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SKAVEN

Clans and Markings of the Under-Empire

By Neil Hodgson & Robin Cruddace

Introduction

Welcome to the Uniforms & Heraldry of the Skaven. This book forms part of a continuing range, each detailing the heraldries, uniforms, iconographies and markings of one of the many fantastical armies fighting for survival in the Warhammer world. This particular book focuses on the malevolent race of evil ratmen known as the Skaven. It is an indispensable guide, not only for miniatures collectors, painters and wargamers, but for anyone who wishes to explore and be inspired by the diverse, clannish nature of the Skaven.

The Skaven Under-Empire is inhabited by hundreds, if not thousands of clans. It is simply too large, too varied, and too anarchic to be entirely documented. This book is not therefore an exhaustive collection of descriptions, but rather a sample of the Skaven's most powerful clans, most characteristic traits and most recognizable markings. These pages will show you dozens of examples, but remember that there is limitless room for variations and entirely new creations. May the Horned Rat favour your schemes and bring about the ruin of your rivals!

Contents

The Skaven	3	Clan Septik	40
Skaven Runes	4	Clan Ektrik	44
The Council of Thirteen	6	Clan Skurvy	46
Clan Eshin	8	Clan Gritus	48
Clan Pestilens	10	Clan Kreepus	50
Clan Moulder	14	Clan Carrion	52
Clan Skryre	16	Clan Grutnik	54
The Grey Seers	20	Clan Scruten	56
The Warlord Clans	23	Clan Treecherik	58
Clan Mors	24	Clan Feesik	60
Clan Volkn	28	Clan Skrapp	62
Clan Morbidus	30	Clan Ferrik	64
Clan Krizzor	32	Clan Vrrtkin	66
Clan Rictus	34	The Multitudinous Clans	70
Clan Mordkin	38		



The Skaven

The Skaven are vile, malevolent ratmen that swarm beneath the surface of the Warhammer world in unthinkable numbers. Hidden in their sprawling underground lairs and warrens, the verminous Skaven gnaw at the roots of civilisation. They plot and scheme for the day when they will boil out of their dark tunnels and drown the world above in a tide of mangy fur, rusty blades and disease-ridden filth.

Skaven are shorter and slighter than men, with red eyes, and mouths lined with razor-sharp teeth. Despite their hunched frames, the Skaven are surprisingly quick. They move in rapid, start-stop scurries, every movement a hurried burst of energy. The Skaven are jittery and nervous creatures possessed of a finely tuned survival instinct and a hyperactive metabolism. Their long, worm-like tails constantly thrash and jerk, their fur bristles at the slightest noise and their glands are forever ready to squirt the musk of fear at the first sign of danger. Bravery is not a word associated with the Skaven; they are always prepared to spring out of harm's way or turn tail and flee at a moment's notice. It is this heightened awareness and constant state of urgency that makes the Skaven such agile and lethal combatants. Their reflexes are honed to a knife's edge and their lightning-fast attacks are legendary. A Skaven can switch between craven cowardice and frenzied ferocity in the blink of an eye. Indeed, their ears are pricked for the cries of the vulnerable and their keen noses forever sniff out the scents of those who could provide an easy meal. It is a fool who turns his back on a Skaven.

Though vicious, a single Skaven is little threat. However, the ratmen number in the billions. When the Skaven muster for battle, their violent temperament is inflamed by their kin until it becomes a desperate need to kill and feed. A Skaven regiment's courage is thus influenced greatly by its number; a small group might startle and bolt at the first sign of danger, whereas a larger pack is emboldened and a force to be reckoned with. When each Skaven believes that his comrades in arms will die before he does, buying him time to flee should he need to, he fights with the fervour of a rabid animal.

The Skaven are a perfidious and cunning race. They prefer to defeat their opponents with skullduggery rather than through direct confrontation. In fact, the whole of Skaven society thrives on being underestimated. It is the Skaven way to feign weakness or submission until the time is right to attack with absolute and terrifying force.

The lords of the Skaven work hard to erase all sign of their race's existence from the records of the surface dwellers with acts of careful sabotage and theft. Though there are whispered rumours of ratmen lurking in the sewers of cities, hardly anyone takes them seriously. But in fact the Skaven Under-Empire is far more vast than any realise. It stretches across the globe, from the capital city-stronghold of Skavenblight in the marshes of Tilea to the plague-ridden warrens of Lustria. This enormous subterranean civilisation is interconnected by a complex series of tunnels and passageways and is host to many hundreds of clans, some relatively small, some so large that they count many lesser clans amongst their number.

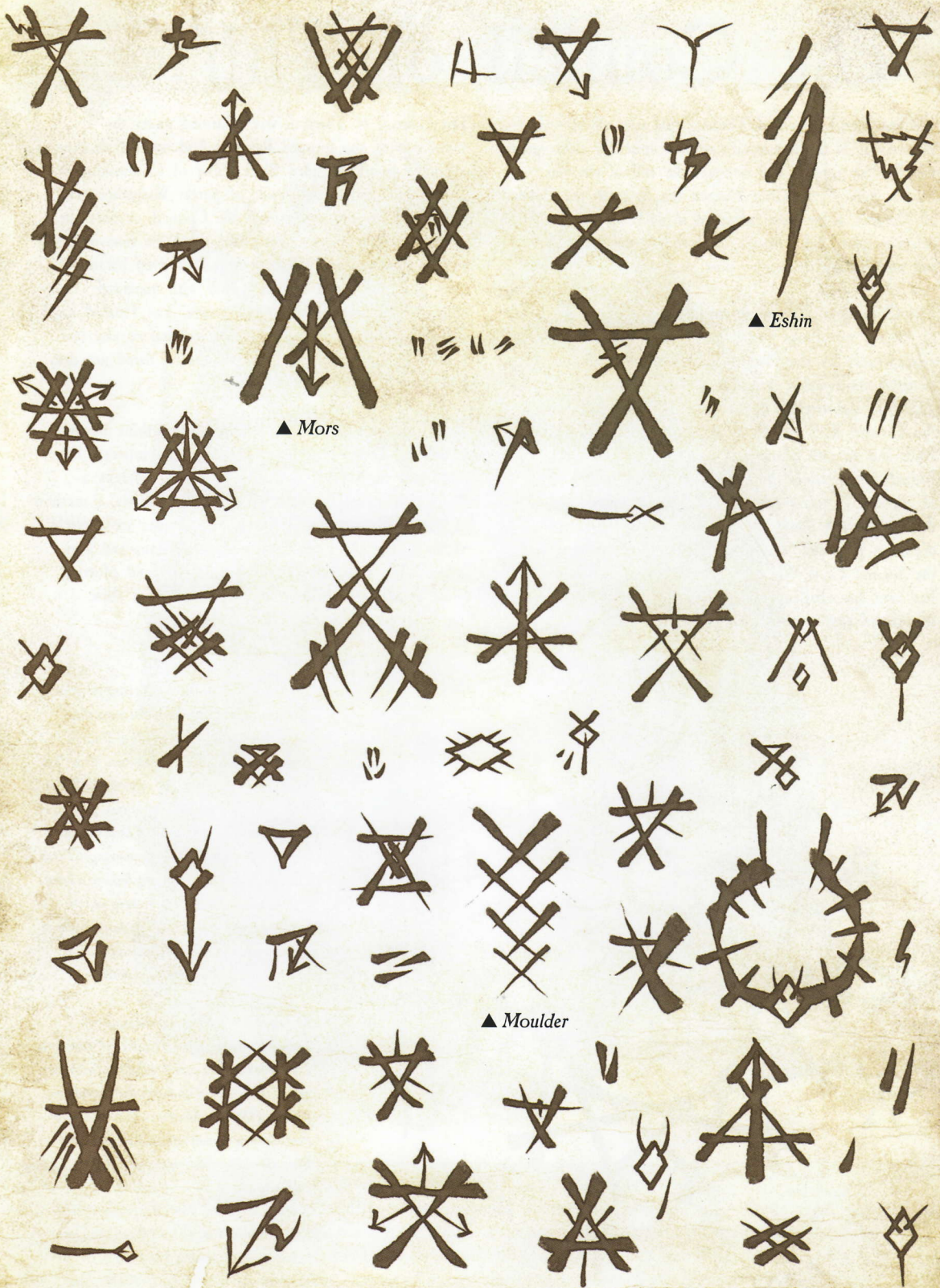
Every Skaven clan has a fierce hierarchy, ranging from weakling Skavenslaves to ferocious Stormvermin, and ultimately to a Skaven Warlord – a tyrannical and merciless leader who must always deceive and conspire to retain and further his position (and worsen that of his rivals). Skaven Warlords are paranoid to a fault, sure that everyone is a potential assassin or usurper. This is, in fact, not paranoia, but actually good sense. They are out to get him. All Skaven, be they a common Clanrat or an aspiring Chieftain, constantly vie for position amongst their clan-mates. Every Skaven must claw their way up through the ranks with acts of duplicity and backstabbing, claiming credit for victories not their own and ensuring their rivals are constantly in the path of danger. Life is cheap and treachery commonplace in the Under-Empire – such is the Skaven way.

Just as individual Skaven plot and scheme for rank or position, so do the clans jostle for power over their rivals. Indeed, the only real factor that keeps the Skaven in check is the constant internecine warring between their many clans. Of the hundreds of Skaven clans that dwell in the Under-Empire, there remain four Great Clans who have amassed such power and wealth that they enjoy a permanent position at the highest echelons of Skaven society. The Great Clans of Eshin, Skryre, Moulder and Pestilens have their own obsessions and abilities, and each has a representative upon the Council of Thirteen – a mysterious ruling body of overlords. When the Great Clans combine their forces with the rank masses of the Warlord clans, the Skaven become nigh unstoppable, a seething mass of vermin that pours across the battlefield. There will come a day when the entirety of Skaven society rises up against the surface dwellers, overthrowing the order of Man, Elf and Dwarf, reducing their cities to ruin and covering the lands in swarming anarchy and death.

Skaven Runes

Skaven proclaim their clan allegiance using an intricate system of 'claw-marked' runes, which are often scratched, daubed and smeared onto shields and banners, or even branded into flesh. Here are just a few of the runes more often seen in the Under-Empire. Variations are common - in fact, it is rare for even two banners in the same clan to use exactly the same form or combination of runes.





▲ Mors

▲ Eshin

▲ Moulder

The Council of Thirteen

The insidious Council of Thirteen rule over all of Skavendom. It is the council's role to unite the clans against the Skaven's enemies and interpret the will of the vile Skaven deity – the Great Horned Rat. In truth the Council of Thirteen is far more interested in pursuing its own nefarious plots and schemes, manipulating the lesser clans and assassinating those who pose them the slightest threat.

The Council of Thirteen's members, known as the Lords of Decay, are always twelve in number, being completed symbolically by the Horned Rat. The positions on the Council command a descending order of precedence. The first and twelfth places (the right and left hand of the Horned Rat) are the most important seats and the sixth and seventh places the least. The seats on the council are occupied by the most wicked and cunning of Skaven. In times past any clan leader strong and devious enough could seize power if only he could depose a rival and 'create' a vacancy. However, not since the Second Civil War and the coming of the Horned Rat have any challengers defeated, disposed of or else supplanted any of the existing Lords of Decay.

The Council of Thirteen was reformed under the commands of the Horned Rat who laid out the dictates of rulership on the 13-sided Black Pillar of Commandment. This unholy monument, made of purest Warpstone, was also a test for any aspirants to the Council, as only the favoured of the Horned Rat could touch its rune-inscribed surface and survive. However, those that lived became the most powerful of all Skaven, gifted with unnatural longevity and imbued with dark power. The Horned Rat ordered all Skaven to obey his new council or else feel his wrath. The Skaven, notoriously craven, dared not defy their god or his favoured servants.

Skaven politics are convoluted and labyrinthine beyond imagining. There exist many complex and intricate laws that must be obeyed, including a system whereby a Council member can veto his opposite number, a method of overruling and proxy voting. The results are a circle of maze-like plots, blackmails, manipulations and even assassination attempts. However, scheming and plotting come naturally to Skaven and no doubt even these machinations amuse the Horned Rat greatly.



The Council members identify their position with an elaborate rune. In most cases these sigils are adapted from a Lord of Decay's Clan-symbol, but it is not unknown for a Clan to adopt the personal icon of its leader. These runes, and endless subtle variations of them, are seen throughout each Lord of Decay's clan. Similar markings are also seen amongst Thrall clans and other 'allies'; having links to a Lord of Decay is not something to keep secret – it is something to inspire dread and fear into rivals and as such should be emblazoned as prominently and as often as possible.

The current members on the Council of Thirteen have remained the same for some time. Their position has waxed and waned with the power of their Clan and with the success and failure of their machinations. Indeed, as Clan Pestilens has risen in influence so has Arch-Plaguelord Nurglitch's position and he currently sits on the tenth seat. However, Lord Kritislik, Seerlord of all Skavendom, has sat as the right-hand claw of the Horned Rat since before the Great Summoning and he remains the most powerful of the Lords of Decay.

Grey Seer Skrittarr



Grey Seer Skrittarr, Herald of the Council of Thirteen, is vain and power-mad – even for a Skaven. He travels with an army of Skavenslaves whose sole duty is to bow down before him. As Skrittarr's palanquin passes, these wretches stand up and run forwards so that wherever Skrittarr looks there are at least a few dozen underlings abasing themselves. Any who are too slow or who dare look upon the Grey Seer's horned form are consumed by searing bolts of sorcerous lighting that leap from Skrittarr's outstretched fingertips.

Clan Eshin

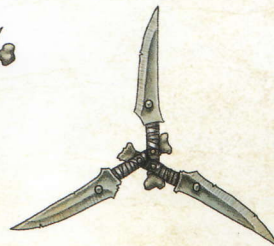
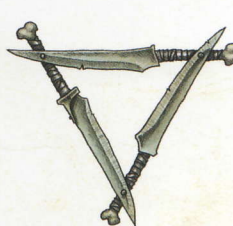


Clan Eshin is by the far the most villainous of the Skaven clans. This mysterious clan trains stealthy spies and murderous Assassins for hire. Clan Eshin has eyes everywhere and its deadly operatives are scattered throughout the Under-Empire as well as secreted about the cities of the surface dwellers. For the right price the black-clad agents of Clan Eshin will steal any information, commit any act of sabotage or slay any rival required. Considering the treacherous, scheming and paranoid nature of the Skaven, it is no wonder that Clan Eshin has become so

powerful. Indeed, Clan Eshin provides an unseen force with which the Council of Thirteen and other powerful Skaven maintain (or gain) their positions of power. Within the highly feared Caverns of Unyielding Shadow, the Clan Eshin district deep in the belly of Skavenblight, treaty-pacts are claw-marked and the doom of many rivals is assured.



The Assassins of Clan Eshin coat their blades in exotic, virulent toxins – if the initial wounds don't kill the foe, the poison soon will!



Claw-and-dagger and poisoned blade symbols are common motifs amongst Clan Eshin Night Runner and Gutter Runner death squads; a simple but effective reminder of what awaits those that dare oppose them.



The death-dealing agents of Clan Eshin use a variety of throwing stars, knives and shurikens to kill their prey. Many of these are fashioned to resemble Skaven runes and all of them are lethally sharp.



▲ Nightleader

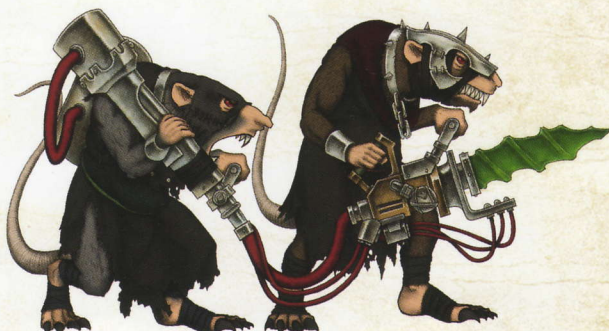


The warriors of Clan Eshin are swathed in dark, hooded cloaks that help them blend into the shadows as they stalk behind their prey.



▲ Deathrunner

Many of the warriors of Clan Eshin soot-blacken their blades so as not to reflect the light and give away their position to a potential target.



▲ Warp-grinder

Clan Pestilens



The Plague Monks of Clan Pestilens are disciples of disease and decay, zealots who dedicate themselves to spreading plague and corruption in the name of the Great Horned Rat. Clan Pestilens's pox-ridden brethren are recognisable for their filth-encrusted robes (and, of course, their unmistakably rancid odour). The scrolls, staves and tomes of Plague Monks are covered in pestilent runes and their foul banners

and totems often depict Skaven skulls or diseased heads replete with weeping buboes and oozing sores. Though they are hugely powerful now, members of Clan Pestilens were once outcasts. The return and meteoric rise of Clan Pestilens plunged the Skaven into a great civil war from which the clan emerged as a pre-eminent power in Skavenblight, seizing several seats on the Council of Thirteen. The Monastery of Clan Pestilens, built within this Under-city, is now the largest of the clan's unwholesome dwellings outside of their Southlands strongholds.

The distinctive battle-chant of Plague Monks is accompanied by the buzzing of great clouds of black-bodied flies – another favoured icon of Clan Pestilens.



▲ Bringer of the Word



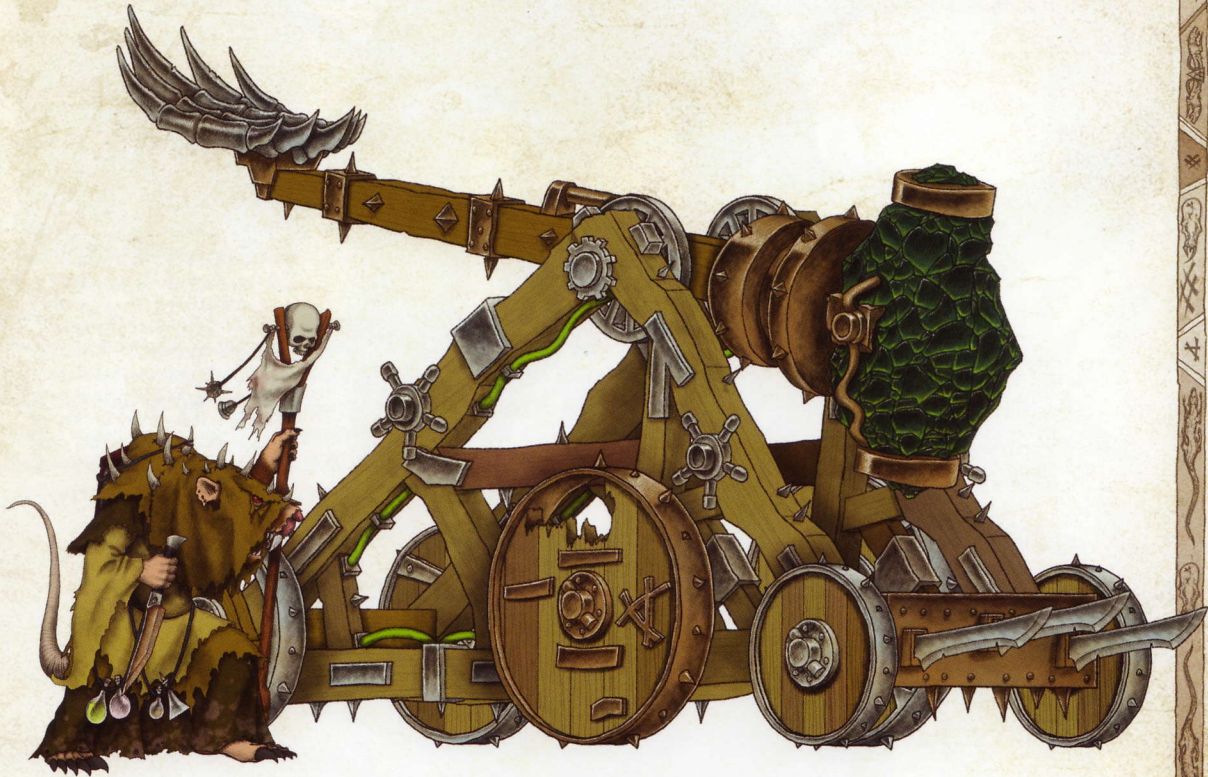
▲ Plague Priest mounted on Giant Pox Rat





A Plague Furnace is a disease-ridden altar to the Great Horned Rat and an unholy pulpit for a powerful Plague Priest. These mighty war machines are covered in runes and foul sigils dedicated to the vile Shaven deity. They are pushed into battle by a congregation of chanting Plague Monks. The machines' giant plague censers boil with foetid fumes and lethal contagions.

Clan Pestilens are forever inventing new ways to spread their concoction of foul diseases. The Plagueclaw Catapults are such a device. They are loathsome war machines; great wheeled scaffold towers adorned with pennants and runes, mounting torsion-powered arms that hurl a putrid mixture of disease-soaked corpses, semi-congealed poisons and even traces of warpstone.



▲ Plague Chanter

The soiled habits of the Plague Monks are most commonly a putrid green colour.



▲ Bringer of the Word



Clan Moulder



Clan Moulder are the undisputed masters of breeding, mutating, and surgically creating horrific fighting creatures and monstrous beasts of war. Such is the demand for these ferocious creations that Clan Moulder is one of the wealthiest of all Skaven Clans. While many are jealous of Clan Moulder's might, few dare to openly challenge them – not when the clan can field an entire army of grotesquely mutated war-beasts. The loathsome stronghold of Clan Moulder, known as Hell Pit, lies deep within the Northern Wastes. The many foul creatures that roam this land provide the raw

material used in the clan's breeding pits, skin forges and flesh laboratories. The Clan Moulder spine-rune is a common brand amongst the clan's Packmasters, as are symbols of the glowing green rat, and crude renderings of the whips and prodders used to goad the beasts that have made the clan infamous.

The collars and cowls worn by the Skaven of Clan Moulder tend to be a bright crimson in colour. The Clan's Rat Ogres are trained not to attack those wearing these red rags, though they frequently seem to enrage the foul-tempered beasts even further.



▲ Master Moulder





▲ Master Moulder



Rat Ogres are horrifying beasts that combine the speed and ferocity of a Skaven with the brute strength of a hulking Ogre. These misshapen monstrosities are one of the most feared and successful of Clan Moulder's numberless creations.



Clan Skryre



Clan Skryre specialises in blending dark sorcery and arcane technology. Its Warlock Engineers are mad inventors that build infernal devices of destruction. So powerful did Clan Skryre become that they and their allies once took complete control of the capital city of Skavenblight, usurping whole clan-quarters to house their sorcerous machinery.

They hold many of the more prestigious precincts to this day, cavernous areas in which cathedral-sized warpforges and workshops build devastating warpstone weaponry. This eclectic arsenal is sold to Warlord clans as quickly as the slaves can churn it off the assembly lines, making Clan Skryre one of the most influential clans in all of Skavendom. The weapons and machinery of Clan Skryre are often inscribed with magical runes and symbols of dark power. These same markings are displayed on the clan's pennants and banners.



▲ Warlock Engineer



▲ Poisoned Wind Bombadier



▲ Warpfire Thrower



▲ Ratling Gun





▲ Warlock Engineer armed with Warpmusket

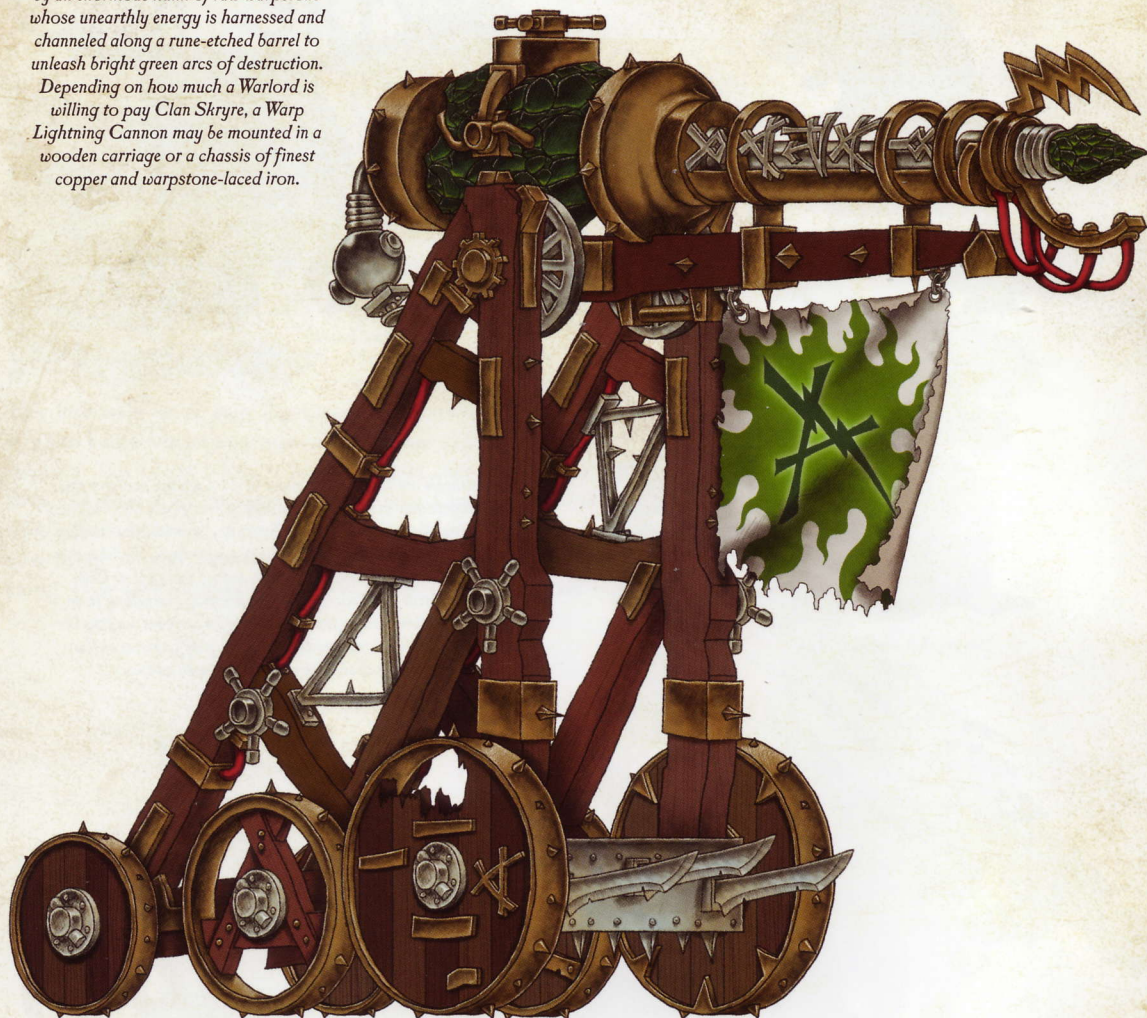


▲ Warplock Jezzail

Doomwheels are the ultimate blend of dark science and sorcery. These dangerously unpredictable killing machines are the pride and joy of Clan Skryre's Warlock Engineers and a must-have item for any Warlord who has gathered enough warptokens, the Skaven's debased form of currency. For a few warptokens more, Clan Skryre will throw in all sorts of optional extras – anything from a an iron-shod wheel and a lavish spoiler, to a pennant bearing the Warlord's personal rune and special lightning generators that create incandescent arcs of any desired colour.



Warp Lightning Cannons are powered by an enormous hunk of raw warpstone whose unearthly energy is harnessed and channeled along a rune-etched barrel to unleash bright green arcs of destruction. Depending on how much a Warlord is willing to pay Clan Skryre, a Warp Lightning Cannon may be mounted in a wooden carriage or a chassis of finest copper and warpstone-laced iron.

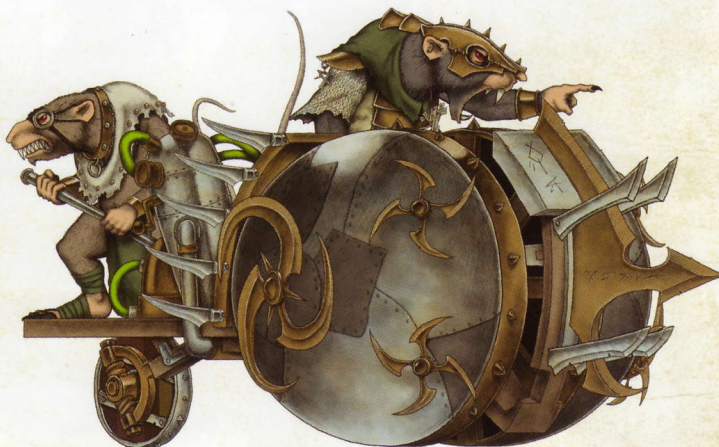


▲ Poisoned Wind Mortar Teams



▲ Warpfire Thrower

A Doom-flayer is a motorised ball of deadly whirling blades. No two Doom-flayers are quite the same, built as they are from an assortment of scavenged scrap. Broken blades, reinforced planks, old shields and a patch-work of armour plates ensure each Doom-flayer is as unique and as lethally twisted as the Warlock Engineer who created it.



The Grey Seers



Grey Seers are powerful sorcerers, capable of channeling eldritch energies and unleashing them in searing bolts of destruction. Their grey or white fur and the bony horns sprouting from their heads mark them as the chosen of the vile Skaven God, the Great Horned Rat. These prophets also act as the chief agents and emissaries for the Council of Thirteen. These twin roles mean that Grey Seers wield tremendous influence in the Under-Empire. Grey Seers possess a rank and position greater than all other Skaven barring the Lords of Decay themselves. This is not to say that Grey Seers are above the self-serving manipulations and treacherous scheming of the Skaven — indeed, they epitomise it. The Grey Seers guard their power jealously and it is a foolish Warlord indeed who does not immediately prostrate themselves at the feet of a Grey Seer and humbly acquiesce. The Rune of the Grey Seers is enough to strike fear into the hearts of friend and foe alike.



◀ Albino Council Guard ▶



The Screaming Bells are the most notorious of all the diabolical Skaven weapons, filling battlefields with magically amplified cacophonies that sound the doom of the Skaven's foes. These infernal bells are cast in a 13-day ritual from warpstone-laced bronze and inscribed with cursed runes and symbols. The giant carriages are constructed from all manner of materials, including wood, steel and scavenged masonry, and require a horde of underlings to push them into battle.





The Warlord Clans

The Warlord clans form the vast bulk of Skaven society. At its peak a single Warlord clan could number in the hundreds of thousands and be spread across a score of different lairs and strongholds. There is no knowing how many different clans there are scattered throughout the Under-Empire, though there are certainly many hundreds, if not thousands. The larger, more powerful Warlord clans actively seek out and destroy smaller clans, absorbing their numbers as warriors or slaves, or simply gorging upon them as the unbearable pangs of the black hunger take hold. Large or strong clans (often one and the same thing) are less likely to be attacked by rivals and are more able to exert their will over lesser clans. The most successful Warlords effectively rule all of the surrounding clans, exacting tolls and demanding heavy tributes from them, becoming increasingly wealthy as a result. However, clans that grow too large and fractious can, if the Warlord is not aggressive enough, split into rivaling factions.

There are no equals in Warlord clans, only underlings and superiors. It is a rat-cat-rat existence where the weak are slain (and often devoured) by the strong. Considering their comparatively short-lifespan, if a Skaven is to gain rank and status he must do so as quickly as possible. The Skaven are obsessed with short-term gain and they will construct an increasingly elaborate web of false promises, imaginary wealth and dubious bargains if there is even the slightest chance that it might work out. One of the quickest ways to gain power in the Under-Empire is to secure an alliance with a more powerful faction. The price of such a pact is invariably extortionate, but for a budding Warlord the opportunity for power is simply irresistible, especially if the ally in question can be double-crossed and disposed of at a later stage.

It is rare indeed for a Skaven army to be composed of warriors exclusively from just one clan. When the time arises to attack a foe, be it an army of surface dwellers (where the greatest bounties of plunder can be found) or a rival clan, a Warlord will gather warriors and weaponry from any available source. Skaven from surrounding clans will flock to a Warlord's banner, either for a share in the spoils of war or in the vain hopes of securing an alliance of their own. Weaker clans will be coerced and threatened into sending troops (who will inevitably form the first wave of an attack) whilst stronger clans will grow fat on the profits required to purchase their aid. Skaven logic in these matters is simple; power and wealth buys (and bribes) better warriors, weapons and war-beasts, which in turn assures a higher chance of victory and a greater

prospect of increasing power and wealth, and so on. One of the most prestigious and destructive sources of arms are the Great Clans, whose skills and weaponry are in much demand. It is for this very reason that the Great Clans have become so rich and powerful.

To a non-Skaven, all the hordes of the Warlord clans may look the same. However, to a keen observer, or the ratmen themselves, there are distinctive differences. Clan markings and symbols, freely interspersed with the rune, icon or visage of the Horned Rat, are often painted, scratched, daubed or smeared atop shields, banners and pennants. Some clans are known to wear rags, clothing or armour of a specific colour, whilst others dye their fur with distinctive bandings or patterns, marking out the members of different clawpacks. Other clans brand Skaven runes or clan icons into their skin so that their foes know who they are facing. Some Skaven are even mutilated, typically with scars and notches in ears to mark allegiance or ownership. Thus when a Skaven army musters for war, a great many banners and markings are present. However, these visual differences blur amidst the ravenous hordes, and even the ratmen tend to rely upon their own keen sense of smell to find their clanmates.



Whilst all Warlord clans are eager to secure treaties and pacts with more powerful clans, there are those who cannot purchase such alliances. Some Warlord clans who willingly throw in their lot with one of the four Great Clans, trading total obedience for power otherwise unobtainable. These clans, known as Thrall Clans, are in effect extensions of the Great Clans themselves. Whether the Great Clans see these Skaven as actual (if temporary) allies or as unwitting pawns likely depends on the size and strength of the Thrall clan in question at any particular time. Unsurprisingly, many of these Thrall clans share the same ideology and goals of their masters and their armies incorporate a disproportionate number of their patron's weaponry, warriors and war-beasts. With such favours do the Thrall clans defeat their rivals and secure their own powerbase. Many tend to dwell in lairs and strongholds far from the eyes of their masters and hence they have a greater rein to pursue their own, nefarious agendas. However, it is a foolish Thrall clan that forgets its bonds of fealty altogether...

Clan Mors



Clan Mors is arguably the most successful of all Warlord clans. Its influence is so great that it is not lacking for war beasts or weapon teams, and its ranks are bolstered by warriors from other clans — hired, bribed or coerced to fight in the first wave. Clan Mors' rise in power, size, and status is due in no small part to the taking of the Dwarf stronghold of Karak Eight Peaks, known to the Skaven as

the City of Pillars — a major nexus for the passageways that make up the Under-Empire. Clan Mors' aggressive warriors bear many trophy scars and they have better weaponry and more armour than other Skaven — the spoils looted over many long campaigns. The upper levels of the City of Pillars are constantly assailed by vengeful Dwarf warbands and spiteful Night Goblin tribes. This provides Clan Mors with a brutal proving ground for its Chieftains, and a chance to grind the teeth of a growing cadre of elite warriors.

The Warlords of Clan Mors are amongst the strongest, toughest and most ruthless fighters in the entire Under-Empire.



▲ Warlord



▲ Fangleader



▲ Warplock Jezzail

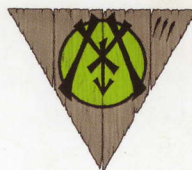




▲ Chieftain



▲ Ratling Gun



Many Skaven from Clan Mors are known for their blood-red armour and shields, and their black, white and scarlet banners often display the foreboding Clan Mors rune.



▲ Warpfire Thrower





Fangsnapper's Clawpack



The battle-hardened Clanrats of Fangsnapper's Clawpack led the assault that retook several vaults from the Night Goblins in the City of Pillars and they were instrumental in Clan Mors' victory over Clan Corpulent. Scrak Fangsnapper rose to command the Clawpack during the sacking of the Empire town of Buchendorf when he throttled his predecessor with his own tail. Since then he has defeated over a dozen potential rivals, and their broken fangs hang from his trophy rack as a warning to other would-be usurpers.

Clan Volkn



Clan Volkn dwells in fortress warrens carved into the searing heart of Fire Mountain. All clan members are branded upon birth and its warriors dye their fur a bright red. The warriors of Clan Volkn bear blades of shiny black obsidian, mined deep beneath their volcanic lairs. The Stormvermin and Warlords of Clan Volkn even incorporate this material into their armour, inscribing it with runes that glow red with an infernal heat. Clan Volkn's banners typically display icons and markings on a background of lava, flames, or else upon

an image of an erupting volcano. Unsurprisingly, Clan Volkn breeds many pyromaniacs and the clan is known for its fondness of Warpfire Throwers. As a result, many of Volkn's warriors are covered in soot stains, scorched fur and scar-tissue.



▲ Warlord



▲ Warpfire Thrower



▲ Warp-grinder



Clan Morbidus

Clan Morbidus' banners are soaked in cauldrons overflowing with virulent poxes and many tend to show images of disease-filled boils.



Clan Morbidus is one of the growing members of the Pestilent Brotherhood. They have unleashed several foul plagues throughout the Old World, including the lethal outbreak of Foaming Lungrot that ravaged Wissenland and the Blackbelly Fever that decimated the Dwarf stronghold of Grim-Duraz. Clan Morbidus is rather more mercenary than their Clan Pestilens masters and they willingly offer their services to the highest bidder; after all, the only thing better than spreading contagions is getting paid to do so. Much of the clan's warptokens are spent in the Clan Moulder breeding pits,

exchanged for plague-ridden Rat Swarms, Great Pox Rats and Rat Ogres dripping with disease. These are seen by Clan Morbidus chieftains as necessary investments that will aid them in their cause to spread more pestilence and, of course, amass greater power. Such avarice has not gone unnoticed by the Plague Lords of Clan Pestilens...



▲ Warlord mounted on Giant Pox Rat





Clan Krizzor



Clan Krizzor was once a poor and unremarkable clan that dwelt deep within the monster-infested region known as the Dark Lands. Clan Krizzor's fortunes changed with the discovery that Skavenslaves dipped in pig's blood make irresistible bait for traps. Soon they were caging enough creatures to secure an alliance with Clan Moulder, counting on the Master Moulders' greed to get their claws on new specimens. Clan Krizzor are one of the few clans that have an affinity for developing their own Packmasters, meaning that the clan is instead able to spend their spare warptokens on the Master Moulders' latest 'experiments'. Clan Krizzor's menagerie of war-beasts is now the most

impressive outside of Hell Pit itself. Clan Krizzor have a particular loathing for Clan Rictus whose extortionate taxes to cross the Dark Lands' border cost them dearly. Little do Krizzor realise that their allies in Clan Moulder are plotting with Rictus to triple such tolls — after all, it wouldn't do to let a potential rival get too powerful.



▲ Warlord with Rat Hound



▲ Master Moulder



The clothing and banners of Clan Krizzor are stitched together from the skinned pelts of many creatures, including tanned Razorgor fur and cured Troll-hide.



Clan Rictus



Clan Rictus control the tunnel lairs and passageways of Crookback Mountain and they demand a steep toll from all those entering the Dark Lands (and twice as much again if they wish to leave it). The proximity of several Night Goblin tribes affords Clan Rictus an almost inexhaustible supply of slaves, making the clan immensely wealthy, so much in fact that its stash of warptokens rivals the treasure holds of Clan Mors; the two clans are forever scheming for a way to usurp the other's power. Clan

Rictus' warriors are all vicious and grim, but it is for their inordinate numbers of large, jet-black furred Stormvermin, that they are rightly feared. These elite warriors are stronger and more violent than any Clanrats, and lesser Skaven go to great lengths to keep out of their way. In contrast to their dark-armoured warriors, Clan Rictus' banners tend to be white with symbols depicted in black or dark red. Unusually, Clan Rictus is not affiliated with its own distinct rune, but instead uses all manner of runic devices, made their own by the addition of jagged claw-marks.



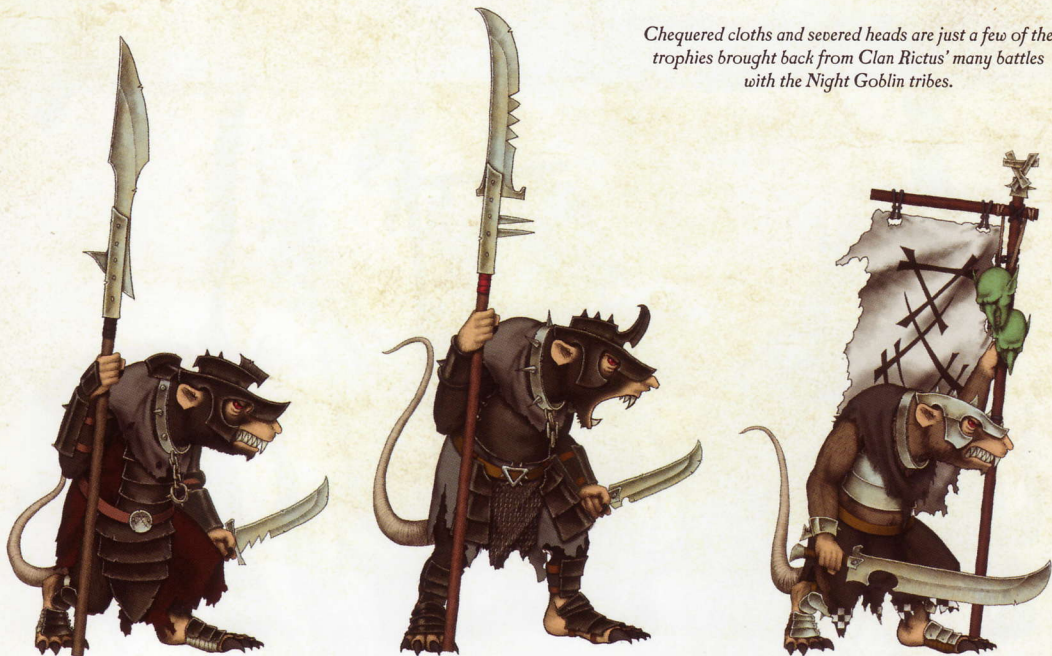
▲ Chieftain mounted on Rat Ogre Bonebreaker



▲ Ratling Gun



Chequered cloths and severed heads are just a few of the trophies brought back from Clan Rictus' many battles with the Night Goblin tribes.



▲ Fang Leader



▲ Warlock Jezzail



The Deathvermin



The Deathvermin, also known throughout the Under-Empire as the Black Death, are the elite of Clan Rictus' formidable Stormvermin regiments and perhaps the most proficient warriors in all Skavendom. They are utterly ruthless and have crushed their enemies in countless battles, much to the annoyance of the Clan's Warlord, Kratch Doomclaw. Indeed, the Deathvermin pose a significant threat to Lord Doomclaw's own powerbase and despite throwing them into hopeless battles on numerous occasions, they have returned victorious every time.

Clan Mordkin



Clan Mordkin was one of the many Warlord Clans to fight against the Undead legions of Nagash. Inspired by the fearsome sight of the walking dead, and wishing to intimidate any rivals, the Skaven of Clan Mordkin took to adorning themselves with the bones of their foes. Many of the Skaven dyed patches of their fur or else painted their clothing and armour white to resemble skeletons. Even the fur of the clan's Giant Rats and Rat Ogres are dyed to give them a more deathly appearance. To this day, the Skaven of Clan Mordkin remain obsessed with death. They are instantly

recognisable for their fearsome appearance and they still frequently incorporate bones and skulls into their armour. Shields, banners and totems are likewise adorned and many of the clan's warriors carry daggers carved from bone.



Many Chieftains and Stormvermin of Clan Mordkin wear a helmet made from the skull of a Giant Rat or even a Rat Ogre.

▲ Warlord



▲ Warlock Jezzail



▲ Claw Leader



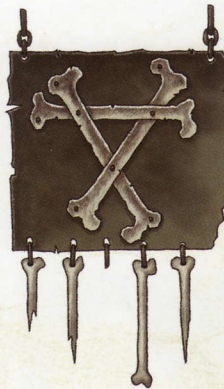
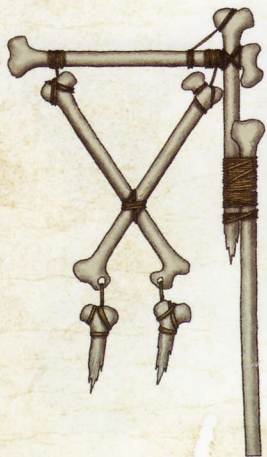


▲ Chieftain



▲ Chieftain

Both the image of a bleached Skaven-skull and the Rune of the Great Horned Rat constructed from gnawed thigh-bones are common symbols of Clan Mordkin.



Clan Septik



Clan Septik swore fealty to Clan Pestilens during the first great Skaven Civil War. They are the most fanatical believers in the entire Pestilent Brotherhood, rabid zealots whose fervour rivals (and possibly exceeds) that of their Clan Pestilens masters. Clan Septik see themselves as the right-hand claw of Clan Pestilens, who have thus far encouraged this view – after all, you can never have enough devout troops willing to fight (and die) for your cause. Despite the casual way in which this Thrall clan is thrown into battle, they have (so far) always emerged relatively intact, leading many to believe that the Horned Rat

himself is looking favorably upon Clan Septik. The warriors of Clan Septik utilise robes of an off-white colour, to better show their disgusting collection of filthy stains. These Skaven wield weapons and armour corroded with rust (the rustier the better), and their bodies are covered in dirty bandages draped over weeping sores. The diseased claw is a common icon amongst the Skaven of Clan Septik.



▲ Warlord



▲ Bringer of the Word





▲ Warp-grinder



The elite warriors of Clan Septik are known as the Plaguevermin. They are blessed with the rustiest blades the clan has at its disposal – weapons that never seem to break or lose their razor-edge.





Blightskab's Plaguepack



Blightskab's Plaguepack are amongst Clan Septik's most disgusting warriors. Their fur is matted with contagions and their skin is covered with boils and buboes. Blightskab commands his regiment with hacking, phlegm-filled shouts and he is so eager to spread disease in the name of the Horned Rat that he has even been known to lead his regiment from the front! The Plaguepack are believed to have been responsible for the outbreak of Bleeding Eyerot that decimated the population of the Empire City of Nuln.

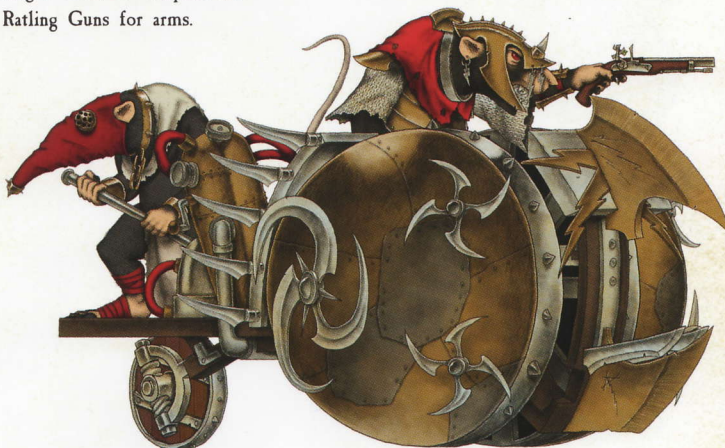
Clan Ektrik



Clan Ektrik's addiction to lightning has made them the thralls of Clan Skryre, for nowhere else can Ektrik's Warlords get their claws on the much-treasured Doomwheels and Warp Lightning Cannons. Clan Ektrik dwell in Foul Peak, where a vast array of machinery, connected to arcane lightning conductors atop the mountain's summit, hangs from the lair's ceiling. A horde of Warlock Engineers tends to this array, harnessing the power of the storm-wracked skies, but to what diabolical purpose none can guess, and they will not tell. The air hums with electricity and frequent 'accidental' electrocutions keep Clan Ektrik's life expectancy well below the Skaven average. With so many Warlock Engineers in their ranks, Clan Ektrik's weapons are forever being tinkered with. When Clan Ektrik march to war they do so with a dizzying assortment of upgrades, from electro-prods capable of stunning a Troll, to Warfire rat-bombs and part-mechanical Rat Ogres with Ratling Guns for arms.



▲ Chieftain





▲ Warlock Engineer



The Skaven of Clan Ektrik are recognisable for their conductive bronze armour and their static-charged fur that always stands on end. Their armour, shields and weapons are adorned with jagged lightning bolt symbols, and the clan's runes are scrawled in a similar style.



Clan Skurvy



The Skaven of Clan Skurvy are a bunch of mangy cutthroats and many bear the scars of their trade, including lost eyes and limbs. Clan Skurvy controls the largest of all the Skaven Clanfleets, having gnawed out the cavern-harbour known as Spineport. From here the clan's ramshackle fleet reaps a fortune (and no small amount of dread repute) from piracy, much of which is spent on buying and press-ganging replacement slaves to replenish the fleet's short-lived crew. Clan Skurvy's spoils are also supplemented by salvaging wrecks off the coast of the Isle of Sirens, bounty that is hauled back to the clan's secret lair beneath the Tilean city of Tobarro. On board a clanship, every Skaven is a suspect of mutiny, which is just as well as they are all planning to do it sooner or later. No clawcaptain keeps command for long unless he is utterly ruthless, and those that lapse for even a moment tend to 'fall' overboard or 'accidentally' walk the plank.

Because mutiny is so rampant, the clawpacks that serve in Clan Skurvy tend to adopt the icons of their ship rather than those of any particular clawcaptain. Variations of the Rat-skull and crossed-bones are common motifs.



▲ Sealord



▲ Warfire Thrower



Clan Skuroy has the largest Clanfleet in all Skavendom and ships such as *The Clanship Bubonic*, *Black Poz* and *The Teeth of Spineport* have been plaguing the seas for many decades.



▲ Warlock Engineer armed with a Doom Rocket



▲ Chieftain



Clan Gritus



Clan Gritus were once part of Clan Mors, but following the death of Great Warlord Vrmik there was an absence of a leader ruthless enough to prevent the vast clan from fracturing. Clan Gritus was one of the factions that split off before tyranny was restored. Clan Gritus is a now a powerful clan in its own right, one that actively seeks out and preys on weaker clans. Those not destroyed are absorbed into their own ranks and as a result, Clan Gritus boasts many slaves and captured warbeasts. Even after post-battle feeding and inter-clan trading, there is such a surplus that this stock is used for sport. Many

of Clan Gritus' warriors test their blades in lethal pit-fights and many bear scars, including the clan's current Warlord who lost an eye in the games. Clan Gritus maintains an ample supply of both Stormvermin and captured weaponry (of which Jezzails are particularly prized) to help put down the frequent slave revolts.



▲ Master Moulder

Skavenslaves that fight especially well may eventually be raised into the ranks of the Clanrats. Many Clan Gritus Skaven thus bear signs of prior slavery, including spiked collars, ankle chains and wrist clasps. These motifs are also displayed on banners.



▲ Clawleader





The Hellbeast of Seep-Gore



Clan Gritus have become so successful in preying on weakling clans that in recent years they have amassed a large surplus of wealth. The Clan's chieftains have traded chests filled with warpstone and commissioned the Master Moulders of Hell Pit to create for them a hideous creature of unparalleled size and ferocity – the Hellbeast of Seep-Gore. With it, Clan Gritus plan to attack and slaughter their former masters, Clan Mors; the time of their revenge is almost at hand...

Clan Kreepus



Clan Kreepus of Gnaw Pit was once conquered by Clan Grikk. Despite months of plotting, Clan Kreepus were unable to overthrow their jailers – until, that is, Clan Eshin promised to intervene in exchange for unswerving fealty. Deciding that service was better than slavery, Clan Kreepus accepted and a stash of poisoned daggers was smuggled into Gnaw Pit that night. Unable to clutch the weapons in their manacled claws, the Skaven of Clan Kreepus instead wielded them in their tails. When the guards next opened the cages they were overwhelmed. Clan Kreepus have been the willing thralls of Clan Eshin

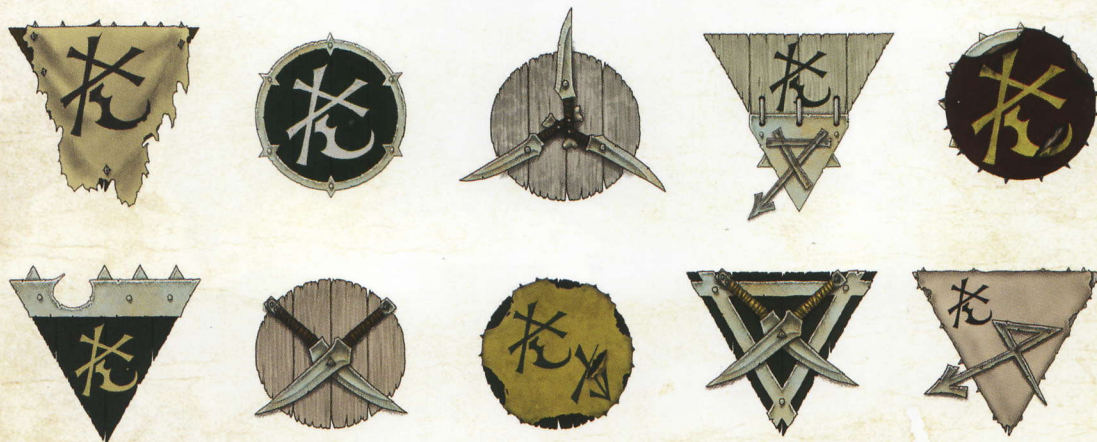
ever since and they have adopted many of their patron's mysterious ways. They are a secretive clan, running many mysterious errands for their Clan Eshin masters. Wary of reprisals, the warriors of Clan Kreepus rarely show their faces; it is rare for them not to obscure their faces with cloths, masks, or at least a few rags.



▲ Warlord

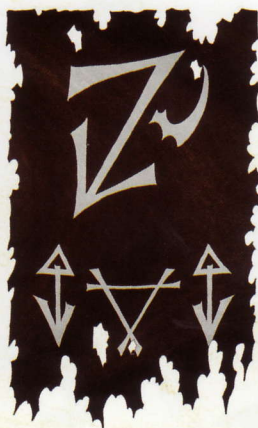


▲ Warlock Jezzail





Clan Kreepus display Shaven runes made from daggers. Poisoned blades and rat-tail motifs are both common on Clan Kreepus' shields and banners.



Clan Carrion



Clan Carrion are the best scavengers in all of Skavendom. Clan Carrion have no permanent settlement. Instead they travel from battlefield to battlefield in search of the richest salvage, carrying heaped spoils upon their backs. Clan Carrion's banners and clothing are a patchwork of scraps and their warriors are armed with a hodgepodge of weaponry, shields and cobbled-together pieces of armour. Nothing is ever wasted and that which can't be used directly is traded. The

Skaven of Clan Carrion make sure that their most valuable items, such as Giant Rats (a valuable source of protein) and Clan Skryre weaponry are painted in vivid, bright colours such that they can be more easily found amongst the post-battle detritus. Clan Carrion firmly believe in 'finder's keepers' and they will quickly scurry away with anything of value if its owner happens to be looking in the wrong direction. Indeed, the Skaven of Clan Carrion are such prolific thieves that they only truly own what they can firmly clasp with their own claws.



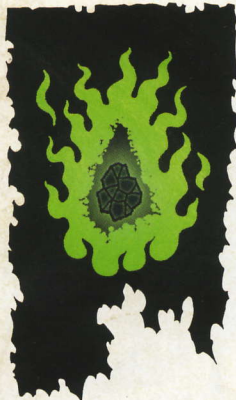
▲ Warlord mounted on a War-litter



Because the Skaven of Clan Carrion are such successful scavengers, their warriors tend to have plenty of spare knives stuffed into belts.



Clan Grutnik



Clan Grutnik's vast power is derived from rich deposits of warpstone beneath their mountain lair. Clan Moulder and Clan Skryre are eager to secure as much of this substance as they can and the cunning leaders of Clan Grutnik have pledged exclusive supply-rights to both, acquiring many weapons and warbeasts in the process. Clan Grutnik trades many of these acquisitions with surrounding Warlord Clans (making a further profit in the process), for many slaves are required to mine the warpstone, and mutations and fatal accidents are commonplace. There is so much warpstone at Clan Grutnik's disposal that it is often forged into their warriors' weapons and lacquered armour. Some further

sport their wealth by wearing raw chunks of the stuff as trinkets, talismans, and even as replacement cyeballs or teeth. Clan Grutnik's banners typically display warpstone shards and many symbols daubed in bright green.



▲ Chieftain

Many of the Skaven of Clan Grutnik are branded with a searing shard of warpstone, a wound that tends to pulse with an ominous green glow forever after.



▲ Pawleader



Clan Scruten



Wishing to establish a secret army, Seerlord Kritislik, leader of the Grey Seers and lord of the Council of Thirteen, led Clan Scruten away from the battles in Skavenblight and established major warrens hidden in the Cursed Marshes. Over time this lair has grown, and it now extends beneath the city of Marienburg. Whites and greys are common amongst the ragged robes of Clan Scruten, interspersed with scraps of reds, blues and yellows scavenged from the city above. These brightly coloured cloths are also tied to belts, banners and weapons as trophies, and defaced Marienburg shields can often be seen strewn amongst the rank and file. Clan Scruten's mysterious patron has granted them much wealth, so much in fact that the other members of the Council have become suspicious. The Seerlord vehemently denies that Clan Scruten receive any special favours and insists that the unusually high number of expensive weapons and Grey Seers amidst their ranks, as well as the common occurrence of Kritislik's own personal rune amongst their iconography, is pure coincidence.



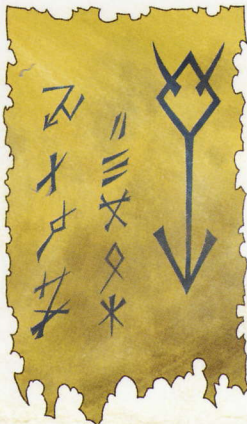
▲ Grey Seer





▲ Warlock Engineer

The Stormoermin of Clan Scruten have white fur, but whether these are actual members of the Albino Council Guard or simply arrogant Skaven who have dyed their fur is uncertain.



Clan Treecherik

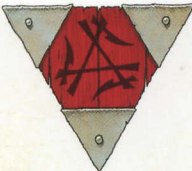


Clan Treecherik are the thralls of Clan Eshin, and they are a murderous, untrustworthy and perfidious clan – even by the dubious standards of the Skaven. Assassination amongst its ranks is rife and such is the risk of an assassin's knife that the warriors of Clan Treecherik always strap their shields across their backs. Furthermore, the clan's warriors tend to wear clothing the colour of Skaven blood – it doesn't pay to let your pack-mates know you're wounded in Clan Treecherik. Far from being detrimental to the clan's long term survival, this unrelenting

killing culls the weak and assures that only the most skilled and ruthless endure. If a Skaven can survive in Clan Treecherik, he is a born survivor and has little to fear from the scheming and plotting of other clans.



▲ Chieftain





The Skurry-stabbers



The Skurry-stabbers are one of Clan Treecherik's most murderous Clawpacks and they have slain more (many more) of their own clanmates than the enemy (in fact, it has been several years since they've killed anything not from Clan Treecherik). Their current Clawleader is Gristl Twitchslice, an imposing figure who has remained in command of the Skurry-stabbers for an impressive three days. If he can make it to four he will have broken the service record set by Sneer Throtskar over twenty years ago.

Clan Feesik

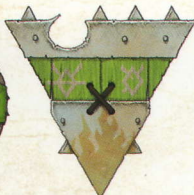


When Clan Pestilens rose in power it destroyed dozens of lesser clans, conquered many more and converted several to their cause. Clan Feesik was such a clan, one whose unwitting filth and squalor was mistakenly interpreted by passing Plague Priests as a sign of devotion. Clan Feesik were quick to seize the opportunity and maintain the pretence, and for centuries since they have appeared to be one of the most fervent members of the Pestilent Brotherhood. This false zeal is born of their own craven survival instincts rather than any genuine sense of faith, for Clan Feesik have many rivals in Festerspike and, without the support of Clan

Pestilens' rabid Plague Monks, it is unlikely they would survive for long. As such, Clan Feesik meets all Clan Pestilens' envoys with sycophantic acquiescence, only too willing for the chance to prove its 'devotion' and send its brown-clad warriors to do the Horned Rat's bidding. That so many of these warriors flee the battlefield at the first sign of trouble has forced Clan Feesik to construct some of the most creative and elaborate excuses in all the Under-Empire.



▲ Plague Priest





Runes of pestilence are smeared onto Clan Feesik's shields and their banners are often dipped in bubbling pox-cauldrons before battle.



Clan Skrapp



Clan Skrapp are poor even by the standards of the Under-Empire. They dwell deep below the Putrid Swamp and nowhere in the Under-Empire can more squalid dwellings be found. Their fur is mangy and bare in patches, and they are clothed in a patchwork of tattered rags. Armour is scarce and weaponry is rusty to the point of falling apart. That Clan Skrapp has not been challenged and conquered by a rival clan is a credit to the campaign of disinformation and propaganda spread by bribed Clan Eshin agents. Clan Skrapp proclaims itself to be favoured of the Horned Rat and dubious rumours persist in the Under-Empire that the clan can

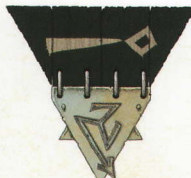
muster an entire army of Grey Seers. The warriors of Clan Skrapp even daub themselves in white streaks of paint and bat droppings and fasten horns onto their helmets and fur in order to promote the façade and mimic the appearance of the feared Skaven seers. Many rivals suspect Clan Skrapp to be either self-deluded or else completely mad, but few seem willing to risk open combat on the off-chance that their outrageous claims about the size, strength and power of their forces are true.

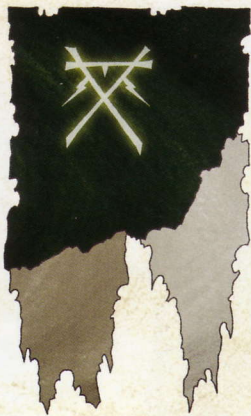


▲ Chieftain



▲ Clawleader





▲ Warplock Jezzail



Clan Ferrik



Clan Ferrik are led by a particularly tyrannical and megalomaniacal Warlord who has carved out a small but powerful clan in the heart of the Worlds Edge Mountains, having wrested several forges and smeltries from the Dwarfs of Karak-Varn. This Warlord hides his face behind a steel mask, and seems blessed of extreme longevity – though his followers are often perplexed by how often his size, voice and fur colour seem to magically change. Countless Skavenslaves toil beneath Clan Ferrik's lairs, while legions of steel-clad Stormvermin lead unrelenting raids to gather a fresh supply of skilled Dwarf labour. Clan Ferrik are now

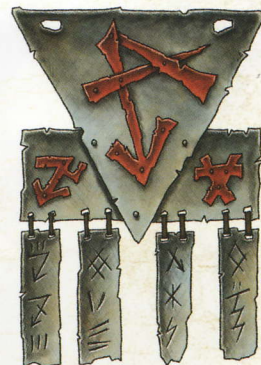
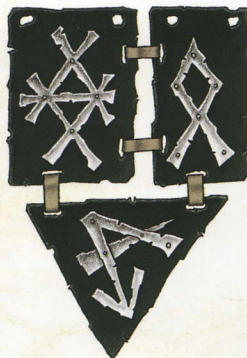
the largest supplier of iron and steel to the Under-Empire. They trade with many Warlord clans but it is their claw-pact treaty with Clan Skryre that has granted them the most power and influence. The warriors of Clan Ferrik are not lacking for weapons or armour, most of which is (relatively) bright and rust free.



▲ Warlord



▲ Ratling Gun



Many warriors of Clan Ferrik wear snarling face-masks, mimicking the head-encompassing helmet of their Warlord.



▲ Chieftain



Clan Vrrtkin



Clan Vrrtkin have been the thralls of Clan Skryre ever since the Second Great Civil War, pledging their armies in return for power and eventually a lair of their own. Armed with hundreds of Poisoned Wind Globadiers and Mortar weapon teams, Clan Vrrtkin led many assaults and gassed many rival lairs. Indeed, such is their predilection to exterminating Skaven warrens with the deadly vapours, that the glass orb is often displayed on the clan's banners, warning enemies (and allies) not to stray too close. Unsurprisingly, the most sought-after item in Clan Vrrtkin is

a gas-mask. These inevitably go to the toughest warlords and Stormvermin first, with weaker Skaven fighting for what damaged and faulty equipment is left over. Most Clanrats have to suffice with a urine-soaked bandage tied around their snout or else stuff rags up their nose to protect them should the direction of the wind change mid-battle.



▲ Warlock Engineer



▲ Poisoned Wind Mortar





▲ Warfire Thrower

The banners and clothes of the warriors of Clan Vrrtkin tend to be a toxic green colour, the same as the emerald clouds of choking gas contained within their beloved poisoned wind globes.



▲ Warlord

The engineers that drive Clan Vrrtkin's Doomwheels are notoriously unreliable, due in no small part to their fume-addled stupor. They regularly careen out of control, crushing friend and foe alike beneath their immense bulk.



▲ Poisoned Wind Mortar

The Turntails



The Turntails are Clan Vrrtkin's longest serving Clanrat regiment, having survived over thirty battles – more than any other clawpack in living memory. This is due to the fact that the Turntails can run away from battle faster than any of their allies. Having fought for so long, the Warlord of Clan Vrrtkin mistakenly believes that the Turntails are formidable warriors and has granted them the use of several Clan Skryre weapon teams. The Turntails find these weapons exceptionally useful, especially when covering a retreat.

The Multitudinous Clans

There are many hundreds, if not thousands of different Skaven clans lurking throughout the Under-Empire. Not even the Council of Thirteen knows for sure how many clans exist. The multitudinous clans vary greatly in size and power as allegiances switch, rivals are conquered and enemies are enslaved. Here are just a few examples of some of these clans.

CLAN SKULLY

Clan Skully's warriors try to emulate the agents of Clan Eshin, but their clunky armour clanks as they move and their red cloaks stand out a mile away.



CLAN MANGE

The Skaven of Clan Mange have distinctive piebald fur and their sense of 'loyalty' (albeit to the highest-bidder) is renowned throughout the Under-Empire.



CLAN SPITTL

Clan Spittl maintain a lair deep beneath the primordial jungles of Lustria. They constantly battle with the hated Lizardmen and often wear their foes' flayed, scaly skin as armour.



CLAN FESTER

Clan Fester are members of the so-called Pestilent Brotherhood and their warriors' are covered with so many contagions that they are literally rotting away.



CLAN GNAW

The barbaric Skaven of Clan Gnow hunt the creatures (and Orc tribes) that dwell in the Badlands. Their captured prizes fetch an impressive price in Hell Pit.



CLAN SKRITTLESPIKE

The Skaven of Clan Skrittlespike shun the light and dwell in the deepest, darkest levels of Skavenblight. Their warriors have large ears and are afraid of most loud noises.



CLAN GRISTLECRACK

The Clawpacks of Clan Gristlecrack fight in large chain gangs. Every Skaven is branded and its tail is docked as a mark of allegiance to the clan.



CLAN CROOKTAIL

Clan Crooktail lurk in warpstone-tainted tunnels under the frozen Northern Wastes. Mutations are frequent amongst its warriors and are seen as a favour of the Horned Rat.



CLAN SKUTTLE

Clan Skuttle maintains the second largest of all Skaven Clanfleets. They are the arch-rivals of Clan Skuroy and the two clans are forever clashing for supremacy.



CLAN GANGROUS

The Skaven of Clan Gangrous are vicious pit-fighters that ram rusty blades into the stumps of lost limbs. They are the most dangerous tunnel-fighters in the Under-Empire.



Credits

Uniforms & Heraldry of the Skaven by Neil Hodgson and Robin Cruddace.

Working on this book has been more fun than 'work' has any right to be and it has only been achieved after rigorously scouring through everything produced by Games Workshop about the Skaven, including Warhammer Army books, Warhammer Fantasy Battle, White Dwarf, and many other publications. Thanks thanks to everyone involved in producing this material because, without it to inspire us, the *Uniforms & Heraldry of the Skaven* might never have been...

Neil Hodgson deserves a special mention for all the long hours he spent toiling away in the darkest depths of Skavenblight; drawing all the Skaven, banners, and shields used throughout this book. Also Alex Boyd, whose inspirational paintings bring the clans to life throughout this volume, and Jeremy 'die-die man-things' Vetock, for his infectious enthusiasm for all things Skaven-related (and also for reading through the manuscript). Emma Parrington and Carl Dafforn led the book design and coloured in more ratmen, banners and shields than any sane man-thing should have to endure.

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This book is an indispensable guide to the clans and markings of the Skaven – a nefarious race of ratmen that swarm beneath the surface of the Warhammer world. Within these full-colour pages you will find hundreds of illustrations of Skaven warriors, banners, and shield designs festooned with runes and symbols.

The Verminous Horde

Examples of all the Skaven's iconic warriors are shown, from Skavenslaves and Clanrats to Stormvermin and Warlords. The Skaven's more unusual troops, war machines and fighting beasts are also illustrated, including Assassins, Plague Monks, Doomwheels and Rat Ogres, as well as the highly feared Grey Seers.

The Skaven Clans

This guide depicts the armour, banners, shields, colourations and iconography of dozens of different Skaven clans, including the Greater Clans and numerous Warlord Clans from all across the Under-Empire. The characteristic traits and most recognisable markings of these clans are described, as well as details of infamous Skaven regiments, and the mysterious Council of Thirteen who rule over all Skavendom.



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Clan Mordkin Chieftain



Clan Mors Banner Bearer



ENGLISH

www.games-workshop.com

PRINTED IN CHINA

PRODUCT CODE
60 04 02 06 002

ISBN 978-1841549828



9 781841 549828