

DRAY PRESCOT: 34

WITCHES OF KREGEN

KENNETH BULMER

writing as

ALAN BURT AKERS

A Mushroom eBook

WITCHES OF KREGEN

ALAN BURT AKERS

a Mushroom eBooks sample

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Witches of Kregen

The story of Dray Prescott on the fascinating world of Kregen four hundred light-years from Earth is arranged to be read in individual volumes. Taken to Kregen first by the Savanti, the mortal but superhuman people of the Swinging City of Aphrasöe, he was rejected by them as too unruly and rebellious a spirit. The Star Lords — the Everoinye — selected him to carry out their mysterious projects for Kregen and, in between these exploits, Prescott hurtled headlong into adventures on his own account. The people of the Empire of Vallia called him to be their emperor and bring them out of the Times of Troubles, and one of his tasks is to rebuild the empire and clean out the slavers, the reiving flutsmen and those who batten on misery.

The plan to re-unite all Vallia is now under threat from the obstructions caused by Csitra, a Witch of Loh, who has Pronounced the Nine Unspeakable Curses Against Vallia. A plague of werewolves has left many of the people who shouted for Dray Prescott as emperor suspicious and fearful for the future.

There are many foes still to be overcome on Kregen; but Prescott has many good comrades and his never-failing source of strength, the Empress Delia, to stand at

his side. Now in the streaming mingled lights of the
Suns of Scorpio, the jade and ruby fires of Antares, Dray
Prescot must go forward to whatever of peril and
headlong adventure his future may bring.

Alan Burt Akers

Chapter one

Frogs

The first frogs fell from the sky on the morning of the day selected for the decisive battle against Layco Jhansi's army of crazed fanatics. Kov Turko's Ninth Army, busy preparing the first breakfast, stopped as the sky filled with the tumbling bodies. Frogs fell everywhere, into cooking pots, sizzling in the fires, impaling themselves on spears, stampeding the riding animals, bearing down tents by the sheer weight of their numbers.

Frogs, roklos, toads and lizards blackened the brightness of Zim and Genodras, the twin Suns of Scorpio.

Some squashed as they hit the hard-packed earth here on the border between Vennar and Falinur. Most hopped about, their ribbiting filling the air with clamor. Everywhere the ground appeared an undulating sea of shining green backs.

"That dratted witch!" Seg's black hair swirled as he batted at the descending swarms.

Nath na Kochwold hoisted his red pikeman's shield aloft and the crimson flower rang and bucked with the rain of bodies buffeting it.

Turko ran to join me under the hard projecting edge of a fighting gallery of a ship of the air. His powerfully muscled body, that of a master of the arcane wrestler's arts, as much as his lofty rank of kov, eased him through the press of men sheltering under the gallery. He looked mad clean through.

"That Witch of Loh! That Csitra! This must be another of her Curses."

"Indubitably."

He glared at me, for a tiny moment unsure of my tone, and then: "Yes! And she's successfully spoiled our plans for today."

"It seems to me," I said, and I spoke mildly, "she has made a grave mistake."

"By Morro the Muscle!How?"

"Why, if she'd waited until we were about to come to handstrokes with Layco Jhansi's poor deluded—"

"I see that. Those screaming idiots would have believed it was the doing of their own sorcerer, and—"

"Precisely," said Seg, storming up, looking ugly. "But she's done enough damage as it is. Look at them!"

The Ninth Army had turned into a mob. Frantically the soldiers ran and yelled and flailed away at the falling frogs. The succulent early-morning odors of breakfast were replaced by the stink of roasting and charring amphibians. The uproar was prodigious. Any resemblance to a disciplined army was entirely lost.

“It’ll take all day today and tomorrow just to get the animals back.”

“And,” I said, “if Layco Jhansi attacks we’ll be mincemeat.”

I spoke with deliberate emphasis, expecting to be instantly contradicted.

I was not disappointed.

“If Jhansi dares to attack,” rapped out Turko. “By Vox! We’ll have him. Have him whole and spit out the pips.”

“He’ll certainly break his rotten teeth on my lads,” promised Nath na Kochwold, as hard and intolerant of imperfection as ever, a true fighting leader of the Phalanx.

The uproar overturning the camp racketed on unabated. There seemed no end to the supply of falling toads and roklos. Frogs hopped everywhere, clambering over one another, tumbling off the heaped piles of squirming bodies, and their ribbiting croaked on and on.

“Where’s Khe-Hi?” Seg buffeted a luckless toad who tried to hop into our refuge under the fighting gallery. The men with us pressed close to the wooden curve of the ship’s lower hull. A few feet away the packed bodies were piling up breast high. We’d be drowned under frogs soon if the rain did not cease in a very short time.

“Like any sensible man, he’s with his lady love.” Turko held a sensible respect for Wizards of Loh; but he was still Turko the Shield and therefore his respect was inevitably tinged with a quizzical amusement. “And

even though she may be a Witch of Loh, Ling-Li-Lwingling is a remarkably attractive woman.”

No one of my comrades offered to make some cuttingly amusing remark about Turko’s qualifications for making that judgment. The situation here for all its unlikely bizarreness was damned serious. The piles of bodies continued to rise higher out there on the plain and most of the campfires had been unpleasantly extinguished.

“So,” said Seg, “he’s likely to be occupied and not realize what’s going on.”

“Then,” I said, and in that familiar yet empty gesture that indicates determination, I hitched up my sword. “Then we’ll have to bust our way through to him.”

“Through that lot?” yelped Turko.

“Any other ideas?”

“No. But we’ll have to move sharpish.”

“Right.Wenda!”

“Wenda!” said Seg with enormous sarcasm. Wenda means “let’s go!” “We’ll be like men sludging through treacle.”

Seg was right. There was another way, though its employment would give me little pleasure. But when it is a matter of your life versus a trifle of valuable property, there is no conflict of interests. None at all, by Krun!

A creak overhead snatched our attention.

The wooden fighting gallery projecting from the side of the sailing flier of the air groaned again, and a little spurt of wood-dust spouted from a joint. The gallery

had been designed to carry archers in aerial combat, with spearmen to back them if boarding was in the offing. It was a slender construction; but it had been built to carry the weight of men in combat.

A plank of the flooring abruptly snapped and snagged downwards, disgorging a flood of green bodies upon our heads. The flopping green hoppers leaped about croaking.

“They must be piled up mast high!” yelled Turko.

“That lot’ll collapse any second,” said Nath na Kochwold.

“It’ll hold for a bit yet,” said Seg. “All the same, that gallery shouldn’t break under the weight of a bunch of frogs—”

“So the confounded witch has increased their weight.”

Seg’s fey blue eyes regarded the gallery above us. Sometimes my blade comrade’s powers startled even him. He said, repeating himself: “It’ll hold for a bit yet,” and we all knew he spoke sooth.

The frogs were now coming down hammering like roundshot. Anyone hit on the head would be killed outright and probably decapitated into the bargain.

Now, on Kregen when you go to breakfast you naturally use cutlery, and some of the men had theirs still with them. But, as this was Kregen, you also take with you what you take just about everywhere you go — your weaponry.

Thus it was I was able to bellow at a couple of Hakko-din to use their axes and halberds on the hull of the ship. I will agree that the pikemen do not usually take

their pikes to breakfast, for the brumbytes stack their pikes in a most neat and orderly prescribed fashion; they will have their swords with them. On Kregen you never know when the next emergency will spring on you.

The axemen soon bashed a way through the hull of the ship. This destruction displeased me, as I say; but needs must in this situation. We ripped the planks apart and dodged roklos and frogs toppling from the sagging gallery.

“Hurry! Get inside, all of you!”

We only just made it.

As I felt Seg and Turko grab my arms and haul me in through the hole, the gallery at last collapsed. It broke up with the sound of a twenty-one-gun salute. The lot smashed down onto the ground where we’d been standing scant moments before.

Nath na Kochwold was furiously angry.

“That’s like him,” Seg said. “Stupid clean through.”

“Aye,” amplified Turko. “Daft as they come.”

“But — but—” Nath had known me in good times and bad, as had Seg and Turko. But Nath genuinely felt that things had changed. “You’re the emperor!” he got out. “You should not have been the last man—”

The gloom of the tween decks before our eyes adjusted made it difficult to see the expressions on the hard faces of my comrades. But I knew for a certainty that Seg and Turko were enjoying themselves. Oh, yes, we were a mighty high-up lot these days, kings and kovs, emperors and nobles, yet my blade comrades still

remembered the old days, days when we'd been slave, when we'd adventured over the hostile if beautiful face of Kregen, days when we'd not known where the next crust was coming from, although we were damned sure we knew where the next lot of grief was due to arrive.

Comrades in a fellow's life are precious — precious! — and worth all the tomfoolery of gold and jewels in the fabled Gardens of Hoi Parndole. Nath na Kochwold was a good comrade and had proved it on a score of occasions; yet still he was used to me as the emperor, as the man who had forged the Phalanx that was his pride, as the man to whom he looked as the savior of Vallia. He had not been slave with me.

So I bashed the dust from my face and clothes and bellowed out: "Get this ship aloft, famblys! *Bratch!*"

Seg and Turko took my meaning.

Men ran to the controls. A couple of Jikai Vuvushis ran past, the girls determined that they should stand at the controls and send the skyship into the air, and damn all onkerish men who got in their way.

The timbers of the ship groaned. The hull heaved beneath us. With the power conferred by the two silver boxes buried deep in her hull, the ship lifted into the air. She was not a voller. She did not have the power, conferred by the two silver boxes, of propelling herself through thin air. She could rise with that mystical power, derived from the mix of minerals in one box and the cayferm in the other; for forward propulsion she must use her magneto-etheric keel and the force of the wind in her sails.

If anyone was foolish enough to venture out on deck to try to set the canvas he'd have his skull driven in by a frog as hard as a cannonball.

The flying ship lifted. The vorlca drifted with the breeze, as we could tell by her movements. Oh, yes, I was the emperor all right. I spoke and men and women acted. But I was growing sick and tired of all the pomp and circumstance surrounding this emperor nonsense. The quicker my lad Drak took over the reins of empire the better I'd like it. I had given my word to be the emperor, and had sworn to liberate the people — my people — of Vallia from the slavers and aragorn, the flutsmen and all those who oppressed them. Once the island was reunited, why, then, you wouldn't see me for dust.

As for Delia, my Delia of Delphond, my Delia of the Blue Mountains, who was the Empress of Vallia, I knew she shared my thoughts, I knew she wished to be free of the burdens of empire and go with me once more aroaming the broad and beckoning lands of Kregen.

The vorlca lifted and moved and the breeze drove her downwind. From a porthole we could see the incredible sight of the frogs and their kindred dropping from heaven.

If Delia and I did take off for a life of adventuring, I was certain that Seg Segutorio would come with us. I had a shrewd suspicion that his new wife, Milsa, who was Queen Mab of Croxdrin, would not be averse to the picaresque life of adventure. And what a life that would be! By Zair, we'd live life to the full, then — although, by

all the devils in a Herrelldrin Hell, didn't we live life to the full right now?

In this tiny breathing space as we waited for the vorlca to drift downwind and clear the rain of frogs, I had time for reflections of different kinds. Yes, we lived life to the full — but whose full? Yes, I wanted to see Vallia once more united and peaceful. Yes, I most certainly wanted to see all the lands of Paz unite in a great league, a grand alliance, against the reiving Shanks who raided our coasts and slew without mercy. Yes, this was true. But, also, sometimes the burdens crowded too close and too heavy. Sometimes I understood with horror that I might yet grow callous and uncaring of anyone else save myself and my friends and family. If the disease of empire took me, I was big-headed enough to guess that not only all Vallia and Paz would suffer; all of Kregen would suffer.

“Almost clear, Dray,” called Seg, peering out through the gash in the hull. “What a sight.”

“That malignant witch.” Turko looked out at Seg’s side. “My Ninth Army—”

I did not think of the frogs and Turko’s fine Ninth Army; I thought that perhaps I might really and truly only care about Delia and my family and my comrades, and to hell with the rest of Kregen. That was how I had behaved and believed in my reckless past on this planet. I had changed. Now I tried to be the enlightened emperor.

Could I change? Could Dray Prescott, the Lord of Strombor and Krozair of Zy, really stop being the reiving tearaway rascally fellow he was?

Seg bellowed in a too-loud voice: “Cheer up, my old dom! You look as though you’ve lost a zorca and found a calsaney.”

“Aye, Seg, aye.”

The overhead abruptly split, the wood shattering away in scything splinters, and a couple of frogs belted down. They hit the deck under our feet with almighty crashes and instantly were up and hopping about. Turko caught them easily enough. He whistled.

“You’re right. They weigh like stone.”

“The whole picture is different,” I said, forcing myself to return to the present and what was going on. “When Csitra dumped cartfuls of frogs onto our heads it was all a bit of an occult lark. She was plaguing us. But now, one of these damned frogs can knock down a fine soldier, between ’em they’ll destroy this ship if we don’t drift clear in time. She can destroy the whole Ninth Army at this rate.”

“Khe-Hi just has to wake up!” Seg, like the prudent man he is — sometimes — positioned himself under a thick beam. We all did likewise, crowding shoulder to shoulder. The frogs began to batter their heavy way through the upper decks and shred the planking away. Soon they were hopping and croaking about our feet.

No one was going to venture out from the thick beam’s protection to shovel them outside. No, by Vox!

My comrades are, by and large, a harum-scarum lot. Clearly, and despite the eeriness of it, they'd been taking this infestation of frogs and roklos and toads in an off-hand manner, seeing the ludicrousness of the situation. A whole piling-up of frogs from the sky would inconvenience us, make the beginning of the battle delayed, perhaps cause one or two hearts to tremble a little more than they had. But it was an infuriating delay, that was all.

Now, with what amounted to stones from catapults hurtling down around our heads, the whole picture became potentially disastrous.

"I suppose the possibility exists," said Nath with a casualness that totally failed in its object, "that Khe-Hiis unable to halt the infestation, that countering the thaumaturgy is beyond his art and strength."

"It exists but is unlikely—" Turko began.

Seg said brutally: "The better chance is that poor Khe-Hi has had his head bashed in."

So now it was in the open, the fact Nath had danced around, sounding querulous, which was a state very far from the fiery yet disciplined Krell Kapt of the Phalanx. If Khe-Hi had been killed, or even incapacitated, when would these damn frogs stop? Ever?

"Where's the woman getting 'em all from?"

"If," I said in that weirdly mild tone of mine, "they are real."

Seg shot me such a look of suspicion as to tell me I was overdoing the mildness bit. Seg had dragged the chief fear in our minds into the open. I just had to go

back to being rough tough Dray Prescot again, hard corners and all.

We were able to speak in easy tones, and for just a queasy moment I couldn't grasp why that was strange. Then I realized that the incessant banging and crashing of frogs' bodies against the decks had dwindled away so that now only the last outriders of the descending column struck us.

"Praise Opaz for that!" exclaimed Nath na Kochwold.

We climbed up past the splinters and the wreckage to the deck and found ourselves perches. Truly, the scene was fantastic. It was awesome too, in a shivery way, for the solid column of frogs falling from the blue sky spread a considerable area and thus by their very bulk oppressed the imagination. Individual bodies were impossible to see in the shining flanks of the mass; colors shifted and reflected, the bright green of a lizard, the orange of a roklo, the brown of a toad, and over all the liquid green glinting of the frogs.

I was just saying: "I don't care for all this sorcerous stuff," when I felt a distinct thump, as it were, in the very air itself.

"What—?" said Turko, and, instinctively, the muscles along his arms rippled ready for instant action.

"Odd," said Seg, and turned himself around and stared out over the land.

The flying sailer drifted with the breeze and we saw a few other ships that had broken free. But, always, we turned back to stare at that infernal, impressive, diabolical torrent of frogs falling from a clear sky.

But...

Seg, with that feyness of his race, was obviously the first to see and recognize what had happened.

He let out a yelp, and then: "By the Veiled Froyvil, my old dom! Khe-Hi's done it!"

"What—?"

"Look!"

We all stared narrowly at the shining frogfall.

"Yes — Khe-Hi's done it."

"I like it," said Seg, cheerfully. "I like it!"

The column of frogs remained, as solid, as torrential, as impressively diabolical as it had been before. But now the frogs rained upwards.

Khe-Hi-Bjanching was sorcerously sending the damned frogs back whence they'd come, we hoped to fall out of the clear sky onto the head of the witch Csitra.

"Good old Khe-Hi!"

"And his lady love," pointed out Turko. "Ling-Li will have had a hand in this."

"I do like it," said Seg.

We stood to watch those damned frogs whirling back up into the sky and the relief was enormous, by Zair, I can tell you!

The experience through which we had just gone had been mind numbing. It had blunted out senses. At least, I felt that inner dizziness as though I had difficulty merely in keeping balance, in finding the right words, in carrying out even the simplest action. Sorcery sometimes plays a great part in the lives of people on Kregen;

mostly it is just there, heard of but peripheral to busy lives.

There was little we could do until the frogs had all been returned from whence they came. A jury-rigged mast and a scrap of sail gave us control; but I felt it essential to return to the camp as fast as possible, so I bellowed out orders to land the ship. We'd go back on foot. There would be a tremendous amount of work to do back there sorting out the damage, caring for the wounded, preparing defenses, putting what regiments we could into shape for any possible attack from Layco Jhansi and his screaming fanatics.

The tall roof of the village barn glistened into view as the upward torrent of frogs continued. The cottages buried in the squiggling mass began to show a gable here, a twisted chimney there. This tiny village of Gordoholme, although within the area occupied by the Ninth Army, was generally out of bounds, off limits, to the swods in the ranks, and the officers, too, unless on duty. We had liberated the place from the clutches of Jhansi's offensive people; we did not wish to continue the crimes of which they were guilty.

This village of Gordoholme represented the farthest point we'd reached in our march into Vennar so far. Jhansi had refused the great and decisive battle we'd expected outside Gliderholme. We knew he was in trouble finding fresh mercenaries, for many of his paktuns had renounced their service and either returned home or joined the usurping King of North Vallia. This puzzled us, for the journey entailed

shipping in order to circumvent the activities of the Racters who were at war with the King of North Vallia.

Whatever obscure motives prompted Jhansi and his sorcerous adviser, Rovard the Murvish, a highly aromatic Sorcerer of Murcroinim, into the various courses of action they had undertaken against us, one fact remained more than most probable — Jhansi would hurry to hire on more mercenaries, and his agents would be overseas now scouring the markets and barracks for tazll paktuns.

In the meantime he had the mobs of ordinary people driven into a state of fanatical frenzy by the thaumaturgical arts of Rovard to hurl against us in waves of screaming humanity. This disgusted us. As I watched the stream of ascending frogs I seriously considered the usefulness of sorcery to any world among the millions of worlds in space.

The people who had taken refuge with us in the ship — the vorlca was named *Wincie Smolek II* — gathered at the rails to watch. Among them I spotted a group of cavalymen wearing pale-green uniforms, the dolmans well-frogged and the pelisses smothered in fur and gold wire. This habit of carrying a spare coat slung over the shoulder to put on when the weather turns chilly is well-known on this Earth, and is sensible enough for many fighting men of Kregen to adopt as a matter of course. These jutmen were from the Forty-Second Regiment of Zorcabows, raised and led by Strom Larghos Favana. The irony in the situation, which I savored as a man

with toothache might savor a poultice, lay in their regimental name — Favana's Frogs.

"The damned things are nearly all gone," I said. "If we're going, we'd better make a start."

Seg and Turko did not reply but just climbed down the shattered remnants of the ladder to the ground. Nath clipped out a command to the men clustered along the rails, and they began to go over the side. They were not all chattering away among themselves as one might have expected. They were very quiet. The enormity of what had happened affected them, affected all of us, deeply.

Soon we were marching off toward Gordoholme and the ruined camp of the Ninth Army.

Other vessels had lifted clear and no doubt the people aboard them would be doing just what we were doing. The flying saddle birds had mostly, fortunately for them and us, been dispersed on patrol duties.

"What a hell of a mess!" said Turko, highly disgusted.

"We'll soon have your army back in shape, Turko," said Seg, striding on, his bow slanting up over his back.

I didn't say anything. The catastrophe might yet prove decisive. Certainly, it had put back our plans for this part of Vallia to what might be a disastrous degree.

In his decisive way, Nath na Kochwold said, "The discipline of the army will hold up, Turko. I'll see to that, by Vox."

Well, that was Nath for you, tough and uncompromising, dedicated to the ideals of order and discipline.

He glared upon the men trooping along from the stranded sailer. His fierce eyebrows drew down.

“Look at ’em!” he exclaimed. “By the Blade of Kurin! A bunch of washerfolk with the laundry would look smarter.”

With that, off he went, rounding up the soldiers, bellowing orders, cutting into them. He did not wave his arms about frantically. He did not even draw his sword and brandish that. He got in among the mob and his incisive personality and reputation very quickly sorted them out.

It made no matter who or what they were. Whether pikemen without pikes, cavalry without mounts, heavy infantry without shields, they jumped to his cracked-out commands.

Very soon they were in a column of march, three abreast, and striding along, heads up, chests out, swinging their arms. It wouldn’t be beyond Nath na Kochwold to have them singing in a moment or two.

“You’ve got to admire—” began Turko.

“Aye,” said Seg. “What’s that?”

His keen bowman’s eye picked up the tiny black cloud in the distance before any of the others. We all swiveled to look.

Seg, Turko and a small group of the lads from my bodyguard, standing a little to the side of the marching column, watched that small cloud as Nath strode up to join us.

“That’s got ’em...” He stopped himself, swung about, shaded his eyes against the Suns.

Seg said: “Flyers.”

“A returning patrol?” But Turko spoke the question without conviction as to the answer.

Glints of light speared off the aerial riders, armor and weapons flashing in the suns-light.

“Damned flutsmen,” I said.

“Aye,” someone at my back ground out. “May they rot in a Herrelldrin Hell.”

We’d all had experience of flutsmen, unpleasant experiences, tending to result in sudden death if you were not the quicker.

Flutsmen, reiving bandits of the air, had preyed on Vallia during and after the Times of Troubles. They owed allegiance to no one apart from their own bands. They would hire out, serving as mercenaries, if the prospect of loot was good. They fought hard and viciously. They were not nice people, to use a phrase once coughed out concerning them. Loric the Wings had died after making that pronouncement. But he was right.

“Whatever they are,” Turko said, “they are enemies to us.”

“And if they’ve been newly hired by Layco Jhansi,” amplified Seg, carefully taking his bow off his shoulder, “they’ve caught us at a remarkably inconvenient moment.”

At this distance it was still only possible to make an estimate of the numbers of flutsmen. From the apparent thickness and extent of the flight, I judged more than a

couple of hundred approached. Well, we'd find out their real strength soon enough.

Nath shot off to the marching column not wasting any time and instantly the soldiers began to fan out and take up the best defensive positions they could find.

"So much," said Seg, stringing his longbow with that cunning application of flexing power that betrayed long experience and great strength. "So much for our friend Nath's neat marching orders."

Around us grew little vegetation to afford cover. There was no handy river. The ground puffed dust-hard underfoot. No, we'd have to stand and fight these reivers of the air where we were.

"I make it better than two hundred and fifty," remarked Turko. He had no sword to draw and I noticed the way he flexed his arms, as if instinctively limbering up for a contest in which all his skills in unarmed combat could be negated. Yet that was a foolish thought. I'd rather have Turko the Shield with me, unarmed, than many and many a man lumbering in full armor and with a whole arsenal of edged and pointed weapons.

With a flash of the old quizzically mocking Turko, he turned to me, half-smiling.

"I do not see Korero the Shield, Dray."

"And I don't see a single shield, either."

"So your back—"

"My back will have to be the business of myself, and your back yours, if we are parted."

In that quiet way of his, Seg Segutorio glanced across as he reached out for the first shaft from his quiver, and said: "I'll fight alongside you, Turko."

I nodded. The arrangement was sensible.

Turko contented himself with: "Aye, Seg. It is a pity Nath didn't hang onto that shield."

Just that, a pity. We looked as though we might be entering on the last great fight. If we were, if we were all to die here, well, I couldn't hope to go down to the Ice Floes of Sicce in the company of finer comrades.

The oncoming flutsmen spread out into individual dots. The dots sprouted wings and became fluttrells, and the riders on their backs, brandishing their weapons, became men.

There were more nearly three hundred of them.

We set ourselves and grasped our own swords and spears. Seg lifted his bow.

Streaming their flying silks and furs, their standards fluttering in the breeze, their armor and weapons a blaze of glitter in the radiance of the Suns of Scorpio, the flutsmen swooped upon us.

About the author

Alan Burt Akers was a pen name of the prolific British author Kenneth Bulmer, who died in December 2005 aged eighty-four.

Bulmer wrote over 160 novels and countless short stories, predominantly science fiction, both under his real name and numerous pseudonyms, including Alan Burt Akers, Frank Brandon, Rupert Clinton, Ernest Corley, Peter Green, Adam Hardy, Philip Kent, Bruno Krauss, Karl Maras, Manning Norvil, Chesman Scot, Nelson Sherwood, Richard Silver, H. Philip Stratford, and Tully Zetford. Kenneth Johns was a collective pseudonym used for a collaboration with author John Newman. Some of Bulmer's works were published along with the works of other authors under "house names" (collective pseudonyms) such as Ken Blake (for a series of tie-ins with the 1970s television programme *The Professionals*), Arthur Frazier, Neil Langholm, Charles R. Pike, and Andrew Quiller.

Bulmer was also active in science fiction fandom, and in the 1970s he edited nine issues of the *New Writings* in

Science Fiction anthology series in succession to John Carnell, who originated the series.

More details about the author, and current links to other sources of information, can be found at www.mushroom-ebooks.com, and at wikipedia.org.

The Dray Prescott Series

The Delian Cycle:

- 1. Transit to Scorpio*
- 2. The Suns of Scorpio*
- 3. Warrior of Scorpio*
- 4. Swordships of Scorpio*
- 5. Prince of Scorpio*

Havilfar Cycle:

- 6. Manhounds of Antares*
- 7. Arena of Antares*
- 8. Fliers of Antares*
- 9. Bladesman of Antares*
- 10. Avenger of Antares*

11. Armada of Antares

The Krozair Cycle:

12. The Tides of Kregen

13. Renegade of Kregen

14. Krozair of Kregen

Vallian cycle:

15. Secret Scorpio

16. Savage Scorpio

17. Captive Scorpio

18. Golden Scorpio

Jikaida cycle:

19. A Life for Kregen

20. A Sword for Kregen

21. A Fortune for Kregen

22. A Victory for Kregen

Spikatur cycle:

23. Beasts of Antares

24. Rebel of Antares

25. Legions of Antares

26. Allies of Antares

Pandahem cycle:

27. Mazes of Scorpio

28. Delia of Vallia

29. Fires of Scorpio

30. Talons of Scorpio

31. Masks of Scorpio

32. Seg the Bowman

Witch War cycle:

33. Werewolves of Kregen

34. Witches of Kregen

35. Storm over Vallia

36. Omens of Kregen

37. Warlord of Antares

Lohvian cycle:

38. Scorpio Reborn

39. Scorpio Assassin

40. Scorpio Invasion

41. Scorpio Ablaze

42. Scorpio Drums

43. Scorpio Triumph

Balintol cycle:

44. Intrigue of Antares

45. Gangs of Antares

46. Demons of Antares

47. Scourge of Antares

48. Challenge of Antares

49. Wrath of Antares

50. Shadows over Kregen

Phantom cycle:

51. Murder on Kregen

52. Turmoil on Kregen