

MILITARY
SPECIAL NEW YEAR ISSUE
WITH FREE PULL-OUT GAME

MUDDLING

CHESTNUT LODGE WARGAMES GROUP NEWSLETTER

Issue 16

January 1991

EDITORIAL

A Happy New Year, everyone. We're all going to need one, especially if one's residence is in the Middle East. Some of you may feel, however, just because you are not a member of HM Armed Forces you can avoid any obligations of a remotely military nature. Sorry, you're wrong, guys! In signing up to Chestnut Lodge you are committed, in 1991, to:

- a) writing something for your favourite wargaming publication (No, I don't mean *Wargames Illustrated*, and
- b) organising a game at the Church Hall or Chestnut Lodge,
- c) paying your sub on time.

You can't commit yourself to a more worthwhile New Year's resolution!

Just to encourage you all this issue includes a free pull-out game - THE RUNES from your editor. If there is sufficient demand expansion kits will be produced in the future.

ANDY GRAINGER

DEADLINES

February issue: 28th JANUARY, to appear on 3rd February.
March issue: 25th FEBRUARY, to appear on 3rd March.
Due to a change of printers "Military Muddling" will appear at the Sunday meeting with effect from this issue.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Basically, I will accept contributions in any format as long as I can actually read what you have to say. If they are short I am even prepared to take them over the telephone. It would help, however, if you could submit your contributions in single-spaced type in columns no more than 10.5 cms wide. Make sure you use a good quality ribbon.

I have no access to a photocopier so, if possible, please submit your material in a 'camera-ready' format.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

There will be a short business meeting before BRITISH BREAKOUT at the meeting on Sunday 3rd February 1991. The following topics will be discussed:

- a) Role of officers,
- b) Election of officers,
- c) Financial statement,
- d) Constitution / Aims
- e) Merger of Streatham & Tooting Club,
- f) Shows (SELWG, Salute etc).

NEWS

That famous club, the South London Warlords, is holding a number of invitation games at a rate of one Saturday per month. Each day is designed to provide an opportunity for wargame personalities and clubs of international repute to present the very best in games, techniques and ideas. Despite this, CLWG have actually been asked to put on a game. The Committee, after the most careful deliberation, have selected The British Breakout, a Normandy map game by Andy Grainger, for our presentation.

Further details of the South London Warlords' programme are available from Jim Wallman.

Details of the venue will be available next month, once I have obtained an explanation of the map provided on the Warlords' Salute leaflet.

(Note that this brings about a change to the CLWG programme on 3rd February. The game on that date will now be Enemy Coast Ahead).

Simon Dunster, of Milton Keynes Wargames Club has contacted Andy Grainger with a draft set of rules complementing and codifying Borage Battle, Andy's Normandy skirmish game. The new rules stress the importance of troop quality, tactical formations (of limited variety) and morale, but require clarification before Andy felt able to playtest them.

A membership statement from Gordon McIlroy, our new Treasurer, can be found later in this issue.

DREAMS OF EMPIRE

Dreams of Empire, the megagame of the French Revolutionary Wars, takes place on 16th February at the Church Hall.

By now you should have received a booking slip and a note of your role. The game is well subscribed so do not delay in returning your slip, and cheque, to Brian.

Briefing booklets are being produced. Expect to receive them towards the end of January.

If you want to take part and have not yet applied you should contact Brian Cameron very rapidly.



TREASURER'S STATEMENT

Membership List

The current paid-up membership of Chestnut Lodge Wargames Group is 17, of which 10 are paid-up until October 1991, in line with the new membership year. The 17 are:

NAME	PAID UNTIL
Graham Breed	1 Oct 91
Brian Cameron	1 Oct 91
Dave Eastham	1 May 91
Andy Grainger	1 Oct 91
Arthur Harman	1 Oct 91
John Harris	1 Jul 91
Peter Knowlden	1 Jun 91
Peter Lawson	1 Oct 91
Terry Martin	1 Aug 91
Gordon McIlroy	1 Jun 91
John Merritt	1 Jun 91
Neil Parker	1 Aug 91
Mukul Patel	1 Oct 91
Dave Rooke	1 Oct 91
John Seaton	1 Oct 91
Jim Wallman	1 Oct 91
Derek Young	1 Oct 91

If you are not on this list and wish to become a member please forward your cheque, made out to CHESTNUT LODGE WARGAMES GROUP, to Gordon McIlroy,

BOARDGAMES

"With blitzkrieg speed," reports the Wall Street Journal, "two new Middle East war board games, Gulf Strike/Desert Shield and Arabian Nightmare: The Kuwait War, are rushing to market. A third, the Butcher of Baghdad, is expected to be out early next year." James Dunnigan, editor of *Strategy & Tactics*, concedes: "If people accuse me of making money over a person's dead body I guess I'd have to plead guilty." In Arabian Nightmare, for instance, a player can take CBS News anchorman Dan Rather hostage and shoot him to gain extra points.

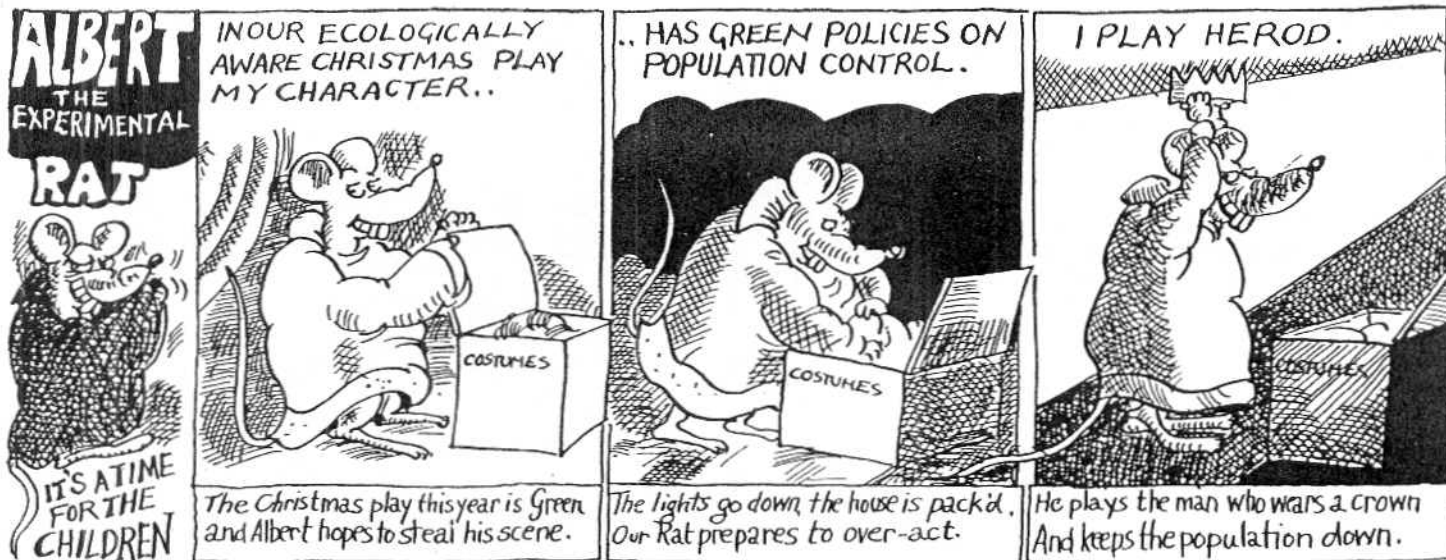
The Guardian, Saturday 23rd December 1990.

Editor recalls; Boardgaming members may remember that in 1976 readers of *S & T* were treated to a load of sanctimonious humbug from Dunnigan that the magazine would not design games for the military-industrial complex. *SPI* then produced *Firefight*, but that was OK, he claimed, because it was only a game 'simulating' a training exercise. In any event I understand that *S&T* has changed hands and that Mr Dunnigan has been sacked (again).

CUTTINGS & CARTOONS

If any readers come across newspaper items or cartoons which they think may be of interest to readers would they please send a cutting to the editor.

"Merry Christmas, no New Year", Inscription on a US cluster bomb targetted at the Iraqi army.



Shooting up on computer mind games

Second sight

Judith Williamson

VIDEO games have been much in the news recently. Computer pages review their technology, while features (as in last Saturday's Independent) usually focus on Japanese marketing techniques and effects on kids. Nowhere have I read a description of what it's like to play these games; those familiar with them wield a closed-off computer-speak, while the unfamiliar hover like anxious Luddites on the margins of a technology their children understand better than they do.

Video games appear parasitic on other forms — films, books, myths, real events — bringing us Turtle games, Alice in Wonderland games, Camelot games, WWII games and so on. In fact, this thematic dressing is merely a way of making abstract processes meaningful, a bit like the way school maths pretends to be about things like how many football tickets you can get for a tenner. For despite the range of themes there are basically four structural types of computer game.

The simplest is the arcade-type game that gives off electronic POWS and *neep neeps*, known in the trade as shoot'em ups and beat'em ups. Flying globs, thematised as tennis balls, spaceships, bullets, or in the wackily-themed Monty Python game, flying fish, shower out of the side of the screen and with a handle that controls the equivalent of a bat, the player has to field them. Success is rewarded by further unfolding of the game — ie the globs fly around in new locations. The further you get, the more you see, and the aim is to get as far "in" as possible, to have the game completely unfold before you.

A similar unfolding takes place in "adventure" games, like Virgin's new Wonderland, based on Lewis Carroll's book. This takes the player through a variety of situations, where choices can be made (lift the key . . . drink from the bottle, etc) with, again, the ultimate aim of moving through all possible locations. The right choice is the one that moves you on. This type of game gives the player the illusion of infinite choice and indeed, there are few "sensible" choices which have not been anticipated: your brain is, as it were, moving inside an area already mapped out by another brain, but this is never apparent unless you reach a "wall", through a perverse choice the computer is unprepared for ("eat the key").

The capacity to home-in on close-ups of locations, and the Mackintosh-type way choices

take you "through" into new choices, do give a sense of exploration, spaces within spaces of the computer. However, the most literal sense of space comes with simulation games, where the screen forms, for example, a 2-d replica of the perspective from a moving plane (these are variants on those old arcade games called "Driving Test"). A simulation game currently in preparation is Shuttle, developed with help from NASA, and replicating precise details of a NASA shuttle interior and controls.

Finally, there are the strategy games where you have to juggle factors whose mutual effects are already programmed: for example, in Supremacy (an Interplanetary Domination Struggle) you can tax your planet's citizens but if taxes are too high the birth rate drops. If the population is large, you can recruit more troops for the Struggle, but troops don't pay taxes, etc, etc. More creepily, in Conflict, a Middle East Themed game, "your" aim is to destabilise the Arab states around you ("you" are prime minister of Israel).

It's easy to see how objectionable Conflict's ideology is; but the point is, in line with that ideology, causes and effects are predetermined (e.g. amass too many troops on the Syrian border and Syria will attack you).

WHAT you learn, with all these games, is the game itself. It is not the themes which flesh out their operational structures, but the mechanism of those structures that the successful game-player comes to know and master. You learn the right angle to field off a particular flying fish. You learn which bottle to drink from in wonderland. You learn how to juggle the parameters set for you in Conflict, the flight control system in Shuttle.

But most interesting is the way that in all but the strategy games, the "draw" for the player is accession to

secret places which open up as you master the techniques. There is something primal about this drive into the screen: it's like a sexual exploration, the game lets you into its hidden landscape, and you get a little further each time you play. But it's also — and the two are linked in reality — like an analogue of the workings of the mind itself. The exploration of inner space is one of our greatest capacities. Yet with computer games, it isn't your own mind you explore, it's the kind which programmed the procedure. Trying out these games, I felt my mind harnessed to someone else's, forced to the pace of the screen. Ultimately, for all the worry about war themes, shoot'em ups and so on, these games aren't about domination, but submission. Try figuring out the appeal of that.

THE GUARDIAN
Thursday December 20 1990

- COMMISSION -

Mark Hone, who teaches in Bury, Lancs, seeks wargame designs to help him in his lessons.

The design criteria are:

- Venue: One classroom
- Numbers: 8 - 14 x 16/17 year olds
- Time: 1 x 35min and 1 x 60 min period / week
- Kit: cheapo, less than £10 per game
- Subject: any but post-1900 for preference

Mark has successfully used Andy Callan's Place of Fear, Paddy Griffith's Men Against Fire and Tom Mouat's Courtroom Chaos from Nugget 38. He has also used role-playing techniques to illustrate the Battle of the Somme to a class of 11 and 12 year olds. An article about this game will appear in a future MilMud.

Have any CLW6 members any games that would meet these design criteria? If not, is anyone interested in designing one? Brian's Agincourt committee game sounded an ideal educational vehicle and I may produce a committee game from my own Clouds in the West material.

GULF CRISIS

There may not be many laughs in the Gulf for some time. Let us smile while we can.

Stand Easy

Any army reservists not tempted by the whopping £200 bonus to 'volunteer' for a brown Christmas might be tempted to try the Heseltine method to avoid a time-consuming career-break. As a National Service Guards officer, young Michael offered himself as an Independent in a byelection. Didn't get in, lost his deposit and, what's worse, wasn't allowed to finish his draft. Next byelection saw a couple of hundred squaddies pulling the same stunt. But that was then, and this is now. Loophole thoroughly plugged by the Servants of the Crown (Parliamentary Candidature) Order, 1960. Thanks, Mike.

Perfect Couple

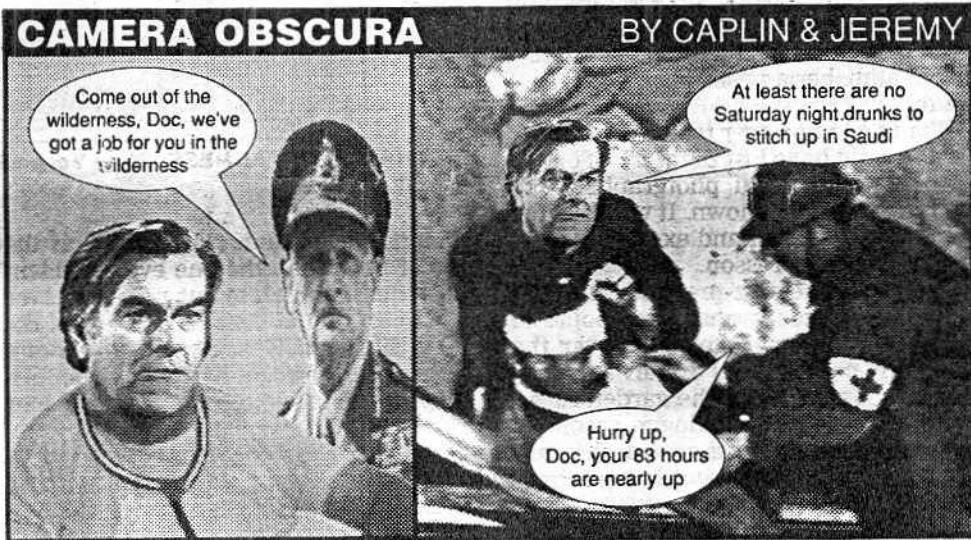
Anyone still inclined to give Saddam Hussein the benefit of the doubt should note that President Kurt Waldheim intends to undertake a state visit to Oman from January 12-14. The Vienna Daily Kronen-Zeitung said "it could not be excluded that he intends to make a stopover in Iraq for contacts at the highest level." The report continued, "If anyone has access to President Saddam it is President Waldheim."

Some of Our Sandbags are Missing

Intense envy of British technological superiority is already emerging from the Gulf, threatening to split the cosy co-operation between the allies. Warrant Officer Carl Homan demonstrated the Bag, Mark 1, Hessian, sand for the use of. "Its got binding power," he declared with evident pride, "not like this." This was an inferior looking khaki plastic bag favoured by the US and Saudi allies. "The Americans have got to get back to natural fibre." Extra guards are being posted after a number went missing, 'relocated' in American positions. Meanwhile our boys, who would like to hold their heads high, are being advised not to.

And Now,

especially for Peter Knowlden



Rune Games

by Andy Grainger

"For omens and the casting of lots they have the highest regard. Their procedure in casting lots is always the same. They cut off a branch of a nut-bearing tree and slice it into strips; these they mark with different signs and throw them completely at random onto a white cloth. Then the priest of the state, if the consultation is a private one, or the father of the family if it is private, offers a prayer to the gods and looking up at the sky picks up three strips, one at a time and reads their meaning from the signs previously scored on them. If the lots forbid an enterprise there is no deliberation that day on the matter in question."

Tacitus, Germania, 10
Rune Games by Marijane Osborn and Stella Longland, illustrations by Steven Longland, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982, Pbk, 296 pages, £7.50.

THE RUNIC FUTHORC

Runes are the angular letters of a writing system used by ancient Germanic tribes. The runic alphabet does not follow the more common order of other European alphabets, a, b, c etc but begins with the letters f, u, t, h, o, r and c; so is termed the *futhorc*. In our writing system the individual letters indicate sounds but not meanings. Runes, on the other hand, represent both sounds and words. For example the letter f 'f' has the name *feoh* meaning 'wealth'. The second letter h 'u', means 'aurochs', a wild ox.

The 'Old English Rune Poem' is a list of the twenty-nine English runes in which each rune is followed by an explanatory verse. The poem was apparently composed by monks as a sort of mnemonic although for what reason is not clear. The poem was preserved in a manuscript which was copied in 1705. The original was destroyed by fire in 1731 and so the copy is the only surviving source of the poem. The English Rune Poem is dated to around the 11th century but may have been composed originally in the 8th. By contrast two other poems from Norway and Iceland date much later, from the 13th and 15th centuries.

CASTING FOR A VENTURE

This is the first, and simplest, game. It is based on the Tacitus description at the head of this article and requires the set of twenty nine staves.

- 1) The Game-master holds the twenty nine rune staves in a bunch or lays them flat, face down.
- 2) The Player picks out three in turn and looks at them one by one.
Rune One: One for the venture.
Interpret the first rune in terms of the player's feelings towards the venture.
- Rune Two: One to cross it.
The second rune defines the atmosphere that will pervade the enterprise.
Rune Three: One tells all.
The third rune will give an indication of the outcome of the venture.

At the Society of Ancients Conference we found that this game provided a quick and aesthetically satisfying method of working out what an umpire-controlled German tribe would do. It was essential to determine the nature of the venture first, ie "The clan will try to ambush the Roman rearguard" or "A war party will try to cut out part of the Roman cattle herd".

Example

Rune 1: B (beorc) Morale may be low but nevertheless the prospects are spectacular, and success is potentially unlimited.
Rune 2: k (ken) A desperate determination to succeed, but a noble leader will offer the best results - does the spectre of the funeral pyre loom in the background?
Rune 3: * (lior) Whatever comes out will provide some satisfaction to everyone taking part.

The interpretations are my own; you may have different ones.

KNUCKLEBONES

This game is designed to illustrate the present state of the personality and its ability to cope with events. It offers a quick way of devising a character for an umpire-controlled tribe or group. I have altered the method of play as the text is not too clear.

The game uses the set of twenty nine counters. Six of these are drawn one by one and interpreted in the light of six aspects of the personality which are defined in terms of the first six runes of the futhorc.

Aspect Interpreted as

f feoh what character trait is possessed in abundance,
 h ur the nature of the will,
 t thorn what external events could shake the confidence,
 o os how to change the personality to overcome the problems shown by 3,
 r rad what the individual's immediate future may be,
 k ken his reaction to it.

Example

f higer A bright, outgoing and expressive character.
 h sigel Supreme optimism
 t M eoh A direct contrast to No.2, deep fear of catastrophe.
 o J eoh He must develop his character to overcome this fear,
 r rad To develop maturity during life's journey.
 k t fjr The talisman, a belief in his destiny - if he is a prince?

I have an impression of a young, still developing character, outwardly tremendously lively and optimistic but harbouring a deep fear. Given time, teaching and thought he may overcome this fear but the final rune might indicate that he is relying on lucky breaks. Again, you may have a different interpretation.

Most of the games in the book are about exploring the inner psyche and don't seem to have a wargaming application. The various tree games are based on the Kabbalah, a Jewish mystical system, and Jungian theories of psychology. The two games I have described above will, I hope, offer a little more atmosphere of northern Europe in the Dark Ages than a turn of the century consulting room in Vienna. A great advantage is that they require a minimum of preparation.

SOURCES

The authors of 'Rune Games' acknowledge the translations of the English Rune Poem which appeared in 'Runic and Heroic Poems', Cambridge University Press 1915. This old work also contained translations of the Icelandic and Norwegian Rune Poems.
'Rune Games' also contains a translation of parts of the Norse poems 'Hávamál' and 'Skirnir's Ride' from 'The Elder Edda'.

THE OLD ENGLISH RUNE POEM

f *feoh*
Wealth is a comfort to one and all,
But he must share it who hopes to cast
His lot for judgement before the lord.

u
The Aurochs is single-minded, with horns
Ascending high, a fierce horn-fighter
Stamping his moors, a striking beast!

þ *thorn*
The Thorn is most sharp, an evil thing
To take a grip on, extremely grim
For any man who rests among them!

o *os*
The Mouth is origin of every speech,
Support of wisdom and wise men's comfort,
Ease and hope to every noble.

R *rod*
Riding for a hero inside the hall
Is soft, more strenuous when astride
A great horse pounding the long mile paths

k *cen*
The Torch, familiar to the living flame,
Is blinding and brilliant; it burns most often
Where royal folk are at rest within.

X *gyfu*
Giving, to men, is an ornament
Displaying worth - and to every outcast
Without any other is substance and honour.

P *wyn*
Joy is for one who knows little of woe,
Unhindered by sorrow he will have
Bright fruits and bliss and buildings enough.

H *haeg*
Hail is whitest of grains. It whirle from the sky
Whipped by the gusting wind, then turns into water.
Need is a tight band on the breast, but it often can be
Turned into an omen of help, if attended to early.

I *is*
Ice is overcold, very slippery.
It glistens like glass, most like a jewel,
A floor made of frost, fair to see.

ð *ger*
The Season is hopeful when heaven's king
Allows the fields to blossom forth
A bright abundance for rich and poor.

S *seh*
Yew on the outside is an unsmooth tree,
But strong and firm, the fire's guardian,
Upheld by deep roots, a joy to the home.

L *peorth*
A lively Tune means laughter and games
Where brave folk sit in the banquet hall,
Beer-drinking warriors bllthe together.

Y *eoh*
Eel-grass grows most often in fen,
Waxes in water, grimly wounds,
Burning with stripes of blood the one
Who tries to get a grip on it.

H *slæd*
The Sun to seafarers always means hope,
When they ferry across the fishes' bath,
Till the horse of the sea brings them to the harbour.

T *tir*
Tir is a special sign. With princes
It keeps faith well, is ever on course
Over the night's dark; it never fails.

B *beorc*
The Poplar is fruit-less, even so puts forth
Shoots without seeding, has shining branches
High in an ornamented helmet,
Laden with leaves, in touch with the sky.

M *eh*
The Horse before peers is a princely joy
Stepping out proudly when spoken of
By wealthy riders all around him -
And to one who's unquiet he is ever a comfort.

A *man*
A Man in his gladness is dear to his kinsman;
Yet each must fail the friend he loves
For the lord in his judgement will allot
That unfortunate flesh to the earth.

L *lagu*
Water to landmen seems overly long
If they must go on the galloping ship,
And the sea-waves scare them excessively,
And the horse of the sea heeds not his bridle.

X *lmg*
Ling at first was seen by folk
Among the East Danes, till afterwards he
Went over the waves, followed his wagon.
Thus the Heerdings named this hero.

D *deog*
Home is beloved of everyone human,
If there he may properly and in peace
Enjoy in the hall a frequent harvest.

X *æsc*
Day, God's marriage, is dear to men:
The Great Lord's light means gladness and hope
To rich and poor, a profit to all.

X *oc*
Oak on this earth is useful to men
As fodder for pigs - and often it fares
On the gannet's bath, where the spear-sharp sea
Tests if the oak has noble timber.

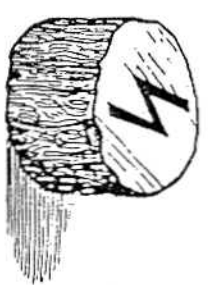
F *æsc*
The Ash looms high, beloved of men,
In a firm position holds well to its place
Though many foes advance to fight it.

F *yr*
The Bow is a joy to princes and nobles,
A reminder of worth, looks well on a steed,
Quick in its course, fine equipment!

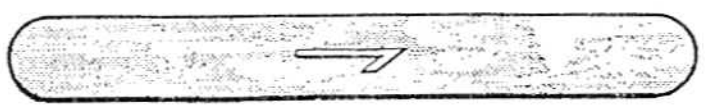
X *for*
The Beaver is a river-fish. Though it always ranges
For food on land, it has a fair dwelling
Lapped round by water, where it lives happily.

X *eor*
The Dust is dreadful to every noble.
When suddenly the flesh begins
To cool, and the corpse must choose the earth
As bleak bedfellow, bright fruits fall,
Joys pass away, covenants fail.

RUNE COUNTERS



Round Rune



Rune Stave