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A New Look. A New Challenge. A New Beginning.

By Steve Menetzky

Zork Zero

Preface to the Story

More than 90 years have passed since the great wizard Megaboz cast the Curse which destroyed Lord Dimwit Flathead the Excessive along with the other members of the ruling family, the Twelve Flatheads. Now, the Curse threatens to bring down the Great Underground Empire itself! Wurb Flathead, the current occupant of the throne, has sent a clarion call to the remotest comers of the Empire: half the riches of the kingdom to the person who can allay the Curse. From every province of Quendor, courageous adventurers, scheming charlatans, and wild-eyed crackpots have streamed into the Imperial Capital of Flatheadia. You are one such treasure-seeker, a peasant from an unheard-of village in an obscure province. However, you have an important advantage: an ancestor of yours, a servant in Dimwit's court, witnessed Megaboz casting the Curse, and obtained a small scrap of wizardly parchment from the mage's pocket. This parchment scrap has been passed down from generation to generation, and is now in your possession. Thanks to it, you know what none of the other would-be cursebusters know; you alone know what must be done to stop the Curse! By the time of your arrival at Flatheadia, most of the treasure-seekers have given up and returned to their homelands. In fact, you discover that most of the population, including all figures of authority, have fled to distant provinces. And when you awake on the hard floor of the castle on Curse Day, you find that even the looters and the most persistent adventurers have departed. In fact, as you begin your desperate quest to find the relics of the Empire you need to stop the Curse, your only company is the court jester, who spins rhymes for your amusement. Always appearing when you least expect him, the jester will confront you with riddles and games, spring some deadly tricks, and give you helpful nudges in the right direction. And throughout, he seems to be laughing at some tremendous joke which you can't begin to fathom...

Zork Zero is the prequel to the Zork Trilogy, one of the most popular, best-loved computer games ever written. Zork Zero takes you back to the age of the Flatheads, where you can glimpse the Great Underground Empire during its heyday, and witness its monumental fall.

About the Author: Steve Meretzky (1957-) was born and raised in Yonkers, NY, where his early hobbies included rooting for the New York Mets and against Richard Nixon. A few historians of interactive fiction think that Meretzky's first job, packing nuts and bolts for his father's hardware business, was the formative moment of his writing career. A few other people think that there's absolutely no connection. Most people don't think about it at all. Many have won awards, but probably no awards you've ever heard of. Along with Infocom's Dave Lebling, Meretzky is the first person admitted to the Science Fiction Writers of America for authoring interactive fiction. Other works of interactive fiction by Steve Meretzky: Planetfall (1983), Sorcerer (1984), The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (1984) (with Douglas [Adams]), A Mind Forever Voyaging (1985), Leather Goddesses of Phobos (1986), Stationfall (1987)

Zork Zero Special Commands

*COLOR - If you are playing Zork Zero on a computer with a color monitor, you can type COLOR to change the colors of the text and background on your screen. This command works only on computers which support a color display.

*DEFINE - This command allows you to change the settings of the function keys. For example, if pressing function key 2 is like typing INVENTORY, you can change this to DROP ALL, or DROP ALL followed by RETURN (or ENTER), or anything else, by using the DEFINE command. See the "Function Keys" section on page N.

*HINT - If you have difficulty while playing the story, and you can't figure out what to do, just type HINT. Then follow the directions at the top of your screen to read the hint of your choice.

*NOTIFY - Normally in Zork Zero, the game will notify you whenever your score changes. You can turn off this notification feature by using the NOTIFY command. Typing NOTIFY pa second time turns the feature back on.

*OOPS - If you mistype a word, such that Zork Zero doesn't understand it, you can correct yourself at the next prompt by typing OOPS and the correct word. For example, if you typed HAND THE CHAIN SAW TO GARNDMA .and were told "I don't know the word 'garndma'"] you could type OOPS GRANDMA rather than retyping the entire sentence You can abbreviate OOPS to O.

*REFRESH - This command clears your screen and redraws the display.

*UNDO - You can use this command to "back up" one move. Suppose, for example, that you found a package but didn't know what was in it. You might type OPEN THE PACKAGE .and be told "The package explodes as you open it, destroying all your possessions." You could then type .UNDO, and you would "back up" one move. Your possessions would be intact, and you could try giving the package to an enemy, or leaving it alone, or something else. Note that the UNDO command works only on certain computers with enough memory.

jinboz fooz



zipso furgalneti

Se cannot be hatted
except by two items belonging
to each other * * * * * the accursed twelve!
Using it into the cauldron...
uttering the * * * * * sacred word.



then



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0	6	0
3	1	0

flood

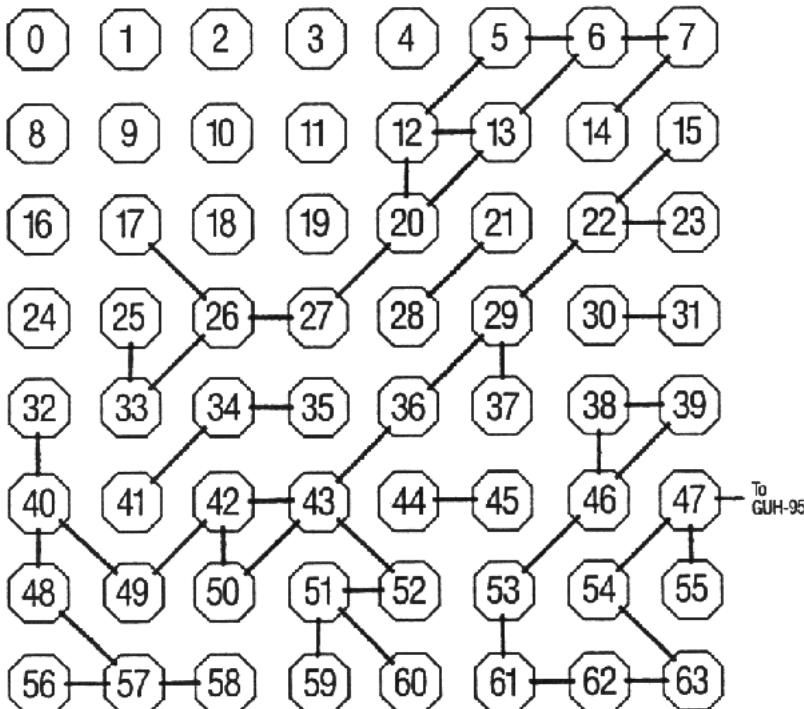
¶

The Flathead ¶ *Calendar* ¶



883





GONE
 I LEFT MY HARDHAT
 OUT IN LOT 8.
 PLEASE PICK IT UP
 THANKS,
 QUICKE

Work still to be performed in Phase Two:

- Removal of temporary passages
- Installation of emergency exits
- Installation of sprinkler system
- Construction of Concierge apartment

THE TWELVE FLATHEADS

*As every student of history knows, the Twelve Flatheads were the greater part of the Thirteen Significant Accomplishments of King Mumberthrax the Insignificant.**

In the immortal words of Boswell Barwell, the royal biographer:

Mumberthrax's place in history was secured by the one thing at which the Flatheads tended to excel: procreation. He sired twelve amazing children; twelve offspring who would transform the kingdom. As these magnificent siblings grew in notoriety, as their vast achievements became legendary, they became known as The Twelve Flatheads.* *

In 783 GUE, the coronation of Lord Dimwit Flathead the Excessive, Mumberthrax's firstborn, began at Flatheadia. This calendar, brought to you under the auspices of the Flatheadia Chamber of Commerce and the Frobozz Magic Calendar Company, celebrates the centennial of that memorable occasion.

Reproduced for this calendar are Leonardo Flathead's famous portraits of the Twelve Flatheads. * * Leonardo brilliantly captured the varied personalities of the siblings on canvas over a span of seventeen years, starting with his own self-portrait in 766 GUE (see Jelly) and finishing with his Coronation Portrait of King Dimwit in 783 GUE (see Estuary).*

We are grateful for permission to reprint the accompanying excerpts from Boswell Barwell's exhaustive biography, "The Lives of the Twelve Flatheads." * **

*The thirteenth accomplishment was a decree that made Double Fanucci the National Sport of Quendor. Legends say that Double Fanucci was invented by Zilbo III, the last king of the Entharion dynasty. Double Fanucci Championships had been an annual event since 691 GUE, and Mumberthrax's Proclamation of 757 simply gave the sport official royal approval.

**From the introduction to "The Lives of the Twelve Flatheads."

* * *The originals can be seen in the gallery at Flatheadia Castle. Acknowledgement is gratefully made to Winifred Booblort of the Flatheadia Castle Preservation Society for her invaluable help.

****Copied right in 804 GUE by the Frobozz Magic Biography Publishing Company.

DIMWIT FLATHEAD

Excessive Ruler of the Empire

(723-789)

Dimwit, as Mumberthrax's firstborn, grew up as heir to the throne of Quendor. A tad spoiled, little Dimmie was fond of torturing his nannies in the castle dungeon.

Dimwit spent most of his early adulthood vacationing (with 40,000 attendants) in the sparsely populated Eastlands across the Great Sea. Dimwit, who despised the outdoors,* was enthralled by the underground caverns there.

When Mumberthrax felt death's icy hand in 770 GUE, Dimwit began his vibrant reign. He immediately moved the capital of Quendor from Egreth, in the Westlands, to Aragain, in the Eastlands. Aragain, a small village, was transformed and renamed Flatheadia. Dimwit also decreed that Quendor be called "The Great Underground Empire."**

Dimwit's grandiosities knew no bounds. His wondrous coronation ceremony*** quickly earned him the nickname Lord Dimwit Flathead the Excessive. On a whim, in 783, he ordered the erection of Flood Control Dam //3, an underground project whose uselessness and cost did not diminish its magnificence. He also had huge granola smelters built near the Antharian Granola Mines.

Some bitter, unappreciative chroniclers have described Dimwit's castle as his biggest folly. It covered 8,600 square bloits, and housed, at one time, over 90% of the empire's population.

Dimwit's last great project was the erection of a huge statue of himself in the Fublio Valley. Nine bloits tall, it necessitated the deforestation of 1,400 square bloits.

It was rumored that Dimwit was planning the construction of a new continent in the Flathead Ocean; a continent whose contours would have resembled his own features. Sadly, Dimwit passed away in 789 before he could realize this incomparable goal. His death has always been shrouded in mystery.

*Dimwit was petrified of rain, which puddled embarrassingly on his level pate.

* *Nowadays, these names are used interchangeably.

* * *The ceremony took thirteen years to plan and lasted eighteen fun-filled months.



ESTUARY 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day™	Star Day
1 <i>Entharion Day</i>	2	3 <i>Monie's Birthday</i>	4	5 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	13	14
15	16  <i>Granola Riots (865 GUE)</i>	17	18 <i>Endless Fire started (773 GUE)</i>	19 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	20	21
22  <i>NEW MOON</i>	23	24	25	26 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	27	28
29	30	31  <i>Flood Control Dam #3 dedicated (783 GUE)</i>	DID U KNOW? Dimwit's Birthday, now associated with big sales at U-Mart and J.C. Zorkmids, was once a day when everyone in the kingdom was required to give the king a present.			



JOHN D. FLATHEAD
Captain of Industry
(725-789)

King Duncantrax formed the Frobozz Magic Construction Company in 667 GUE to enlarge the underground caverns of the Eastlands. Affiliated companies, such as the Frobozz Magic Dirt Disposal Company, and the Frobozz Magic Underground Sewer Installation Company, soon followed. The next year, FrobozzCo International was formed as a parent company for the burgeoning subsidiaries.

By 743, there were more than 17,000 subsidiaries of FrobozzCo. That same year, a young entrepreneur named John D. Flathead graduated from the venerable Borphee Business School.

At age 22, John D. founded Flathead Industries. FI's business was inventing other companies, which it would then sell to FrobozzCo. Within three years, FI had an annual income of 80,000,000 zorkmids. Eventually, the conglomerate decided to buy FI, renaming it the Frobozz Magic Company Company. John D. became one of FrobozzCo's 39,000 vice-presidents.

It didn't take John D. long to parlay his business acumen and royal connections into the chairmanship of FrobozzCo. Years of heady growth followed. When John D.'s older brother Dimwit became king, FrobozzCo received every contract for Dimwit's incredible projects. Hundreds of new subsidiaries were formed daily; in 781 a huge 400-story headquarters opened in Flatheadia.

John D.'s long-time goal was for FrobozzCo to control every single zorkmid of commerce in the Great Underground Empire. The lone holdout, a small rutabaga farm in Mithicus, finally sold out to FrobozzCo in 789. John D. never heard the news, however. He disappeared, along with a huge entourage, while touring the factories of the Frobozz Magic Snowmaking Equipment Company in the Gray Mountains.

FROBUARYTM 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day TM	Star Day
			1	2 	3 	4
				<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	<i>Undergroundhog's Day</i>	
5	6	7	8	9 	10	11 
				<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>		
12	13	14	15	16 	17	18
				<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>		
19	20 	21 <small>FULL MOON</small>	22	23 	24	25
				<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>		
26	27	28	29 	30 	31	32
				<i>Start of Leap Week (Antharia only)</i>	<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	
33	34	35				

Frob Day is a trademark of the Frobozz Magic Day Company.

Frobuary is a trademark of the Frobozz Magic Month Company.

STONEWALL FLATHEAD

Military Hero

(729 - 789)

T.J. "Stonewall" Flathead received his celebrated nickname while serving as a Squire in the Royal Army during the famous Battle of The Stonewall in 747 GUE.

The Stonewall was a strategically vital locale, commanding the two most important caverns of the Eastlands. When reports arrived that rebellious natives had captured The Stonewall, T.J. Flathead and his garrison were assigned the mission of retaking it.

After a battle lasting seven weeks, during which T.J.'s men suffered a casualty rate of nearly 75%, the garrison stormed The Stonewall. Once in command of it, they discovered that the reports had been erroneous: The Stonewall was completely undefended, and the supposedly rebellious natives were actually all vacationing in the Gray Mountains. Nevertheless, T.J.'s tactics and strategies during the battle were brilliant, and he would henceforth be known as Stonewall Flathead.

Stonewall rose quickly through the ranks, and in 755 GUE he became General of the Royal Army.

During his 34 years in command, he squelched three provincial rebellions and over 12,000 tax riots. Fortunately, his unlimited conscription powers helped mitigate the 98% casualty rates his army suffered during these difficult battles.

Stonewall died in 789 GUE during the Battle of Ragweed Gulch, when he was accidentally shot by one of his own men.



ARCH 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day TM	Star Day
KRAZY KWOTES "Why pay less?" -Dimwit Flathead			1	2 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	3 	4
5	6	7	8	9 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	10	11  <i>St. Balhu's Day</i>
12 	13	14	15	16 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	17	18
19 <i>Frobazz Magic Cave Co. founded (668 GUE)</i>	20	21  <i>EMPTY MOON</i>	22 <i>Royal Museum dedicated (777 GUE)</i>	23 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	24	25
26	27	28	29	30  <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	31	



JOHANN SEBASTIAN FLATHEAD

Musical Genius

(728-789)

In 732 GUE, the Frobozz Philharmonic Orchestra was formed. Because of the woeful lack of orchestral music in existence, the FPO usually settled for playing baroque versions of old folk tunes and popular dance numbers.

Seven years later, the FPO performed their first symphony. The piece was notable because of the age of its author, a precocious eleven-year-old named Johann Sebastian Flathead.

As he matured, Johann's symphonies increased in length, while his audiences mysteriously decreased in size.* His Symphony//981, the so-called Infinite Symphony, contained over 60,000 movements; over the course of its only performance, several members of the orchestra retired and were replaced by their children or grandchildren.

Dimwit recognized a kindred spirit in his younger brother, and appointed him official court composer in 771. Later that year, he wrote his famous "Flatheadia Overture for Rack and Pendulum" to celebrate the dedication of Dimwit's new dungeon.

He spent his latter years composing music for ever more grandiose instruments, such as his Concerto for Woodwinds and Waterfalls. Johann was killed in 789 when a mishap occurred during a rehearsal of his Minuet for Violin and Volcano.

**No reasonable postulation has been made to explain Johann's lack of popularity. It is the belief of this author that the short attention span of the general public precluded it from sitting still for the whole of one of his symphonies.*

ORACLE 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day TM	Star Day
TID BITZ This year is the 100th anniversary of the original Coronation Day. Since Dimwit's coronation, all subsequent kings have been crowned on Oracle 22nd.						1
2	3 <i>King Wurb's Birthday</i>	4  <i>St. Foobus' Day</i>	5	6 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	7	8 
9	10	11	12	13 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	14	15
16	17 	18	19	20 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	21	22  <i>Coronation Day</i>
23	24	25	26  <i>OLD MOON</i>	27 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	28	29 <i>dinner at the Bozb's</i>
30						

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J. PIERPONT FLATHEAD

Dauntless Banker and Financier

(730-789)

As a child, J. Pierpont demonstrated both the flair for capitalism and the resourcefulness which would make him the most successful banker in El of Quendor. The enterprising eight-year-old opened a lemonade stand in the center of Egreth Village, using the royal militia to force citizens to buy lemonade. At spearpoint, most people were willing to pay little J. Pierpont's exorbitant price of 300 zorkmids per glass.*

He also used the militia to quash the other lemonade stands in the city, and later to shut off El other beverage sources as well. As the prices at his lemonade stand soared into quadruple digits, J. Pierpont quickly realized the benefits of monopolies.

In 749, at the age of nineteen, J. Pierpont became a clerk at the Bank of Zork. Six weeks later, following a rash of disappearances of his successive bosses, J. Pierpont became the youngest Chairman of the Board in the bank's history, a testament to his financial acumen.

As Chairman, he used his royal connections to eliminate El competing banks, increasing the Bank of Zork's market share from 99.2% to 100%.** He also supervised the installation of the latest magic-based security techniques to guard the bank's vault and deposit box areas. For unknown reasons, J. Pierpont hired exclusively gnomes to fill his teller and security positions.

J. Pierpont Flathead served as Chairman of the Board until his odd disappearance in 789 GUE, when he entered one of the bank's vaults and never re-emerged. Although gone, he is not forgotten; reproductions of his portrait still hang in every branch of the Bank of Zork.

**Ice was extra.*

***He was later able to increase this number to 131% by encouraging customers to deposit their money several times*



MAGE 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day TM	Star Day
0 <i>Zero Day</i>	1 <i>Mage Day</i>	2 	3	4 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	5	6 <i>Antharian Marble Pageant</i>
7	8 	9	10	11 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	12	13
14 	15	16	17	18 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	19	20 
21	22	23	24	25 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	26  <i>PAC MOON</i>	27
28	29	30	31  <i>St. Honko's Day</i>	QUICKIE QUIZ Who was the first king in the Flathead Dynasty?		

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THOMAS ALVA FLATHEAD

Inventor Extraordinaire

(730-789)

Many have mastered the magical arts; few applied them to the creation of practical devices as masterfully as the great inventor Thomas Alva Flathead.

His brilliance was evident even in childhood. Thomas Alva, the sixth son in his family, was constantly tormented by his siblings: no sooner would he get a toy to play with than some older brother would snatch it away. Thomas Alva quickly remedied the situation by inventing powerful steel traps which, at first glance, looked exactly like toy boats or stuffed dornbeasts.

As an adult, Thomas Alva produced a seemingly endless stream of inventions from his laboratory, Froblo Park. His most useful inventions include the magic room spinner and the magic compressor, but he is probably best-known as the inventor of the battery-powered brass lantern.

Thomas Alva also made a number of breakthroughs in the area of person-ally-ingested magic. His most famous invention in this area was a yellowish-green potion which allowed humans to talk to plants.

All of these inventions were marketed by FrobozzCo International, providing Thomas Alva with generous royalties. But he spurned wealth, living in a small room behind his laboratory and sleeping on an unfinished wooden board. Thomas Alva died in 789 GUE from a severe case of splinters.

JAM 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day™	Star Day
KRAZY KWOTES "A good lawyer is much better than a good husband." -Lucrezia Flathead				1 EATEN MOON <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	2  3 	
4  FAST MOON	5 <i>Treaty of Znurg (474 GUE)</i>	6	7	8 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	9	10
11 	12	13	14 <i>Capital moved to Flatheadia (771 GUE)</i>	15 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	16	17
18 	19	20	21	22 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	23	24
25 	26	27	28	29 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	30	

LEONARDO FLATHEAD

Artist and Scientist

(731-789)

Little notice was taken of Leonardo Flathead as a child. He was shy and quiet, and quite overshadowed by his aggressive older brothers. It wasn't until his arrival at Galepath University that his genius blossomed and the world began to take notice.

While at the University, Leonardo wrote several major treatises which revolutionized scientific thought. The most famous of these disproved the hoary myth that the world sits on the back of a giant turtle, proving instead that the world actually rests on the head of an enormous troll.

After his University days were over, Leonardo turned from science to art. He became the most famous painter in the land: noblemen from every province were escorted to his studio by Dimwit's personal militia to have their portraits painted.

Unfortunately, during his later years Leonardo became quite senile, and his painting style deteriorated. He took to flinging paint at his canvasses in much the same way that a Borphee baker flings bits of dough into a hot oven to make Frobolli Cakes. His studio became caked with layer upon layer of splattered paint. It was during this period that his famous incomplete work, "Obstructed View of Fjord," was lost.

Leonardo made a final, feeble attempt to recapture his former greatness by moving into other media beside paint, but these efforts led to his tragic end. In 789, while working on a large statue intended for the harbor of Antharia, he suffered a fatal plunge into a vat of molten granola.



JELLY 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day TM	Star Day
-5 	TID BITZ The great Thaumaturgist, Davmar, spent six years of his life as a zucchini farmer, but was allergic to zucchinis and could not eat them himself!					1
2 WHITE MOON	3 <i>Double Fanucci became National Sport of Quendor (761 GUE)</i>	4 <i>Fifre Day</i>	5	6 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	7	8
9	10 	11 SUDDEN MOON	12	13 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	14	15
16	17	18	19 	20 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	21	22
23	24	25 	26	27 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	28	29
30	31					



LUCREZIA FLATHEAD

Legendary Murderess or Innocent Widow?

(735-789)

Of all the Twelve Flatheads, it is most difficult to separate history from legend when studying Lucrezia, the only sister to eleven aggressive broth-
ers. Showing a total lack of understanding for her delicate position, detrac-
tors have cruelly tried to claim that Lucrezia had a warped mind.

At the tender age of sixteen, Lucrezia married a very rich but very old
nobleman from Gurth, Marcus Bzart-Foodle. Ten-and-a-half months later,
he died in bed with his bride. Afterward, Bzart-Foodle's doctor could not
recall whether he had warned Lucrezia to avoid over-exciting her husband's
weak heart.

Lucrezia's second husband, a wealthy land baron from Mareilon
named Oddzoe Glorb III, was found dead just five weeks after the
wedding, his body mangled by hellhounds. It was quite understandable that
Lucrezia had her multi-volume hellhound training manual removed from
the house at once; the sight of it must have brought back tragic memories.

Five days later, Lucrezia sought consolation in a third marriage, to the
Governor of Antharia, Hirax Mumbleton. Only two days after that,
Antharia was without a governor. Hirax had been discovered in his office,
smothered under a ton of raw granola. His sobbing widow immediately
cancelled delivery of her daily truckloads of granola, in order to avoid any
similar tragedies.

After her next fifteen husbands, all wealthy lords, died on their
wedding nights, royal insiders reported that she was so distraught by her
tragic string of bad luck that she was becoming dangerously suicidal. Elder
brother Dimwit was finally forced into action, and had her locked up in a
cell in the dungeon for her own safety. She languished in that cell for the
remaining fifteen years of her life. During this period, some 1,800 prison
guards were mysteriously poisoned. Some legends say that her own death,
in 789, was self-induced.

AUGUR 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day ^{TR}	Star Day
QUICKIE QUIZ What is the busiest seaport in the Eastlands? <small>Answer: Port Foozle</small>	1	2	3	<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	4 • SMALL MOON	5
6  <i>St. Bovus' Day</i>	7 <i>Gnusto spell invented (769 GUE)</i>	8	9	10 • <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	11	12
13	14	15 <i>dentist 1:50</i>	16 • <i>First Zorkmid minted (699 GUE)</i>	17 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	18	19
20	21	22 •	23	24 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	25	26
27	28 • <small>LARGE MOON</small>	29	30	31 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	FUN FAX Bottomless pits are the second-leading cause of death in Flatheadia.	

RALPH WALDO FLATHEAD

The Poet of the Empire

(737-780)

An unspoken Flathead family motto was "quantity over quality," and no one demonstrated that tenet better than Ralph Waldo. During his 40-plus years of putting pen to parchment, he wrote 912 novels, 4,000 short stories, and an incredible 87,000 sonnets. His essays have never been successfully counted.

Ralph Waldo spent eleven years at Antharia University, collecting a chestful of degrees, including three doctorates: Doctor of Idyllic Poetry, Doctor of Excellent Elegies, and Doctor of Octameter Odes. He was very proud of his academic accomplishments, and always signed his name "Ralph Waldo Flathead, D.I.P., D.E.E., D.O.O."

Fresh out of college and flush with the enthusiasm of youth, Ralph Waldo wrote a series of lengthy essays which he hoped would uplift the human spirit. Sadly and inexplicably, these essays lifted little more than the profits of the Frobozz Magic Writing Paper Company. The essays from this period include "On the Benefits of Keeping Ears Clean" and "Why Doorknobs are Necessary." Also during this period, he wrote "On the Discoloration of Roadside Slush," but the manuscript was lost before it could be published, leaving Ralph Waldo disconsolate for years.

During his middle years, Ralph Waldo spent nearly half a decade living in the granola mines of Antharia. It was during this period that he wrote his longest work, a 60,000-verse epic about the varieties of moss that one finds in granola mines.

Toward the end of his life, Ralph Waldo specialized in exploring related themes, as brilliantly demonstrated by the four sonnets found by his deathbed: Sonnet #8Z177 "Ode to a Tiny Moist Avocado Pit" Sonnet #8Z178 "Ode to Another Tiny Moist Avocado Pit" Sonnet #87,179 "Ode to Two Tiny Moist Avocado Pits"

Sonnet #87,180 "Ode to Two Still-Tiny-But-Less-Moist Avocado Pits"

Ralph Waldo died in 789 GUE. An autopsy revealed that the cause of death was an overdose of avocados.



SUSPENDUR 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day™	Star Day
					1	2
						<i>Time Travel Spell invented (927 GUE)</i>
3	4 	5	6	7 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	8	9
10	11 <i>Double Fanucci Championships</i>	12	13 	14 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	22 <i>MISSING MOON</i>	23
24	25	26 	27	28 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	29	30

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JOHN PAUL FLATHEAD

Seaman and Explorer

(738-789)

All the Flathead aunts and uncles predicted early on that John Paul would find his destiny at sea. He loved boats so much that the royal carpenters were ordered to produce a flotilla of 1,400 vessels for his bathtub.*

From an early age, John Paul suffered from an inferiority complex derived from being the second "John" among the Flathead children.** This complex made John Paul determined to become a world-famous seafaring adventurer.

At sea, his feats ranged from the courageous (he was the first person to traverse the Great Sea in a one-man ship) to the curious (he set a new record for the most circumnavigations of Antharia on a raft towed by groupers).

In 766 GUE, at the age of 28, John Paul joined the royal navy; by 771, he was the ranking admiral; by 773, every ship in the navy had been sunk or lost at sea. John Paul retired shortly thereafter.

He spent his latter days touring the Flathead Ocean, collecting curios and unusual pets from all comers of the world. Among the most interesting: a large blue toad named *"Otto"* who was known for his extraordinary appetite and his curmudgeonly personality.

John Paul died in 789 GUE, during a vacation in Grubbo-by-the-Sea, when his old nemesis, the great white jellyfish, finally caught up with him.

*His bathtub had to be consequently enlarged; a large inland sea resulted.

**In his autobiography, Mumberthrax explains that when he named John Paul he "simply forgot about John D."

OTTOBUR 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day TM	Star Day
1	2  FULL MOON	3	4	5 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	6  St. Wiskus' Day	7
8	9	10 	11	12 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	13	14
15  FULL SUN	16	17	18 	19 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	20	21
22	23 	24	25	26 	27	28
29	30	31 	TID BITZ Antharian cave-dwelling witches can sometimes be summoned by coughing.			

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FRANK LLOYD FLATHEAD

Royal Architect

(741-789)

As children, all the Flathead siblings adored playing with blocks.* However, only Frank Lloyd drew plans before building.

Frank Lloyd got his big break at the tender age of 17, when his father, King Mumberthrax, commissioned him to design a new wing for Castle Egreth. The resulting wing was breathtakingly impressive. As Frank Lloyd himself wrote, "the conjunction of space and time seems to interface in a pre-subjected instantiation of the underrepresented whole." Frank Lloyd became, overnight, the hottest architect in the Kingdom.**

His reputation established, Frank Lloyd designed virtually every important Quendorian building during his three decades as Official Court Architect. His designs ranged from his vacation chalet in the Gray Mountains to the Great Meeting Hall of the Enchanters' Guild in Borphee, but Frank Lloyd is best known for his most ambitious work: the 400-story FrobuzzCo Building in Flatheadia.

Overlooking exaggerations such as "on a dear day you can see the FrobuzzCo Building from anywhere in the world," it is still the most ambitious building ever designed or built. A FrobuzzCo Building address is most prestigious, and Frank Lloyd himself had a penthouse office, until a slight case of acrophobia forced him to relocate to a nineteenth-story office with a pleasant southern exposure.

The carcinogenic chemicals used in the eighth century to create blue-prints finally took their toll on Frank Lloyd, and he died in 789 GUE.

**Nanny Beeble, governess to the children, recalls that many had teams of slaves whose exclusive job it was to move the larger blocks.*

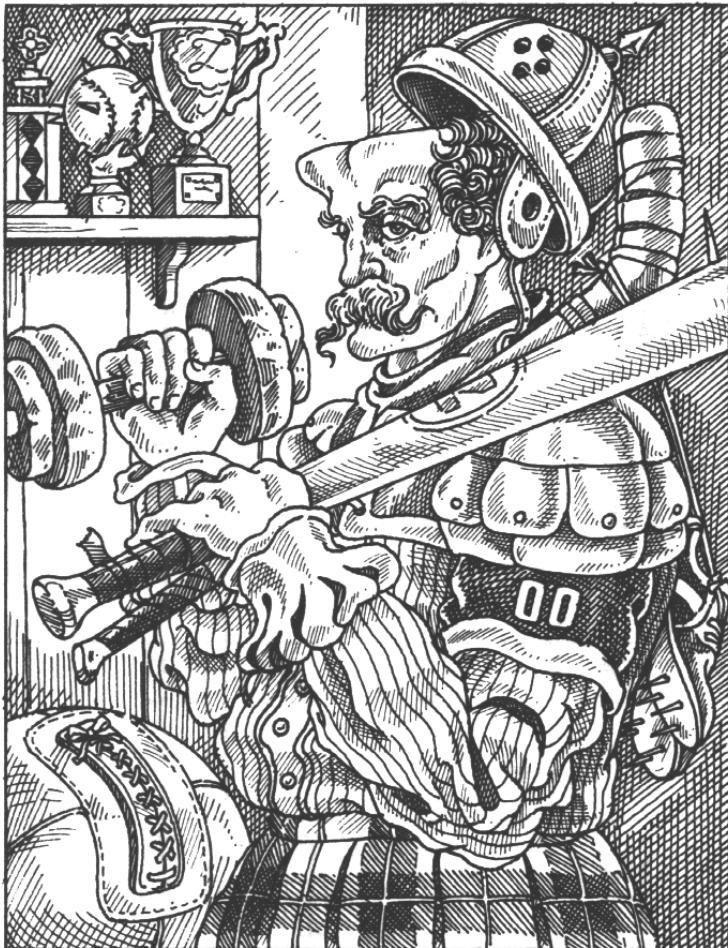
***The fact that the new wing of Egreth collapsed two years later killing over 4,000 royal guests, was credited to a miscalculation on the stonemason's part. He was summarily executed.*



MUMBERBUR 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day TM	Star Day
DID U KNOW? Some silly people actually believe that the Empire will collapse on Curse Day this year.			1	2 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	3 NEW MOON	4
5	6	7	8	9 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	10	11 <i>Veterinarian's Day</i>
12 <i>Leave for Flatheadia</i>	13	14 <i>Curse Day</i>	15	16 NEW SUN <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	24	25
26	27	28 RAD MOON	29	30 <i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	KRAZY KWOTES "You ain't nothing but a hellhound." — Elvis Flathead	

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BABE FLATHEAD

Athletic Superstar

(748-789)

Often called the flattest of the Flatheads, Babe, the youngest of the twelve, was born with an aptitude for sport. He demonstrated his dexterity and coordination early on, throwing baby blocks at his older siblings with impressive speed and accuracy.

As a youth, he was always captain of the Little League teams, thanks in part to pressure applied by his uncle, Mayor Fiorello Flathead. Even as a teenager, he was something of a lady's man and a party animal, and his older brother Dimwit would frequently have to bail the Babe out of jail following one infraction or another. By all accounts, Babe and Dimwit, despite their 25-year age difference, were closest of all the Flathead siblings.

When he reached college age, Babe selected Mithicus Province University from amongst many eager suitors. At MPU, Babe was a 43-letter man, leading his team to championships in every existing college sport and several non-existent ones as well.*

Throughout the Babe's professional sports career, he excelled in everything he tried: bocce, tag-team kayaking, full-court furbish. There was only one exception. Try as he might, Babe could not master Double Fanucci. Even the unexplained disappearances of the 339 leading Double Fanucci players failed to get Babe into the championships. Fanucci experts believe that Babe's difficulty with the game could be traced to one weakness: his failure to remember that three undertrumps after an opponent's discard of a Trebled Fromp is an indefensible gambit.

By 782 GUE, the Babe was such a phenomenal drawing card that Dimwit constructed the kingdom's largest sporting arena, Flathead Stadium, in his honor. It was there, during the shark-wrestling semi-finals in 789 GUE, that the youngest of the Twelve Flatheads met his end.

**Many experts feel that Babe's teams would have won these championships even if every competing school had NOT had their QCAA memberships revoked.*

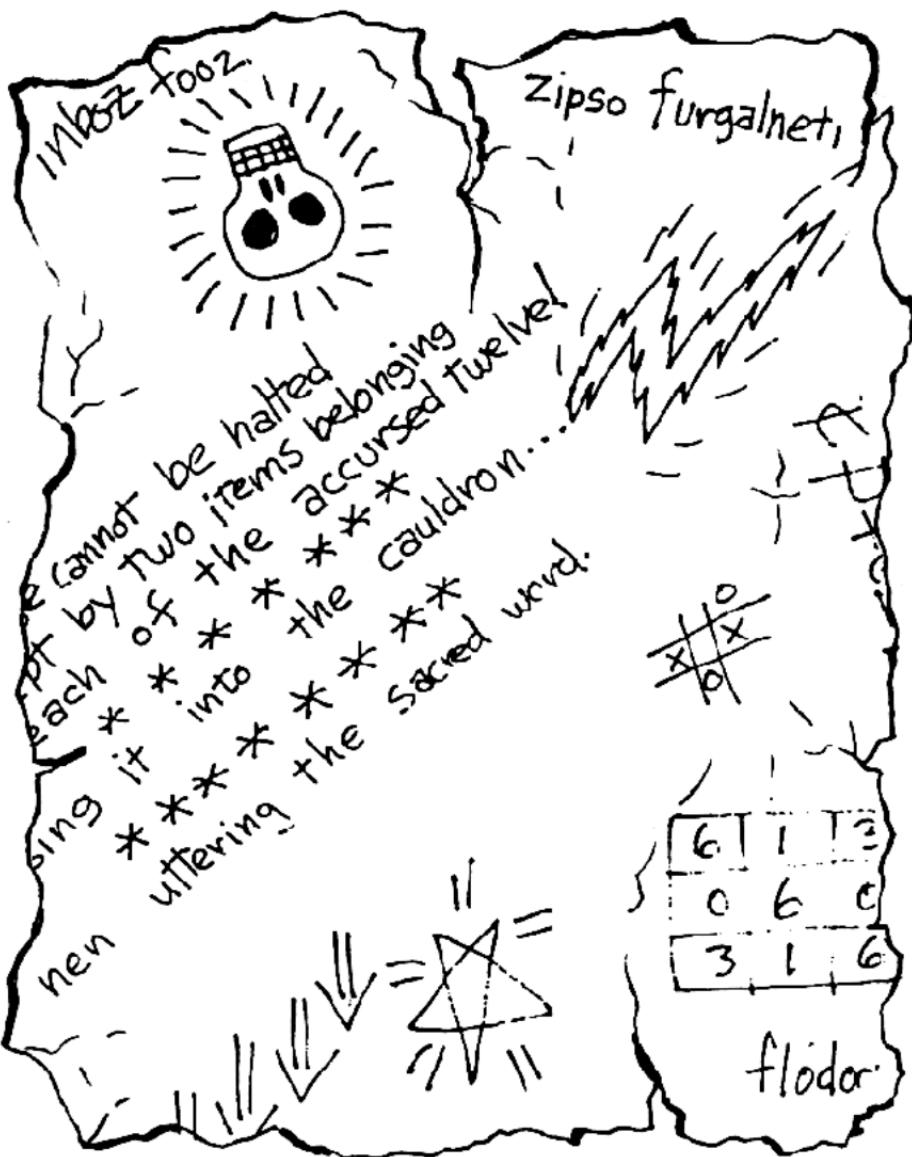
DISMEMBUR 883

Sand Day	Mud Day	Grues Day	Wands Day	Birthday	Frob Day TM	Star Day
QUICKIE QUIZ Who said "A home that's cut in half usually falls over"?					1	2
				Answer: Abraham Flathead		
3	4	 SEMI-FLAKE	5	 BULL MOON	6	7
				<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	8	9
						<i>Unnatural Acts (672 GUE)</i>
10		11	12	13	 HAPPY MOON	14
					<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>	15
17	18		19	20	21	22
					 BLUE MOON	<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>
24	25	26	 HALF-BOZ SUN	27	28	29
31					 GRUES MOON	<i>Dimwit's Birthday Observed</i>
						 ZIKKO FLAKE

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Zork Zero Parchment

This parchment has been passed from generation to generation and is now passed to you, use it wisely or the Empire is doomed.



The Hints for this game are within the game itself.