

## **The Wall of Mournhold**

*By Chlodovec*

*Extract from "Inventory of Missing Objects from the Mages Guild Vault, 4E 176 edition"*

Code: ASPV 08, 11824 (Wall of Mournhold)

Old Location: Alteration School Pocket Vault, Area 8, Section 1895

Old Status: Hidden (political), non-dangerous

Missing since: 4E 175

Background: Discovered during the Mournhold Excavation Campaign of 3E 269 [AADEI 08, 269.33]. Covert extraction requested by Master Nelas Sadra of the Auxiliary Department of Exoimperial History, made effective the same year [AADEI 01, 269.54-57]. Allocated into the Vault in 3E 270 [AV 01, 00568]. No use attested in the ledgers after that date. Original catalogation lost, re-catalogued in 3E 368 [Catalogue 3E 368].

Description:

[Extracted from Catalogue 3E 368]

The object consists of a smooth stone wall of 50 pertands of height, 143 pertands of longitude and 20 pertands of thickness, weighing 100,000 angaids. The stone is native from the area of Mournhold. The solidity analyses and audiological proofs (see transcript) permit dating it somewhere in the first centuries of Late Merethic Era.

At first sight the object is indistinguishable from any other stone wall. When run under magic detection spells it displays a high density of magicka, enough to clearly consider it an enchanted object. The front side of the wall seems to have been enchanted so the rock can regenerate when punctured or cracked. Attempts to roughen up the front side are also futile, as the rock tends to regain its smoothness noticeably quickly.

If a Light Spell with an intensity of 3.2 to 3.7 ninaleons is cast in second degree darkness and the focus point of the resulting light is oriented towards the front side of the wall, the main enchantment of the wall is triggered, displaying a series of object-less shadows and auditory sounds. The sequence of shadows and sounds cycle as long as the Light Spell is active and the resulting light makes contact with the front side of the wall. The following transcript describes the sequence of shadows and sounds that the wall displays. The transcript has been referred to the Auxiliary Department of Exoimperial History and its Archive for further commentary and insight, a report from experts from both sections is expected to complement this entry at some point in the near future.

It is recommended that this object continue to be classified as Hidden, as is common in objects that have undergone a covert extraction. If the contents of the transcript were to be accidentally revealed to the outside, be it through the wall itself or the written transcript, please refer to the Archive of the Alteration School Vault for a cover story [AASV P 08, 11824b].

Annex 1: Transcript

When the enchantment triggers (see main document) a shadow of a limping middle-aged mer, carrying what appears to be a corpse on his back, appears from the right. The shadow has a relatively low intensity, and this shadow and all that share the same intensity seem to be

thematically unified, and are to be labelled as Layer 1. After the limp mer makes his entrance, he is followed by fellow mer people. The limp mer appears to make a speech to his companions, but the wall still transmits no sound. Everyone starts feigning to be building while sometimes coming to the forefront to talk amongst themselves. The silhouette of what appears to be Dunmer style houses start arising from the ground. Then everyone leaves, except from the limp mer.

The limp mer leaves the corpse to his side and grabs a shovel to simulate digging a grave. While he feigns digging he stumbles onto something, and grabs a cog from the ground. He looks at it and pronounces another silent monologue while looking at it. While pronouncing the monologue a more intense shadow suddenly appears in the middle, the shadow of an old mer casting a spell, along with the first sound heard emanating from the wall, a loud “woosh”. This shadow is more intense and is part of what’s to be called Layer 2. He vanishes quickly. Then, the limp mer deposits the corpse on the ground, from where it drifts downwards. The limp mer leaves. The old mer of Layer 2, along with the “woosh” sound, suddenly reappears while seemingly casting a spell, but gradually vanishes.

The companions of the limp mer return, along with the limp mer himself, and seem to have a silent debate centred on the cog. The old mer of Layer 2 reappears, along the “woosh” sound, but this time accompanied by a middle aged tall man. They vanish quickly, but as they do, the first instance of human voices is heard, albeit in a quite distorted manner.

1. So let me get this straight, you spent our section’s entire budget and wasted ten months of surveys, just to dig out a stone wall? Care to explain yourself?

2. Silence! Don’t you see I’m working on something? Besides you are not a Dunmer, you wouldn’t understand.

1. I may not be a Dunmer but I am your superior. And if I don’t get an explanation of why are you wasting this experimentation room practicing basic light spells in front of a wall which, by the way, you have made us carry from that stinking hole that you call a homeland, I will make sure that you never see the [damaged]. If the authorities in [damaged], do you understand?

2. If I explain my research, will you leave me alone?

At this point the assembly that is being celebrated at Layer 1 is interrupted by bearded, armed mer. The limp mer and his companions organize to protect the cog from them and kick them out. The two figures from Layer 2 reappear and vanish again. While the assembly kicks out the newcomers, the voices continue.

1. Depends. Go on.

2. The early Chimers of the Golden Age of High Velothi had a complicated relationship with the written word. We know there were written [damaged] during Veloth’s pilgrimage and long after that, but during the early days of the settlement of Resdayn, my ancestors wrote nothing of note. All the tales, songs and stories about the companions of Veloth were written either during the exile or many generations afterwards. Instead of using the written word, my ancestors turned to the visual arts. What we lack in songs we have in paintings and masonry.

1. But you already proved that the temporal abandonment of the written word was a cultural reaction against the Dwemer, the written word being too precise for [damaged]. Are you telling me that you have organized this mess just to write silly ponderings about the power of imagery and symbols again?

At this point everyone in Layer 1 has left, when they return into the wall from the left they carry weapons and armour, from the right come the bearded mer, equally armed. When both sides are assembled they start fighting, sometimes coming to the front to aggressively talk with one another. Another instance of appearance and vanishing of Layer 2 occurs, and the dialogue continues.

2. Let me finish. There are two mysteries I try to shed light on right now. The first one is why the followers of Veloth are always represented in this period as silhouettes, in black and white, without any type of detail. The second has to do with the story of Rasfor the Mourner. According to some legends Rasfor the Mourner was one of the companions of Veloth and the founder of Mournhold. Of course, there are many other legends that claim other founders, but that's beside the point. The extant inventories and [damaged] show that indeed there was a Rasfor in Veloth's crew, but they call him Rasfor the Limp. Past the Golden Age the ancient playwright Andras Salo wrote *A choral song on the deeds of Rasfor the Mourner* somewhere in the third century of the First Era. In the play Rasfor is limp. The Exile era texts were the only sources for the limpness of Rasfor and they were buried and unknown of until the Third Era, and the artistic depictions of Rasfor during the Golden Age do not depict his limpness. How could have Andras known that he was a limp?

The battle of Layer 1 is over. The limp mer's side has won. They celebrate and say silent speeches. Another instance of Layer 2 happens. From this point onwards Layer 1 seems to cycle.

1. Oh, please! Are you losing your wits, old man? You, of all people, should see that oral folklore probably sung of his limpness.

The limp mer, carrying what appears to be a corpse on his back, appears from the right, followed by his companions. The limp mer makes a silent speech. Another instance of Layer 2 occurs.

2. That's what everyone thinks. But I know better. Folklore preserves but also destroys, and his limpness was so inconsequential to his story that it surely had to be lost in the tales. No, his limpness was transmitted through another channel, the art of drama, so beloved by our kind. But how? How can there be drama when there are no texts? How can there be playwrights if writing is unfashionable?

1. Again, probably these plays were transmitted orally.

The limp mer and his companions begin feigning to build while Dunmer style houses rise up.

2. That may be so for the text. But what about the indications? What about who has to enter, who has to leave, and what each actor has to do? No, there was another way of transmitting

that. And the conducts to transmit the indications were what Mournhold had most: light and magic.

An instance of Layer 2 occurs, but this time, it stays for longer.

+ Arkay be merciful! What is this? What are these shadows? How are you doing [damaged].

From this point onwards both Layer 2 and sound start cycling.