

A Tale of Two Cities

Setting: Ch'thon (Earth)

Requirements: NWP *Reading/Writing (English)*

Author: Charles Dickens.

Size: 15.6 cm tall, 10.7 cm wide, 1.8 cm thick; 456 pages.

Description: A small book with featureless, somewhat worn red leather covers. At the top and bottom of the spine are texts in gold-leaf inlay, perhaps the title of the book.

Within are pages of thin, yellowed paper sewn into place. The text is in exceptionally regular lettering and numerous pages contain illustrations in shades of black and gray, which seem to have been “transferred” onto the paper in an unknown way.

DM: Duplicate (One of many originals). Very rare. Average condition. Title and name of the author on the spine.

Reading the title and the text requires the NWP *Reading/Writing (English)*. The texts on the spine read, from the top down: “A Tale of Two Cities”, “Charles Dickens”, and “Collins”.

NWP Sage Knowledge (Art, Literature): The book can be of use to an individual who wants to improve his NWP *Sage Knowledge (Art, Literature)*. Note that improving an NWP requires the necessary number of character points or free NWP slots.

Lore: The story of numerous people involved in a dramatic struggle for power.

Contents: *A Tale of Two Cities* relates the story of a number of people involved in a dramatic struggle for power between a country known as England and one as France. A knowledgeable individual will find that the book is remarkably well written.

Excerpt: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on it being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.”

Research: A scribe or knowledgeable sage may conclude that the text could have been transferred onto the pages using an extremely advanced form of xylography.

History: Although this is not very likely to be common knowledge, the book was once part of the extensive library of Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar, a legendary elven king who led his people in an epic journey across the world after most of it had been destroyed in the great wars of the elves – before they all but disappeared without a trace. Magical divination might reveal that the king obtained the book on a world called Earth in the year 1860 AD and that he used to read the book on a small deserted island on a calm purple sea in an unknown dimension or plane of existence, where he would sometimes go to relax before he was called back to his duties.

Source/Origins: *A Tale of Two Cities*: Steven M. Kurtz, *Thiondar's Legacy*, in: *Dungeon 30* (TSR, 1991); Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* (Collins, 1860)

Aerographia Aeronautica

Aerovaria and Aerodynamics as They Pertain to Aviation and Extraordinary Aeronautics

Setting: Ch'thon

Requirements: NWP *Ancient Languages (Sabin)*; *Read Magic* for spells; see below

Author: Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar

Size: 50 cm tall, 30 cm wide, 20 cm thick; 1,453 pages.

Description: A large folio with covers fashioned from sheets of a shining, silvery blue metal, exceptionally thin and obviously of supreme quality. The covers are kept together by three strips of blue linen attached to the spine with gold rings. Within a rectangular cadre on the front cover is a text, perhaps the title of the book. Both the cadre and the text are inlaid with a blue metal seemingly fused with the silvery metal of the cover. Within are many loose pages of paper, parchment, and vellum, all of fine quality and featuring polychrome manuscripts with many illustrations, diagrams, and schematics as well as a large number of tables.

DM: Original. Unique. Good condition. Title on the front cover and title page. Subtitle on the title page.

Reading the title and manuscript requires the NWP *Ancient Languages (Sabin)*¹. The spells are written in an arcane language and a Wizard must cast *Read Magic* if he wants to read them for the first time.

Specialist Content: The contents of the folio are of a highly magi-scientific and complex nature and understanding them requires the reader to have Intelligence 17 as well as the NWPs *Mathematics* and *Sage Knowledge (Physics)*.

NWP Sage Knowledge (Engineering): The book can be of use to an individual who wishes to improve his NWP *Sage Knowledge (Engineering)*. Note that improving an NWP requires the necessary number of character points or free NWP slots.

Lore: A highly advanced study of the movement of air and how it pertains to flying contraptions.

Contents: *Aerographia Aeronautica* is a highly advanced and complex study of the movement of air and how it pertains to the weather, flying, and non-magical flying contraptions and constructs more in particular. It speaks of the movement of air in general, of winds, thermals, air speeds, downward drafts, and erratic winds; of aerodynamics and the mechanics of flying and flying constructs in general; of how air currents influence these mechanics and of the physics of winds blowing objects off course and even into the ground.

Throughout the book, there are many, seemingly endless, complex tables and diagrams, all with references to other tables, some of which are apparently in different books altogether.

The author explores the notion of creating non-magical flying contraptions, calculating minimum weights and air speeds as they pertain to various materials. He discusses mechanical propulsion, gliding, binding spirits to matter and often refers to another book titled *Fusiography of Ventus and Chalcum*. He speaks of landing speeds; of decreasing speed by curving back and forth to cover distance more slowly and to what extent; of a law that dictates that flying contraptions must always travel forward and of the unlikelihood that they will ever be able to travel straight up in direct line; and of many materials and their use in the construction of flying contraptions (most notably the strengthened paper of a world called Callisto), of canvas, leather, vegetable matter, magical gauze, balsa wood, reed, bamboo, and numerous mythical metals, among which the *urlium* of lost Lemuria (said to have no weight) and *gravanium* (said to have a negative weight).

Although the author focuses on the non-magical aspects of air, weather, materials, and flying contraptions rather than their magical aspects, he does speak of a number of known and unknown spells and the effects they generate when cast in mid-air and in various weather conditions, discussing their effects on aerial movement (e.g., *Gust of Wind*, *Phantom Wind*) and how to use some of them to generate thermals (e.g., *Wind Wall*).

Thermals: Thermals are warm bodies of rising air, upward gusts of warm air formed by heat rising from the ground. They can be used to have flying creatures and objects soar higher and for longer periods of time, to buoy them to help them fly higher. Thermals can be predicted by the presence of cumulus clouds (created by thermals; updrafts are always beneath them) and hills (there is a 60% chance exists that a given hill produces an updraft).

The author calculates which thermals generate what lift in objects made of numerous materials (e.g., paper, balsa wood, silver, vegetable matter, stone), expressed in air speed and percentages and compiled in many complex tables (flying creatures may climb at 75% of their normal flying MV rate instead of the normal 50% rate). He briefly touches on the subject of aerial combat, mentioning flying reptiles on some occasions, suggesting the use of thermals to fly upwards to gain an advantage or to increase speed. He speaks of navigating between masses of hot and cold air in thunderstorms, allowing a flier or object to remain in the air with little effort (a flier can travel 1½ times as far as normal without rest). A footnote mentions the use and occurrence of lightning-based spells and effects in mid-air (e.g., *Chain Lightning*, *Lightning Bolt*, *Call Lightning*), discussing the notion that lightning will only strike creatures that are on the ground, those that are charged with electrical energy of their own, and even the caster himself if he is not careful.

Gliders: An extremely complex treatise (See above) on non-magical gliders. It speaks of materials used in their construction and of many other technical aspects of these contraptions, making many incredibly complex calculations in the process. It speaks of wingspans, maneuverability, flight speeds and stall speeds, minimum air speeds, weight of materials and occupants, minimum wind speeds for take-off, minimum slopes, and minimum and maximum heights. It considers getting them airborne by having them pulled by flying creatures, by pulling them behind large, fast, running beasts, by launching them with great catapults, and by binding spirits and elementals to matter, once gain repeatedly referring to *Fusiography of Ventus and Chalcum* in the latter case.

Otherwise of interest are sections on the supposed existence of gliders, fliers, and skyships on legendary worlds or continents where fliers seem to exist (Callisto, Lemuria) and of the supposed ways they were made to fly. It seems that most of these sections were copied from other sources and they contain many later annotations by the author, especially in the sections that speak of “miraculously tough and resilient laminated paper”; of hollow double hulls and buoyant gases; of “complicated systems of cables and joints and pulleys by which the jointed stationary wings are manipulated”; of “some old sorcerer of Lemuria the Lost had first learned from the High Gods the secret of the weightless metal, *urlium*”; of “engines powered by *sithurls* or *sun-stones*”; of “power crystals that draw, store, and focus energy from sunlight”; of “engines producing power for rotors whose fan blades propel crafts”; and of adjustable vanes at the tail of the ship for steering the ship”.

Parachutes and Artificial Wings: A short, extremely complex (see above) section that discusses the notion of parachutes and artificial wings. It speaks of materials required for their construction, some exotic (e.g., spider webs, ethereal wisps) and briefly touches on *wings of flying*. It calculates heights at which to deploy parachutes and artificial wings (a parachute requires a distance of at least 1,000 feet above the ground). It considers folding techniques and refers to an ancient art it calls *origami*. It attempts to calculate the minimum required size of parachutes and artificial wings as this pertains to materials and the weight of the aeronaut (a parachute must be 24 feet wide for every 200 lb it is to carry) and it speaks of the necessity of a central hole in a parachute lest it start spinning during the fall. An informed reader will find that the author did not succeed in understanding the mechanics of parachutes and (non-magical) artificial wings and that he did not arrive at

a useful conclusion. Indeed, the section seems to be little more than a collection of notes, thoughts, and tables.

Finally, the book contains the following rare spells on 12 pages: **II: *Glide***; **IV: *Windshear***. At the DM's option, these spells may be unique to this book.

Glide **(Alteration)**

Level: Wiz 2
Range: Touch
Area of Effect: One creature
Duration: As required
Casting Time: 2
Components: V S M
Saving Throw: None

Glide enables the caster to imbue himself or one other creature touched by him when he casts the spell with the ability to glide through the air at a certain angle and rate of descent, lasting as long as it takes the recipient to land or until the spell ends. The recipient must begin gliding within one round of the spell's casting or the magic is wasted.

The recipient moves at MV *Glide* 4 (A) – about 2 feet per second, or 120 feet per round – and he can travel a linear distance equal to twice the height from which he began to glide. Thus, in principle, a recipient starting from a 100-foot cliff will descend at an angle that will place him 200 feet away from his starting point upon landing.

The spell allows for some maneuvering and directional changes during the descent, providing limited horizontal movement. This means that the recipient could descend 100 feet in one direction, make a 180-degree turn and then descend the remaining 100 feet so as to land at the base of his launching point.

Alternatively, if the recipient wants to land at the base of his launching point but has no desire to use the 'glide out, turn, and glide back' routine, he can opt to perform a spiraling 'dive', maintaining a constant close proximity to his launching point. Note, however, that the recipient must always glide the full distance as determined by the altitude he started from. Under no circumstances does *Glide* enable the recipient to gain altitude, nor can he increase or decrease the rate of descent. However, certain magical and mundane effects (e.g., powerful winds, *Windshear*) can be factored in, as appropriate to the effect in question.

Dispel Magic cannot end the spell prematurely but if the recipient glides into an *anti-magic shell* or *dead magic zone*, or if *Limited Wish* or a *wish* would be used to negate the spell, he immediately plummets to the ground and suffers falling damage as usual (1d6 points of crushing damage for every 10 feet fallen, up to a maximum of 20d6 points for distances of 200 feet or more).

Note that there is no saving throw against the spell and that touching an unwilling creature, or one engaged in combat, may require a to hit roll.

The material component of *Glide* is a miniature kite, which is consumed in the casting.

Notes: *Glide* is a rare spell for Air Elementalists; it is otherwise very rare.

Source/Origins: *Glide*: Robert S. Mullin, *Arcane Lore. Spells of Elemental Air*, in: *Dragon 244* (TSR, 1998)

Windshear **(Alteration)**

Level: Wiz 4
Range: 50 yds + 10 yds/level
Area of Effect: One 25-ft-radius sphere
Duration: 1 rd/level
Casting Time: 3
Components: V S M
Saving Throw: See below

Windshear enables the caster to cause a sudden, violent disruption of air currents (the wind shear) within the area of effect, which he may move about within the spell's range at an MV rate equal to three times his level (e.g., a 7th-level Wizard can move the wind shear at a rate of MV Fly 21 (A)).

Flying creatures passing into, out of, or through the area of effect must immediately pass a saving throw vs. Breath Weapon or lose control and crash, suffering falling damage as usual (1d6 points of crushing damage for every 10 feet fallen, up to a maximum of 20d6 points for heights of 200 feet or more). However, if more than 100 feet separates the flying creature and the ground (or other surface, as applicable), a second saving throw is permitted to regain control; no other actions may be taken that round and the creature automatically acts last on the following round.

Missile weapons passing into, out of, or through the wind shear suffer a -4 penalty to hit but are otherwise unaffected. Missile-based spells and magical effects that require a to hit roll (e.g., *Melf's Acid Arrow*) also suffer this penalty. Effects that are assumed to always hit their targets (e.g., *Magic Missile*, *Fireball*) remain unaffected.

Spells, effects, and creatures that travel along air currents (e.g., *Stinking Cloud*, *Cloudkill*, creatures in *gaseous form*) suffer a random course change upon entering or exiting the wind shear. If such effects are under the directional control of a caster, magic item, or the like, control is regained at the end of the following round (though the course alteration may require the effect once again to break the wind shear's plane in order to resume its previous heading). If the effect is not a controlled force, it continues on its new course as air currents demand.

When brought into contact with magical wind-based effects (e.g., *Gust of Wind*, a djinni's *whirlwind* ability), there is a 50% chance that the wind shear negates the other effect and a 50% chance that the wind shear is negated and absorbed into the new effect, increasing the effect's duration by whatever remained of the wind shear's duration before it was absorbed. Against normal winds, the wind shear has an equal chance of either increasing or decreasing the wind speed as it passes into the spell's area of effect.

Finally, when creatures from the Elemental Plane of Air – particularly those creatures composed of wind and air (e.g., air elemental, invisible stalker, aerial servant) – pass into, out of, or through a wind shear, the sudden disruption to their own personal air currents is sufficient to slow them down for a few moments while they 'reorganize' these patterns.

Essentially, they suffer a +4 penalty to the next applicable Initiative check following contact with the wind shear.

Note that this spell is not the same as a gust of wind. Although capable of altering the course of flying creatures, missile weapons, and certain spells, it does not produce any force of its own. It is simply a disruption in air currents that creatures and conditions utilize for motive force. Therefore, it cannot be used to extinguish flames, move stationary objects or levitating creatures, or the like.

The material component of *Windshear* is a knife constructed entirely of glass and worth no less than 100 gp, which the caster sweeps before him in a cutting motion during the spell's casting. The glass knife is not consumed and may be reused.

Notes: *Windshear* is a rare spell for Air Elementalists; it is otherwise very rare.

Source/Origins: *Windshear*: Robert S. Mullin, *Arcane Lore. Spells of Elemental Air*, in: *Dragon 244* (TSR, 1998)

Research: The covers are made of mithril. Sages versed in matters pertaining to the elemental planes may find that the metal used for the inlays on the front cover is a unique metallic substance seemingly created from elemental air, perhaps associated with the Quasi-Elemental Plane of Vacuum.

A knowledgeable sage or historian may be able to inform researchers that the author was a legendary elven king who led his people in an epic journey across their world after most of it had been destroyed in the great wars of the elves – before they all but disappeared without a trace.

¹⁾ Sabin is an ancient language of an unknown world, perhaps best likened to the Latin of Earth.

Source/Origins: Tomes about physics, mechanical engineering, and aviation: Steven M. Kurtz, *Thiondar's Legacy*, in: *Dungeon 30* (TSR, 1991); Thomas Kane, *Flying the Friendly (?) Skies*, in: *Dragon 124* (TSR, 1987); Ed Greenwood, *Sailors on the Sea of Air*, in: *Dragon 124* (TSR, 1987); L. Gregory Smith, *On a Wing and a Prayer*, in: *Dragon 124* (TSR, 1987)

Bibliography: Lin Carter, *Sky Pirates of Callisto* (Dell Publishing Co., 1973); Lin Carter, *The Black Star* (Dell Publishing Co., 1973)

Anthiandria'in na'Ch'thar (Chronicles of the Ch'thar)

Volume I: The Wars of Darkness; Volume II: The Great Journey; Volume III: The Last Forest

Setting: Ch'thon

Requirements: NWP *Ancient Languages (Ancient Elvish)*; see below

Author: Thanwarion, Scribe to Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar.

Size: Each volume 89 cm tall, 52 cm wide, 11 cm thick; 1,000 pages each.

Description: A trio of splendid volumes with covers of polished, light wood with a rich patina and inlaid with what seem to be ferns of a burnished orange color, with each leaf accentuated with an exceedingly thin line of gold. The edges of the covers are protected by bands constructed of copper, messing, and white and yellow gold, all intricately carved with miniature scenes of what seem to be elves on a long journey. In the center of the front cover of each volume is a sun-like symbol composed of the same metals, this time inlaid with texts (perhaps the titles of the books) in various precious metals in shades of rich green, white, pearlescent gray, and many blues.

Within are pages of fashioned from extremely thinly cut sheets of the same wood as used on the covers, with flowering texts inlaid in gold and illuminated with the same minerals as are found on the cover.

DM: Original. Unique. Good condition. Titles on the front covers.

Reading the titles and the manuscripts requires the NWP *Ancient Languages (Ancient Elvish)*.

NWP Ancient History (Elves): The books can be of use to an individual who wishes to acquire the NWP *Ancient History (Elves)*. Note that acquiring an NWP requires the necessary number of character points or free NWP slots.

Lore: A unique work on the history of the elves of Ch'thon.

Contents: *Anthiandria'in na'Ch'thar* is a comprehensive work that dates back to a time when the elves ruled Ch'thon and their great wars ravaged the lands.

Volume I contains stories of these great wars, the wars that led to a schism in the society of elves, the eventual departure of the drow into the depths of the earth and, finally, the end of the wars.

Volume II relates the journey of the Ch'thar and their king, Thiondar, a journey that lasted many thousands of years and led them past the ruins of their world, through frozen wastes innumerable.

Volume III speaks of the end of this journey, some 6,000 years ago, when the Ch'thar and their king reached a valley they called the "Magical Valley" and where a "terrible dispute" between King Thiondar and his subjects led to nearly a thousand Ch'thar leaving again leaving their king and a few hundred of their kin in the magical valley. Calling themselves the "Elves of Gray", the leaving Ch'thar wandered for decades until they reached a forest that is now known as Val Forest. Here, their journey finally ended and millennia of tranquility followed, in which the memory of the sufferings disappeared gradually.

The notes do not speak of the nature of the "terrible dispute" at all.

Research: The covers and the pages were crafted from a variety of oak that has been extinct for some millennia. The pages are flexible like paper and they were created using a time-consuming alchemical process known only to a select number of the most knowledgeable elves. Among the precious metals used for the inlays on the covers and the illuminations on the pages are malachite, white marble, abalone, and lapis lazuli.

The chronicles are of immense historical value on Ch'thon, especially since they explain the origins of the gray elves of that world and because they cover thousands of years of its history.

History: The books were once part of the extensive library of Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar.

Source/Origins: Complete histories, legends, and myths of the continent: Steven M. Kurtz, *Thiondar's Legacy*, in: *Dungeon 30* (TSR, 1991)

Barytic, Helcitic, Heraclithic, Thlibic, and Ptosic Qualities of Archygea

Setting: Ch'thon (Elemental Plane of Earth)

Requirements: NWP *Ancient Languages* (Sabin); Intelligence 17 and NWP *Alchemy* and *Research*

Author: Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar.

Size: 47 cm tall, 35 cm wide, 19 cm thick; 387 pages.

Description: A large, well-used book with covers of gray stone. Most of the front cover is taken up by a raised rectangle that has been smoothed and polished to a mirror-like finish. Chiseled into the relatively rough edges that make up the rest of the front cover is a long text, perhaps the title of the book and inlaid with chrysoprase, jade, jet, ruby, sapphire, sard, malachite, chrysoberyl, peridot, and spinel, all set in silver. The back cover is still slightly rough like the edges of the front cover.

Within are pages of thick, yellowish parchment featuring polychrome diagrams, tables and a runic manuscript.

DM: Original. Unique. Excellent condition. Title on the front cover.

Reading the title and manuscript requires the NWP *Ancient Languages* (Sabin)¹.

Magic Mirror: The front cover of the book can be used as material component for *Magic Mirror*.

Specialist Content: The text is of such a complex and advanced nature that an individual needs to have Intelligence 17 or more and the NWP *Alchemy* and *Research* before he can fully comprehend it.

NWPs Sage Knowledge (Alchemy, Elemental Essences), Sage Knowledge (School of Magic, Divination), and Sage Knowledge (School of Magic, Elemental Earth): The book can be of use to individuals who want to improve any of their NWPs *Sage Knowledge (Alchemy, Elemental Essences)*, *Sage Knowledge (School of Magic, Divination)*, and/or *Sage Knowledge (School of Magic, Elemental Earth)*. Note that improving an NWP requires the necessary number of character points or free NWP slots.

Lore: A complex study of the various aspects of the immaterial component of elemental earth.

Contents: *Barytic, Helcitic, Heraclithic, Thlibic, and Ptosic Qualities of Archygea* is an extensive study into the ultimate quality of the immaterial aspect of elemental earth and its supposed relation to *scrying* devices, *teleportation*, and possibly the powers of primordial gods. It starts with an extended study of the most important opinions on the subject, dealing with theories on magnetism (heraclithism), pull (helcicism), pressure (barytism), gravity (ptosism), and compression (thlibism) and how all of these pertain to *scrying*, *teleportation*, and their connection to the supposed powers of primordial gods.

The author continues with a study of many spells and items associated with divination and elemental earth (e.g., *Stone Tell*, *Magic Mirror*, *crystal balls*, *scrying mirrors*) and sets out to connect each of them to the various theories discussed earlier. He proposes that scenes and events leave images that can be affected by the attractive quality of elemental earth – attracting them (heraclithism, helcicism, ptosism) and continue to do so until they end up stored in the material quality of the element (barytism, thlibism), thus masterfully combining most of the major theories he researched earlier. The author briefly mentions the theory that, since all matter is made up out of the four elements, it would seem only natural that all events affect all elements and he then relates this to the lingering presence of primordial gods and similar spirits, apparently as a prelude to later studies into the subject and a variety of artifacts (there are various added references to other books that seem to have been in the author's collection, such as *Collogium of Chronospectral Dimensiography* and *Tome of Shim-Shari*), mentioning their fickle nature and the time it takes to understand them for the purposes of magical research and, for now, wryly deciding that "such is better left to the priests of the world, and then those with more time at their hands than even I have".

After this, the author concentrates on means to magically retrieve the "stored images" and even prevent them from being 'stored' in the first place. He suggests that glass would perhaps be the best material to use for his experiments (mirrors, refraction of events in glass) but quickly delves deep into the reflective qualities of stone and rock itself, the possibility of transporting reflected images to other locations, and how to connect them to other materials (e.g., fabric and, more in particular, banners). Various paragraphs seem to be attempts to prove that certain aspects the author seems to have been confronted with – involuntarily, apparently – can be reproduced or even countered magically.

Research: Sages of dwarven lore may conclude that the author made extensive use of the secret knowledge of ancient dwarves.

A knowledgeable sage or historian may be able to inform researchers that the author was a legendary elven king who led his people in an epic journey across their world after most of it had been destroyed in the great wars of the elves – before they all but disappeared without a trace.

Furthermore, a qualified reader (See above) may conclude that the author was apparently researching the subject matter with a single goal in mind, which may have been to solve a problem that seems to have been associated with an artifact or relic that may have had its origins in primordial times.

¹⁾ Sabin is an ancient language of an unknown world, perhaps best likened to the Latin of Earth.

Source/Origins: Several hundred books dedicated to the study of magic; *The Stone of Gul* and further centuries of research: Steven M. Kurtz, *Thiondar's Legacy*, in: *Dungeon 30* (TSR, 1991)

Beryllium

An Annotated History of the City of Beryl and its University, its Colleges, and the College of Magi in Particular

Setting: Ch'thon

Requirements: NWP *Ancient Languages* (*Ancient Elvish*)

Author: His August Eminence, the Wizard Thanmar, Rector of the College of Magi.

Size: 45 cm tall, 27.5 cm wide, 14.2 cm thick; 2,700 pages

Description: A large, thick book with covers of heavy, resplendent white leather. In the center of the front cover is a single rune, pressed into the leather in platinum and depicting a stylized seven-pointed star in a circle.

Within are high-quality, gold-edged, white paper pages, each sewn to a tawny leather inner spine backing with silver thread and featuring a polychrome manuscript in an exceedingly neat hand. On the title page are several lines of text, illuminated in many colors and with emphasis on one word, perhaps the title of the book.

DM: Duplicate (One of 15 copies). Copies rare. Good condition. The title is on the title page.

Reading the title and manuscript requires the NWP *Ancient Languages* (*Ancient Elvish*).

NWP Ancient History (Beryl): The book can be instrumental to individuals who wish to acquire the NWP *Ancient History* (*Beryl*). Note that acquiring an NWP requires the necessary number of character points or free NWP slots.

Lore: An extensive history of the city of Beryl and its university.

Contents: *Beryllium* describes the history of the city of Beryl – nestled in the heart of the vast Val Forest and adorning the shores of the Silver Lake – and the University of Beryl. It describes the foundation of the city and its university nearly a thousand years ago, their subsequent history, and how the city grew into a center of wealth, splendor, intrigue, and of elven and human commerce, attracting the attention of scholars and merchants for the past two centuries.

The renowned University of Beryl covers a quarter of the inner city with the campuses of its five colleges: the College of Art and Architecture, the College of Alchemy, the College of Engineering, the College of Antiquity, and the university's first school, the College of Magi.

Although the book does not usually go into too much detail on these subjects, it does give the informed reader a good idea of the nature of the countless intrigues and scandals that have marred the history of both the city and the university over the past centuries.

Research: Although some 15 duplicates are known to exist, only five of these were written in Ancient Elvish, the remainder in Common.

The author is a high-elf and the famous founder of the prestigious university and, more in particular, its College of Magi.

History: Although this is not likely to be common knowledge, the book was once part of the extensive library of Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar, the legendary elven king who led his people in an epic journey across their world after most of it had been destroyed in the great wars of the elves – before they all but disappeared without a trace.

Source/Origins: Complete histories, legends, and myths of the continent: Steven M. Kurtz, *Thiondar's Legacy*, in: *Dungeon 30* (TSR, 1991)

Convolutés of Legend and Song

(Sixteen volumes)

Setting: Ch'thon

Requirements: See below; NWP *Ancient Languages* (*Ancient Elvish*)

Author: Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar (comp.).

Size: Each volume 124 cm tall, 60.5 cm wide, from 10 to 40 cm thick; from 659 to 2,567 pages.

Description: A collection of sixteen large, featureless mahogany folios.

Each folio contains hundreds and hundreds of pages and sheets of all kinds of materials, usually parchment, vellum, paper, and papyrus but also bamboo sheets, etched sheets of metal or mother-of-pearl, bone frames, and so on.

DM: Collection unique. Originals and copies and unique to common. Excellent to poor condition. Untitled.

Reading the manuscripts requires many different NWP (See below for a few examples). Reading the marginalia and summary notes requires the NWP *Ancient Languages (Ancient Elvish)*.

NWP Folklore: Although they can also be of use to various other people (e.g., Bards, singers, historians, lovers of art, arcanologists, poets), the folios would be of particular use to an individual who wishes to improve his NWP *Folklore*. Note that improving an NWP requires the necessary number of character points or free NWP slots.

Lore: A huge, probably unique collection of myths, legends, and songs.

Contents: *Convolutés of Legend and Song* comprises a huge collection of sheets, maps, songs, ballads, poems, snippets of information, studies, theses, and essays concerning many legends from all over the planes of existence. There are legends and songs of heroes and heroines of old; legendary treasures, relics, and artifacts; lost pyramids, temples, and tombs; sunken cities, islands, and continents; mysterious constructs; lyrical poems; tales of ancient dragons and mythical sphinxes; omens, auguries, and divinations; lost worlds and unknown planes; fiendish labyrinths and haunted castles; sewers and catacombs; islands of magical clouds and the depths of the earth; and so on, and so on.

The marginalia and notes in *Ancient Elvish* add to the texts, provide the reader with directions, delete whole sections, refer to other sheets in the folios and to many other books on many different subjects (legends, history, magic, the theater). They refer to portals and *gates* and to all manner of spells, items, and apparatuses that can transport creatures and things (e.g., *mirror of transportation*, *portable hole*, *cubic gate*, *apparatus of the Kwalish*); to guides and servants; to components for transportation spells and where they can be found; to talismans and amulets.

On a damaged sheet of vellum are two sentences in a faded, grayish blue ink (World of Greyhawk; NWP *Reading/Writing (The Common Tongue)*). Several additional sentences have been crossed out. An annotation in *Ancient Elvish* and in the author's hand reads "Ractus?".

Excerpt¹⁾: "As time progressed, Adder built vast libraries, and amassed a large number of ancient books and scrolls. Tomes dealing with beasts, magic, and religion were plentiful. Information about almost anything could be found in his libraries."

Another note contains a text in an unknown language and several sentences written in *Ancient Elvish* (Ch'thon; NWP *Ancient Languages (Ancient Elvish)*).

Excerpt²⁾: "Siragle is a major Abyssal fiend whose form is that of an unsettling blend of humanoid and reptilian. It stands 8½ feet tall and has the head of a crocodile, crowned with sharp black antlers.

"Its body is that of huge, muscular human, a full 3 feet wide.

"Its eyes are a solid blood-red, its numerous teeth (666? 88?) are black as soot.

"It has a 5-foot tail that trails behind it and ends in a dagger-like, yellowed ivory stinger (Vampiric? cf. Greyhawk).

"... but has not brought a weapon with him?

"On its hands and feet are vicious claws and its leathery, muscled body is a blackish-green."

Another contains a number of hastily scribbled notes (Forgotten Realms; NWP *Reading/Writing (Espruar)*).

Excerpt³⁾: "On a night, a piece of sky fell to the earth?

"Neverwinter upriver Neverwinter Woods Mount Hotenow

"Lady of the Woods

"*Klolu*

"cf. 28, IV?"

A sheet of beaten copper features an engraving that reads (Fantastic Earth; NWP *Reading/Writing (English)*).

Excerpt⁴⁾: "Mighty Slave of this Ring

Obey at my command!

Hear my call; come,

And hear what I demand!

Sharlumanugash appear!"

Research: There seems to be no logic to the way the sheets are arranged.

A knowledgeable sage or historian may be able to inform researchers that the author was a legendary elven king who led his people in an epic journey across their world after most of it had been destroyed in the great wars of the elves – before they all but disappeared without a trace.

Such an individual could also be able to suggest that it seems likely that King Thiondar used *factotums* or *bikbellums* to retrieve whatever information he wanted from the folios, although there is no record of him ever having possessed such creatures.

¹⁾ This is a reference to Garry J. Sled, *The Vault of Time* (www, 1997)

²⁾ This is a reference to Michael Shel, *Sleepless*, in: *Dungeon 28* (TSR, 1991)

³⁾ This is a reference to Shonn Everett, *Visitors from Above*, in: *Dungeon 28* (TSR, 1991)

⁴⁾ This is a reference to Harry O. Fisher, *The Finzer Family — A Tale of Modern Magic*, in: *The Dragon 8* (TSR, 1977). Interestingly, some scholars suggest that there may be a connection to the mysterious world of Nehwon.

Source/Origins: Complete histories, legends, and myths: Steven M. Kurtz, *Thiondar's Legacy*, in: *Dungeon 30* (TSR, 1991)

Manifest of Majuur Maledictions

(The Book of Mummies)

Setting: Ch'thon

Requirements: NWP *Ancient Languages (Semnuwian)*

Author: Thebesotar the Episcopt.

Size: 45 cm tall, 30 cm wide, 3 cm thick; 77 pages.

Description: An ancient book with covers fashioned from what seem to be strips of cloth or bandages featuring sequence upon sequence of pictoglyphs in faded black ink. The front cover features a painted, polychrome depiction of a scarab, underneath a number of symbols reminiscent of hieroglyphic writing, perhaps the title of the work.

Within are brittle, dark brown to black pages not unlike vellum in structure and with a manuscript of symbols in faded polychrome inks and paints.

DM: Original. Unique (No known copies). Average condition. Title on the front cover.

Reading the title and the manuscript requires the NWP *Ancient Languages (Semnuwian)*¹⁾. The faded hieroglyphs on the strips of cloth that make up the covers are the names of the ancient kings of the House of the Night Winds, each accompanied by its own hymn of praise to one of their ancient gods.

NWP Sage Knowledge (School of Magic, Necromancy): The book can be of use to an individual who wants to improve his NWP Sage Knowledge (School of Magic, Necromancy). Note that improving an NWP requires the necessary number of character points or free NWP slots.

Lore: A collection of ancient curses associated with mummified corpses.

Contents: *Manifest of Majuur Maledictions* is a collection of ancient and unholy curses and chants that aim to animate and command the mummified corpses of the kings of the House of the Night Winds, the rulers of the Majuur Desert in ancient times. These curses involve calling upon the aid of various dark, heinous entities of the lower planes such as Set, Anubis, Zadaphiel, Mazatan, Maal-Bechiel, Nabaril, and Arat-Astrel. The curses and chants were used both for animation and controlling purposes and it can be gleaned from them that many of them were chanted in occult rituals performed after the initial animation of the corpses, perhaps by the members of a dedicated cult who would repetitively chant the names of the animated kings, evidently to ensure their continued control and existence in undeath. Since these curses and chants seem to have a distinct feel of abjuration and invocation about them, it seems that they were also necessary to prevent the mummified kings from turning on their creators and exact a terrible revenge.

Research: The covers consist of sheets of a reed-like material covered with the cursed windings of mummies, which have been soaked into a preserving solution of elixir of dead larvae, ichors of scorpions, black hellebore root, asafetida, carbonate of soda, and numerous spices and resins. The pages are of human skin preserved in a similar substance. The paints and inks used in the manuscript were concocted from such exotic ingredients as ichors of scarabs, powdered obsidian, the blood of jackals, and venom of cobras.

Although some indices refer to the book as *The Book of Mummies* (not to be confused with *Obloquy of Occult Obsequies*), this is believed to be based on an inaccurate translation of a list describing items retrieved from a pyramid in the Majuur Desert some centuries ago.

Several indices and catalogues written over the ages refer to the supposed, numerous curses associated with the book, ranging from readers contracting diseases not dissimilar to *mummy rot* and gangrene to insect plagues and droughts laying waster to towns where the book was kept. However, there is no actual proof that the book is subject to any such today.

Interestingly, many of the names of the extra-planar entities mentioned in the book (Zadaphiel, Mazatan, Maal-Bechiel, Nabaril, Arat-Astrel) do not occur in the known references to the denizens of the lower outer planes or, indeed, any of the planes of existence.

History: Although this is not likely to be common knowledge, the book was once part of the extensive library of Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar, the legendary elven king who led his people in an epic journey across their world after most of it had been destroyed in the great wars of the elves – before they all but disappeared without a trace.

¹⁾ Semnuwian is an ancient language of Ch'thon, the royal language spoken in the ancient kingdoms that comprised much of what is now known as the Majuur Desert. It is written using hieroglyphic and semnoglyphic symbols, each of which stands for a particular sound of groups of sounds. It is known mostly from inscriptions and epigraphs.

Source/Origins: Books about necromancy: Steven M. Kurtz, *Thiondar's Legacy*, in: *Dungeon 30* (TSR, 1991)

Nanais na'Ch'thar (Songs of the Ch'thar)

Setting: Ch'thon

Requirements: NWP *Ancient Languages (Ancient Elvish)*

Author: Anachrin Anais, Last of the Ch'thar.

Size: 60 cm tall, 37 cm wide, 11 cm thick; 222 pages.

Description: A large folio with covers from a rich, dark green vegetable material contained in elaborate gold and silver frames and with what appears to be a complex text cut into the front cover and filled with a rich, velvet-like, yellow material with striations of gold and silver. The work exudes a faint, perfumed smell perhaps most reminiscent of a blooms in a sun-drenched field.

Within are loose, thin pages fashioned from what appear to be various, large flower leaves in many, usually pastel, colors (lilac, light yellow, light blue, violet, broken white, pink) and featuring polychrome manuscripts in faint inks and contained in elaborate frames in golden, brown, and silver paints.

DM: Original. Unique (See below). Good condition. Title on the front cover.

Reading the title and manuscript requires the NWP *Ancient Languages (Ancient Elvish)*.

NWPs *Ancient History (Elves)*, *Sage Knowledge (Art, Music)*, and *Singing*: The book can be of use to individuals who want to improve any of their NWPs *Ancient History (Elves)*, *Sage Knowledge (Art, Music)*, and/or *Singing*. Note that improving an NWP requires the necessary number of character points or free NWP slots.

Lore: A collection of ancient elven songs that speak of the history of the Ch'thar.

Contents: *Nanais na'Ch'thar* is a collection of elven songs that speak of the Ch'thar reaching a "Magical Valley", of their wonder and amazement, of a terrible dispute, of betrayal, of primordial forces, and of a melancholy king. It starts with the arrival of the Ch'thar in "The Magical Valley" and their first weeks there and leads up to a terrible dispute between King Thiondar and his subjects, to nearly a thousand Ch'thar leaving the valley again after this, leaving their king and a few hundred of their kin in the magical valley. It does not speak much of this 'terrible' dispute, although it seems to have involved the death of a noble elven hero through betrayal of some kind. After this, there are only three more songs, one that speaks of betrayal in the general sense of the word, another of primordial forces, and the last of a melancholy king who ruled the valley for millennia.

Research: The covers and pages were made from plants and flowers found in the "The Magical Valley". Inks expertly crafted from flowers, honey, and minerals found in the same valley.

Many scholars have suggested that the work is no longer complete. Furthermore, some sages at the University of Beryl believe that parts of what is described by the songs in this book may have been told by the author to the Elves of Gray thousands of years ago. However, the records of this event have not been seen since.

From the book, it can be gleaned that Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar, was an elven king who led his people in an epic journey across their world after most of it had been destroyed in the great wars of the elves.

A knowledgeable sage or historian may be able to inform researchers that both Thiondar and his elves eventually all but disappeared without a trace.

Source/Origins: Complete histories, legends, and myths of the continent: Steven M. Kurtz, *Thiondar's Legacy*, in: *Dungeon 30* (TSR, 1991)

Thenth'thon Ch'thon

Setting: Ch'thon

Requirements: NWP *Ancient Languages (Ancient Elvish)*

Illustration: Unknown

Author: Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar

Size: 42 cm tall, 29.7 cm wide, 4.5 cm thick; 1,350 pages.

Description: A libram with covers of polished, scaled leather of a silvery, anthracite hue with a deep glow. On the front cover, a text has been inscribed, perhaps the title of the work.

Within are pages of first-class ivory colored paper. Monochrome manuscript in an exceedingly regular calligraphic script.

DM: Original. Unique. Average condition. Title on the front cover.

Reading the title and manuscript requires the NWP *Ancient Languages (Ancient Elvish)*. The title roughly translates as "Symbol Stone" or perhaps "Primordial Symbol" – there is little distinction between both in Ancient Elvish.

Lore: A collection of notes on research into a previously unknown artifact.

Contents: *Thenth'thon Ch'thon* contains the author's notes on his research into an artifact he believes hails from primordial times and which he calls *The Symbol Stone*. He provides a full description of this *stone* and mentions that it features and engraved pattern of unknown magical symbols.

The first series of notes comprise an extensive, orderly collection of notes on the myriad of books the author seems to have consulted regarding the subject. These are followed by many of his theories, apparently aimed at eliminating thousands of possibilities to identify the *stone*. It seems that this has led him to concluding that the *stone* could be one of three things:

- 1) It could be the famed *Tabula Smaragdina*;
- 2) It could be the *Bragollaich*, more commonly known as the famous volcanic-green *Philosopher's Stone*; or,
- 3) It could be *Hebenhizer*, better known as the *Stone of Aid*.

After this, the notes contain a lot of information about these three legendary stones, followed by many magical tests to determine their authenticity. Eventually, the

author has to conclude that the *stone* in his possession is neither of these stones.

He is unable to determine the exact age and origins of the *stone* in his possession but he estimates that it must be many, many thousands of years older than the times described in the annals of the elves, a time when an unknown people roamed the world.



Now, the author starts attempting to analyze the symbols and patterns on the stone, which leads to endless essays and calculations of patterns, for which he consults many books he owned about the subject. Slowly, ever so slowly, his research leads to the notion that the pattern seems to contain a certain power, which he can call forth by means of a special code or system. After much research, he finds the key and realizes that he has found, perhaps, one of the oldest magical spells ever found.

The author eventually finds that the *stone* seems to contain two spells, one that would call fire to an inflammable object and the second to localize herds of animals. He notes that both spells are based on a completely different school of magic than any other he is aware of and that they do not depend on the experience of the caster but rather on how long the runes are studied – the longer, the more effective the spells will be. He also notes that there are more variables that would influence the effect of the spells, such as distance of the target or subject, relative power on a presumed scale, and time (e.g., wet wood would require more power than dry straw; locating a herd takes longer the further they are away from the *stone*). All in all, the spells are not very effective. The simpler versions of the first spells, which he dubs *Call Fire*, would take five hours to ignite a pile of dry sticks, while *Locate Herd* would take twelve hours to locate a small group of pigs some two miles away from the *stone*.

The author classifies the symbols as distant forebears of a lost magical language of which only three words are believed to have survived today and he seems to have toyed with the idea to call them “Dethlek”, after the first syllable from the simplest magical script used by students of magic to transcribe their first cantrips.

Research: The covers are fashioned from silver *dragonscale*¹⁾. The title was magically inscribed. The pages are of rosewood paper (200 gram each). Like the title, the manuscript was magically wrought onto the pages. Interestingly, there seems to be only very little information on the *stone* the author possessed²⁾.

A knowledgeable sage or historian may be able to inform researchers that the author was Thiondar, King of the Ch'thar, the legendary elven king who led his people in an epic journey across their world after most of it had been destroyed in the great wars of the elves – before they all but disappeared without a trace.

¹⁾ *Dragonscale* is a leather-like material made of the scaly skin of a dragon, usually from the tougher parts of the skin and always with the scales still showing. More often than not, the hide is protected by many layers of transparent lacquers, which not only protect the skin but also lend a certain ‘depth’ to the cover. Sometimes, intricate patterns or texts in gold-leaf are added between the layers.

²⁾ If the book would be brought to a sage specialized in ancient history, there is a 30% chance that he will discover that a reference to the valley of the Ch'thar matches an allusion to a relic of giantish manufacture, called the *Stone of Gul*. The sage's histories relate that the Ch'thar discovered a long-abandoned temple dedicated to Gul in the valley. Use of *Legend Lore* or *Contact other Planes* has about the same chance for obtaining this information.

Source/Origins: *The Stone of Gul* and further centuries of research: Steven M. Kurtz, *Thiondar's Legacy*, in: *Dungeon 30* (TSR, 1991)