

## **GMB 13-14**

### **(General Metaphysics Military Dowsing Rod)**

Yes, the ‘dowsing’ in General Metaphysics’s ‘GMB 13-14 Military Dowsing Rod’ means what you think it means. It is remarkably similar in form to the [ADE 651](#) ‘bomb detector;’ in fact, it’s a deliberate rip-off in appearance, specifically designed to make people think that it’s a regular ADE 651. It’s likewise used like an ADE 651. To operate, insert a card with a sample of the substance that you want to detect while holding the GMB 13-14 at right angles to your body. After a few seconds, the GMB 13-14 will start tracking the substance on the card. It is, in other words, identical to the ADE 651, with one pertinent exception: unlike the ADE 651, it actually **works**.

Why? Because it’s a *magic item*. General Metaphysics is one of the companies that provide reliable, one-off arcane devices for the Five Eyes intelligence community, and its CEO (Zachariah Whitman, born 1834 AD) was absolutely **infuriated** to hear that somebody was peddling phony magic items to the military. The man didn’t serve for four years in the Union’s Freemason Brigade to just sit by and let fellow soldiers get killed because of occult charlatans

and mountebanks, you hear? Dammit, he likes to sleep at night.

That got the GMB 13-14 into production, and sold to the relevant authorities practically at cost. Fortunately for the bottom lines of General Metaphysics' *other* programs, it turns out that there are advantages to having an detector that everybody think **doesn't** works, but actually **does** work. If the bad guys think that they've smuggled the explosives through without anybody noticing, but all they've done is let the good guys know which truck to tail, well, all sorts of plots can be thwarted that way. This unexpected benefit guarantees that General Metaphysics gets good contracts for other projects, thus neatly fulfilling the old saw of doing well by doing good.

Alas, GMB 13-14s are rare enough that people notice when one goes missing. Which is standard operating procedure, alas. Real, useful magical items are just too expensive to be ubiquitous. If they weren't, people would use them all the time.

One last note: 'GMB 13-14' is an indirect reference to St Barbara, martyr and patron saint of bomb disposal technicians. It's one of Whitman's little jokes. Not to mention a sincere entreaty to the Saint in question, and

Whitman doesn't *care* if St. Barbara was removed from the Calendar. That just means that St. Barbara's not as busy as she used to be, hey?

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