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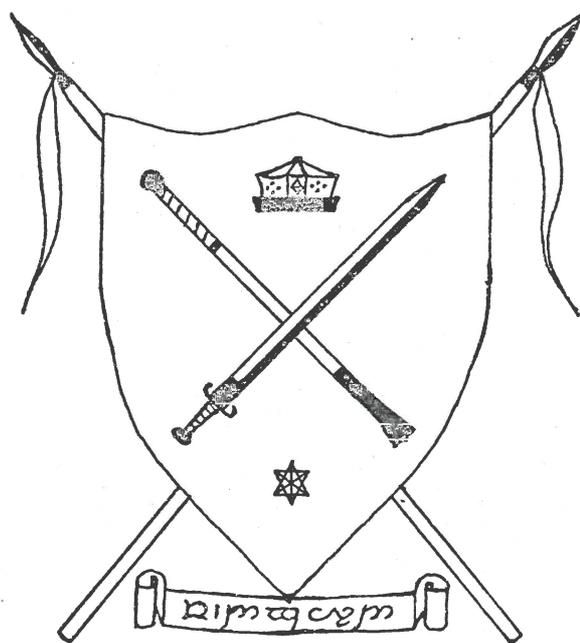
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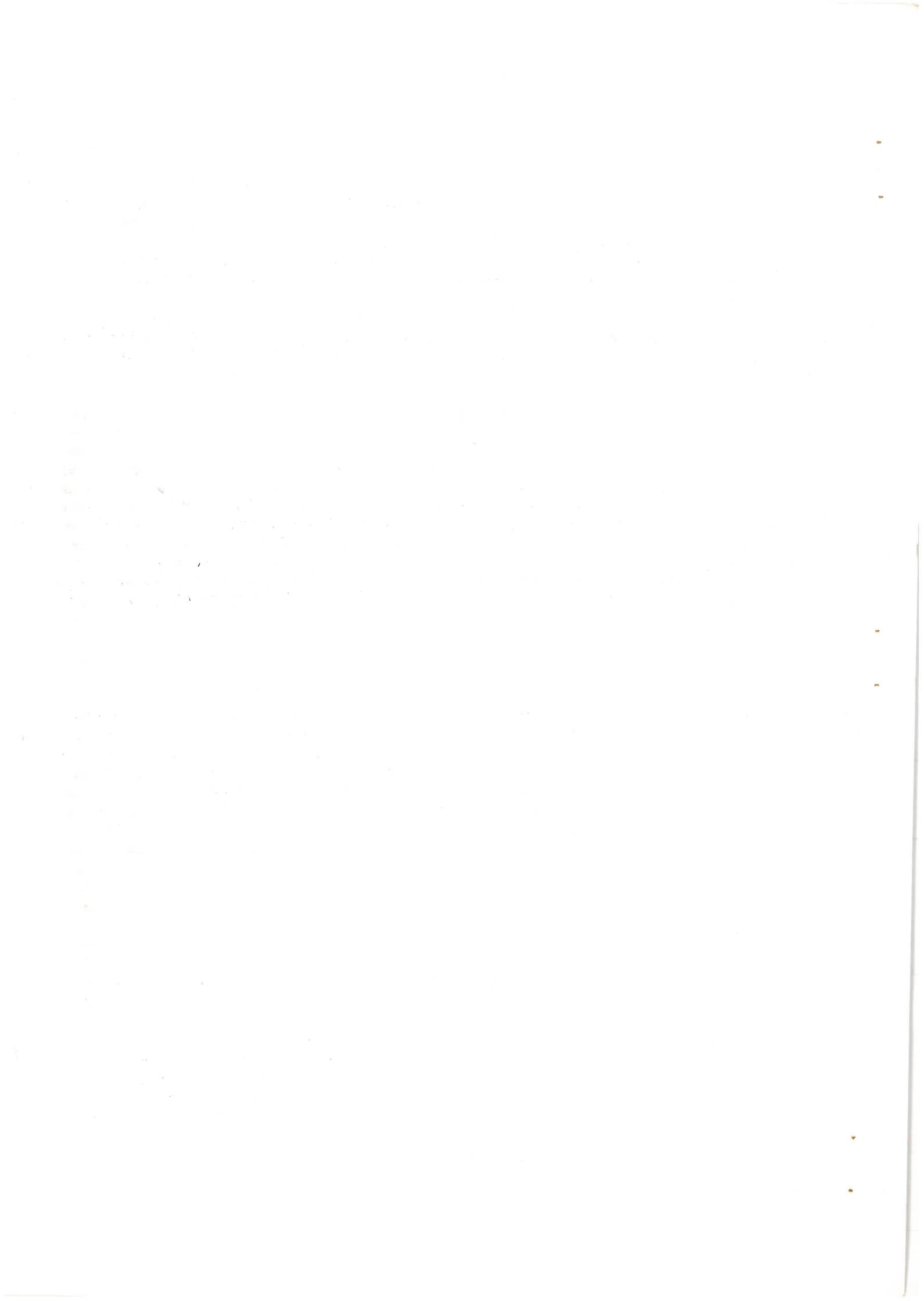


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Editor; Kevin Flynn, 18 Rossmore Ave Coorparoo 4151.
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EDITORIAL.

by Kevin Flynn.

This issue of the magazine is fairly small and relatively late as I am sure you have noticed. I will not waste my time appealing for contributions as most of you are so slack it isn't worth the effort. Those people who have contributed I thank and hope they will continue with their support.

Over the weekend of the 5th of September the Club held a wargames weekend. I was extremely pleased with the result and the Saturday was really good. Sunday was a bit of a drag and it seems obvious that one day events of this kind should be promoted by the club. Possible future events we could think about is a resurrection of the figurines competition with a worthwhile prize to attract real gamers, this could become an annual event and I am sure it would be popular with a little publicity. As for further games weekends I feel that 1 or 2 a semester would be worthwhile not only for our membership but for enervating our enthusiasm.

For those who may not know yet, the WRG Armies Listing part 1 is out and available from Battlefield, 55 Clissold Pde, Campsie, NSW. They will set you back around \$10.00 including postage. The listing covers armies from ancient times up to a Caesarian Army. Later armies will come out with later editions I imagine.

In January next year, more specifically over the Australia Day weekend, the Canberra Wargames Society hold their annual convention. This includes a figurines competition and competitions for all other forms of gaming. The turn out is quite good (I attended last year and had a pretty good time) but there was a slight drawback in that they are still using 25mm figures. When I asked them about this last year they said they were thinking of instigating a 15mm competition next year. A small group, including myself, will be attending next years and if you are interested in going then let me know.

The following is a free plug for myself. In the next two months I will be starting a play by mail fantasy wargames campaign known as Midgard. The game has only a limited allowance of players and so I will only be accepting the very best. The max to begin with will be 20. The games will allow for fantasy adventuring, military campaigning and political intrigue. Each player will run a character within a pre-set up fantasy world. If you are interested then drop me a WRITTEN application, describing your age, experience with fantasy and figurines, and your attitudes on how you should play a fantasy character within a role playing game. Costs for playing will be \$1.00 for rules and a self-addressed stamped envelope for the moves.

Is anybody out there interested in writing a guest editorial? If so then please submit one and we shall see if it is used. Even if not used we will print it as a letter. You could talk about the stupidity of high level D&D characters and the idiots who insist on running them and see themselves as accomplished role players. Or you could possibly talk about the childish nature of most fantasy players, about the extent to which they disregard reality and shrink their connection with the facts of life by hiding in small introverted groups.

To help fill the last few lines of this page I would appreciate people advising me of any rules hassles they are having with the 6th Edition WRG rules. I hope to make up a list and send it over to England to get answers sometime in the near future.

AN ARTHURIAN ARMY: PART 2.

by David Bugler.

In part one of this article we looked at the historical background to the Arthurian period. I suggested that the basis of Arthurs army was a late Imperial Roman force which had begun to decay after around 425, and changed considerably after 460. The forces used by Ambrosius and Arthur from 460 to 540 had a heavy cavalry force as a major component, supported by infantry units organised on Roman lines.

Though we have no definite proof, it seems reasonable to characterise the Britain of this period as a Roman successor state. The national institutions were Roman in style, and quite possibly the army attempted to continue Imperial practices as far as it could. There are several examples of late Roman military institutions in this period.

Federate measures continued: the Votadini - a Pictish tribe from north-east of Hadrians Wall - seem to have been moved enbloc in the 430s to the central Welsh border, where they were used to contain the small Irish principalities. There is also evidence for Saxon federates based north of London, independent of Hengists group and thoroughly loyal to British leaders. Mercenaries were also hired - on short term contracts for cash and food- from the Irish population in Wales to operate against Irish raiders.

There is also the Visigothic mystery. A tenuous string of evidence exists - based mainly on place-name implications - to support the contention that there was a Gothic presence in south-western England in the early sixth century. In about 507 Clovis expelled the Visigothic nation from south-western France; and it is at least conceivable that the remains of this people transferred lock, stock and barrel to British service - offering their military capacity in exchange for a permanent home. If the idea is accepted, the lands they received were in the south-western peninsular and south Wales, where garrison states were set up to halt the deprivations of local Irish settlers.

We must bear in mind that the place name evidence may bear other interpretations. Moreover, since the battle of Mount Badon (circa 495) had temporarily halted the English advance, it is doubtful whether Arthur was so desperate that he could accept another national presence in his rear areas. Be that as it may, the possibility is intriguing.

The army we are discussing existed from about 460 to 540 from the coup of Ambrosius to the plague that destroyed the British capacity for effective resistance. During this period the British fought the English virtually unassisted, while in the west the small Irish principalities were rooted out by Votadini federates, Irish mercenaries and perhaps the Visigoths.

However, in accordance with WRG practice I have given the army list a variety of options, and this not without a good reason. The later mediaeval French romancers insisted that Arthur led an army to Rome itself; and we may indulge in a less extreme

fantasy on the same lines. If, after Badon, the English threat had been effectively destroyed (instead of merely contained), Arthur may have felt able to intervene in France on behalf of the Imperial forces - who were now going under for the last time. Such an army might have contained representatives of all national elements in the British wars.

Here then is my proposed list, followed by justifying remarks on the various troop types.

General (HC or EHC) @ 100.	1
Teleu cavalry Reg C HC; javelins, shield @ 10pts	15 to 75
extra to upgrade HC to EHC Reg B @ +3pts.	up to 30
Pedyt infantry Reg C LMI; javelins, shield @ 4pts.	25 to 75
Pedyt infantry Irreg C LMI; javelins, shield @ 3pts.	50 to 100
extra to upgrade Irreg C to Irreg B @ +1pt.	up to 25
extra to give Irreg C or B sling @ 1pt.	up to 25
English Federates Irreg C MI; short spear, shield @ 3pt	up to 30
English Federates Irreg C LI; short spear, shield @ 3pt	up to 60
Irish mercenaries Irreg C LI; javelin, shield @ 3 pt	up to 60
extra to give Irish LI Long Spear @ +1pt.	up to 1/2
Visigothic noble cav, Irreg B EHC; javelins, shield @ 9pt	up to 12
Visigothic Foot, Irreg C MI; javelins, shield @ 3pts	up to 200
Visigothic skirmishers Irreg C LI; javelins, shield @ 3pt	up to 40
Visigothic archers Irreg C LI; bow @ 2pts.	up to 20
up to 8 regular command factors.	
up to 15 irregular command factors.	

Noticable by their absence from the list are two troop types: light cavalry and heavy infantry. Light cavalry are never mentioned or even implied by the evidence we have today; given that the Romans understood and used light cavalry, I would be prepared to accept a case for their inclusion. There is however, the point that the later Empire was tending towards heavier cavalry forces all the time; and the British commanders may have preferred to put their limited resources to better use in armouring all possible horse units.

Heavy infantry had more or less disappeared from Imperial armies by this date. Since their enemies were all light or medium types, the British may have felt no tactical pressures to maintain this expensive troop type. The garrison forces taken over by Vortigern would have been exclusively of medium or light medium class.

The Welsh term "Teleu" means "household", and suggests that these units were maintained by the British provincial kings. It is highly likely that they were formed from the six field-army cavalry units mentioned in the "Notitia Dignitatum". I have given them regular status for this reason, and because of their continued importance under later Romanised British commanders. The personal Teleu of a major leader, such as Ambrosius or Arthur, would have received the very best in training and equipment, so I have made provision for upgrading two units if desired.

The Pedyt infantry is divided into two types. The remnant of the Roman force, now British-manned but maintaining the Imperial traditions and training, are regulars. Alongside them are newly raised British units, modelling themselves on the regular cohorts but not achieving regular status. These latter, more dependent on kings than generals, could be upgraded and better equipped by a richer king; so I have allowed for one unit to be B class.

In addition, one irregular unit may be equipped with slings. This weapon, regarded as some-what lower class (compared to sword or spear), was on its way out of history; though it did survive until the seventh century. There is evidence that the English occasionally met with - and disliked - British sling fire.

The English federates are not the well trained, heavily armed types we meet at the battle of Hastings, but small warbands much closer to the tribal infantry described by Tacitus in the first century. The two troop types here represent upper and lower class warriors; the first relatively well protected by mail or leather, able to fight in primitive shield wall lines, while the second class are poorer types running in loose skirmishing groups.

Irish mercenaries are late Pictish types; by this time the bow and chariot had both fallen out of use. As noted in the list, some of the better-off warriors added a long spear to their equipment, but there is no evidence for even leather armour. This troop type description may also be used to cover the Votadini federates, about whom little is known for sure.

The Visigothic force may or may not be an acceptable addition to the list, depending on ones reading of the available evidence. Troop types described are essentially those of the WRG Early Gothic Army, except that the proportion of light troops has been raised. I justify this on two grounds: that light troops are easier to transport by sea, and that the hilly country of south-west Britain would have suited light forces better.

Some restrictions must be placed on the fielding of the Visigoths. If the contingent appears at all, at least half the maximum number of each type must be fielded; and they must have their own sub-General. These conditions apply because the evidence shows that if the Visigoths did appear, they fought as an independent corps under their own commanders, subject only to British strategic directives.

As I have said throughout this article, the statements are not facts but probabilities; the meagre evidence available today allows us to make intelligent guesses and to extrapolate trends, but not to make definitive assertions. My own conclusions are just that - conclusions - and readers may feel they have an alternative view which fits the evidence just as well. However, anyone who disagrees violently with the conclusions drawn in this article is enjoined to read Morris' work thoroughly before committing himself to print.

WELCOME TO THE AGE OF THE COMBI

It is a small middle class house in the suburbs. The occupant is a man in his forties, a quiet, balding bachelor. He was a perfect neighbour, very well liked, that was before the police came to call.

The knock on the door brought Rafael to his feet, he was tense, but when the police announced themselves he relaxed, smiling. Stepping to the door he drew a gauss rifle from a cupboard and loaded it, stopped to listen to the idle conversation of the troopers outside. Fluidly then he opened the door, the police were unprepared. Hurriedly Raf then began making plans to leave.

Five minutes after the two police died sirens were echoing down once silent suburban streets, Rafael was preparing to leave. He was sitting comfortably in his back room, calmly strapping into an acceleration couch.

By the time police reinforcements arrived, the back room was lifting smoothly on its anti grav pods, false boarding falling away in a spume behind him. Rafael turned the fusion drive on (two city blocks), just for a laugh. The police couldn't understand such an adverse reaction to a traffic fine.

One of the greatest problems facing a Traveller GM is the extent to which characters are mobile between the stars. While it is useful to the GM to be able to determine closely the direction in which players move, which he can do by limiting the availability of passage between the stars, most players eventually lust after a starship of their own.

Standard Traveller starships are both expensive, (meaning characters must either steal one or go heavily into debt), and powerful, increasing a character party's strength greatly. To solve both problems, enter the age of the Combi class spaceship.

THE COMBI CLASS STARSHIP

At nine million credits the Combi class starship is the perfect vessel for the player character, it is both cheap and reasonably inoffensive.

The one drawback (sic) of the Combi class is that it breaks the GDW tenet that no starship will be less than 100 tonnes. However it can be simply argued that GDW have provided a precedent in their acceptance of the Jump torpedo, J-Drives can be produced in that size. The development of the Combi has also provided for the existance of the drifter, a personality excluded by GDW's more expensive spaceship options. After all, what multi millionaire is going to invest all of his extremely padded back account in a trading ship, and then spend the rest of his life deep in debt, working hard, and making a tenuous living after repayments and costs. Better to buy a second (third?) hand Combi and skip for the stars.

The Combi is also in violation of the rule (Highguard 81) that 20 tonnes of space be given over to the ships bridge. (Again, the jump torpedo shows jump is capable with a smaller bridge). As this is a rule essentially founded in logic, the loss of bridge

space causes the following functional deficiencies.

1. Sensor range is reduced to one quarter range.
2. One point increase in misjump chance.

At ten tonnes the Combi is the same size as a semi-trailer. It is capable of entering and leaving the atmosphere on grav pods as well as on fusion drive. The grav pods also allow the ship to act as an air or semi surface vehicle. In the latter mode it is extremely useful, however such usage is usually banned on civilized planets.

Although unarmed the Combi can use its fusion flame as an extremely effective weapon.

It must also be noted that for the purposes of construction, computer weight was halved for every TL above that at which the model was introduced. Considering current trends this is an extremely conservative estimate.

END

MONSTER PIT

The following "monsters" are the intelligent inhabitants of Larry Niven's "Known Space". While these are written up specifically in D & D terms, they can doubtless be easily adapted to a Traveller campaign.

KZINTI

Frequency:	Very rare	Damage/Attack:	3-18/3-18
No. Appearing:	1-6	Special Attacks:	See below
Armour Class:	0	Special Defences:	Surprised only on a one
Move:	12"	Magic Resistance:	Standard
Hit Dice:	7+7	Intelligence:	Very
% in Lair:	15%	Alignment:	Aggressive
Treasure Type:	R	Size:	L
No. of Attacks:	2	Psionics:	Rolled For

The Kzinti are a carnivorous race of hunters who will normally attack on sight, though not against an obviously superior enemy. A Kzin surprises on a 1-4 and attacks with two sets of retractable claws.

This race resembles large orange rotund felines, with large, pink, parasol like retractable ears. Although they are bipedal the Kzinti run on all fours for maximum speed. A Kzin will never surrender and can never be tortured for information. The Kzin will carry a grudge and seek vengeance over great distances. An extremely proud race the Kzinti pride themselves on their courage and fighting ability, regarding all other races as inferior and therefore legitimate prey.

Kzinti females are unintelligent and do not fight, they and their cubs will only be found in lair. Male cubs will also attack fiercely.

SLAVERS

Frequency:	Very Rare	Damage/Attacks:	Nil
No. Appearing:	1-2	Special Attacks:	See Below
Armour Class:	9	Special Defences:	See below
Move:	1/2"	Magic Resistance:	Standard
Hit Dice:	2	Intelligence:	Very
% in Lair:	Nil	Alignment:	Neutral
Treasure Type:	Nil	Size:	L
No: of Attacks:	Nil	Psionics:	Special, See Below

The slaver resembles a comical mound of flesh, about 8' tall and covered in short brown hair. There are only two visible physical characteristics on the body of a Slaver, a large mouth and four useless, attenuated limbs.

Slavers are carnivores, mentally controlling their prey until they are within reach of the Slavers whiplike tongue, Slavers are capable of swallowing a man sized creature whole.

Slavers appear perfectly harmless and will only attack if they

have a good chance of victory.

The Slaver attempts to control up to six creatures as per the spell Suggestion. Casting time is instantaneous, saving throws are applicable.

Being sedentary and extremely long lived, and being possessed of strong telepathic powers, the Slavers know many languages and count as having permanent speak with animals and comprehend languages.

If a Slaver considers a party to be completely trustworthy it will communicate with, and befriend them. Only one attempt may be made to control any creature.

THE PUPPETEERS

Frequency:	Very Rare	Damage/Attack:	4-16
No. Appearing:	1	Special Attacks:	Nil
Armour Class:	8	Special Defences:	Nil
Move:	12"	Magic Resistance:	Standard
Hit Dice:	5	Intelligence:	Genius
% in Lair:	Nil	Alignment:	Nil
Treasure Type:	Q	Size:	N
No. of Attacks:	1	Psionics:	Nil

These extremely cowardly herbivores are best described by Larry Niven as a three legged ostrich with two Cecil the Seasick Serpent puppets attached to the body by long flexible necks.

Puppeteers will run from or attempt to talk their way out of troubles on every occasion, they will only fight if completely cornered. To do so the Puppeteer turns its back to the enemy and kicks strongly with its rear leg, if this creates a gap the Puppeteer will then attempt to flee.

If placed under emotional stress in non-danger (immediate) situation it will curl up in a catatonic ball.

The Puppeteer's brain is situated on a bony hump at the top of its body. The heads are merely used for sight, eating, respiration and as hands.

Avoiding contact with all other species, the Puppeteer is little known, those seen will be the braver ones, those considered insane, and these will pass through manic/depressive cycles. Puppeteer cities are so well hidden they can be considered impossible to find.

There are no female Puppeteers, sperm from two different males are imbedded in the flesh of an unintelligent sybiotic animal and the maturing Puppeteer feeds on the flesh of the host.

The leader of the Puppeteers is referred to as the Hindmost.

GAME REVIEW.

by Kevin Flynn.

La Bataille de Deutsch-Wagram.
La Bataille d'Espagnol-Talavera.
La Bataille d'Austerlitz.
La Bataille de Preussisch-Eylau.

Marshall Enterprises.
825 West Washington Street,
El Cajon, California 92020.

The above is a list of the four games that have been released by Marshall Enterprises that I know of. Difficulty arises with the fact that the company is privately owned and American, we in Australia therefore hear little of them. Those of you who may remember the original Bataille de la Moskova game will be familiar with Marshall Enterprises, their new games are similar to Moskova in mechanics but vary greatly in all other respects.

Marshall Enterprises is a private company, run by a relatively small group of what might be called 'fanatics', specialising in the Napoleonic period. They produce around one game every 18 months as far as I can work out. Of each game they produce only 1000 copies thus giving an exclusive appeal to their games. Ordering appears to be solely by mail and their order form caters to this field. Games will cost between \$30 and \$60 depending upon the size, this includes mailing. They are very prompt in their service (as far as I have experienced with the three games I have mail ordered) and quite friendly. At one stage I did have trouble with an order, it hadn't shown up after a couple of months so I sent a letter informing them, two weeks later a game arrived by air mail.

The first thing that you notice about a Marshall Enterprises game is the counters. The game is based on a battalion-regiment scale and each unit in the armies of the battle has a distinctive counter. To achieve this the makers have used up to 4 (not counting the white background) colours on some counters. The colouring of each counter is based upon the historical colours of the unit the counter represents, they also use distinctive symbols if the unit had these; eg, Grenadiers each have a grenade symbol on their counters, Hussars have their distinctive vest patterns printed. In most cases however the old infantry/cavalry symbol is centered on the counter. Numbers along the sides identify the division, regiment and battalion of the unit and values on the front represent stacking points and movement. On the reverse of the counter is printed the fire strength, melee strength, morale and range if applicable. Special counters for leaders are given and each leader has die roll bonuses for the various troops they are capable of commanding, as well as a morale bonus value. So, you can see that each counter is a compact little treasure trove, probably very confusing at first sight but visually stimulating. With practice and if you have any interest in the period, you will become very familiar with the counters and units such as the Grenadiers a'Cheval will come to take special significance to you.

Next is the map boards, and to some people these may be a bit dissapointing. They are printed on very plain card stock and usually only two or possibly three colours are used. The colours tend to be matt and drab in appearance. I can believe this is deliberate as a colourful board with colourful counters would not have mixed well. The terrain symbols used upon the maps could be improved probably, especially with regard to hill slopes.

Lastly are the rules and player aids. The interesting point about all these games is that they use one basic rule book through-out. This basic booklet comes with every game so I now have ample sets. After an excellant start we now come to a bit of a problem, the rules have not been set out the best and tend to be very brief, this creates problems in actual play when the tricky situations occur as in any wargame. Another problem is that a couple of amendment sheets have now come out and I'm not sure if they come with every game. Also each game now has its own corrections and this results in a build up of some 5 or 6 different sheets of corrections. Apart from the basic rule book each game comes with its own special conditions sheet relating to this specific battle, or to the condition of the particular armies present. On the whole this system works well but does result in a lot of paper.

The player aids provided with the game are set up sheets, essential to keep track of the regiments and battalions as they break-up and rejoin. Combat sheets for melee and fire utilising the vastly superior 36 probability table (this is achieved by using two 6 sided dice, noting each roll individually, thus getting a range from 1,1;1,2;1,3;1,4.....to 6,4;6,5;6,6). There is a card for turn recording, movement costs, square forming, stacking limits, terrain effects on fire and melee, fire multipliers for nationality and formation, and lastly for corps morale levels.

The combat system of these games was quite unique (at least to me) when it first came out and is really very good. The main reason for this is the 36 probability table which gives real emphasis to the use of generals and terrain. Also with the use of this table they have kept the overall mechanics of melee to a very simple comparison of strengths with terrain modifiers. The most important part of melee and fire however is the morale test that results from it. Morale in the Napoleonic period was undoubtedly the most important aspect of the army and these games include this effectively. Each unit has a morale value tied into the 36 probability table. Elite units have 1.4 morale say, on any particular morale test a roll of 1.5 or more means they pass and there is no effect, however if they roll less then the unit goes into disorder, should a unit in disorder fail a morale test it routs. Apart from unit morale they also have Corps morale, this is effected by counting the number of routing regiments at the end of specified turns, this fits into a modifier table which is applied to all units of that corps. In this way a battalion may be intact but have terrible morale as all its friends have been shot to ribbons, however a seperate corps can remain stable while all the rest of the army routs around it. This aspect of morale

forces the wise general to make maximum use of his units and to deploy them in the true napoleonic method.

Wagram is the last game produced and it is probably best to say something about this game as we all tend to judge a company by its last effort. Obviously little of the game systems have changed but the counters have improved, not in design or colour but in printing. When several colours are printed over each other it is not always successful, but in this game they seem to have improved their accuracy. The map also has been improved and the colours are not so dull. Also in this game they have used a strategic map due to the nature of this particular battle, this is a bit dissappointing as it is extremely simplistic and appears to be a temporary measure, I would have expected something better. On the whole however it is an improvement.

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MURPHY'S LAWS and other observations

Murphy's Laws: (1) If anything can go wrong, it will, at the worst possible moment. (2) If there is a possibility of several things going wrong, the one that will cause the most damage will be the first one to go wrong. (3) If anything just cannot go wrong, it will anyway. (4) If you percieve that there are four possible ways in which something can go wrong, and circumvent these, then a fifth way, unprepared for, will promptly develop. (5) Left to themselves, things tend to go from bad to worse. (6) If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something. (7) Nature always sides with the hidden flaw. (8) Mother Nature is a bitch.

O'Toole's Commentary on Murphy's laws. Murphy was an optimist.

Addition to Murphy's laws. In nature, nothing is ever right. Therefore, if everything is going right ... something is wrong.

Forsyth's corollary to Murphy's Laws. Just when you see the light at the end of the tunnel, the roof caves in.

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Just a reminder to those of you that we havn't seen for a while, the club meets once a month at 11am on the second saturday of every month. Thus future meeting dates are 10th October, 14th November and the 12th December.

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WANTED: A solution to the problem of the ages. How do you get the Maid (or anyone for that matter) into bed in Mystery Mansions?

Games in Review.
'Knights of Camelot' (TSR)

Of the many new multi-player games that have arisen of late, 'Knights of Camelot' seems to be good value for money. At first impression it appeared to be similar in style as 'King Maker' i.e. A whole pile of Knights/Lords trundling around the countryside terrorising peasants, killing everything they meet and generally having a good time. After the first few games (and subsequent many deaths), the players will realize that (1) there always exists the chance that death is a mere dice roll away that even a ferret (theoretically, though extremely improbable) can kill a Knight. (2) There is always the chance that the player can effectively be removed from the game for an indefinite period of time, and (3) follow the advice of your mother and never go to sea.

Point number one is perhaps the biggest difference between this and other player games. The game mechanics are such that the players do not necessarily go straight for each others throats (although it can be done) as they have enough problems surviving on their own.

The basis of the game is that each player starts off as a Knight subject to a Lord determined at random, and by conquering randomly encountered creatures (?) and other people, gain chivalry and virtue. This determines how many theoretical wounds the player can take and if he is virtuous enough, whether or not he can avoid the seductive alures of enchantresses.

Most advantageous is entering the service of a Lady, this is quite difficult but the rewards are an increase in the chivalry point level and having someone to heal your poisoned wounds etc. Once a Knight is strong enough and virtuous enough, he can go to Camelot and ask to serve Arthur as an Arthurian Knight. This is usually granted on the completion of a task. The object is then to rush to the shrines around the countryside looking for the Holy Grail, and having seen it, grasp it. The virtue level of the Knight must be fairly good to accomplish this. If he fails, the Grail then shifts to another randomly determined shrine. The first Knight back to Camelot with the Grail is the winner. It is at this point that the other player Knights descend upon you like a bunch of crazed locusts to beat the (beeeep) out of you to secure the Grail for themselves. The trail back to Camelot once you have the Holy Grail, rather looks like vulture row at a funeral.

Now, for a brief look at the encounters. The first time a fresh, cocky, young Knight went up to the dragon, the dragon had a tasty repast and wanted more (since dragons are renowned to carry can-openers, and what could be more tasty than fresh tinned meat!). The older and more experienced Knights prove to be a tougher supper with the boot mostly being on the other foot. The odds being about 50-50. The whole point of the passage is that if one runs into something that can beat one, run.

It will be a rare thing for a player Knight to defeat six other Knights out for a rumble, although it has been done. Diplomacy is the more tactful solution than a mace in the head, and there is a good chance that the Knights will join your party or help you in some manner. Brigands are just about always beaten up although, some poor Knights have had the reverse done and been robbed blind. Animals are interesting as encounters, as they can prophesise or join you or be magically enchanted people, etc..(A good friend of mine was actually a ferret for a while, another could bark exceedingly well!) Monsters are generally good encounters although the chance of a fatality is extremely high relative to any other encounter. Mad Knights also roam the countryside killing all they defeat, but will be extremely loyal allies if cured of their madness at the local shrine.

Dwarves are generally not that nice to encounter and I personally try to avoid them before they trick me into making oaths.

Every major area on the board has a castle in it which is unfriendly to the player Knight until he can befriend them. This is very handy, as friendly castles will re-equip the Knight who has been robbed. Also requests may be made of the Lord, and it is a place of refuge if unfriendly to ones enemies. Castles may not be so good to those imprisoned in them. This is a situation which can effectively take you, as a player Knight, out of the game. Imprisonment is effective until either (1) an appeal to a passerby moves him so that he then goes to the jailer and appeals for your release, or (2) you are in a rare situation of appealing to the jailer and he releases you, or (3) some other player Knight storms the castle, killing all defending Knights and releases you. Methods (1) and (2) can be extremely long, while method (3) is very rare.

There is only one thing I can think of to say about sea travel - DON'T - if you can possibly avoid it. Boats of the 12th and 13th century must have been extremely unseaworthy, which isn't very nice when pirates and monsters are about. Storms and shipwrecks are also included in most package tours, at no extra cost.

There are many more points in the game to mention like Merlin, Morgana Le Fay (run away !!), tournaments and jousts, adventures in Fairie-land, and the odd story or two of a Knight going to Canterbury eating nothing on the way and scourging himself to increase his virtue level. All this may sound like a high level of complexity, but has actually been compacted very nicely into a simple form which actuates fast play and high entertainment. The counters are of a good thickness with very passable graphics. The map has been done well with plenty of room in each area for the counters and different colours in each area for easy distinction. It is not a hex or square grid system.

I suppose that every game has something in it that could have been better, and 'Knights of Camelot' is no exception. With a sadly typical TSR mistake of bad explanation of rules, this could lead to disputed interpretations and several readings before

being able to play even the simple game level properly. A small amount of thought on TSR's behalf could have solved the confusion and whoever laid out the organisation of the rules into disorder should be taken out and lanced. For a simple game - and to keep the mechanics of such diversity simple is beautiful - has perhaps been the downfall of an otherwise very good game, as it is rare nowadays that a game which is interesting for solo play as much as it is for eight people.

Geoff Turk.

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FOR SALE: I have available for sale a small number of metal figures all of which are painted and on the correct bases. The figures are:

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