has earned his nickname with the richer farmers and leading Thaners, as he has consistently taken their side in disputes over land, cattle and wives. Strangely, he has never once visited Brymstone, preferring not to venture far from the Jarl's castle. Nor has he taken on any new henchmen to replace those who retired to their farms, heartbroken, at Helder's death. Instead he summons his thanes for a monthly Thing at his fort, where he is served by the rough foreign-looking mercenaries he brought with him.

One modern practice he has instituted, apparently copied from Albion to the south, is that serious crimes are no longer tried by the Thane but at his court. Executions are carried out before the Thing, and the corpses buried on the ramparts for all to see.

As for the serfs and smaller farmers, they are happy

that the new Jarl has brought a modicum of order back to the land. Thane no longer fights Thane, although the roads remain perilous to travel – the goblins have been beaten back but remain a constant threat to the unwary.

Follow more of the ongoing campaign at
<http://rpol.net/game.cgi?gi=33805>

The County of Anglica

Anglica is one of the smallest counties in the country but at the same time one of the most powerful. The county has always been the breadbasket of the kingdom, with flat fields for growing crops and pastures for raising sheep & cattle.

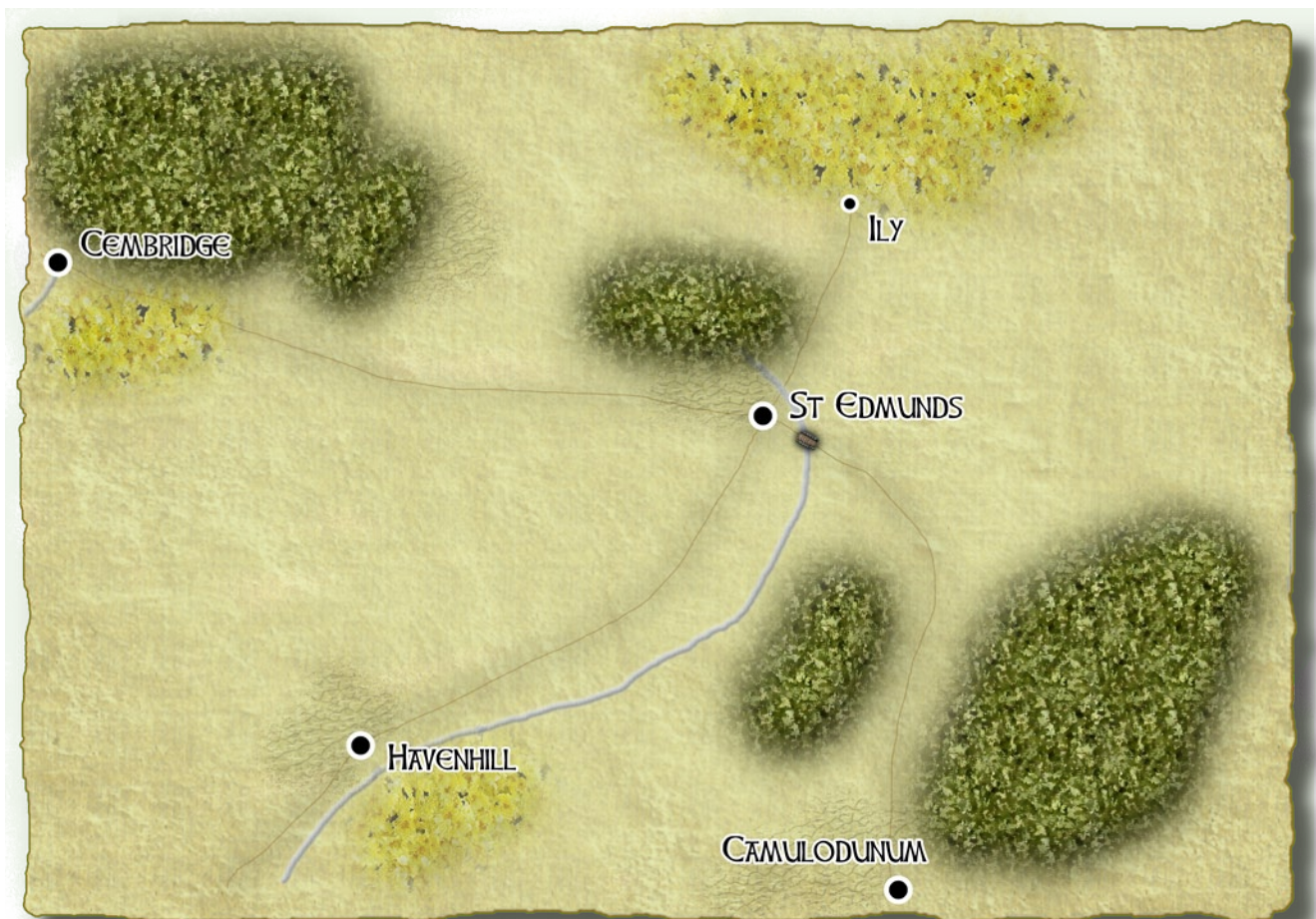
A part of the county is marshlands and is known for hiding brigands and foul monsters, in response to this threat the lords of the county have started to maintain a standing armed force nearby.

In ancient times the lands were divided by local tribes, these tribes were for always in conflict until the coming of the Selestine empire. The Selestine general who landed in Albion had thought that any resistance would be minimal, however they were in for a great shock, the local tribes at first moved away from the invaders then later joined forces and fortified what is now known as Anglica. This ar-

range ment worked well for a while and there was 20 years of peace but it was not to last.

Blunders by some Selestine commanders enraged the unified tribes that were now controlled by a woman called Bosicia, she formed a vast army and rushed them towards the Selestine towns.

The tribe captured town after town until they stood at the gates of the main garrison city of Camulodunum. The city pleaded for clemency but the tribes bent on vengeance razed it to the ground killing all those inside.



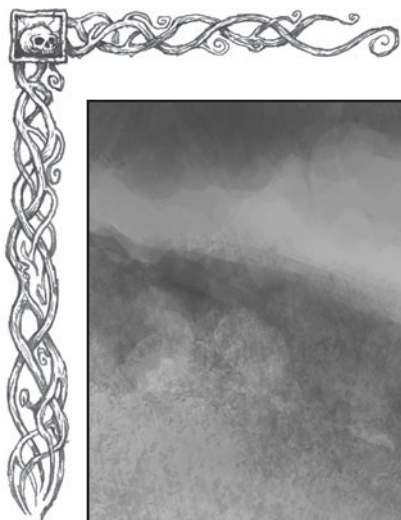


Illustration © Jon Hodgson



The empire after it regained control of the situation made a point of wiping out each and every tribe in its way, it held the region until the main legions were pulled back to defend the empire leaving what they now called Anglicia undefended.

The county in recent years has been raided from over the seas but now has established itself as a trading powerhouse and is closing down its seaside borders with the gained wealth.

SETTLEMENTS

The main city is Cembridge, a powerhouse controlled by universities connected to the church, named after the river Cem that runs through the centre of the city water trade is an important part of its daily life.

Its roads are well paved and the building in the centre around the university are of the best quality in

the county if not the country.

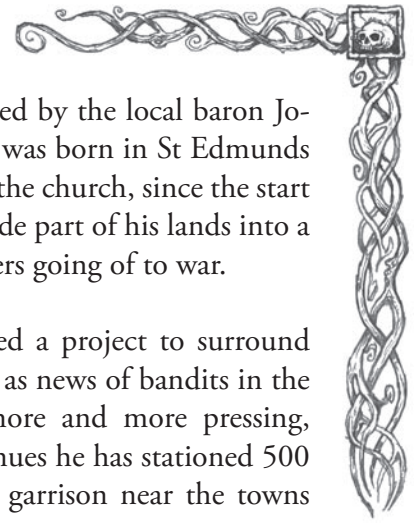
Money and power is the theme that drives Cembridge and it is not unknown for less than savoury figures to be found studying.

The next most important settlement is St Edmunds, not in the same league as Cembridge, its power is gained from the church and the large monastery there. St Edmunds has become the main training ground for the warriors going over to the crusades and so is growing larger day by day, this is starting to cause tension with the locals and trouble is on the horizon.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Gog Magod hills

These twin low hills lie a few miles south of Cembridge. Once the site of an old tribal fort they it



is now deserted and avoided due to the stories of ghosts and spirits that wander the hills.

On the side of the two hills are chalk images of two strange giant beasts named from the legends Gog & Magod – they were said to be two giants that duelled to the death over an hidden treasure hoard somewhere in the hills.

Havenhill

This was once a prosperous town that supplied the flint that was used to build the church and monastery in St Edmund's.

To the North-East of the hamlet were numerous flint mines dug into the shallow hillside that gave Havenhill its name, 20 years ago its said a darkness came from these mines to swamp the hamlet and since then no one living there has been seen again. A low fog bank clouds the hamlet and evil is said to walk its silent streets.

St Edmunds

St Edmunds is the largest of the town in the county of Anglica, the towns population stands around 4,000 a quarter of this number are monks.

The town has grown up around the original village of Bedric's Worth, the village still exists but is now the place were the poorer residence live. It was re-named after its greatest resident, the gallant knight Wilfred Edmunds.

Edmunds story is one both of bravery and piety, while defending the town from a evil band of robber's and monsters he gave his life in defending to the last the monastery and the monks who lived there – his story reached the pope and he decided that his faith was so strong that he raised him to the status of saint.

Since that time the monastery has grown larger around a impressive church named after St Edmund, the town has also grown larger now its a major place for trading the local wool and the goods made in the monastery's grounds.

The town itself is protected by the local baron Joseph Alecson a man who was born in St Edmunds and a staunch believer in the church, since the start of the crusades he has made part of his lands into a training ground for soldiers going of to war.

The baron has also started a project to surround the city with a stone wall as news of bandits in the countryside is getting more and more pressing, whilst the building continues he has stationed 500 soldiers to a newly built garrison near the towns market square.

Building works on part of the wall has uncovered a set of doors built into the hill near the north of the town, news of this is now starting to draw in adventures since the door has been linked to the ancient stories of the mad wizard Aionif.

Aionif is now a bed time story to scare children but 1000 years ago he ruled the area around the older village of Bedric's Worth with an iron fist, the stories tell of a mighty battle but nothing about what happened to him – except his was rich and maybe his wealth is still around.



Believing in Faerie

by Dave Morris

The fays of Legend aren't Tolkien or Gygax, but an entirely alien melange of nature spirits as disparate among themselves as humans are from Thuland to the Sinistine Empire.

Lafcadio Hearn wrote a story about a mujina that haunted a stretch of road in old Tokyo. The mujina appeared as a woman without a face, terrifying travellers at night. Because the term "mujina" had not been seen in the West, readers assumed that it meant a creature that had no face. Eventually the word achieved its *reductio ad absurdum*: an entry in a the monster manual for a dozen fantasy role-playing games that were either set in the Orient or had reached the point of desperation where another few dozen new creatures were needed to sell a supplement and it didn't matter what part of the world they came from.

The truth is, mujina doesn't mean a creature with no face. It's just a word for a goblin, sprite or imp, derived in fact from the medieval Japanese superstition that badgers and foxes were mischievous faerie critters. And the blank face? Just a spooky magic trick. Hearn – a folklorist, not a biologist – never intended it as the defining characteristic of a species.

Elf, dwarf, goblin. Where do those words come from? From the mind of Man, who is never happier than when he's managed to tie a label on something and put it in a display cabinet.

All very well in our world, but this is Legend. Darwin is never going to exist here. The magic of Legend is not a science and, despite the convenience of the game rules, magic doesn't yield to strictly logical principles. The creatures of faerie that we may call elves and dwarves may have very different ideas of how to categorize themselves.

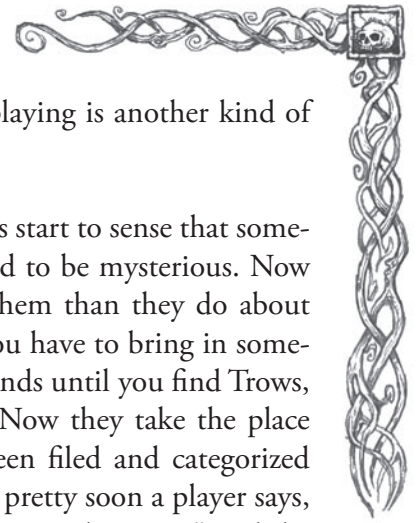
*Gin ye ca' me imp or elf,
I rede ye look weel to yourself;*

*Gin ye ca' me fairy,
I'll work ye muckle tarrie.*

The fays of Legend are not the elves and dwarves of Tolkien's Middle-Earth or of *Dungeons & Dragons*. For one thing, they are rare. The people of Legend believe in elves and dwarves, but they don't expect ever to meet one. They *hope* never to meet one, put it that way. Because they are rare, there is misinformation about them; conflicting stories. And because this is Legend, those conflicting stories may all be true. Logic sits in the corner without a dance partner, disapproving and ignored.

But what are fays, or faerie folk? They are the degenerate remnants of pagan nature spirits whose power has sapped away with the coming of the True Faith. As nature spirits, they take their form and their nature from the living landscape. In forests they are shadowy, agile, willowy. In mountains they are squat and strong as barrels. Out on the moors they are gnarled, spiteful and dank-breathed. You can call those elves and dwarves and goblins, but to the creatures themselves the terms would seem irrelevant. No doubt they do see themselves as different, but the urge to fit things into categories is not part of a fay's outlook. Referring to them as species like that means even less than the concept of race among humans.

As you travel about Legend, you'll encounter local beliefs in the faeries just as you might have done in Cornwall or the Scottish Highlands not so very long ago. When a Cornumbrian tells you of mischievous pookas and an Erewornian tells you of murderous redcaps, the nature of the creature they are describing may simply be the vernacular penchant of the fays, shaped by countryside and



weather and the attitudes of mortals.

More often, though, the talk in taverns is of a specific local fay: Long Lankin or Old Ned or Jack Hollyshoes. No two are exactly alike. A hobgoblin is just a goblin that nearly did for you. There's no such thing as a genome we can use to pin down their faerie lineage. If you want to GM them properly, you can put that rulebook away for a start.

"My name is Eildonas of Hulda Hoo," I tell him as we walk.

"I take you to be one of the Grey Elves," he says with a sidelong glance, provoking in me a short laugh, since such categories only interest mortals.

What the fays do recognize is territorial sovereignty and status. An elf of the forest regards himself as cultured aristocracy, and may even model his manners on the etiquette of a mortal court. The kobolds or dwarves of crags and caverns are a more rough-hewn breed, but still pride themselves on having noble status. A mean creature of the moors and ditches, whether you call it a goblin or a boggart, knows its place in the hierarchy of faerie.

Now, all of this is the way it works in "real" Legend – that's my and Oliver's Legend. But you've bought the Dragon Warriors books, so your Legend is entirely up to you. We don't have no truck with authorial privilege in these parts. But I do have a good reason for recommending that you don't start neatly indexing elves and dwarves and what-have-you into suitable player-character templates. That's because it will ruin your game.

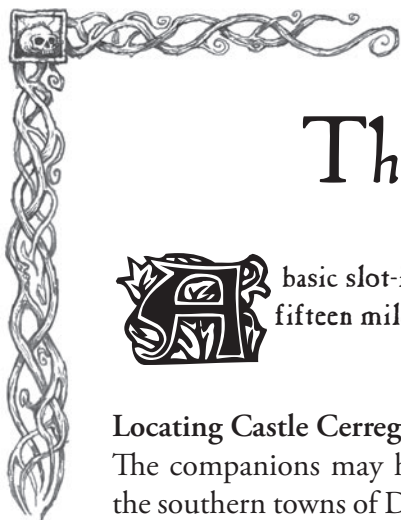
Mike Polling (the author of "The Key of Tiran-dor", an excellent scenario in *White Dwarf* #49-50) describes a problem in fantasy fiction and gaming that he calls taxonomic reduction. It begins with a demand for details about elves, for example - their social organization, clothing, breeding habits, and so on. So you get a supplement with all that stuff... hit points for Grey Elves, magic for High Elves, eye colour and what they eat. Now you can play an elf.

But actually all you are playing is another kind of human being.

Okay, so now your players start to sense that something has gone. Elves used to be mysterious. Now they know more about them than they do about Yanomami Indians. So you have to bring in something new. You scour legends until you find Trows, say, or Sith. Just words. Now they take the place of the elves who have been filed and categorized into meaninglessness. Yet pretty soon a player says, "How can I get to play a trow character?" and the whole reductive process begins again.

The point is: you don't need elves or dwarves. Unless of course you want to recreate Lord of the Rings in your games, in which case stop playing Legend right now because it's not that kind of setting - what you want is D&D or MERP. Human beings (or rather mortals, as the term is in Legend) already have infinite diversity. If you aren't able to find that in your own role-playing ability, dressing up as an elf isn't going to do it for you.

We have to have the rules in role-playing, but they're a necessary evil. They shouldn't be allowed to shape the way we think about the world and characters. And most especially they shouldn't be allowed to stifle the magic and mystery that's the whole point of choosing Legend as your game world in the first place.



The Ruins of Castle Ceppez

by Damian May

A basic slot-in adventure set within the thick bordering forest in the far south-east of Darbon, fifteen miles south of Cully.

Locating Castle Cerreg

The companions may hear of the castle in any of the southern towns of Darbon. The people of Cully certainly know of it and warn against approaching it, but are not above perhaps guiding the companions to the ruins in exchange for some hard currency.

Rumours About the Castle (all of which are at least partially true)

- It was once the seat of a local warlord and was set on a slight rise over a minor tributary and surrounded on all sides by a deep trench.....water from the tributary has since soaked through into the trench and eroded into the base of the castle-mound.
- There was an assault on the forest fortress 300-odd years ago by a band of Albish who navigated all the way up the river to lay siege lead, it is said, by a sooth-sayer.
- Some of the ancestors of Cully residents died in the battle. After the castle fell the Albish stayed for a few seasons but then abandoned it one summer and were never seen again.
- The siege destroyed much of the upper levels of the castle and time and the forest has done the rest but the sub-levels were left intact until a score of years ago when a corner of the mound collapsed due to erosion.

The Ruins

The forest is thick with ancient oak and beech. These areas are hunted regularly so

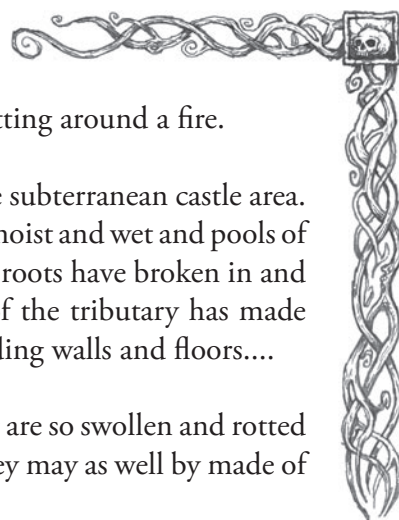
there are few large predators about.

The ruins can be spied through the thick forest. They rest on a raised area surrounded by a deep recess half-filled with dark tannin-infused water and shrubbery.

If the companions approach to about 50m away they will be able to see smoke from a fire in the ruins. Some figures may be seen in the ruins. There is little left of the ruins themselves bar the remains of a central tower and stairwell fallen into a rough mound shape and a low outer wall scattered with piles of fallen stone.

The figures are a small group of Wadwose (AKA Black Riders; see *Dragon Warriors Bestiary*) who have been driven off from the area they once inhabited deeper in the forest and have gathered here for the night as they continue northward trying to find a new home.





The four Wadwose (all rank 3) are dressed in little but rags and skins. Their furred skin is tangled and matted with leaves and plant material and their snout-like faces are drawn and pinched.

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| ATTACK: 13 | Spears (d8, 6) |
| DEFENSE: 8 | Reflex: 12 |
| MAG DEF: 5 | Armour Factor: 0 |
| EVASION: 4 | Perception: 6 |
| Health: 10, 11, 9, 8 | Stealth: 11 |

If questioned any surviving Wadwose will attempt to communicate by simple gestures why they are here (something bigger moved in, they ran away) and will leave immediately if allowed heading down towards the river valley.

Two of the Wadwose will be on guard at the edge of the ruins.

If the companions can approach undetected they will see that there are a number of dark almost hu-

man-looking figures squatting around a fire.

The map below details the subterranean castle area. The entire underworld is moist and wet and pools of water dot the stones. Tree roots have broken in and a subterranean offshoot of the tributary has made its way into the void, eroding walls and floors....

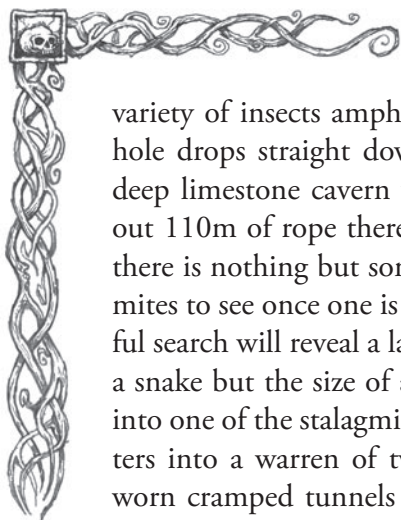
The doors are of wood but are so swollen and rotted from the moisture that they may as well be made of parchment.

1. Fallen wall This cleft in the side of the castle mound is covered in soft green moss- upon entering there are scattered remains of a series of shelves and broken pottery underfoot.

A small pool of water has gathered here. Fed from rivulets trickling down the walls, it empties into a deep hole to right-hand side. Frogs and the like chirrup from the shadows.

The pool is about 2 foot deep and contains a healthy





variety of insects amphibians and algae. The deep hole drops straight down for about 100m into a deep limestone cavern within the bedrock. Without 110m of rope there is no way to descend and there is nothing but some particularly large stalagmites to see once one is down there, though a careful search will reveal a large white scale, like that of a snake but the size of a man's palm, half calcified into one of the stalagmites. Further exploration enters into a warren of twisting cavities and water-worn cramped tunnels within the earth; it would be a major undertaking to go further.

2. This room is about 6-8 feet wide and there are two doors one in the east wall and the other in south. The walls and floor are covered in fallen shelves and the remains of clay urns and wooden crates of long perished comestibles. A long and dedicated search will find a brace of tarnished silver spoons. Value: 5 florins.

3. This corridor is empty, bar the remains of a wooden table in the far corner. There is a rotted leather parcel upon it but the contents are nothing but a sodden mass. Careful inspection indicates it may have been a ledger once.

4. This corridor is also bare. The door in the west wall is solid and very thick. It has swollen into its frame and must be cut down in order to bypass it. The door to the south is destroyed and lies in shreds in its frame.

5. This room was once a holding cell. There was little need for a dungeon in the dark days of the castles use as prisoners were simply put to death or made to swear allegiance to their new lord, but occasionally it was necessary to hold someone.

A hole excavated in the floor was once a privy but has since filled with water seeping up from underground. It contains some particularly colourful bacterial mats.

The floor is covered in a black mass of rotting straw and the sad remains of a young male, now nothing

but bones and slime. A careful, and rather disgusting, search will reveal a gold ring not unlike a wedding band but carved with floral symbols. The ring is worth 10 florins.

6. This room is bare except for the remains of a desk and stool at the eastern end.

7. This room is quite dry compared to the rest of the remains. There is a parchment nailed to the wall next to the southern door. It appears to be in an old form of Albish. Those who can read the ancient script can make out a reminder not to disturb 'the witch' unless it is vitally important.

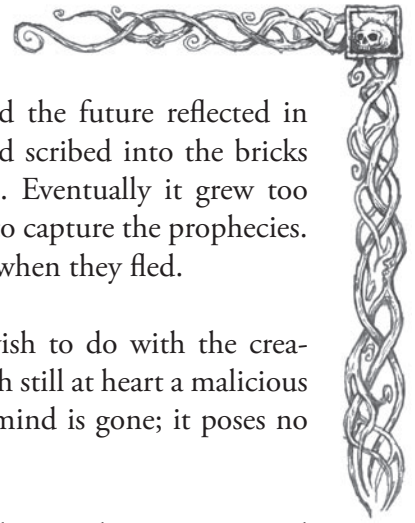
8. This room is also quite dry. There are a number of iron rings and chains set into the wall but whatever they once held is long gone. A desk lies to the far east and there is a heavy primitive-looking rusty axe buried in its surface.

There is little of interest in this room. It was once the guard/warders room outside the soothsayers inner sanctum and housed a guardsmen and 3 mastiffs. The axe is still functional as a weapon – at least for a couple of combats, after which it will break. Its cold iron construction may make it useful.

9. This small passageway has heavy doors at both ends. A now perished pulley system prevented both doors from being opened at the same time creating an 'air-lock.' At this time, both of the doors are nothing more than wasted boards and the pulleys are but desiccated wooden curiosities. There is a small brass cowbell lying on the ground attached to a ruined piece of rope.

10. This chamber is large and open. There are a number of chests, desks and cluttered shelves about. The bottom edge of the southern wall and a section of floor have fallen away. The edge of a deep pool of water is situated there, extending back beyond the wall.

In the far north east corner there are two brick walls covered in a strange script that a sorcerer may



recognise as a variant of Arcane. It is gibberish.

The benches and shelves are covered with a miscellany of preserved herbs, animal parts, clay tablets marked with stick-like figures, and a number of clay flasks with wax seals.

The four flasks once contained potions. All but one have now debased into medium strength poisons. The remaining potion is a Potion of Night Vision. The latter doesn't look quite as curdled as the others.

The chests contain naught but the ragged remnants of rich clothing. After an hour's searching, three small river pearls, worth 15 florins, fallen from embroidery may be found.

A shelf full of pungent herbs has been torn to pieces by some powerful force and the marks of large claws can be seen in the wood fragments. There is also a drag-mark across the centre of the room from the destroyed shelf to the pool...

11. This cell can only be reached if the bricks are broken down. Anyone doing so is subject to a curse with an MA of 16. If it takes effect, the character in question becomes subject to the effects of relics as if s/he were a faerie creature. This will last until the next time s/he comes in contact with such a relic and will then fade away. This may lead to a dangerous situation if it happens in front of the wrong people...

Within this dark and cramped cell chained to the wall in heavy iron chains is a small wizened creature with a large head, hooked nose and sallow skin. It is mumbling softly to itself and, if roused, screams unintelligibly for a moment before dropping its head and continuing to mumble, its eyes shining with the light of insanity.

Background: This goblin was captured by Saris, the ancient Albish witch/soothsayer. Its gift of prophecy was used by the witch to win favour with her lord. When it grew insane from its mistreatment

she walled it up and read the future reflected in the magical script she had scribed into the bricks around the creatures cell. Eventually it grew too mad for even her magics to capture the prophecies. The Albish left it behind when they fled.

What the companions wish to do with the creature is up to them. Though still at heart a malicious faerie beast, the goblin's mind is gone; it poses no threat to anyone.

12. This room contains the wooden supports and rubble of the fallen staircase and tower above. There is little of value in this room except for a scattering of old silver coins worth 3 florins.

13. This room is extremely moist and moldy. A large pile of rotting leaf matter and branches have been pulled into the south-east corner on the other side of a deep stream which is running through the room. The stream has eroded a good portion of the original floor.

The stream runs out of the room on the western side. If one were to dive into it and swim along for some five metres, they would find themselves back in open air as the stream shallows and runs into a small tributary leading down to the River Cully.

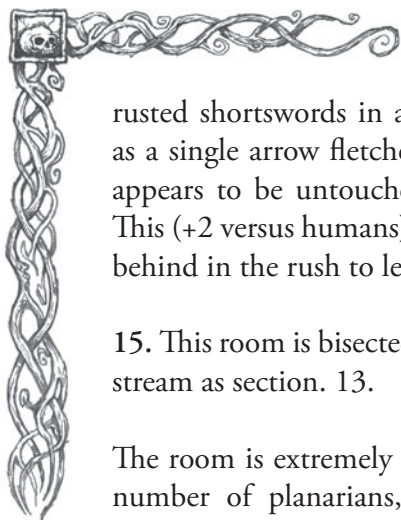
Swimming to the east is harder against the current but leads under the wall into area 15.

If the pile of leaves and branches is disturbed the two giant rats nesting in it will attack to defend their 6 pink wriggling young.

2 Giant Rats (rank 1)

| | |
|--------------|------------------|
| ATTACK: 9 | Spears (d3, 3) |
| DEFENSE: 2 | Reflex: 10 |
| MAG DEF: 2 | Armour Factor: 0 |
| EVASION: 4 | Perception: 9 |
| Health: 3, 5 | Stealth: 15 |

14. This room appears to be an old armoury. Most of the weapon racks lie bare and many have fallen as their timbers rotted. There are a number of badly



rusted shortswords in a pile in the corner as well as a single arrow fletched with white feathers that appears to be untouched by the ravages of time. This (+2 versus humans) arrow was accidentally left behind in the rush to leave.

15. This room is bisected by the same underground stream as section. 13.

The room is extremely moist and there are a large number of planarians, leeches and other living things creeping through the shallow pools of moisture that dot the room.

There are crumpled black masses on the floor along the walls that may of once been racks of clothing....

16. This room was once a storehouse for the castles nobles and housed fine clothing, a series of strong boxes and a generous array of rich preserves and spirits; it now strongly resembles a combined lavatory and compost heap (medium strength disease check for anyone touching bare flesh to the heap).

The room is bisected by the same underground stream in 13 and 15. It is in this room that the continuation of the breakthrough into 10 may be found.

Also in this room sleeping off a hearty meal of stag, atop a great pile of sticks and branches woven together with dung and mud, is a young Afanc.

Young Afanc

The Afanc resembles nothing so much as the misbegotten spawn of a pairing between a beaver and something much older and reptilian.

Its pelt is richly furred but the skin beneath is like that of crocodile. A ridge of sturdy spined plates similar to that found on crocodilians runs down its back to its wide flat tail.

Flat yellow eyes glare out over huge orange chisel-like teeth and its webbed feet bear wicked claws.

ATTACK: 19
DEFENSE: 13
MAG DEF: 9
EVASION: 5
Health: 15

Spears (d8, 5)
Reflex: 11
Armour Factor: 2
Perception: 6
Stealth: 14

As a faerie creature the Afanc takes +1 damage from weapons of Cold Iron, such as the Axe from Section 8, which hits as a shortsword, and the Goblins Chains from Section 11, which may function as a crude flail for someone of great (16+) strength.

Being a young beastie it does not possess the magical abilities or sly intelligence of older afanc and relies on its power and speed to bring home its meals. If reduced to less than 5 hp it will attempt to escape into the stream and swim away.

Scattered about the room, often under piles of dung are 30 florins worth of tarnished silver and gold jewelry and votive statuary.

17. This strong room once contained the priceless objects of the castles rulers. Unbeknownst to the Albish usurpers the original inhabitants concealed a small fortune in sapphires and amethyst beneath one of the stones in this room. If it is dug up, it is worth 120 florins.

18. An empty corridor dripping with moisture. A thick black mould coats the walls here the air smells unhealthy but is ultimately harmless.

19. This long empty corridor contains nothing but dust and old cobwebs.

DRAGON WARRIORS CHARACTER RECORD

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|-------|-----|---------|-----------|
| Character Name: | Profession: | Rank: | XP: | CURRENT | NEXT RANK |
|-----------------|-------------|-------|-----|---------|-----------|

CHARACTERISTICS

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|--|---------|----------|---------------|----------|------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| STRENGTH | | ATTACK | | MAGIC ATTACK | | STEALTH | | HEALTH POINTS | |
| REFLEXES | | BASE | ADJUSTED | BASE | ADJUSTED | BASE | ADJUSTED | TOTAL | CURRENT |
| INTELLIGENCE | | DEFENCE | | MAGIC DEFENCE | | PERCEPTION | | EVASION | |
| PSYCHIC TALENT | | BASE | ADJUSTED | BASE | ADJUSTED | BASE | ADJUSTED | BASE | ADJUSTED |
| LOOKS | | | | | | | | | |

ARMOUR

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| TYPE | |
| ARMOUR FACTOR | |
| ATTACK PENALTY | |
| DEFENCE PENALTY | |
| STEALTH PENALTY | |
| SHIELD | Yes / No |

WEAPONS (A STRENGTH of 16-18 grants +1 to ABR AND DAMAGE, a 19 or more grants +2)

| WEAPON | ABR | DAMAGE | SHORT (+0) | MEDIUM (+3) | LONG (+7) |
|--------|-----|--------|------------|-------------|-----------|
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EQUIPMENT

| | ENC.? | ENCUMBRANCE LIMIT (pg. 23) = [] | ENC.? |
|--|-------|--------------------------------------|-------|
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MAGICAL POTIONS, TRINKETS, & ITEMS

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WEALTH (10 Pennies = 1 Florin, 10 Florins = 1 Crown)

| | | |
|----------------|--|----------------------------|
| COPPER PENNIES | | OTHER VALUABLES & PROPERTY |
| SILVER FLORINS | | |
| GOLD CROWNS | | |

All characters have a MOVEMENT of 10m. A character may only move 1/4 his MOVEMENT (2.5m) and attack in the same round unless the enemy is SURPRISED (pg. 61). In the latter case, a character may move half his MOVEMENT (5m) and attack.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------|------------------|
| Race: | Age: | Sex: | Height: | Weight: | Character Sketch |
| Skin Colour: | Eye Colour: | Hair Colour: | Handedness*: | | |
| Distinguishing Marks: | | | | | |
| Trademark Phrase: | | | | | |
| Overall Appearance: | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

*All Sorcerers are left-handed.

BACKGROUND

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Homeland: | Father's Vocation: |
| Languages (Fluency): | |
| | |
| | |
| Ancient Languages (Fluency): | |
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| | |
| Scripts (if literate): | |
| | |
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CHARACTER HISTORY

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MOUNT/HENCHMAN

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Name: | Profession: |
| Creature Type: | Rank/Equivalent: |
| ATTACK: | DEFENCE: |
| MAGIC ATTACK: | MAGIC DEFENCE: |
| STEALTH: | PERCEPTION: |
| EVASION: | MOVEMENT: |
| HEALTH POINTS: | MAGIC POINTS: |
| ARMOUR (AF): | |
| WEAPONS/ATTACKS (ABR, DMG): | |
| | |
| SPECIAL ABILITIES: | |
| | |

MOUNT/ HENCHMAN

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Name: | Profession: |
| Creature Type: | Rank/Equivalent: |
| ATTACK: | DEFENCE: |
| MAGIC ATTACK: | MAGIC DEFENCE: |
| STEALTH: | PERCEPTION: |
| EVASION: | MOVEMENT: |
| HEALTH POINTS: | MAGIC POINTS: |
| ARMOUR (AF): | |
| WEAPONS/ATTACKS (ABR, DMG): | |
| | |
| SPECIAL ABILITIES: | |
| | |