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“Beyond the Grave: The legends and lore of the wight, wraith, and mummy”

By Tom Moldvay — Dragon #198 (October 1993)

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Undead, Angreden

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any, especially subarctic and subterranean
FREQUENCY:	Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary or small bands
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Night
DIET:	Nil
INTELLIGENCE:	Average
TREASURE:	20% B
ALIGNMENT:	Any evil

NO. APPEARING:	1 or 2-16
ARMOR CLASS:	5
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	4 +4
THACO:	14
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1d6+2
CRIT. HIT/FUMBLE:	25%(+16%)/75%
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Enfeeblement, fear
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Immunity to some spells
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (5'-7')
MORALE:	Fearless (20)
XP VALUE:	1,400 2,000 (with curse)

An angreden, based on Middle-English form, would mean "the state or condition of anger" or "filled with anger" An angreden is the walking corpse of an individual who died under a curse, or who was so filled with hatred and anger in life that he refused to lie still in his grave. An angreden has a blackened, bloated body with a huge, oversized head.

Combat: An angreden is considered to have 18 Strength, so it gets a +1 to attack and a +2 to damage in combat, which has already been calculated into its statistics. Its touch acts like an *ray of enfeeblement* spell. Victims of a successful hit must make a save vs. spells or temporarily lose 25 percent of their Strength scores (fractions rounded down). The gaze of an angreden acts as a *fear* spell. An angreden's attacks are unsophisticated, being physical attacks with a club or hand-held rock.

An angreden is immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, cold, poison, paralyzation, and death magic. A *raise dead* or *resurrection* spell destroys it. A cleric has the same chance



to turn an angreden as he does a wight.

Habitat/Society: An angreden has trouble getting along with everyone, even after death. It is often solitary but may sometimes band with others for protection. Such bands are a snarling, quarrelsome lot.

An angreden may be lawful, neutral, or chaotic, but will always be evil. It exists only to vent its insensate rage at the world. It delights in harm for its own sake and, when not killing, will try to smash everything in sight.

Note: Strictly as a plot suggestion, DMs may wish to give an angreden the power to *curse* before being destroyed. Such a *curse* acts as a prophetic utterance, unless it is lifted with a *remove curse* spell. For example, an angreden might tell a character: "Horses will die under you," and that character would be unable to ride a horse until the curse was lifted. If an angreden is given a curse, the XP Value becomes 2,000 instead of 1,400.

Grettir and the ghost of Glam

In *Grettissaga*, a tale from Iceland, another kind of undead corpse walks the earth. Grettir, known as the Strong, was a man during Viking times who came to be outlawed for killing too many men in a blood feud. He spent most of his life as an outlaw until he was finally slain. His

exploits, while historically based, contain a strong element of supernatural legend. Grettir's story was retold by succeeding generations and finally written down during medieval times:

There was a man in Iceland, named Thorhall Grimsson, who had difficulty keeping shepherds. Some were injured and others could not finish their work, for some evil being stalked the pastures. So Thorhall hired Glam, a big strong man. Glam feared nothing, but he was often disliked for his strong temper. Glam commenced his work as a shepherd. He had a loud, hoarse voice. He abstained from mass, had no religion, and was stubborn and surly. Everyone hated him—but he lost no sheep.

The time passed 'til the eve of Yuletide. Glam was warned that, out of reverence, it was not proper to eat on the day before Yule. He demanded food anyway. When he had eaten, Glam went out.

It was very dark. There was driving snow, the wind was howling, and it became worse as the day wore on. In the evening, Glam did not return. Only after the violent storm passed could people search for him.

On the track above the valley, the searchers found Glam. The stones and earth were torn up all about from a violent struggle. Glam was dead; his body was black and swollen to the size of an ox. The people believed that the evil spirit that had been slaying sheep had also slain Glam. Glam was too heavy to drag to the church, so he was rolled into a nearby gully and covered with a cairn of stones.

It was not long before men became aware that Glam was uneasy in his grave. Many men were attacked. Some were severely injured; others were struck senseless and lost their wits. At night, the walking corpse would try to break into houses. Soon Thorhall's cowherd was slain by the ghost. The panic was great; the district was in a grievous condition.

A foreigner named Thorgaut then came to Thorhallsstad as a shepherd. He did not fear Glam's ghost, and he laughed at the stories. One day Thorgaut went out to the sheep and did not return. The men found his body on top of Glam's cairn. Thorgaut's neck was broken, as was every bone in his body.

Glam became worse than ever. People fled the district. Thorhall's steading was deserted. Livestock left behind was killed by the restless spirit.

Grettir the Strong then rode to Thorhallsstad, where he was welcomed. Grettir said he wished to spend the night in Thorhall's stead if the *bondi* permitted. Thorhall said he would indeed be thankful to Grettir for staying there.

When about a third part of the night had passed, Grettir heard a loud noise. Something was around the house, riding

above the hall and kicking the wood with its heels. This went on for some time when the sound came down toward the door. The door opened and Grettir saw Glam, bloated and black, with an enormous, ugly head like a goblin.

Grettir sprang under the ghost's arms, seized it around the waist, and squeezed Glam's back with all his might. Glam managed to wrench free. The monster sought to flee, but Grettir prevented flight. A fight raged up and down the hall, benches flew, and everything was scattered. Glam, with a desperate effort, forced Grettir to the porch.

Grettir changed tactics and loosed his hold on the monster. Glam was not prepared for that; he reeled backward and tumbled hind-foremost out of the door, tearing away the lintel with his shoulder and shattering the roof.

The monster turned its eyes at Grettir and stared. The sight of Glam in the moonlight made Grettir's heart sink. Grettir could tell that Glam possessed more malignant power than any creature the hero had ever faced.

Then Glam spoke: "You shall possess only half the strength and firmness of heart that were decreed to you because of this night's battle. Henceforward, there shall fall upon you exile; your deeds will turn evil and your guardian spirit shall forsake you. You shall be outlawed, and your lot shall be to dwell ever alone."

The faintness that had come over Grettir left him. He drew his sword and cut off Glam's head. Then he and Thorhall set to work and burned Glam to cold cinders, bound the ashes in a skin, and buried them far from the haunts of man or beast. Yet, in the years to come, Grettir found that the curse of Glam would, indeed, unfold.