

The Jameld Line

ISSUE 1
AUGUST 1998

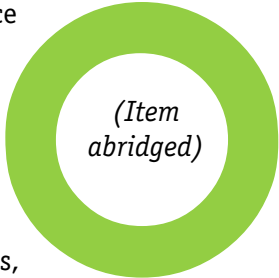
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ÄUGÛT 1998

An occasional publication from the offices
of the BJZ, home of **Zolid Matters**

So, it's come to this then: your humble Ed, dragged kicking and screaming out of retirement to satiate the lone reader for whom the persistent absence of (whisper it) *Zolid Matters* has just been too emotionally trying. No one else seems to have noticed its passing, and yours truly was anticipating a glorious career in brain surgery—as a patient—but in spite of our better judgement (everything is relative, of course) the BJZ extravagantly presents this dull yet worthy journal: *The Jameld Line*. Mind the doors please...

MILLENNIUM PLACE

There is increasing speculation in the media about the possible failure of all sorts of things on the 1st of January 2000, due to the effects of the so-called 'Millennium Bug.' Some Association members have expressed concern as to whether Jameld itself may be affected by similar problems; in Jameld's case, the bug is that there is no word for 'millennium.' As you will appreciate, this is an extremely serious situation which has the potential to plunge many of the major world economies into disastrous collapse, and therefore the BJZ Millennium Bug Task Force have decided that action should be taken only after due consideration, to prevent mistakes being made in haste. To this end, the BJZ have redesignated this year '17 A.J.' (Anno Jameldis); with effect from the 1st of September 1998, all documents written in Jameld will have to conform to this new standard dating system, thus obviating the need for a Jameldic equivalent for 'millennium' and sidestepping the whole tangled situation rather neatly (if glibly). Thus, there will be no century change for another eighty-four years; indeed, *hundreds* of years will pass before any millennium change occurs in Jameld, by which time there may be a word for it.



(Item
abridged)

IJDIV CIRCUS

The Fourth International Jameld Day (hereafter to be known as IJDIV) will take place on Saturday the 14th of November 1998. As is now customary on such occasions, BJZ members will be encouraged to don ludicrous facial furniture: cottonwool beards, chipboard sideburns (or chipburn sideboards), knitted eyebrows etc. Around the world, enthusiastic Jameldists and other strange people will gather to laugh at each other, choke on cottonwool, extinguish burning chipboard, and pull the wool over each other's eyes. No change there then.

JORTHEL SQUARE

The BJZ recently sponsored the first visit by Association members to Zuraalant. This, not unnaturally, raises a number of questions—What, Who, Where and Why, for instance. More specifically, seasoned readers of the peculiar missives that irregularly appear from this source may well ask: What or where is 'Zuraalant'?—you have not mentioned it before, O Ed; casual passersby however will no doubt want to know what this 'BJZ' thing is, and for satisfaction we direct such ones to various issues of *Zolid Matters passim*, a stout dictionary, and/or counselling.

Since you asked, Zuraalant is the Jameldic homeland, the area where, in an alternative reality, Jameld survives as the mother tongue of a people whose origins were in Friesland (now northern Holland), but who wandered around for hundreds of years, as discussed in detail in ZM7. Eventually, they settled in a beautiful land, with lush lowlands ideal for farming, sparkling rivers teeming with fish and dramatic rolling wooded hills. This land is, in our reality and our time, situated in north-east France along the German border, as you can see from the map we reproduce below, where Jameldic features are super-imposed upon those which are there in our version of the universe.

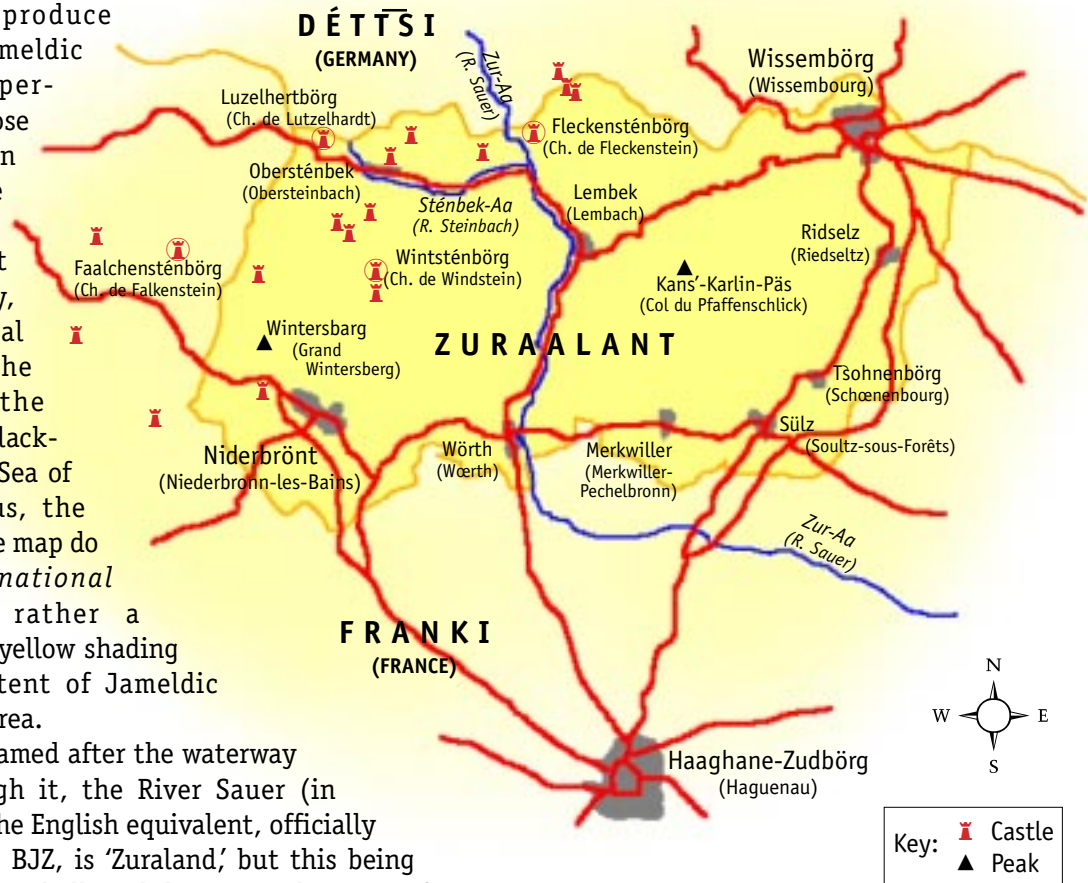
Zuraalant is not a political entity, but a geographical area, in much the same way as the Rhineland, the Blackmore Vale, or the Sea of Tranquillity. Thus, the orange lines on the map do not denote a *national* boundary, but rather a *notional* one. The yellow shading indicates the extent of Jameldic influence in the area.

The region is named after the waterway that flows through it, the River Sauer (in Jameld, *Zur-Aa*); the English equivalent, officially sanctioned by the BJJ, is 'Zuraland,' but this being *The Jameld Line*, we shall stick herein to the native form.

The expedition, sponsored by the BJJ and arranged by the Zuraalant Tourist Agency (*Zuraalantü Vakansarbürau*), sought to explore the area for signs of Jameldic culture and history, and was remarkably successful in this endeavour. Among the discoveries, hitherto unknown to the BJJ, were numerous castle-forts, grand architecture, and a proud musical past.

The castle-forts are notable by their number: there are nearly two dozen within this small area. Some are constructed in the usual Society-for-Putting-Things-on-top-of-Other-Things manner, but the majority

are fashioned from naturally-occurring hilltop pinnacles of red sandstone which tower above the surrounding countryside; these have been shaped by the various actions of water and person such that they are festooned with, respectively, myriads of curiously-shaped nooks and scores of dizzyingly exposed carved staircases. Some of the latter even feature handrails to provide



Jorthelquadret (Jorthel Square) in Wissembörg, the capital of the Cultural Region of Zuraalant. Special guest star: a blue Citroën
Amateurish photo by: J. Campbell



Faalchensténbörg (Château de Falkenstein), a fortress formerly in Jameldic territory [*no, the castle didn't move, the border did—Ed*]; the lizards are just out of shot.
Photo: J. Campbell.

at least nominal protection from the sheer drops alongside.

Sadly, almost without exception these castles are in a worryingly advanced state of disrepair. Not only have the windows gone, so have the ceilings and half of the walls. The BJZ's Historic Buildings Consultant, deeply disturbed by what he saw, recommended that all the castle curators and managers be sacked forthwith, as clearly they have been extremely lax in exercising their duties; it transpires that this will not be necessary (or, indeed, possible) as they have all been dead these last four hundred years or so. Nevertheless, it was felt that at least an admonitory memo should be sent to each one.

Many of the castles were evidently in former use by the *Jamelfses* as lookout posts, providing valuable forewarning of problems with marauding neighbours, of which there were of course many; even in *their* reality, the Jameldic peoples had chosen something of a crossroads to live in, where the land was of considerable strategic import and everybody else, as

usual, *wanted it*. The huge outcrops of the castles Fleckensténbörg, in the North, and Faalchensténbörg, in the West, must then have afforded the defending forces commanding views of the borderland and the incoming marauders, just as today from their summits one can clearly make out the approaching coachloads of schoolchildren well before their screams are audible. Such terrors were no problem for the noble Jameldic knights, who laughed in the face of danger [*and, according to some historical sources, took wax impressions of the jaws of death—Ed*]. This relaxed attitude gave rise to the Jameldic axiom: "Laughing in the face of danger can get messy if you're eating fruitcake."

Quite apart from the eccentric and hazardous designs of the castles, Zuraalant has other buildings to admire. Of particular note are those which surround the centrepiece of Wissembörg, the attractively floral and idiosyncratically triangular *Jorthelquadret* (Jorthel Square), of which we provide a pictorial sampling opposite.

Away from the towns, the expedition view-maniac found plenty to enthral him, although curiously the many photographs he took, once developed, seem to show little apart from lush lowlands ideal for farming, sparkling rivers teeming with fish and dramatic rolling wooded hills ... and ruined castles. It's all right if you like that kind of thing, which evidently he does.

This expedition showed Zuraalant to be a most engaging and beautiful land, one which all Jameldists would do well to visit. They will not be disappointed.



Two Association Members with appropriate message. The very ruined Luzelhertbörg (Château de Lutzelhardt) is in the background (it was broken when we got there, honest).
Photo: A. Elven (via J. Campbell).

T̄SOHNENBÖRG GREEN

During the expedition, a particular joy for the Association members was visiting the small village now known as Schoenenbourg, which bears the family name of the Jameldic musician and artist Gerg T̄sohnenbörg who was born nearby on the family estate in 1774. T̄sohnenbörg was a remarkable talent, the only Jameldic composer of any note—and indeed that's precisely what he used. His works, such as *JORTHELTRAUNATESÜ MART̄S* (THE MARCH OF THE JORTHEL MOURNERS) and his *KONTSERT VOR KUMALIN DANTMEDIK* (CONCERTO TO ACCOMPANY DENTISTRY) IN F, A FLAT MINOR AND #3 DRILL BIT are extraordinary for their pioneering experimental use of atonality, discordance, random note lengths, and just general awfulness. T̄sohnenbörg's pieces are now rarely performed, which is a shame for Jameldists, although perhaps it's just as well for the planet in general.

T̄sohnenbörg lost his way artistically after chewing on a lead ingot for a wager. He won the bet but tragically lost his uncoordination, and thereafter became increasingly disillusioned with his own dullness, eventually resorting to writing advertising jingles. He abandoned painting and destroyed the canvases he had kept, even his beloved *CHADOFMÖNÖS I-PORTRAAT* (SELF-PORTRAIT WITH HEAD MISSING).

Bizarrely, the rest of his work was lost when the King Älvard V Museum in Wissembörg, which was hosting a posthumous exhibition of his daubings, burnt to the ground in the Great Pyrophoric Mice Disaster of August 1863, so nothing remains to remind us just how truly bad a painter Gerg T̄sohnenbörg was.

DETRITUS

Introducing a word of Jameld (possibly useful, possibly not)... *Läf* (rhymes with 'safe')—the English equivalent is 'leftovers': half a cold lamb chop, the debris of last weekend's roast, assorted film-clung bowls of unidentified green or brown material at the back of the fridge, etc.; an important source of nutrition in many modern households.

While considering the foregoing, please also ponder over our Inverse Caption Competition: the caption is provided, and it is up to the reader [*both of you—Ed*] to imagine the cartoon from which it might be taken. The legend is as follows: "*Henry was so fond of Blossom that he fitted a cow flap to the back door.*" Entries, in a thought bubble, to the usual address.

Interchange with the Sevorian Line ...

TERMINUS

Thank you for taking *The Jameld Line*. We apologise for any inconvenience caused by the earlier delay, which was due to a frog on the line at Honiton. *Hauf!*

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(apart from the bits which might be considered to be the intellectual property of London Regional Transport—see the note below)

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Te Binertglobakläi
Jameld Zolidaton
(The Jameld Association)

e-poſt:

bjz@zeugma.force9.co.uk

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

including a somewhat expanded version of the Zuraalant Expedition report with more photos and less staples, please visit the *Zolid Matters* web site, the official online home of the BJZ, at www.zeugma.force9.co.uk/zm

The headline font used in this publication is Johnston Underground, a facsimile of the original typeface created by Edward Johnston for London Transport in 1916. The design of *The Jameld Line* is intended as a tribute to Johnston's timeless design and to the work of Harry Beck, the originator of the London Underground Diagram in 1933.

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and the Rahha Line (restricted service)