



GELLARDE BARROW

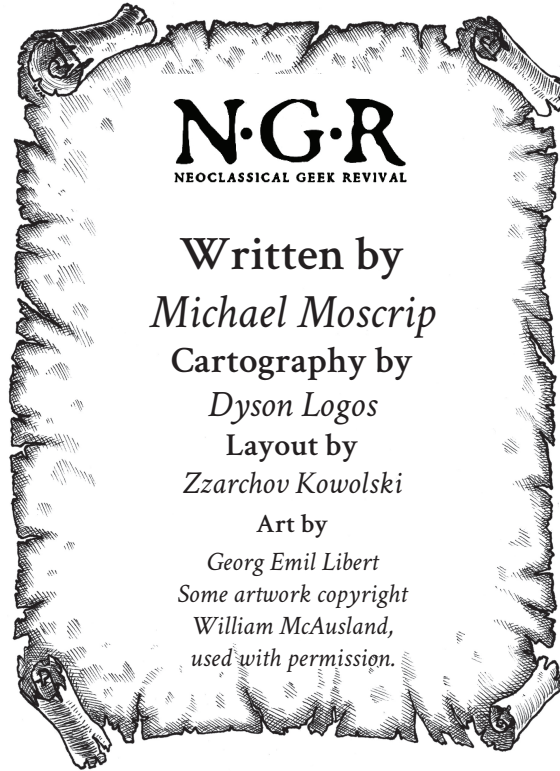
By Michael Moscrip

**An Adventure For
Neoclassical Geek Revival**



GELLARDE BARROW

An Adventure for Neoclassical Geek Revival



The legends of the mountainfolk are calling...

It was said of Luc Gallarde that if anyone could build something out of wood, he could build it out of stone. He was never seen without the old mallet his ancestors had brought with them from their homeland in the mountain country, and legends told after his death claim he could wake the stone itself with the ancient tool. His final work was the tomb he built for himself and his family, delved into the hills in the barrow style of the mountain-folk.

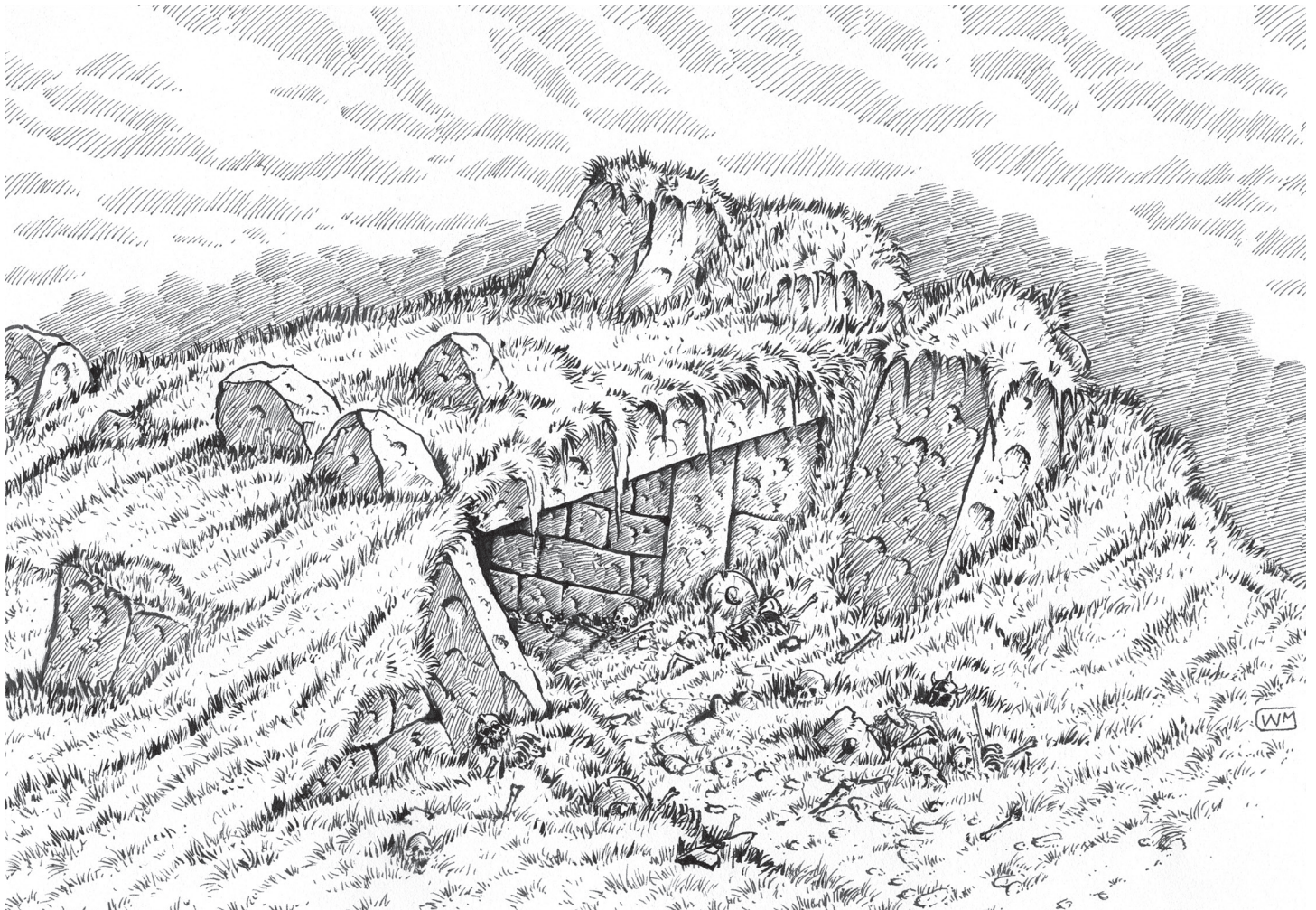
In the centuries after the last of his family was buried there, the location of the barrow was lost to most locals. Recently though, a band of highwaymen plague the roads in the area where some believe the barrow lies. If their lair could be found, perhaps the ancient Mallet of Gellminster, missing since his death, could be discovered within.

However, those seeking it should be wary. The legends also say curses of the mountain-folk were laid on the tombs. Ungessed by anyone living, the barrow has also become home to a horrid creature born of the unwholesome roots of strange weeds that have grown upon the hill, perhaps due to the long action of the

curses laid within, as well as the lair of a rare and dreaded rogue hipposteus.

The entire complex is constructed of tightly fitted stone blocks ten feet across. All doors are of heavy but perfectly balanced stone, and all are watertight except the door between areas 9 and 10. Unless stated otherwise, doors are opened by moving a 1 foot long stone lever in the center. Unless otherwise specified, the ceiling is always ten feet above the floor, slanting above stairways to maintain this height. The stairs, other than those coming down from the outside, are all quite steep, rising 10 feet vertically in the space of only 5 feet horizontally, as shown.

Words carved in the stone around the entrance are easily seen by those entering the barrow. On the wall to the left of a person entering the barrow is the word **'BRAVERY'**, carved vertically from the ground upward. Above, carved from left to right, is the word **'VALOR'**. On the right, carved from the top down, is the word **'SERVICE'**. Carved from left to right into the stone at the foot of the entrance is the name **'GELLARDE'**.



2. LEVER ROOM

This is the home of a large and dangerous creature, a **ROGUE HIPPOSTEUS**. If there is a sustained loud noise in room 1, it will charge in and attack. It will also attack anyone entering room 2. The stone door to the south shows evidence of being smashed into by the monster many times, with several shallow pits worn into it. The small stone lever on this side of the door is mostly broken off, making it less easy to turn the opening mechanism. The hipposteus will try to enter any amount of water big enough to hold it whenever it can see or smell it.

2a and 2b are short, narrow corridors with a single two-foot **LONG STONE LEVER** at the back. The levers are identical in appearance, and there are no markings on the walls. Used in the proper combination, these levers raise and lower the water level in room 10, the corridor to the east of room 10, corridor 9, and the northern part of room 8.

a ↑, **b** ↑

water level does not change

a ↓, **b** ↑

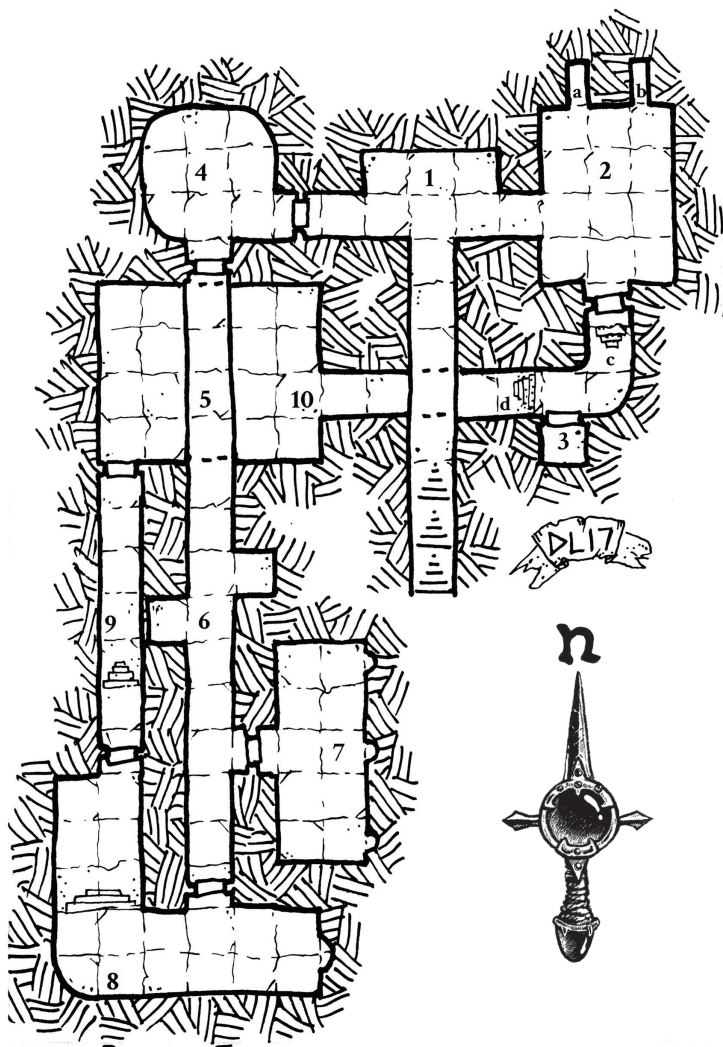
starting position. water level does not change

a ↑, **b** ↓

water fills to maximum depth and stops

a ↓, **b** ↓

water drains to minimum depth and stops



Dungeon Encounters (2d6)

- 2-6: All of the bandits come to investigate
- 7: Dripping water echoes in the distance
- 8-12: The hipposteus angrily searches for intruders

1. ENTRY CHAMBER

Amid the last traces of dead leaves and grass coming down from the entrance stair sits an **ORNATE CHAIR** made entirely of white marble, but not carved from a single piece. Instead, the chair is constructed of thick, carved marble pieces nailed together with bronze nails, in the same fashion a wooden chair would be made. To anyone examining it, its construction seems to defy common sense. Although potentially valuable to a collector, it weighs 150 pounds. A **BANDIT** from room 4 usually sits here in the chair to guard the entrance, but may be sleeping.

The water takes only a few minutes to fill or empty, but the levers cannot be moved while this is occurring.

Though there is no indication of this in any way, lever a opens and closes a water gate buried inaccessibly next to the barrow. Lever b moves a similarly inaccessible switch between the water gate and an underground stream. The mechanism has deteriorated such that it keeps filling past the 8 foot level at which it was originally meant to stop, filling the complex to a depth of 20 feet. It also stops emptying early, always leaving 1 foot of water remaining.

Hipposteus

Size modifier 2

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
14	6	16	2	8	10	10

Natural Weapons

Armoured head (full helm), bite (large, piercing, devastating), headbutt (large, blunt), tail (medium, blunt, reach, ineffective)

Special: Knows the "Charge" combat trick

3. BARGE ROOM

This small room contains a **CEREMONIAL FUNERAL BARGE** with 4 paddles and 3 places for torches. it is 8 feet long and 5 feet wide, and will still float despite its age. there is an ornate wooden stand built into the middle of it to hold a coffin. the stand is about 3 feet tall. it has no treasure in it, but is finely crafted of the best wood and silks. Several precious stones are inlaid into the woodwork: 2 sapphires in the eyes of a voluptuous but stern female figurehead; 2 rubies, one at the center of raised wooden knotwork on each side of the barge; and a huge amethyst at the head of the coffin stand. These gems can be removed from the barge, but the value of the entire intact boat is easily double that of the gems alone.

The lower portion of the corridor outside this room, to the west of stair d, has a 15 foot ceiling so that the barge could travel through it when the flooding mechanism was operating properly. It is covered in a 1 foot depth of water, coming up to the bottom step of stair d. In the water, but not coming up the stairs, can be seen a few 2 foot long **GIANT TRILOBITES**. If poked or touched, the trilobites will roll up into a ball. If the root creature in room 10 is alert and hostile, it will sense anyone stepping into this water.

Flooded state

Water fills the corridor outside this room to the top step of stair c, and due to the ceiling sloping downward, the length of the corridor after stair d is completely submerged underwater, with no breathing room above the water's surface. If the door to this room is opened while there is water in the corridor, the room will flood to the ceiling, and the barge will float too high to fit through the door.

4. BANDIT ROOM

A group of **FIVE BANDITS** lives here, going out occasionally to rob travellers on the roads. One of these bandits is usually on watch in room 1. They have been waiting for the creature in room 2 to leave so they can explore that way, but it only seems to leave while they are out. The bandits will not willingly open the door leading from this room into corridor 5. If it is opened, the shocking stench of a dead body assaults those in the room. One of their friends, their sixth member, tried to get through location 5, but the roots killed him when he got too close.

They have amassed a **SMALL AMOUNT OF TREASURE** with their robbery, consisting of 14 gold

coins, 58 silver coins, a valuable fur robe, and a blood-stained set of chain armour. They also have enough provisions left to last 5 people for 2 weeks, including 19 torches, a small oil lamp (not a lantern), and 4 quarts of oil.

Bandits

Level 0 humans

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
10	10	10	10	10	10	10

Inventory

Sword (medium, defensive, slashing), dagger (small, piercing), longbow (large, piercing, missile), leather jack (partial, light armour), quiver with 12 arrows.

5. UPPER CORRIDOR

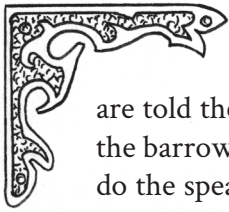
The 40 feet of this passage which lies above room 10 is filled with **IVORY COLOURED ROOTS** running from ceiling to floor. The remains of a bandit, dead about one week, can just barely be seen about a foot inside the mass of roots.

The roots can be hacked through at a rate of about 5 feet for every ten minutes of work, assuming two people working side by side. However, any cut roots will grow back within 30 minutes. Additionally, the strong roots move and grasp, frequently trying to capture any living creature next to them, which they will then quickly strangle and kill (treat those working in the area as under the effect of the *Entangle* miracle who also must save against 1d6 damage every ten minutes). After this, they slowly absorb the nutrients of the captured body. They are living roots, and thus will not burn easily. If a large amount of some flammable liquid, or other effective accelerant, is used on the roots it is possible to burn them away, but even in this case they will grow back within 24 hours. If all the roots in the entire 40 foot length of corridor are severed or destroyed at any given time, a loud rumbling or bashing sound will be heard from below.

The stone floor here is 5 feet thick between this corridor and the ceiling of room 10.

6. BARROW GUARDIANS

In each of the two niches along this corridor are **MASSIVE, BLOCKY STONE FIGURES**, over 8 feet tall (Barrow Guardians). They will immediately move to bash and smash anyone coming within 20 feet of their niches, or trying to open the door to room 7. **THEY CALL OUT IN A GRINDING STONEY VOICE**, asking "what is the secret of the stone?" If they



are told the Gellarde family motto from the opening of the barrow, “*Bravery - Valor - Service - Gellarde*” they will do the speaker’s bidding, including engaging in combat on their behalf, but they will not leave the barrow. They are able to rapidly clear the roots at location 5 without getting trapped.

Barrow Guardians

Size modifier 2

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
20	4	10	10	10	10	S

Innate Weapons

Heavy fists (Devastating, Small, Blunt), stone construction (Granite Plate Armour and Full Helm)

Special: Knows the “Immovable” combat trick and was constructed via the *Craft Barrow Guardian* spell at PL2.

7. FAMILY CRYPT

There are three alcoves on the east side of the room, each containing one of **THREE STONE SARCOPHAGI** of the members of the Gellarde family. Each sarcophagus is oriented lengthwise from left to right, and their lids bear an inscription with the family member’s name and several unintelligible runes (the spell Barrow Hex at PL3). The heavy lids of each one are attached by 4 large carved stone latches. As soon as one of the latches is pried open, a green glow begins to rise from the inscription in the lid of that sarcophagus, appearing almost as a wispy dim flame moving in slow-motion. If all 4 latches on a sarcophagus are pried open, a Barrow Lurker steps from that sarcophagus, seemingly emerging directly from the unlifted stone lid itself. If a second or third sarcophagus is unsealed, the process is identical, with one creature stepping forth at the moment the 4th latch is opened on that sarcophagus.

All three sarcophagi contain the mouldering remains of a wooden casket and the brittle skeleton of the occupant. Additionally, inside the center sarcophagus is a stone box constructed with six slabs of stone, each 2 feet by 2 feet square, and 2 inches thick, nailed securely together with large bronze nails. Inside the box are 125 gold coins, a bracelet with a ruby setting, a golden goblet, and two mundane silver rings. The box alone weighs 640 pounds.

Barrow Lurker

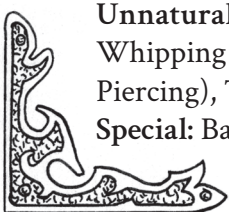
Size modifier 2

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
10	16	10	4	8	10	10

Unnatural Weapons

Whipping neck and bites (Medium, Vicious, Reach, Piercing), Talons (Medium, Slashing, Vicious)

Special: Barrow Lurkers are supernatural demons



8. MAIN CRYPT

In the alcove at the east end of the room is a single **STONE MONUMENT** dedicated to Luc Gellarde, Master Stonemason. It is a stone sarcophagus, oriented lengthwise from left to right. The heavy lid was attached by 4 large carved stone latches. These have all been pried open, and the lid sits very slightly askew, with a rusty iron pry bar sticking up out of the narrow gap. All that remains inside are the fragile bones of Luc Gellarde, which will collapse if handled.

Pinned against the south wall, about 15 feet from the east end of the room, is a transparent **SHADOWY BLACK FIGURE** which was summoned when the sarcophagus was opened. Smoky bat wings spread on either side behind it, and in-curving horns top its featureless head. Its clawed hands grasp at a wooden stake which seems to hold it to the stone wall. Below, its body trails off into a legless wispy tail. An ancient dessicated corpse lies on the floor near the shadowy figure, the Mallet of Gellminster clutched in its mummified hand. This tomb-robber managed to ‘nail’ the demonic shadow to the wall with a wooden stake and the enchanted mallet, but it slew him in the process.

The demonic shadow-figure, summoned when the now-dessicated tomb-robber opened the monument, can communicate in a wan, breathy voice. It promises that if the wooden stake, very old but still sturdy, is somehow removed, it will peacefully return to the monument (although it was never actually inside it) after giving its liberators a reward. Regardless of its promises, if it is released it will immediately set upon any living creatures in the room, tearing and biting as it flies around, with most weapons merely passing through its shadowy form to no effect.

Flooded state

The door to corridor 9 is watertight, but if opened while 9 is flooded, the portion of this room north of the stairs will be immediately inundated to a depth of 10 feet. The water, after rushing out over most of the floor of the higher portion of the room and washing the corpse up onto the monument, will settle to a level even with the top of the stair.

Shadowy Black Figure

Size modifier 1

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
10	16	10	12	20	8	20

Unnatural Weapons

Claws (Small, Slashing), Horns (Helmet)

Special: This creature is an incorporeal demon

9. BARGE CORRIDOR

This hall is **PAINTED BLACK WITH STARS**. The floor south of the stairs is laid down in 6 different colours of stone, like a rainbow, from east to west, and the exit to the **SOUTH IS PAINTED WITH A STRANGE GOLDEN CITY**. There is an obvious hole on the right side of the door leading to room 8, slanting down slightly into the wall. If a torch butt or similar shaft is placed in the hole, the door swings open.

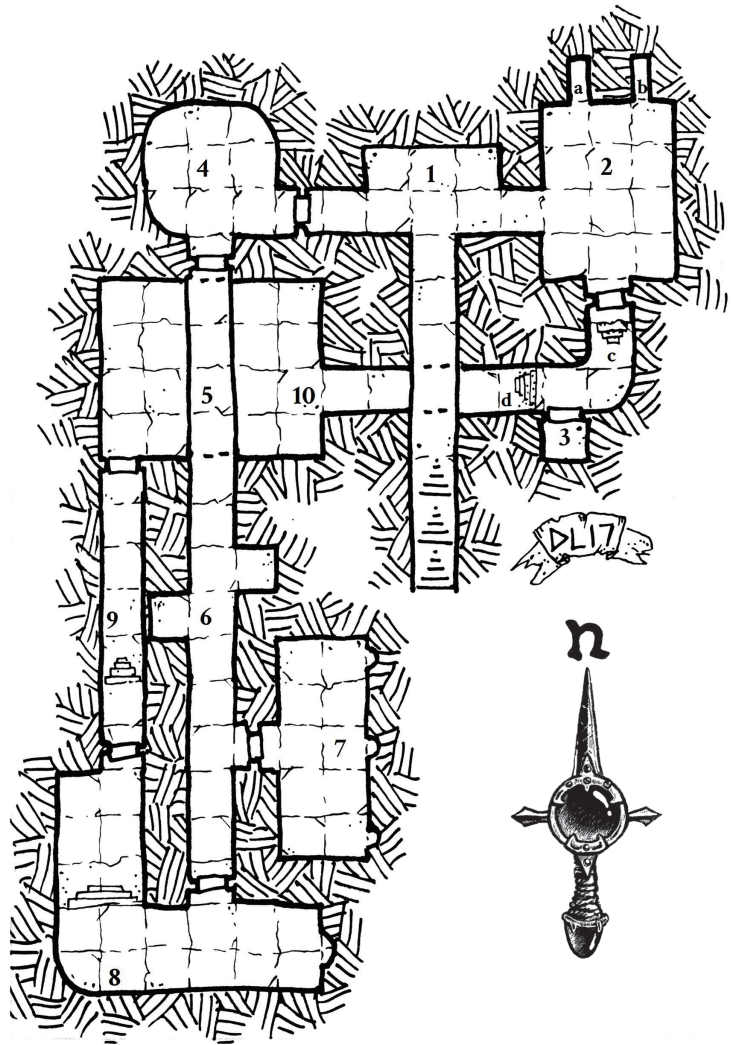
There are thin dark slots spaced intermittently at the very bottom of the walls in the lower portion of the corridor. The slots are only wide enough to insert a dagger. Water enters or leaves through these slots, depending on the position of the levers in room 2. The ceiling in the lower portion of the corridor is 15 feet high, to accommodate the motion of the barge to the stairs when the water mechanism was functioning as intended.

Flooded state

The entire length of the corridor on both sides of the stairs is submerged in water from floor to ceiling, with no breathing room. This remains the case even after the watertight door leading to room 8 is opened. The door north to room 10 is not watertight, and is 15 feet tall so that the barge could travel through it when the flooding mechanism was operating properly.

10. MOURNERS' ROOM

This room has a 15 foot ceiling. The walls are all **PAINTED WITH A CONTINUOUS RIVER SCENE** depicting throngs of mourners along a riverbank, and recognisable mountains in the distance. It appears to depict a river that is about 100 miles from here. The banks of the river are painted at a height of about 8 feet, indicating that when the water mechanism controlled by the levers in 2a and 2b was functioning properly, the water would reach a height of about 7 or 8 feet in this room. The mechanism is now broken and completely inaccessible, entirely submerging the room in water when the complex floods. The door from this room into corridor 9 is painted like a sunset on this side. This door is not watertight, and is 15 feet tall, so that the barge could travel through it when the flooding mechanism was operating properly. The door is opened by placing a torch (or similar shaft) into an obvious hole high in the wall left of the door, about 12 feet from the floor. There are thin dark slots spaced intermittently at the very bottom of the walls. The slots are only wide enough to insert a

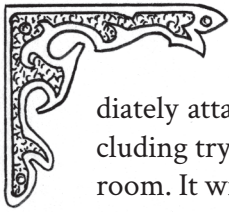


dagger. Water enters or leaves through these slots, depending on the position of the levers in room 2.

Water covers the floor to a depth of 1 foot, and the backs of dozens of mostly submerged two-foot long trilobites can be seen slowly milling about the floor of the whole room. The water continues at a depth of 1 foot out into the corridor to the east, stopping at stair d. A few trilobites often wander out into this corridor as well, but never go up the stairs.

In the center of the room, attached to the high ceiling by thousands of ivory roots, is an enormous, 10 foot tall **PALLID ROOT CREATURE**. To visit its anger upon more distant targets, it will begin by picking up several of the large trilobites. As it grabs them, they roll into hard-shelled spheres, and it throws them at its target. After such abuse, it is possible that the usually placid trilobites will then bite whatever they were thrown against. Closer antagonists will be battered by the root creature's several heavy limbs, or lashed and picked up by its thick grasping tendrils to be slowly sucked dry.

If the roots in location 5 have not been damaged in the last 24 hours, the root monster will not imme-



diately attack unless people get within 20 feet of it, including trying to go past it to get to the other side of the room. It will start throwing rolled up trilobites, and also grabbing or bashing anyone within 10 feet of it. Since it is attached to the ceiling by thick roots, it will only move up to 5 feet from the center of the room in any direction. Thus, a person flattened up against the north or south wall would be just out of reach of its grasping, lashing appendages. It would still be able to throw trilobites at them, of course.

If the roots above have been damaged within the last 24 hrs, the root monster will be alert and hostile, starting to throw trilobites at people as soon as they set foot in the 1 foot of water at the bottom of stair d, 40 feet east of the room's east entrance.

If the roots in area 5 above are currently completely severed or destroyed, the root monster will not only be alert and hostile, but will pull its root stumps out of the ceiling and charge around the room to fight intruders.

Flooded state

Water fills the room, submerging it entirely up to the 15 foot ceiling. The trilobites stay on the floor, and people can swim over them. Whether the roots in location 5 above have been cut or not, the root monster is in the exact center of the room, busy drinking and absorbing water, and will only attack if people get within 5 feet of it. They will need to have some other light source or feel along the walls, and it will be difficult to hold their breath long enough to get through the door into 9 and up to the water's surface in room 8. The door leading to corridor 9 is not watertight.

Pallid Root Creature

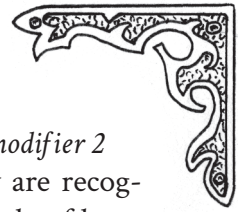
Size modifier 2

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
12	10	20	6	6	10	10

Natural Weapons

Bludgeoning limbs (medium, blunt), wet protrudences (wood mail armour), thrown trilobite (small, throwing, blunt).





CREATURES

Hipposteus

Size modifier 2

It is 4 feet tall at the shoulder and similar to a hippo, but with a thick 5 foot tail and an enormous 3 foot wide, heavily armoured head. It resembles the head of an ancient armoured fish (specifically, a dunkleosteus). Its hide and armour are covered in patches of moss. It spends most of its time lying down in the northwest corner. It begins with a powerful head-butt combined with a bite, then continues to bite with the several beak-like projections of its head armour. Anyone attacking the creature from behind will suffer sweeping attacks from its tail.

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
14	6	16	2	8	10	10

Natural Weapons

Armoured head (full helm), bite (large, piercing, devastating), headbutt (large, blunt), tail (medium, blunt, reach, ineffective)

Bandits

Level 0 humans

The bandits all have a long sword, a dagger, and a longbow. They do not wear much in the way of armour, preferring to stick with leather gear for mobility.

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
10	10	10	10	10	10	10

Inventory

Sword (medium, defensive, slashing), dagger (small, piercing), longbow (large, piercing, missile), leather jack (partial, light armour), quiver with 12 arrows.

Shadowy Black Figure

Size modifier 1

Smoky bat wings spread on either side behind it, and in-curving horns top its featureless head. Its fingers end in dangerously sharp claws. Its lower body trails off into a legless wispy tail.

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
10	16	10	12	20	8	20

Unnatural Weapons

Claws (Small, Slashing), Horns (Helmet)

Special: This creature is an incorporeal demon

Barrow Guardians

Size modifier 2

Originally built here by Luc Gellarde, they are recognisable as roughly man-like, but made entirely of large squared-off, stone block sections. They are immensely strong and over 8 feet tall.

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
20	4	10	10	10	10	S

Innate Weapons

Heavy fists (Devastating, Small, Blunt), stone construction (Granite Plate Armour and Full Helm)

Special: Knows the "Immovable" combat trick and was constructed via the *Craft Barrow Guardian* spell at PL2.

Barrow Lurker

Size modifier 2

a 9 foot tall creature, covered from head to toe in dark-green and dirty-white fur.

The creature stands on its hind legs, like a man, and has a wide, skull-like head with an animalistic face and seemingly empty sockets for eyes. Its neck is so long that the head almost touches the ground, and it immediately begins trying to bite any living creature in the room, its head darting out to snap at opponents up to 8 feet away.

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
10	16	10	4	8	10	10

Unnatural Weapons

Whipping neck and bites (Medium, Vicious, Reach, Piercing), Talons (Medium, Slashing, Vicious)

Pallid Root Creature

This creature is normally found attached to the by thousands of ivory roots. It is an enormous, 10 foot tall creature, roughly in the form of a massive, bulbous and misshapen man. Twisting limbs and tendrils sprout from the sickly white surface, and multitudes of finger-like protuberances and waxy eyes distend from the glistening wet root-flesh.

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
12	10	20	6	6	10	10

Natural Weapons

Bludgeoning limbs (medium, blunt), wet protrudences (wood mail armour), thrown trilobite (small, throwing, blunt).



SPELLS

CRAFT BARROW GUARDIAN

Template Simulacrum

Difficulty 8 per power level

Cost 10 (cumulative) per power level

Range Touch

This spell allows the caster to turn an inanimate stone representation of a being into an obedient servant. The simulacrum can take 5 points of damage per power level before the spell is dispelled and has no combat or stealth modifier. A simulacrum may be used as a receptacle for an imprison spell, in which case the simulacrum has the presence, occult, faith, combat and stealth modifiers of the imprisoned spirit. This spell animates 1 statue per power level and the stone statue(s) animated by this spell must have a size modifier equal to the spell's power level. The spell's duration is permanent or until the spell is cast again.

Barrow Guardians

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
20	4	10	10	10	10	S

Innate Weapons

Heavy fists (Devastating, Small, Blunt), stone construction (Granite Plate Armour and Full Helm)

Special: Knows the "Immovable" combat trick

BARROW HEX

Template Trigger & Summon

Difficulty 7 per power level

Cost 7 per power level

Range Touch

This spells allows the caster to protect a coffin, casket, or sarcophagus with potent runes that summon a Barrow Lurker. When the tomb is opened or interfered with (including using the wizard power Sage to learn this spell) it will trigger the summoning of a Barrow Lurker demon. The spell will lower by one power level per century, dissipating at power level 0.

Barrow Lurker

Size modifier 2

S	A	H	I	P	C	W
10	16	10	4	8	10	10

Unnatural Weapons

Whipping neck and bites (Medium, Vicious, Reach, Piercing), Talons (Medium, Slashing, Vicious)

ITEMS

THE MALLET OF GELLMINSTER

Although it appears to be an old, mundane, but well-made wooden carpenter's mallet, this enchanted tool weighs twice as much as it looks like it should. If used to hit a creature, it will strike more heavily than an ordinary mallet (as if made of granite), but its true power is in driving sharp objects into virtually anything. For example, it could be used to 'nail' a ghost to a solid stone wall with a large spike, fixing it there as though it were a living corporeal person. It is a divine relic of the mountain spirits.



N·G·R

NEOCLASSICAL GEEK REVIVAL