

THE DOMESDAY

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BOOK

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What is Old is New Again!

Back at the end of 2009, I wrote about the 'Valiant Defenders of the Castles & Crusades Society' on my own blog, 'Under Siege'. In that post I talked about the origins of the C&CS and the 'Domesday Book' newsletter they were releasing back then. This was back in 1968 and was formed by Gary Gygax. The C&C RPG was named so in acknowledgement of these roots and a fanbased community formed up around it. This community adopted the name of the C&CS and also began releasing an e-zine using, once again, the Domesday Book as its title. At first, it grew but then, the demands on time and resources taxed the few that tried to keep it going. After four issues, nothing new was put out since 2009. Now, in the summer of 2012, I am happy to say that the community is back at it and we are looking forward to many more issues to come.

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Editorial - Once More Unto the Breach

By Joshua Sherrier

It is hard to believe that three years have passed since the last Domesday Book. I can assure you that the intent of all behind Domesday was not for this span of time to pass between issues. For a while, it seemed that Domesday was dead and had passed into history. I am glad that thought was wrong!

I am honored to be here looking at the newest issue. Over time, I have grown to not see this as issue number five of the old Domesday Book but, the first issue of a new Domesday Book. For me this is not a continuation but a rebirth. A new beginning for both this newsletter and the Castles & Crusades Society.

As you read through this issue know that Domesday VI is under planning. Also know that many of us are kicking ideas around to bring the Society back to its heritage of a fan based community. We are looking at ideas both old and new and are looking to give the C&CS the best of our abilities.

Until then, sit back, relax and look forward to what's coming.

Agape,
Joshua 'Julian Grimm' Sherrer



Designing a Quasi-Feudal Society for C&C

Part I - By Andrew Gelbman

Agriculture and the Economy

A role-playing game allows us to transport ourselves to another world (or another version of this world). The characters we play then try to become the heroes of that world. Of course, the key to success is understanding how that world works and turning the situation to our heroes' advantage.

Let us face it; socioeconomics are not C&C's strong suit. The reason is there is no relationship between the value of a gold piece and the cost of goods and services. Unfortunately, one key to success in any situation is understanding its underlying assumptions this isn't a "good thing". In order to impose some semblance of sanity on the C&C economic system, it is necessary to establish the relative worth of a "gold piece".

Looking at the relative buying power of gold in our own economy is of little use. To begin with, the relationship of gold to silver has historically been 1:20, but silver is twice as valuable than it ought to be in the C&C economy – we can chalk this up to a certain amount of debasement of gold coinage (a common occurrence in historical times). However, to do so requires us to switch from a "gold standard" to a "silver standard" where the silver penny becomes our basic unit of currency. As tempting as it is, we cannot simply discard the C&C economic system for something more reasonable since it would require not only a new price list but also changing treasure tables, tables in dozens of books, etc. However, we can look at the existing price list (which is too widely used to discard in any case) and calculate wages and relative values from that.

Table 1

	Copper	Silver	Gold
Copper	1	1/10	1/100
Silver	10	1	1/10
Gold	100	10	1

According to the Players' Handbook, currency in the C&C default setting is decimal like modern American or British currency – while it is not historical, it is easier to keep straight.

For all calculations in this article, we will use the standard C&C values for coinage, which can be found in Table 1.

For example, take the laborer who has manfully carried your pack for a day. According to the Castle Keeper's Guide he should be paid 1 gp/month (or 4cp per day) for his pains. He must pay his room and board out of this. His meals for the day come to one silver piece alone according to Players' Handbook and he must provide for his own room and support his family out of this!

With wages as depressed as this, it is a wonder he does not abscond with your pack and join the nearest bandit gang! The fact is, no one will work for less than a subsistence wage. So what is a subsistence wage in C&C terms? Well, let us consider our expenses. The average household size in feudal Europe was five people according to the *Domesday Booke*. We need our breadwinner to feed, house and warm that many people at a minimum of squalid conditions.

The Castle Keeper's Guide tells us that a one room flat in the poorer section of town costs 1gp/month. The Castle Keeper's Guide also tells us that a common meal costs 1sp, "good" meals cost 3sp and "noble" meals costs 10sp each. The Castle Keeper's Guide does not tell us what firewood costs we can extrapolate – a cord of firewood costs about \$100. In the Northeastern US it takes 3 cords to get through a heating season. Obviously medieval dwellings are less well insulated than a 21st century American home and the hearth much less efficient than a modern fireplace or wood stove but the size of the dwelling is also much smaller (about 1/5 as large) so let's assume these factors cancel one another out. If a "poor" meal costs 1sp out, let us equate that to a fast food meal in the modern world, which averages \$6.00 according to the National Restaurant Association. The cost of heating a poor dwelling would be 50sp/year or a hair over 1cp per day. Taxes in the medieval period averaged around 15% of one's income and the tithe was 10%.

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Adding up these costs, we get 266gp/year as minimum subsistence wages. Assuming fifty working weeks in a year and six working days a week (300 workdays a year), our erstwhile laborer must earn just under 9sp per day (2700sp/year). An apprentice in any trade receives the same wages as a laborer but he is single and has no family to support, he lives in his master's shop (obviating the need for guard dogs) and eats at his master's table. He can get by on a mere 4cp a day – so let us assume the “laborer” referred to in the CKG is an apprentice or other “servant cum trainee” whom the employer supports – his wages represent mere pocket money his master gives him. This is much higher than historical prices but then the prices given in the Players' Handbook are also.

That should stave off the Jacquerie for a little while. However, is this reasonable given the quasi-medieval, agrarian economy most C&C settings assume? In order to find the answer, we need to look at the agricultural economy in C&C terms. In medieval times, at the bottom of everything, literally, lay the land. While we will look at products and costs in terms of coinage, it is worth noting that in our own medieval period, most transactions were conducted by barter or payments in kind, not in cash. Even great nobles could go months without ever handling that strange thing called “money”. However, C&C assumed a monetized economy (being it is something that American and European players are most familiar with) and thus we will monetize all crops, taxes and other products for purposes of our analysis of the economy.

According to Players' Handbook, a 5-pound bag of grains costs 5sp at “retail”. A bushel is about 60 pounds of grain (actually it varies depending on the specific grain but tends to hover around 60-pounds) so a bushel of “grain” retails for 60sp. This means its “wholesale” cost should be about 30sp. A pound of flour, according to the CKG, is 4sp, which is sufficient to make 2.5 pounds of bread. If a “loaf” is ½ pound, it has a “wholesale” or production cost of 8cp so it should retail for 2.4sp. This is a little high if a “common” day's meals cost only 3sp. However, let us assume this applies to “white” flour and “white” bread, which were more expensive historically. According to the Wheat Institute of Kansas, a bushel of wheat ground into whole-wheat flour will yield enough to make 150 loaves of bread. This works out to a

pound of “wheat” flour being 1sp/pound and a ½-pound loaf of bread having a production cost of 2cp meaning it should cost about 6cp. This leaves a profit for the baker of 4cp per loaf on average and assuming he sells 50 loaves of bread a day, he will realize 20sp in profits (6000sp per year placing him in the middle class). So far, so good – these figures square with those in the Players' Handbook and Castle Keeper's Guide (more or less).

The question becomes then, are these figures reasonable given a medieval level of agricultural technology most FRPG campaigns assume? To answer that we need to look at a simple peasant farmer; the feudal economy was decidedly agrarian. At the base of everything lay, literally, the land. One should note that medieval agriculture was woefully inefficient. In an average year, a feudal farmer could expect to realize 8 bushels per acre (compare this to 150-200 bushels per acre in the modern USA).

A serf or unfree poor peasant farmer probably lives the same squalid existence that his urban laborer counterpart does. Our poor farmer needs to realize 2700sp a year to meet his obligations – this requires a crop of 90 bushels or about 11.25 acres under cultivation. Assuming a four crop rotation, that means our poor family has a 15-acre farm yielding him 40sp surplus per year (or about 1cp per day). This makes our peasant viable and gives us an idea what the countryside should look like.

Beneath the cottar is the Boarder – he lived on a smaller plot (about 10 acres) and generally had a smaller family (3.35 persons on average) or he might be a servant in the house of a wealthier commoner or noble.

A cottar is a peasant farmer who occupies a cottage and on occasion, a small holding of land. - Ed.

Above the cottar was, in ascending social clout, a free peasant, a rich peasant (or kulak), a yeoman (or freeholder) and a petit sergent. Keeping the ratios between poor, common and good from the Players' Handbook gives us the annual figures for our various rural classes as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Title	Social Class	Holding (acres)	Active Acres	Annual Yield (bu)	Gross Income (sp)	Food (sp)	Rents (sp)	Fuel (sp)	Feudal Dues	Tithes (sp)	Surplus (sp)
Boarder	LLC	10	8	60	1800	1080	54	36	270	180	180
Cottar	MLC	15	11	90	2700	1612	108	72	405	270	233
Peasant	ULC	25	19	150	4500	2418	162	108	675	450	687
Kulak	LMC	40	30	240	7200	3224	216	144	1080	720	1816
Yeoman	MMC	60	45	360	10800	4030	270	180	1620	1080	3620
Sergeant	UMC	80	60	480	14400	4836	324	216	2160	1440	5424

Let us round out our examination of the rural economy by looking at the nobility, starting with a simple knight's fee. Historically, a knight's fee (the minimum amount of land to support a knight and his retinue) was reckoned at 7-12 square miles. Let us assume he holds 10 square miles or 6400 acres. On this little fief will live 2 sergeants, 4 yeomen, 10 kulaks, 20 peasants, 50 cottars and 100 boarders. This leaves about 2000 cultivated acres under the direct control of the knight. His gross annual income will be 480,000. He will collect another 82,350sp in taxes.

He will support 10 servant families (27,000 sp), 10 men at arms (72,000 sp), 4 yeomen-at-arms (44,000) 1 sergeants-at-arms (15,000) as well as a liveried smith (15,000), a carpenter (11,000) and a cleric (15,000). The cost of his staff is a staggering 200,000 sp per year. His household will eat very well – say about four times the standard of a petit sergeant – or 25,000 sp. He will owe 72,000 sp to his overlord and 48,000sp to the religious establishment. Assume repairs and other maintenance to his manner house will cost him another 25,000. This leaves our petty lord a pretty tidy sum left over – over 200,000 silver pennies (20,000 gold crowns or as much as your favorite character made last month!). For general purposes, a noble will collect 87.5gp/year in taxes for each acre controlled or 560,000gp for each square mile. His expenses (exclusive of taxes and tithes) will be 31.25gp/year.

It also places the wage of the very upper class workers at about 50,000 sp per month or 12,000 sp per week (2000 sp per day). Of course, you cannot hire nobles – they live on landed estates but this does give us a guideline for wizards, powerful clerics and other hard-to-find specialists.

This gives us general guidelines for incomes which can be seen by consulting Table 3. Base income represents the minimum gross income such a character will have available.

Notice that player characters will tend to come from the wealthier commons because they have the most incentive to adventure. The very poor cannot afford the basic gear and/or training required to adventure while the very rich and/or noble have little incentive to do so. Rich or noble characters already have power, wealth and position. Why would they risk the hazards of monster slaying? There are plenty of erstwhile adventurers willing to do that; and they are much more expendable.

Next Issue: Part II will discuss the a Town's Unguided & Guided Professionals

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Table 3

General Populace D %	Player Character D %	Class	Description	Base Monthly Income
01-10	01-04	Lower Lower Class	Boarders, Beggars, Slaves, Thralls, Vagabonds, Criminals	150 sp
11-40	05-10	Middle Lower Class	Cottars, Laborers, Servants, Herdsmen, poor wandering bards, Common Men-at-Arms	225 sp
41-65	11-20	Upper Lower Class	Peasants, Unguilded Journeymen, Pikemen, Feudal regulars, city guardsmen, legionnaires, apprentice wizards, clerical menials	375 sp
66-75	21-35	Lower Middle Class	Kulaks, Unguilded Craftsmen, Guild Journeymen, rangers, common wandering bards, journeyman wizards, un-ordained clergy	600 sp
76-90	36-55	Middle Middle Class	Yeomen, Guild Craftsmen, Wealthy unguilded professionals, poorer international merchants, wealthy rural smiths or innkeepers, wealthy kulaks, non-knighted members of fighting orders, ordained clergy	900 sp
91-95	56-87	Upper Middle Class	Petit Sergeants, Wealthy Guildsmen, Landless Knights, Wealthy guild craftsmen or guild officials, petty civic officers, city guard officers, feudal functionaries, knighted members of fighting orders, clerical functionaries (priors, legates, Roshe Yeshivot, et al)	1,200 sp
96-97	88-96	Lower Upper Class	Knights Bannerette, leading civic officers, untitled royal officials, officers of religious fighting orders, "noble" clergy (abbots, bishops, Mullahs, Chief Rabbis, et al)	2,500 sp
98	97-98	Middle Upper Class	Titled nobles, titled royal officials, leading clergy (archbishops, rebbes, ayatollahs, et al)	4,000 sp
99	99	Upper Upper Class	Nobles de la race, members of the privy council, "Princely" clergy (cardinals, primates, primarchs, exilarchs, et al)	40,000 sp
100	100	Elite	Royal Family, "Royal" clergy (popes, patriarchs, grand rebbes, caliphs, et al)	60,000 sp

A Touch of Class:

The Ghostwalker by Robert Doyel

Between the realms of the living and those who have passed, there are some who seek to breach the veil and serve as a bridge for worlds. For a few, this is an act of respect, to communicate to the deceased and quell mortal fear; others use the gift simply to seek knowledge, whether good or ill; and there are some who subjugate and abuse their talent, harnessing the Otherworld for personal gain – these are the darkest and most foul. Some are called prophet, medium, or seer... others are known as villains.

Usually driven to dwell at the fringe of polite society, these (typically) destitute individuals often exhibit strange or unusual behavior, sometimes aloof and uncaring and other times scheming or simply unaware of grace – regardless, they generally share a hermit tendency, unable or unwilling to make friends with the still-breathing. As such, a ghostwalker is normally encountered in a state that one might consider insane or below even peasantry, barely clothed and rambling in a tongue known only to themselves; in fact, in many cases, the ghostwalker is playing along doing the expected to avoid unscrupulous attention... or has simply gone mad. They do possess the power to see the deceased, and sometimes speak to them, but it is not a trait that most are willing to use simply because it can be used – the spirits, if abused, quickly sort the rest.

Due to the treatment accustomed to one who walks with spirits, ghostwalkers tend to develop skills that keep them safe, namely that of blending in with normal folk, but also those of deception – this generally takes the form of false divination or begging, much like a gypsy is rumored to possess; some even resort to thievery. However, these abilities are not always reliable since some strongholds consider their practice forbidden and guilds (if a recognizable one exists) may take issue with the practice, extorting protection or other services – in fact, this is often the impetus for a ghostwalker to take an adventuring life, both for fear and possibly for power or wealth.

ABILITIES

Disguise (Charisma): This ability is identical to that of the assassin class except that a ghostwalker gains a bonus when impersonating specific individuals if the spirit of that individual has been consulted (note, use of disguise in this way implies the impersonated person is deceased) and a positive reaction achieved – in such a case, a +4

modifier is bestowed. Furthermore, a ghostwalker can easily assume the disguise of a poor or destitute individual, this requiring no roll, and always succeeds, for weal or woe.

Pick Pockets (Dexterity): Street life is not an easy existence, and so a ghostwalker typically learns to supplement income by less-savory means, much like a common thief – this ability functions identically as that of the rogue class.

Dead Cant: Tied directly to the Otherworld, ghostwalkers have the unearthly ability to not only see the dead, but to communicate with them, often seeming as a person afflicted with madness when doing so – indeed, any person not acquainted with the practice automatically assumes the ghostwalker is insane or threatening, and reacts appropriately, perhaps even believing the ghostwalker to be demon-possessed or a warped spellcaster. In effect, when used, the ghostwalker gains two amazing abilities – that of speaking with the dead and of turning (or commanding) undead. The speak with dead ability functions as the spell of the same name, with a caster level of 5; it may be used once per day for every 3 levels the ghostwalker has attained, starting at first (increases to twice per day at 3rd, 3 at 6th, 4 at 9th, etc.) Unlike the spell, a ghostwalker may speak with any dead character, but must make a Charisma check if alignment / disposition are dissimilar – the Castle Keeper decides when a check is needed, and always makes it in secret. Turning undead functions like the clerical ability of the same name, except the ghostwalker may choose to turn, or command, and does so with each attempt; it is also not a Wisdom check, but one based on Charisma – the ability has a level of effect equal to half level +2 (at 1st level, this means the effective level is 2), and allows up to the same in total Hit Dice of undead to be commanded.

Ethersight: A ghostwalker can see into realms mortals were not meant to dwell, able to view the world as it really is. When used, which requires complete concentration akin to that of maintaining a spell, this ability grants the ghostwalker a +3 bonus against any illusion which relies on vision as a major component such as disguises, polymorphs, and anything with the word image in its name (the Castle Keeper will need to decide when this ability applies, as it should not be universal against all illusions.) It also lets the ghostwalker see into the ethereal plane, revealing things not visible to standard sight, but

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will leave them vulnerable to things such as a basilisk gaze, ghostly attack, etc. Use of this ability is draining on a ghostwalker and may be used once per day for every 2 levels earned, minimum of 1 at 1st.

Parlor Tricks (Charisma): Through psychological manipulation, skilled use of mundane prestidigitation, and the like, a ghostwalker is able to affect amazing results, or so it seems. This ability is often used to divine the future, the ghostwalker using some tool such as cards, dice, or a crystal ball to draw a subject into a lie and rake in the gold; the ghostwalker has no real magical ability at this art but the victim often believes they do, and pay accordingly – as such, with each successful check, a ghostwalker will earn an equivalent amount of gold equal to their Charisma modifier multiplied by level. To maintain the illusion of actual power, the ghostwalker cannot use this ability for this purpose more than once per day. Finally, if the ghostwalker has enough time to plan ahead and prepare for a given victim, some real magic effects can be duplicated, such as ghost sound or prestidigitation but these are always at 1st level casting ability – the effect is not truly magical in nature but produced by alchemical components, mechanisms, and the victim's own mind.

Ancestral Knowledge: A ghostwalker is typically friendly to the spirits and specters that haunt the Otherworld, and these beings sometimes impart their knowledge. Essentially, a ghostwalker can select one dead being with which they have had contact and gain an ability possessed by that being, provided the ability is not one which is magical in nature (the ability to cast spells is one such), empowered by a divine source (such as most everything gifted to a paladin), or one which is antithetical to the character concept (that is, a ghostwalker who is primarily good would be hard-pressed for a good reason to request the death attack ability of an assassin). Note, this does not give the same level of expertise – it simply allows the ghostwalker an attempt (or, in the case of weapon or armor skills, to use the item without penalty), when none may have been given such as a ghostwalker who requests the decipher script ability of a passed-on wizard. This ability is tricky, and potentially abusive, so a Castle Keeper must be somewhat strict with its allowances – if a ghostwalker wants a very powerful use, it is certainly acceptable to not only reverse it, but to also pervert the request in some way to reflect the disdain of the dead. The ghostwalker may only have one ability

bestowed through ancestral knowledge at any given time – changing it requires three days of meditation during which time nothing else may be done. Furthermore, the Castle Keeper may require a Charisma check (done in secret) to see if the spirit is willing. If it fails, the ghostwalker falls out of favor and is not allowed to use this ability until some sort of atonement is performed at the behest of the spirit.

Fearlessness: Having seen and dealt with death for practically all of their life, a ghostwalker is not afraid of the Otherworld like most other living people and so does not exhibit the same sort of inhibitions that others might – this ability grants a +2 bonus against fear and against death-based effects.

PRIME ATTRIBUTE: Charisma

HIT DICE: d6

ALIGNMENT: Any

WEAPONS ALLOWED: Hand axe, brass knuckles, cat-o-nine-tails, cestus, cleaver, club, dagger, dirk, light flail, flatchet, hatchet, knife, light mace, light pick, pike, sap, sickle, spear, short sword, dart, and whip

ARMOR ALLOWED: Padded armor, leather coat, leather armor, studded leather, mail shirt, and buckler

ABILITIES: Disguise, pick pockets, dead cant, ethersight, parlor tricks, ancestral knowledge, fearlessness

Level	Hit Dice	Base to Hit	EPP
1	d6	+0	0
2	d6	+1	2,625
3	d6	+1	5,251
4	d6	+2	10,501
5	d6	+2	21,001
6	d6	+2	42,001
7	d6	+3	84,001
8	d6	+3	168,001
9	d6	+3	336,001
10	d6	+4	672,001
11	+1 hp	+4	868,001
12	+1 hp	+4	1,068,001
13+			200,000 xp per level

The Muse's Market

Gnomish Healing Brandy By Daniel Corwin

DESCRIPTION: An amber liquor that smells richly of honey and blackberries. It tastes overly sweet, but it is light and easy going down. The brandy is usually bottled in a drinking gourd. The recipe is a closely guarded secret and gnome brewers will never share it easily, even with other gnomes.

COST: 50 gp (Note: price may vary by availability and how willing the gnome brewer is to sell to non-humans.)

EFFECT: Heals 1d6 HP, but the character must make a constitution save (CL 0) or suffer -1 to hit and -1 to AC for 1d4 rounds due to the brandy's potency. A flask contains one dose and multiple doses can be taken (1 per round). However, a save must be made for each dose and the effects are cumulative. For example, a character that took two doses would make a save for each dose and, if both saves failed, the character would suffer -2 to hit and -2 to AC. The CK may rule that failed saves result in other ill effects (e.g., trouble casting spells, penalties to dexterity or charisma checks, etc.).

The character must be conscious, or at the least at 0 HP, to take a dose.

Shroud of Grafting By Pat Bellavance

DESCRIPTION: These shrouds are relics whose history have long been lost but legend has it that they were created by a powerful necromancer. These shrouds appear as large but tattered pieces of black cloth with obvious signs of staining. They are odorless but very cool to the touch feeling similar to silk.

COST: Priceless.

EFFECT: When one of these shrouds is used to wrap a severed appendage, the wrapped limb can be grafted back onto a body. Several limbs can be re-attached in this manner for up to three hours

from the moment it was severed. Unfortunately, these shrouds have been used for far more nefarious purposes. There is nothing to stop one from attaching additional limbs or even replace them in exchange for more powerful ones.

If purposefully severing a limb in order to replace it with a more powerful one, the subject suffers 4d4 dmg and must make a Con Save (CL3) to survive the process. The new limb will successfully bond and heal in the number of hours equivalent to the amount of damage taken. The magical bonding process is quick in itself and initial grafting phase only takes minutes but will be unusable until the entire process is complete. Nothing can be done to magically speed up this healing process.

For attaching an additional limb, an additional Int Check (CL6) will be required to gain mastery of the new limb in order to work successfully in conjunction with existing ones. A failed check means the new limb will never be in complete control by the recipient's mind. This will result in a permanent -3 penalty to any Dexterity checks involving balance and agility. If the check is successful, the recipient may gain additional attacks, speed, strength, and abilities befitting the new limb (CK's discretion to exact nature of abilities gained in this manner).



A Hunter's Bestiary

Maze Monster By Gabriel Emerson

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1

SIZE: Medium

HD: 4 (d8)

MOVE: 30 ft.

AC: 15

ATTACKS: Slam (1d4)

SPECIAL: Amaze, Darkvision 60 ft.

SAVES: M

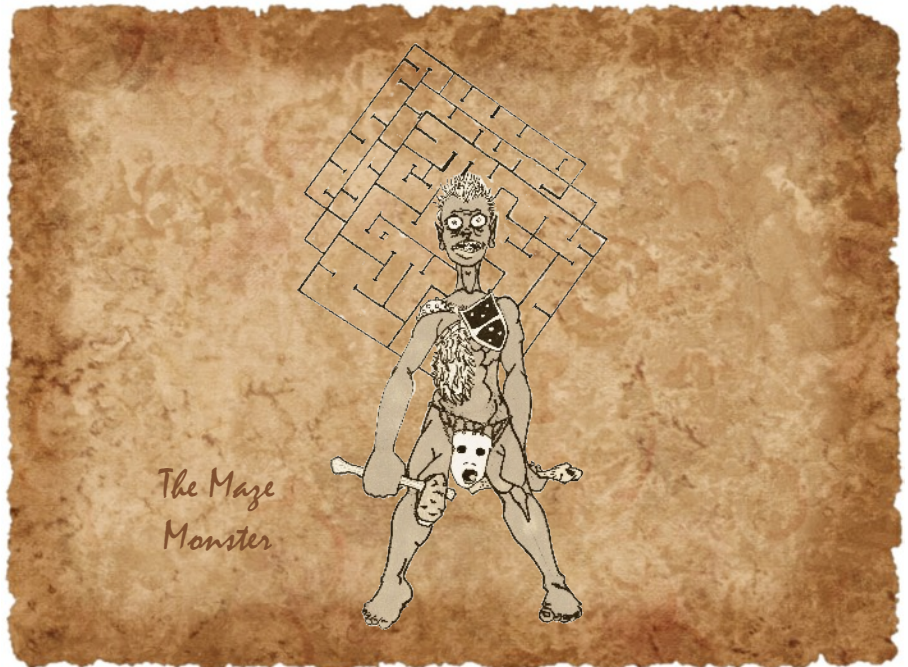
INT: Average

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

TYPE: Humanoid

TREASURE: 1

XP: 130+4



Maze monsters are humanoid creatures of medium stature. They have greyish skin and wide eyes that are always completely open, as if afraid or surprised. They wander alone through dungeons and ruins in search of the corpses of adventurers and monsters, which they eat, and use to make simple tools and clothing. Often the maze monster will be covered in a gruesome patchwork of adventurer and monster skins stitched together with their own sinews. They do not speak or seem to understand any known language.

COMBAT: A maze monster avoids fighting directly. They are generally weak and do not seem to understand the use of weapons. Instead of confronting a foe directly, they attempt to get them to fight one another. A maze monster will approach a group of adventurers and look into their eyes, and attempt to Amaze them. If a fight is not going well for it, it will typically try to look for additional nearby creatures and get them to join the fight, or flee and wait things out.

AMAZE: Anyone meeting the gaze of the maze monster (generally automatic upon seeing it) will need to make an Int save or believe they have been transported to a maze. The maze is illusory; the adventurer is still where they were, but now it will seem like they are

in a cramped, unpredictable labyrinth of passages, some of which shift from moment to moment. Their fellow adventurers will appear within the maze as more maze monsters. Victims will randomly move toward and attack the “maze monsters” every round. 10% of these attacks will hit the real maze monster if present, the rest will randomly strike other nearby adventurers. Any help offered by those unaffected will be interpreted by the victim as an attack by a maze monster, and they will wildly strike back on their turn. The effect does not require concentration or the presence of the maze monster and ends after two minutes or after the monster is killed.

*Interesting in contributing to the
Domesday Newsletter?*

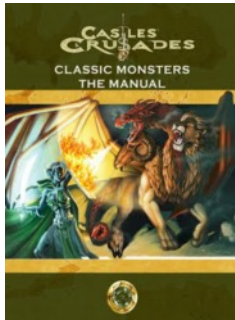
The Domesday is always looking for submissions from fans who want to share their creations. Rest assured that the creator of said work retains ownership and copyright but grants rights to publish and modify this content for the purposes of the newsletter.

Please send submissions and inquiries to:

domesday@arcanacreations.com

Under the Looking Glass

Classic Monsters - Reviewed by Pat Bellavance



PRODUCT: Classic Monsters
AUTHOR: Kim Hartsfield
COVER ART: Sarah Walker
INTERIOR ART: Peter Bradley, Sarah Walker, Jason Walton
LAYOUT & DESIGN: Peter Bradley
EDITOR: Tim Burns
PRODUCTION: Troll Lord Games, 2012

One of the biggest criticisms that a segment of the C&C fans have laid at TLG's feet deals with missed opportunities. From the very beginning, they have had to contend with fans who wanted C&C to be a just a clone of their favorite game and then there were those who wanted something more. In either case, the general consensus has always been that C&C was simple and adaptable enough to use older, 'classic' gaming material as well as newer, 'modern' (read d20) material. The other consensus (for some) was that TLG wasn't doing enough to support the core of the game.

Well, I feel that "Classic Monsters: The Manual" is a step in the right direction. Not only should it please fans who loved the original Monster Manual I and II books but the Fiend Folio as well. The author, Kim Hartsfield, takes a look and updates these classic creatures for use in C&C. Over 200 entries can be found in this book spreading across 144 pages. Actually, the critters themselves occupy just over a hundred of these pages. The Introduction and a general 'How to Use' section takes up 4 pages, and the index takes up a full 31 pages.

You may ask, "Why are there 31 pages for the index?"

Simple. The 'index' is a complete summary listing of all creatures along with their stats from the 'Classic Monsters' book as well as the original 'Monsters & Treasures' and the 'Monsters & Treasures of Ahrde'. This easily makes the index one of the best aspects of this new book.

As for the rest of the book, the essay on 'Monster Creation' in the 'Introduction' is a nice enough read and the creatures which adorn the majority of the pages are standard fare and is what one would expect

for a book on monsters. In fact, the book will hold little surprises for those who have gamed well before Castles & Crusades was first published. I expect there will be some that will compare previous iterations of certain creatures by consulting the d20 'Tome of Horrors' by Necromancer Games or consulting the original Monster Manuals and Fiend Folio in order to see how these new versions actually stack up. I suppose this is one of the issues here when you think about it. Was this book actually necessary?

Many people who play and use C&C undoubtedly also have access to a variety of other published material from other games which can be used and converted for their own use. This is one of the hallmark features that fans of the game will mention about C&C – that being the ease of conversion from older D&D material as well as newer editions. I have certainly done so and have run several 1st and 2nd edition modules as well as 3rd edition ones with extreme ease so I know I can pull out something from a Monster Manual from any of these editions and do the same. On the other hand, it's nice to have a book which is readily available to use as we also have to acknowledge that not everyone is in the same situation or collects various books from different editions. This is a great book to have especially if one doesn't have or no longer has all these other books and I'm sure people will invariably want to use this book for different things. One thing to point out is that the names of some of these creatures which served as inspiration will also be changed which means some critters won't be an obvious conversion at first glance.

As for the presentation of the book itself, it keeps the look of the recent books such as the latest printing of the 'Monsters & Treasures' book. The art style is typical of what you will find in the newer printings of the C&C books with some pieces being more 'sketch-like' than others. Art is a very subjective thing but it's consistent enough throughout and there isn't any one piece I dislike. There is one aspect of the layout done which some people may not be pleased with though. The book is presented in a two column format but there are instances where the stat block (as opposed to the description) is 'cut' and split at the bottom of one column to resume at the top of the next. Worse yet, at least a couple of instances has this across two pages! Now, the issue is not a terrible one but it does lack a bit of

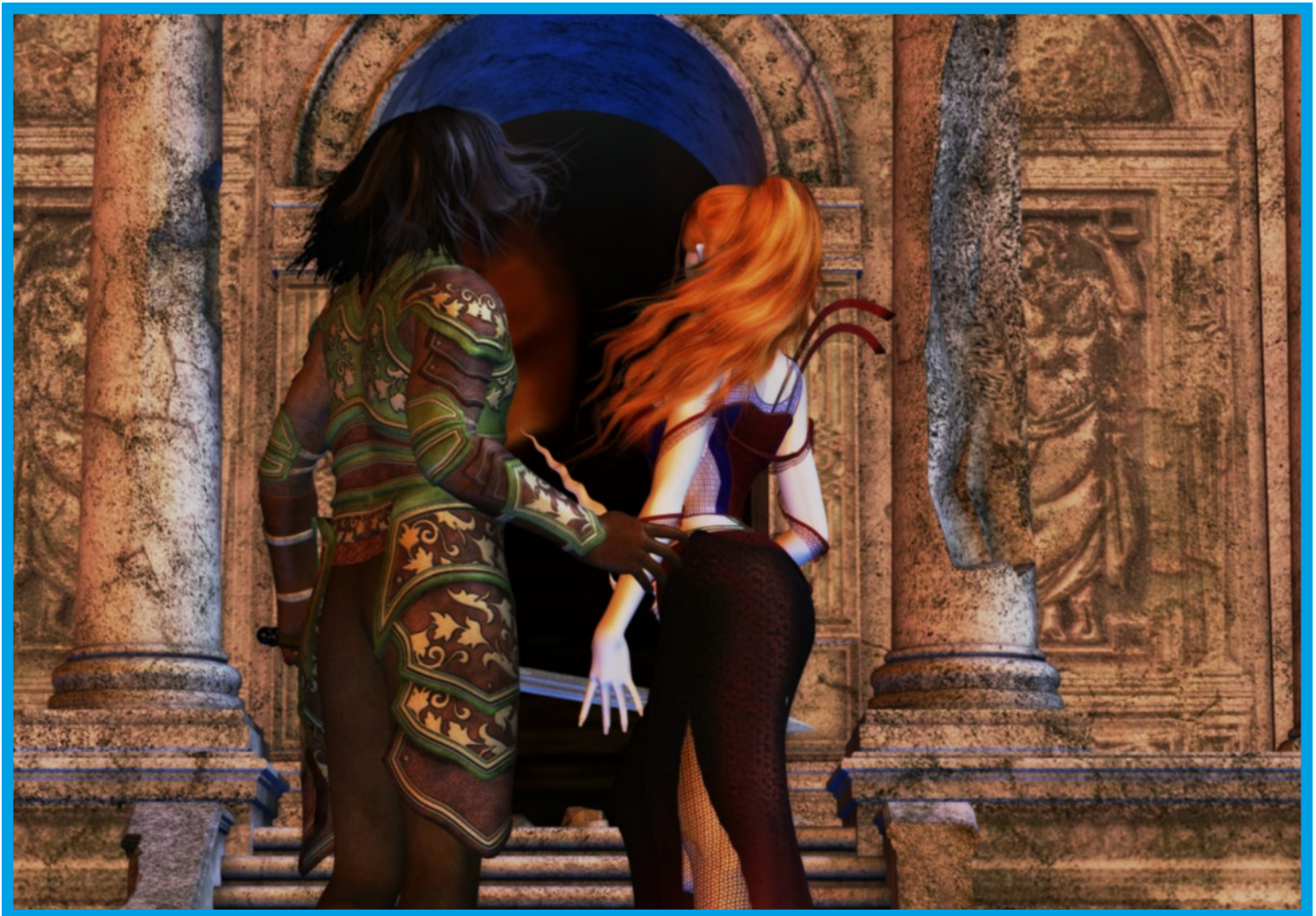
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professionalism when it comes to the appearance of a finished product. They seem to have managed to avoid this sort of issue in the past so I was genuinely surprised to see it present in this work. I expect some of it might have to do with a few last minute problems before this book made it to press.

Aside from this issue, this book is one that is sure to become a favorite among C&C fans. Whether or not the book is one that warrants purchasing will depend on the sort of fan you are. When you first heard about a new monster book for C&C, did you wish to have more classic monsters that you know and love or would you want to have a book of brand new, never-before-seen monsters to throw at your players? Do you want to keep you C&C game to be more like the

older games that inspired it, or would you rather go 'your way'?

For what it is, I'm generally satisfied with it and retailing at \$24.95 for a hardcover edition, you are still getting value for your dollar compared to the typical cost of a gaming book today. For what it is, there is little else that this book 'needs'. One thing I would have liked to see included was the handful of critters found in 'Of Gods & Monsters' included in the appendix but that's just me. And, as usual, this is a product from TLG and thus never quite perfect but certainly good enough. The quirkiest thing I found with the book was the decision to include the Cloaker. I find this odd since the original M&T for C&C also has an entry for the Cloaker. We probably don't need two but I chuckle when I think that they are also both listed in the Index.



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And most importantly, thank you to all who refused to give up and wished us all the best with our continued struggles as we worked to get this out to you!

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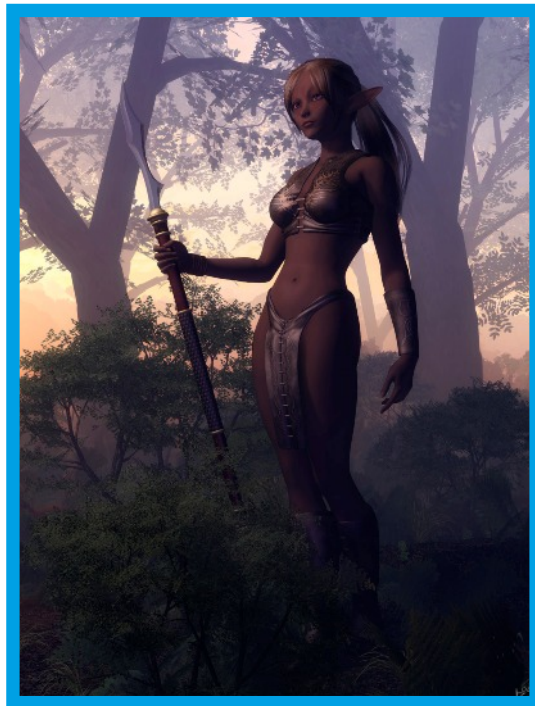
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