d20 MODERN

NO MAN'S
LAND

By Stan!

A Short Adventure for Four 3rd-Level Characters

They say that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Thus, it would seem that educating the public about past military conflicts would help to ensure peace. But one patron has a different purpose in mind for the new museum exhibit on World War I trench warfare. To him, a historical recreation of the War to End All Wars simply isn't complete without massive casualties.

No Man's Land is an adventure set in the modern day, but it includes fantastic elements such as undead creatures and black magic.

LEVELS

You, the Game Master (GM), need a copy of the *d20 MODERN Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* to run this adventure. *No Man's Land* is a short scenario for four 3rd-level player characters (PCs). With slight modifications, you can make it suitable for PCs from 1st to 4th level (or groups as large or small as you're comfortable adjudicating). The text that appears in shaded boxes should be read aloud or paraphrased for the players. Opponents' statistics are provided in abbreviated form.

To get started, print out this adventure and read it through. Then make sure you are familiar with the rules for skeletons and arcane magic (Chapters 8 and 10, respectively, of the *d20 MODERN* rulebook).

BACKGROUND

The Great War, the War to End All Wars—by any name or euphemism, World War I encompasses five of the most brutal years in the history of mankind. During that bloody conflict, more than 8.6 million people were killed worldwide, the vast majority of them on the fields of Europe.

Combat soldiers in the Great War were stationed primarily in trenches—claustrophobic furrows gouged out of the earth. The enemy sat in similar trenches,
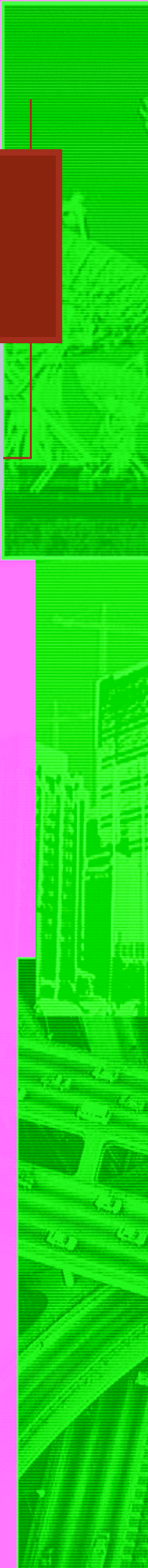
sometimes less than 100 yards away. The war was fought inch by inch, as young men left the uncertain safety of their own trenches and charged those of the enemy in the hope of gaining a few feet of ground. Of course, those muddy fields were covered with mortar craters, barbed wire, and fallen bodies, so crossing them was no easy task—especially while the enemy was spraying the field with machine gun fire.

In our age of intercontinental ballistic missiles, stealth jets, and smart bombs, war can be fought from very great distances and in relative comfort. Thus, recent generations find it difficult to imagine the conditions faced by the soldiers of yesteryear. By creating realistic displays, museums and historical societies do their part to educate the modern public about the horrors faced by their grandparents.

No Man's Land takes place in a fictional museum exhibit intended to give visitors the merest taste of what it might have been like to serve on the Western Front in World War I. The exhibit has been especially popular because it features an actual British trench from the Battle of the Somme, dug out of the ground and preserved for this display. The soil is the very earth on which thousands of soldiers died in 1916. It is an exhibit designed to leave even the most jaded visitor shaken and keenly aware of the fragility and sanctity of life.

Of course, not everyone is affected the same way by the realistic nature of the display. The action in No Man's Land is caused by one bitter man who does not believe that this violent chapter in human history should be left buried.

Elmar Ganz

Elmar Ganz is the great grandson of a German officer who was hung for using mustard gas against civilians, the grandson of a Nazi doctor sent to the gas chamber for performing bizarre medical experiments on prisoners of war, and the son of a black marketeer shot for selling heroin on the streets of Soviet-occupied Berlin. Needless to say, hatred of the establishment and homicidal tendencies are his birthright. Until a few months ago, he was simply another angry young man looking for a way to strike a blow against the forces he perceived as having oppressed his family for nearly a century.

All that changed when the Russian authorities released a warehouse full of previously classified material, among which were the personal effects of Elmar's drug-dealing father. The item of greatest interest to Elmar was the key to a safe deposit box at a Swiss bank.

Much to his disappointment, Elmar did not find a secret fortune there. In fact, the only item in the safe deposit box was a hand-bound journal covered in leather that had been made from human skin. Inside were notes written by all his executed forebears, including a series of dark magic rituals developed by his grandfather.

SYNOPSIS

Studying black magic and learning the sordid details of his family's past has driven Elmar quite mad. He has no care or concern other than causing as much death and destruction as possible.

Elmar has come to the "No Man's Land" exhibit planning to use one of the spells that he found in the journal to raise the long-dead German soldiers buried within the trench display.

The spell allows him to create skeletons by casting a variant of the *animate dead* spell. Once he has awakened the corpses within the exhibit, he plans to have them use the weapons in the museum—including bayonets, rifles, a machine gun, and even a tank—to kill every living person they find.

The PCs' job is simple—destroy the skeletons and prevent this madman from ever casting that (or any other) spell ever again.

No Man's Land is a straightforward, site-based adventure. The first part (Lest We Forget) describes the site and details the numbered areas on the map. The second section (Those Who Have Fallen) presents the encounters, beginning with the awakening of the dead German troops.

The action takes place entirely within the "No Man's Land" museum exhibit. The skeletons will not leave the museum's confines unless the entire building is devoid of life—that is, unless all the patrons (including the PCs) have either fled or been killed. If they are left with no more targets, Elmar may, at your option, order them to take their hatred to the city streets.
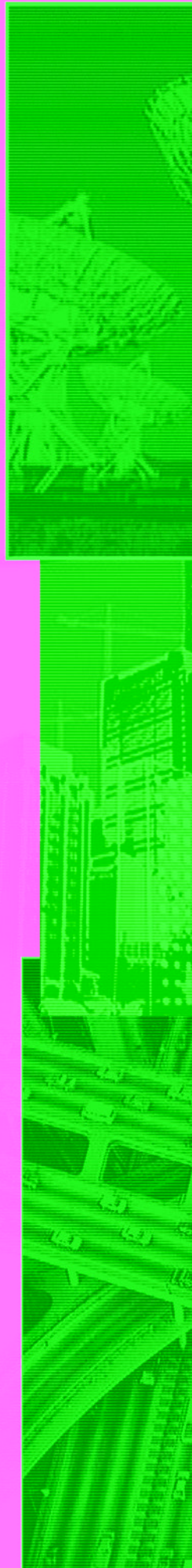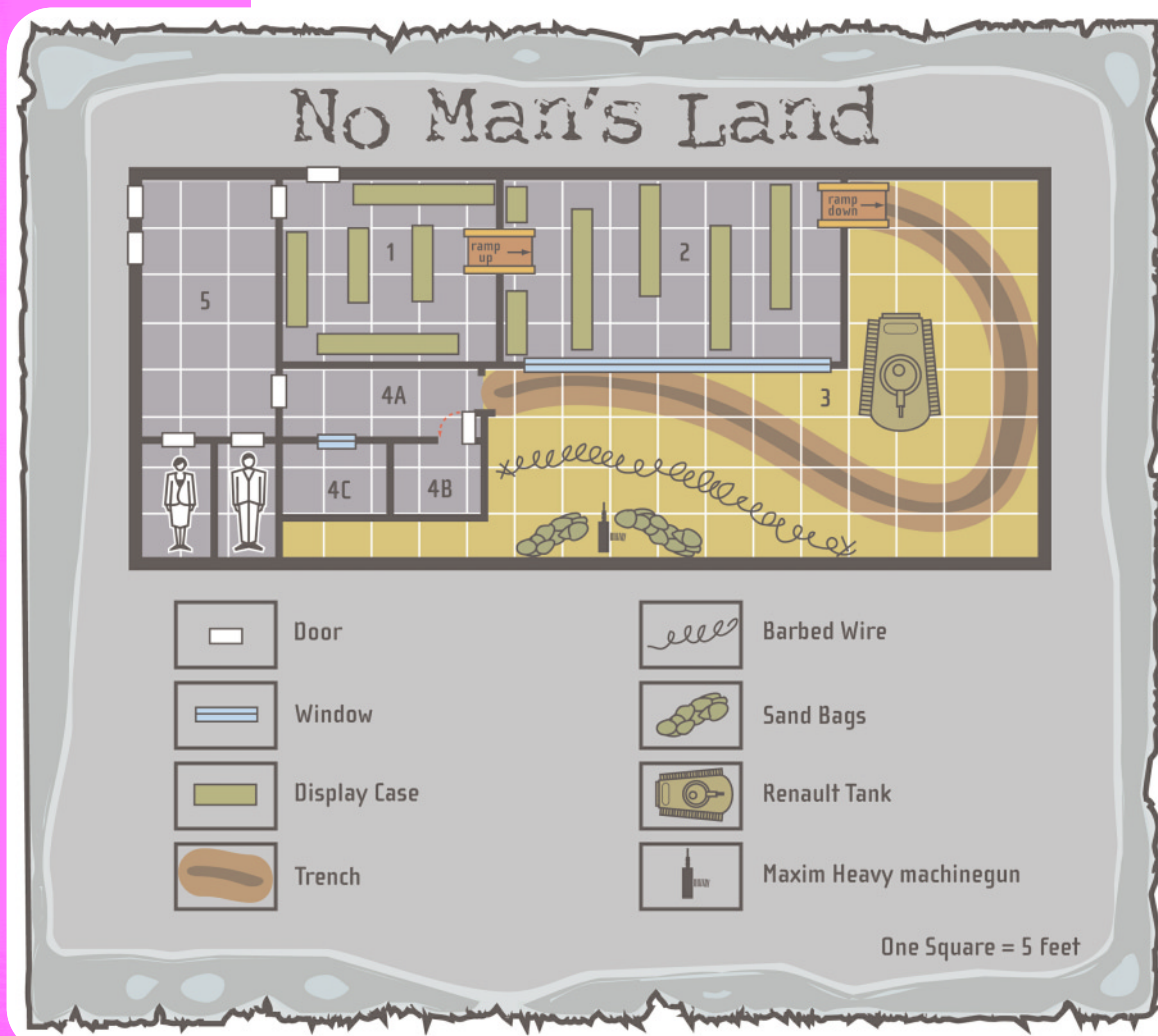
Character Hooks

As GM, you know best how to involve your players and their characters in an adventure. You can use the following adventure hooks to spur your imagination, modifying them as necessary to make them appropriate for the characters' interests.

- While visiting the exhibit for their own edification, the PCs find themselves thrown unexpectedly into a bizarre crisis.

- The characters have, as part of a wholly separate adventure, arranged to meet an important NPC at the exhibit for a completely unrelated purpose. If this is the case, the PCs must not only defeat Elmar and his skeletons but also try to protect the NPC so that the other adventure can continue.

- The PCs are law enforcement agents tracking Elmar Ganz. In this situation, the characters may actually know what he is up to if they work for an agency that believes in the supernatural. Alternatively, Ganz may simply be wanted for some more mundane reason—drug dealing, entering the country illegally, or the like.

- Ganz has disrupted historical exhibits at one or more other museums in the past, and the PCs have gotten a tip that he is planning to strike at "No Man's Land." (This option is especially good for groups of lower-level PCs because it allows them to prepare ahead of time for a threat that could otherwise prove too strong for them.)

LEST WE FORGET

The exhibit is meant to be an interactive, educational presentation of conditions and equipment in the trenches of Western Europe during WWI. Entry is free, but donations are gladly accepted.

No Man's Land

Door		Barbed Wire	
Window		Sand Bags	
Display Case		Renault Tank	
Trench		Maxim Heavy machinegun	

One Square = 5 feet

"No Man's Land" is a modern facility. Each doorway is a full 5 feet wide and is equipped with motion sensors that enable it to open automatically. There are no stairs in the exhibit; access is provided by wheelchair-friendly ramps leading to and from the gallery (area 2). This arrangement serves to accentuate the feeling of going down into the trenches.

1. The Forum

This chamber is the entrance to the "No Man's Land" exhibit. When the PCs first enter the room, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

> The room is dimly lit, and popular music from the war era plays faintly from speakers hidden in the shadows of the ceiling. Most of the available light comes from the five cases displaying items once used by soldiers stationed in the trenches. Beside the main door stands a box for donations; next to that is a door leading to the museum gift shop. At the left is a ramp leading up to the gallery.

The display cases contain items such as shaving kits, gramophones, medals, and honorariums from various countries. A plaque below each item describes what functions it served

and how the museum came to own it. There are no weapons in these display cases, but some of the items are large, heavy, or sharp enough that, at the GM's discretion, they could be used as improvised weapons.

The music consists of songs such as *Over There*, *It's A Long Way to Tipperary*, *Pack Up Your Troubles*, and other popular war-related songs of the WWI era.

2. The Gallery

This large room is devoted to showcasing the weapons used by frontline troops during WWI. When the PCs first enter, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

> This room is larger than the adjacent forum, and it is difficult to see from end to end because the display cases have been arranged to create the effect of a trenchlike hallway. The displays feature various weapons used by frontline soldiers.
>
> Scratchy recordings of speeches made by politicians of the era drift from the speakers occasionally. Interspersed among them are clearer recordings of elderly veterans describing their experiences from the war.diorama is a sandbagged foxhole in which two mannequins in German uniforms man a machine gun.

One wall of this room is actually a floor-to-ceiling window overlooking a recreation of a WWI battlefield. Other museum visitors walk below, along a trench, before passing through a doorway. At the far end of the diorama is a sandbagged foxhole in which two mannequins in German uniforms man a machine gun.

Spread out among the various display cases in this room are the following weapons:

- 6 Lee-Enfield short rifles*
- 4 Mauser C.96 pistols**
- 10 French F1 grenades†
- 4 cavalry sabers††

*Treat as an M4 Carbine with a fixed bayonet.
**Treat as a Glock 17.
†The grenades are not live, but only an attempt to use one reveals that fact.
††Treat as a longsword.

All the firearms are in excellent condition for antiques, but they have not been oiled or fired in decades. An attack roll of 1 made while firing any one of them causes it to misfire violently and explode, dealing 2d6 points of damage to the wielder.

Museum Realism

Museums do not generally display firearms that are in working condition. Usually they either plug the barrels or disable the firing mechanisms to prevent accidental discharge. In this adventure, however, realism takes a backseat to cinematic flavor—it's very evocative to have the skeletons using period firearms.

If this arrangement seems too unrealistic for your tastes, try one of the following solutions, or invent your own.

- **Buried Treasure:** Have the skeletons rise from the ground still carrying their original weapons.
- **Magic:** Add a spell to Elmar's journal that restores the weaponry to its original state.
- **Modern Weapons:** Let Elmar somehow sneak in modern weapons for the skeletons to use.

3. The Trench

This area houses the main part of the exhibit—a full-scale, original trench in a reconstructed battlefield. Each section of this area is described separately below.

When the PCs first enter area 3, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

A ramp leads down between walls of dirt, giving the impression that you are descending into the ground as you walk along. The display tag at the bottom of the ramp says this exhibit is an actual WWI trench, carefully dug up and transported here from the fields of France. Its

structure is well supported by sandbags and wooden slats, and great care has been taken to preserve and secure the sod walls with a durable coating, so that the hands of the curious cannot pry off clumps of dirt. Stepladders have been placed every dozen yards or so to allow visitors to peer over the 10-foot high dirt walls.

The ground around the top of the trench is bare of all grass and vegetation, but lengths of barbed wire spiral across the field. The walls and ceiling have been painted to show gray clouds overhead and forests and farmhouses in the distance. Hidden speakers play the sounds of men shouting in German, biplanes passing overhead, intermittent gunfire, and occasionally a mortar explosion.

The atmosphere in the trench is as realistic as the curators could make it, and the whole effect is meant to be more than a little bit disturbing. Do what you can to reinforce this feeling for the heroes.

When the PCs first pass below the tank, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

Above the trench stands a tremendous metal vehicle about 8 feet tall, 10 feet wide, and 15 feet long. It is covered with heavy iron plates held in place by bolts at least an inch in diameter.

The display tag identifies this behemoth as a Renault tank with a 37mm cannon. It was affectionately called Ol' No. 7 by a battalion of Canadian troops who took refuge behind it after an unexpected German offensive had forced them to evacuate six previous positions. The tank not only saved their lives but also helped them retake the ground they'd lost.

Ol' No. 7 has been restored to perfect working condition by the museum. For details, see encounter B, below.

When the PCs first pass below the window into the gallery (area 2), read aloud or paraphrase the following.

Above you is a window that looks into the gallery. Visitors looking at the display cases pass by in a steady stream, and some stop to peer down at you in the trench.

Across the field from you is a semicircle of sandbags from which a large machine gun barrel pokes up, pointing your way. Plaques explain that the foxhole beyond contains a Maxim Machineengewehr 08 machine gun that is estimated to have killed more than four hundred soldiers during the Battle of the Somme.

Ahead of you is a wooden doorway reinforced by sandbags. A sign above it reads, "Lancashire Fusiliers HQ."

The machine gun is not loaded, but there is plenty of ammunition stacked around it. For more details, see encounter C, below.

4. The Bunker

This section of the display is an actual command bunker (albeit a small one) that was lifted along with the trench from the fields of France. The interior is claustrophobic and dusty, but not

4
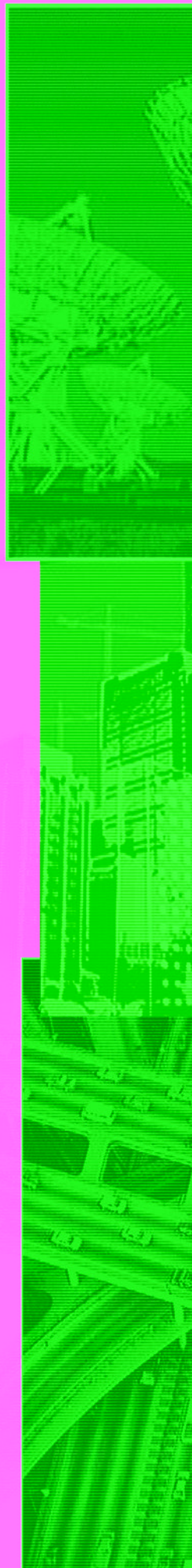
especially uncomfortable. However, the close confines leave very little space in which to move around, and the ceiling is rather low (not quite 6 feet high). It is impossible to wield a two-handed weapon normally in this space—anyone attempting to do so takes a –4 circumstance penalty on attack rolls and damage.

4A. Main Room

The main room of the bunker served as an office for the company commander. It was also as safe a place as the trench could offer when the Germans began lobbing mortars.

If the heroes first enter the main room before Elmar has cast his spell, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

> The first thing you notice about this room is how low the ceiling is. Anyone 6 feet tall or taller must stoop or hunch over to get into this chamber.
>
> The walls consist of wooden slats evidently erected so hastily that they intermittently leak dust and clumps of earth. A rickety table, too small for more than one person to use at a time, stands in one corner. There is no chair.
>
> Light is supplied by a pair of naked light bulbs hanging from the ceiling on short cords, one at each end of the room. Along the back wall, two doors lead into separate chambers.

If the PCs don't get here until after Elmar has cast *awaken dead*, skip to encounter D, below.

4B. Bunk Room

This area was the closest thing to a private room that soldiers could find in the trench. When the heroes first enter the room, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

> The walls of this tiny room are even more ramshackle than those of the main bunker room, if such a thing is possible. The only furniture here is a set of bunk beds with lumpy-looking mattresses. The room has a dilapidated door with a simple latch-hook lock. Currently, the hook is fastened to an eye socket set into the wall, so as to hold the door open. A single light bulb hanging on a short cord from the ceiling provides dim illumination.

This is the room to which Elmar Ganz retires after awakening his first batch of skeletons (see encounter D, below).

4C. Ordnance Locker

This chamber served as the armory for the troops manning the trench. It is the only room in the bunker that visitors are not permitted to enter. If the heroes first approach the room before Elmar has cast his spell, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

> Entrance to this room is blocked by a floor-to-ceiling sheet of plexiglass. The room beyond is better lit than the others, so it's easy to discern its contents—weaponry and ammunition. The room contains six crates marked "Lee-Enfield .32 caliber ammunition," one crate marked "37mm shells," and a row of Lee-Enfield short rifles with fixed bayonets.

If the heroes don't arrive here until after Elmar has cast *awaken dead*, the plexiglass sheet has been torn down to allow the undead soldiers entry. The skeletons have taken all but five of the rifles, plus a good portion of the ammunition and four of the 37mm shells for the tank (see encounter D, below).

Plexiglass Barrier: Hardness 2, hp 5.

5. The Gift Shop

This large area is the museum gift shop. When the PCs first enter the room, read aloud or paraphrase the following.

> This spacious room is well lit, and the sound of a brass band playing a marching tune fills the air. Bookshelves, display racks, and bins of merchandise are arranged to make it difficult to get to the exit, which is located next to the cash registers against the far wall. Everything is decorated in camouflage and painted to look antique. Immediately to your left are restrooms bearing stylized logos, one resembling a trench soldier and the other a Red Cross nurse.

The shop is full of tacky merchandise—plastic helmets, toy guns, model kits for various WWI-era vehicles, and even plush toys. It also stocks a variety of photo books and commemorative magazines.

One locked display case behind the cash register contains museum replicas of pistols, rifles, bayonets, swords, and other weapons. The guns in the case cannot be made to fire, but the other items can be used normally, though they were not made for durability. Because of the cheapness of the manufacturing, each of these weapons imposes a –1 penalty on all damage rolls and breaks if the wielder rolls a 1 for an attack roll.

THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN

Let the PCs wander around the exhibit for as long as you like. You might even want to let them reach the gift shop before Elmar Ganz casts his fateful spell. It's up to you as GM to decide how many other visitors you want to be in the museum at that time and where exactly you wish to place them.

Whenever you decide the time is right, Elmar casts *awaken dead*. All the skeletons were 1st-level ordinaries in life, so he can awaken a minimum of five skeletons with each casting (see New Spell, below). Each awakened skeleton still has a black, spiked helmet strapped to its head and the tattered remains of its German uniform clinging to its bones.

Elmar's Strategy

Elmar knows something that most people don't—the land dug up for the "No Man's Land" exhibit was the site of a German mass grave. Thus, there are dozens of skeletons interred in the dirt below the diorama.

After looking through the museum once and noting any places where his troops are likely to meet resistance (museum guards, uniformed police, and the like) Elmar moves to the section of the trench below Ol' No. 7, waits until he is relatively certain that no one will see him, and casts *awaken dead*.

Elmar orders two of the skeletons to climb into the tank and wait until they hear screaming, then start the vehicle and cause as much mayhem as possible (see encounter B, below). He warns them explicitly, however, not to fire at the bunker for any reason. Ganz then leads the remaining skeletons to the bunker.

Once inside the relative safety of area 4, Elmar orders the skeletons to tear down the plexiglass and arm themselves. Then he tells them to break into squads of two, three, or four, head out into the museum and the gift shop, and kill everyone they find (see encounter A, below). Elmar then goes into the bunk room and begins casting *awaken dead* again.

When the second batch of skeletons has been awakened, Elmar orders two of them to climb into the foxhole in the diorama, load the machine gun, and shoot any visitors or guards who come within range (encounter C). He instructs another two to grab rifles with bayonets and stand guard in the bunker's main room (encounter D). The others he sends out in groups of two, three, or four to cause more havoc (encounter A).

If this strategy seems to be doing the trick, Elmar sits in the bunk room and waits for his skeleton troops to finish their assignments. If there is greater than expected resistance, he may (depending on how badly casting *awaken dead* twice has affected him) cast the spell one more time and send out additional squads of two, three, or four skeletons.

Should Elmar be attacked personally, he casts *cause fear,* hoping that his enemies will flee. If they do, he leaves in the opposite direction and orders his two skeleton guards to cover his escape. If anyone gets within melee range, Elmar casts his *inflict minor wounds* spell and then tries to escape.

A. Behind Enemy Lines (EL 4)

The skeletons move about in squads of two, three, or four, searching for museum visitors. They shoot at any targets more than 15 feet away using Lee-Enfield short rifles (see area 2). If a target is within 15 feet of a squad, the skeletons charge and attack with bayonets.

NO MAN'S LAND

The skeletons try to maneuver any fleeing targets either into the gallery (area 2) or over the top of the diorama, so that they become targets for the skeletons in the foxhole (encounter C).

Human Skeletons (4): hp 4, 6, 6, 8; Def 13. Each skeleton is armed with a Lee-Enfield short rifle with a fixed bayonet. For details, see Chapter 8 of the *d20 MODERN Core Rulebook*.

B. Ol' No. 7 (EL 6)

Two of Elmar's first batch of skeletons have been ordered to take control of the Renault tank. As it turns out, the vehicle still has some gasoline left from the last time it was used (in a Veteran's Day parade). There is enough leftover fuel to drive it for a couple of miles. The skeletons have four usable shells for the 37mm cannon, which they brought with them from the ordnance locker.

Once the other skeletons have left to hunt museum visitors, this pair starts up the tank and begins using it to add to the chaos. The tank soldiers start by firing the cannon at the wall opposite them, blowing a big hole in the side of the museum. (An attack roll of 1 made while firing the cannon causes it to malfunction and explode, destroying the tank and its skeleton personnel along with it.)

The skeletons fire the cannon at any obviously organized pocket of resistance, though they never fire in the direction of the bunker. If no organized resistance is apparent, they settle for driving around trying to crush museum visitors. Avoiding the tank requires a successful Reflex save (DC 10 for a character moving at alley speed, or DC 12 for one moving at street speed). Any character in the trench gains a +5 circumstance bonus on this saving throw.

Getting into the tank is a daunting task. The first requirement is to climb onto the outside of the tank. If it's stationary, no check is required; if it's moving, the hero must succeed at a Climb check (DC 13). Once on the tank, the hero must then make a successful Balance check (DC 15) every round thereafter that the tank is moving to avoid falling off.

The next step is getting inside. The skeletons have locked the hatch, so entry requires a successful Disable Device check (DC 10) or Intelligence check (DC 15). If the tank is moving, a –4 circumstance penalty applies to the check.

WWI Renault Tank (Tracked Tank): Crew 3; Pass 0; Cargo 300; Init –6; Man –6; Spd 30 (3); Defense 6; hardness 15; hp 50; Size Gargantuan, FS 10 ft. by 20 ft.; Wpn 37mm cannon, Dam 4d12 (ballistic), Crit 20, Range 100, ROF single, Mag 1, Size Huge.

Human Skeletons (2): hp 6, 8; Def 13. Each is armed with a Lee-Enfield short rifle with a fixed bayonet. For details, see Chapter 8 of the *d20 MODERN Core Rulebook*.

C. Over The Top! (EL 4)

After casting *awaken dead* for a second time, Elmar orders two skeletons to man the foxhole that contains a Maxim Machineengewehr 08 machine gun. The foxhole contains plenty of ammunition for the weapon. Once they take position and load the gun, they fire at anyone they see—including visitors beyond the window to the gallery (area 2).

Window: Hardness 0, hp 10.

In the foxhole, the skeletons have nine-tenths cover from ranged attacks and one-quarter cover from melee attacks. Like the soldiers of World War I, the characters can go "over the top" to get to their enemies by climbing out of the trench and charging across no man's land. Although only 15 feet separate the trench and the foxhole, movement is blocked by a 5-foot-high barbed wire fence. In World War I, soldiers used to get past such an obstacle in either of two ways.

• **Belly-Crawl Underneath:** Crawling under the barbed wire requires a full-round action and a successful Dexterity check (DC 13), Tumble check (DC 10), or Escape Artist check (DC 15). While belly-crawling, a character is considered prone for the purpose of Defense against ranged weapons.

• **Cut The Wire:** To snip one wire, the hero needs a full-round action, an appropriate tool (such as a pair of wire cutters), and a successful Disable Device check (DC 10) or Dexterity check (DC 15). The first successful check provides a +5 circumstance bonus on any subsequent checks made to belly-crawl under the fence. A second successful check creates a 5-foot section of the fence through which Medium-size creatures may pass unimpeded.

In combat, treat the Maxim as though it were an M2HB heavy machine gun. However, since it's a museum piece that hasn't been oiled or fired for decades, it is prone to mishaps. An attack roll of 1–5 causes the Maxim to misfire. Clearing the jam and making the gun ready for firing again takes a full-round action.

Only one skeleton can fire the gun each round. The other one is there to clear any misfires so that the first skeleton never has to go a round without firing. During rounds in which the machine gun fired normally, the other skeleton may fire its Lee-Enfield at a target within range.

Human Skeletons (2): hp 6, 8; Def 13. Each is armed with a Lee-Enfield short rifle with a fixed bayonet. For details, see Chapter 8 of the *d20 MODERN Core Rulebook*.

The Better Part of Valor?

At some point during the adventure, fear may get the better of the heroes, and they might try to run instead of facing the threat of Elmar and his skeleton minions. It's up to you as GM to decide whether to let them flee or force them to stay until the fight is over. Below are three possible ways to keep the heroes in the action.

No One Gets Out Alive: Elmar didn't want anyone to escape his trap, so he chained (or magically locked) the doors before casting his first *awaken dead* spell.

Hostages: The police surround the building, and Elmar decides that his only way out is to keep some of the museum visitors alive as hostages. He refuses to let police into the building, but he is willing to allow negotiators, such as the heroes, to enter.

Skeletons in the Streets: If you don't mind going completely off the script, you can allow the PCs to do whatever they like. Once the skeletons have slain everyone in the museum, Elmar sends the tank and the remaining skeleton squads into the streets of the city to cause even more mayhem.

D. Battle of the Bunker (EL 5)

After casting his first *awaken dead* spell, Elmar uses the bunker as his headquarters while the skeletons carry out his orders. He secures himself in the bunk room with at least two skeletons standing guard at all times. The sentries do not bother to defend the ordnance locker, but they fight to the death to protect Elmar in the bunk room.

If the heroes can get to the ordnance locker (area 4C), they discover that the protective plexiglass barrier has been torn away. The room contains five Lee-Enfield short rifles with fixed bayonets, one crate of ammunition, and a crate containing twenty-one live 37mm shells. Four shells are obviously missing (taken by the skeletons to arm the Renault tank). The rifles are in working condition, but they have not been oiled or fired in decades. An attack roll of 1 made while firing any one of them causes it to misfire violently and explode, dealing 2d6 points of damage to the wielder.

If the heroes attack the bunk room (area 4B) and seem likely to overcome the skeletons, Elmar casts *cause fear* to scare them off. Should that tactic fail, he tries to escape the museum entirely, casting his *inflict minor wounds* spell on any opponent that comes within melee range.

Human Skeletons (2): hp 6, 8; Def 13. Each is armed with a Lee-Enfield short rifle with a fixed bayonet. For details, see Chapter 8 of the *d20 MODERN Core Rulebook*.

Elmar Ganz (Dedicated Hero 3/Acolyte 2): CR 5; Medium-size human; HD 3d6+6 plus 2d8+4; hp 29; Mas 14; Init −1; Speed 30 ft.; Defense 12, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (−1 Dex, +3 class); BAB +3; Grap +3; Atk +2 ranged (2d8, Lee-Enfield short rifle); Full Atk +2 ranged (2d8, Lee-Enfield short rifle), or +3 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike); SQ divine spells, rebuke undead 4/day; FS 5ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; AL evil; SV Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +10; AP 2; Rep +3; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Occupation: Criminal (class skills: Hide, Move Silently).

Skills: Concentration +10, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcane lore) +13, Knowledge (popular culture) +9, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +7, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +9, Spot +10.

Feats: Educated (Knowledge [arcane lore], Knowledge [popular culture]), Iron Will, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Stealthy.

Talents: Faith, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [arcane lore]).

Spells Prepared (4/4; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (3), *inflict minor wounds;* 1st—*awaken dead* (3), *cause fear*.

Possessions: Elmar wears a threadbare linen suit, loafers with no socks, and a coral necklace. He carries no watch or electronic items. His wallet holds about $50 in U.S. currency and six stolen credit cards. The only item of real value that he carries is a hand-bound journal covered in leather made from human skin. The entries are all in German, but a successful Read Language (German) check (DC 12) reveals that the middle third of the book contains a dozen arcane spells. (You can determine exactly what the spells are should it become relevant, but one of them must be the new spell *awaken dead.*)

The following new spell is available for use in any *d20 MODERN* adventure.

Awaken Dead

Necromancy [Evil]

Level: Acolyte 1, Mage 1; **Components:** V, S; **Casting Time:** 1 minute; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels); **Targets:** One or more corpses in range; **Duration:** 1 hour; **Saving Throw:** None; **Spell Resistance:** No

You can turn the bones or bodies of dead creatures into skeletons or zombies, respectively, as though with the spell *animate dead*, except that *awaken dead* may be cast at range and has a cost to the caster (see below).

The spell causes a number of Hit Dice worth of dead creatures (based on the creatures' HD when living) equal to 2d4 + your caster level + your Charisma modifier to rise as skeletons or zombies that follow your spoken commands. The spell first awakens the dead creature with the highest HD total (roll randomly if multiple targets are in range), then the next highest, and so on, depending on how much potential remains.

For example, suppose that the bones of two 6-HD soldiers, three 2-HD dogs, and a single 1-HD cat are all within range. Your roll results in 9 HD of corpses that can be awakened. First, one of the soldier skeletons would rise, leaving 3 HD of awakening potential remaining (9 − 6 = 3). This amount is not enough to awaken the second soldier, so a dog skeleton would rise next, leaving 1 HD of awakening potential (3 − 2 = 1). This amount isn't enough to awaken another dog, so the cat skeleton rises last, using up all the awakening potential of the spell. Any awakening potential that cannot be used (because there are no creatures of appropriate Hit Dice within range) is lost.

By casting *awaken dead,* you are using your life essence to breathe a semblance of life into dead creatures. Thus, you take 1d4 points of Constitution damage each time you cast this spell.

If the PCs manage to stop Elmar Ganz and his skeleton minions, they receive some form of monetary reward from the grateful museum curator. The amount that he has to offer depends on the amount of damage caused in the battle—anywhere from a +5 Wealth bonus (if the museum has been completely wrecked) to a +35 Wealth bonus (if almost no damage has been done) would be appropriate.

Elmar's journal can be sold either as an antique relic of both world wars or as a spellbook. At auction as an antique, it brings a Wealth bonus of +2d6+15. As a spellbook, it brings a Wealth bonus of +3d6+15.

Less tangible rewards include media attention for saving the lives of innocent museum patrons, offers of future employment, and just the satisfaction of having beaten the bad guys.
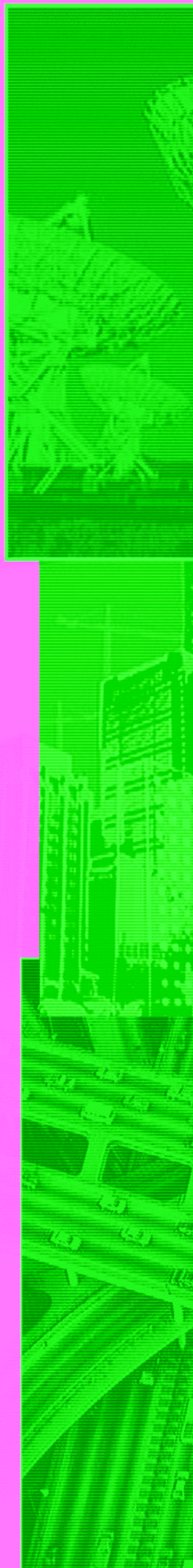
For Further Information

The Treaty of Versailles that officially ended World War I was signed on November 11, 1918. The Allies truly believed that they had won the "War to End All Wars." However, as we know, war remained only too prevalent during remainder of the 20th century, and another world war was only two decades away.

With all the military conflicts, technological advancements, and social upheaval in the past eighty-five years, it's easy to underestimate the significance of World War I. Among other things, it was the first conflict to feature air combat, tanks, and chemical weapons.

There is a wealth of information available on the events, personalities, technology, and repercussions of World War I. Resources used in the creation of *No Man's Land* include:

www.worldwar1.com
www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWtrench.htm
www.pbs.org/greatwar
freepages.military.rootsweb.com/~worldwarone/WWI
www.ga.k12.pa.us/academics/us/TECHsite/WWIsite/

Remember, those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Arm yourself with knowledge.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stan! has been publishing fiction, cartoons, and games professionally since 1982. He has served as a graphic designer and line editor for West End Games, as an editor and designer for TSR, Inc., and as an author, senior designer, and creative director for Wizards of the Coast. Currently, Stan! is the creative vice president of The Game Mechanics, Inc. ‹www.thegamemechanics.com›. His most recent projects are the *Modern Players Companion* from The Game Mechanics (which goes on sale in late March 2003) and *Urban Arcana* from Wizards of the Coast (which goes on sale in May 2003). Stan! lives in Renton, WA, where he eats nothing but meat and cheese. Visit him online at The Stannex ‹www.stannex.com›.

Credits

This d20™ System game uses mechanics developed for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, and Peter Adkison. This game also uses mechanics developed for the *Psionics Handbook* by Bruce R. Cordell, the *Call of Cthulhu® Roleplaying Game* by Monte Cook and John Tynes, and the *Star Wars® Roleplaying Game* by Bill Slavicsek, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker.

9

NO MAN'S LAND