

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

Expert Game Adventure

Adventures in Blackmoor

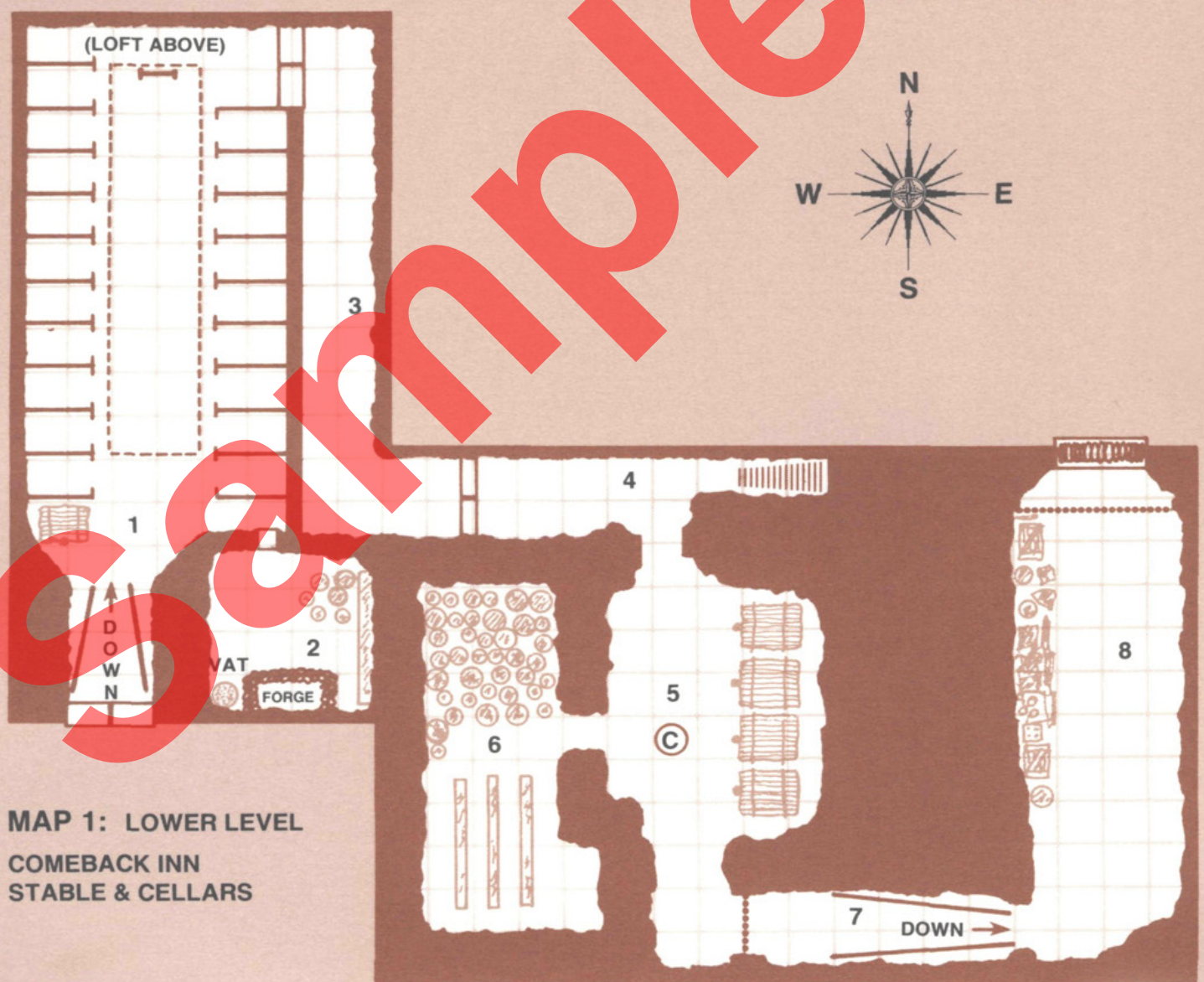
by Dave L. Arneson and David J. Ritchie



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-  LATHE-WALL
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-  JUNK PILE
-  SOFA
-  WINDOW
-  GATE
-  BARS
-  RAMP
-  BARRELS
-  LADDER
-  STALL
-  BIN/CHEST
-  TUN
-  CRATE
-  DESK
-  DOOR
-  DOUBLE DOOR
-  DOWN STAIRS
-  OPEN AREA ABOVE
-  COOK STOVE
-  (F) TRAP DOOR-FLOOR
-  (C) TRAP DOOR-CEILING
-  RAILING
-  PORCH
-  VANITY
-  TABLE/TUB

SCALE: 1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



MAP 1: LOWER LEVEL
 COMEBACK INN
 STABLE & CELLARS



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DM BACKGROUND

Stop! If you plan to participate in this module as a player, read no further. Knowing the adventure's details will make it less fun for everyone.

This module is the first in a series of adventures set in the mythical kingdom of Blackmoor. Blackmoor was the first campaign setting ever devised for use in a fantasy role-playing game. The Blackmoor presented in this module is a substantially revised and expanded setting based on material developed for that venerable campaign. In view of this fact, it is perhaps fitting to note that the events, places, and characters resident in Blackmoor exist some 3,000 years before those described in any other D&D® fantasy role-playing game material.

The adventure in this module is designed for a party of five to eight player characters (PCs) of the 10th to 14th levels of experience. A balance of character classes will be needed since the PCs will face many problems, each of which may be most easily and effectively solved by a character of a different class. A number of prerolled characters are included for use in the event that there aren't enough PCs of the correct level and class available. In addition, the campaign material includes a long list of famous persons indigenous to Blackmoor who can, if desired, be used as high-level NPCs to flesh out the party.

In addition to the adventure that introduces the PCs to the Empire of Thonia and the kingdom of Blackmoor, this module includes extensive background material on both of those areas. This material is designed to provide you, the Dungeon Master (DM), with a campaign setting within which to run further adventures. Future modules in this series will be set within the confines of Thonia and Blackmoor, and will use the places and characters introduced in this module.

Read this entire module before playing. There are some plot elements that won't be fully developed until late in the module, but for which the groundwork must be laid much earlier. If you are not already aware of these elements before play begins, you won't be able to plant clues or build drama as effectively, and the module will be less fun to play.

Study the maps while reading the area keys in the module booklet. Most of these keys contain boxed information that should be read aloud to the players when they enter the area. Unboxed information is provided only as a guide for you, the DM; it is not read to the players. While every effort has been made to provide all information needed for play, you may want to add extra details to the boxed descriptions for atmosphere.

The following abbreviations are used throughout the text of this module:

AC = Armour Class;
MV = Movement Rate;
HD = Hit Dice or Level;
hp = current hit points;
#AT = Number of attacks;
D = Damage;
ML = Morale;
AL = Alignment;
XP = Experience Points;
F = Fighter;
T = Thief;
M = Magic User;
C = Cleric;
cp = copper pieces;
ep = electrum pieces;
gp = gold pieces;
pp = platinum pieces;
sp = silver pieces;
OL = Open Locks;
FT = Find Traps;
RT = Remove Traps;
PP = Pick Pockets;
MS = Move Silently;
CW = Climb Walls (Sheer Surfaces);
HS = Hide in Shadows;
HN = Hear Noise.

Nonplayer characters (NPCs) are introduced throughout the text where they are most likely to be encountered. When introduced, their statistics are shown in an abbreviated form with all combat and movement adjustments already computed.

And now—welcome to Blackmoor.

THE LAND OF LEGEND

Before there was Thyatis—before there was Hyboria—before there was the land of Norwold—before the cruel Nentsun built their longships or the Four Kingdoms fought their deadly wars—before the dread Alphatians fell from the sky—before all this, there was Thonia.

Not the Thonia of our time. No. That barren, frozen Thonia is but a pale shadow of the Thonia that was, and the mind can but weep at the sightless vision of its past glory. Full 3,000 years ago and 2,000 years before the crowning of the first Emperor of Thyatis, whose coronation day marks the beginning of our own age, that elder Thonia was torn apart and half drowned in the vastest cataclysm this world has known.

Fearful was that time—a waking horror when the earth shook and the skies burned. And when it was done, Thonia was no more. The land existed, yes. But its cities were tum-

bled, its pride humbled, its culture a poor tattered thing lacking the will even to continue. A few survivors sailed to a new land, which they called Thonia in memory of all that they had lost. But it does not bear and never bore the least resemblance to the waking dream of elder Thonia—the Golden Empire.

In the far north of what was elder Thonia, where for half a millenium a vigorous border province called Blackmoor had dominated the affairs of the empire, the gray seas lapped unbroken save for a few islands that were once uninhabited peaks. Of the towns and castles of the Northlands, there was—nothing. All were swallowed by the sea. And when the land again rose up from that vasty deep, it had been scraped clean. What was not destroyed by the waters—the mountains and river beds, the cliffs and lakes—were soon buried under a half a mile of ice, as climatic changes wrought by the catastrophe made the Northlands into a howling glacial wilderness. When the climate again shifted back to more or less its original pattern, the very face of the land had changed. It was as if, said men, a curse from an angry and vengeful god had utterly and purposefully obliterated Blackmoor and all her works. And the name of Blackmoor, itself, became a curse.

It was in Blackmoor, you see, that the cataclysm originated. Not a cataclysm of nature, but a cataclysm wrought solely by the hand of man. For a thousand years, first as half-forgotten province, then as independent kingdom, then as keystone of a faltering empire, Blackmoor had followed its curious destiny. There, far from the ken of the great wizards of the Thonian capital, men discovered wild magic, stronger than any at the empire's center. By blending this magic with the arts of science, they forged tools of awesome power, devices to tame seas and raise mountains. It was these that gave them place of pride in the empire. It was these that were their undoing.

None in our time knows which of the devices of the Blackmoor philosophers set off the chain of disasters that destroyed that land. Even the names of such machines have been lost. All that is known is that some accident occurred, and Blackmoor sank beneath the seas, its shattered shores becoming the Broken Lands we know today.

But of the sinking of the fabled land—another time! Today, we speak of other things. Of a time a thousand years before the cataclysm. Of a time when Thonia was still master of the world, and Blackmoor but its least and newest province. Of a time when men were just learning to use the wild magic,