

Issue 7

The Domesday Book

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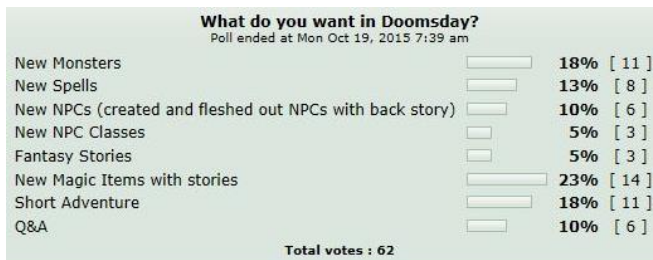
Everyone loves the game just as it is, no one ever tinkers with it, and no one ever has original ideas in their own fantasy world. Since this is so terribly NOT true, we have The Domesday Book.



Castles & Crusades – Seriously Old School [13]

FORWARD

Treebore and I are pleased to reconstitute the Domesday fanzine for your reading pleasure, gaming use, and for the much appreciated contributing authors as a way to showcase their gaming/writing chops. The Domesday Book started in April of 2008 and was last seen in late 2012. We asked what you wanted to see in Issue 7 of The Domesday Book, 62 of you responded to our poll. Based on what was submitted, we will do our best to bring you several Domesday (yes that’s Domesday, not Doomsday) in rapid succession* following your content guidelines.

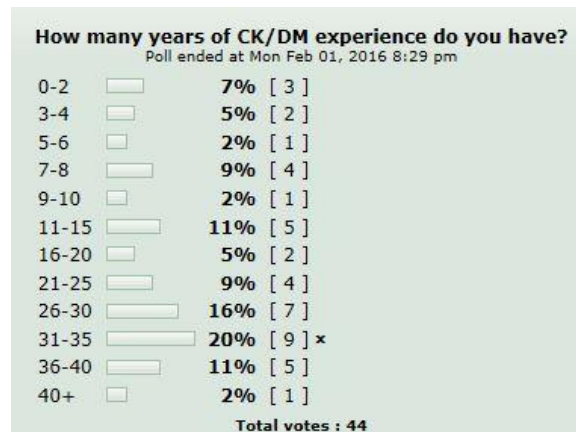


*We reserve the right to invoke Troll-Time.

WHO ARE WE?

The question does need to be asked, not so much on a personal level, but on a gaming level. We can all close our eyes and imagine ourselves and our gaming group. But do we know each other? Who’s behind all those avatars? Without getting into too much personal detail, we took another poll to find out how many years of experience our Castle Keepers had so we can better tailor The Domesday Book to their needs; as the CKs will be the most likely users of The Domesday Books.

Although we are in large part “senior” RPGers, about 25% of us are less seasoned Castle Keepers, and many of the players within our groups could be younger still; some second and third generation Gygaxian gamers! But no matter what the polls told us, we can only publish in The Domesday Book what has been submitted. So please submit your work for future Domesday Books or my original misunderstanding of the name, “Doomsday”, may come true.



This issue starts a bit on the dark and deathly side, but finishes with a bit of fun for all (more monsters and magic), plus some really exciting engineering stuff! A nice necrology leads right into two new undead, two spells, and three new magic items all with a darker shade. But the topics quickly transition with two fighters and one of three ancient mounts rediscovered from the *Lost Bestiaries of Atlantis*. The material then turns straight to four adventures of varied length and plot. The contributors permitted many pages to be filled with new magic items of wondrous history and power to the truly cheesy. Finally, ancient engines & alchemy, technology for Castles & Crusades, characters, and castle keepers closes out the issue.

The editors, Michael D. Snyder “*Midasn*”, Robert Miller “*Treebore*”, and I “*Captain_K*”, do hope you all will find Issue 7 to your liking and ultimately useful and worth everyone’s efforts. Enjoy!

WHAT’S NEXT?

Issue 8 will likely have an underground theme, but time will tell. The centerpiece may well be a nice 3rd level adventure by ArgoForg; *The Missing Ring*. We have some golems to share as well as the *Coven Lord*. There will be many more magic items and some more creatures from the *Lost Bestiaries of Atlantis*! A **Study on Light and Vision** will go nicely with more new spells. We might even have another cool tavern map by the MadCartographer to share, but this one might come with a contest! Still need another “one page adventure” or two. Please keep them coming.

A GENERAL NECROLOGY OF THE UNDEAD

by Todd Pote, "GoOgleplex" © 2016

Artwork by Kevin Morton, "Morty", © 2016

An opinion piece based on myths, legends, film, literature, and pop culture to give substance to the un-lives of the undead.

Mindless Corporeal Undead:

(Skeletons, Zombies, & Ghouls)

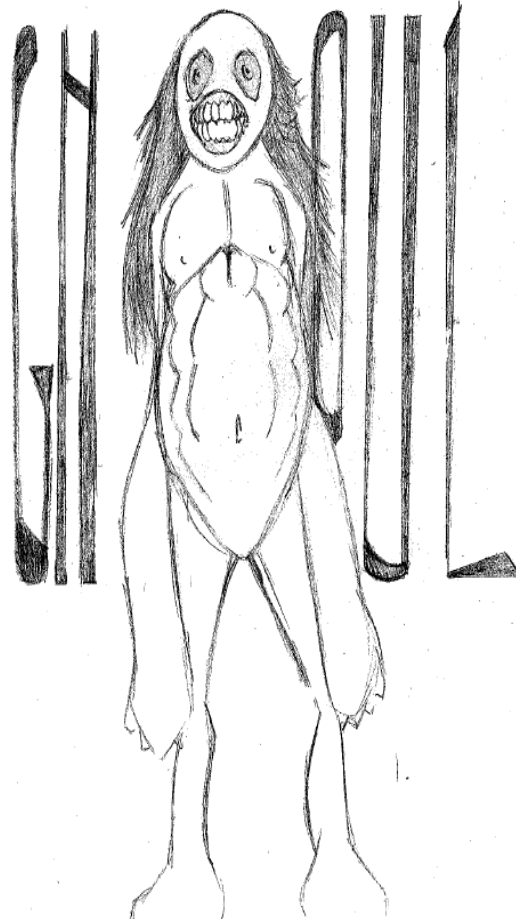
What we have with these basic undead is a body in various states of heavy decomposition or, in the skeleton's case, merely a bunch of dry bones wandering about. Most organs are dried up or rotting and skeletons do not have any organs. As such, normal bodily functions related to the senses of taste, smell, sight, hearing, and touch no longer function, nor is there any brain function to interpret such signals if they were present. So how do such undead interact with the world around them? Looking into the myths related to zombies from Africa, the Caribbean, and Europe, a common factor emerges: The body is merely a shell animated by magic. The nature of this magic is necromantic either directly animating the body or dragging the person's soul back from the afterlife and both enslaving and imprisoning it to follow the will of the caster.

Touch, taste, and smell are null and void in the majority of myths. Hearing and vision should not work either, yet they do. And why are zombies and ghouls so drawn to consume the living if they have no taste or biological processes creating a sense of hunger?

I believe the key is the imprisoned soul. The magic imprints the sense of hearing and sight from the soul itself, so the necromancer and his slave have a means of interacting with each other in a way that the enslaved soul can recognize, since it has no cognitive function or sentience of its own. This would allow the undead to both see and hear normally, but fails to address how it sees in darkness. Again we go to the magic of the necromancer. Since the sense of sight is created by magic, which has no concept of light or darkness, the magic does one of two things: 1) The magic bypasses the issue simply allowing the undead to see in contrasts of grey (much like black and white television for those old enough to remember watching it that way); 2) It radiates around the undead or in the range of what its peripheral vision was in life and constructs the image 'seen' by the undead much like radar or ultrasound does in company with three-dimensional holograms.

Of the two, the former seems more likely and would allow almost normal sensory perception. In the case of illusions, those that did not require interpretation by an active brain or mental facilities such as patterns and phantasms, would be registered by the undead. Also, this would mean that invisibility is effective against them even outside of the

invisibility to undead spell. If option two is assumed, then the magic sees only the physical reality of what surrounds the undead, ignoring anything not physically present thus rendering any illusion spell not creating a tangible, physical presence or attempting to mask a physical presence useless. Since the magic involved is mimicking a sense of sight then it is safe to assume that this pseudo-sense is limited to the room or hallway being occupied within normal or reasonable limits as determined by the game master.



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Addressing the hunger for living flesh (not blood mind you, but just the flesh and organs of the living) it could be attributed to the magic seeking to replenish itself after a fashion. Some myths and legends speak of the flesh and muscles of the body being filled with the energy of life. The brain being of the higher chakra, organs and nerves being ki points, and so forth. So it might not be far off to believe that the necromantic power is feeding on this living energy to keep the undead it infuses animated. Does this give the undead a "life sense" ability? Possibly, in a very limited fashion. The magic animating them that seeks to replenish itself through life energy may be sensitive to the presence of said energy, but not necessarily able to give the undead anything more than a general idea that it is in the immediate vicinity. Normal illusion magic would not be able to mask this, hence the value

of the “invisibility to undead” clerical spell that hides the life energy via divine power.



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Intelligent Corporeal Undead:

(Ghosts, Wights, Mummies, Vampires, & Liches)
Intelligent corporeal undead pose a slightly different dilemma when confronted by illusions. Here we have an undead whose body is in the same state of overall decay as their lesser mindless cousins. However, unlike the lesser undead, they are capable of some form of thought (though in the case of mummies that might be debatable). Also unlike the lesser undead, these more intelligent and powerful sorts are not necessarily created by a necromancer but by their own dark will and corrupted spirit. Given that these undead had a degree of free will it could be assumed that the magic involved in their creation or revival is tainted strongly with unholy powers and/or negative energy. Even if enslaved to a necromancer, the risk of their breaking free of their bonds is high. In a way, it is as if the will of the person in question superimposed itself over reality to a limited extent by refusing to acknowledge their own mortal end. With a will strong enough to alter reality, it can be unreasonably said that certain magic will be less effective against them. Particularly anything that affects their perception of their already altered reality. The higher the intellect retained, the greater their force of will, the greater degree of alteration to the reality of their personal situation. This is most evident in the case of Liches and Demi-Liches. They are not unaware of their undead state merely the senses and abilities their body had

while living that remain. Thus these greater undead have a sense of touch, taste, smell, as well as sight and hearing, complete with the ability to see color and pick up general nuances of sensation and sounds. So if their will lets them alter reality to continue their life, why do they obtain other abilities?



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This would be the influence of whatever negative or unholy energy they have linked with to give their will the power to alter reality and preserve their body from further decay. The saying “there is always a price to be paid” is very true when applied to greater undead. In the simplest form, the explanation is that these abilities are side effects. The most common of which is being locked into their hatred and other darker emotions. There is also their ability to drain away energy from the living. Like their lesser cousins, the magic or power that keeps them animate is drawn to the positive/life energy as a means to maintain itself. Almost like a sixth sense keyed to the presence of the living, it alerts them when they are nearby. Yet here is where a lot of people diverge in opinion and a conundrum arises. Game rules have long stated that the drain is against experience/levels of the undead’s victims, yet the creature descriptions and even many of the myths associated with some of them state that it is the life force being siphoned off. This results in premature aging in many cases or a gradual weakening of the body overall, much like the long term end effects of cancer or similar diseases.



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My own house rules on this subject have long ago tossed out the experience/levels method for level drain in favor of the descriptive text and myths. The reasoning is the nature of the link with the negative/unholy energy powering the undead and following the logic that it seeks life energy, not memories and skills, which is what levels and experience actually represent. Therefore, it is the physical attributes of the victim that are affected. Strength and Constitution primarily, with Dexterity being affected as a side effect of muscles no longer being able to move the body effectively, are the things affected the most by this. As noted in the commentary regarding the lesser undead, the life energy is thought to be contained in the muscles and organs of the body. Rather than crudely consuming the flesh the power is simply drawn out directly by contact. The body of the victim resists this of course but the weak quickly succumb. The life span of the victim may also be affected, though this is more subjective opinion looking at the effects of long term terminal illnesses that create a premature aging effect than substantiated in legend.

But vampires drink blood, how does this fit in? This is probably the side effect of being the most normal looking of undead. Generally speaking, their body is the least changed from how they appeared in life. But it is still dead and non-functioning. Blood can contain some life energy, but it may be more plausible that the craving for blood is in response to a need by

the body to repair itself and maintain moisture to avoid desiccation, which is supported in legend by vampires deprived of blood for long periods appearing similar to mummies in their coffins only to regenerate after a crazed killing spree draining many creatures of their blood. This craving and with possibly enhanced senses could also conceivably allow vampires to literally sniff out hidden foes nearby should blood be flowing through their veins. Of all the undead, vampires can arguably be considered to have the strongest will and greatest control over the reality of their existence, hence their ability to change their form or manipulate the weak minded.



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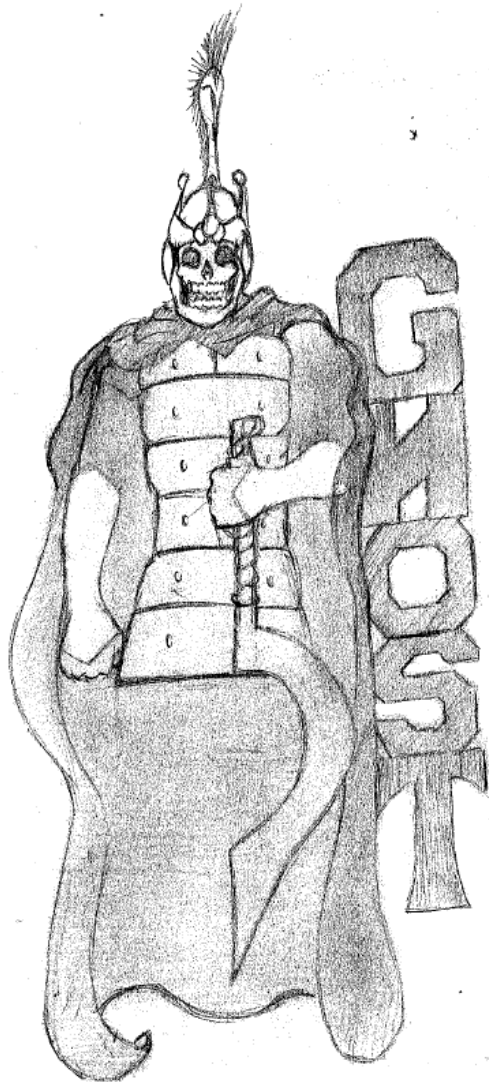
Incorporeal Undead:

(Shadows, Wraiths, & Ghosts)

Much like corporeal undead previously discussed, incorporeal undead differ only in the fact that they have not physical form. If anything, they are an even greater example of will interacting with negative/unholy energy to defy death and even more-so than their corporeal counterparts, are stuck between life and death.

This halfway status and lack of a physical form allows these undead some immunity to the physical world they exist in. Being creatures of energy, magic is needed to affect them or divine power wielded in opposition of the unholy energy they draw upon for their existence. It also gives them the ability to ignore the more mundane physical protections such as armor and the walls of most buildings. Some legends state that homes in their own right are infused with an ancient power derived from the various goddesses of hearth, home, and/or family making their walls inviolate to creatures of darkness unless they are invited in by a member of that home. Others give credit to the protections of a happy home to the fey that live hidden within, helping the family or living in secret symbiosis with them. Of course there are the more straight forward wardings and other magical

protections that can be raised as well to secure against unwanted guests of incorporeal nature. These protections may apply to more than merely the undead as well. Unhappy homes where cruelty and pain rule may not have these protections and it is not uncommon in myth and legend that they fall afoul of the roaming undead that seem to be drawn to the negative emotions radiating from those that dwell within.



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Like their corporeal counterparts, maybe even to a greater degree depending on the undead involved, these diaphanous beings require life energy to maintain their connection to the physical plane and stave off whatever rewards await them in whichever afterlife their passing will deposit them into. But lacking a body, how do these apparitions sense the physical world and creatures moving within it? First of all, like lesser undead, they have no sense of taste, smell, or touch. These incorporeal undead do still retain the senses of hearing and sight, though not in the form one might expect. As beings of what is essentially energy, they react to the energy around them, be it sound, light, life, or the absence there of.

The flaw to this line of thought is that if they are reacting to energy, then illusionary magic should be even more effective against them than regular spells being solely energy in most respects and thus even more visible to such undead. The counter-argument is that they are also beings of will and like greater corporeal undead, this will has forced reality to bend to it in a limited manner. Thus it is their force of will that allows them to withstand alterations to their definition of reality.

Of all undead, it is the incorporeal that are the most likely to possess a 'life sense' with which to track their prey, though this is just a side effect of how their sense of vision works. Fortunately their sensitivity to energy is limited to a relatively close proximity, likely the same room or a few hundred feet at most for more liberal settings. So how would this appear to the incorporeal undead in terms of 'vision'? The most likely representative analogy to use would be similar to a negative photographic image rather than the colorless grey scale lesser corporeal undead see.



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With regards to aging effects, this is completely due to the influence of myth. The old saying "Scared ten years off my life" is directly related to reported sightings of ghosts and wraiths. But seldom do those same myths equate this loss of life span to immediate physical aging effects. Not to say that there are not such myths, just that they are less frequent. Thus it would be more appropriate to shorten the victim's overall life expectancy than suddenly give a victim crow's feet, wrinkles, and arthritis. Going back to my previous mention of my own game and house rules, I have required characters to establish their maximum old age for decades. Encounters with aging effects reduce this age much like damage does hit points. As the life span shortens, the effects of middle age, old age, etc. arrive sooner in their life than they might for others. Having minor physical effects occur, such as their hair turning white suddenly after a ghostly encounter, are totally fair game in my opinion.

Thus ends my thoughts and conjecture into the nature of undead and how they interact with the

world of the living. As noted at the beginning, this article should be considered an opinion and not an authoritative piece of game canon. Use it as a basis for your game or not. That choice, as always, is completely up to the Game Master. Happy Gaming!

GHOST DRAGON

by Kirk W. Olsen, "Captain_K" © 2016

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1

SIZE: Large

HD: 22 (d10)

MOVE: 60 ft., 200 ft. (fly), 30 ft. (burrow)

AC: 25

ATTACKS: Bite, claws, wing &/or tail touch.

SPECIAL: Touch of Death, Incorporeal, Frightful Presence & Roar, Telekinesis, Magic & Spell-Like Abilities, Breath Weapon, SR 3, & Keen Senses.

SAVES: M & P

INT: High to Genius

ALIGNMENT: Evil

TYPE: Undead (Unique)

TREASURE: 18 + 10

XP: 20,000 + 26

A ghost dragon is the undead spirit of an evil dragon, forever haunting the region of its death, or more commonly, guarding its beloved treasure hoard into eternity. In life, the dragon was a paragon of its subspecies; greedy, cruel, vindictive, and generally causing suffering upon those in its domain. Upon the dragon's death, its spirit was forced to remain bound to the physical world. For most ghost dragons this new form of immortality suits them well. But some are either forever angered by their untimely death, driving them to the deepest depths of evil, or completely unaware they are now members of the undead world; a ghost of their former self. A ghost dragon can still speak their own tongue and common.

COMBAT: Ghost dragons never fear to enter combat and do so with grave determination. Moving as they moved in life with no material obstacle able to stand in their way to keep them from their chosen targets. They will defend their domain and their treasure hoard with fierce determination and all the guile they possessed in life. As an Undead, ghost dragons are immune to all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, etc.) and to poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, and death effects. Note: Ghost dragons do not add their full hit dice when making attack rolls; a ghost dragon adds one-half of its hit dice to attack rolls. Ghost dragons do, however, add their full hit dice to saving throw rolls.

TOUCH OF DEATH: A ghost dragon's touch drains the life energy of the victim, whether through pure fear or by smothering the victim's psychic force. Although they fight like they did when alive with tooth, claw, wing, and/or tail, each successful attack ages the victim rather than causes direct physical

harm. This touch literally takes years off of the victim's life. Humans, halflings, and half-orcs age 1d4 decades, half-elves and gnomes 1d6 decades, and dwarves and elves 3d4 decades. Elves are not immune to this form of ghost dragon attack, for elves do fear dragons.



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INCORPOREAL: Ghost dragons exist only partially within the mortal realms, most of their essence resides in the ethereal. A creature on the mortal realms cannot attack a ghost except with magical weapons of +2 or better, though a creature in the ethereal can attack the ghost dragon's manifestation there with normal weapons.

FRIGHTFUL PRESENCE: A ghost dragon can unsettle foes by its mere presence. The ability takes effect whenever the ghost dragon attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Creatures within a radius of 300 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer than ten hit dice. Creatures affected by a ghost dragon's frightful presence must make a charisma saving throw to avoid the consequences. If successful, the affected creatures become immune to the dragon's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failure, creatures with 4 or less hit dice become panicked (treat as the effects of the *fear* spell) for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more hit dice become shaken (suffering a -2 penalty on all attack, damage, attribute check, and saving throw rolls) for 4d6 rounds. Ghost dragons ignore the frightful presence of other dragons.

FRIGHTFUL ROAR: Ghost dragons can roar their eternal grievances. This horrific roar causes a spine wilting noise that unsettles the mind and heart. Any creature hearing this noise must succeed at a wisdom save, or suffer the effects of *fear*, as the spell. A successful save grants that individual immunity to that particular ghost dragon's roar for 24 hours.

TELEKINESIS: A ghost dragon is able to acutely focus their energies, allowing them to manipulate the physical realm. This ability is identical to the *telekinesis* spell.

DRAGON MAGIC: A ghost dragon will typically have five 1st level wizard spells and cast them as a 9th level wizard (CK may vary).

OTHER SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES: Ghost dragons have all the spell-like abilities they had in life (CK may decide some do not translate into undead status).

BREATH OF DEATH: Ghost dragons have but one breath weapon, however it appears as the breath weapon the dragon had in life. Those who are struck by the breath weapon are unnaturally aged. The breath weapon takes years off of the victim's life similar to the ghost dragon's touch. Humans, halflings, and half-orcs age 2d4 decades, half-elves and gnomes 2d6 decades, and dwarves and elves 6d4 decades. Elves are again not immune to this form of ghost dragon attack. A successful constitution save reduces the years aged by half. This undead dragon's breath weapon can be used as many as 3 times per day, but not more often than once every five rounds. Recall, in life, the dragon's breath weapon came in two basic shapes, a 120 foot line* or a 60 foot cone**.

*A line is always 5 feet high and 5 feet wide.

**A cone is as high and wide as its length.

KEEN SENSES: A ghost dragon sees four times as well as a human in shadowy illumination and twice as well in normal light. It also has deepvision and darkvision out to 120 feet but loses its Scent ability. However, it still has superior hearing and is able to pinpoint almost any opponent unless the target is magically hidden, such as with an *invisibility* spell.

Estocs of Piercing aka "Snakes of the Withered Corpse" [11] (by K. W. Olsen © 2016): An estoc [10] is a variation of the longsword. The blade is long and has no sharpened edge, tapering to a very sharp point, designed to penetrate armor, especially mail and plate. When used two-handed, the one-handed d8 damage increases by +2. Although the primary alloy of these blades remains adamantine, darker stuff, unnatural things, mined from too deep, make up the balance. As such, the blades gains a +4 to hit and damage from the adamantine. The living dark magic within makes this bonus magical in nature and the normal +1 bonus against armor is raised to +2 for a total bonus of +6 vs armor or thickly hidied/plated beasts (AC 16 or more).

The nature of these magical blades shows in their dull black exterior, vibration damping, and pulsing warmth. Something truly scary flows within their core, the Snakes of the Withered Corpse promise all an aged death. With but a thought, these blades can

instantly extend to any length between 13" and 49" while their weight remains invariant at two and one half pounds. Their matching sheaths make them look like little more than poniards [10] when sheathed.

However, the above oddities pale in comparison to the deadly aging power of the blades. With every successful strike, *touch of death*, similar to the ability of a ghost, drains the target of youth and vitality. These blades can even pierce elven immunity from aging. Elves fear death and aging from these dark blades. Humans, halflings, and half-orcs age 1d4 decades, half-elves and gnomes 1d6 decades, and dwarves and elves 3d4 decades. Double aging occurs when a natural 20 scores a hit. A CON save, at a CL of 13, reduces the years aged by half and the spell *age restoration* can undo some or all of the aging affects from these blades if administered promptly. For every century drained, the wielder gains 1d4 years of youthful energy for an equivalent number of days (simple play method: STR, DEX, and CON gain +1).

Note: Creatures with uncertain age/aging are assumed to be brought to middle aged by a hit and a failed save, thus suffering -1 to STR, DEX, and CON. Second and subsequent strikes result in further cumulative aging affects in an additive manner (-2 for the second for a total of -3, -3 for the third for a total of -6, -4 for the fourth for a total of -10, etc.). Few creatures can avoid death from old age after five to six wounds.

AGE RESTORATION*, Level 4 cleric, 7 illusionist
by Kirk W. Olsen, © 2016

CT 1 hour R touch D permanent
SV see below SR yes (h) Comp V, S, DF

The caster repairs the life energy of a single creature. *Age Restoration* dispels any and all magical effects that unnaturally increased the subject's age temporarily. The spell also restores d8 decades of youth to a creature who has had permanent unnatural aging (example; ghost touch). The artificial aging is reversed only if the time since the creature was aged is equal to or less than 1 day per caster level.

The reverse of this spell, *touch of death*, permanently ages the touched creature d8 decades regardless of race (elves included). A constitution saving throw avoids all the spell's effect.

DEATH SPELL, Level 6 wizard

CT 2 R 10 ft/lvl D instantaneous
SV none SR n/a Comp V, S, M

When a *death spell* is cast, it slays creatures in the area of effect instantly and irrevocably. The number of creatures which can be so slain is a function of their hit dice:

Victim HD	Victims Affected
< 2	4d20
2 to 4	3d10
4+1 to 6+3	2d4
6+4 to 8+3	1d4

If a mixed group of creatures is attacked with a *death spell*, the CK should use their discretion. A *death spell* does not affect lycanthropes, undead, or creatures from other than the prime material plane. The material component of this spell is a crushed black pearl with a minimum value of 1,000 gp.

+5 Bec de Corbin of Striking (by K. W. Olsen © 2016): This deceptively thin, all *mithral*, Crows Beak has been fashioned by the Elves to ensure the Dwarven smiths understand their place as premier weapon smiths is not so sure. This highly magical *fell* weapon is so light and beautifully balanced it does d10+5 damage when used two or one handed. The weapon can strike any creature, or target, no matter what state it is in (real, gaseous, ethereal, incorporeal, extra planar, or even divine) due to its *fell* nature. Note: *Fell* weapons [9] exist in all planes of existence at once - nothing can avoid their reach.

“Deep Thoughts” with Traveller © 2016

Q: *Bless water* makes holy water. Only the CKG notes its 2d4 damage to undead and evil creatures.

A: Holy water cannot affect evil NPC/PCs, think "extraplanar" evil (devils & demons). *Curse water* creates unholy water. Unholy water heals undead and evil creatures (2d4 points). Unholy water damages some good (extraplanar) creatures but not NPC/PCs.

FELL SHADOW

by Mike Stewart, “DM Mike” © 2016

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-4

SIZE: Medium

HD: 6 (d8)

MOVE: 30 ft., 60 ft. (fly)

AC: 18 (20 in darkness)

ATTACKS: d4+1 w/2 claws

SPECIAL: STR & CON drain

SAVES: M

INT: High

ALIGNMENT: Lawful Evil

TYPE: Extraordinary Undead

TREASURE: 5

XP: 210 + 6

The Fell Shadow is a form of undead similar to the Shadow (see *Castles & Crusades Monsters & Treasures* guide). Unlike its more common kin, the Fell Shadow is more attuned to the negative material plane and subsequently draws greater strength from it. This dread creature, like most undead, seeks out the

living when possible to feed on their life energy. Like the Shadow, it moves quickly to strike its victims with raking claws, but as well as 1d4+1 hit points of damage and 1 point Strength drain. The victim must make a CON save or lose 1d3 CON points as temporary attribute damage. This saving throw must be repeated each time a victim is hit, and the save reduces in efficacy with each reduction (for every point of CON damage inflicted the saving throw is increased in difficulty by the same number). Furthermore, Fell Shadows gain a +2 AC bonus in darkness as well as resistance to all damage save magical weapons and spells due to their shadowy substance and ability to fade into surrounding darkness. Yet this shadow-like being works against them, as they abhor the sun and suffer a -2 to hit whenever in sunlight or fully lit area (such as a Continual Light spell).



[14]

When a victim is reduced to 0 STR points, 0 hit points, or 0 CON points, the victim is dead and will rise in 1-3 nights as a lesser Fell Shadow under the thrall of the Fell Shadow that slew him or her; if the Fell Shadow in question still exists. If not, the new Fell Shadow will be independent and at full strength.

More intelligent than Shadows, they occasionally (30%) have 1-10 Shadows as servants

and lackeys for they are easily able to dominate their weaker cousins. They inhabit graveyards, mausoleums, and sometimes battlefields; wherever violent death is present.

DESCRIPTION: The Fell Shadow appears as a black silhouette like the Shadow, but is the height & outline of their living form, be it human or elf or even humanoid. A feral red glow emanates from their eyes as they prepare to feed upon their chosen prey.

ORB OF THE DEAD

by Todd Pote © 2016

This magical item appears as a simple sphere of rough black basalt approximately four inches in diameter. Its magical ability does not appear unless exposed to a 'detect magic' spell or until it is picked up by someone capable of using magic.



Should someone pick the sphere up that is of good alignment, they will suffer a terrible burning sensation though no damage. The longer they hold the sphere the worse the burning gets. If someone of neutral alignment picks of the sphere, a battle of wills begins between the spirit of the orb and the person holding it. Should the person lose the battle, they will be possessed by the orb and an agent of death seeking to spread death to all corners of the world. Should the person win the battle, they will be able to utilize only the basic functions of the orb. Should someone of evil alignment pick up the sphere, the sphere will reinforce their desire to kill and destroy unless they are already an agent of death at which point the spirit of the orb may offer a partnership and use of its full abilities.

The orb is only capable of being destroyed by being exposed to pure positive energy, such as being tossed into the positive plane; or struck by the primary weapon of a divine servant of a lawfully good aligned divinity, such as an angel's spear.

Intelligence: High

Alignment: Neutral Evil

Basic Powers:

Control Undead (common): The possessor may control up to double their level in hit dice worth of common undead. If the possessor is of evil

alignment then up to four times their level in hit dice of common undead may be controlled.

Life Leech: Any creature that dies within one hundred yards of the Orb of the Dead has their soul or spirit absorbed by the orb rather than passing on to whatever afterlife they may have been destined for. The Orb may absorb 100 levels worth of life energy before reaching its maximum power. When the Orb of the Dead is fully powered, it will begin to glow crimson from within its depths as if its core was molten.

Create Undead (minor common): The possessor may create two skeletons or one zombie per use at the expense of one life level of energy possessed by the orb. If more undead than what can be controlled are created, they will run amok with the potential of turning on their creator if no other potential victims are nearby.

Major Powers:

Spell Use: The possessor of the Orb gains knowledge and use of all negative energy based spells, be they arcane or divine, known to the world. Each of these spells may be cast at the cost of one life energy level possessed by the orb per level of the spell being cast.

Control Undead Army : The possessor may control up to six hundred and sixty six hit dice worth of undead of any type within one mile of the Orb. This ability overrides the basic Control Undead ability and may not be used in tandem with it.

Immunity to Negative Energy (full): The possessor becomes immune to level draining effects of undead and all spells or magical effects based on negative energy, such as cause wounds spells or slay living.

Grant Un-death: The possessor of the Orb may utilize 50 life levels within the orb with its agreement, to pass into a state of un-death. For spell casters, this means becoming a lich. For non-spell casters, they become vampires, though there is a 5% chance of a warrior type becoming a death knight instead.

Kingdom of the Dead: Usable only when the Orb is fully powered and by a possessor in full partnership with the Orb itself, this ability causes the life energy of those killed by undead within six miles of the Orb to be absorbed by it and to rise themselves as common undead using one of the absorbed levels. Essentially, this creates a self-sustaining reaction of death and un-death within the borders of 'the Kingdom'. The undead within the kingdom are under no command beyond killing all that lives, the exception being those controlled with other powers of the Orb. This is the ultimate ability of the Orb.

THE DEATH OF LIFE

Courage dies;
Age of the axe
Age of the sword
Hope dies;
Nithlings rage
War-wolves feast
Honor dies;
Show no mercy
Know no truth

Love dies;
Life grows old
Soul becomes feeble
dies;
Sun grows cold
Sea swallows land
dies;
Stars darken forever
Even death dies



**ADVERSARY (CHARISMA):
HELL'S CHAMPION, THE UNPALADIN**

by Kirk W. Olsen © 2016

Edited by Bill De Franza, "Relaxo"

The Adversary is truly Hell's Champion. This class is a thoroughly evil holy warrior chosen for adherence and devotion to an evil deity, demon, devil, or similar evil cause. They are every paladin's nemesis, they are their opposition. Adversaries have been called "anti-paladins", but they are only opposite to the paladin in alignment. They are neither pacifists nor atheists, they are strongly tied to evil divinities/powers and they are very capable warriors. An Adversary's very soul is tied to their patron and their evil cause(s). Thus, the Adversary is fully devoted and bound by code and conduct like a paladin with restrictions and rewards appropriate for a champion of evil (player and CK are encouraged to write these out within the norms of their game).



[12]

There are two primary varieties of these most evil warriors, those that are chaotic evil and those that are lawful evil, but neutral evil Adversaries also exist. Adversaries are followers of demons, devils or gods such as Lolth, Kali, Ares, Set, Druaga, Inanna, Hel,

Hades, Surma, or Yutrus based upon their matching alignment/nature.

Most Adversaries begin play at first level like any other character or NPC. Alternately, an Adversary can be created at any level via the drastic conversion of a fallen paladin. These rare conversions from faithful paladin to evil Adversary are appropriate only when a paladin has intentionally forsaken his vows and is guided onto a far darker path. Like a wicked shepherd guiding a black sheep, clerics, devils, demons, or some other divinities devoted to evil take pride in twisting wayward oath-breaking paladins to this final vocation as an Adversary. These evil beings always grant all abilities and benefits of the Adversary class to the converting paladin at the same level, or in rare cases, one level higher than the original paladin class level.... Evil has its benefits!

ABILITIES

DISEASED: At 1st level, each Adversary is immune to all diseases, of any origin, because they are already carriers of all diseases. As such, the Adversary can cause any disease, once per week, through a simple touch. This ability improves as the Adversary rises in level. At 6th level, the Adversary can cause disease two times per week, and at 12th level, three times per week. CK decides on disease options and severity.

UNDETECTABLE EVIL: The Adversary has the ability to always mask their evil alignment in the same manner as the spell; even when unconscious or sleeping. The Adversary must actively concentrate to drop their "good alignment masking". The Adversary will radiate a good alignment, but keep their natural tendencies toward Chaos or Law. Even though the Adversary's alignment is masked, each Adversary bears upon his or her flesh a Devil's or Demon's Mark. The character is marked by evil. He bears a three inch symbol somewhere upon his flesh, denoting the Adversary's pursuit of wickedness, it cannot be hidden magically by the Adversary.

BLACK SOUL: Despite their masked alignment, Adversaries are warded against attacks from good, summoned, or conjured creatures. Their unholy evil nature creates a magical barrier around themselves that conveys a +2 bonus to armor class and a +2 bonus on all saving throws against good creatures. This similarly undetectable unholy aura also prevents bodily contact by summoned or conjured creatures. This causes the natural weapon attacks of such creatures to fail, and the creatures to recoil, if such attacks require touching the warded Adversary. Evil elementals and outsiders are immune to this effect.

HARMING HANDS: An Adversary can touch another creature to vampirically steal up to two hit points per level once per day. These stolen hit points permanently heal damage or act as temporary hit points when they exceed the Adversary's maximum hit point total. Temporary hit points only last one minute/level.

REBUKE UNDEAD (WIS): At 3rd level, the Adversary gains the ability to rebuke undead as an evil cleric of 1st level. When making a wisdom check to rebuke undead, an Adversary adds his “rebuking level” (RL) to the roll, not the Adversary’s level (AL). This ability improves with each level, so a 5th level Adversary rebukes undead like a 3rd level evil cleric (AL - 2 = RL).

UNHOLY HARM: At 12th level, an Adversary can call upon his deity, devil, or demon to harm his or her enemies (similar to, but more powerful than, the reverse of a heal spell). Unholy harm enables the character to cause disease, blindness, or deafness as well as great injuries plus the chance for poisoning or feeblemind. The touched victim receives no save against the loss of all but four hit points and the contraction of a disease, blindness, or deafness (CK’s decision based on the whim of the Adversary’s patron). The victim is entitled to the appropriate save against Type I or Type II poisoning or feeblemind (again, the CK’s decision based on the whim of the Adversary’s patron). The Adversary can use this powerful ability but once per week and only against good aligned beings.

NEUTRAL EVIL ADVERSARY ABILITIES

Neutral evil Adversaries have chosen for them, by their Patron (CK), one 4th, one 5th, and one 8th or 9th level ability from the below listings.

LAWFUL EVIL ADVERSARY ABILITIES

HELLISH MOUNT: At 4th level, the Adversary gains the ability to call an unholy warhorse or other mount (CK discretion). An Adversary’s deity or devil confers this grace upon the Adversary as a reward for faithful service. The hell-touched mount is unusually intelligent, strong, temperamental, and mean but ready to serve the Adversary (and only the Adversary) in his or her crusade against good. The mount is usually a jet black heavy warhorse (for a medium-sized Adversary) or a black war pony (for a small-sized Adversary), but a *Nightmare*, *Monocerus*, or *Hellhound* are also possible. The Castle Keeper provides information about the mount that responds to the Adversary’s call. Should the Adversary’s mount die, a year less one day must pass before another can be called.

AURA OF FEAR (CHA): At 5th level, an Adversary is immune to fear (magical or otherwise) and can choose to radiate fear when in battle once per day for every five levels of the Adversary. All non-Evil aligned beings within ten feet of the Adversary must save against fear effects (Charisma). This power cannot affect any creature more than once per day.

SMITE GOOD: Once per day, an Adversary of 9th level, or higher, may attempt to smite good with normal melee attacks. Smite good adds the Adversary’s charisma modifier (if positive) to those attack rolls, and deals one extra hit point of damage

per level of the Adversary. This ability can be used once per day, and only on creatures of good alignment. The Adversary has one round per level of the Adversary to use this smite good ability and deal the extra damage associated with each smiting within those nine plus rounds before the daily use expires.

CHAOTIC EVIL ADVERSARY ABILITIES

INFERNAL PERCEPTION: At 2nd level, an Adversary is able to sense the presence of evil, chaos, and black magic/necromancy (be it divine or archaic) at a range of five foot per level after one round of directionally focused concentration (much like the spell detect evil).

POISON USE & KNOWLEDGE (INT): At 4th level, an Adversary can identify, make, and use poisons and anti-toxins as an assassin of 1st level. When making an intelligence check with poison, an Adversary adds his “poison level” (PL) to the roll, not the Adversary’s level (AL - 3 = PL). This ability improves with each level, so a 6th level Adversary makes and uses poison like a 3rd level assassin but without a +1 bonus to save versus poisons.

SNEAK ATTACK: A 5th level Adversary gains the ability to sneak attack (not back) like an assassin or rogue.

BLOOD OFFERING FAVOR (CHA): When an 8th level Adversary commits an utterly reprehensible act to an innocent (or at least, undeserving) humanoid(s) and offers their blood to his patron divinity or demon he is rewarded with a special favor granted by his patron. Blood offerings can be made as many times as the Adversary wishes, but only one favor is granted per day. The favor must be used within 24 hours or it fades. During the blood offering, the Adversary pleads (Charisma check) for one of three types of favor: A) Demon Power, B) Bane, or C) Plague. The general category of favor bestowed is dependent on how pleased the patron divinity/demon is with the blood offering(s). The greater the sacrifice, the more likely a more powerful favor will be granted. Once the type of favor is determined, then the specific favor is also up to the patron divinity or demon (CK). The CK is encouraged to create deity or demon specific favors, the following are suggested favors:

A) Demon power lasts for two rounds per Adversary level and may be invoked as often as desired within that time frame. This favor comes in the form of a spell-like power that mirrors a spell and directly affects the Adversary, or his enemies, such as mirror image, blink, invisibility, darkness, heat metal, warp wood, etc.

B) Bane lasts for but one round for every three levels of the Adversary (round any fraction down). The bane ability is usually a more powerful touch spell (reversed) which can be performed as many times as possible within the duration of the favor (curse, life drain, or cause critical wounds).

C) Plague “lasts” or is magically conjured/empowered for one round, one minute, or one hour per level of the Adversary and the duration is inversely proportional to the power or intensity of the plague. All plagues permanently “summon” the effects/creatures/diseases and once in existence they remain and melt/disperse/spread naturally. Plagues are similar to the following spells or modified spells:

i) Ice storm, with or without thunderous sounds, lasts one round/level.

ii) Insect plague, summoned vermin are locus, flies, lice, gnats, or even frogs, lasts 1 minute/level.

iii) Infestation, a special version of insect plague that “invisibly” infests the area with fleas and bedbugs which prevent restful sleep and affect those who fail their Constitution save as if they have been poisoned with both Types I and II poison. The infestation lasts one hour/level, but the effects require time and/or remove disease to be removed.

iv) Black Death, custom to disease deities, this mass disease spell is the reverse of remove disease but with a range of 25 feet and an area of effect of 625 square feet. The magical contagion lasts one round but effects are permanent to those in the area at the time and spread naturally afterwards.

ADVERSARY CLERIC SPELLS (OPTIONAL ABILITY)

Some unholy warriors choose a more specialized path as they progress, one of extra prayer and stronger ties to their dark patrons. These Adversaries are rewarded with a selection of clerical spells. No other abilities of the Adversary are changed when they devote themselves to extra prayer other than the addition of the following clerical spells and the counter balancing change in hit dice/points denoted by italics in the table below after 5th level.

All of the Adversary’s clerical spells must use the Adversary’s holy symbol*. Simply add a holy symbol material component to the spell description if it does not have one; such spells are not barred. An Adversary learns spells directly from his religious sect; clerics &/or devils, demons, or god(s). Adversaries are only taught and thus only know as many cleric spells as they can cast; they do not get to choose from the full range of available spells a cleric can choose from for their daily allotment of spells. The learning of these spells is up to the Adversary’s religious leaders, the Adversary’s devils, demons, deities or divine forces (the CK), and at times, they take input from the Adversary (player). Once taught they can only be changed by the above teachers. Adversaries fundamentally cast spells as a cleric of less than half the Adversary’s level. Specifically, the character’s “caster level” (CL) is the Adversary’s level (AL) minus four levels divided by two; rounding down to whole spell caster levels ($(AL - 4)/2 = CL$). As such, they cannot cast any spells until 6th level and then as

a cleric of 1st level. The number of spells they can cast per day are per the Cleric and Druid Spells per Day Table using the “caster level” (CL) noted above. They do not gain additional spells for high wisdom as clerics. Finally, Adversaries cannot cast or learn spells of higher level than 4th level and the Adversary can never know/cast more than three spells of any level. Ex.: A 15th level Adversary casts spells as a 5th level cleric. This Adversary would only know three zero level spells and can cast three zero level spells in one day. The Adversary can memorize for the day two uses of the same spell, thus only memorizing two unique spells with one being memorized twice. This Adversary would also know and can cast three 1st level spells, two 2nd level spells, and but one 3rd level spell each day. Adversaries must be affiliated with, and on good terms with, their local and regional religious sects or evil patron to gain any clerical spells. At the CK’s discretion, some Adversaries are without a formal or organized religion and thus gain their spells directly from their divine powers. Adversaries gain spells one, or a few, at a time directly from their clerics/divine powers. As such, each spell is highly prized and considered a specially gifted ability for the Adversary from his or her devils, demons, or god(s). Summon Familiar (Magical Beast) is a 2nd level Adversary spell which always yields as small demon or small devil. An Adversary is not restricted to the weapons and armor rules of the clerics of his or her sect.



[12]

PRIME ATTRIBUTE: Charisma

HIT DICE: d10 (then d8 after fifth level if cleric spell option is selected)

ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil or chaotic evil but occasionally neutral evil

WEAPONS: Any

ARMOR: Any

POISON USE: Any

***HOLY SYMBOL:** Fitting for divinity, devil, or demon OR the blood of innocents OR a perverted paladin's holy symbol.

Level	HD	BtH	EPP	CSL*
1	d10	0	0	
2	d10	1	2,666	
3	d10	2	5,666	
4	d10	3	11,666	
5	d10	4	24,666	
6	d10 (<i>d8</i>)	5	47,666	<i>1st</i>
7	d10 (<i>d8</i>)	6	95,666	
8	d10 (<i>d8</i>)	7	176,666	
9	d10 (<i>d8</i>)	8	366,666	
10	d10 (<i>d8</i>)	9	666,666	<i>2nd</i>
11	+4 (<i>+3</i>)	10	1,066,666	
12	+4 (<i>+3</i>)	11	1,266,666	
13+			306,666 per level	
	*CSL = Cleric Spell Level or Level of Spell			

TRACK FIGHTER (STRENGTH)

by Treebore, Rigon, Arduin, & Captain_K

The fighter is the archetypical warrior, superior to all other classes in armor and armed combat. As such, these characters gain combat abilities as their core and can do things with weapons and armor that others cannot. They train as individuals or as squads of specialist be they an elite elven archer or a phalanx of half-orc long spearmen.

ABILITIES

No core abilities of the fighter are significantly changed other than the addition of the following and a more gradual gaining of existing abilities. In some cases the base definition of the core ability is somewhat expanded/modified. All house rules of the above noted authors have been blended to best fit together with an eye toward alignment with the CKG Epic Level Fighter. Suggestion: Use character BtH instead of level for combat related SEIGE checks.

CORE WEAPON SPECIALIZATION: All of the fighters are masters of one select and specific weapon; it is their initial choice for Weapon Specialization (WSI). The bonus to hit and damage with that first weapon are noted, and smoothed out, in the table below. As the fighter trains and gains experience additional, or greater, specialization is possible starting at 13th level per the CKG. This Weapon Specialization II (WSII) adds more bonuses to the first weapon selection or allows for a unique second weapon of choice as noted in the table below in italics. Suggestion: Fighter specialization bonus to hit applies

to combat related SEIGE checks when using their specialized weapon.

WEAPON SPECIALIZATION FAMILY: A fighter's skill with one particular, or unique, weapon be it a dirk, a long sword, or a long bow gives that fighter additional ability with weapons within the same family or group of weapons (weapon families or groupings are determined by the CK, but a suggested listing is provided below). Their skill within their group of similar weapons be they other knives and daggers, other one handed double bladed swords, or other traditional bows is not as good as their specific specialized weapon, and it is always one bonus point less than their unique specialized weapon. The reduction is fixed and set by the CK depending on the weapon family. Ex.: A 10th level Master of the Dirk gains a +2 to hit and +3 to damage with any dirk, but only a +2 to hit and +2 to damage with a knife or a dagger. A 2nd level Master of the Long Sword receives a +1 to hit and damage with long swords but he or she would only receive a +1 to hit OR a +1 to damage with a broadsword.

ARMOR & WEAPON EXPERTISE: Fighters may select one type of shield, one type of armor, or one specific weapon, with which to gain a +1 to armor class, a +1 to hit, a +1 to damage, or a +1 to the weapon's non-magical special ability* (fighter's choice with CK approval). The fighter gains one such bonus per the table below. This singular bonus comes from extensive training with, cultural or racial affinity to, or a simple desire to be better at some shield, armor, or weapons that are NOT specialized weapons. These unique expertise bonuses may only be applied to a weapon outside the fighter's specialized weapon(s) and associated family or group of similar weapons. This minor bonus cannot be applied multiple times to the same bonus on the same shield, armor, or weapon or even to both the plus to hit AND the plus to damage, but it can be applied to either the plus to hit OR the plus to damage AND non-magical special abilities of the weapon. *Note: Some weapons have non-magical special abilities, denoted by a superscript in the PH indicating that they can add to armor class, disarm, overbear, etc.

COMBAT MANEUVERS: All fighters train and drill and practice many martial maneuvers and combat techniques. Only fighters can choose to improve in these maneuvers over their normal limits rather it be reducing the penalty to a called shot or increasing their armor class bonus when parrying attacks. The fighter gains a bonus of +1 in 20 to decrease a penalty, increase an armor class bonus, increase special damage, or gain an additional +1 to hit with a specific combat maneuver (See PH and CKG for a full listing of specific combat maneuvers). Each Combat Maneuver bonus occurs per the table below and represents a singular bonus to one aspect of the maneuver only. Ex.: A 3rd level fighter decides to

improve his charging ability with a reduction in AC penalty from -4 to -3 with no effect to the +2 to hit associated with the Charge Combat Maneuver. A 9th level fighter decides to improve his offhand penalty from -6 to -5 when fighting with two weapons. No maneuver can be improved by more than 5% (+1) and no maneuver can receive two improvements in a row. The maneuver must employ weapons &/or armor, as such, it does not apply to Grapple, Pummeling, or Overbearing. Note: Dodge, Disengage, Flank Attack, and Rear Attack gain special bonuses at 17th and 22nd level as the CK permits. The application of Combat Maneuver Expertise bonuses to these particular maneuvers in advance of the CKG noted levels may reduce the benefit at these levels; CK to determine details. Permissible Combat Maneuvers: Called Shot, Charge, Close Supporting Fire, Dodge, Disengage, Disarm, Evade, Flank Attack, Offensive Focus, Parry, Push, Rear Attack, Shield Blow, Shield Wall, and Two-Weapon Fighting.



[12]

COMBAT DOMINANCE: At 4th level, the fighter gains an extra attack, with any weapon, when fighting multiple opponents (weapons must have no mechanical limits to use speed or rate of fire i.e. black powder weapons or crossbows). In order to use this ability, the fighter must direct all attacks in a combat round against opponents that meet all required criteria. This ability improves as the fighter progresses. The fighter gains an additional attack for every four levels gained after 4th level. So, at 8th level, the fighter is allowed a total of three attacks or six attacks in one round at 20th level. This ability does not combine with the Extra Attack ability described below. The CK will also place one of the following three restrictions upon combat dominance:

A) All opponents must have hit dice, or levels, that are three HD or levels below the fighter. Thus at 4th level the fighter can only employ combat dominance against creatures with one HD or level but a 6th level fighter can attack three HD/level opponents with combat dominance. The fighter can split the available attacks among qualified opponents within reach as desired.

B) Each opponent can only be attacked once, but there are no hit dice restrictions on those attacked.

C) All opponents must have hit die, or levels, that are no greater than ¼ of the level of the fighter; round all fractions of 0.5 or greater up. Thus at 4th level the fighter can only employ combat dominance against one HD creatures or 1st level characters while at 6th level combat dominance will work against two HD or 2nd level opponents. The fighter can split the available attacks among qualified opponents within reach as desired.

EXTRA ATTACK: All fighters gain an extra attack each round with all weapons at 10th level. But they get there gradually with three attacks every two rounds when they are 5th level to 9th level. Another way to view this is that the fighter still gets one attack per round the first round of combat and every odd round of combat thereafter but they gain two attacks per round on every even round of combat. At the CK's discretion this progression can continue all the way to three attacks per round at 20th level.



[12]

Level	Att/Rd	WSI	WSII#	Expertise	Maneuver
1	1	+1 +1	0		
2	1	+1 +1	0	*	
3	1	+1 +1	0		*
4	1	+1 +2	0		
5	3/2	+1 +2	0		
6	3/2	+1 +2	0	*	*
7	3/2	+2 +2	0		
8	3/2	+2 +2	0		
9	3/2	+2 +2	0		*
10	2	+2 +3	0		
11	2	+2 +3	0	*	
12	2	+2 +3	0		*
13	2	+3 +3	+1 +1		
14	2	+3 +3	+1 +1		*
15	5/2	+3 +3	+1 +1		
16	5/2	+3 +4	+1 +2		*
17	5/2	+3 +4	+1 +2		CKG
18	5/2	+3 +4	+1 +2	*	
19	5/2	+4 +4	+2 +2		
20	3 max	+4 +4	+2 +2		
BOLD = Combat Dominance			# CKG Weapon Specialization II		
<i>Italic = CKG Advanced Combat Dominance</i>					

WEAPON SPECIALIZATION FAMILIES:

Axes: Battle axe, bearded axe, hand/throwing axe, piercing axe, 2-handed axe, hatchet, etc.

Bows: Long and short, composite and not, etc.

Clubs: Club, light/heavy mace, morningstar, godentag, etc.

Crossbows: Light crossbow, heavy crossbow, hand crossbow, etc.

Flails: Sap, light flail, heavy flail, chain whip, etc.

Hammers: Light hammer, war hammer, maul, etc.

Heavy Polearms: Bardiche, glaive, glaive guisarme, guisarme, halberd, lucerne hammer, pike, ranseur, etc.

Lances: Light lance, heavy lance, etc.

Large Blades: 2-handed sword, bastard sword, katana, tachi, falchion, great scimitar, flamberge, etc.

Light Polearms: Bec de corbin, billhook, fauchard, fauchard fork, military fork, partisan, vouрге, etc.

Long Blades: Broad sword, long sword, jian, dao, tachi, saber, scimitar, nine ring broad sword, etc.

Picks: Light pick, heavy pick, crowbill, etc.

Punching Weapons: Brass knuckles, cestus, katar, sai, etc.

Reaping Weapons: Scythe, sickle, hafted hook, etc.

Short Blades: Short sword, rapier, tulwar, hook sword, wakizashi, flatchet, etc.

Small Blades: Knife, cleaver, dagger, dirk, main gauche, poniard, etc.

Spears: Spear, long spear, qaing, wolf spear, staff, trident, tiger fork, man catcher, sleeve tangler, etc.

Throwing Weapons: Harpoon, javelin, aclis, dart, slings, bolas, etc.

Whips: Cat-o-nine-tails, whip, chain whips, etc.

THE LOST BESTIARIES OF ATLANTIS

All know of the famous Unicorn, but few know of these three monstrous mounts which have been recently rediscovered in the *Lost Bestiaries of Atlantis* [16]; the eale or yale, the parandrus, and the monocerus. This installment of creatures from the *Lost Bestiaries of Atlantis* brings you the **monocerus**.

MONOCERUS, NEMESIS OF THE UNICORN

by Kirk W. Olsen © 2016

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-5

SIZE: Large

HD: 4 (d12)

MOVE: 60 ft.

AC: 16

ATTACKS: Hooves (1d4+2) or Horn (2d6+2)

SPECIAL: Darkvision 70 ft., Magic Circle, Shape Changer, Mimic, Immunity to Disease/Poison/Fear, Twilight Vision, Wild Empathy

SAVES: P

INT: Low

ALIGNMENT: Neutral Evil

TYPE: Magical Beast

TREASURE: 5

XP: 180+4

The monocerus is commonly confused with the unicorn. Even Pliny the Elder in his multi-volume *Natural History* does not distinguish between the monocerus and the unicorn. The reason for this is

quite nefarious; a monocerus can **shape change** into a normal horse, zebra, or unicorn, alignments included, once a day for up to 2-20 hours. Detection of a shape-changed monocerus is very difficult, but elephants can always detect a shape-changed monocerus. As a result, monocerus will always attempt to injure or slay any elephant on sight. In any form, the monocerus is a superb mimics of all natural animal and bird sounds but their natural calls to one another remains a deep, lowing sound.



[17]

The natural form of the monocerus is that of a heavily muscled and beautiful horse but with oversized black hooves, the twisted tail of a boar, and a single very long black spiraled horn growing from its forehead. Some believe there is no true difference, other than alignment, between unicorns and monocerus and that one can be turned into the other. While still others believe them to be a magical sub-species of rhinoceros.

No matter what their true origins, the monocerus is in direct competition with the unicorn for the same remote grasslands and forests. They share the unicorn's reclusive nature, and rarely keep company with creatures other than monocerus or the dark faerie-kin believing themselves above all other creatures of the field and wood. They are fiercely territorial. When aroused to battle, their evil nature comes to full blossom. They act only in their own self-interest and have been known to slaughter innocents in order to ensure their privacy and seclusion.

WILD EMPATHY: Monocerus have an empathetic bond with the forests in which they live. They are aware of most things that pass through, and certainly of any intruders or unicorns that are afoot. They are the dark protectors of both plains and forest.

On rare occasions, a hard-hearted demi-human, or even a human, can approach a monocerus and strike a bargain with it. This bartered relationship is always one of distrust, binding, and/or oaths forged only through great need of the monocerus. A monocerus' partner may be allowed to ride it as a mount. If a monocerus' partner should ever renege on the bargain, regardless of the presence of the creature, the beast will know it, and the bargain will be broken. Indeed, a monocerus so betrayed will consider its former partner to be a sworn enemy to be hunted and slain.

COMBAT: When engaging enemies, a monocerus will charge, using its lance-like horn to impale foes. Thereafter, they make use of their hooves to strike, and often gallop around to make additional charges.

HORN: The great black horn of the monocerus are magically endowed. They function as +2 weapons, giving a +2 bonus to hit when attacking with the horn. Simply possessing a monocerus horn provides total immunity to disease, poison, and fear (monocerus themselves benefit from this). If a monocerus loses its horn, it loses the following abilities: magic circle, shape change, and all immunities. The horn will regrow at the rate of 1" per day and be fully functional within one moon.

MAGIC CIRCLE: A monocerus makes all saves against magical attacks, regardless of primes, as an 11 hit dice creatures. Monocerus cannot be surprised, and are constantly affected as if by a double strength *protection from alignment* spell.



Figure 1: Tavern & Guests [8 & 15]

SETTING THE SCENE

More often than not many a fine adventure has begun at a tavern, inn, or seedy bar (Figure 1). To that end, the MadCartographer and Captain_K bring you a link to a truly unique tavern (Figure 2) filled with all sorts of great characters (6), story hooks (21), new creatures (4), and a place to rest, heal, & do research between adventures (21 rooms and a stables); plus unique magical items, too (24). Unfortunately, the scope of the tavern write up (27 pages) and the size of the full color maps (over 50 MB) does not lend them to inclusion in this issue of The Domesday Book so the following link allows you to download a free copy of:

Müller's Wellhead Tavern

A 1st to 8th Level Adventure Setting for Castles and Crusader Player Characters

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/mp794b39gvmmfnu/AADYnOD0e005qM6lRaarOvva?dl=0>

Hint: Print to scale (1" = 5') and use with minis!



Figure 2: Wellhead Tavern – Overview

AND THEN THERE WERE THREE

Issue 7 does bring you a package of three nice short adventures. They can be run singularly, or as a series of three, they work very nicely for a group of four or five roughly 2nd level characters; a woodsy group should do just fine. Our efficient staff has even supplied you with an assortment of possible PCs you could use in these three adventures as well as lists of cool magic items for them to start with or find along the way (some assembly, and tweaking, required).

If you want to run all three in series, your group needs to be made aware that... "Pilgrims that have journeyed to Isabella's Shrine have failed to return, vanishing without a trace or word. The clergy is concerned that something or someone may be responsible and wishes to send someone to investigate." Assemble your team, have a last beer, you're off to make a name for yourselves!

OGRE AT THE BRIDGE

by Mike Stewart © 2016

Photography by Jeffery Herbert © 2016

Levels: 1-2

Nbr of PCs: 3-5

Scenario: While traveling on a forest road the adventurers come across a deep creek bed with a stone bridge spanning its width. The road continues into the forest beyond the bridge, but as the party observes the edifice a large hairy hand grasps the side rail of the bridge and draws up a huge and malevolent figure....an Ogre!

The Ogre will identify himself as "Ratspit Yelloweye" and he tells the party in pidgin Common that he will let them pass the bridge only if they give up all their coin, or their largest horse-- assuming the PCs are riding horses or other pack animals. This Ogre is more hungry than greedy and would much rather take the horseflesh. Warhorses will be chosen over riding horses, and the heavier the better.



[13]

If the crusaders decide to fight:

Ratspit Yelloweye: This is a Chaotic Evil Ogre whose vital stats are: HD 4d8, HP 28 and AC 17. His prime attributes are: Physical. His special abilities are Darkvision 60 ft. and Twilight vision. He attacks with his axe for 1d10+3 damage or uses his fists for 1d10 damage. Ratspit wears a +1 *Ring of Protection* in his nose.

If Ratspit is defeated and the PCs look under the bridge they will find a small pile of decaying horse bones and some uncured hides stretched under the sides of the bridge to make a foul smelling enclosure. Within this noxious tent will be found amidst other refuse a burlap bag containing 30 gp, 62 sp, and 138 cp; a scroll tube with a stone jammed within the bottom with *Continual Light* cast upon the rock (the tube focuses the light in a sort of 'flashlight'); a haunch of mystery meat (CK's discretion) and a +1 *dagger* that is so encrusted with filth that it might be ignored as a piece of junk; Ratspit used it as a toothpick. Any character searching the tent must make a WIS attribute check at -2 (due to the fumes) in order to identify the dagger's unique craftsmanship. If the dagger is inspected outside the 'tent' this penalty is negated.

Plot Hook: Also in the Ogre's lair might be found a parchment from the local noble of the region giving his rangers a map to where the 'perfidious goblins' took his family heirlooms (Ratspit used the paper to wrap up his meat haunch so it might only be partially legible). The Castle Keeper is encouraged to use their imagination (or the magic items described below) as to what the "Family Heirlooms" might be if the party decides to pursue the matter. In fact, the hall of the goblins is on the way to Isabella's Shrine and should not be far from where a night's rest must be taken anyway – goblin hunting by torch light anyone?



[15]

MOVING DAY

by Mike Stewart © 2016

Minis by Jayson Stewart, "jdizzy001" © 2016

Levels: 1-3
Nbr of PCs: 4-6
Monsters: Goblins
Environment: Any "rough" terrain

Scenario: "As the party settles into their encampment for the night, the first watch is disturbed by noises coming from a nearby ravine. Grunts, indiscernible curses and the sounds of stone being dragged on stone filters up to the crusader's encampment."

A small band of Goblins have recently discovered an abandoned Dwarven warren nearby to their own cavernous lair. The warren is small but well built, and the goblins chief has decided to move the tribe en masse to the new abode. Due to veins of hardstone intervening between the two locations, the goblins have instead started to move their belongings overland during the night.

The Castle Keeper can choose either to roll randomly on the table below for the particular band of movers encountered, or pick the most appropriate as needed. Each encounter will occur once save for 1-3 which can happen repeatedly as the Castle Keeper desires. If the crusaders manage to dispatch one group of goblins fairly quietly, the next group should appear in 1d6 turns.



[15]

Encounter: Roll d12

1-3 16 Goblins: Six of these are guards, and the rest are porters and carrying various bundles and bags. The porter goblins will flee if attacked, but their guards will fight.

4-6 12 Goblins, with 4 as guards and eight moving a 6 foot stone statue of a roughly hewn goblin with exaggerated muscles and fangs (think chainsaw sculpture here). This is a statue of their tribal god, and any goblin porters that retreat will return quickly with arms and reinforcements to save the statue. The statue could be a mundane sculpture, or the Castle Keeper can have something dire happen to any party members who desecrate it!



[12]

7-9 6 goblins, with 3 being guards, two being porters, and one being the goblin Shaman Mugwump.

Mugwump: This Lawful Evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d4, HP 7, AC 15. His primary attributes are mental. He carries a dagger and a snakeskin pouch with a small gold statue similar to the great stone one denoted in encounter 4-6; it is worth 25 gp. His spells are: 0 level Cantrips: *Dancing Lights*, *Detect Magic*, *Detect Poison*, *Prestidigitation*; 1st level spells: *Shield & Shocking Grasp*

The porters carry several bundles with various spell components and 'holy' herbs such as catnip, hemlock and belladonna.



[13]



[12]

10-12 8 goblins, with six being guards, one being the goblin lieutenant Grimley, and the last the Goblin Chief himself Gnee the Mighty:

Grimley: This Lawful Evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d4, HP 8, AC 17. His primary attributes are physical. He carries a spear, a silver dagger, and a +1 Dwarven crafted shield and wears banded mail. He has a small pouch under his helmet with 8 gp and 2 pp.

Gnee the Mighty: This Lawful Evil creature's vital stats are HD 2d6, HP 11, AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He carries a +1 short sword, a Ring of Blinking*, banded armor and a medium iron rimmed shield. He has a pouch with 16 gp and 27 sp.

*= This magic ring allows the wearer to "blink" as a Blink Dog.

GOBLIN STATISTICS:

Goblin porters: These Lawful Evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1 d6, HP 4, AC 11, Move 30 feet. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry no weapons or wear armor, but can do 1-2 DMG with claws if pressed.

Goblin guards: These Lawful Evil creatures vital stats are HD 1 d6, HP 5, AC 12, Move 30 feet. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry short spears and wear leather armor.



[13]

Plot Hooks: The CK can arrange things so that a) the move has just begun. As such, the majority of the tribe's members (and wealth) are still at the natural caverns; thus providing a small dungeon crawl. Or, b) the move could be almost complete and the Dwarven warrens could provide the same locale...with the addition of other things in the new lair. Or c) The move is in full swing and all males, less a few guarding the females and young, are moving everything in one fell swoop. Everything means all treasure and magic items, even the ones they don't know how to use.



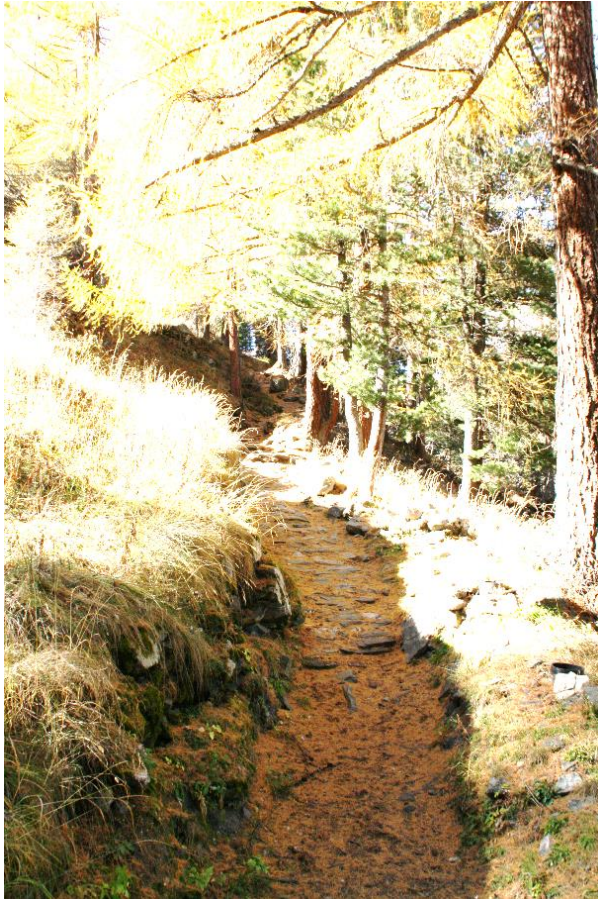
[14]

SHRINE TO SAINT ISABELLA THE CALM

by Todd Pote, Go0gleplex © 2016

Levels: 2-3
Nbr of PCs: 4-6
Monsters: Ogres

Isabella the Calm was a cleric known to be kind and serene to all who came to her for help, no matter the circumstances. Upon her death a tomb befitting her serene nature and peaceful demeanor was built in a quiet corner of the land not too far from civilization as to inconvenience pilgrims but not so close as to be polluted by the chaos of civilization. Unfortunately as time passed, so did the people of the land as borders shrank and redrew themselves over the numerous centuries. Still, to the credit of those stubborn pilgrims, Isabella's tomb was not lost to those whom desired to seek it out. It merely became an oasis of peace within the untamed reaches of the land.



[15]

ENCOUNTER KEY: THE SHRINE

A) Pilgrim's Rest

A covered stone well with a rope still in serviceable condition attached to a large wooden bucket is located near the edge of a decent sized clearing. A thick hitching post, the cross beam polished smooth by countless ropes, leads, and reigns tied to it, is between the well and an old windowless log cabin with a moss-covered shake roof. The door of the cabin is missing allowing a clear view into the dark interior. There is only a dirt floor in the cabin with a central fire pit and smoke hole in the ceiling above it. The fire pit seems to have seen some recent use.

Bones litter the clearing and the interior of the cabin. Mostly animal but several humanoid remains are present as well. The area smells of blood, smoke, and rancid meat.

The cause of the disappearances is the rather disgusting and cruel ogre that has taken up residence in the cabin. He kills those who come, stripping them of valuables, then tossing their bodies, or what is left if he decides to snack on them, into the woods to bait in scavengers which he kills and eats.

There is a 40% chance during the day that the ogre will be out hunting instead of in the cabin. If absent, he will return within 6d6 turns after the PCs have arrived in the clearing. The ogre will fight with

the cabin at his back to reduce the likelihood of rear and flanking attacks. If wounded below 50% of his hit points, he will attempt to break away and flee into the forest in hopes of losing any pursuit.

Ogre (1 or 2) Large

HD: 4(d8) HP: 23 MV: 30' AC: 16 Attack: Club (1d6+4) or Slam (1d10) Special: Darkvision 60', Twilight Vision Saves: P Int: Low Align: CE Type: Giant Treasure: 3 XP: 40+4



[13]

Found stuffed in bloody and dirty bags within the cabin; 1200cp, 680sp, 100gp, jasper (12 gp), Bentonite (15 gp), Clinohumite (27 gp), garnet (9 gp), Cat's Eye (9 gp)



[13]

B) The Grand Terrace

A large area that has been leveled and surfaced with flagstone. Grass and clover grow in the gaps between the flat stones. Near a large pond is a curved stone bench allowing weary travelers to rest while looking out over the pond towards the central pavilion.

Some of the grass and clover has been uprooted and flagstones stained darkly, the pattern seeming to indicate something was dragged across them. The stains are blood from the ogre's prey.

C) Pool of Tranquility

There is a 20-foot wide moat of water encircling the central pavilion. The water is relatively clean, the only inhabitants of its two-foot depths being frogs, carp, and salamanders. Its mirror-like surface reflecting the

sky, trees, and pavilions with only lily pads and insects disturbing it.

The water tastes foul and acidic to creatures of evil alignment. Against undead it acts as holy water unless taken from the pond at which point it loses all special properties.

D) Southwest Pavilion

E) Northeast Pavilion

Worn marble stairs rise to a 20-foot diameter marble platform raised 10-feet above the surrounding ground and waters. Three marble columns several feet thick and carved into the likeness of celestial guardians are spaced equidistant along the platform edge. These columns support a thick marble ring above them, the sides of which are carved in bas-relief with twining vines and flowers. From the platform, a bridge of carved marble arcs over the waters of the moat to the central pavilion. Delicate marble balustrades line the edges of the bridge.

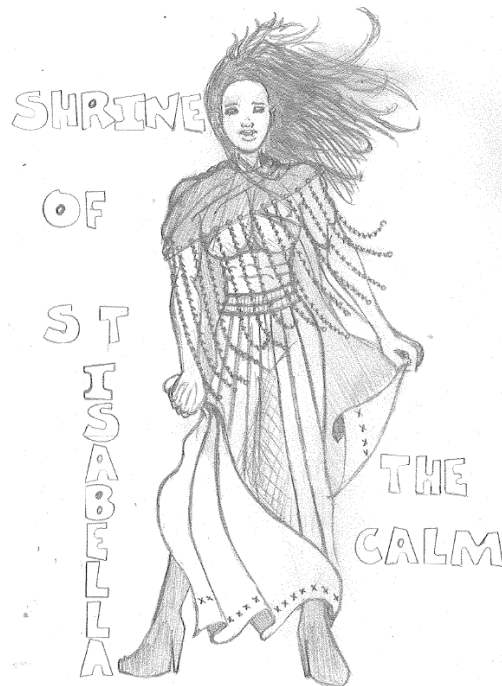
The pavilion is under the effects of a permanent “hallow” spell. Those upon the pavilion also gain benefit of “resist elements” as a side effect of the *hallow* spell. Good and neutral aligned creatures have a feeling of serenity and peace while within the pavilion. Evil creatures feel an overpowering revulsion and fear. Attempting to harm the pavilion in any way will result in a celestial guardian appearing to admonish or smite the offender(s).

F) Pavilion of Serenity

This 40-foot diameter raised platform of carved marble rests 15-feet above the surrounding ground and water surface. Eight marble columns several feet thick and carved into the likeness of exulting celestial guardians spaced equidistant around the edge of the platform support an ring of featureless marble 10-feet above them. At the center of the platform is a large 20-foot tall marble statue of a kneeling woman, her face the epitome of gentleness and peace. In her hands she holds a large shallow dish approximately 4-feet in diameter near the level of her knees. In this two-inch deep dish is pure water. It fills the dish to the lip and is mirror-like in its stillness. Not even wind disturbs its surface. At the base of the statue a passage in trade tongue into the marble platform, “Place your faith in serenity and it shall be received.”

Placing anything into the plate of serene water will result in it vanishing, accepted as an offering by the powers protecting the tomb shrine. The pavilion is under the effects of a permanent “hallow” spell. Those upon the pavilion also gain benefit of “resist elements” as a side effect of the *hallow* spell. Good and neutral aligned creatures have a feeling of serenity and peace while within the pavilion. Evil creatures feel an overpowering revulsion and fear. Attempting to harm the pavilion in any way will result in a celestial guardian appearing to admonish or smite the offender(s).

If the PCs should place any of the ogre’s ill-gotten gains within the dish, a small ball of blinding white light will rise from the water as the treasure disappears. The voice of a female, soft and soothing, will be heard from the light, speaking in trade tongue. “Thank you brave souls for making my shrine safe once more. You have my blessings upon thee.” The light vanishes as do any wounds the PCs still bear.



[14]

GETTING YOU READY TO GO, FAST!

The year was 1982, after one of the first games hosted at my childhood home, my father innocently asked, “How did the game go?” When I explained to him all we did was roll up characters and that we did not actually “play”, he was mildly confused and amused, but sensed it was best to ask no more questions, and simply smiled and closed the conversation with, “Well tell me how it went next time.”

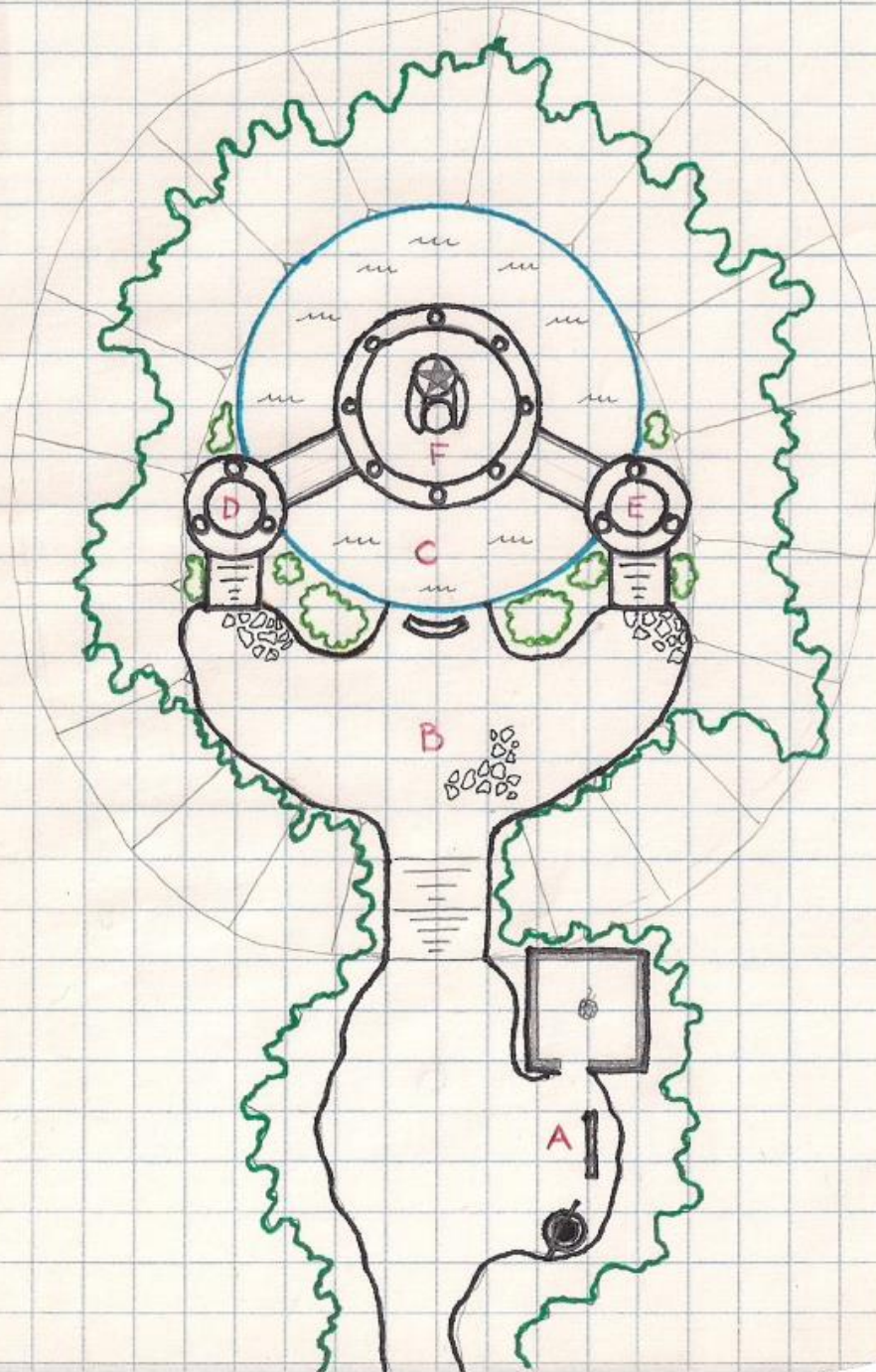
We all know getting a new game going can take forever between the rolling, the outfitting, the endurance calculations, spell selection, and actually agreeing upon why a druid, a wild man, a hired killer, a tracker, a cloistered mage, and a cultured centaur would ever be an adventuring group headed for the *SHRINE TO SAINT ISABELLA THE CALM* or ever be in the same room at the same time sharing a beer at the local Wellhead Tavern.

So to help you start playing the above adventures now, below you will find five possible player characters (or NPCs) compliments of the “MadCartographer” and a host of magical items that could be helpful as well as amusing. So put the dice down and start playing, why wait.

Hint: Print pregens double sided and fold in half.

Shrine to Saint Isabella the Calm

□ = 10'



**UNIQUE, BUT NOT TOO POWERFUL
PART I of III: WEAPONS**

by Kirk W. Olsen, © 2016

Artwork by Kevin Morton, "Morty" © 2016

These class tailored magic weapons add a great deal of flavor and fit nicely for each class without too much kick, enjoy!

Target Class	Weapons
Ranger	"Tiger Fork": This magical Trident can also be used as a "man catcher" ⁴ against any normal wild animal or humanoid of size Small to Medium but the Trident when used in this manner only pins the creature to the ground. When used by a Ranger, Combat Marauder and Favored Enemy Bonuses are added. Note this weapon offers the wielder a +2 to trap and the victim a -2 to escape being pinned to the ground.
Fighter	"The Trickster" An Enchanted Bastard Sword: 2/day for 5d4 rds the sword becomes invisible at a command word (which is etched into the blade in Norse) (+1 to hit at this time - not due to magic)
Thief	The Black Thorn: A Magical Dagger, never dulls, floats, all dull black, does not shine/glint/or reflect light.
Assassin	+1 Throwing Axe, If a throw misses it returns to the thrower as a boomerang (Dex roll to catch).
Monk	Twin Sai (Main Gauche): +1 to hit/damage or additional +1 to AC when used defensively.
Barbarian	War Mattock (Bladed Maul): 2x damage vs. Earth Based Creatures and +1 hit and damage vs. metal armors
Illusionist	"Thumper" This highly magical club only works for Arcane spell casters. Any successful strike with this club (held or thrown) has a higher chance than normal to be a critical strike (double damage at least). The chance for a critical strike is 5% per spell caster level.



[14]

Target Class	Weapons
Mage	Darts of Sleep: These black hawthorn tipped wooden darts affect anyone damaged by their point as if struck with a sleep spell cast by a 19th lvl mage.
Druid	Giant's Sling: Magical sling that will use just about any hard round object from the size of an acorn to a large rock (volleyball sized) doing never less than d4 damage but never more than d10. Druids can use Acorns.
Cleric	Mace of Crushing: Can hit some creatures requiring magic to hit (Up to +3 for Undead, but only +1 for non-Undead). No actual + to hit or damage on the roll. Double Damage (by rolling the damage dice twice) against all skeletal Undead.
Paladin	Holy Bec de Corbin: Glows with Holy Aura and Divine Daylight (1/2 range and intensity of a torch) when the Paladin prays with religious conviction (out loud) or is turning undead. +1 to the qty of undead turned.
Knight	"Hunter's Twig": This +1 Lance/Spear can slowly take the form of any spear or lance at the mental thought of the wielder (each transformation takes 2d3 rds).
Bard	Iron Banjo: This metallic stringed instrument is virtually indestructible due to its magical nature. Treat as a two handed War Hammer. If used as a weapon, it must be retuned, but no more.



[14]

Part I: The Panoply of the Lord of Almansa and Defender of Mancha and Alcarria

by Lesley Rouell, "Lurker" © 2016

The lands of Mancha and Alcarria are a border land between the more civilized and settled lands of chivalric Castilia – at least more civilized and settled when compared to Mancha and Alcarria – and the lawless wild lands to the south. The area is rough with steep rocky hills and mountains, and dry – but not completely desert like. The lands are feudal with dukes and nobles acting as liege lords over lesser nobles and knights who in turn offer allegiance, and skill in arms, to the lords above them. The area, several generations ago, was overrun by invaders – goblins, orcs, barbarian / infidel humans and brigands – and since then the peoples have fought a constant war to push back the invaders and regain the lands lost.

The inspiration for this area, and the peoples, places, and items in this write up, comes from 2 places. First is Feudal Spain. The lands that produced the epic poem of El Cid, Roland, and the centuries long war (re-conquests as it was called by the medieval and early renaissance Spanish) and at times moderately peaceful coexistence between the Iberian Christians and Muslim invaders from N Africa. From this the write up takes the lands as a back drop and adds the historic raids skirmishes and warfare of the time. Also, the names of types of soldiers and styles of combat inferred in the work. The second, and most important, is "The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha", or more simply "Don Quiote, Miguel de Cervantes master piece. Names, places, and events are directly taken from the book and used as inspiration. At times items from the book are used with little change and will be easily recognizable. Other items in the write up use gem of an idea from Don Quiote but are almost unrecognizable unless you pay close attention.

One family of the warrior knights, the Quesada, eventually gained renown and became the nominal leaders of the defenders and warriors of the Mancha and Alcarria lands. They built their castle and consolidated their power on the hill overlooking the town of Montiel, which has since grown into a minor city and key trade center for the area. Through feats of arms, battle success, and force of personality, the patriarchs of the family – Sir Durand and Sir Raymond being two of the more famous and successful – eventually, to greater or lesser extent, gained more control of the lesser knightly families, warrior brotherhoods, militaristic adventure bands, and other commoner filled militias in the area. Under the Quesada's leadership, the knights soon formed the Order of Calatrava, and the other forces of commoners formed the Hermandad – the armed brotherhood,

bands of medium and light infantry and archers. These combined forces became known as the Manchegos.

The Quesada, and their Manchegos, quickly gained a reputation for seemingly careless attacks on superior forces, reckless cavalry charges, and aggressive offensive tactics. However, they also used to great effect feigned retreats and ambushes to do much damage to their foes. Furthermore, the Quesada – but not necessarily all of the Manchegos – also became known for being merciful and honorable, to those that showed a willingness to be so themselves. However, the retaliation to those that betrayed the mercy given was quick, brutal and ruthless. This mix of relentless brash attacks, ambushes, mercy, and ruthlessness eventually – after over 8 to 10 generations from the first re-conquest to the last – lead to victory for the Quesada and their Manchegos and a free and safe land.

Unfortunately, after the final re-conquests was successful and the enemies pushed out of not only the lands of Mancha and Alcarria but also the mountains to the South and West – including the tribe of hill giants that had plagued the plateau in the south-west of the region, the battle glorious knights and warriors had no further enemies to conquer and defeat. For a few years the Calatrava and the Hermandad were happy to rest in peace and simply patrol and police the area ensuring all remained safe. However, they or their young sons, growing up in the shadow of their fathers' and grandfathers' story of daring and glory, began to miss the old days of war, strife, and adventure.



L O R D
R O D R I G O

[14]

Sir Alonso de' Quesada, the son of Lord Rodrigo – the current, and presumably last, Defender of Mancha and Alcarria – is one such glory seeking adventurer. Some twelve years ago, Alonso requested his birthright – the panoply of the oldest active fighting knight of the Quesada – and receiving it left the lands of Mancha and Alcarria seeking adventure. For a few years he was seen adventuring and campaigning in various areas, but eventually the sightings became rumors and then even the rumors ceased to reach civilized lands.

SIR ALFONSO



[14]

From the generations of warfare and glorious deeds of the Quesada, the panoply of the knight family gained wondrous and potent powers. These powers not only supported the family's natural tendencies but also fed off them. This circular and self-fulfilling process gave the knightly equipment the following powers:



DURAND

[14]

The Lance of Durand

A light lance/or long bladed hewing spear that has been in the forefront of innumerable charges of the knights of the Order of Calatrava. At times these charges have been into forces vastly superior – including a fist of ogres and hill giants by a lance of knights. From these charges the lance/spear has developed the following abilities:

A +2 to hit and damage, but a +4 when attacking bandits, highway men, and goblins.

Being a hewing spear, it can be used to attack in more than just a charge, it can be used to cut and slash even from horseback. When the lance is so used, the knight is at +4 on all horsemanship checks. If the wielder is not a knight, he receives the horsemanship skills of a knight at half his current level.

The knight's ability to inspire and cause fear will be enhanced as if he is 3 levels higher than his current level. If the lance/spear wielder is not a knight with abilities, the lance will give the user these abilities as if he is a knight at half his current level.

Even if dropped after a charge or knocked from the hand of the knight, the lance/hewing spear will always find its way back to its wielder, even if it requires someone to unknowingly picking it up and then thoughtlessly dropping it where the knight will soon be in need of it or find it after the battle ends (or even in retreat if the battle turns against the knight). In 1d20 rounds the lance/spear will be back in the possession of the knight.

However, being used in the numerous impetuous charges that the Quesadas' and the knights of the Order of Calatrava were so famous for, the lance has gained some negative effects

When holding the lance, the wielder must make a charisma save to resist charging a group of foes regardless of the current knight's HP or the size/strength of the foe. Also, a wisdom save with a CL of -4 must be made for the wielder to release the lance if he expects a battle is soon to come.

The wielder is at -2 to save vs any illusion or enchantment/suggestion/mind effecting spell (this stacks with the negative associated with the Sword of Raymond if both are possessed by the same wielder).



[14]

The Sword of Raymond

A broad sword that grew to love the skills needed in ambushes and help its wielder to master these skills. Furthermore, as many of the forces it has faced are led by or the leaders are closely supported by evil sorceress and witch doctors, it has grown dislike for these magic wielding foes. The sword's abilities are:

A +2 to hit and damage, but a +4 when attacking any evil magic user (both arcane and divine magic).

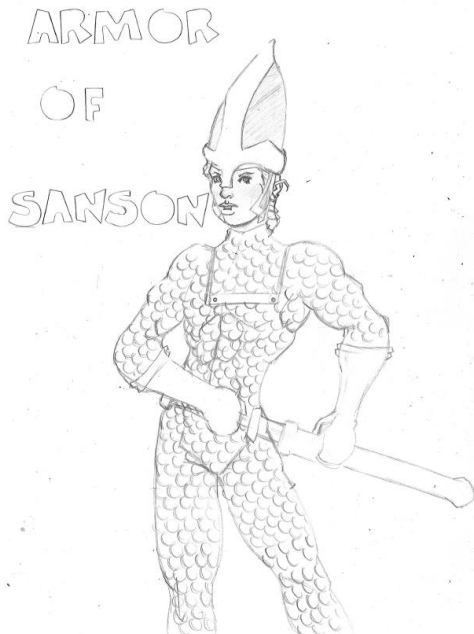
The wielder will know the general location and power of any magic user within a mile or two, if he grasps the sword's hilt and concentrated for 1d10 rounds. A wisdom check will give more accurate information – level, exact location, general spells known, etc.

When used in an ambush, the wielder receives a +4 to initiative, and the wielders followers/fellow adventures receive a +2.

The wielder has the ranger abilities of concealment and silent movement as if they were a ranger at half their current level. A ranger wielding this sword receives a +3 on these checks.

Any oath taken by the wielder while wearing the sword is difficult to break – more so if the knight is gripping any part of the sword. If a one gives an oath, he must make a charisma check to actively break the oath, if the wielder was holding the sword during the oath the check is at -4. Also, when the oath is blatantly broken, the wielder will know it, and from that point on he will know the general location of the oath-breaker.

The wielder is at -2 to save vs any illusion or enchantment/suggestion/mind effecting spell (this stacks with the negative associated with the Lance of Durand if both are possessed by the same wielder).



[14]

The Armor of Sanson

A much used and worn, but well mended and maintained, suit of armor that has been instrumental in saving the lives of many of the Quesada. Over the generations, the armor has gained abilities that help the wearer survive the numerous ill-advised attacks.

A +3 suit of knightly armor (the type is most fitting for the setting, in my case it is a chain suit reinforced with a coat of plates)

The suit, when in combat, heals 1 HP every round. This lasts as long as the knight is actively fighting, or if the knight has fallen unconscious until he is back up to 5 hp.

When the wearer goes below 10 hp (or 1/4 of their HP total if it is below 40 HP), the wearer goes “unconscious” and begins to fight defensively and attempts to strategically withdraw from the melee. This will continue until the wearer is either safely free of the combat or is at -5 hp. If he is not free of the combat, he will collapse.

If the wearer collapses while in combat, the opponents must make a wisdom check at -4 each turn to remain aware of the fallen knight's location and continue to try and kill him. If they fail the wisdom check, it can be assumed the knight was covered by a fallen combatant, fell into a ditch behind a deadfall tree etc. while the melee moves past or away from him.

The wearer is not dead until he passes below -15 hp instead of the standard -10. Also, he is immune from a coup de grace. To continue to receive damage, the attacker must roll a to hit (but modified for a fallen and helpless foe) and damage. As a note, an INT check may be needed for the foe to realize there is still a slight spark of life in the fallen knight and continue the attack after a successful hit.

Unfortunately, there is a negative effect associated with possessing the armor (possessing, not just wearing the armor). The knight is gullible and will have difficulty disbelieving a story told to him or resist a suggestion – this equates to a -4 to any wisdom check to recognize a lie or resist.

* These items have for generations fought in tandem for the Quesada, in the defense of the lands of Mancha and Alcarria. As such, if they are separated they will begin to work towards reuniting with the rest of the items under one owner. Additionally, once they are united, they will begin to work towards returning to the lands of Mancha and Alcarria and back into the hands of a member of the Quesada family. If a party so returns the gear – without being overly compelled to do so – the Quesada family and the Order of Calatrava will more than likely reward the adventures with replacement arms and armor from their vaults and treasure troves.

** This equipment is given to the current warrior knight actively filling the role of Defender of Mancha and Alcarria, there are similar (in both positive and negative effects) but less potent arms and armor used

by the younger siblings/nephews, etc. of the family. Because of this, a party may find a sword that has a +1 to hit and damage, +2 vs evil magic users, and a -2 to save vs illusions, and is tied to the family but not be the actual Sword of Raymond.

MAGIC ITEMS for the PRACTICAL JOKER

Part IV in a Trilogy

by Todd Pote © 2016

Ail Straw: This drinking straw appears to be made of thin gold tubing inlaid with silver and blue agate. If used to drink alcoholic beverages the magic of the straw will render the beverage non-alcoholic as it passes through, much to the disappointment of the imbibor in most cases. If used to drink water, dairy products, or fruit juice the magic of the straw will cause instant fermentation in the beverage, making it strongly alcoholic as it is drank through the straw. Water may become the equivalent of moonshine or vodka, dairy may turn to a form of mead or ale, juice may turn to wine or brandy. Whatever the case, the drink will be strong enough to have the imbibor severely drunk by the time the tankard/cup is finished, leaving them ailing.

Belt of Delusions: This ordinary looking leather belt with the plain dark iron buckle is another great prank item. When worn, it causes the person to start seeing things like roaches scuttling across the table from under their plate or a big poisonous looking spider crawling up the back of some unsuspecting barmaid and so forth should they fail an initial save versus magic. So while the person affected is squashing these bugs or sweeping them off of people, those around the belt wearer are seeing them swat at air or slamming things onto the table at random. These delusions last until the wearer removes the belt.

Blink Chair: This comfortable looking padded armchair looks perfect for relaxing in with a good book and beverage of choice. However, the moment someone other than the owner attempts to sit in it the chair will blink, like the spell, just as their butt is about to contact the cushion appearing up to ten feet away in a random direction. The chair will appear in the nearest unoccupied area along the generated line of travel.

Bracelets of Attraction: These thick polished silver bracelets are adorned with fancy knot-work engravings over their 1-inch wide surfaces. Always gifted in their own boxes, these bracelets have a super strong magically magnetic attraction for others of their kind within 10-feet. If people wearing these bracelets pass within 10-feet or less of each other they will be pulled together unless their strength is at least that of an ogre in which case they are allowed a STR check to resist the pull. Two of these bracelets on a single

person have the opposite reaction, causing their hands (or wherever else they might be wearing the bracelets) to violently repel each other if brought within 3-feet of its twin. Some noble 'cupids' have been known to gift such bracelets to couples they are shipping for in an effort to bring them together at any given opportunity.



[14]

Cantankerous Candles: These candles appear as nothing more than simple candles found in any craftsman's shop. The joke is that should someone try to light them, they will burn for a few seconds then extinguish themselves. No matter what manner of flame is used, they will simply not burn for more than ten seconds. The secret to getting them to stay lit is the second half of the joke. The person lighting them must try to extinguish the flame themselves within that ten second window. Should they do so, the candle will relight itself within ten seconds after being extinguished and no method of putting it out will permanently do so once it has lit itself. Again, one must simply try to light the candle after extinguishing it within that ten second window for it to stay extinguished. A lit candle of this type will burn normally like any candle should someone manage to figure out how to light it.

CHEEEEEEEEEEESE!: CHEEEEEEEEEEESE! Is usually obtained in small rounds. It looks like a pale yellow orb with a hard crust and smells absolutely delicious. Anyone who ingests even the smallest bit of this CHEEEEEEEEEEESE! will become the target of every feline, feline monster, and feline humanoid within a 1000 yard radius. The felines will pounce, claw, and bite the imbiber as if they were a large mouse and will pursue them relentlessly until the effects wear off in an hour or until a dispel magic is cast upon the victim. CHEEEEEEEEEEESE! has been

outlawed in at least one kingdom after its ruler became victim to its prank by a group of no-longer-nobles. Even regular cheese is suspect in that land.

Cowardly Blade: This sword comes in many types, always in an ornately decorated and lacquered sheath with a gold lion-headed pommel. All in all it appears as a rather expensive piece of weaponry. Until it is drawn that is. Once drawn, the pommel screams in fright like a little girl locked in a room full of spiders and the silver blade goes absolutely limp like a wet noodle. The screaming will only stop once the blade is replaced in its scabbard.

Decloaker Choker: This expensive looking piece of jewelry appears as a choker made of white gold set with cat's eye gems. When worn the choker is harmless unless hit by moonlight. Once moonlight shines upon the cat's eyes of the choker, whatever clothing or armor is worn will turn invisible leaving the unfortunate victim exposed au natural to the world and present company at large. Their choker may not be removed after this until either an hour has passed, at which point the clothing reappears, or a remove curse is cast. The 'curse' of the choker will affect even any additional clothing thrown over the victim in attempts to give them cover.

ANCIENT ENGINES & ALCHEMY

technology for Castles & Crusades
characters and castle keepers
by Kirk W. Olsen © 2016

INTRODUCTION

The engineers and alchemists of old were a self-reliant bunch, be they gnomish alchemists, simple tinkers, wise philosophers, elven glass blowers, or dwarven smiths and miners. Our history is filled with the stories of ancient thinkers, engineers, and alchemists: Enki, Imhotep, Hero, Hermes Trismegistus (Figure 6), Philo, Vitruvius [3], Homer, Artepheus, Polybius, Archimedes, Miriam the Prophetess, Frontinus, Olympiodorus of Thebes, Pliny the Elder, Al-Jazari, etc. [1]. Their skill sets, tools, and supporting communities are as widely varied as their professions and the societies which bred and fostered them (Figure 3 & Figure 4). Like the historic archetypes of warrior and priest, there is a place in the Castles & Crusades game system for the ancient alchemists and engineers as acid distillers, keepers of the secret of Greek fire, crossbow designers, siege engine chiefs, or simple sappers. The items, technology, and knowledge noted below

can be readily integrated into any current CnC campaign with a setting similar to Tolkien's Middle Earth or 1st to 13th Century style games.



Figure 3: Principles of Learning; Gages [2]



Figure 4: Principles of Learning; Math [2]

Although they worked their more permanent structures in brick, stone, and masonry as practical builders, wood and metal-reinforced wood structures were vastly more common. These early builders were also artists and architects who covered their grandest public or religious works in marble. Using curved bricks to build columns and triangular bricks to build walls. These practical engineering builders, or alchemists, created cement of hydrated lime

(calcium oxide) mixed with sand and water to permit the creation of specialized buildings and structures without reliance on quarried and manually shaped stone. They even discovered that substituting, or supplementing, the sand with a pozzolanic additive, such as volcanic ash, would produce a very hard cement, known as hydraulic mortar or hydraulic cement. They used it widely in structures such as buildings, public baths, and aqueducts, ensuring their survival for millennia. The control and manipulation of water, be it to bring clean drinking water to the people or to control the elimination of waste, is a central and driving public service which the larger cities could not survive without. Many clever inventions stem from, or were devised to, harnessing the power of moving water or to move water where it was needed (Figure 5). Larger cities, or high-density populations, had to have teams of skilled specialists, craftsmen, engineers, and alchemists just to remain functional, free of disease and draught. As A. Dale often quoted, “If necessity was the mother of invention, then the father was laziness.” The demands and pressures of urban living lead to many of history’s greatest inventions to solve problems or avoid repetitive menial tasks, which were not readily scaled, for the needs of large, dense populations.

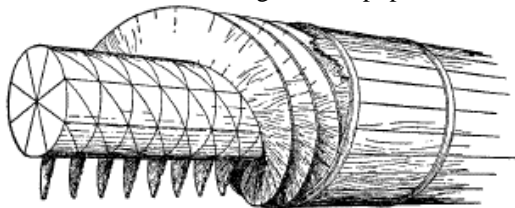


Figure 5: Archimedes Water Screw [3]

Public works, be they buildings, baths, libraries, sewers, aqueducts, water-powered mills/lifts, or canals, rarely make for exciting game play or come into CnC gaming in anything other than the background or settings. But they are needed, or at least useful, to give detail, depth, and “wonder” to larger more amazing cultural, religious, or societal institutions, colleges, or permanent structures/buildings. They could be contemporary marvels or ancient wonders of a past/lost civilization/race.

The following smaller scale items can be immediately used by both players and castle keepers as items purchased or found. They draw from the larger background of specialized engineering and alchemical skills, knowledge, and trained individuals (Figure 6) as well as from alchemy, optics, hydrology, and mechanics.

ALCHEMICAL POTIONS: See Table 16.13 of the Castle Keepers Guide (CKG) page 295.

HOURLY GLASS: This classic early glass and wood time piece measures one unit of time when the sand

passes from the upper chamber through a small opening to the lower chamber. Ex.: Three minutes, 30 minutes, or one hour are typical measured times. COST = 25 gp, WGT = 1 lbs. & EV = 1 [5].



Figure 6: Hermes Trismegistus [7]

MAGNIFYING GLASS: This simple lens allows a closer look at small objects (+2 bonus when applicable). It is useful as a substitute for flint, steel, and tinder when starting fires. Note: It takes a light source as bright as direct sunlight to focus and ignite tinder. At least a full turn is required to light a fire with a magnifying glass.

COST = 100 gp, WGT = 0 lbs. & EV = 0 [5].

SPY GLASS: Any character that looks through a spy glass will have their vision amplified by 2 to 4 times. Note: Light is required, so it cannot function with dark or deep vision.

COST = 500 - 1000 gp, WGT = 1 lbs. & EV = 1 [4].

HORSE LINIMENT: Effectively casts *cure light wounds* on four-legged mammalian herbivores when rubbed down with this liniment. Minor wounds must be tended for 3d4 rounds.

COST = 50 gp, WGT = 1 lbs. & EV = 1 [4].

SECRET COMPARTMENT RING: A seemingly simple ring of any base or precious metal that contains a small hinge behind the center piece. One dose of powder, pill, or similar dry substance can be stored and kept hidden within. The face springs open, dumps its contents, and automatically reseals in an instant with but an innocuous flick of the thumb of the same hand. This intricate mechanical device is favored by various villainous types, especially assassins and kidnappers.

COST = 35 gp, WGT = 1/16 lbs. & EV = 0 [4].

SCALE: This scale includes a small balance and pans and a suitable assortment of weights.

COST = 2 gp, WGT = 1 lbs. & EV = 1 [5].

LOCKS (SIMPLE, AVERAGE, GOOD, OR

AMAZING): These large, durable metal pad locks are custom made with one to three keys. They all operate the same for someone with a key, but to open such a lock without the custom key requires a skilled thief or a crushing blow. The higher the quality of the lock, the harder the challenge level (1, 6, 11, or at most 15).

COST = 20 to 150 gp, WGT = 1 to 2 lbs.
& EV = 1 [5].

MAGNETIC COMPASS: The needle in this device points to the north after one round of stable searching. The device requires water, or similar fluid, to fill its bowl and float the magnetized needle. Strong magnetic fields will cause error.

COST = 50 gp, WGT = 1 lbs. & EV = 1.

POWDER OF IPECAC (1 oz VIAL): The victim who consumes this powder and fails their CON save, doubles over in extreme distress and vomits for 1d6+4 rounds, unable to do anything offensive and barely able to defend themselves while in such distress. It is also used as a purgative to immediately empty the stomach of unwanted contents such as poison or disagreeable food, sometimes permitting a save from, or eliminating, secondary or long lasting effects.

COST = 75 gp, WGT = 0.1 lbs. & EV = * [4].

RUBBER COATED GAUNTLETS: These wrist-to-elbow length, normal leather gloves have been created in an equatorial land of lush tropical jungles. Various special alchemical processes are required to create the strengthened tree sap coating prior to and after its application to the leather gloves (additives, cooking, application, and final baking). These durable work gloves provide extra grip as well as electrical, water, certain chemical, and limited heat resistance to their wearer over normal leather work gloves.

COST = 65 gp, WGT = 1/16 lbs. & EV = *.

PLATO'S WATER ALARM CLOCK: This inflow-type water clock is largely immobile. It is used in an institution or town center, like Plato's school, to awaken a room of people or announce the end of a work day. A fixed vessel under constant pressure is used to fill a graded vessel (b of Figure 7) at a constant rate. Once the water reaches the top, buoyance causes an unstable bowl of lead balls (a of Figure 7) to rise and tip over, spilling the lead balls down onto a copper gong-like platter (c of Figure 7)

held by by a bronze statue. The design of the unstable bowl permits all balls to fall quickly or so slowly as to be considered the first "snooze" button.

COST = 2,500 gp, WGT = 2,200 lbs. & EV = 100.



Figure 7: Plato's Water Alarm Clock [6]

FLASK OF ACID OR BASE (GRENADE): A fragile glass flask, encased in a removable leather protective sheath, is used to store strong acids or bases. These flasks, once removed from their protective carrying sheath, can be thrown as missile weapons (the limit of short-range is just 20 feet). Any creature directly struck by the flask will be subjected to an acidic or basic burning effect that deals 1d6 damage. All creatures within five feet of where the flask breaks also receive one point of splash damage.

COST = 10 gp, WGT = 1 lbs. & EV = 1¹ [5].

FIRE-RETARDANT PASTE: Any inanimate object can be coated with this paste to be made resistant to fire, up to a maximum of 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit (simple natural fuel sources) or 33 HP of damage before the carbonized layer becomes dysfunctional. The paste must be stored in a specialized green glass jar or it loses its effectiveness in d6 hours. One jar contains enough paste to coat one medium sized full suit of armor or four large shields. Warning: Living tissue which comes into contact with even a small amount of this paste experiences a painful burning sensation for d6 rounds, suffering one point of damage each round and further garnering a 10% accumulative chance to contract a chronic disease of the skin with each successive exposure (Table 19.6 of CKG page 336).
COST = 25 gp, WGT = 1/2 lbs. & EV = 1 [4].

MEDIAN OIL (FLASK-GRENADE, BUCKET, AND NOZZLE): A fragile glass flask, encased in a removable leather protective sheath, is used to store Median Oil. These flasks, once removed from their protective carrying sheath, can be thrown as missile weapons (short-range = 20 feet). Any creature directly struck by the flask will be subjected to the sticky burning naphtha-quicklime substance that ignites when exposed to air or water. The flames deals 1d6 damage on the first round and the second

round if the target ignores the sticky substance. If the target does nothing but attempt to extinguish the flames on the second round, a DEX save is permitted to avoid the second round of burning damage. Water does not douse the flames, as the sticky substance not only floats on water but reacts violently with water. All creatures within five feet of where the flask breaks also receive one point of splash damage.

Specially constructed sealed buckets of Median Oil can be dropped or poured from above onto enemies below. Such methods cost and weigh ten times what a flask does and the damage is multiplied by four. The splash zone is ten feet doing four points of damage.

In very rare occasions Median Oil has been very carefully fitted on ships with a heated and pressurized nozzle system capable of shooting the equivalent of one bucket of Median Oil per round to a range of 50 feet. Ships equipped in this manner have saved countries from invasions! The exact ingredients and manufacturing method of this vile liquid, sometime also called Greek fire, is a closely guarded alchemist's secret.

COST = 30 gp, WGT = 1 lbs. & EV = 1¹.

SMOKE STICK: This alchemically-treated wooden stick instantly creates thick, opaque smoke when ignited. The smoke fills a ten foot cube. The stick is consumed after one round and the smoke dissipates naturally.

COST = 20 gp, WGT = 1/2 lbs. & EV = 1¹ [5].

CURATIVE POTION FOR LESSER

INFECTIOUS DISEASES: This living potion, an amalgamation of many weakened bacterium and viruses, grants the character a second and, if necessary, third save against common natural diseases in hopes of reducing their affects in d3 rounds after consumption. The second save granted is made with a +3 bonus, the third at -1.

COST = 90 gp, WGT = 1 lbs. & EV = 1¹ [4].

*Items marked with a * have no appreciable EV. If carried in bulk treat the EV as 1 per 10 items carried.*

1 The EV for these items is listed as if they were full. If they are empty, reduce the EV by 2, to a minimum of 1.

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