

Midderzine

More green for your game

More fodder for your 'The Middelands' OSR campaign setting.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Meet the Middelander: Pookie, the Wordmancer.

More rumours from The Haven Gazette.

Sixoaks: A town in Kentshire.

New Monsters: Eyballers and Gloomium Elementals.

A New Class: Phantom Piper.

New Oddities including: Gripe Seat and Royal Peridot Brooch.

And more...

OSR
OLD SCHOOL RPG

Issue 3
August 2019



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SUBMISSIONS

Do you want to contribute an article or artwork to the Middelzine?

Why not drop an email to glynn@monkeyblooddesign.co.uk with the title 'Middelzine Article' with a quick overview. It can be really short (a few sentences), or a couple of pages.

If we use it, you will be credited above in the relevant issue and receive a complimentary softcover copy.

WHERE CAN I EXCHANGE COINS FOR MIDDERLANDS STUFF?

Well, the MONKEYBLOOD DESIGN & PUBLISHING webstore here:
<https://monkeyblooddesign.co.uk/store/>

Or the DRIVETHURURPG website here:
<http://www.drivethururpg.com/browse/pub/7771/MonkeyBlood-Design>

And finally, the REDBUBBLE website here:
<https://www.redbubble.com/people/glynnseal/shop>

Keep an eye out for future crowdfunding projects by following us on KICKSTARTER here: <https://www.kickstarter.com/profile/monkeyblooddesign>



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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO ISSUE 3!

Hello once again,

So here we are at Issue 3. There has been a slight delay in preparing this issue whilst The City of Great Lunden Kickstarter was being prepared and fulfilled, but I am pleased to say that that is now out in the wild and doing great.

It's always a fantastic feeling to get something you have laboured on for so long out into the hands of others. Like offering your new born to the world, my new father instincts are to protect it, help it grow, nurture it.

That's what the Midderzines are all about really. Nurturing the setting, teaching it new things.

This zine is the next Midderlands-related product, but what comes next is murky and unsettled, but sure to be creative and (hopefully) engaging. Here are some projects in the pipes or underway already...

- HandyMaps - A5 double-sided card maps.
- The Serpentlands - A Midderlands adjacent setting based on the serpentfolk across the Dog Sea.
- Trollfang - A small setting inside a circular mountain range with a mysterious floating inverted mountain.
- Lost Machines - An RPG and setting based on lost machines in a post-apocalyptic alien world.

Lots to cogitate, but until then, stay in the light of the gloombug lanterns.

Thank you.

Glynn (August 2019).

MEET THE MIDDERLANDER

This piece is where we promote the work of another person that has helped in our process and journey of self-publishing, and whose work we greatly admire. In this issue, we say a warm welcome to none other than...

MATTHEW POOK (POOKIE)

WHERE DO YOU LIVE AND IS IT COOL?:

Birmingham, in sight of Spaghetti Junction (in Midderlands terms, Herding Town) and some do think it cool.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT FAVOURITE RPG?:

King Arthur Pendragon, Greg Stafford's elegant combination of mechanics and generational play that brings the Arthurian legends alive. You only get to play one character type (knights), but the mechanics really encourage to roleplay them to the hilt.

WHAT IS YOUR ALL-TIME FAVOURITE RPG?:

I am fond of so many, but I suppose I have two. One is *Call of Cthulhu* because I like mysteries and cosmic horror and the other is *Tékumel: Empire of the Petal Throne*, a genuinely unique setting based on South-East Asian and Mayan cultures rather than Western European cultures or fantasy.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE MIDDERLANDS-RELATED THING?:

I love the grottness and the humour of the setting. There are lots of little jokes and references in *The Midderlands* and sometimes I get to add to them when I edit the books which Glynn has graciously accepted so far!

IF YOU LIVED IN THE MIDDERLANDS, WHERE WOULD YOU LIVE?:

Technically, I already do (Herding Town), but I would probably return back to Dorsomset and live with the monster of Wimbirne Monster so I can be close to my family.

WHAT IS YOUR BEST PIECE OF RPG WORK TO DATE (EXCLUDING THE MIDDERLANDS, OBVS) AND WHERE CAN WE FIND IT?:

As an editor, I am proud of *ZWEIHÄNDER*, the Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay retroclone from Grim & Perilous which got me to Gen Con and pleased with *Blood in the Chocolate* and *Scenic Dunnsmouth* for Lamentations of the Flame Princess.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE FOOD?:

Rhubarb crumble or baked apples with custard or rice pudding.

DO YOU HAVE A WEBSITE?:

My reviews can be found at <http://rlyehreviews.blogspot.com/>.

HOW CAN WE COMMISSION YOU?:

Drop me a line at pookie.uk@gmail.com whether you want something edited or reviewed.

THE HAVEN GAZETTE

THE LATEST IN HUSHED MURMURINGS FROM ACROSS HAVENLAND

THIS MONTH'S GAEL/GRIMM COUNT					
Murders.....	166	Turned into devil.....	7	Lost in the Middergloom.....	24
Hangings.....	222	Drowned.....	286	Consumed by neighbours.....	4
Burnings.....	16	Mudcow stampede.....	25	Missing.....	833
Taken in the night.....	203	Explosion.....	3	Taken by a plague.....	79
Possessions.....	13	Lost at sea.....	451	Spontaneously combusted.....	19
		Executed by Witchfinders.....	666	Consumed by sewer crocodile.....	7

BRIGANDS OF THE SCALED SKIN

In the forests in the Borderlands to the north, a group of deformed brigands have been terrorising travellers. It is suspected that the brigands are living below ground and close to gloomium deposits.

Their leader is a giant of a man and talks in a slobbering Lunden accent through his mouth which is filled with deformed and distorted teeth.

THE WOLF OF ALDERWYCH

A giant wolf has been seen skulking around the hamlet of Alderwych in the Western Miederlands. Late at night, the wolf is seen to take livestock in its maw and head off north towards the Leyswood.

The local militia have begun to light fires around the hamlet at night in order to frighten off the beast, but this hasn't had the desired effect, and the previous evening a local militia man, Gerald Jugman was taken. His remains have not yet been found.

HORROR AT THE ATLAS

The rumoured giant pike that is said to live in The Atlas pond near Shelfold is said to have struck in the early hours. A fisherman, Bob Boblington, was dragged off the shoreline according to his friend, William 'Bullshit' Meade. William has setup a fund to help out the Boblington family, which has so far

raised 12 copper hay'pnees. Another more vigilant local farmer is said to have spotted Boblington in The New World Inn in Walshale the following morning.

SIX OF ONE, HALF A DOZEN OF THE OTHER

An argument turned into a whole village brawl recently, when two friends from Weeshaw got into a debate about what to call their new business venture. One favouring 'Old Smoked Reels', the other favouring 'Old Smoked Rods'.

The debate, which started off in The Cock Inn, turned into an argument about allegiances to the local Lords, the Duke, and the Queen, but culminated in a huge brawl with those on both sides of the debate wading in, fists flying. The militia were happy to wade in on either side. Sir Judas Horley was away on business, but has returned to settle the debate. He favours 'Old Smoked Idiots'.

FIVE DEAD PEEKERS

Five dead Peekers (The *City of Great Lunden*, page 20) have been found floating in the Queenswater surrounding the city's Inner Wards. Each had their throats slit and a letter 'K' carved into their palms. There is a reward of 100 gold quids for information leading to an execution.

HEXES & UNIQUE LOCATIONS

MULLARD'S OBELISK

The Haven Isles Map Hex U25

Two weeks ago, as a spectacular lime-hued dusk began to fade to night, a local shepherd, Thomas Mullard, was wandering the bank of the Thameswater Estuary gathering his flock of Kentshire ewes. He noticed an odd object poking out of the rock at the water's edge. He'd never seen it before, so went down for a closer look.

Rising from the natural rock, an obsidian obelisk stood, 10 feet tall and black as night. As he approached it, the obelisk began to hum a wavering pitch. His sheep, spooked by the unusual rock, made him wary but he got close enough to touch it.

As his fingers made contact, green sigils flared on the surface of the

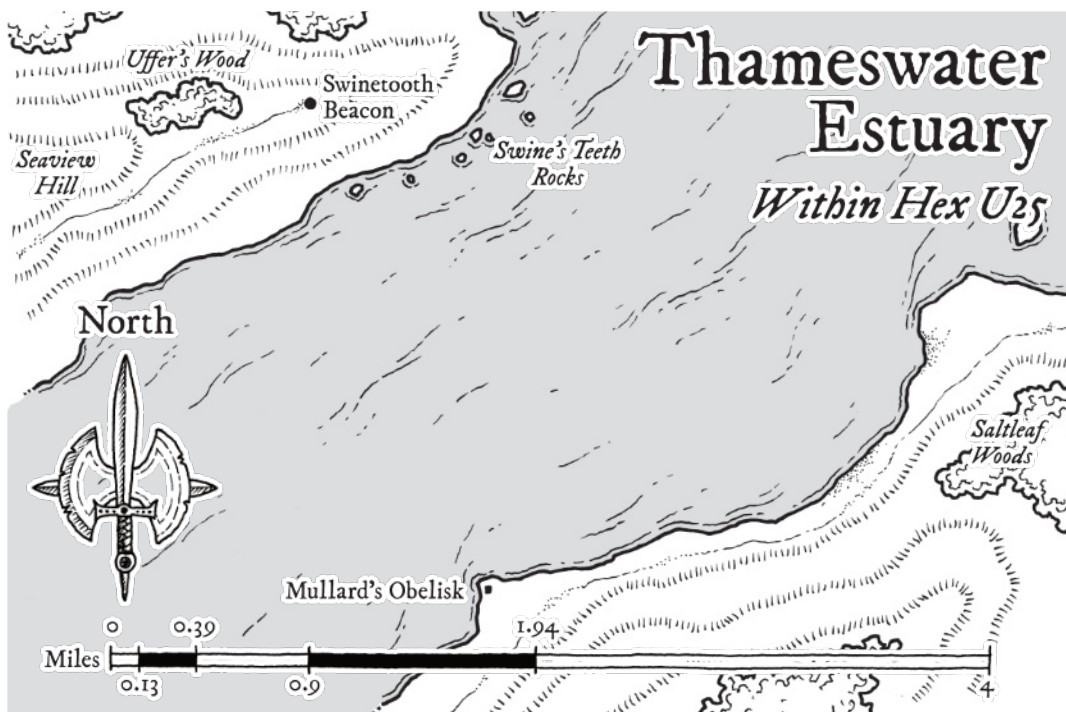
strange menhir, and a bright emerald flame began to flicker and twist about its top.

Mullard returned to his farmstead that evening and had a night of fitful dreams about ancient gods and awakened evils. The following day, he relayed his tale to the locals in the Singing Duck Tavern in the village of Grave's End, and they descended on the obelisk to gawp and fondle.

The obelisk remains covered in glowing runes and with its flame still burning. Attempts to chip off pieces have been fruitless, and the obelisk seems to be rooted in the stone from which it rises.

SWINETOOTH BEACON

An old lighthouse that protects vessels from getting too close to the Swine's Teeth Rocks in the estuary. Some say that the beacon is actually a naval lookout post, manned at all times.



Sixoaks

To Tithe Barn



Polg's Pond

Newtling Copse

Sennock River

*Knole Woods
(Location of the six oak trees)*

MAP LEGEND

- 1. Sackville Keep
- 2. Well's Stables
- 3. Inn of the Felled Oak
- 4. Hartknoll Farm
- 5. The Vine Bakery
- 6. The Anchor Tavern
- 7. Rogers Farmstead (mudcows)

North



SIXOAKS

The Haven Isles Map Hex T26/U26

The town of Sixoaks sits in a valley just north of the Weald Forest and south of the old goman road and pilgrim's trail between Great Lunden and Canterbury. It relies more on passing trade than its oak resources. The river known as 'The Calm' spills south out of the Kentshire Hills on its route down to the fetid Bilewater in Wessex. A tributary, the Sennock River, passes through Sixoaks just before joining it. The occasional waft of the cabbagey Bilewater can make it to Sixoaks if the weather conditions are right. Sixoaks is a melting pot of occasional far-flung visitors, untrusting locals, opportunistic hawkers, and heavy-handed militia. Those militia are commanded under the town rule of Lord Gregory Krust, Protector of Sixoaks.

POLG'S POND

An old oxbow lake, this is a remnant of an older flow of the Sennock River. Some say that the wart goblin, Polg, turned into a water spirit that still inhabits the pond to this day. Children can sometimes be found talking at the side of the pond, and when asked, they say they are talking to Polg, but no-one is actually there. The myth of Polg still endures to this day because of the day that Polg saved Sixoaks. Children playing near the pond are said to have been told by Polg that a flood was coming down from the hills to the north and to seek sanctuary on Knole Hill (where Sackville keep now sits). As many of the townsfolk wandered up to the hill, a torrent of floodwater washed away many of the buildings on the banks either side of the river. The day – Polg's Flood Festival – is celebrated by throwing offerings into the pond and

eating prodigious amounts of food.

KNOLE WOODS

Near to the town-side edge of the woods are six venerable oak trees no more than a couple of hundred feet from each other. Amongst the myriad of other oaks that are far more recent, they have stood here for over a thousand years, thus giving the town its name. When the woods are quiet, except for the rustling of leaves, it is said that you can hear the six oaks, referred to as the Gods of Knole, talking to each other in long, creaking tones.

I. SACKVILLE KEEP

Sitting on the outcrop known as Knole Hill, Sackville Keep is home to Lord Gregory Krust and his retinue of obnoxious advisor-friends. The bastard son of the bare-faced liar, Duke Magnus Ham, Krust's rise to prominence is not one supported by the townsfolk, but they know that things change quickly when you live this close to Great Lunden, and they are biding their time before something unfortunate besets their Protector.

The keep itself is a fine edifice built with bricks and having opulent glazed windows in carved stone frames, it is clearly designed to promote dominance through a display of wealth. Its construction was funded by Lord Ham's predecessor, who knocked down the old stone keep that had stood there for hundreds of year before.

2. WELL'S STABLES

On the northeastern approach to the town, Evan Well and his wife, Hilda, run the stables. The horses here are mostly working horses used for farming and heavy hauling, but they can be

bought for a price which exceeds their value. The building is two-floors, with the stables beneath and the living areas above.

In the northern corner of the yard a small outbuilding hides a captive travelling priest, Father Joll Sanderson of Chestern. He is forced to bless all the water that the family and horses drink. They believe that a horrible demon is coming to destroy the lands and that only those pure enough will survive – so they are making sure the horses will survive too, so they can sell them for hundreds of times their value to those that need them. The couple's beliefs are growing ever-crazier and they are beginning to grow ill along with their horses. Little do they know that the captive priest is slowly cursing the water that they drink.

3. INN OF THE FELLED OAK

Gladys Bosterton and her timid husband, Wally, run the only inn in the town. Packed with pilgrims on most days of the month, only the winter sees the demand drop. Sir Krust extracts a heavy tax from the Bostertons in exchange for ensuring that no other inn opens in the town. He also offers protection for the couple for extra coin. There is little the couple can do other than accept the terms, although they feel more and more like they don't own their own business.

They are secretly engaging with a member of the Nightways Runners from Great Lunden to have Sir Krust meet a grisly end on a trip to the city. They pay their serving staff extra for gossip about Sir Krust's and his advisor's movements.

4. HARTKNOLL FARM

Boris Pickers and his family make their living from growing carrots. Their

carrots are good too. One of their customers travels from Great Lunden every week to get a cartload full, his name and purpose remain a mystery, but it is thought that he has many mouths to feed.

5. THE VINE BAKERY

On the banks of the Sennock, Herrod Oggurst makes the best breads in Kentshire. Three-cheese flatbreads are often eaten warm and filled with hot pork, known as Mouth Busters, they are a hearty meal. They also bake beer bread, tiger bread, and giant crumpets.

Herrod is in a serious amount of debt, having paid to have a family member 'bumped off', and is now being blackmailed by an accomplice of the murderer from telling the rest of his family. Herrod is getting increasingly desperate to resolve the situation.

6. THE ANCHOR TAVERN

Outside this tavern, sits a large rusting anchor. Found discarded on the shores of the Thameswater Estuary fifty or so years ago, the local blacksmith dragged it by mudcow to Sixoaks with the intention of melting it down to make mudcow shoes. After several attempts to liquify the anchor, he gave up. No amount of heat was doing the job, so he left it outside his smithy.

A curious tavernkeeper and retired ship's captain, Chichester Blythe, thought it would make a good landmark and symbol for his soon-to-be-open tavern. Hence, The Anchor was born.

The anchor itself is actually quite remarkable, and if used to anchor a ship, the vessel is protected from storms and hazards bought about by weather whilst it is anchored.

7. ROGERS FARMSTEAD

The mudcow herdsman, Francis ‘Mud Cow’ Rogers and his wife, Clarice have been looking after mud cows for thirty-two winters in and around Sixoaks. Their prized bull, Thistle – named on account of his insatiable appetite for thistles – has sired almost half of the current herd. His value is considered priceless to the family and they ensure he is well-protected from rustlers and the hungry.

THE TITHE BARN

A road leads southeast from Sixoaks, eventually leading towards Hastings Watch. After a mile through the hedge-lined trail, the tithe barn can be found. Always guarded by one or two of the local militia, the tithe taken from the farmers finds its way here ready for Duke Ham’s men to collect it on behalf of the Queen.

THE TITHE BARN

North of Sixoaks

The tithe barn is used to store surplus harvest and produce taken as taxes from the locals of Sixoaks. As a result, it is a prime target for ne’er-do-wells and thieves who want to make a fast shilling.

The tithe barn is currently almost full although there have been some recent thefts, and Lord Krust is under considerable pressure to find out who is responsible. To protect the tithe whilst it sits awaiting collection by the Duke’s men, he has stationed four guards.

LORD KRUST’S MEN

HD: 3, AC: 5 [14], ATK: Longsword (1d8), SV: 17, SPECIAL: none, MV: 12, AL: N, CL/XP: 3/60.

The guards have been stationed here in shifts for the last ten nights and days, but still there has been some theft of the goods from within the barn. Kalvin Postern, the captain of the guards has begun to suspect one or more of his men are responsible and has stationed a spy in the pig sty across the road to keep his eye on events at the barn.

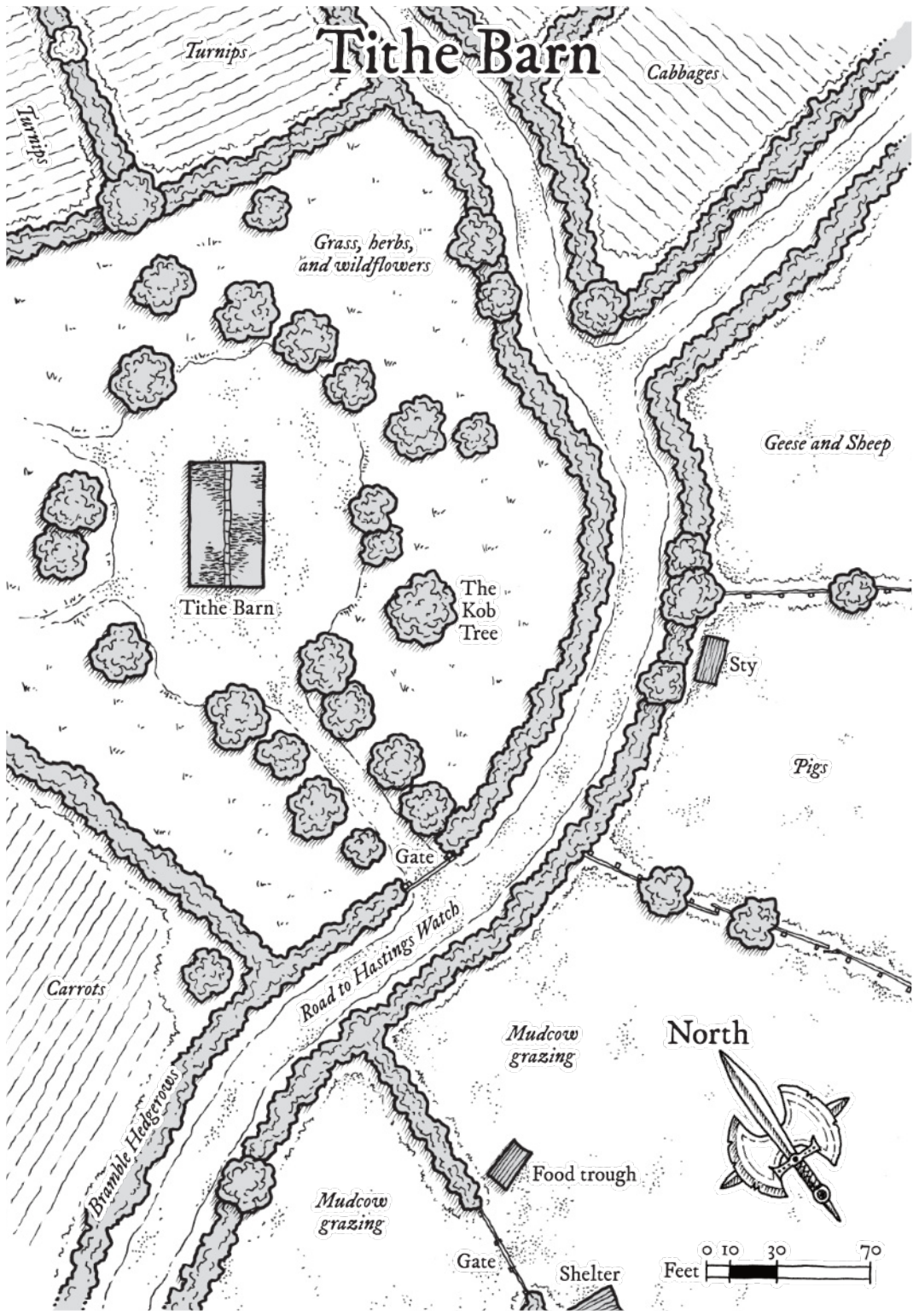
Little do they all know that one of the apple trees surrounding the barn – the Kob Tree – is a portal to a series of caves beneath the barn. The portal was discovered – and is currently being used by – a nobblin, called Lugg (use the stats for Jugg from *The Miederlands*, page 155), whose specific kleptomaniac seems to be anything that is within the barn. He steals what he needs, then takes it through the tree portal into his lair.

LUGG, DISTANT COUSIN OF JUGG

HD: 11 (19 hit points), AC: 3 [16], ATK: Lugg will avoid fighting at all times preferring to run away, SV: 16, SPECIAL: *time stop*, (1/day), *teleport* (1/day) *mirror image* (3/day), *invisibility* (3/day), MV: 18, AL: N, CL/XP: 11/1,700.

THE KOB TREE

The Kob Tree is a mature apple tree near to the tithe barn. It is linked to a portal within a cave beneath the barn (see location 2, Caves of Kob map). The portal from the tree to the cave (which opens for 1 round) is activated by eating an apple and tossing the core at the tree trunk. To get through from the other direction, any produce can be consumed and thrown at a large boulder that rests in the cave.



Tithe Barn

Turnips

Cabbages

Grass, herbs,
and wildflowers

Tithe Barn

The Kob
Tree

Sty

Geese and Sheep

Pigs

Gate

Road to Hastings Watch

Carrots

Bramble Hedge

Mudcow
grazing

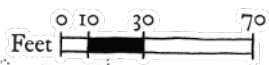
North

Mudcow
grazing

Food trough

Gate

Shelter



CAVES OF KOB

Beneath the Tithe Barn

The caves have been here for millenia, carved out by an underground watercourse and many many floodwater surges. Centuries ago, the caves were discovered by an esoteric cult who worshipped serpents. They carved out some extra chambers and made them into their meeting place and temple. At that time, it was only accessible by boat (see location 1). They carved out the secret passage (see location 19) that provided a safe walking route down to the undergorund lake where they venerated a giant water serpent they named Kob, whom they fed with missing local folk. That time has long passed and now the caves are still filled with artifacts of their time in the caves.

Lugg doesn't like the water much, so keeps himself to himself in his new cave home where he feels safest.

1 LANDING AREA

The river is deep (30 feet) and doesn't flow too fast here, so you can moor a small rowing boat or raft

2 LUGG'S CAVE

This is where Lugg spends 50% of his time. The cave has a large boulder (the other end of the portal) and his filled with produce stolen from the tithe barn. He also stole a +1 *dagger* from somewhere.

3 WET CAVE

This cave is wet from occasional water level rises from the river. The water is about 1 foot deep.

4 ACOLYTE SKELETON

The skeletal remains of what was probably once an acolyte of the serpent cult lies here. Tattered clothes, and a rusty, curved dagger.

5 LAST STAND

Three more skeletons lie here, presumably acolytes. There are also the remains of a large skeletal snake. It looks like the acolytes were fighting the snake.

6 TENTACLED HORROR

A Lesser Tentacled Horror of the Upper Middergloom (see *The Midderland's Expanded*, page 170) has found its way here.

7 SPIDER HUSK

The shed skin of a large spider (6 feet across) lies curled up in the corner.

8 MURALS

This cave is decorated with faded murals of intertwined serpents.

9 HALL OF SERPENTS

Broken and crumbling statues of serpents sit in alcoves. The corridor has a pit trap halfway up. Saving Throw or fall 20 feet for 2d6 damage.

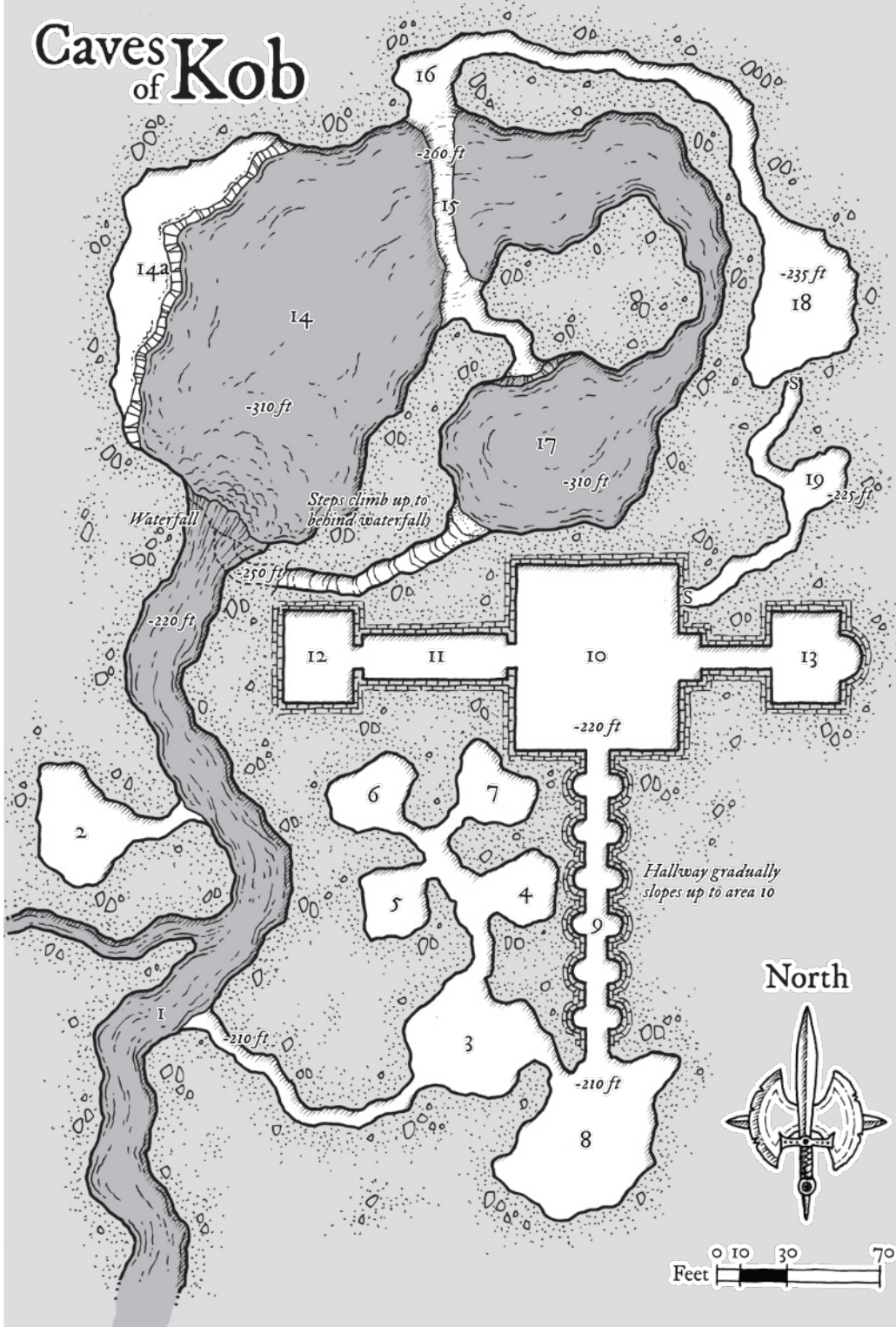
10 GREAT HALL

This chamber used to be the main meeting hall and ceremony chamber. Crumbling statuary lines the walls, and damaged mosaics decorate the floor, all with serpentine motifs.

11 HALLWAY

This hallway contains the skeletal remains of two acolytes and two large serpents who died in a struggle.

Caves of Kob



12 HIGH PRIEST'S CHAMBER

This is where the high priest used to reside. All the furniture is rotted or crumbling to dust. A hidden treasure stash holds 488 old silver coins.

13 TEMPLE

This small chamber is the main worship area. It contains a crumbling stone altar with dried blood, a raised stone plinth with a large, crumbling, coiled serpent statue. Two rubies adorn its eye sockets, each worth 300 gold quids.

14 THE LAKE

In the depth of this lake, the remains of Kob lie – a 100 feet long serpent that fed on anything that dropped into the lake from the water fall, of which there was much.

Also, the High Priest's partially devoured skeletal remains lie in the sediment, as well as a *Snakestaff* (see page 22).

The lake is now home to two Gloomcrabs (see *The Midlands Expanded*, page 155), who have been trapped here since they were young. They'll eat anything.

The wall at the back of the ledge at 14a is decorated with murals of serpents and the ledge is littered with old offerings.

15 THE BRIDGE

A narrow bridge spans 50 feet above the lake. It is from this ledge that Kob rose up from the water and dragged the High Priest to his death in the waters below. The snakes throughout the caves turned on the priests, and the cult fell into obscurity.

A few strands of almost-invisible silken web run across the bridge, giving the spider (see location 18) its first signs of prey.

16 WEBS

The opening to this tunnel is lined with webs which continue down the dark tunnel.

17 SMALL LAKE

This lake is smaller than location 14. In the bottom of this lake, the water drains down further into the earth.

18 GIANT SPIDER LAIR

In this chamber, filled with webs, sits a Spider, Giant (Greater). The whole tunnel leading to location 16 is filled with sticky webs and many husks of dead things lurk within.

The Game Master can put whatever treasure or 'game juice' they want in here.

19 SECRET CHAMBER

This chamber is a secret route to get to the bridge (see location 15). Within this chamber, the old cult used to store their valuables.

Within a small, locked and trapped chest is:

- 167 silver coins,
- 4 pieces of gold, serpentine jewellery worth a total of 235 gold quids,
- A +2 *dagger* with a long, wavy-blade,
- A scroll of *Protection from Drowning*,
- A scroll with *Sticks to Snakes* spell,
- 2 *Potions of Extra Healing*.

NEW MONSTERS

ELEMENTAL, GLOOMIUM

HIT DICE: 8, 12, or 16

ARMOUR CLASS: 2 [17]

ATTACKS: 2 FISTS (2d8 each) plus special

SAVING THROW: 8, 3, or 3

SPECIAL: Gloom Punch, Immune to non-magic weapons, Double damage from Middium weapons, Tear down stone.

MOVE: 6

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic

CHALLENGE

LEVEL/XP:

8 HD

(9/1,100),

12 HD

(13/2,300),

16 HD

(17/3,500)

DESCRIPTION:

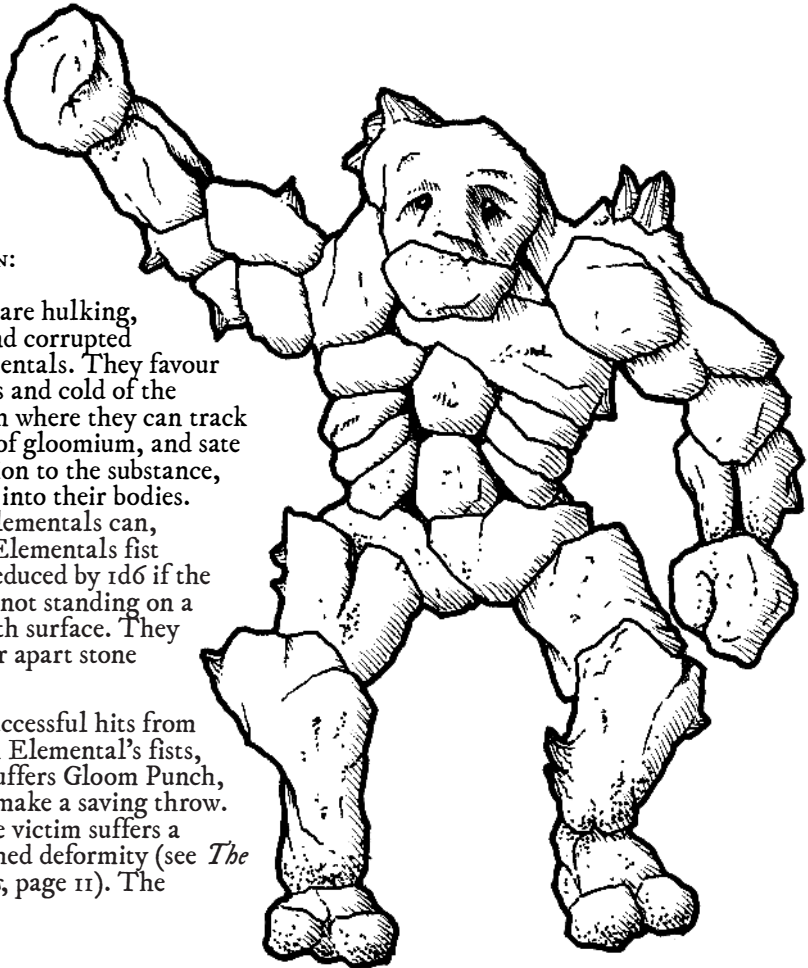
Gloomium Elementals are hulking, deformed and corrupted Earth Elementals. They favour the darkness and cold of the subterranean where they can track down veins of gloomium, and sate their addiction to the substance, absorbing it into their bodies. As Earth Elementals can, Gloomium Elementals fist damage is reduced by 1d6 if the opponent is not standing on a stone or earth surface. They can also tear apart stone structures.

After two successful hits from a Gloomium Elemental's fists, the victim suffers Gloom Punch, and should make a saving throw. If failed, the victim suffers a gloom-touched deformity (see *The Midderlands*, page 11). The

deformity occurs over a period of 1d4+2 days and lasts until a *Cure Disease* spell is cast on the victim, or until the Game Master's discretion.

Gloomium Elementals hate middium, and suffer double damage from any middium-made weapons.

A defeated Gloomium Elemental crumbles to inanimate boulders streaked with veins of gloomium. Albeit dangerous to handle, specialists can extract the ore to make gloomium ingots and other such small – and dangerous – curiosities.



EYEBALLER

HIT DICE: 3

ARMOUR CLASS: 6 [13]

ATTACKS: 2 Claws (1d6 each)

SAVING THROW: 14

SPECIAL: Phenomenal sight, rear tentacles

MOVE: 12 (6 climbing, 6 swimming)

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic

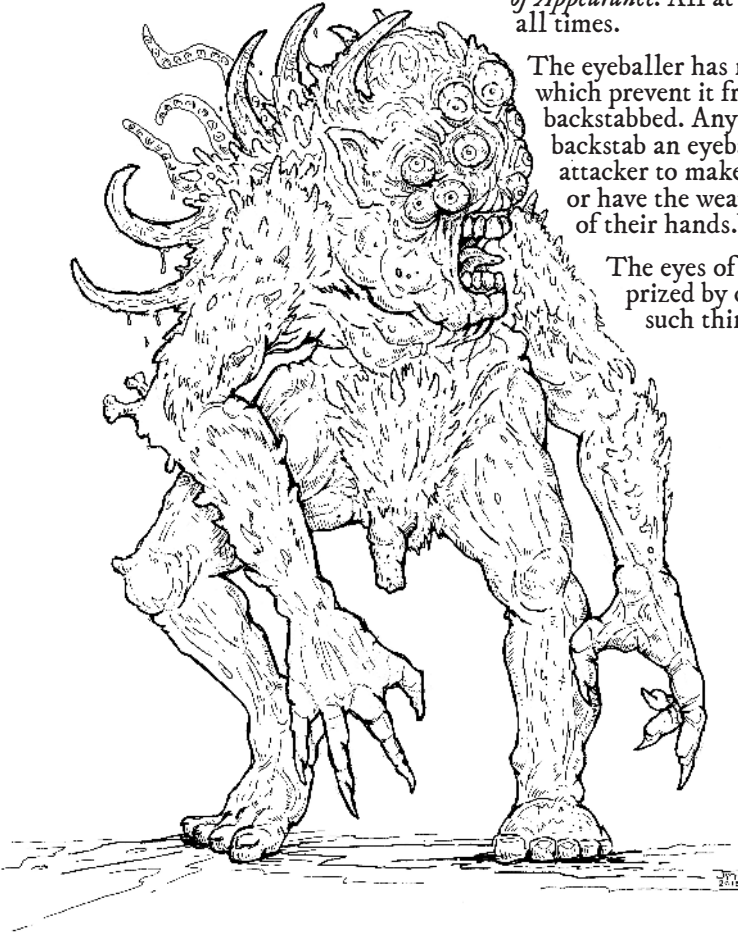
CHALLENGE LEVEL/XP: 3/60

DESCRIPTION: An eyeballer is a deformed and mutated humanoid, whose original form in life is difficult to tell. Thought to have been exposed to large quantities of raw gloomium, they now live in detritus and rubbish piles coming out at night to hunt for food. They venture into sewers, clamber onto rooftops and trudge through farmers' fields.

The eyes of the eyeballer give the creature phenomenal sight, allowing it to see as if using the magical item *Dust of Appearance*. All at a 60ft range, at all times.

The eyeballer has rear tentacles which prevent it from being backstabbed. Any attempts to backstab an eyeballer require the attacker to make a saving throw or have the weapon grabbed out of their hands.

The eyes of an eyeballer are prized by collectors of such things.



NEW CLASS

PHANTOM PIPER

PRIME ATTRIBUTE: Charisma, 13+
(5% experience bonus)
HIT DICE: 1d4/Level (Gains
1HP/Level after 9th.)
ARMOUR/SHIELD PERMITTED: None.
WEAPONS PERMITTED: See below.
RACE: Humans of Scottish ancestry.

Bagpipes are the national instrument of Scotland and pipers are respected and popular figures in every shire. They often accompany the Shirefolk to war, encouraging them to feats of incredible

bravery with the rousing tunes of their pipes.

Even so, Phantom Pipers are a breed apart. Hailing from an ancient tradition, they play the tunes that guide the souls of the dead to the afterlife and lay angry spirits to rest. They go from settlement to settlement, plying their trade in return for food and lodging and seeking out any of the restless dead that might threaten the people of Scotland.

Some Phantom Pipers are serious and stern, taking heed of the awesome responsibilities they bear. Others are more jovial, preferring to comfort the

Level	Experience Points Required for Level	Hit Dice (d4)	Saving Throw	AC	Special Abilities	NUMBER OF SPELLS (BY LEVEL)								
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
1	0	1	15	9 [10]	Pipecasting, Lay of Rest, Call of the Grave, Not All There, The Pipes Are Part of Me.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2,000	2	14	8 [11]		2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	4,000	3	13	7 [12]	Mark of Death	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	8,000	4	12	7 [12]		3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	13,000	5	11	7 [12]		3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	20,000	6	10	6 [13]	Mark of Death	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	40,000	7	9	6 [13]		4	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
8	60,000	8	8	6 [13]		4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
9	90,000	9	7	6 [13]	Mark of Death	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
10	130,000	9+1 hp	6	5 [14]		5	3	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
11	200,000	9+2 hp	5	5 [14]		5	3	3	3	2	1	-	-	-
12	400,000	9+3 hp	4	5 [14]	Mark of Death	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	-	-
13	800,000	9+4 hp	4	4 [15]		6	5	5	4	4	3	2	-	-
14	950,000	9+5 hp	4	4 [15]		7	5	5	4	4	3	2	-	-
15	1,100,000	9+6 hp	4	3 [16]	Mark of Death	7	6	5	4	4	3	2	-	-
16	1,250,000	9+7 hp	4	3 [16]		7	6	6	4	4	3	2	-	-
17	1,400,000	9+8 hp	4	3 [16]		8	6	6	5	4	3	2	-	-
18	1,550,000	9+9 hp	4	2 [17]	Mark of Death	8	7	6	5	5	3	2	-	-
19	1,700,000	9+10 hp	4	2 [17]		9	8	6	5	5	3	2	-	-
20	1,850,000	9+11 hp	4	2 [17]		9	8	7	5	5	3	2	-	-
21+	+150,000/level +1 hp/level		4	1 [18]	Mark of Death	9	8	7	6	5	3	2	-	-

living with gallows humour even as they dance on the precipice of death. Whatever their mannerisms, they bring peace to the bereft, joy to the lost, and safe passage to the departed. They are always treated with respect, awe and not a little fear by their fellow Scrots. These mysterious men and women tread the borders between Cleric and Necromancer, Shaman and Bard, Life and Death.

Spooky fuckers, the lot of them.

The Phantom Piper fights and saves as a Druid.

PHANTOM PIPER CLASS ABILITIES

ALIGNMENT: Usually Neutral but can be Lawful.

WEAPONS: Phantom Pipers can use any melee weapon as long as it is made at least partially of bone, a bone-hilted sword for example or a club made from a piece of wood and the skull of a goblin. Phantom Pipers cannot use missile weapons except thrown daggers and oil, (with Game Master permission).

THE PIPES ARE PART OF ME: Every Phantom Piper makes her own set of pipes, using animal hide, carefully treated wood and the carved bones of an ancestor or mentor. When she plays her instrument for the first time the Piper goes on a harrowing supernatural journey to the Other Side. She returns forever changed and forever bonded to her pipes.

Phantom Pipers and their pipes are treated as a single character and share

the same pool of HP and the same AC. This does not grant any bonuses or penalties to HP or AC to either one.

Whenever anyone should inflict damage on the pipes the Piper takes the damage instead. It is impossible to destroy a Phantom Piper's pipes while she yet draws breath. It is, however, possible to kill a Phantom Piper by striking at her pipes as you would at any other part of her body.

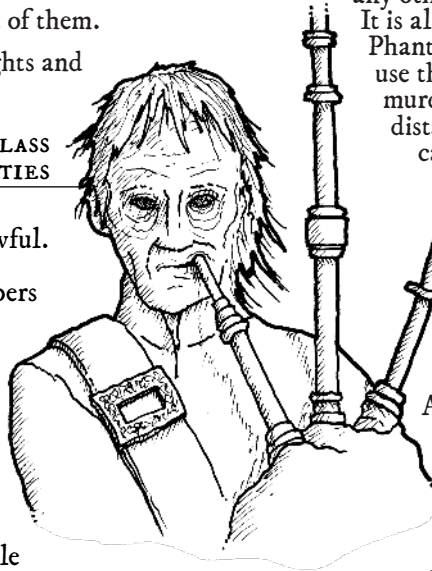
It is also possible to steal a Phantom Piper's pipes and use this connection to murder her from a distance. Healing spells can be cast on the pipes and it's even possible to pour healing potions into the mouthpiece, the benefits of the healing are passed on to the Piper.

A Phantom Piper always knows the general direction in which her pipes lie.

NOT ALL THERE:

As Phantom Pipers grow in power, they get closer to the Other Side, appearing less human and more ghostly. Being less substantial and more in tune with death than an ordinary mortal the Piper is harder to injure and gains AC bonuses at the same rate as a Dragon Singer (see *The Middelands Expanded*, page 151).

MARK OF DEATH: At 3rd level and every 3 levels after that the Piper gains some kind of Mark which demonstrates how they are getting closer to the Other Side. Scrots recognise these Marks as signifying the favour of the ancestors. Other folk are often less understanding



and the Witchfinders of the Havenlands have burned more than one roaming Piper.

EXAMPLE MARKS

- Translucent skin.
- Makes the sound of bones clicking together when walking.
- Pale, dead eyes.
- Always smells like incense and freshly turned earth.
- A booming, sepulchral voice.
- A tendency to disappear for a moment if looked at for too long.
- Face becomes more drawn and skeletal.
- Constantly wreathed in shadows.
- Feet are indistinct unless viewed in direct sunlight, giving the impression that the Piper glides rather than walks.
- At odd moments, an onlooker may see the face of a dead loved one superimposed over the Piper's face.

LAY OF REST: Phantom Pipers can *Turn Undead* like a Law-aligned/Good-Aligned Cleric of the same level. They do this by playing "The Lay of Rest" on their pipes.

Pipers can choose to have any turned undead that are not destroyed leave the area as normal or follow them wherever the Piper leads, expressions of bliss on their withered faces, until the effect ends.

Undead destroyed by a Piper's *Turn Undead* ability visibly pass into the afterlife, possibly accompanied by the sound of celestial harps and choirs of angels singing, or by the morose chanting of lost shades or by whatever effects the Game Master finds appropriate.

CALL TO THE GRAVE: Masters of life and death, each Phantom Piper can play their bagpipes in such a way that it actually harms a single target. This may be by playing a song so sad that it inflicts a deadly depression on the target, by summoning a ghostly hand to claw at the target, by drawing the target closer to the Other Side or by simply breaking his bones with a shattering cacophony.

While playing his pipes the Piper can make a ranged attack action against one opponent within a hundred yards that he can see. On a successful hit he inflicts damage equal to 1d3 plus his Level or his Charisma Bonus, whichever is lower.

PIPECASTING: Each day, Phantom Pipers can petition the ancestral spirits for spells in the form of arcane Tunes which they trap in their pipes and release by playing. A Piper cannot cast spells without her pipes but needs no spellbook or other accoutrements.

Pipers have access to the following spell list, plus any spells which the Game Master considers appropriate.

The spells in brackets are the equivalent of those found in the *Swords & Wizardry Complete* rulebook. New spells are noted with an asterisk, and described in the New Oddities section.

 PHANTOM PIPER SPELL LIST

Spell Level	Phantom Piper Spell Name	Conventional Rules Spell Name
1	Glimmering in the Gloaming	Light
1	Ghost Fire	Faerie Fire
1	Our Old Scot's Songs	Protection from Evil, Cleric Version
1	I Smell the Blood of a Havenlander!	Detect Evil
1	Cormac's Cure	Cure Light Wounds
1	McDonal Where's Yer Trousers?	* (See page 20)
2	Oh, Bonny Scotland!	Bless
2	Ahm A Canny Man	Find Traps
2	Last Orders at McGillivray's	Hold Person
2	Walk Wi' Shades	Invisibility
2	Woo Me Again	Snake Charm
2	Jessie's Nightmare	Phantasmal Force
3	Ye'll Be Reet in the Morning Lad	Remove Curse
3	Shield O' The Glen	Protection from Normal Missiles
3	We'll Meet Again	Speak with Dead
3	Burning Bright	Continual Light
3	The Wild Wizard of Doomfreshire	Dispel Magic
3	The Skyboat Song	Fly
3	Ode to a Mouseling	* (See page 20)
4	Tis Naught But a Scratch	Cure Serious Wounds
4	Heather and Lavender	Neutralise Poison
4	Scotland the Brave	Protection from Evil 10 foot radius
4	Lock the Door, my Lads and Lasses	Fear
4	Och, Ye're a Bonnie Wee Beastie!	Charm Monster
4	The Low Road	* (See page 20)
4	Flower of Scotland	* (See page 21)
5	Mary's Lament	Animate Dead
5	Come Back to Me Johnny	Raise Dead
5	Fareweel to Whiskey	Finger of Death
5	Road to the Isles	Quest
5	Our Ain Sweet Land	Dispel Evil
5	Longhand Lew	Telekinesis
6	She's an Awfu' Lassie	Repulsion
6	Deep in his Cups	Feeblemind
6	Dancing and a Jigging	Animate Object
6	Up in the Morning	Stone to Flesh
6	Lay of the Piebald Piper	* (See page 21)
7	Go On, to the End of the Road	Resurrection
7	When You and I were Young, Martha	Restoration
7	Castles in the Air	Wind Walk

NEW ODDITIES

SPELLS

McDONALD WHERE'S YER TROUSERS?

SPELL LEVEL: Phantom Piper, 1st Level

RANGE: Within earshot

DURATION: Instant.

DESCRIPTION: A popular tune often played by ordinary pipers and sung in the rowdier pubs of the shires. When played on a set of Phantom Pipes it becomes rather more literal. In Scotland even the dead have a good sense of humour.

This tune teleports the target's trousers, pants and belt to a random location 100 miles away. (If a 1 is rolled on the die then the trousers and their contents are lost in the gaps between worlds.) The tune works on kilts but not on any other form of skirt. Mostly used as a party trick or as a gentle warning to those who disrespect a Piper's authority. But a few enterprising Pipers have found ways to make better use of it.

ODE TO A MOUSELING

SPELL LEVEL: Phantom Piper, 3rd Level

RANGE: Within earshot

DURATION: 6 rounds (minutes)

DESCRIPTION: This tune draws on the ancient compacts between the Shirefolk and the Mouseling tribes of Scotoland. It summons a handful of Mouselings to aid the Piper in battle. The Mouselings aid the Piper until the spell ends or they are all slain.

The caster summons allies, who serve him until slain (or until the duration of the spell expires). The Mouselings do not appear immediately; there is a delay of 1 turn (10 minutes) before they appear.

DIE ROLL	MONSTER SUMMONED
1-3	1d6 Mouselings
4-5	1d3 Mouseling Warriors
6	1 Mouseling King

THE LOW ROAD

SPELL LEVEL: Phantom Piper, 4th Level

RANGE: Within earshot

DURATION: Instant

DESCRIPTION: This tune sends the target on a short and, (usually), safe trip through the Underworld. Playing this tune allows the Piper or an ally to sink into the ground or floor and rise up again at any relatively horizontal point which the Piper could see when they started the tune. This power can be used on enemies but they get a saving throw to resist the effect.

FLOWER OF SCOTLAND

SPELL LEVEL: Phantom Piper, 4th Level

RANGE: Within earshot

DURATION: Special

DESCRIPTION: One of several patriotic tunes which are more or less interchangeable for game purposes. Playing these tunes summons the wrath of the ancestors in the form of a ravening horde of ghostly Scottish warriors. These ghosts appear in a 20-foot-wide formation directly in front of the caster and charge in whatever direction he chooses, travelling 100 feet a round and attacking a random number of enemies along the way.

The ghost-horde has the same bonus to attack as a Fighter of the same level as the caster and can damage both mundane foes and creatures which could normally only be harmed by magic weapons. Each successful attack by the ghost-horde inflicts 3d10 damage on the target. The ghost-horde never attacks the same enemy more than once in a single round. Undead take half damage from the ghost-horde's attacks. The ghost-horde can turn before moving to make sure it reaches out of the way enemies but will not retreat. The ghost-horde is not under the caster's control and will make its own mind, (minds), up about which enemies to target, (though it won't attack the Piper or creatures that are very obviously aiding him).

The ghost-horde disperses after making a total of 2d6 attacks or travelling 1,000 feet, whichever happens first.

A Cleric or Phantom Piper of the same level or higher than the caster can Turn the ghost-horde, forcing it to flee at its usual movement rate. A Cleric or Phantom Piper 3 levels higher than the Caster can Turn the ghost-horde, destroying it.

LAY OF THE PIEBALD PIPER

SPELL LEVEL: Phantom Piper, 6th Level

RANGE: Within earshot

DURATION: Special

DESCRIPTION: Named after an ancient Piper so powerful that patches of his skin had fallen away to show pale bone beneath. As the oldest and strongest Phantom Piper of his day he would be called upon to bring justice on anyone who cheated a Piper or caused her harm. When the McRags, (a family of bandits), murdered a Piper on the road to Glasshollow, the Piebald Piper tracked them down and bound them with chords of music. They followed him, dancing, clapping and singing, until he led them into the sea. No one ever saw the McRags again and ever after the Piebald Piper was said to have the scent of salt clinging to him. All enemies who can hear the sound of the Piper's music must make a Saving Throw. Failure means that they will follow her wherever she goes, for as long as she continues playing this particular song. They will ignore all dangers and seek to climb over or through any obstacles that prevent them from following her, even if doing so will get them killed.

SNAKESTAFF

These magical +1 two-handed staves are much sought after by those that venerate serpentkind. Made from gloak tree wood (see *Midderzine Issue #12*) they are carved into a serpentine form with the head at the top, their eyes are usually inlaid with middium studs. The staff gives off a feint green glow in darkness illuminating 10 feet all around, this is a permanent and harmless effect.

When command words are spoken, the staff has the following abilities:

- *Krrl Gss*: The staff begins to sway like a snake ready to strike. This swaying acts as a *suggestion* spell. This can be used once per day and costs 2 charges.
- *Hsst Ndak*: The staff turns into a large poisonous snake: HD: 2 (15 Hit Points), AC: 8 [11], ATK: bite 1d4 plus special, SV: 14, SPECIAL: poison, MV: 6, AL: As wielder, CL/XP: 3/60. The snake's poison is delivered on a successful bite attack and causes the victim to take a Saving Throw. On failure the victim becomes paralysed for 1d6 rounds. This ability can be used once per day and costs 1 charge.
- *Vrr Ess*: Casts *snake charm* spell at the level of the wielder. This can be used once per day and costs 1 charge.
- *Oon Liss*: Casts *sticks to snakes* spell. This can be used once per day and costs 1 charge.

When used in combat, a Snakestaff is +1 to hit and deals 1d6+1 damage. It weighs 10 lbs.

VALUE: 5,000 gold quids



Anyone stupid enough to go anywhere near a gripe lair — assuming they can find one — is risking their lives for possibly three things: reputation, removing their sharp claws for a collector, or a pile of shit.

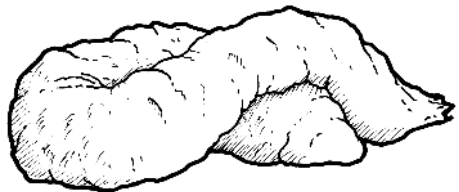
Gripe scat, when freshly laid, is pungent — and not in a good way. A few seconds after being curled out, a thick crust forms over it, but poke it with a stick later and it is possibly the vilest substance to have ever assaulted the nasal passages of humankind.

When agitated, this substance gives off a highly noxious gas. Anyone smelling a pound or more of crust-broken gripe scat is in for an olfactory treat. They must make a Saving Throw. If they fail, blood vessels in their noses burst and they pass out unconscious for 1d4 rounds only to wake covered in their own blood. They will remain unconscious if the grip scat remains uncrusted for any reason.

A pound of it can be formed into a ball for throwing, and when it hits its target, they must make a Saving Throw.

The only known non-magical counter to the effects of the smell are to line the nasal passage with mudcow urine which has been standing for three days or more. It is most easily applied by snorting.

VALUE: 1,000 gold quids per pound.



ROYAL PERIDOT BROOCH

Among the many fabulous jewels in the royal collection, the Royal Peridot Brooch is a favourite of Queen Elspeth. Roughly three inches in diameter, this rare and exquisitely cut peridot is flecked with Gloomium. The stone is set in a griffon-stylised setting of middium filigree work. The brooch has a sharp middium pin and clasp on its rear.

When worn, the brooch gives the wearer the following abilities:

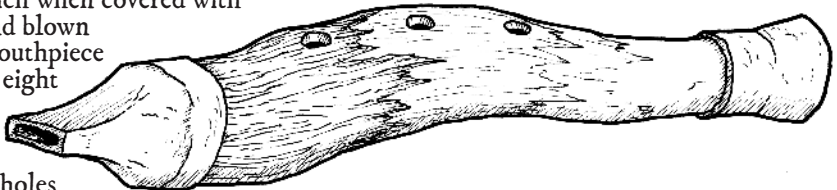
- The wearer is protected from rear attacks. This 'sixth sense' negates the +4 bonus for any attackers striking from the rear.
- +2 bonus on Saving Throws against mind-affecting spells such as charm person and suggestion.
- +2 bonus to Armour Class

VALUE: 20,000 gold quids

MUD COW HORN WHISTLE

This magical whistle is about six inches long and fashioned from the horn of a legendary mud cow known as Boghide Honeysuckle Flapentacle – renowned for her loyalty, mothering instincts, and longevity.

The whistle has three holes in its length which when covered with fingers, and blown into the mouthpiece can create eight different notes (including having no holes covered).



There are three known short calls (1 round to play) that can be played on the whistle, which have the following effects:

• *Call 1:* The closest mud cow to the player stops what it is doing and ambles over the whistle-holder. They are affected as if under the effects of a *Charm Monster* spell.

• *Call 2:* When played within a 200 feet radius of a mud cow herd, the herd will stampede towards a target which the whistle-player nominates at the end of the call. The nominated target must be within the mud cows visibility at the time of nomination. They will continue to stampede and attack the target for 2d6 rounds.

• *Call 3:* Once per month, the whistle-player can make this call to any mud cow within 10 feet, and it will become loyal until the end of its days (as if under the *Charm Monster* spell, but with a permanent duration). This effects one mud cow at a time. At the end of its life, the whistle call can be played to gain another loyal mud cow.

VALUE: 5,000 gold quids

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