

Published by New World Computing, Inc.

Designed by Holistic Design Inc.

Executive Producer: Jon Van Caneghem

**Produced by** Mark Caldwell and Deane Rettig

**Programmed by** Ken Lightner and Rob Lefebvre

**Introduction Animation:** Great Northwestern Graphics

**Graphics:** Ed Pike, Ed Hudson, Frank Rydberg, Stephen Beam,  
Daryl Elliott, Joel Payne, Bonita Long-Hemsath,  
Julia Ulano, Cris-Jon Lindsay

**Music:** Rob Lefebvre and Bruce Nunley

**Digital Sound Effects:** Ken Lightner

**Audio Technology:** Human Machine Interfaces, Inc.  
Sound Operating System

**Documentation:** Ed Pike

**Introductory Fiction:** Bill Bridges

**Quality Assurance Manager:** Mario Escamilla

**Play Testing at Holistic Design:** Mary Lefebvre, Cheri Gatland-Lightner,  
Jeff Thomas, Craig Reardon, Cris-Jon Lindsay, and Kevin Creekmore.

**Play Testing at New world Computing:** Peter Ryu, David Vela, Manny  
Lomas, Brian Stubbings, Clayton Retzer

**Play Testing at American Garners Association:** Phil Bump, Kevin  
Hobbs, Greg Plunket, Ken King, Malcolm Todd, and Freeman Goodyear,

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# HAMMER OF THE GODS: Am Saga

*Tigers of the sea! Men with the hearts of wolves and thews of fire and steel! Feeders of ravens whose only joy lies in slaying and dying! Giants to whom the death-song of the sword is sweeter than the love-song of a girl!*

— Robert E. Howard, *Tigers of the Sea*

Thunder rumbled across the face of the sea. Distant lightning lit up the far clouds, hanging heavy and low on the horizon. A lone dragon ship sped furiously across the waves, racing against the coming storm.

The sail stretched full taut, filled with the chill, wet wind. The rain beat down on the huge, bearded men furiously working the oars, heaving forward and back, shoving the boat forward faster than wind alone through strength of muscle.

By the prow, below the arching dragon head which clove the waters, stood a man wrapped in dark furs. His left leg was propped on the railing, resting his thick-thewed arm. He ran his hand through his long beard, tugging mercilessly at it, deep in grim thought. Rain ran down his face, although he appeared to take as much notice of it as would a statue.

The men of the ship knew well his grim demeanor. Indeed, it was cause for the man's namesake. Am the Grim he was called, and known as such up and down the icy coasts of the northlands. The men of those lands feared him for his ill temper and his strong thews.

Am stared out at the raging seas, unmoved as his boat rocked restlessly under him and his men struggled against time to make the coast before the storm arrived in force. Am thought upon the weighty matters which had recently confronted him, matters of peace and diplomacy which a man of action like himself so hated. But in such matters he had to think of the livelihood of his family, and not be concerned with his own needs and desires.

His lands had known war for a long time and peace was what was needed. Peace and a time for mending and healing old wounds. A time to grow and prosper, to utilize the booty seized from foreign cities, and repair the damage done by enemy raiders. For such a time to come about, Am had to make oaths of peace with his neighbor, Kralki Beareye, a bold but dishonorable chief who Am had long hated.

But peace must come, and so it did, as Am swore the proper oaths and traded the proper hostages. For such a treaty to be solid, Am had to give Kralki his son, Gund, as a hostage. Likewise, Kralki gave his own son, Rolf, into Am's keeping. In such ways, war would be less likely to start between them, when a treasured son was so close to doom.



However, Am did not trust Kralki to care well for Gund. Gund was Arn's only son, although he hoped his wife would bear him more one day. No, he would have much preferred to fight Kralki until all the mothers of Kralki's lands cried to him for the weight of sons they had lost, and Kralki would be forced to yield his lands to Am, the conquering chief. But now was not the time for such glory. His lands needed trade, and only Kralki could provide it.

But while his farmers and lodgemen rested and rebuilt the towns and cities ravaged by war, Am could not rest. He had the urge to go outwards, towards something new, to perform deeds unknown yet to men. So, he took his dragon ship and departed his lands, heading north and east, towards unexplored regions.

He thus set out on the god path, to serve mighty Tyr, god of war. Through deeds of valor he would prove himself worthy to that god, and thus win favor in the eyes of Odin, the All-Father, chieftain of the gods. Am had sworn an oath long ago to surpass the deeds of all men, to continually strive beyond what common heroes accepted as glory. He swore to one day become the Hammer of the Gods.

Am was wrenched from his brooding by a large hand gripping his shoulder. He turned to the owner of the hand, the only one on board who would dare bother Am so and get away with his head intact, his long-time axe-brother, Erik Nornson.

"What is it now, Erik?" Am said.

"Damn your brooding hide, Grim One! We have trouble here and now, not in the mist of your memory," Erik cried out over the lashing wind.

Am scowled. "And what is this great trouble that wakes me from weighty matters?"

Erik pointed out over the ocean, towards the horizon, "That!"

Am growled and cursed at what he saw. There, out across the waves, slipping in and out of the tumultuous waters, almost camouflaged amid the rise and fall of the crests, was a great, green serpent, winding its way towards the dragon ship.

"Damn!" Am cried. He turned to his men, who stilled rowed furiously. "Drop your oars and take arms! The serpent is upon us! And I'll kill the first man who fails to fight like a true warrior against it!"

Am gripped his axe and slipped it from his belt. The rain made the haft slick, but Am wrapped the leather thong tight about his hand. He would be damned if he'd let his weapon slip from him when he needed it most. He looked about at his men as they stood and reached for their weapons, Huge

men, all strongly muscled, trained swordsmen all.

None were armored, for rowing in armor is too arduous a task. But this was good, for if any was flung into the sea, armor would only drag them down faster.

"It's here!" Erik yelled, raising his sword high.

A deafening roar cracked through the sky like thunder, and Am realized it was the cry of the serpent. A huge, scaly head reared up from below the waves, mere feet from the side of the ship. Swordsmen yelled and ran forward, some flinging spears at the gaping maw of the lizard. But Am spun around and scanned the waves on the other side of the ship. There, slipping almost stealthily from the waters, was the thing's tail, moving forward to wrap around the ship while the men were distracted by the beast's armored head.

Am leaped forward and heaved back his axe, bringing it down hard on the slithering tail as it reached the edge of the ship. The axe cleaved through iron-hard scales and bit deep into the tail. Green ichor spewed onto Am and across the deck.

Am heard the roar of pain behind him, and spun to see the serpent's head rushing for him, ignoring the wall of swords between them. The head knocked the men aside as if they were mere waves of the sea. But Am was not so easily moved. He had met such beasts before; this was nothing compared to the Drakes and Dragons he had bested.

He stood stock still while the serpent's head rushed at him, its maw gaping wide, ready to swallow the mortal with one chomp. Then, as the jaws loomed over him, ready to snap shut, he swung upward with his axe, into the thing's mouth, where its armored scales could not protect it. The thing's rancid, fish breath nearly gagged him, but the axe swung true and hard, thunking into the roof of the serpent's mouth, then deeper as the serpent fell forward, cleaving its way into the thing's brain.

Am leaped away before the serpent could land on him, but his hand, tied to the axe, was caught inside the mouth. The axe, buried so deep, refused to be dislodged. Am grunted in pain as the dead beast's weight bore him down to the deck, his arm buried to the shoulder in its dead mouth. He cursed as the hot ichor poured down over his hand, burning him, and he struggled harder to pull the axe out.

The weight of the dead beast had its toll on the dragon ship, as the boat slowly began to reel over, beginning to capsize as the thing's body dragged it down into the depths.

"Curse you, Erik! Where's your knife?" Am yelled, his arm still in the



serpent's mouth. "Come cut my hand from my axe before the whole ship goes with it!"

Erik ran over, pulled his knife from its sheath and stuck his head and arm into the mouth. He saw the axe and thong, pulling taught against Am's hand and dripping with the bleeding ichor of the sea serpent, and cut it cleanly with the sharp iron. Am leaped away and pulled Erik back as the serpent's body slipped away into the sea.

The boat rocked violently back and forth, waves cresting and threatening to swallow the boat on either side, but soon the ship settled aright.

"Phew!" Erik grimaced, still sitting on the deck. "What a stench! I'd wager its smell is almost as bad as yours, Am."

"Your humor is sharp, my friend. Almost as sharp as your knife," Am said as he stood up, nearly slipping on the slick ichor that covered the deck, smeared in a trail leading down into the sea.

"Ah, but humor wouldn't have cut that damn leather away," Erik replied.

"True indeed. And I'll remember it, Erik. My thanks. From now on, I shall have to rely on my own grip to keep my axe in hand."

A man came up to them, this one different from all the others on board in demeanor and bearing, although no smaller than the smallest of them. His eyes bore a wisdom deeper than his apparent years, for he looked to be a mere twenty years old but seemed more like forty. He was called Ulf the Fey, for he knew the ways of the elves and dwarves, and understood his Wyrd, a great thing.

"Speak, Ulf," Am said. "How fares the crew?"

"One dead. He fell over the side and none have seen him since. In this storm, he is surely gone."

"Damn! Who was it? What was his name?"

"Geri, chief. He was a warrior recruited in Ostersund."

"Aye, I remember him. A good man. A strong sword arm. Had he wife or son, Ulf?"

"Aye, chief, he did. Both."

"Then his weapons will go to that son upon our return."

Ulf nodded and returned to the crew, yelling out orders for them to return to their seats. After the ship was checked from prow to stern, it was revealed that a small leak had been rent by the force of the serpent's body weighing upon the ship. Men were put to tarring the hole up, while the rest resumed their oaring. If the wind kept with them, they would reach the coast within the hour. Then they could effect more thorough repairs on land once they had found a river or beach.

Am and Erik stood at the prow, staring forward, searching for sign of this unknown land to which they traveled. They relied on a map given to them in trade by dwarves, who claimed distant cousins of their race lived in the mountains here. Am thought grimly that if the dwarves lied about the distance to the coast, the ship could well sink before finding land. But he was soon relieved to see a rocky coast in the distance before them. He yelled to the crew to heave to and make time fast.

"Well, Erik. A new land waits before us. Only dwarves have trod here before. What think you we shall find here?"

"Trouble. Trouble and adventure. Perhaps our glory. Perhaps our doom," Erik replied, staring out at the coast.

"Ha! You are more grim than I! Come, Nornson, your mothers would surely have warned you of the danger before departing."

"My mothers, the Norn keepers of fate, are distant and do not speak to their children unless spoken to, as you well know. And I do not ask my fate to be revealed, but only wish to live it."

"A wise philosophy, my friend," Am said, and then grew silent, as he pondered what lay before them.

...

A day and night had passed, all busy with the job of dragging the ship onto the rocky beach they had come upon. Fires were lit and tar heated, while others went into the woods to fell trees for the wood to repair the ship. Am led these men himself, for if there was trouble to be found in these strange woods, then he would be the first to greet it. But nothing was encountered on the forays, except sightings of the usual woodland creatures.

Throughout the day, Am wished that his son was near, so that he could teach him the ways of things, from patching a leaky ship to stalking game in the woods. And if enemies were near, he could teach him to fight and show no mercy for a foe.

When Am returned with all the wood necessary, the men set about carving it while he retired to his bed. Ulf was there, waiting for him, standing quietly by Am's bedroll.

"Ulf, you look as if you have something to say," Am said as he sat down tiredly.

Ulf looked over at the woods, staring strangely at them, as if he saw more than the mere trees and rocks of the mortal world. "There is danger here, Am. It will not bother us on the beach, but deeper, farther into this land, much trouble awaits us. There are also dwarves here. I see sign of their passage. They have been to collect rocks from this coast before."



"Then we will search them out tomorrow and get them to reveal what they know of this place."

"I did not think of it before, but I have heard tell of a land that looked much like this, although always spoken of in mystery and caution. If this indeed be that land, we will be lucky to leave with our skins, but mayhap we will leave with much more besides, for it is said that the Sword of Hrut was lost here long ago."

"Odin's Blood! Say on, man! That legendary sword carved kingdoms in the past, when my grandfather's father was but a milk-fed lad. If it is here, I would win it and prove its master! With such a blade, I could rule all the northlands, and my son and his sons after me!"

"We will know more when we speak with the dwarves tomorrow, if that is your will, my chief. And I will do all I can to help you achieve that blade." This last was said with a deep sorrow that Am could not understand, but before he could speak, Ulf arose and walked from the fire, into the darkness surrounding the camp.

Am pondered on this statement of his friend. It was said that Ulf at times knew his own Wyrd, his fate, and if this was so, perhaps he had seen ill for himself in the coming days here. At this thought, Am's heart filled with pride to know Ulf, for if his Wyrd did speak ill, then a brave man indeed was Ulf not to beg Am to return to known lands on the morrow.

Am rolled over and fell into deep sleep,  
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The next day, Am led a band of warriors out to explore. With him was Erik and Ulf. One third of his force he had left behind to finish repairs on the ship, and to guard it from enemies.

The band thrashed through the forest, which was thick with pine scent. Few paths could be found, sure sign that men rarely if ever came here. Ulf was quick to point out the dwarf paths, faint through age. They had not been trod in some time. About mid day, they came to the edge of the woods and looked out at a plain stretching a few leagues to a mountain pass. All across the horizon were mountains, huge, blocking out half the sky.

"There! There will the dwarves surely be," Am said.

Ulf simply nodded, a dark look on his face. Am led the men onward. In another few hours, they reached the foot of the pass and prepared to make camp.

Am stood apart, watching all around them for signs of the dwarves. The light began to grow dimmer as the sun set to the west, the direction they had come from. Soon, the only light was the flickering fire, dancing in and out

of the mountain crevices.

They assigned sleep shifts, with half of them sleeping while the other half stayed awake. Am did not sleep, but instead paced impatiently about the fire.

As he finally tired of pacing and settled down to ponder their situation, he saw a shadow moving on the nearby mountain wall, the shadow of a man smaller than any in his band.

"Hsst," Ulf said. "The dwarves come."

Am rose to his feet, gripping his new axe but not pulling it from his belt. He watched as the shadows began to move all around them. Am wondered how many dwarves there were, and feared that the trick of the shadows was true, and that there were forty of them. Finally, a single dwarf stepped from the rocks and approached the camp.

He was a stout figure, with a thick, dark beard which covered his abdomen like a shirt. He stood only four feet tall, and bore a hammer that was nearly as large as he, which he carried over his shoulders. His face was dirty, smeared with grime, as were his limbs. Barely visible beneath his beard was the gleam of mail, perhaps a hauberk.

The dwarf spoke: "Who are you? Why do you come to our lands?" He addressed Am, who was clearly the leader.

"We have come seeking the Sword of Hrut, rumored to have been lost here long ago," Am replied.

At the mention of the sword, the dwarves eyes widened, and a strange expression came over his face which could only be described as greed. "So you seek the sword of heroes, do you? You know that all who have sought it have died?"

Ulf spoke up. "We know well its legends. Do you know where it rests?"

"Ha! Ha! I know where it is, but it is not at rest! Its work of slaying never ends. Oh, yes, I know well where it hides."

Am stepped forward. "Then will you tell us where it is?"

The dwarf looked warily at the large Viking, as if measuring up his chances against him in a fight. Then, as if he had decided he would fair poorly, he said, "What shall be my reward for such a boon?"

"Name your price!" Am said.

The dwarves eyes lit up. "I want the gold hoard!"

"What hoard is this? I know of no hoard," Am said.

The dwarf smiled. "The Sword of Hrut guards a treasure, the hoard of the Giant who took the sword to these lands. But the Giant is dead, so the hoard is yours for the taking."

Ulf spoke up again. "Why then do you not take it?"





The dwarf scowled at him, and then turned back to Am. "The trolls guard the Sword. We have warred with our enemies, the trolls, for years, and have not the strength to best them for a few pieces of gold."

"A few?!" Am said. "I am thinking there are more than a few coins there, judging by the look on your face. But take no insult, for it shall be yours. I only ask a mere 10 gold coins per swordsman in my band. And the sword, of course."

The dwarf looked about the camp, counting the men there. "Done! It shall be as you ask! Come now, then. I will lead you to the Sword of Hrut!" And he spun around and quickly walked towards the mountain pass, where shadows convened and more dwarves appeared, a small army of them.

Am looked at Erik and Ulf. Both nodded. They could trust the dwarves. For now.

"Up men!" Am yelled, kicking a still sleeping swordsman out of his roll. "We have legends to forge!"

The men all got up quickly, trained through years of raiding to be up and ready to follow the path to battle at a moment's notice. Am walked resolutely forward, following the dwarf, and his men fell in behind him.

The pass narrowed the deeper they went, until it finally ended at a steep mountain wall, bereft of handholds. The dwarves all walked behind a large rock and disappeared. The one who had spoken with them waited there, motioning the Vikings forward.

Am looked around the rock and saw a small cave leading into the mountain, although the entrance was only four and a half feet high. A dangerous trap, if this was a trap.

The dwarf walked into the cave, and Am followed, crouching low, but ready for anything that waited in the darkness ahead. The cool air from the under mountain passages hit his face, and he could see far off a pale luminescence from around a corner ahead.

"Follow," he yelled to his men, and he marched on. He quickly discovered that the cave's height increased as he walked, and soon he was able to stand up to his entire six feet.

As he turned the corner, he discovered the source of the illumination. Growing on the floor and walls of a huge cavern was acre upon acre of pale, glowing moss. Bent down over the moss in various places were dwarves, not dressed in armor and bearing no weapons but instead holding odd farming implements which allowed them to trim the moss off and drop it into bags. They watched the huge Vikings as they passed by, staring at the strangers with incomprehensible glances.

"Come," the dwarf leader said, and turned off down another tunnel. Am followed, with his men behind him.

It seemed they walked for hours, turning often down passageways to the right and left, and soon Am was unsure how to return the way they had come.

"If this is a trap, dwarf..." he growled at the leader who still traveled before them. The rest of the dwarves had disappeared down side passages,

"I would not give up gold so easily, mortal," the dwarf replied, and kept walking onwards.

Soon, Am could feel a breeze coming from the tunnels ahead. The dwarf slowed down, often putting his large ear to the wall and listening. Then he would creep forward a few more feet and listen again. He then turned to Am. "Tell your men to draw their swords now and be quiet. The trolls sleep now, for it is day in the upper world. However, a few guards pace the cavern."

"Does this cavern not lead outside?" Am said. "I feel a breeze."

"There are many holes through which the air comes, for we are at the top of the mountain, and near the troll's territory. You must move carefully ahead until you see the cavern. I will wait here for your return."

Am scowled. He did not like this. It put him at the mercy of the dwarf to escape the caves. But he saw no other option. If the Sword of Hrut was in the cavern ahead, he would risk all to have it. He began to move quietly forward, and his men followed behind him.

He heard the troll before he saw it. A deep, almost barking, grunt from a few feet ahead, around the corner. Am stopped moving and listened carefully. He heard heavy breathing, a sound full of rattling mucus, moving away from him. He crept forward and peeked around the corner.

The tunnel let out into a large cavern, and Am could now feel a strong breeze. In the far wall, he saw sunlight poking from various crevices, but it did not travel far into the cavern. It was enough, however, to set the gold in the center of the room gleaming. There, a mound of coins, cups, platters, and other ornaments, was piled high. Then Am noticed something dark by the mound and looked closer. Two trolls were stretched out sleeping, as if the gold was their bed.

He looked about and saw the source of the grunt he had heard before: a troll sentry circling the cavern. He waited until it had passed to the far side of the room, behind the mound, and then stuck his head into the room, looking for the sword. It was nowhere to be seen. He cursed under his breath and withdrew back into the tunnel.

"Damn! I see no sword," he uttered in a low whisper, looking for the 16 dwarf.





"The dwarf has disappeared," Erik said. "Perhaps he knew what your reaction was to be."

"The sword may be buried under the gold," Ulf said. "It would be a wise place to hide it. Most thieves would grab what gold they could and run before they were caught. Impossible to take it all."

"Hmmm. Perhaps you are right," Am said. "But that means we shall have to slay the trolls. I see only three, but there is no telling how many may answer their call."

"We fear no trolls, chief," Erik said.

Am looked at him. "Then let's be at it." And he slipped his axe from his belt. "When the sentry passes by next, I shall leap out and split his skull."

Am moved back to the tunnel edge, and waited until the rumbling breathing could be heard again, and had passed by as before. Then, he leaped out and spied the troll before him, spinning around with amazing speed. But before the creature could fully turn, Am drove his axe down. It sunk into the troll's shoulder, just missing the head, but it dug deep. As Am wrenched the axe back out, a sick cracking sound was heard as the thing's arm popped from its socket.

The troll screamed, a deafening roar, and tried to grab Am with its one good arm. A sword sliced out of nowhere and cleaved the forearm in half, spraying blood over the cavern walls. The troll's scream was cut off and it fell dead to the ground. Erik, his sword dripping blood, looked at Am and nodded.

"That's another I owe you, Nornson," Am said. "Will you not get into trouble so that I might make up my debt, damn you?"

Barking noises were heard from the center of the cavern as the two sleeping trolls rose up, yelling for aid and reaching for their clubs,



Am rushed towards them, yelling for his men to spread out and guard the tunnel entrances. He reached the first of the trolls and swung back his axe, but the troll was faster than he had anticipated. Its club swung down on Am's shoulder. He managed to slip aside in time, to avoid what would otherwise have been a crippling blow, but the strike still rattled him. He would be bruised on the morrow, if he survived that long.

He ducked under the troll's next swing and came in under the thing's reach, lashing out with the axe at both legs, cleaving them both at the ankles. The troll screamed and fell, and Am finished him with another blow, this time to the head. A meaty crunch proved the thing was dead.

Am turned to look for the other one, and saw Erik pinned to the floor by the thing's powerful arms, as it raised its club to smash Erik's skull to jelly. Am smiled and leaped at the thing's arm, grabbing it with one hand, holding it back from falling, and swinging his axe with the other. The axe thudded into the troll's back, severing its spine. The thing gagged out a last bark and fell over dead.

Erik crawled out from under its body, covered in blood. Am smiled at him, hefting his axe. Erik nodded.

"One less you owe me, Am," he said.

"Nay, Nornson, we owe each other naught but what sword brothers owe by right," Am replied.

Then they heard one of their men yell in pain, and turned to see more trolls pouring from one of the tunnels, overwhelming their defense.

"Damn, more of the curs!" Am yelled and began to run towards them.

"Walt!" Ulf cried, coming towards Am. "You will need this, my chief."

Am saw that Ulf carried a gleaming sword in his hand, surely the best wrought-steel Am had ever laid eyes on. Its surface was laced with faint



runes and its hilt was carved with ravens. The pommel was the image of a man wearing a helmet: the mighty warrior king of old, Hrut.

"Take this, my chief," Ulf said. "I found it beneath the gold."

"Gods!" Am said, staring at the sword. "It is magnificent. No troll shall stop us now!" He reached for the blade, and as he touched it, he could feel strength flowing through his veins. He raised it high and cried, "Tyr! Take this next blood that I shed as a sacrifice to you so that you and I shall become mighty! So that my son after me shall conquer lands undreamed of!"

And he lowered the sword, but it whipped out with a life of its own, dragging his hand with it, plunging straight into the breast of Ulf.

"No!" Am screamed. "What has this sword done?! It is cursed!" He tried to release the blade, but his hand would not come free,

"No, not cursed," Ulf whispered, his life's blood bleeding from him, welling up around the sword still stuck in his chest. "I did not tell you the truth of the sword, that it must first slay your most loyal liegeman before it could be yours. Your cry to Tyr gave it the rein to slay me."

"Then damn this sword! I will throw it away where no man shall ever have it!" Am cried.

"No!" Ulf said, his last breath drawing near. "It will serve you now, and do only your bidding. It is not your fault, for it was my Wyrð, and I saw it so that night on the beach. If I had told you, you would have never sought out the sword, and your glory would never become as great as I know it shall."

"Curse your damn Fey sight that you lead me into such shame!" Am cried.

"No shame. Only everlasting glory.. " said Ulf. And then he died.

The sword slipped free from his body and fell from Am's hand. Am stared at the blade in disgust.

"Pick it up, damn you, Grim One!" Erik yelled. "Our men are slaughtered by the trolls, and you deny Ulf's dying destiny!"

Am looked at his friend, and then at the sword. He heard the yells of his men, crying in pain as the trolls fought their way into the room. And then he picked up the sword.

"I'll carve every last one of you trolls to pieces to make up for Ulf's death! Even if I have to walk to Trollheim to make up the payment for this brave soul, I shall not hesitate!" He ran towards the tunnel mouth. "Aside, men! Stand back as I unleash the power of ancient kings!"

His men moved back and the trolls stepped forward, barking in glee for what they thought was a soon to be certain victory. But their leader stopped

and stared in fear when he recognized the weapon the human was charging at him with, and he tried to back up but only ran into his horde of trolls, all trying to cram into the cavern.

Am swung the sword wide, cleaving it into two trolls at once, whose bellies slit open and spilt their guts and dinner onto the floor. They crumpled to the ground and Am stepped on their bodies to reach the trolls behind them, all desperately trying to retreat now. He swung again, and a troll head flew across the room, trailing blood through the air. Another swing and two arms went flying, dropping their spear as they fell.

The sound of troll pain filled the cavern, echoing all around. Am kept swinging, and the trolls tried to fight back, but no club or spear could get past the Sword of Hrut. Its arc unerringly found a target with every swing. Soon, all the trolls were dead.

Am dropped his arm, feeling as strong after cleaving through twenty foes as he had before the fight. He marched back into the cavern over the rug of troll bodies he had left on the floor, his boots squashing into the gray-green flesh, spilling more blood onto the rocks as he stepped over them.

Erik waited by Ulf's body, staring at Am as if he had never seen him before. His men all stared at him also, as if a god walked among them. No one spoke.

"We will let the dwarves have their promised gold," Am said. "But we will take our portion too. Ulf and the other dead shall be carried from here and given a heroes' pyre. We shall build a ship to take their souls to Valhalla."

Erik nodded, and the men moved over to lift Ulf and the other dead swordsmen, five of them, and carry them from the cavern.

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The pyre flames flickered in Am's eyes as he watched his friend and liegeman, Ulf the Fey, depart for Valhalla. The ship they had built floated out over the water, engulfed in flame. The other dead lay on it also, surrounding Ulf.

Am gripped the hilt of his new sword, resting in its sheath in his belt, and blinked in surprise. He looked again out over the waters, and saw figures in the sky, coming down quickly towards the boat. He gripped the sword tighter and looked more closely, knowing that the Sword of Hrut gave him the Sight, the ability to see into the world of the gods.

Six winged stallions came down from the heavens, each bearing an armored maiden. They hovered about the flaming boat and the maidens reached down in accord to lift up its passengers. One of them pulled Ulf to her and cradled his body in her arms. The Valkyries looked at Am and then rose again into the sky, passing through a hole in the clouds, and were gone.

Am released the sword, and saw only a burning ship again. He looked to Erik, who stared at the pyre sadly.

"This is no cause for sorrow, my friend," Am said. "For Ulf now resides in Valhalla, taken by Odin's Valkyries to sit in the hall of heroes and prepare for Ragnarok, where he will once again fight."

Erik turned to Am and wondered at the strange expression on his face, an expression of wonder. "I believe you are right. But I think we can no longer call you the Grim, for your demeanor is much changed by your new weapon, I shall have to think of a new name for you."

"Ha, ha! You do so, but be sure it will be a name feared by my enemies."

"Oh, it shall surely be so, my chief," Erik said, and then turned towards the camp fires.

Am looked once more at the burning ship and wondered what news awaited him at home.

\*\*\*

Am's dragon ship drove up against the beach outside Ostersund, and swordsmen leaped out to push the ship up onto the sand and rocks. Am jumped out with Erik behind him and began marching towards his city, eager to meet his wife and daughters,

At the gates of the wooden palisade a man waited. This was Hagbard. Am's housecarle, left in charge of his affairs these past weeks, Hagbard's face was drawn and stern, as if he had suffered a tragedy of late.

"Why so grim, loyal thane?" Am said as he slapped his hand onto Hagbard's shoulder. "What news here?"

"Bad news, my chief," Hagbard said. "Your son, Gund, is dead, killed treacherously by Kralki Beareye."

Am stared at Hagbard, his eyes narrowing in fury. "When?" he whispered in a low, menacing voice.

"But a fortnight ago. He raided Uppsalla, breaking our peace, and then sent Gund's body here with a message: he intends to take your lands,"

"Jormungandr take his hide! My son is dead!" Am yelled. "Where is his son? Where is Rolf, whelp of Kralki?" Am pushed Hagbard aside and stormed into the palisade, towards the fortress ahead. "Bring him to me!"

Hagbard and Erik looked at each other apprehensively, and then fell in behind Am. The people of Ostersund came out of their lodges to see what the commotion was, and when they saw Am, they hung their heads low in sorrow for him. Some followed him as he walked by, swordsmen who had been left behind to guard the city.

At the gates of the fortress, more swordsmen came out, dragging a



screaming boy behind them, a lad of only twelve years. They had seen Am coming from afar, and knew what his reaction to the news would be.

Am marched up straight to the boy, who cringed before the huge, furlous Viking. Then, Am drew the Sword of Hrut from his belt. The swordsmen let go of the lad and stepped away.

"My only son is dead!" Am said, glowering down at the boy. "Your father has done me great wrong. He thinks that in slaying my son, he has slain me. But he has only slain himself, and I shall be his doom! He cannot break his oaths to me and not pay the price! I will send him your body as proof that Am the Grim is not a man to be so easily insulted!"

He raised his sword and prepared to bring it down. But then he stopped. He looked down at the boy who had ceased his cringing and now stood up straight and met full Am's hateful gaze. He knew he was to die, and prepared to die as a man, not a coward.

Am lowered his sword, letting it drop to the ground.

"Your father has bred a braver man than he," he said to the boy. "Go, then, lad. Return to your father. But tell him this: I now wear the bear shirt, the shirt of the berserk. I will not stop my rage until he is dead and all his lands are mine. When next we meet, boy, it will be on the field of battle. If your father is dead by then and you choose to relinquish your lands to me, I shall let you live. But your father will die no matter what. War and misery shall be his lot until I send him screaming to Niffleheim. Aye, the land of the dead for him, not the hall of heroes in Valhalla, for such a man as your father deserves not to sit by Odin's side. Go!"

The boy ran, and five swordsmen set off to catch him and ship him off in a boat to his father's lands, to be followed swiftly by Am's own dragon ship and fleet of warriors.

Am stared down at the ground where the sword lay. Erik walked up next to him.

"I will see about the duties of war, my chief," he said to Am.

"Aye. Do so." Am said, still staring at the sword. "But know this now and forevermore, Erik Nornson. What you said of my name on the beach in that far off land is no longer true. For I am still grim. And I shall make my enemies even more so."

Erik nodded and looked away. He motioned the men to follow him, and they walked into the fortress to prepare for the coming war. Am stood silently for a while longer, and then reached down to pick up his sword. He would not put it down again for a long time to come.



## INTRODUCTION

**H**AMMER OF THE GODS is a unique strategy game that recreates the world the way the Vikings experienced it. The gods are a real consideration in the decisions that you make and glorious death one of the highest goals. Unlike most strategy games, the building of an empire is not necessarily the end objective, otherwise we may as well have done a game about Romans. You will understand the historic actions of the Vikings on a gut level once you have lived in their world.

In Hammer of the Gods, you compete against your fellow players to earn the favor of the Norse gods and become the Hammer of the Gods. The particular path that you follow to victory will vary based on the "family" of gods that you choose to pursue at the beginning of the quest. Each of the four paths requires basic martial skill but vary in other ways. Maintaining your Honor in the eyes of your fellow Vikings will be important throughout the game. The Human path requires collecting a majority of the magical weapons that exist. The Elf path emphasizes fertility and growth, requiring that you control a certain percentage of the world's population. The Troll path emphasizes the accumulation of military might. Completion of the Dwarf path requires the accumulation of income producing cities.

At first you will find it in your best interest to raid vulnerable coastal hamlets and villages, leaving as soon as possible to avoid the retaliation of the local defenders. Later, you may pursue the path of empire, conquering cities and linking them by roads, defending them with castles. Or help bring Ragnorak, the apocalypse, by utterly destroying the cities you defeat in a savage wind of destruction.

## BACKGROUND

You are the lord of one of the four mightiest Viking chiefdoms. See The Golden Age in Appendix E for a general account of the world then.

## OBJECTIVE

The objective of the game is to become Odin's chosen leader on Midgard, thus ensuring your place in legend as THE HAMMER OF THE GODS. How you reach the final quest of your path is totally up to the player, though the "winning" score kept track of in the Diplomacy screen is based on the total number of Quests completed and how high in the tree they are.



### **SEQUENCE OF PLAY**

1. **Receive Messages and Reports-** Communications from other players are received at this point as well as reports of attacks on your units,
2. **Choose Next Quest-** If you completed a quest on the last turn you must choose a new one to pursue. You are not allowed to choose another quest until you complete the one you selected.
3. **Move Units/Resolve Battles-** You will receive an "all units moved" message after the last unit has received orders to move or are out of movement points.
4. **Diplomacy/Messages-** You may send communications to other players any time during the movement phase.
5. **Resolve attacks by mobile defenders-** Garrisons from nearby enemy castles will sally forth to attack your units and settlements.
6. **Resolve Quest Completions-** If you have completed a quest during the turn, you will be informed at this point. You will be able to choose your next quest at the beginning of the next turn.
7. **Next Player**

### **TUTORIAL**

Place the HAMMER OF THE GODS CD in your CD drive. See the Installation Instructions sheet to install Hammer of the Gods.

In the HAMMER directory of your hard drive type HAMMER. After the introduction plays, select "Start New." To play the short tutorial, switch to Tutorial under the Game Length header. Do not adjust any other settings or the tutorial may work incorrectly. You are playing a Human against Easy Level computer players playing the Elf, Troll, and Dwarf positions. The overall game difficulty will be Easy; that means that there will be no storms at sea and no sea monsters.

Type in your name and Click on O.K. (Click means use the LEFT mouse button: RClick means click using the right mouse button.) You are then notified that it is your turn.

From here on out, whenever you first access a screen you are presented with descriptive dialogue boxes. Press Return or Click on the Continue button to clear each one.

The next task at hand is to select your first quest from the Quest screen. The buttons (nodes) toward the bottom that are colored blue are the only ones that you currently have access to. Click on some nodes to hear the name and moniker of other gods. Quests that are currently unavailable for selection will say CANNOT ACCESS in the quest description area at the lower edge of the screen. For our current purposes let's choose Volund, Weapons Smith of the Gods, for your first quest. It's an easy quest because all you have to do is let him have one of your daughters for a bride. Once Volund and a description of the quest are in the lower portion of the screen, Click the Select button.

Next is the Main screen. This where you will give most of your orders. The blinking area with a ship in front of it is the Active Stack. Notice that there are three unit portraits in the lower left corner. They are the units that are in the Active Stack. RClick (click using the right mouse button) on the any one of them. You are presented with a description of the unit. Melee (may-lay) skill is face to face fighting. Missile skill is the ability to use missile weapons like bows, slings or magic. Defense is the number of combat hits it can sustain before it dies. The movement points show how many movement points the unit will have when moving on the Main map (not in combat). Clicking on the O.K. button causes the description to disappear. A picture of a Viking ship is in the lower right corner meaning that there is also a ship in the current stack.

Notice that only the Viking Hero (the guy with horns on his helmet) has

a green check mark on him. This means that he is part of the Active Group. (He is the only unit in the group.) We want to put him, the swordsman and the archer in the Viking ship so we can go raid a nearby village. Click on the Swordsman and note that his red X has become a green check. That means that he is part of the same group as the Hero. Click on the archer and ship to cause their red X's to also become green checks. You can also cause all units in a stack to become one group by Clicking on the Group button in the lower right part of the screen. Now they are all on board the Viking ship and ready to do some raiding!

Move one tile to the right along the coast, To do this, double Click on the tile adjacent to the ship or use the arrow keys. Move two more tiles to the right along the coast. You should now see the neutral Viking village of Kemi. RClick on it to see what sort of units are defending it. The top of the City Information screen always shows the size and name of the city across the top and what type of people own it. This city is a neutral Viking village. The visual description in the upper left shows the village, the surrounding countryside, and each tile's value (food in yellow, wares in red.) The summary area in the center left shows that the surrounding countryside supplies it with eleven food resources and fourteen trade wares (goods). It has a current population of twenty four families. The row of units across the bottom are the defenders of the village. There should be about six farmers with pitch forks and two slingers. RClick on one of each type to find more information on their combat abilities. No problem! These guys are real wimps, but let's move on to some truly helpless peasants to raid.

Move three spaces directly to the right, ignoring the river that leads north. Then follow the coast down and to the right. RClick on the hamlet that you see to the right. After some practice you can tell what size the city is by the icon on the map. This city is the neutral Viking hamlet of Oulu. The summary area in the center left shows that the surrounding countryside supplies it with eight food resources and sixteen trade wares (goods). It has a current population of nine families. There should be about three farmers with pitch forks and one slinger. RClick on one of each type to find more information on their combat abilities. Easy pickins! No fuss, no muss...

Move the group into the hamlet by Clicking on the hamlet icon or by using the arrow keys on the number keypad. Battle will ensue.

Battle always begins with the attackers on the left and the defenders on the right. Their flags will appear above them in the corners. The defender always moves first; their portraits appear at the bottom of the screen while they are moving. When the defenders are done your units' portraits appear

at the bottom and one of your units begins to blink. Note that the portrait that is outlined in red matches the Active unit on the field. You may RClick on the portraits to see the normal unit information.

Note that movement points only apply to the Main screen, not to the Combat screen. Each combat round, each unit may move one space or attack one enemy in combat. If you don't want a unit to do anything, Click on the NEXT button at the lower right side of the screen. You can come back to move a unit If you click on it when another unit is the blinking (Active) unit. Be careful because if you Click on Next for the last unit in the row on the bottom of the screen all units that had NEXT orders will lose their move until it is your turn again. A safer way to temporarily skip a unit is to pass the cursor over another one of your units. Click when the Hand icon appears and that unit will become the Active unit. The skipped unit will prompt you again during that combat round.

Your Hero moves first. He has no missile weapons so let's move him up one. Move the mouse cursor in front of him until you get a blue arrow cursor that points straight right. Click while the cursor is showing and the Hero will move one space to the right and stop. The swordsman will move next. Move him forward. You can try moving in a diagonal up or down direction as long as you get a blue diagonal arrow pointing in the appropriate direction. If you get a red X then that space is an illegal option. You cannot move into a space that another friendly unit occupies. When it is the Archer's turn, move the mouse cursor over the enemy units. Since the cursor never turns from the red X into a green target icon you know that there is no one in range to shoot with your bow. Go ahead and move him forward so someone might be in range next turn. The peasants will now do their turn. Note that a unit's missile range matches its Missile rating. Slingers have a Missile rating of two, so they have to be within two spaces of an enemy before they can attack.

The defenders now move forward again, eager to meet their doom. The Hero will begin blinking when it's your turn. Let's select the archer to be the Active unit. Move the cursor over the Archer until it changes to a hand. Click on the Archer with the hand icon. His portrait will now be outlined in red and on the combat field he will begin blinking. The Archer is now the Active unit. Move the cursor over one of the peasants until it becomes a green target. Click on one of the pitchforkmen with the green target icon. If a Viking archer shoots well, he can lay a peasant low with one hit.

The Hero now becomes the Active unit again. Move your Hero and Swordsman forward one space. The peasant Pitchforkmen will move forward again but the slinger will take a shot at one of your units if it is in range.



Now at least one peasant will be standing toe to toe with death!

Select whichever of your units is standing next to (in any of the eight cardinal directions) a peasant. Pass the cursor over the peasant and it will become a sword icon if he is within Melee range. Click on the peasant with your sword icon and watch the drama unfold. When the attack succeeds, you will be prompted to stay forward in the defeated units space or to return to where you were. Since you are trying to Melee the slinger next, you should advance. Repeat for the other unit or move him forward.

Combat may require another round like the ones above. The slinger knows that running is futile, so he will Melee attack one of your units. When victory is achieved your units celebrate and a screen appears asking you what you want to do to your helpless prey. You are given four options: RAID, PLUNDER, RAZE and SUBJUGATE. Raid does a minimum of damage to the city and finds the least amount of loot but takes only 10% of your original movement points, allowing you to depart rapidly, a good idea if there is a castle nearby (do not worry, in this case there is not.) Raze destroys the entire city and allows your men to take the time to root out every last gold piece. Razing uses the groups original movement points, Plunder does a middling amount of damage and costs half of your remaining movement points. But beware, cutting the men loose means they'll be recovering for a while and vulnerable to counter attacks. Subjugate razes the city and puts you in the Colonize sub-screen.

Select the RAZE option. The message that appears describes the amount of gold looted and families killed. It will also tell you how many warriors were impressed with your deed and decided to go to your home city to be recruited to your cause. You will probably only receive one recruit based on the daring nature of your mission. Click on the OK button. Since RAZING takes all of your stack's movement points you no longer have any units to move. You are asked whether you wish to end your turn now. Click NO because you still have some things to do. Notice that your stack is blinking red to show that the stack is out of movement points. Also notice that there is an End Turn blinking to the right. It is there as a convenience to remind you that all of your units have moved. Later (not now) you can Click on it to end the turn.

Since RAZE totally decimates the population, Oulu is now a vacant city location. RClick on it to see the City information. Note that your stack information is also displayed below the city information. (YOU can access stack information any time by RClicking on your stack.) The visual description in the upper left shows the city as a stone with a Fertility rune. The fertility

ne stone indicates places that the gods have deemed appropriate to live in. Christian cities are also built on pagan foundations.

For the purposes of the tutorial, we are going to start a colony at Oulu; normally it wouldn't be a very good idea at this time. Click on the ACTIONS option on the pull-down menu and select Colonize. Only Viking swordsmen and archers can be colonists. It requires only one to found a colony though you may use all of the swordsmen and archers in the stack. Move the slide bars until it shows one of one Swordsmen and zero of one Archers. You'll want to use the swordsman since he is cheaper to replace than the archer. (If your swordsman was killed, go ahead and use the archer.) Click on the O.K. button. Your man will bring his family there, beat his sword into a plowshare and you'll soon have a growing village. Notice that the name of the hamlet now appears in blue, your player color.

You need as many units as you can get early on so recruit someone by Clicking on the Actions pull down and choosing the RECRUIT option. If by chance you did not get a volunteer after your combat you'll have to wait until after your next combat. If a unit is available it should be a swordsman. There is a number under his portrait that shows how many are available (one). In the statistic table you will see that he costs forty gold to outfit (Note the amount of money that you have in the window located at the lower left of the screen.) Click on his moving animation area. His portrait appears in the row below the unit descriptions, the number available becomes zero and your wealth decreases by forty. Click on the UNDO button below his portrait. Everything returns to its previous state. Purchases are not permanent until you Click on the DONE button. Recruit the unit again and Click on the DONE button. Your new unit appears in your capital, Ostersund. He has zero movement points left this turn but he'll be ready to travel next turn when you go to pick him up.

Ostersund is now on the far left of the screen. You can use the scaled down world map in the upper right corner of the Main screen, from here on called the Corner World, to change what is displayed on the main map. Point the cursor to the place that you **want** to see on the Corner World and Click. The Main screen now displays a zoomed-in area corresponding to the area outlined by the white rectangle in the Corner World. Another way to move the screen is to press the appropriate arrow key while holding down the CTRL key. The final way to move the screen around without moving your groups is to "tap" the mouse cursor against the edge of the screen. This moves the screen one tile in that direction. Place the mouse at the edge and leave it there for a moment. The screen begins to scroll more rapidly the longer the

mouse remains there until it reaches the edge of the world. Here there be dragons so let's move back to where we were. Hit the [C] on the keyboard. The main screen is now centered on the Active group. Use whichever method you want to bring Ostersund back on the main screen. Click on your capital. The arrows leading to it from your ship show the path that the ship will take to get there. The arrows are red because you do not have enough movement points this turn to move along them. Next turn the arrows will be green. For now, click on Ostersund again to keep the orders to move your ship to Ostersund. We'll need to pick up our new crew member.

Before we end this year of daring-do, let's give notice to one of our Norse neighbors. Select DIPLOMACY from the ACTIONS option on the menu bar. This screen shows the status of diplomacy between the different players as well as their Honor scores and, in the case of computer players, how much they like you. Click on the Diplomacy button under the Dwarves' hammer and anvil banner. Click on the Suggest Peace option in the lower left corner. You are asked if you would like to offer your son as hostage to help the deal go through. Once you have a peace treaty with another player you can then engage in full trade and move around the map without worrying about his castles attacking you. If he holds a hostage it becomes very painful for either one of you to declare war or sneak attack the other. Let's go ahead and get the trade treaties rolling. Click on propose Limited Trade. He will receive the messages at the beginning of his turn and respond. The Barter, Idle Threats and Ultimatum options are somewhat advanced and will not be covered in the Tutorial.

Return to the Main screen by Clicking Done on the Diplomacy status screen. Click on the flashing End Turn. Turn one is now over for you. The computer players do their turn, following which you are prompted to begin year 702. Click on O.K. You receive the Dwarves' reply to your requests.

You must now choose a new quest. Note that Volund is written in black signifying that the quest is completed. Shop around before you Click on Select. Finally, Click on Thialfi, an easy one, and then Click on Select.

At the beginning of the year 702 you will be presented with your ship. Notice the crew that is in it at the bottom of the screen. The move-to arrows that were red are now green because you have enough movement points to reach your destination. To make the ship move to Ostersund, click on the GO button near the bottom right of the screen or Click on Ostersund itself. Once the ship has completed the move to Ostersund, RClick on it.

A screen showing information about Ostersund at the top and information about the stack of units appears at the bottom. There is a magic weapon

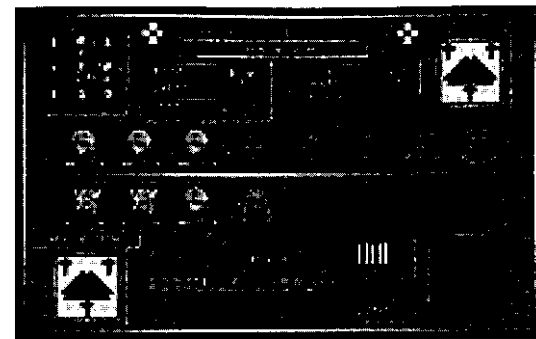
description at the bottom center of the screen and a PICK UP button just above it. Click on the PICK UP button. Since there is only one Hero there (only Heroes and Wizards are able to carry magic items), the magic item will be assigned to him. Click on the DROP button. The magic weapon description will reappear as well as the PICK UP button. Pick the weapon up again and exit the information screen by Clicking on DONE.

Double Click (rapidly click twice with the left mouse button) on the stack to create one group. Move south along the left-hand coast, exploring new territory and looking for your ticket to Valhalla. You will Pass Gayle and Upsalla. Ignore them. Keep your eye open for an island to the East and a city town called Gotland. Attack Gotland with your mighty Viking horde!

Gotland has walls. Walls make it harder to hit the defenders with missile weapons. When it is your turn, Click on the AUTO button and watch the fireworks. Quickly Click on the STOP button that replaced the AUTO button to regain control of your units.

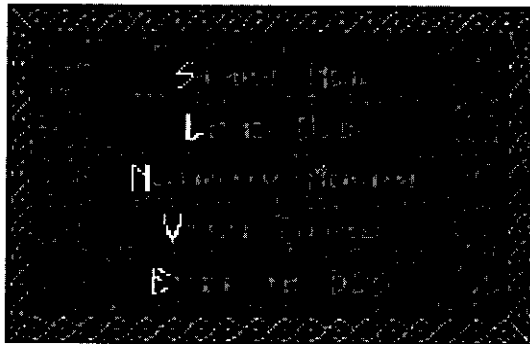
NOW YOU must decide whether to RUN or stay. Run by clicking the cursor over the extreme left of the combat field where the icon becomes a white flag with run written beneath it. You must Click RUN for each unit. Units that run appear adjacent to the battle site and have no remaining movement Points. Staying will probably buy your hero a seat in Valhalla's eternal halls. What more could a Viking ask for.....

Thus ends the Tutorial. You should look at all the other options in the pull down menus while still in the Tutorial because they contain helpful hints.



## **GAME RULES** **THE SCREENS**

NOTE: Throughout Hammer of the Gods, one will notice that many commands have a white letter. These are hot-keys for the mouse-impaired or mouse-phobic. There is a quick-key index at the back of the manual that explains short cuts for each screen. ALSO, the right mouse button is always safe to use and will often yield useful information.



Start New: places you in the Setup screen.

Load Old: presents you with saved game files.

Network/Modem: allows you to play a game by modem or network,

View Intro: shows the outstanding Silicon Graphics rendered introduction.

Exit to DOS: you know what this does.

## **SETTING UP A NEW GAME**

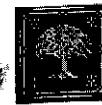
### **PLAYERS**

There are always four players at the beginning of a game for the sake of game balance. The Human player always goes first, the Elf second, troll third, and Dwarf last. "Troll", "Dwarf" and "Elf" refer to the units that one earns and the victory conditions that one must meet; all players begin with only human units. The players have the following attributes and victory conditions:

**Human-** Human quests combine elements from the other races, YOU receive many magic weapons and berserker units. You must ultimately possess magic weapons to win.



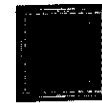
**Elf-** Your quests are skewed towards founding colonies and achieving population levels. You receive blessings that make your forest lands more productive and your population more fecund. Elven archers will often come to your aide. You must ultimately control a certain percentage of the population.



**Troll-** Your quests tend towards martial deeds of destruction. You receive blessings that help you live in the brutal tundra environments near Trollheim. Trolls and Ogres will often come to your aide. You must ultimately control a large army.



**Dwarf-** Your quests tend to demand the accumulation of wealth. The blessing that you receive improves your ability to live in and mine mountainous regions. Grim dwarven axemen will join your cause as you progress in the respect of your gods. You must ultimately control a large hoard of gold.



The icons that appear to the right of the player flags may be clicked on to cycle through the available Computer Opponents.

### **MAP SELECTION**

**Historical:** A representation of Europe during the Viking golden age beginning in 700 A.D.

**Random:** The Random generator creates very believable terrain based on realistic terraforming concepts and cities are placed to reflect the true tendencies of cities to locate on coasts and rivers. YOU may influence the composition of your new world. The number by the Ocean setting represents the percentage of the map that will be ocean. The leftover percentage is assumed to be land. The numbers by the other land terrain types represent the *percentage of total* land that will be covered by that terrain type. Any leftover land will become grasslands. The North/South Pole toggle button determines whether the colder regions appear near the north or south of the map. A high scatter number causes the land and sea masses to appear in smaller clumps. A low scatter setting will cause more monolithic lands masses. The random seed number combined with the other settings can be reentered in a future **map** to cause an identical map to be generated. This can also be used to generate identical maps on different machines so that you can challenge another player to a parallel game.

### **DIFFICULTY LEVEL**

The overall difficulty levels may be set to Easy, Average, Advanced and **Impossible**. These settings represent generic conditions that affect the presence of storms and seadragons, and the defenses of cities and castles. The

**custom** option allows you to mix and match difficulties for the different variables.

### **GAME LENGTH**

**Tutorial-** Limits you to the first seven quests. Provides game hints along the way. Since you have not truly earned the title of Hammer of the Gods, you will not be able to view the victory finale.

**Short-** Complete any twenty quests to achieve victory.

**Full-** You must complete Odin's final quest to achieve victory.

**PBEM Short-** Play by E-Mail, the first to complete twenty quests wins,

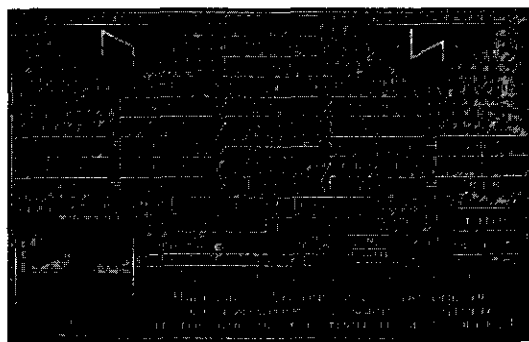
**PBEM Full-** Play by E-Mail, the first to complete Odin's final quest wins,

### **NAME**

Type in the name that you wish to be addressed by in the game, like Ulf Bloodaxe (limit twelve characters).

### **THE QUEST SCREEN**

The branching hierarchical arrangement of the gods is often referred to as the "god tree" as it reflects the form of Yggdrasil, the tree of life. Gods that you have not yet earned the right to speak to are light grey in color. Gods that you may speak to but have not completed a quest for appear in a color from your flag. The gods that appear on the extreme left and right of your tree are shared with the player to either side of you and appear in his flag color. The names of gods with completed quests appear in dark grey.



The portrait that appears in the lower left of the screen represents the crest of that association of gods or in the case of the higher gods, the actual god to whom you are speaking.

If you are allowed to accept a quest from a god or have already completed one, a description of the quest will appear in the lower part of the screen. Otherwise only a brief description of the god will appear there.

Your current wealth and the number of sons and daughters that you have at home appear near the bottom of the screen as a convenience when choosing a quest.



Clicking on the Select button causes the quest described at the bottom of the screen to become your current quest. *It will remain your quest until completed.* Click on the Quests option under the Tomes pull down menu if you need to be reminded of what your quest currently is.

Quests are resolved at the end of the turn in which they are completed. You select a new quest at the beginning of the subsequent turn,

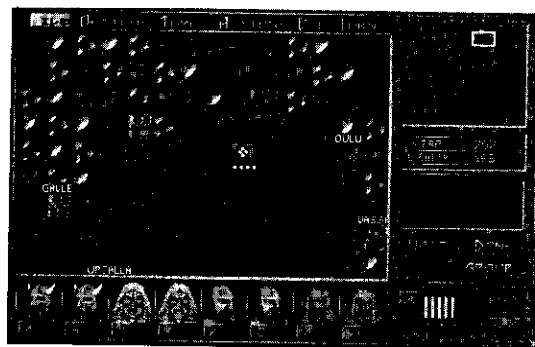
The runes at the top of the screen represent Strength and Success.

## **MAIN SCREEN**

### **MOUSE CONTROLS**

**CLICK AND RCLICK:** Note that throughout the text the term "Click" means click the left mouse button and "RClick" means click the right mouse button.

**MOVEMENT:** Clicking on any place on the map causes the "Active" unit to attempt to move to that point. Ships will use their designated move-to "Mode" (see "Mode" below). If the active unit is adjacent to the destination and has sufficient movement points, it will immediately move there. Otherwise, a path is marked to the destination using arrows and X's. Green arrows represent a point that you can reach this turn. A green x shows the farthest point that would be reached that turn. Red arrows and X's show destinations that would be reached in subsequent turns. A red X will appear at the final destination but does not necessarily mean that the group will have exhausted its movement points when it reaches the end of the path.



When calculating a move-to path, the group assumes that unexplored terrain costs five movement points. Every time a unit with move-to orders explores a tile it recalculates the quickest route to its destination.

Once a path has been marked, Click on the destination again to cause the group to begin moving along the path. If the destination is not reached that turn, then on subsequent turns the group's path will be shown. You must then Click on the destination again or on the GO button that appears on the right side of the screen to cause them to continue on that path.

To clear an Active Group's path simply click on the group.

**STACKS:** Stacks consist of one to eight units which share the same map tile. The units in a stack are shown at the bottom of the map. If a ship is present, its icon and port and move-to mode information is shown in the lower right of the screen. Groups of units exist within stacks. Up to eight single unit groups may exist in the same stack or an entire stack of eight can be in one group. Units in the same group will exhibit a green check in the lower right of their portraits at the bottom of the screen. If a ship is in the group the large ship picture will be checked. Units not active will have a red X.

To add or remove a unit from a group Click on the check or X. To cause all units in a tile to become one Group, double Click on its location. Or use the GROUP button on the right side of the screen.

RClick on a group on the map to cause it to become "Active". RClick again to find out more about it or to drop or pick up a magic item that exists in the same tile. See the STACK INFORMATION screen description below for more information. Hit the [C] key to have the screen center on the Active Group.

A blinking green background behind the stack indicates that all units in the group have movement points. A blinking red background indicates that at least one unit in the group has insufficient movement points to continue.



**CITIES:** RClick on a city to find out information about it. See the CITY INFORMATION screen description below for details.

**SCROLLING:** Move the mouse cursor to the edge of the screen to make the map scroll (pan). Fine control can be gained by tapping or bumping the mouse cursor against the appropriate side of the screen, causing it to move one tile at a time in that direction.

## **MOVEMENT SCREEN BUTTONS AND FEATURES**

### **PULL-DOWN MENUS**

#### **FILE**

**NEW:** Allows you to go back to the main Hammer Screen.

**SAVE:** Saves the game under its current name.

**SAVE AS:** Saves the game under a new name.

**AUTOSAVE:** Saves the game between turns when selected.

**EXIT:** Ends your game and returns to DOS. All actions since your last save are lost.

#### **OPTIONS**

**SOUND:** Allows you to set the volume level.

I **ANIMATION:** Adjusts the default speed of the animation during combat.

#### **T O M E S**

**CITIES:** Quickly cross references city names, information, and locations and allows you to go straight to any city.

1 **GROUPS:** Quickly cross references groups or stacks of units locations.

**MAGIC:** Lets you easily inventory, locate and zoom to the location of magic items that you possess.

**MAIL:** Rereads messages received at the beginning of your turn.

**QUEST:** Shows the quest screen. This is useful to remind you what the objective of your current quest is. You may not select new quests from this screen. You can see your progress on your current quest by Clicking on the STATUS button. (See THE QUEST SCREEN above for a detailed description of the screen's layout.)

ti **WORLD:** Accesses the World Map which shows unexplored terrain in shades of sepia and explored terrain in more vivid colors. The information shown in sepia becomes increasingly distorted as one gets further away from the city you started in. A flashing cursor denotes the current unit's locations.

#### **ACTIONS**

**BUILD:** Things are built in the following sequence: ROAD->SMALL CASTLE->MEDIUM CASTLE->LARGE CASTLE. The larger the castle, the stronger the garrison inside of it. The garrison may move out to attack any Player's units that you are neutral or at war with. If you are at war, it will also attack enemy villages within its radius. The radius for a small castle is 2 tiles, 4 for a medium castle and 6 for a large castle. Garrison units must also obey movement point costs. They must be able to move out of the castle and back to it in the same turn. Castles will not attack lone units because they are usually harmless and could be decoys to lure the defenders from the castle. *Castle garrisons repair at a rate of one unit per player turn.*

To build something, Click on the BUILD option on the ACTIONS pull down. The sword icon will become a shovel. Click **once** on the tile where you are Interested in building something. The text area on the right side of the main screen will display the cost of building the next object in line. If you still wish to build the object, Click on the square again. You may only make one castle improvement to a given tile on a given turn. For example, you may not improve a roadless tile to a large castle in one turn, you must first build a road and a small castle this turn, a medium castle the next turn, and **then** a large castle on the third turn.

*[To return to normal movement RClick anywhere on the screen.]*

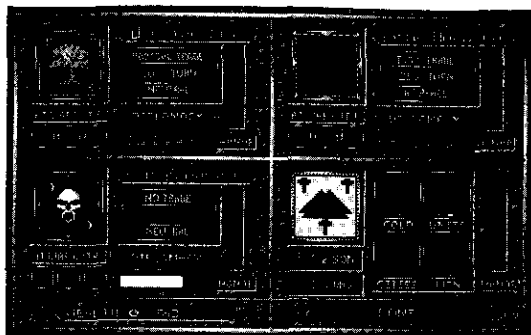
**COLONIZE:** Only Viking Swordsmen and Archers may be used as colonists. You may colonize empty cities, add population to any city that you own, or conquer small ones that still have independent inhabitants. In order to conquer a city site that has an independent population, you must have more Viking Swordsmen and Archers than the city has population. The Swordsmen and Archers turn their swords into plowshares and become free-holders.

Use the slide bars to allocate the number of each type of unit that you Want to become colonists. Where the text says "x of y" above and below the slide bars, "x" represents the number that will be used and "y" represents the total number of that type of unit in the group. Clicking on the O.K. button makes it final.

**DIPLOMACY:** Vikings were actually well known for their crafty Political skill. Diplomacy can become a very powerful tool for those willing to use it to the hilt.

**Trade Level-** Trade levels are dependent on how well you are getting along with other players. Full trade requires a peace treaty. All trade requires that you be at least in a neutral position to that player. Breaking a treaty





ally be lower than it was before the trade treaty was initiated.

**Trade Worth-** This number shows the amount of revenue you receive per turn from trade with that player.

**Relationship-** Most players find that as the game progresses it becomes wise to establish peaceful relations with other players. A state of War is in effect whenever one player attacks another player's city. War remains in effect until a neutrality or peace treaty is achieved. Neutrality can be canceled by declaring war. *One may attack another players units without violating neutrality.* The game begins with all players in a state of neutrality. Peace is only achieved when it is proposed by one player and accepted the other. When an action will violate a standing treaty with another player, a warning message will first appear to reconfirm the action.

**Sons-** Sons are your heirs; therefore sons are valuable, as they were during the Viking age, as insurance for peace treaties. They are also needed to lead the cities of your special ally race.

**Daughters-** Daughters are also useful tools of diplomacy. Marrying another player's daughter brings a dowry at no expense to the father. Gods occasionally want one of your daughters to become their wife.

**Honor-** The red bar represents your honor score. Honor is decreased by breaking treaties. Your Honor score will increase every turn for every treaty that is still in effect. The maximum amount of increase (3%) occurs when full trade and peace are in effect with every player. Honor effects how much your opponents trust you, what your men think about you and how hard it will be to complete certain quests.

**Bar Graphs-** Bar graphs provide information on the following:  
**GOLD:** Shows the *relative* amount of gold in the home treasury of each player.

**WIN:** Reveals how far the players have progressed on the Path. The higher the quest the more that completion of it is worth.

**CITIES:** Shows the *relative* number of cities controlled by each player

causes trade with that player to be reduced to the appropriate level. Broken trade treaties have an additional negative effect on your economy until your people find other sources for the materials that your erstwhile trade partner was supplying, so for one turn your income will actu-

**UNITs.** Reveals the *relative* number of units controlled by each player  
**FRIENDSHIP:** This bar graph shows how much a computer player likes *you*. "like" can be improved by giving him gold, magic, daughters and other desirable things.

**Diplomacy:** Click on this button to go to the heart of the **DIPLOMACY** screen.

**Hostages:** Shows if you have the other player's son or if he has yours. "N" means none. Causing or declaring war on someone who has your son as hostage dishonors him and you.

**NOTE:** Whatever options were selected last under Change Treaty or change Trade will come into effect when the turn in which they were selected ends. To see what options will be pursued after your turn ends, enter the appropriate diplomacy screen and note which options, if any, have check marks by them. If you want to change your mind about a selection, enter a new selection before ending your turn. The Give Gift options takes effect immediately. Clicking on the same or another Give Gift option will cause a second gift to be given.

**Change Treaty-** Declaring war when you are at Peace will cause your honor to suffer. Attacking another player's city without first declaring war the turn *before* causes you to lose honor.

**SUGGEST PEACE-** The potential ally must first accept the treaty before it goes into effect. A peace treaty allows you to move through the other player's territories without being attacked by his castles. Peace is violated whenever you attack another player's units, cities or castles.

**DECLARE NEUTRALITY-** Neutrality's worth is that it allows you to carry on limited and partial trade. Neutrality does not protect you from another player's castles. You may attack a neutral player's unit without declaring war and affecting trade. If you attack a neutral player's city you will be betraying his trust and starting a war; your honor will subsequently suffer.

**WAR, SEND HOSTAGE HOME-** If another player starts a war, you may kill your hostage without penalty. Sending a hostage home to a computer player that you are at war with can cause that player to Like you more.

**DECLARE WAR, KILL HOSTAGE-** If you start a war, killing a hostage will ~~lower~~ your honor. Killing a computer player's son will cause him to dislike you tremendously.

**Change Trade-** Decreasing your trade level causes your income to suffer for one year while your people find alternative suppliers of the specialties that your erstwhile partner supplied. If you decrease the trade level by one step, your pre-treaty income will be reduced by 10%. If you decrease the

trade level by two steps, the income that you would have made without any trade is reduced by 50%. If you decrease the trade level by three steps, your pre-treaty income will be reduced by 100%. Full trade requires a peace treaty. All Trade requires that you be at least in a neutral position to that player. Breaking a treaty causes trade with that player to be reduced to the appropriate level. Trade levels affect your income by multiplying the combined income of the two participants by the modifier shown below. If you cause Trade levels to drop by attacking a players units or cities, your honor will drop depending on what level of trade was in effect as follows:

NONE- Combined pre-trade incomes x 1 (no effect)

LIMITED- Combined pre-trade incomes x 5

PARTIAL- Combined pre-trade incomes x 10

FULL- Combined pre-trade incomes x 25

Give Gift- The Give Gift options takes effect immediately. Clicking on the same or another Give Gift option will cause a second gift to be given.

GOLD- Once you have Clicked on the Gold option you will be prompted to give an amount.

MAP INFORMATION- Click and drag the rectangular area of your map that you want to give away. Areas that you have explored which the other player has not will become explored on his map. He will not receive any of your sepia map information.

MAGIC- Clicking on the Magic option will cause the Magic Tome to appear. Use it to select which item you wish to give away. If the magic is related to an item it will appear in his home city. If it is a global spell, e.g. forest lore, it will appear in the Magic section of the Tome pull-down.

DAUGHTER- Clicking on the Daughter option will cause one of your daughters to be given away immediately. Daughters bring a dowry of 10% of your wealth to their new husband. The money will not be subtracted from your treasury as it is assumed that the dowry is supplied by her mother's clan.

Barter: Click on the Barter button to set up mutually agreeable contracts. You may offer an incremental increase in trade by selecting Increase Trade. Offer a peace treaty to the other party by Clicking on the button for Agree to Peace. Offer to declare war on another player by Clicking on one of the player numbers under the "War With:" heading (repeat the barter if you want him to start a war with both players). Or you may offer gold, map information, magic items or a daughter to sweeten a deal. Selecting the Gold option brings up a screen that asks how much gold you would like to send from your current treasury.



*Your wealth will not reflect the offer until it is accepted: if you do not have the gold to cover the offer by the time the other player receives the proposal the barter will not occur even if the other party Accepts it. They will be notified at that time that you no longer have the gold to cover the deal.* If you choose to offer Map Information you must select the area of your map that you wish to reveal. When the other party receives the deal, he will be shown the area that you indicated with the explored area shown in red.

Click O.K. when you have selected the offer that you wish to make. The "If you give me:" box will then appear on the right side of the screen. You may request the same things that you offered. Be careful when selecting the Map Information option: the other player's obligation will be satisfied even if the area you requested has not been explored. You cannot select a specific magic item that you want to receive. Click O.K. to finalize the proposal.

Sending a Barter proposal causes the other player to receive a summary message. They may then Click on the Agree, Decline, Next Message or End Reading. Clicking on Accept causes the deal to take effect immediately. Barter proposals that are declined have no effect. If Agree or Decline are selected, the summary will not appear if they access Messages later in the turn. Otherwise they may reaccess a proposal that they have received by selecting the Mail under the Tomes pull-down menu and selecting Accept or Decline. If they do not respond to the proposal it will be deleted with no effect when they end their turn.

**Idle Threats:** brings up a prepared list of threats with which to menace other players. They have no effect on actual trade or diplomatic treaties.

**Ultimatums:** If your friend will not listen to reason or idle threats then this is the screen for you. You may seek the same results as in the Barter screen using real threats like breaking treaties or killing hostages. *Unlike the first Barter screen, the first Ultimatum screen indicates what you want.* Click O.K. once you have indicated what you desire. The "Or 1 will:" screen then appears to the right. Choosing the Reduce Trade option will cause your trade level with that player to be reduced by one step if he does not fulfill your request, e.g. from Full to Partial or Partial to Limited. Click O.K. to finalize the Ultimatum. *Ultimatums cannot be canceled once they have been sent.*

Sending an Ultimatum causes the other player to receive a summary message. He may then Click on the Agree, Decline, Next Message or End Reading. Clicking on Accept causes the deal to take effect immediately. Declining an Ultimatum causes the threat to come into effect immediately. If Agree or Decline are selected, the summary will not appear if you access Mail later in the turn. Otherwise you may reaccess an Ultimatum that you have received

by selecting the Mail option under the Tomes pull-down menu and selecting Accept or Decline. If you do not respond to an Ultimatum by selecting either Accept or Decline, the threat takes immediate effect when you select End Turn.

**RECRUIT:** units swear their fealty to you as your Honor and fame grow: they congregate at your capital waiting to be called to service. You must pay money to outfit them for service. Every player may select from Viking Swordsmen, Viking Archers, and Heroes. Each player also has a special fourth unit type that they can recruit: Humans>Berserkers. Elves>Elven Archers, Trolls>Trolls, Dwarves>Dwarven Axemen. Special units begin to volunteer after the completion of a quest that gives you a "village" in their lands which exist in a parallel world. Heroes are scarce but do occasionally show up, especially if it is rumored that you have great need of them.

The number beneath each unit's portrait is the number of that unit type which are available. Melee strength is the hand to hand combat ability of a unit. The Missile ability score represents a unit's capability with a ranged weapon. Defense represents the number of hits a unit can sustain before dying. This number is reset at the end of each combat. Moves shows how many movement points a unit is allotted. Cost is the amount of gold required to outfit the unit when you recruit it. A swordsman cost forty gold. An archer cost fifty gold. A hero cost one hundred and each player's special unit costs sixty gold to activate. Active is the number of units like this one that you already possess. The animation to the right of each unit's description shows that unit in action.

To recruit a unit, Click on any area of that unit's description. The portrait of that unit will appear at the bottom of the screen. Any units that were already there when the recruit screen was first accessed are units that were already in the capital city, *Purchases are not permanent until the done button is Clicked.* If you wish to change your mind about a recruit, Click on the UNDO button at the bottom of its portrait. The UNDO button will be voided for units that were already in the city.

Dragon ships cost three hundred gold and may be purchased by Clicking the BUY button. The BUY will turn in to an UNDO button at that time.

Your wealth is displayed at the bottom of the screen for your convenience.

Recruits always immediately appear at your capital city. If the city is occupied by enemy units, new units will appear in an adjacent square.

**SEND:** Allows you to send letters and or money to other players.

Click on the banner of the chieftains that you want the message to go to. Duplicates of the message and/or money will be sent to each player whose banner is outlined in red. Clicking Send Message makes it final.

**SPELLS:** This option allows you to cast any strategic spells that you have been awarded. All strategic spells have an accompanying number of charges. Charges are the number of times that a spell can be used before it dissipates and the item disappears,

**RETIRE:** Quit Position in a multi-player game; the computer then takes over. *NOTE that the change is permanent, and that once your position is taken over by the computer, you may not restart it.*

**END TURN** Choosing Play By E-Mail saves the game file at the very start of the next player's turn.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**CORNER WORLD:** The Movement Screen display is represented by the white rectangle. Clicking anywhere on the Corner World causes the white rectangle, and hence the Movement Screen display, to move to be centered where you Clicked. Note that the Corner World scrolls left and right in order to show the entire world.

**YEAR:** This shows the current year. The game starts in the year 701 AD.

**WEALTH:** This shows your current wealth.

**STACK CONTROLS:** The WAIT button causes the Active Group to wait to be moved until all other groups have been moved. The DONE button causes the Active Group to not prompt *you* for the rest of the turn *whether or not it has any movementpoints* left. The DONE order last only during the turn in which it is given. The WAIT or DONE order may be countered by RClicking on the group at any time.

The GO button is only usable if the Active Group has move-to orders. The GROUP button causes all units in a stack to become part of one Group.

**THE LONG SHIP:** This icon represents the ship, if any, that is present in the stack. A check in the upper left corner indicates that it is part of the selected group in the stack that you are viewing.

There are three magic ship types that you might have. River ships do not pay additional movement points to move on rivers; the icon has white wings that sprout from the sail. The Storm Ship is impervious to storms and is represented by an icon with a cloud on it. The Land Ship sails through land as if it were water and is represented by a ship with green wings,

**CARRY/PORT:** Viking long ships were relatively very light and could be carried over land by the crew. The button is a toggle. If it shows some guys walking off the gang plank, the ship will be left behind whenever land must be crossed. If the ship is being carried on the shoulders then it will be brought along. It cost more movement points to move a unit when it is carrying the ship.



**MOVE MODE:** This is a three-way toggle. The dots denote the option that the ship will make when it is deciding the best path to a destination that you have given it. The more the dots hug the coast, the more cautious the ship will be about crossing open water. Storms and sea dragons occur only at open sea.

**DESTRUCTION OF SHIPS:** Ships are destroyed at the end of each player's turn if the ship is not within one space of the winning player's units, cities or castles.

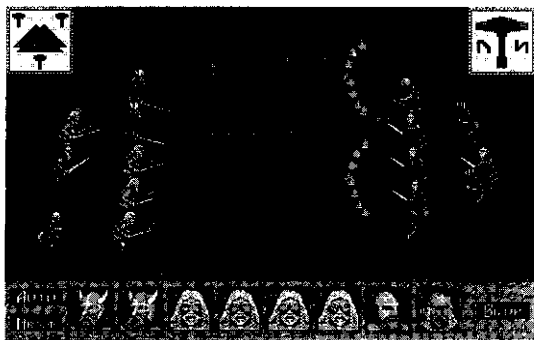
## COMBAT SCREEN

The combat screen consists of a background that reflects the terrain type where the combat occurred. The attacker is positioned on the left and his banner is displayed in the upper left corner. The defender always begins on the right side of the screen and his banner is displayed in the upper right corner. The defender moves first.

### CONTROL ICONS-

**Hand-** To select a unit to be the active (or selected) unit, Click on it with the Hand icon. Active attackers always face right and active defenders always face left.

**Move Arrow-** Move arrows cover the eight cardinal directions that you are allowed to move. If a unit is adjacent to the selected unit, passing the cursor over it will cause the Hand icon to appear rather than the blue move arrow. A red x over an unoccupied area shows that the selected unit cannot move there. If a unit is adjacent to an enemy unit it may not move to a position adjacent to another enemy unit.



**Sword-** A sword icon indicates that a unit is within melee range. Click on the enemy unit to have the active unit move into the opponent's square and engage in combat. Melee combat is usually to the death. The attacker always swings first. Combat automatically ends when the attacker has made three swings and the defender has made two, unless one of the combatants has a magic weapon that increases the number of swings per attack.

**Magic Attack-** The magic wand icon indicates that the active unit has spells. If the magic Wand icon appears when the cursor is placed over the

**selected** unit then that unit possesses a magic item. If a selected unit has a magic item then Click on that unit to get a menu of items. Click on the item, then on the O.K. button to cast the spell, Click on the enemy with the Spell icon to cast the spell at it. If the spell does not activate then your target is out of line-of-sight or inappropriate for that spell type. Line-of-sight is blocked when an enemy unit stands between you and the target.

**Target-** The green target icon indicates that a unit is within range of a non-magical missile attack. You must have line-of-sight to attack a unit with a missile weapon or spell. Line-of-sight is blocked when an enemy unit stands between you and the target.

**Run!** Place the cursor near the rear border of the side of the screen that your units came in on. It will become a white flag with RUN written below. Clicking this will cause the **selected** unit to move towards the back of the screen each turn. RUN is permanent during the combat that it is given. Groups that ran will appear in a tile adjacent to where the combat occurred. Units that ran will appear with the group if it is victorious. If the group is defeated, units that ran will appear together in an adjacent tile. **Defending units may not Run.**

**WALLS-** Walls decrease the likelihood of missile units hitting units behind the wall. The defenders can quickly remove the wall if desired.

**Wooden Walls-** occur around small castles as well as some burgs and towns. They decrease the attackers to-hit score by 15%.

**Stone Walls-** occur around large castles and medium castles as well as cities. They decrease the attackers to-hit score by 30%.

**VICTORY OPTIONS-** If you are victorious when you attack a city you will be given four options: RAID, PLUNDER, RAZE and SUBJUGATE. Raid does a minimum of damage to the city finds the least amount of loot but



takes only 10% of your original movement points, allowing you to depart rapidly, a good idea if there is a castle nearby. Raze destroys the entire city and allows your men to take the time to root out every last pfenning. Razing uses the groups original movement points. Plunder does a middling amount of damage and costs half of your original movement points. But beware, cutting the men loose means they'll be recovering for a while and vulnerable to counter attacks. Subjugate razes the city and puts you in the Colonize sub-screen.

You are automatically rewarded with gold every time you defeat a castle or monastery.

## STACK INFORMATION

RClicking on the active stack will bring up detailed information on the units in it.

Unit Information- Clicking on a unit that appears in the row of units along the bottom will bring up detailed information about that unit in the lower center portion of the screen. Clicking on the detailed information box will cause it to go away.

Magic Items- Units that carry magic items have an asterisk in the upper left corner of their portraits. Clicking on the unit will make it appear in the unit information area. A brief description of the item will appear. A DROP button will appear if he is carrying a magic item. A NEXT button will also appear if he is carrying more than one item. Use it to cycle through the objects that he carries. Clicking on the drop button will cause the item described at the bottom of the unit information area to be dropped. The unit information area will then be replaced by a description of the unclaimed magic items on the tile. If the unit still has an asterisk then he was carrying more than one item. You may repeat the process as many times as necessary.

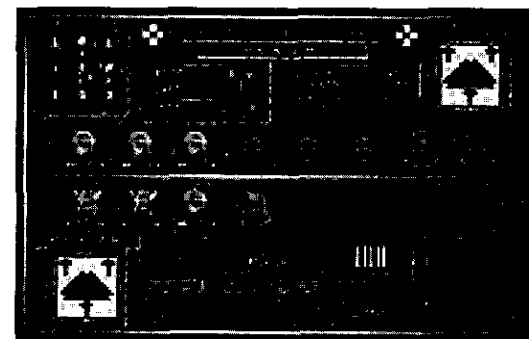
If there are unclaimed magic items in the tile, you are initially presented with a description of the items. If there is a hero or wizard in your stack then a PICK UP button appears also. If there are multiple items there, you will also be presented with a NEXT button that you can use to cycle through the objects. If you Click on the PICK UP button, the item currently described is picked up by any lone hero or wizard in the stack. If there are multiple units capable of carrying magic you must then Click on the unit that you want to carry the object.

Ship- If a ship is present in the stack it will appear in the lower right area of the screen.

## CITY INFORMATION SCREEN

RClicking on a city will bring up detailed information about it. Size and Name- Cities occur in five sizes:

NAME	SIZE	POPULATION
Hamlet	1	1-9
Village	2	10-24
Burgh	3	25-49
Town	4	50-99
City	5	100+



The owner of the city appears beneath its' size and name. If the city is a capital it is stated there.

The upper left corner shows the resources that the city has access to. Yellow numbers represent food related resources while red shows trade wares. Terrains have the following values:

TERRAIN TYPE	FOOD RESOURCES	WARES	ITEMS
Grass	3		1
Tundra	2		1
Forest	1		2
Hills	1		2
Mountains	0		3
Ocean	2		1
Large Rivers	2		2
Small Rivers	1		2
Cataracts	2		1

A total of the resource points and population always appears in the left center of the screen. The amount of resources produced by a city is a function of the total available resources multiplied by the size of the city.

If you own the city you will also find how much gold is stored in the city



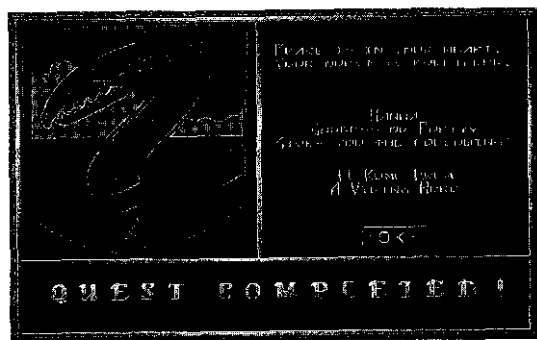
storehouse. The percentage of taxes that you collect from a city is the same as the degree to which the storehouse is full. For example, if the storehouse is 30% full, you will only collect 30% of the taxes that you would otherwise collect if the storehouse were 100% full. The storehouse is what is raided by invaders. The maximum capacity of a city's storehouse is 5xcity size X wares or 5 X production.

The units shown across the bottom are the city's militia. They represent strapping peasants, retired warriors, and in the larger cities, professional militia. Militia units regenerate at the rate of one per player turn.

Magic Items present in the city are indicated in the lower left. Heroes that appear in cities or castles may not carry magic items.

**COMBINED INFORMATION:** When a stack exists in a city or castle, both the stack and city information screens will appear at the same time. The city information screen will appear on top.

**GODS AND THEIR REWARDS-** The specific reward given by a god as a reward for completing a specific quest varies. The following is a table showing the general thrust of gifts given for a particular quest. The gift varies with the group of gods that a god appears in.



## MAGIC ITEMS AND SPECIAL UNITS:

**SPELLS, MAGIC AND THEIR USE-** There are five types of magic in Hammer of the Gods: magic weapons and armor, miscellaneous tactical spell devices, miscellaneous strategic spell devices, global magic items and blessings. Magic items may be carried by heroes of any race and wizards.

**Magic Weapons and Armor-** Magic weapons can modify one of the following: Melee ability, Missile ability or number of attacks. You may only use one weapon of each type. Only one item that adds to your Defense score may be used at one time. Weapons and Armor can be used by any player, regardless of who was first awarded the item. They may be used indefinitely. You

may not use ranged magic weapons if you have a zero Missile rating.

**Tactical Spell Devices-** This category includes wands and other miscellaneous magic items (hereafter called wands) that are used on the Combat screen. Click on a unit carrying a wand (you'll know that they are carrying one if the icon turns in to a wand icon). Note that the name of the item is followed by the charge number. Each Charge allows the item to be used once. Once the charges are used up, the item disappears. Items cannot be recharged. Select which wand you want to use by clicking on it. Some spells, like the summon Drake spell, do not require a target and happen as soon as you Click on the object in the list. If the spell requires a target, Click on the enemy unit that you want to attack. Tactical spells follow the same rules that Missile weapons do regarding line-of-site. (An enemy unit will shield an enemy unit behind it.) Some spells allow saving throws. If the target saves, the spell fails and a charge is burned.

Press the ESCape key during targeting to cancel a magic item selection.

**Strategic Spell Devices-** Some items cast spells that are only usable from the Main screen and only when the unit carrying the item is adjacent to the target. To cast a Storm spell for example, you must be adjacent to the target ship. Some examples of spells cast by strategic devices include Storm, Assassinate and Wither.

**Global Magic Items-** Some items cast a permanent spell that affects all Of your units.

**Blessings-** Gods sometime give blessings as rewards for quest completion. Blessings are permanent and global. Blessings are not attached to an item and can never be taken away. Each terrain blessing adds one point to the food or wares rating of that terrain type.

TERRAIN TYPE	FOOD BLESSING	WARES BLESSING
Tundra	Blessed Ice Fishing	Blessed Fur Trapping
Forests	Blessed Hunting	Blessed Logging
Hills	Blessed Herding	Blessed Wool Growth
Mountains	Blessed Mining	Blessed Fungus Farming
Rivers	Blessed Fishing	Blessed Gold Panning

## MAGIC ITEMS AND SPELLS-

**ASSASSINATION-** Use this spell on an enemy that is adjacent to you on the strategic map. Evil vapors coalesce to strangle the victim. If he is quick to recognize his peril, he may survive.

**THE BLACK CAULDRON-** As warriors fall, toss them into this foul cauldron. The seething evil within permeates their flesh and they return, if at all, as skeletons or ghoulish shadows of their former selves.

**CAUSE FEAR-** A successful fear spell causes the target to scream like a girly-man and immediately leave the field of combat.

**CAUSE STORM-** You must be adjacent to your target to summon a storm on his ship.

**DRAGON SLAYER WEAPONS-** Use these unique weapons against the dreaded wyrms they were designed to kill. Adds a small Melee bonus against non-dragons.

**FERTILITY** This Elven item increases the growth of your cities.

**GIANT SLAYER WEAPONS-** Use these unique weapons against Ogres and Giants. Adds a small Melee bonus against non-giants.

**HEAL-** A heal spell will completely restore a wounded units health.

**INCOME-** This global item increases the your income from each city you hold sway over. Some versions only last a few turns.

**MOVE** Carrying this item grants all members of the same group double the movement allowance.

**PARALYZE-** Paralyzed units become as rigid as kobolds exposed to the sun until they are attacked.

**PILFER-** The pilfer spell sends a swarm of tiny imps from the casters position, which must be adjacent to the target, into the city to seek out all of their valuables. They then bring the loot back to the caster.

**REGENERATION SPELL-** An individual or group of warriors carrying an object containing the regeneration rune will be slightly healed every other combat round.

**SUMMON DRAKE-** A Drake cannot be summoned unless there is room in the ranks which cannot exceed eight warriors.

**TRADE-** This Dwarven item increases revenue from trade treaties.

**TUNNEL-** This spell summons subterranean wyrms that destabilize the earth beneath a defenders walls and causes them to crumble and no longer provide cover to their units.

**WITHER-** This spell sends a horde of pestilent imps into an adjacent city where they destroy half of the population and vanish back to Hel's lair carrying all of the city's valuables.

**SPECIAL UNIT ATTRIBUTES-**

**DWARVES-** Dwarves know the secret ways of the mountains. They use the hidden paths worn through the roots of the mountains and hills and therefore move more rapidly there than any other terrestrial race.

**ELVES-** Elves are not only at home in the forest but they actually cause trees to bend out of the way as they move through and thus move more quickly through the forest than any other unit.

**56 TROLLS-** These noisome creatures are wise in the way of the great cycle

of life and death and feel it is their mission the assist others along the later half. Trolls naturally regenerate one lost defense point at the end of each combat round.

**SKELETONS-** Because they are undead, skeletons may walk underwater without fear of drowning. They can therefore move in any environment though they must navigate the terrain beneath the waves.

**DRAKES-** Drakes are dragons in the nymph stage of development. Drakes can fly on the strategic map but not in combat. They have a powerful Melee breath weapon.

**WATER WIZARDS-** These masters of Aegir's realm may walk, nay glide, over the waves.

**NECROMANCERS-** Necromancers, like Skeletons, are undead and can therefore walk underwater.

**FIRE WIZARDS-** Fire wizards are the allies of the dwarves and have also learned the hidden paths beneath the mountains and hills.

**FIRE GIANTS-** These unlikely dwarf-friends also know the secret routes beneath the mountains.

**SEA SERPENTS-** Sea serpents avoid the shallow waters of coast and river but rule the waves and are responsible for the loss of many a mother's son. Slaying a Sea Serpent brings great honor to your empire.

**DRAGONS-** Dragons are loathe to move from over their golden horde, even in combat, lest it be stolen by some invisible halflingtwit. They lay low their foes with a mighty fire blast or, if a fool gets close enough, rend him with their savage claws.



**GODS AND THEIR REWARDS-** The specific reward given by a god as a reward for completing a specific quest varies. The following is a table showing the general thrust of gifts given for a particular quest. The gift varies with the group of gods that a god appears in.

#### NAME OF GOD

##### HUMAN:

Volund, Melee Weapon +1  
 Ratatosk, Melee Weapon +1  
 Groa, Hero. Berserker or +1 Melee Weapon  
 Thialfi, Berserkers  
 Nanna, Armor +1. Hero  
 Wyr, Map Information. Berserkers or Hero  
 Modi, Slayer, Hero, Berserker  
 Uller, Melee Weapon +4, Hero, Berserker  
 Iarnsaxa, Melee Weapon +2, Hero, Berserker  
 Magni, Berserkers  
 Forseti, River Harvest +  
 Heimdall, Melee Weapon +3, Hero. Berserkers  
 Bragi, Multiple Attack Melee Weapon, Hero. Berserkers  
 Vidar, Berserker City  
 Aegir, Magic River Ship  
 Loki, Drake  
 Jord, River Wares +  
 Hermod, Magic Storm Ship  
 Tyr, Acid Spell, Hero. Drake  
 Thor, Paralysis, Hero. Berserkers  
 Saga, Water Wizard. Drake  
 Frigga, Drake Summoning, Hero, Drake

##### ELVEN:

Fiolnir, Elven Hero  
 Hnoss, Missile Weapon +1  
 Gersemi, Elven Archers  
 Hyndla, Forest Lore  
 Forseti, Forest Food +  
 Odur, Map Information, Elven Archers or Elf Hero  
 Veda, Armor +1, Elf Hero. Elf Archers  
 Sif, Hill Food +  
 Uller, Missile Weapon +2, Elven Hero, Elf Archers  
 Skadi, Frost Spell, Elven Hero, Elf Archers  
 Vali, Missile Weapon +2, Elven Hero. Elf Archers  
 Magni, Heal Spell, Elven Hero. Elf Archers  
 Hermod, Global Move Spell, Elf Archers or Elf Hero  
 Frey, Elf City  
 Aegir, Protection From Storms Spell, Elf Archers or Elf Hero  
 Rinda, Frost Giants  
 Freya, Forest Wares +  
 Kari, Magic Land Ship  
 Tyr, Cause Storm Spell, Elven Hero, Elf Archers or Frost Giant  
 Thor, Cause **Fear** Spell. Elven Hero. Elf Archers or Frost Giant  
 Saga, Wind Wizard. Elf Archers or Frost Giant  
 Frigga, Global Fertility Spell



#### NAME OF GOD

##### TROLLS:

~~Ratatosk~~, Melee Weapon +1  
 Ratatosk, Trolls  
~~Norn~~gesta, Troll Hero, Trolls  
~~Suttung~~, Trolls  
 Vala, Trolls  
~~Hodur~~, Map Information, Trolls or Troll Hero  
~~Modi~~, Melee Weapon +1, Troll Hero, Trolls  
~~Mald~~, Skeletons or Trolls  
 Gerd, Ogres, Trolls  
 Gam, Regeneration. Troll Hero. Trolls  
 Sigyn, Tundra Food +  
 Anguboda, Melee Weapon +2, Troll Hero. Trolls  
 Vidar, Ogres, Trolls  
 Skymir, Troll City  
 Hermod, Movement Spell, Trolls or Troll Hero  
 Hel, Fire Giant  
 Rinda, Tundra Wares +  
 Loki, Assassin Spell. Hero. Ogres or Skeletons  
 Tyr, Wither Spell, Troll Hero, Ogres  
 Thor, Group Regeneration, Troll Hero. Skeletons or Ogres  
 Saga, Necromancer. Skeletons or Ogres  
 Frigga, Black Cauldron. Troll Hero. skeletons or Ogres

##### DWARVES:

Flalar, Dwarves  
 Ratatosk, Melee Weapon +1  
~~Gerd~~, Dwarf Hero, Dwarves or Melee Weapon +  
 Volund, Mountain Food +  
~~Suttung~~, Global Income Spell (3 turns)  
 Ran, Map Information, Dwarves or Dwarf Hero  
 Sindri, Dragon Slayer, Dwarf Hero, Dwarves  
 Thrud, Hill Food +  
 Idun, Armor +1, Dwarf Hero, Dwarves  
 Loric, Fireball Spell, Dwarf Hero. Dwarves  
 Iarnsaxa, Mountain Wares +  
 Dvalin, Melee Weapon +2, Dwarf Hero. Dwarves  
 Loki, Raiding Spell. Dwarf Hero. Dwarves  
 Oberon, Dwarf City  
 Hermod, Global Trade Spell  
 Heimdall, Fire Giant  
 Fulla, Hill Wares +  
 Rinda, Tundra Wares +  
 Tyr, Tunnel Spell, Dwarf Hero, Dwarves or Fire Giant  
 Thor, Fireball Spell, Dwarf Hero, Dwarves or Fire Giant  
 Saga, Fire Wizard, Dwarf Hero, Dwarves or Fire Giant  
 Frigga, Global Income + (Permanent)

## PLAYER ELIMINATION-

If you do not own at least one city of any size by the end of your turn you will be eliminated from play. If you own other cities your capital will automatically be moved to the largest one.

**END OF GAME:** The end of the game occurs when one of the players completes Odin's quest or when only one player remains.

## APPENDIX A: Keyboard Support

It should be noted here that Hammer of the Gods is primarily designed around using the mouse. In some cases, the mouse is, in fact, necessary. Using the keyboard to input spatial information typical in a game is just too clumsy. However, below are a few tips for using the keyboard in other circumstances to speed up game play.

Most of the interface is "Windows"-like or "CUA" like. This means that in general to get to a button or field (without the mouse), one uses the TAB key and then SPACE or RETURN to press the button. The arrow keys are reserved for moving around inside fields (like editable fields or listboxes.)

In general most of the keyboard hotkeys are the highlighted letters of each button. For example, in the first screen the 'S' in Start new game is a different color than the rest of the word. Pressing the 'S' key here takes Hammer of the Gods immediately to the new game configuration screen. If you are currently in an EDIT field where S's are treated literally, then you may use the ALT key in combination with the hotkey.

Also, to speed up play, there are a few special keys enabled in the movement screen. They are as follows:

Arrow keys The arrow keys may be used to move the current group one space at a time. (Num Lock must be off to use the number pad) Home, End, PgDn, and PgUp on the Number pad can be used to move diagonally.

[Control] + arrow keys These scroll the map around without moving a group.

'C' Center map on current group.

'I' Brings up the Info screen.

'Q' Changes to a scout mode where you can move around a cursor without moving any groups.

'T' Like "Q", but when done pressing enter will move the current group to the cursor location.

## APPENDIX B: General Trouble Shooting

Q. An out of memory error occurs during a game?

A. Check the AUTOEXEC.BAT & CONFIG.SYS of the system and reduce the size of your hard disk cache or remove it.

B. In the future you may want to employ the AUTO SAVE. If a memory error occurs then you may be able to continue playing the game.

Q. The mouse cursor does not operate properly?

A. With some mice (that are not 100% Microsoft compatible) there can be problems with the mouse. Replacing the driver should correct the problem.

Q. What if my display appears vertically squashed?

A. Some monitors do not support the 640x400 mode that Hammer uses for SVGA. You may play the game in VGA by typing HAMMER VGA on the command line when starting the game.

## APPENDIX C: CUSTOMIZATION

Command Line switches- You may add any of the following to the command line when starting Hammer of the gods. For example, to start Hammer of the gods with no music, type HAMMER NODIGITAL when starting the game.

NODIGITAL - Start without playing digitized sounds.

VGA - Forces the graphics mode to be standard VGA/MCGA (320x200. 256 colors)

VESA and VESA480- Forces the graphics mode to be SuperVGA (SVGA) using a VESA driver (640x400 or 640x480)

MODE# - Forces a specific SVGA card/chipset to be used where # can be: 2 for ATI, 4 for Paradise/Western Digital/AST, 5 for Trident 8800/8900, 6 for Tseng ET3000. 7 for Tseng ET4000. 8 for Headland Video 7 VRAM/VGA/1024, 9 for Cirrus 542x, 10 for Cirrus 5410. and 11 for S3. Note that these switches are only necessary if the autodetection fails (which is rare). For example, use Hammer MODE4 if you want to explicitly specify a Paradise card.





## APPENDIX E: The World of The Norsemen

**Odin-** Germanic people knew Odin as Woden, hence Wednesday. Some evidence that he was a mere mortal from somewhere around the Black Sea. It is thought that he brought new technologies and a code of laws from the civilized south and appeared somewhat a god to the relatively primitive Norse.

**Frigga-** Frigga is the Queen of the gods. Wife, and some also say daughter of Odin, She was the Goddess of the sky and patroness of housewives, she was fond of fine clothing but also carried a staff. She appeared in white or black robes symbolizing the clouds of the sky which happened to match her mood.

**Frey-** Frey was the god of Alf-heim, the land of the light elves. The king of the dwarves gave him Gullin-bursti, a golden boar with bristles that shone like the sun. He also had a sword that would fight of its own when drawn but could not be sheathed until it tasted blood. Frey brought warmth and light wherever he went. Friday is named for Frey.

**Thor-** Thor is the god of thunder but also of fire. He wears a crown, each point of which is tipped with a steadily burning flame. His hammer, Mjolnir, would always return to his hand when thrown at an enemy. Thor wore an iron gauntlet named Iarn-greiper because he could not otherwise hold Mjolnir's red hot handle. Thor was the patron of peasants and thralls. he had a special place reserved for them in Thor's home in Thrud-vang. Thursday bears his name.

**Tyr-** Tyr is the son of Odin. He is the god of courage, war and martial valor. Tribes that worshipped him performed great sword dances and cried out to him for victory in battle. Among the Franks, the priest offered prisoners of war as human sacrifices upon his altars by cutting the spread-eagle upon them. The spread-eagle refers to the process of cutting along either side of the face-down victim's back bone and opening the ribs like wings. The viscera would then be removed through the opening from the still living victim. The dolmens, or stone altars, that the sacrifices were made upon can still be seen in Northern Europe. Tuesday is named in Tyr's honor.



The warmer weather also made the ice pack recede enough to allow the Vikings to explore much further West than they had before. While many have questioned the authenticity of the Saga of Eirik the Red, a lesser known but more respectable account of Norse exploration, the Saga of the Greenlands, supports the Norse discovery of North America. It tells of Bjarni Herjulfsson being blown off course while journeying from Iceland to Greenland, themselves only recently discovered and colonized. in 986. He travelled down the coast of a new land naming them Hulluland, Markland and Vinland, then returning that same year. His brother Thorvald returned the next year with colonists but was reported killed by the natives. It is widely accepted that the ruins found at L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland are the authentic remains of a Norse colony. The authenticity of the sword, axe and shield boss found in Lake Nipigon, Ontario and the rune stone found in Kensington, Minnesota are not established in mainstream circles.

**Dwarves, etc.**- After the gods slayed the frost-giant Ymir, a host of maggot-like creatures bred in his flesh. The gods gave them humanoid form and superhuman intelligence. They divided them into two classes. Those which were treacherous and cunning by nature were banished underground to Svart-alfa-heim (Black-dwarf-home), from whence they could not come during daylight without being turned to stone. They were called Dwarves, Gnomes, Trolls or Kobolds and in time explored all the secret places beneath the earth and collected gems and gold to store in secret recesses. Those beings that were good and useful were sent to dwell in the airy realm of Alf-heim (Elf Home).

**Skalds**- Skalds were the Viking equivalent of bards.

**Normandy**- Nortmanni was based on the ecclesiastical province of Rouen, which in turn was based on the Roman province of Lugdunensis Secunda. Vikings had settled the river estuary areas there for nearly a hundred years when Hrolfr (Rollo) the Walker defeated the Franks at the battle of Chartres in 911. Bargaining from a position of weakness, Charles III the Simple granted the province of Rouen to Rollo on the condition that they take baptism and give liege service to the Frankish Carolingian Monarchy. The area then became known as the home of the Northmen and it is said that Rollo died a pagan.

The Carolingians were determined to regain the only nominally loyal province as a Crownland under their direct control. Fortunately for the Franks, Rollo's son William I Longsword was assassinated in 942. Then king Louis IV took William's young son Richard I into "protection" during his minority, Louis soon launched an attack against the Norman "rebels" with the thinly disguised goal of ruling Normandy in Richard's name, assuming that no "accidents" happened to Richard before he produced an heir. The Normans captured Louis in battle with the help of some Viking allies that they called in

knowing that Normandy was still very much in touch with its Norse relatives) and reestablished Richard to the Normans throne. Over the next several generations the Norman adopted French and became true champions of Christianity and began to deny safe harbor for their estranged Viking cousins.

Richard I's grandson, William the Bastard, defeated English King Harold in 1066 and became William the Conqueror. Ironically, Harold had just come from defeating the last great Viking warleader, Harald Hardruler, at York. The "civilized" Norse had finally achieved what their cousins could not.

**Gall-Gael**- Many Irish boys were adopted by Vikings settlers in Ireland. They were trained to be vicious fighters known as the Gall-Gael, meaning the "Sons of Death".

**Runes**- Viking runes are a derivative of the Indo-European system that had existed since Neolithic times. It was slowly replaced by the Phoenician system. The Norse variant was called Futhark and very closely related to the German system. It consisted of 24 characters that represented both sounds and ideas.

**The Geography of the Norse Mythos**- The land of Man is called Midgard. Midgard is surrounded by Ulthaf, the world ocean. Beyond Ulthaf is the ring created by the serpent Midgard. Bifrost, the rainbow bridge, spans Midgard and has its bases in Niflheim on one side and Muspellsheim on the other. The top of the arch reaches Asgard. Asgard is the home of the gods. Valhalla is Odin's special palace in Asgard. Yggdrasil is the tree of life and knowledge. It has one root in Asgard, one in Niflheim and one in Ulthaf on Midgard.

**Dragon Ships**- Norse variant of the standard European boat which was direct descendent of hollowed-out log type canoes. Dragon ships ranged from 45 to 75 feet in length and had one square sail. It was clinderbuilt, meaning that the hull was made of overlapping boards like the technique used in shingling a roof, and therefore very leak resistant in heavy seas. The design remained the same for thousands of years until the introduction of the center mounted stern rudder circa 1200 AD. This led to a differentiation of the bow and stern.

**Russia**- Russia is named for Rus, the Norse word for trade. The 12th Century Primary Russian Chronicle, covering from 852 to 1110, claims that Varangian (Viking) mercenaries, led by Rurik of Jutland, were hired by local Slavic rulers, As often happened in other cases, they turned on their employers and seized power, founding the Kingdom of Kiev. The Rurikid clan produced several fine leaders and the Vikings spread their rule east and south, continuing to rule various portions of East Slavic territory until 1598.

The area was thinly settled and useful mainly for trade goods: amber, furs, honey, wax and timber products. The greatest wealth, however, came from controlling trade routes between the Baltic and Black seas. Unfortunately for Russia, the First Crusade (1096 to 1099) reestablished trade routes through the Mediterranean sea making the Black Sea to Baltic routes less profitable.

Vladimir, son of Rurik, was quick to see the usefulness of Christianity for his kingdom. The pagan Slavic tribes were difficult to rule. The Church gave the concepts of territorial and hierarchical organization that made states out of tribal territories. After baptism, Vladimir allowed Constantinople to establish an Episcopal See in Russia in 988.

## CREDITS AND DESIGNERS NOTES

Rob Lefebvre- "We started Hammer of the Gods as our next strategy game to follow Merchant Prince. When we first came up with the concept, we figured that we would just use our same game engine and crank it out 'in a few months.' Well, after the initial game design was underway we saw a lot of promise in the game concept, and decided that we should go all-out. So, after almost a year and after the redesign of our combat, sound, AI, and most other systems, we are really proud of the results. Things have really come a long way since our first shareware strategy game, Modern Conquest, and I'm pretty excited to be a part of it all."

Ken Lightner- Ken is a long time gaming enthusiast, both real and virtual. After finding little financially rewarding to do with his Sociology degree he turned to programming. After finding little entertaining about programming in the real world, he turned back to gaming! "If you're doing workplace software, no one really wants to use your product..." He co-founded Several Dudes Holistic Gaming Inc. with a few long time gaming partners (mostly of the non-virtual type,) and started hacking together games. Luckily, his wife, Cheri, puts up with him disappearing for months at a time to finish a project. In fact, she sometimes even brings pizza! Ken's goals include a forty foot gaming table for minatures, more free time, and digitizing napalm.

Ed Pike- Ed is an enthusiast of history and believes that truth is always stranger than fiction. He stumbled in to designing interactive entertainment software as he Graduated from Georgia Tech with a BS degree in the History of Technology and Society. He co-founded Several Dudes Holistic Gaming Inc. with his Phi Kappa Theta fraternity brothers Rob and Ken. The company has recently changed its name to Holistic Design Inc. Hammer of the Gods

the team's third title. His toddler, Eleanor, is a true inspiration to be with and his wife, Michele, has made this whole endeavor possible. Ed dreams of creating the ultimate simulation of Medieval Europe's trade, politics and warfare as well as wondrous new worlds of dread and beauty.

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