

The Eye of Gazul: A Mountain-Scale Burning Shadows Emplacement With Dwarven Runic Augmentation

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Abstract—The Eye of Gazul is a new defensive weapon in the Karak Eight Peaks region. A Bound Spell of Burning Shadows is applied to the shadow of Karag Nar. Targets are selected by either a Grey Wizard operator or an array of magical signatures for common enemies of humanity and *Dawi*. A Rune of Gazul transmits *Zharvengryn* through the Bound Spell to the targets, severing their souls from the mortal plane and damning them to the ever-burning nega-fires of Dwarven Hell. Bound Spells of *Azyr*, *Aqshy*, and *Ulg* control weather and lighting and provide power for 24-hour operation with arbitrary shadow placement. The Eye was successfully deployed to break the back of WAAAGH Birdmuncha, killing over 500,000 orcs with its initial activation. We additionally present new suggestions about the operation of Burning Shadows and observations on large-scale dwarven runes.

Index Terms—Burning Shadows, Dwarven Runes, Gazul, Siege Weapons, Towers

I. INTRODUCTION

King Belegar Ironhammer's Expedition to Karak Eight Peaks retook Karag Lhune, Karag Nar, and the Citadel in 2479. Impending threats from nearby orcs, trolls, and beastmen indicated immediate fortification. Several approaches to the Expedition's holdings are too open to be easily defensible, notably the slopes of Karag Lhune and the Caldera. During the Expedition's initial push these open approaches were held using artillery, Anvils of Doom [1], and infantry. This was unsustainably expensive and the siege-scale resources, particularly the Anvils, could not be guaranteed to be present in the future. A more permanent large-scale defense was needed.

In this work, we detail the design, capabilities, construction, and initial combat deployment of a unique weapon system which satisfies Karak Eight Peaks' need for permanent, large-scale defenses. A cluster of towers atop Karag Nar binds a spell of Burning Shadows which is projected through the shadow of the mountain. A Rune of Gazul allows targets that fall within the shadow to be burned from the inside out by the anti-fires of *Zharvengryn*, which is Dwarven Hell, the Sword of the Dwarven Ancestor-God Gazul, and the soul-burning fire that Gazul uses to judge the enemies of the *Dawi*. A cluster of other towers clear the weather, place a light so the system can be fired at night, and move the image of the sun so the shadow of Karag Nar can be placed

anywhere within the Karak Eight Peaks region at any time in any weather. In 2482 the Expedition's holdings fell under attack by WAAAGH Birdmuncha, numbering approximately 1.1 million greenskins. The system was deployed by Magister Dame Mathilde Weber, instantly destroying almost half of the WAAAGH. This makes the Eye of Gazul one of the most powerful operational weapons the authors know of.

II. RELATED WORK AND BACKGROUND

A. Wizard Towers as Spell Foci

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B. Burning Shadows

Burning Shadows melts flesh like acid by disappearing it into the depths of the shadow that is used as the spell's focus [?]. Occasionally referred to as "Baby's First Battle Magic", its

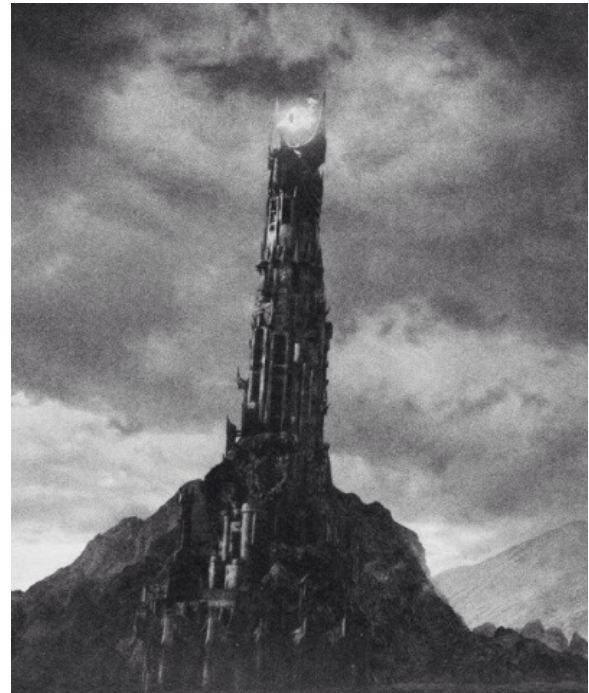


Fig. 1. An illustration of the Eye of Gazul.

exacting requirements give it a reputation for being tantalizingly powerful in the right situation and dangerously useless in every other. If every single one of a dozen conditions is met, a brand-new journeyman can instantly break a charge or obliterate an enemy formation. If even one of those conditions is absent, an enemy too far or too close or too many lights or not enough lights, the spell does nothing. Many wizards have lost their lives in attempts to arrange the perfect shot [?].

Scaling Burning Shadows up for battlefield use has been a topic of research since the spell was invented [?]. These attempts suffer from the same limitations as the original spell and have a similar success rate [?]. TODO: Name was killed when beastmen attacked his tower at night [?]. TODO: Name was killed when the forces of chaos attacked his tower on an unseasonably cloudy day [?]. TODO: Name was killed when beastmen found an ascent to his tower that avoided the walkway that was covered by the tower's shadow [?]. TODO: Name was killed when a greenskin shaman doused the bonfire he was using to direct his wagon's shadow [?].

C. Gazul

D. Dwarven Runes

III. FUNCTIONALITY

A. Reach

Sun-steering functionality and an artificial light source ensure that the Eye of Gazul is not beholden to natural lighting. The Eye's range covers the entirety of the Caldera, the Eastern Path, Death Pass, and the Eastern Valley. The only entrances to Karak Eight Peaks that cannot be targeted are Death's Crossing, the West Gate, and some exterior mountain slopes. The immediate approach from the Caldera to the Citadel is shadowed by a southern ridge on Karag Lhune, but enemies can be engaged as they cross the caldera before they reach this area.

B. Security

IV. CONSTRUCTION

V. DEPLOYMENT

All noise vanishes. The sun jerks in the sky. The Caldera is plunged into shadow. And for a single exhilarating, terrifying moment, you feel power you can't begin to comprehend flow through you.

Apart from the click as the button sinks down as far as it will go, there's nothing but silence. But this is more than an absence of sound, this is silence that devours sound, somehow growing louder by the moment. *Ulgû* is siphoned from the Room of Dawn and Dusk and in the space between heartbeats, the sky is made to forget where the sun should be, and the shadow that was pointing straight north is now centered almost exactly on the greenskins below. The silence echoes, there's a hint of a scrape of metal on metal, and the shadow of Karag Nar deepens into a solid black...

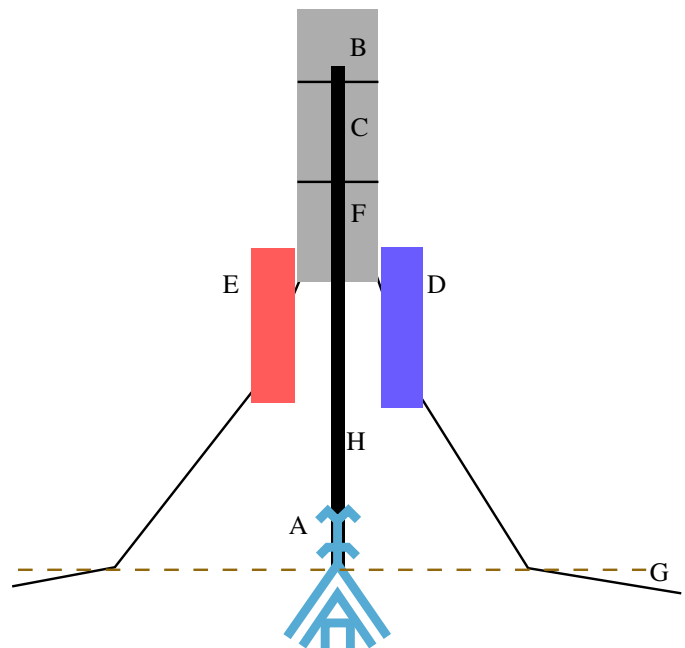


Fig. 2. Functional Diagram of the Eye of Gazul. Not to scale. A: Rune of Gazul. B: Control Room and major functionality. C: Room of Dawn and Dusk. D: Blue Tower. E: Red Tower. F: Living Space. G: Conceptual line between Karag Nar and Ground. H: Rune connector beam.

And then, just as suddenly, the sun is back where it belongs and the quiet that grips the tower is the mere sound of eight people holding their breath.

A. A Note on Target Selection

It is commonly believed that Burning Shadows draws information from the caster's mind to differentiate between target and non-target. The authors observed otherwise when firing the Eye of Gazul under Wizard control:

For an instant that stretched into what felt like hours, I glimpsed one greenskin after another for a fraction of a second each and mentally confirmed that, yes, it was an enemy of the *Dawi*. Apart from some having been Orcs and some Snotlings, the only variation was the scarce handful of vultures mixed among them, following hopefully in the Waaagh's wake and likely destined to be very disappointed. And throughout the entire process I could feel the energy of the Waaagh like an unpleasant vibration in my teeth.

It is possible, even likely, that the divergence is due to the presence of the Rune of Gazul. This is particularly due to the operator's confirmation of targets as enemies of the *Dawi*, rather than as enemies of the operator or simply targets versus non-targets.

VI. FUTURE WORK

The Eye of Gazul has so far only been tested against greenskins. Future work will report on its effectiveness against other attackers and on extensions of the targeting array. Of

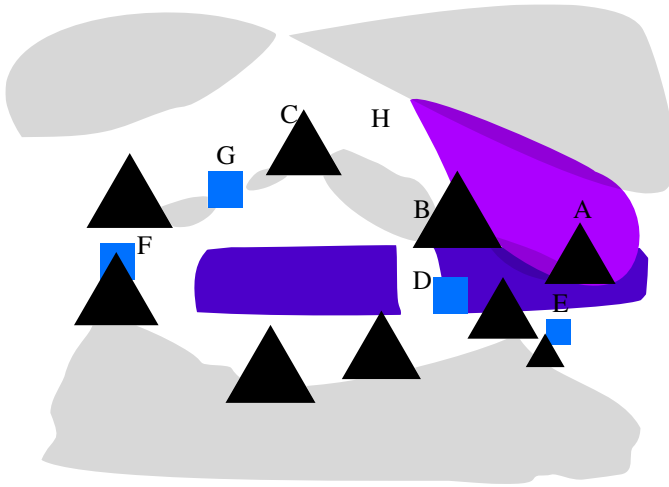


Fig. 3. A map of Karak Eight Peaks showing the natural extent of the shadow of Karag Nar. Dark Purple ■: daily extent at Mondstille. Pink ■: daily extent at Sonnstill. Grey ■: easily-defended mountains. A. Karag Nar. B. Karag Lhune. C. Karagril. D. The Citadel. E. East Gate. F. West Gate. G. Death's Crossing. H. Death Pass.

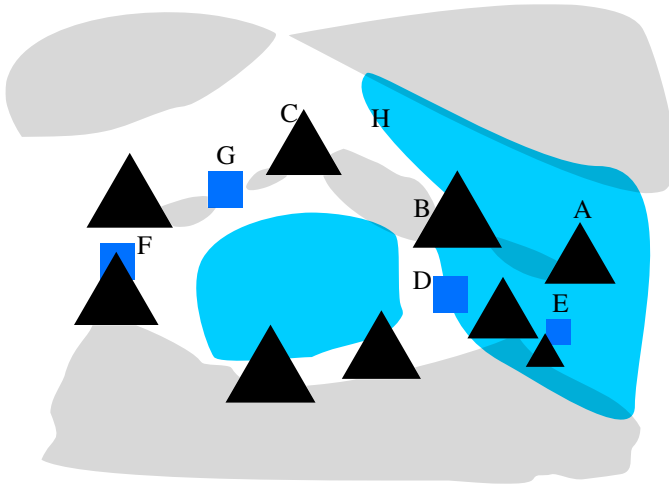


Fig. 4. A map of Karak Eight Peaks showing the range of the Eye of Gazul. Blue ■: Targetable area. Points of Interest as in Fig. 3.

particular interest is the possibility of adding targeting parameters for destroying particular portions of an enemy force (e.g. assassinating Bosses or Shamans) and servants of Chaos less significantly mutated than full daemons. The authors are also interested in peacetime uses of the system; for example, a targeting crystal attuned to Sosnowsky's Hogweed, which causes severe burns and phototensitivity on skin contact, would make weeding in the Karak Eight Peaks region significantly less dangerous.

VII. CONCLUSION

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