HACKMASTER®

HackJournal Issue #26
Summer - 2008

Welcome to the newest edition of HackJournal, the HackMaster fanzine written by Players and GameMasters around the world! Whether you profess to be the greatest fighter, magic-user, cleric or thief, you can't afford to pass up a single issue! Here's just a sampling of the inventory of secrets revealed herein:

- *Newly discovered magic items and fireball spells*
- *A Doppeljammer creature for your HackJammer campaign*
- *Manor house maps with construction and component guidelines*
- *A detailed article on riddles and how to use them in your game*
- *Special HackJournal coupons found only in this issue!*

ABOUT THE HACKJOURNAL

The HackJournal is a PDF supplement written specifically for (and by) the members of the HackMaster Association - an organization of HackMaster players and GameMasters who meet online and in person to discuss and play the HackMaster 4th edition roleplaying game. Each issue's game content contains GM's option material for the HackMaster 4th edition game system.

HackJournal is published quarterly. HMA members may submit articles for publication in future issues of HackJournal by posting on the official Submission and Editing forum of the Kenzer and Company website. Electronic and e-mail submissions are required as we cannot take responsibility for the care and feeding of any postal workers or transcriptionists.

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GAMEMASTER'S WORKSHOP:

Called Shots, Critical Hits, and You

by Jay Rutley (HMA# CAN-2-00799-03)

It is a well-known fact that HackMaster is the most realistic gaming system ever designed by man and, as such, contains a combat system with a depth that most GameMasters can never hope to fully understand. Players and GMs alike must strive to understand and utilize the various systems to the maximum potential (on their side of the screen) to secure victory. Today we shall discuss a rarely considered rules issue, that of called shots and critical hits.

Even the most wet-behind-the-years player knows that, when performing a called shot, a character scores a critical hit on a natural roll of 19 or 20 on his to-hit roll, provided the modified roll still strikes the target's AC. Although the character loses the "automatic hit" functionality of a standard critical hit, the improved chance is often well worth it. But what happens when a critical is rolled? If a character aimed for the "arm," the GM may be disconcerted to find that there are eight separate entries on the critical hit table that refer to the arm. Which should he use?

Worry no longer, proud and noble GMs, for I have amassed a sub-table which complements the original critical hit table from the *GameMaster's Guide*. This table is fairly self-explanatory in its function, but I shall endeavour to explain its use to those who may have cheated on their HMGMA exams.

First, look for the section under the target area for which the character (or monster) made a called shot, and roll d% (1d100). The result of this roll shows which section of that area is hit. *GameMaster's Guide* Tables 8HH-8JJ show the effects of the resulting critical hit.

Players may also wish to target some of the more specific body parts listed in the critical hit chart, but without any called shot modifiers. In this case, under the "To-Hit Penalty" columns, you can find modifiers to make a called shot to a specific area, as extrapolated from *Combatant's Guide* Table 5C. I cannot tell you the sacrifices the interns here made to determine these modifiers, and I ask in their memory that you refrain from sending me (or the HackMaster Association) any mathematical gobbledygook "proving" them wrong.
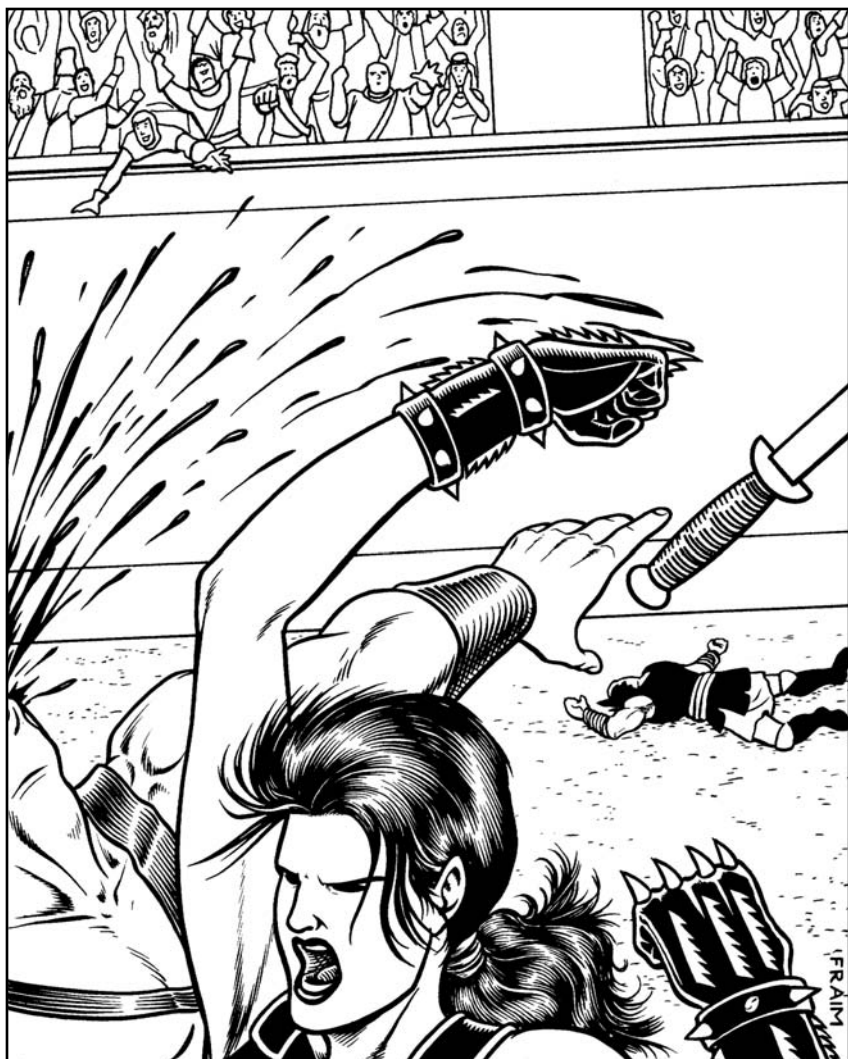
For hits on a limb that are not critical hits, the following effects apply:

Foot: Movement reduced by 50% until healed.

Ankle: Movement reduced by 50% until healed, Dexterity reduced by 2 until healed.

Leg Below Knee: Cannot use leg. Movement reduced by 50% until healed, Dexterity reduced by 1 until healed.

Leg Above Knee: Cannot use leg. Movement reduced by 50% until healed, Dexterity reduced by 2 until healed.

Groin: Movement reduced by 50% until healed, fall prone

Hand: Cannot use hand.

Finger: Drop carried items on a failed Strength check versus half the Strength value, fumble on an additional number for each disabled or missing finger (stacks with quirk).

Arm at Elbow: Cannot use hand. -2 to hit.

Arm at Shoulder: Cannot use arm or hand. -2 to hit.

Remember that any limbs disabled in this manner are not destroyed or severed and may be healed normally.

Table HJ26-1: To-Hit Penalty on Called Shots

Roll	Location	Tiny	Small	Medium	Large	Huge	Gargantuan
Foot		-8	-7	-6	-6	-5	-4
1-45	Foot, Top	-8	-7	-6	-6	-5	-4
46-47	Heel	-10	-9	-8	-6	-5	-4
48-63	Toe(s)	-10	-9	-8	-6	-5	-4
64-65	Foot, Arch	-12	-11	-10	-6	-5	-4
66-80	Ankle, Inner	-10	-9	-8	-6	-5	-4
81-96	Ankle, Outer	-8	-7	-6	-6	-5	-4
97-100	Ankle, Upper/Achilles	-10	-9	-8	-6	-5	-4
Leg		-4	-3	-2	-2	-2	-2
1-34	Shin	-6	-5	-4	-4	-4	-4
35-36	Calf	-6	-5	-4	-4	-4	-4
37-41	Knee	-6	-5	-4	-4	-4	-4
42-43	Knee, Back	-7	-6	-5	-5	-5	-5
44-47	Hamstring	-8	-7	-6	-6	-6	-6
48-82	Thigh	-5	-4	-3	-3	-3	-3
83-97	Hip	-5	-4	-3	-3	-3	-3
98-100	Groin	-6	-5	-4	-4	-4	-4
Torso		-6	-4	-2	-2	-2	-2
1-10	Abdomen, Lower	-8	-6	-4	-4	-4	-4
11-43	Side, Lower	-8	-6	-4	-4	-4	-4
44-50	Abdomen, Upper	-8	-6	-4	-4	-4	-4
51	Back, Small of	-10	-8	-6	-6	-5	-5
52-53	Back, Lower	-10	-8	-6	-6	-5	-5
54-63	Chest	-8	-6	-4	-4	-4	-4
64-65	Side, Upper	-8	-6	-4	-4	-4	-4
66-67	Back, Upper	-8	-6	-4	-4	-4	-4
68	Back, Upper Middle	-10	-8	-6	-6	-6	-6
69-100	Armpit	-10	-8	-6	-6	-6	-6
Arm		-5	-4	-3	-3	-2	-2
1-10	Arm, Upper Outer	-7	-6	-5	-5	-3	-3
11-14	Arm, Upper Inner	-7	-6	-5	-5	-3	-3
15-16	Elbow	-10	-9	-8	-8	-6	-6
17-18	Inner Joint	-10	-9	-8	-8	-6	-6
19-31	Forearm, Back	-8	-7	-6	-6	-4	-4
32-42	Forearm, Inner	-8	-7	-6	-6	-4	-4
43-62	Shoulder, Side	-6	-5	-4	-4	-3	-3
63-100	Shoulder, Top	-6	-5	-4	-4	-3	-3
Hand		-8	-7	-6	-6	-5	-4
1-19	Wrist, Back	-12	-11	-10	-10	-9	-8
20-39	Wrist, Front	-12	-11	-10	-10	-9	-8
40-59	Hand, Back	-10	-9	-8	-8	-7	-6
60-65	Palm	-10	-9	-8	-8	-7	-6
66-100	Finger(s)	-10	-9	-8	-8	-8	-8
Head		-10	-8	-6	-6	-5	-4
1-2	Neck, Front	-10	-8	-6	-6	-5	-4
3-4	Neck, Back	-10	-8	-6	-6	-5	-4
5-31	Neck, Side	-10	-8	-6	-6	-5	-4
32-62	Head, Side	-12	-10	-8	-8	-7	-6
63-66	Head, Back Lower	-12	-10	-8	-8	-7	-6
67-75	Face, Lower Side	-14	-12	-10	-10	-9	-8
76-77	Face, Lower Center	-14	-12	-10	-10	-9	-8
78-81	Head, Back Upper	-12	-10	-8	-8	-7	-6
82-90	Face, Upper Side	-14	-12	-10	-10	-9	-8
91-92	Face, Upper Center	-14	-12	-10	-10	-9	-8
93-100	Head, Top	-12	-10	-8	-8	-7	-6

ALL THINGS MAGICAL:

Newly Discovered Items from the Treasure Chests of Aldrazar

by James Butler (HMA# UK-1-01469-03)

Potion of Magical Jumping Beans

(GPV = 275, EPV = 160)

This fun potion will confuse many of the greedy and stupid creatures the PCs are likely to face. Upon being poured on a surface, the liquid immediately moulds itself into a mass of multicolored, delicious-smelling, steaming hot beans. As soon as someone approaches within 1 foot, the beans suddenly start bouncing away in random directions. If the potion is thrown across a surface, the beans animate in this manner for 1d6 rounds. All creatures with Intelligence 3-4 have an 80% chance of ceasing all action and following the pile of bouncing beans. All creatures with Intelligence 1-2 have a 100% chance to do so. If someone drinks the potion, the beans form in the imbiber's stomach. As stomachs are usually quite small, the beans will bounce around for 1d4 hours, during which the character of Size L or smaller, cannot run, attack, or do anything more strenuous than sit around moaning. A severe case of latrine squirts is not uncommon during this period.

Ruby Slippers of Teleportation

(GPV= 13,200, EPV = 2000)

Often mistaken, at first glance, for a pair of matching rubies, these jewel-based articles of footwear are worth much more. Able to grow to accommodate the feet of any elf, Pixie-Fairy, Halfling, Gnome or Gnomeling, these pinkish red, very sparkly items allow the wearer to recreate the effects of a Teleport spell, up to a distance of 20 yards in any direction which is visible (and hence, Very Familiar for all checks). All the wearer has to do is jump in the air, and click the heels together twice (requiring a Dex check with a +4 bonus, otherwise the character stumbles and falls flat). It goes without saying that male characters seen wearing such glittery items should suffer the loss of 1d6 points of Temporal Honor. Each usage requires one charge. Ruby Slippers of Teleportation are typically created with 50 charges and cannot be recharged.

Spear of Gashing

(GPV = 27,000, EPV = 2100)

In battle, this spear has a +1 attack bonus. Any successful attack that causes damage to an opponent shows the weapon's true nasty nature, adding +2 to a Critical Hit's severity level. The wound always appears ragged and scars in an ugly fashion (-1 to Comeliness if on a commonly visible body part) and the receiver bleeds like a stuck pig. Large amounts of blood seep out, just as with the Hemophiliac flaw, no matter how deep the cut. This blood loss causes 1 point of damage every round. This loss is cumulative, thus three successful strikes would make an opponent lose three hit points every round from blood loss. Furthermore, the dripping blood creates an easily discernible trail off any creature that attempts to flee. Bleeding only stops if the wound is cauterized or magically healed, or (in a worst case scenario) an hour after death.

Spear of Nailing +2

(GPV = 29,250, EPV = 2700)

As well as providing its wielder with a +2 attack bonus, this enchanted spear grants an additional benefit when used to attack multiple enemies in enclosed spaces. If thrown and the spear deals a critical hit to a target, the spear's mithril head not only penetrates that creature, but carries on, dragging the impaled victim back up to 5 feet. If up to three additional creatures are in this path, standard attack rolls should be made to see if these creatures too are damaged. If the spear skewered one or more creatures, and there is a wall or other inanimate object within its path, the weapon embeds itself into the wall. Otherwise, it simply bounces off and falls to the floor. To free himself from the spear, a creature needs to make both a successful Con check followed by a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates check to either pull himself along the shaft, or yank the spear head out of its embedded surface.

Tetron's Throwing Knife Trio

(GPV = 10,500, EPV = 1100)

This item is a single throwing knife with a jagged blade resembling a lightning bolt. The blade is always found in a black leather sheath with the silvered initials T.T. upon it. When thrown, the knife splits in mid-air, with a flash of blue light, into three identical blades. Each blade travels at the same speed and in the same direction, and all strike the same target, or up to three different targets in a 10-foot-square, at the thrower's choice. Each blade functions as the same weapon for attack purposes if all three target the same victim, otherwise separate to-hit rolls are called for. In any case, the initial blade deals +3 additional points of damage, the second deals +2, and the third deals +1 point of damage. After impacts are resolved, the magic reverts the blades back to that of a single knife ready to be reclaimed.

MAGE'S ADVANTAGE:

New Fireball Spell Variants

by James Butler (HMA# UK-1-01469-03)

Fresh from the charred pages of the Pyromancer branch of the Circle of Sequestered Magicks' research libraries come the following recently developed spells. Although very few copies are out in general circulation at the moment, the passing trade of spell copiers is slowly ensuring their spread. However, magic-users will have to pay a pretty penny to get hold of these currently popular variants of an old favorite.

Fireball, Aerial Firework (Evocation)

Level: 6
Range: 30 yds/level of caster
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: Special
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 6 segments
Saving Throw: ½ damage

Unlike other fireballs, this variant was designed specifically for incinerating air-borne enemies. When cast, a fireball shoots into the air until it is at the height specifically desired by the caster, with a limit of 20 feet per caster level. If aimed at an airborne target, the caster may add +2 to his to-hit roll, but if on the ground, he suffers a -2 penalty. Once it reaches the desired height or hits something, the fireball explodes in a colorful fashion, causing any creature caught in it to suffer 5d4 points of damage.

This explosion also casts out a further three standard fireballs, each in a random direction, but at the same height of initial explosion. These fireballs travel 20 feet in each direction before exploding in a shower of stars and sparkles. If one strikes, it deals 3d4 points of damage.

The material components for this spell are four tiny balls of bat guano, a feather, and a pinch of sulfur.

Fireball, Smoker (Evocation)

Level: 4
Range: 10 yds + 5 yds/level
Duration: Instantaneous + 3-8 rounds
Area of Effect: 20 foot radius + 10 yard/level trail
Components: V, S, M.
Casting Time: 3 segments
Saving Throw: ½ damage

This fireball variant functions much like its original, inflicting 1-4 points of damage per caster level. Where it differs, however, is that once launched from the casters hand, the Smoker Fireball releases an ungawdly amount of thick black smoke, causing all those unfortunate enough to be surrounded in it to choke and become blind with tears.

The smoke follows the line of projection, expanding to become a 5-foot-wide path. The point of impact continues to emit toxic fumes for an additional 3-8 rounds, creating 20 cubic feet of smoke per round, centered on the point of impact. The smoke causes blindness and tears to all those caught in its range, whilst the noxious, acridic smell chokes all those in the thickest parts for 1 point of damage per round. A successful Dex check allows characters to jump out of the line of fire and avoid being blinded, but will not necessarily save them from the blast.

The material components for this spell are a tiny ball of bat guano, a handful of soot, and a pinch of sulfur.

Fireball, Splatterball (Evocation)

Level: 5
Range: 10 yds + 5 yds/level
Duration: Instantaneous + 1-4 rounds
Area of Effect: 10-foot radius
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 4 segments
Saving Throw: ½ damage

Also known as the 'Ol' Greaseball', this nasty fireball variant creates an oil-based conflagration that not only bursts over the target, but also spits out flaming droplets on the way. Any target within 3 feet of the line-of-fire must succeed at a Dexterity check or be struck by 1-3 droplets of burning oil. Each droplet causes 1-2 points of damage.

If the Splatterball strikes an object, it explodes, spraying burning oil in a 10 foot diameter (burns as standard oil; see *GameMaster's Guide* p98). Any target struck by the Splatterball suffers 1d4 points of fire damage per caster level, and is coated in the flaming oil, taking an extra 1-8 points of fire damage with the impact, and 1-6 points of fire damage each additional round until the flames can be extinguished, 1-4 rounds pass, or the target is charcoaled (dead).

The material components for this spell are a tiny ball of bat guano dipped in lantern oil, and a pinch of sulfur.

Fireball, Twin-Twister (Evocation)

Level: 4
Range: 10 yds + 5 yds/level
Duration: Instantaneous
Area of Effect: See text
Components: V, S, M.
Casting Time: 5 segments
Saving Throw: ½ damage

This spell enables the caster to throw two fireballs simultaneously, striking either a 10-foot-radius with both fireballs, or two adjacent 10-foot-radius areas with one fireball each. Each fireball acts as though it was cast by a magic-user with half the caster's actual levels (round up).

The material components for this spell are two tiny balls of bat guano and a pinch of sulfur.

GAMEMASTER'S WORKSHOP:

Strength Bow Specifics

by Dave Stanford (HMA# IL-2-00591-02)

Although we all know that the true warriors are up front in melee (the game is called HackMaster for a reason), we've heard a lot of complaints from the players that are afraid of getting blood on their character's shoes. These players would like to be more effective from the back ranks with their bows. We've seen in *HackJournal 21* (in "Simplifying Friendly Fire") that bow specialists can increase the size used in shooting into melee comparison's by 2, and in *HackJournal 24* (in "Firing into Melee and Mayhem") that any fighter can get a precision targeting proficiency to increase the size by 1. So now that these wuss-of-hearts can hit their target, they want to be able to do more damage with their weapons.

The *Player's Handbook* does mention that strength bows exist (*PHB* pg 118) and could cost anywhere from 3-5 times more than a regular bow. *Goods and Gear: the Ultimate Adventurer's Guide* also implies that any bow being made into a strength bow must be a composite bow (*G&G* pg 24-25). This was just enough to whet the player's appetites who want a head start on their retreat. GameMasters everywhere started hearing the begging from their players about

how they could get a strength bow. Wise GMs have already emptied their player's pockets, so these players want to construct the bow themselves.

Here are some guidelines for a GM on what rules to use to "discourage" your players from getting a strength bow. As you know, the GM is always right, so if you want to make it tougher on those namby-pambys too scared to wield a sword, than it is your right.

A strength bow must be a composite bow. It could be long, or short, but it must be composite. Strength bows are more expensive because they are harder to make, and they take longer to make.

When crafting a composite strength bow from scratch, a very skilled bowyer is needed. While the *PHB* states that a bowyer can make a composite bow in two weeks time (*PHB* pg 322), it refers to one without any Strength bonuses. Because in making a composite bow many layers are glued together, and the glue must be allowed to set over a long period of time, the base time to make a Strength 13 composite bow with a +1 damage adjustment is one month. You can see that it would be difficult for any PC to give up the time necessary to create such a weapon. It only gets worse, however. For each increase in Strength needed to wield the bow, an additional two weeks is necessary. A 14 Strength bow requires 6 weeks, and an 18 Strength bow needs 14 weeks.

Time is not the only difficulty in making a strength bow. Because of the large internal tension that a composite

Table HJ26-2: Strength Bows

Bow Type	STR Needed	STR Bonus	Cost (gp)	Construction Time	Bowyer Check Modifier	Base Availability		
						High	Med	Low
Composite long bow	none	0	100	2 weeks	0	85	80	75
	13	1	200	4 weeks	10%	75	70	65
	14	2	300	6 weeks	20%	65	60	55
	15	3	400	8 weeks	30%	55	50	45
	16	4	500	10 weeks	40%	45	40	35
	17	5	600	12 weeks	50%	35	30	25
	18	6	700	14 weeks	60%	25	20	15
	19	7	800	16 weeks	70%	15	10	5
	20	8	900	18 weeks	80%	5	**	**
Composite short bow	none	0	75	2 weeks	0	80	75	70
	13	1	150	4 weeks	10%	70	65	60
	14	2	225	6 weeks	20%	60	55	50
	15	3	300	8 weeks	30%	50	45	40
	16	4	375	10 weeks	40%	40	35	30
	17	5	450	12 weeks	50%	30	25	20
	18	6	525	14 weeks	60%	20	15	10
	19	7	600	16 weeks	70%	10	5	*
	20	8	675	18 weeks	80%	*	*	*
Great elven bow	19	7	800	*	*	20	10	5

* GM's discretion

strength bow is under, they are more difficult for bowyers to make. For each Strength-related damage adjustment added to the bow, there is a 10% penalty to the skill check. Only a truly expert bowyer has much chance making an 18 Strength bow (+6 damage bonus) with a 60% penalty.

This large internal tension also makes creating composite bows a little dangerous. While a successful skill check signifies that the bowyer correctly layered each piece and aged the glue correctly, a failed check by up to 20% indicates the bowyer knows that he failed to make a useful composite bow. A failed check between 20%-40% means that the bow snapped, and dealt its Strength damage adjustment to the bowyer. A failure of more than 41%, or a 96-100% roll on the skill check, means that the bowyer does not realize that there is a fatal flaw in the design. However, the first person to draw the bow in combat will surely realize it, when the bow shatters and deals its Strength bonus in points of damage against the person wielding it. (If the player gives you lip about this, ask them why they think the bowyer would have even been able to draw the bow to test it.) A strength bow is completely useless to anyone without a Strength ability matching that of the bow.

Because of the difficulties in making a strength bow, players will probably insist on buying one instead of making one from scratch. Not so fast there, partner. Composite bows already start out slightly less available than regular or self long bows. Each +1 Strength bonus makes the bow 10% less likely to be available. This means an 18 Strength bow is 60% less available than a regular composite bow. The bows that are available will be more expensive. Each +1 Strength adds in a multiplier to the cost of the bow. The formula looks like (1+Strength bonus) * base bow cost. This means a composite Strength 14 long bow costs 300 gp, and a composite 18 Strength short bow costs 525 gp.

Players may have seen the elven great bow (*PHB* p 118) and wondered why that bow is so expensive. It becomes obvious from the rules above that the elven great bow is a 19 Strength bow. As *Goods and Gear* says, it's also a composite bow. It gives bonus to damage for Strength up to 19, thus allowing most any natural elf to get the maximum benefit out of it. (Unfortunately, *Goods and Gear* did misprint when they said this HackMaster bow only cost 120 gp. It is in fact 800 gp, as the *PHB* states.)

So, now you have your strength bow -- is everything done? Not quite. Normal arrows in a strength bow break much more often. They must make the saving throw vs. normal blows (see *Combatant's Guide* pg 116) with a penalty equal to the Strength bonus of the bow itself, when they hit their target. If they hit a wall, they must make a save against crushing blow with the same penalty.

RUSTLERS OF THE NIGHT:

Doppeljammer

by Charles M. Slaton (HMA# NY-1-10055-06)

Description: When not mimicking the form of another object, the Doppeljammer appears as a rectangular wooded box covered in an amorphous, pinkish slime of gigantic proportions. The mimic ship is rarely seen in this natural form but more often in the disguise of another type of ship. The Doppeljammer is a simple rectangular wooden structure 65 feet long, 20 feet wide and 2 stories high. This structure serves only as a safe home for the crew and mounts for the ship's weapons. The true Doppeljammer is the pinkish blob surrounding the box, the Mimic Helm.

Doppeljammer

Cost: 55,000 gp
Tonnage: 26 tons
Hull Points: 40
Crew: 3/26
Maneuverability Class: E or mimicked ship
Air Worthiness: by mimicked ship
Sea Worthiness: n/a water submersion frightens the Mimic
Landing: Ground only
Armor Rating: 6
Saves As: Stone
Standard Armament 1: Medium ballistae (1F, 1S, 1P) Crew: 2 each
Standard Armament 2: Heavy ballistae (2 aft) Crew: 4 each
Standard Armament 3: Light catapult (1 aft) Crew: 1 each
Cargo: 13 tons
Keel: by mimicked ship or 65 ft.
Beam: by mimicked ship or 20 ft.

The Mimic Helm is a mature House-Hunter that has been magically imbued with Hackjamming abilities similar to those of a Lifejammer helm. The same augmentations that granted the creature these powers also left it somewhat tame.

When a doppelganger allows itself to be partially absorbed by the Mimic Helm, the creature is bent to its will and becomes an extension of its body like any other helm. In addition to controlling the ship, the helmsman can control the shape changing abilities of the Mimic Helm, allowing it to assume the form of any other ship or celestial body within the tonnage of 20 tons to 100 tons, or a length of 55 feet and width of 20 feet. The Mimic Helm forms itself into the sails and rudder of the ship as well, and requires no additional crew to manipulate them for maneuverability.

The illusionary powers of the House-Hunter remain, allowing the Mimic Helm to create illusory crew to operate its "sails."

The mimic helm is powered in a similar fashion as a Lifejammer. The House-Hunter consumes creatures in order to survive. Its stomach can hold up to 15 Man-sized creatures.

The combined HD of the creatures forms the HD pool from which the ship draws it power. At tactical speeds, the ship moves at 1 SR per Hit Die spent from the pool, and can move to a max speed of SR 6. The cost to accelerate is calculated only once per 24 hour period. (If a ship accelerates up to SR 5, it can slow down and speed up freely at no additional cost for 24 hours, but must spend the additional HD point to accelerate up to SR 6.) Each "jump" into HackJamming speeds burns 1 HD from the pool.

For example, if the Mimic Helm has a HD pool of 15, having recently consumed 6 creatures (such as several low-level adventurers totaling 6 HD, and a mind flayer with 9 HD), it can now travel at SR 1 for 15 days. Alternatively, it can HackJam for 14 days, giving it 1 day of simple maneuverability. Needless to say, if the crew wants to run the ship for long, they need to feed it tougher creatures.

The Doppeljammer was created by the Arcane for a group of Doppelgangers, the only race currently able to operate the Mimic Helm without being consumed. There is currently only one Doppeljammer and Mimic Helm. However, it is only a matter of time until the Mimic Helm reproduces, or the Arcane find another buyer.

GAMEMASTER'S WORKSHOP:

Riddle Me This...

by Heather O'Malley (HMA# TN-3-00809-02)

This article is meant to be a tool for GameMasters only. If you are a player, stop reading this and find something else to read. If you keep going through this material please turn yourself in for betraying the sacred trust of a HackMaster player.

GameMasters, this article is meant to be a source of information of the long and noble tradition of the hero answering riddles, often in a life or death situation. This is true from the age of the Greeks and on. The history of riddling in the English language will show you the scope of this fine art. Hopefully this article will revive this often forgotten challenge of the hero, and many players will find their doom by answering incorrectly. Enjoy.

THE HISTORY OF RIDDLES

Riddles are generally short, puzzle-like poems in which the reader is invited to identify an object, animal, natural phenomenon or process which is described in a mysterious and sometimes playful way. These poems require intuition and logic to be able to solve. The complexity of the riddles depends entirely on which characteristics of the object are being mentioned in the body of the poem.

Old English riddles, those riddles that survive, are found in the Exeter Book, one of the four Poetic Codices written between 975 and 1025. The exact number of riddles is a matter of scholarly opinion, with some editors claiming there are 90 (e.g. Williamson) and others as many as 96 (Crossley-Holland 10), depending on how they choose to separate the text. The riddles cover a fairly broad range of subjects which reflect some of the concerns of life in Anglo-Saxon England. Some depict weaponry and warlike matters; others, items and processes (such as bookmaking) related to life in the monasteries. Several riddles describe aspects of the natural world: natural phenomena, personified animals, and plants; yet others describe household objects, farming implements and other trappings of everyday life in a primarily agricultural society (Crossley-Holland 12-14).

The riddles, like all puzzles that encourage people to see things in a new or different way, could no doubt play a role in training the mind, and those riddles dealing with scholarly or religious matters must, by the nature of their content, have served a certain educational role. Indeed, that riddles can perform a reputable intellectual function can be seen in the riddle like qualities found in many examples of Old English Wisdom Literature, such as the Maxims I and II and Solomon and Saturn II (Johnson 642). Nevertheless, the primary purpose of the Old English riddles appears to be to entertain the reader, who is challenged (explicitly or otherwise) to identify the speaker or, if the mysterious subject is not the speaker, the "creature" described (Orchard 171). Sometimes the solution is obvious, in which case the pleasure might arise from the simple charm of seeing a familiar object presented in an unusual, clever or metaphorical way. Other times, two possible solutions are built parallel to each other -- in about a dozen cases the secondary solution is "obscene" -- and it is up to the reader to decide which solution is the "right" one (Wilcox 393). Some of the riddles' solutions are lost in obscurity, and it is important to note that for several of the poems even the commonly accepted solution is by no means certain: the Exeter Book does not provide an answer key!

The majority of the riddles vary in length from about eight lines to over a hundred; some are considerably shorter, and there are even a few that are only one line long. They are constructed of four-stress lines with at least two of the stresses alliterated. The language tends to the formal, featuring many compound words and kennings, a kind of metaphorical description (e.g. the sea might be "the swan's riding-place" or "the ship's road") (Crossley-Holland 8, 15). Within these poetic parameters, however, the riddles vary considerably in literary sophistication and style, from the simple catchword-type riddle which relies on wordplay, through riddles made of straightforward descriptions of the subject's attributes, to more sophisticated riddles which go beyond simply challenging the reader and portray the object within a framework that leads the reader to consider grander themes or issues. For example, the battle-scarred shield of riddle 5 draws the mind to the plight of the wounded, hopeless, and battle-weary (Whitman 47) - the riddle leads the reader from thoughts of the inanimate subject to a consideration of a very human experience.

The Old English riddles are often compared with the Anglo-Latin enigmata poems of Aldhelm, Tatwine and Eusebius, and to a certain extent to their Late Latin predecessor, Symphosius. While the two genres are comparable in that they are both made up of riddles, which often share the same subject matter, the Latin poems differ in tone, focus (more to educate than to entertain) and in the fact that they are presented as coherent collections by known authors (Orchard 171). There is no doubt that the enigmata influenced some of the vernacular riddles (numbers 35 and 40, specifically, are direct translations of two of Aldhelm's poems) (Orchard 171; Whitman 122), but the general extent of this influence is debatable. The similarities that many of the Old English riddles are said to bear to the enigmata might indicate a conscious imitation of these sources, or they might just as easily bespeak the use by writers of both genres of a similar traditional or popular source (Whitman 110).

The authorship and dating of the riddles is also largely a matter of scholarly contention. For a period in the nineteenth century, many academics believed that all of the Exeter Book riddles were the work of one eighth-century poet, Cynewulf; this theory has since been almost unanimously discredited, although linguistic clues suggest that some of the riddles do date to the eighth century (Crossley-Holland 10). The sheer variety of styles, poetic sophistication and subject matter suggest multiple authorship; nevertheless, textual, linguistic and stylistic arguments aside, given the nature of the manuscript evidence -- passed to us through the medium of a scribe -- it seems unlikely that most specific questions of authorship or dating will ever be answered beyond a doubt.

This historical framework of medieval riddling should help GameMasters to understand the role of riddles in various medieval/ fantasy settings. Riddles have a certain complexity and a long history. They were also used as forms of entertainment and in competitions in certain fairs. Riddles were actually a common part of medieval life, something that anybody could do. In most gaming settings there is a connection between the realities of medieval Europe and the gaming worlds, based of a fantasy version of that time era. There are several types of monsters that could easily use riddles as a way to stall the party, challenge the party, or to give them enigmatic clues to lead them on their way. GameMasters would be well served by using riddles in as many settings as they can comfortably manage.

THE LOGIC OF RIDDLES

The thing that makes riddles so difficult to understand is that they make a person have to use a broad range of associations. You are not meant to think straight to an answer but rather to wind your way through the riddle until you find it. Once the answer for a riddle is known it seems perfectly obvious. Before that it seems utterly confounding, which is of course the point.

The way to work with riddles is to understand their internal rules and the way they work. If you know these rules and the logic behind them they become a bit easier to solve. This will be explored by working through the creation process of the riddle first then by analyzing a poem to see why the answer is what it is. The logic of riddles will be clear as we go through the process of creating a riddle.

To create a riddle the first thing you need is the answer. For the purposes of this riddle we will use the word "sword". This is a common object, which is what riddles often use for answers. You want to keep the word simple and straight forward as that opens up your possible associations. Now that we have the word that will be used we need to build a list of associations to it.

Some of the various connections to the word are steel, straight, hard, long, sharp, pointy, blood, stabbing, edge, hack,

slash, cold, death, war, shinny, armor, shield, encrusted, forged, honor, deceit, battle, and cross. This list of correspondences, though not complete, will help us in creating the body of the riddle. The larger the collection of correspondences the wider the possible word choices that could be used to built the frame. A good thesaurus will be really helpful when expanding your list of words to use.

Look at the list. What sorts and types of connections do you see? There are references to the blade itself, to its uses and to things it represents. Some of these can become fairly abstract making the poem deeper and more difficult. We can use all of these factors in its creation. If we work from the list of words we generated with "sword" for example we can get the following riddle:

Straight I stand, both short and tall,
Heat and cold birthed me,
Plain as a palm, jeweled like the stars
I am a tool of honor and deceit,
I am found amongst the din and crash,
What am I?

You can also take the same words and come up with a different arrangement, such as:

Though fire wrought me I have a cold heart.
I drink the blood of many who stand before me.
My touch is death, the shield my foe,
The more I sing the greater the woe.
What am I?

As you can see all of those elements of the above are there, but framed in a way to blur the distinctions. That is the way riddles are built. They are supposed to say something specific in such a way as to miss the meaning. These collections of images describing the same word demonstrate how you can expand your personal collection of riddles from collections of simple objects.

Trying to solve riddles is a process of working backwards. You have to take the images given and try to build up a collection of possible sources. Let us take one of the poems from the riddle game section of the *Hobbit*:

A box without hinges, key, or lid,
Yet golden treasure inside is hid.

Those who read the book should know that the solution to the riddle is an egg. When you know that is the answer the clues seem to be obvious. But what if you didn't know what the answer was and you had to work it out? Let's look at how this riddle means egg.

Step by step you go through the process and built your collection of images associated with the terms used. The word "box" here obviously does not refer to a specific type of square container, yet that is what you are supposed to think. The section stating "without hinges, key, or lid" should be able to give you the idea that the object is solid, and thus you are unable to open it normally. When combined with the word "box" this gives you the imagery of a hollow object that contains something. "Golden treasure" is to give you the idea of coinage, yet the yolk of an egg is obviously what is being mentioned. First you need to build up the images from the first line into a rough idea and then you go into the following lines, to reach your answer at the end.

If you take your time and work through all the possible meanings of the various words in the riddle you can arrive at the obvious solution to the riddle. There is a logical break-down of the images and words but often it takes an intuitive leap to deduce the answer in a short period of time. The best and only way to get really good at riddles is to read a large number of them, analyze them and to write your own. This can give you practice with the form of riddles and how they are made. That in turn can expand a GM's arsenal to include the oldest of games.
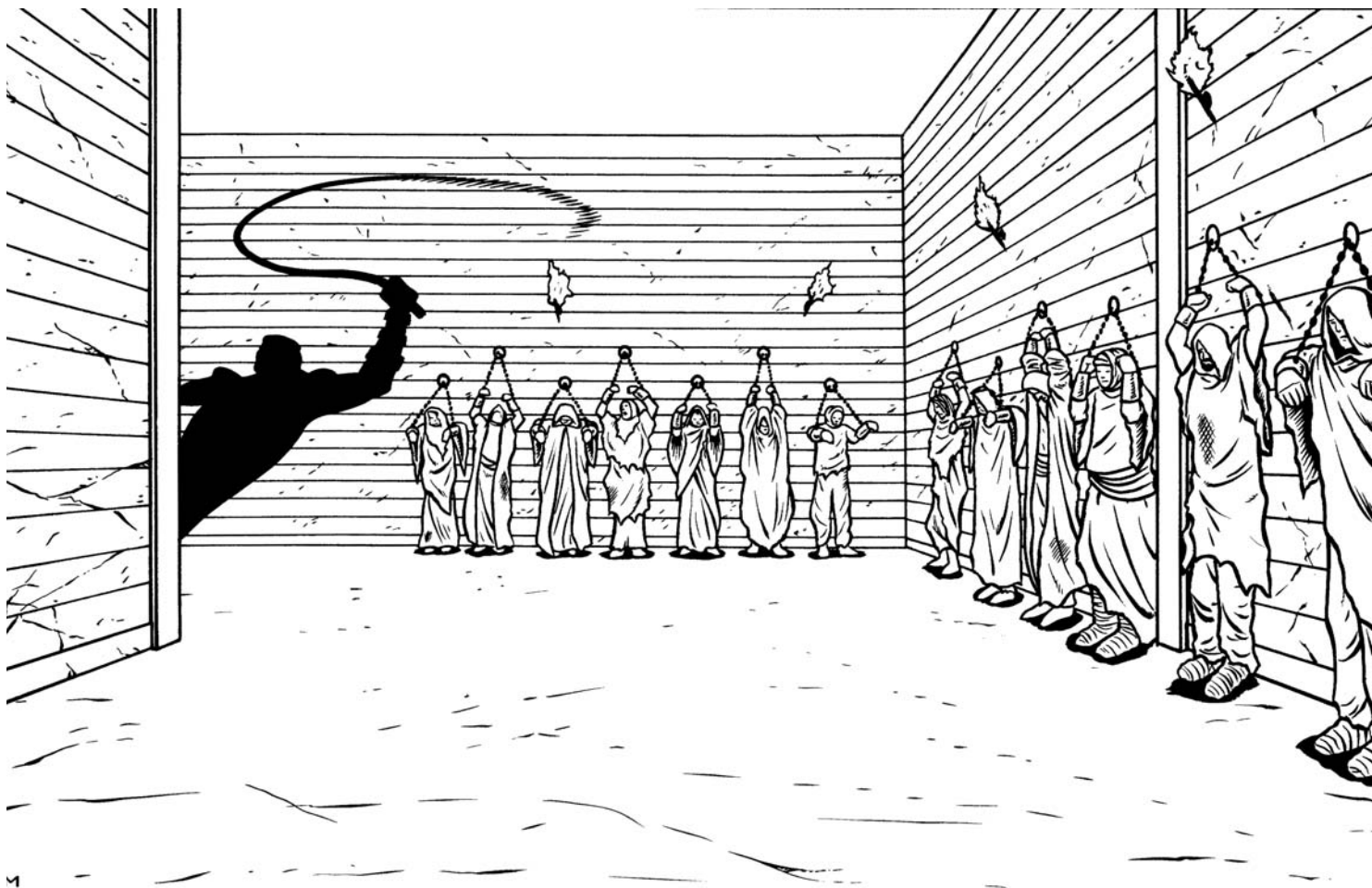
As mentioned above, there is a good section on riddles in J.R.R. Tolkien's *Hobbit,* and there is also a good section on riddles in the fourth book of the *Gunslinger* series by Stephen King.

Now, I leave you with a riddle to enjoy.

Often held but never touched,
always wet but never rusts,
often bites but seldom bit;
to use me well you must have wit.
What am I?

Have fun!

Answer: A tongue.

Failing to correctly answer a riddle can have dire consequences...

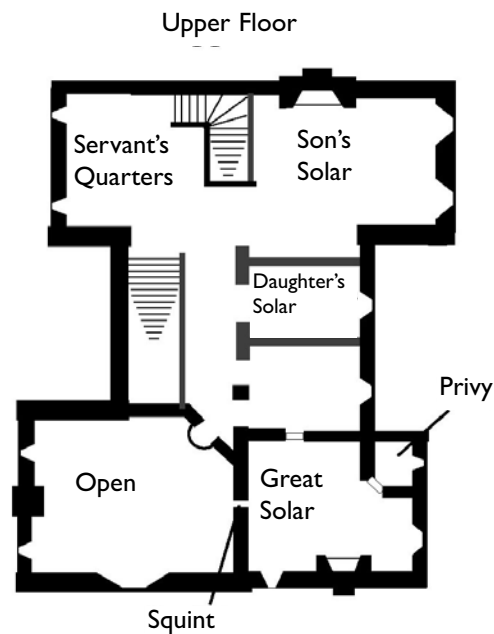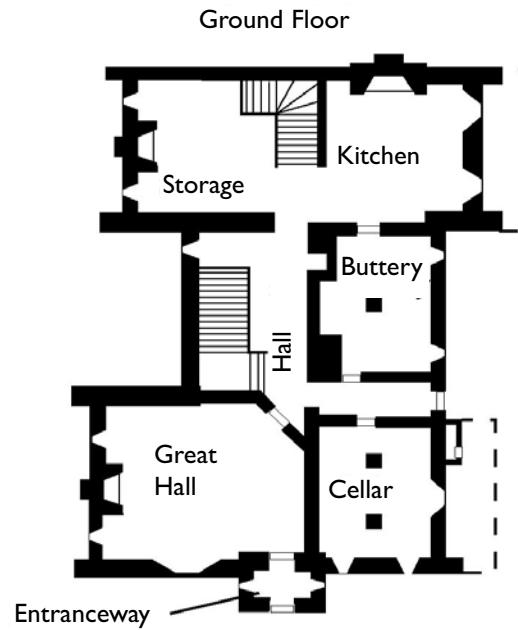# A HACKER'S GUIDE TO ALDRAZAR:

Manor House Maps

by James Montney (HMA# MI-2-01486-03)

MEDIUM STONE MANOR HOUSE

Ground Floor

COMPONENTS

1 Great Stone Building: 300 weeks, 10,000 gp
1 Wooden Wall: 1 week, 5 gp
3 Stone Walls: 90 weeks, 1,500 gp
7 Stone Buttresses: 14 weeks, 105 gp
23 Flagstone Floors: 46 weeks, 2,300 gp
1 Stone Stair: 5 weeks, 50 gp
6 Fireplaces: 12 weeks, 120 gp
27 Arrow Slits/Windows: 27 weeks, 189 gp
6 Wooden Doors: 6 weeks, 60 gp
3 Iron Doors: 9 weeks, 300 gp
25 Flagstone Roof Pieces: 50 weeks, 2,500 gp
3 Pillars: 9 weeks, 150 gp

TOTAL: 569 weeks (or about 300 weeks if worked simultaneously), 17,429 gp

Upper Floor

Legend

Fireplace
Window
Dressed Stone
Wood

Scale
0   7 m
0   25 ft

LARGE STONE MANOR HOUSE

Ground Floor

Cess Pit

Stables

Servants Quarters

Servants Quarters

Buttery

Cellar

Cold Stores

Entranceway

Entranceway

1st Floor

Privy

Workshop

Son's Solar

Kitchen

Great Hall

Murder Holes

Murder Holes

2nd Floor

Privy

Great Solar

Waiting Chamber

Squint

Open

Squint

Daughter's Solar

Small Tower

COMPONENTS
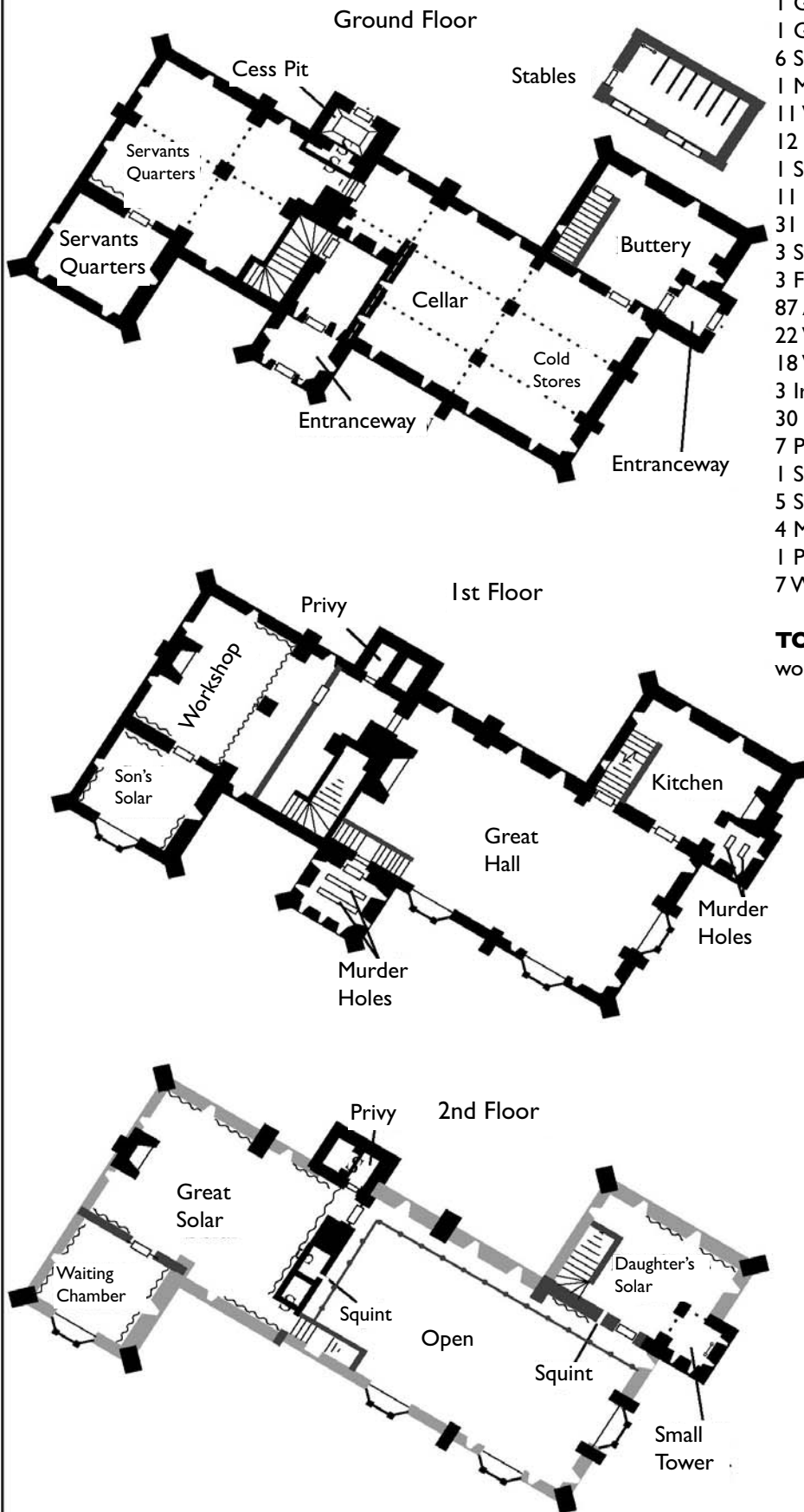
1 Grand Stone Building: 600 weeks, 19,000 gp
1 Great Wood Building: 40 weeks, 200 gp
6 Small Stone Buildings: 384 weeks, 12,000 gp
1 Medium Wood Building: 12 weeks, 60 gp
11 Wooden Walls: 11 weeks, 55 gp
12 Stone Walls: 360 weeks, 6,000 gp
1 Small Square Tower: 280 weeks, 7,000 gp
11 Stone Buttresses: 22 seeks, 165 gp
31 Flagstone Floor Sections: 62 weeks, 3,100 gp
3 Stone Stairs: 15 weeks, 150 gp
3 Fireplaces: 6 weeks, 60 gp
87 Arrow Slits: 87 weeks, 87 gp
22 Windows: 22 weeks, 154 gp
18 Wooden Doors: 18 weeks,90 gp
3 Iron Doors: 9 weeks, 300 gp
30 Flagstone Roof Sections: 60 weeks, 3,000 gp
7 Pillars: 31 weeks, 350 gp
1 Squint: 3 weeks, 100 gp
5 Secret Doors: 15 weeks, 250 gp
4 Murder Holes: 4 weeks, 40 gp
1 Pit: 8 weeks, 25 gp
7 Wooden Catwalks: 7 weeks, 70 gp

TOTAL: 2,472 weeks (or about 600 weeks if worked simultaneously), 52,256 gp

Oriel Window

Fireplace

Window

Dressed Stone

Wood

Wattle/Daub

Ladder

Tapestry

-N-

Scale
0 .... 7 m
0 .... 40 ft

GAMEMASTER'S WORKSHOP:

Coupons at Random

by John Costa (HMA# CA-1-10248-08)

Fellow hackers, it is my privilege to write regarding a unique area of our game - the coupons. As a returning gamer (after a nearly four year hiatus), I quickly came back to a game I love. I flipped through the pages and always laugh at the coupons, both ingenious to me, and fruitless, as I never use them. You see, tthere are dilemmas to coupon usage. For some, the GM simply won't allow it. To others, the thought of tearing pages out of their precious tomes tears them up as well. There is also the chance that one player owns all the books and doesn't want to share. Well, here's a twist that just might bring coupons back into play.

Gather all the available player coupons and put them into a paper bag (or anything that will conceal them). Next, gather up all the GM coupons. These will be at your disposal, so just keep them in a handy location. Next, allow the players to roll dice to decide their draw order and allow them to draw a number of coupons of your choosing. (I use three for my group.) The cards are not transferable, of course, so if your players try to trade them, you're fully within your right to slap the culprits with a roll on the HSST. Remind the players that they can play their coupons anytime during the session, and once a decision to place a coupon into effect has been declared, that decision is final.

What if the players want to wait for that "right moment" to use their coupons? Simply notify them that they only have one game session to use the cards in their hands, and that after the game they return to the draw pile. This will make them itchy to use a "good" coupon. Meanwhile, you have your entire arsenal to fire back with. The more plays they make, the more punishment. Once they redeem a coupon, it returns to the draw pile, waiting for another brave player to chance its usage once more. Now, it's not all bad for the player. A coupon can potentially be life-saving, or even bestow benefits. This is good for them, and their teammates may even survive your retribution - once or twice...

C. MORENO '04

HackJournal Coupon Sheet

Limit one printed sheet per HMA member. Three rolls on the HSST (GMG p132) are recommended for anyone caught using multiple sheets. Coupons are invalid if removed from coupon sheet, if validation area is incomplete, or in the hands of non-HMA members. This sheet expires three (3) months after GM validation. Limit one use of one coupon per HMA member per game session. Not valid in conjunction with any other coupon/sheet. The GM should write his initials and the date on the face of each coupon after it is used.

VALIDATION AREA

MEMBER NAME: _____

MEMBER HMA#: _____

GM SIGNATURE: _____

HMGMA#: _____   DATE: _____

PLAYER COUPONS

HACKJOURNAL COUPON

BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB
Receive *Metempsychosis*
(150 gp value)

To Redeem: present sheet to Game Master. No cash value. Authorized by the H.M.P.A.
Limit one coupon per player per gaming session. Not valid in conjunction with any other coupon.

HACKJOURNAL COUPON

IRON GUTS
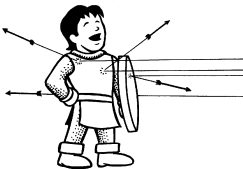
Play to gain a +1 bonus on saving throws vs. Poison

To Redeem: present sheet to Game Master. No cash value. Authorized by the H.M.P.A.
Limit one coupon per player per gaming session. Not valid in conjunction with any other coupon.

HACKJOURNAL COUPON

SNEAKY...

Automatic success at a Move Silently check

To Redeem: present sheet to Game Master. No cash value. Authorized by the H.M.P.A.
Limit one coupon per player per gaming session. Not valid in conjunction with any other coupon.

HACKJOURNAL COUPON

JUST KIDDING!

Play to negate a fumble

To Redeem: present sheet to Game Master. No cash value. Authorized by the H.M.P.A.
Limit one coupon per player per gaming session. Not valid in conjunction with any other coupon.

GAMEMASTER COUPONS

HACKJOURNAL COUPON

HUH... THAT'S WEIRD...

Automatic failure of a skill check

To Redeem: present to Players. No cash value. Authorized by the H.M.G.M.A.
Limit one coupon per Player per gaming session. Not valid in conjunction with any other coupon.

HACKJOURNAL COUPON

BAD MEAT

Gain the Flatulent quirk for 24 hours

To Redeem: present to Players. No cash value. Authorized by the H.M.G.M.A.
Limit one coupon per Player per gaming session. Not valid in conjunction with any other coupon.

HACKJOURNAL COUPON

PACKING IT IN

Entire party subject to alignment and encumbrance audits

To Redeem: present to Players. No cash value. Authorized by the H.M.G.M.A.
Limit one coupon per Player per gaming session. Not valid in conjunction with any other coupon.

HACKJOURNAL COUPON

MASTER THIEF

All party members lose 20+3d10 gp.

To Redeem: present to Players. No cash value. Authorized by the H.M.G.M.A.
Limit one coupon per Player per gaming session. Not valid in conjunction with any other coupon.

FROM THE CUBICLE OF THE CHANCELLOR:

HackJournal Submissions Needed!

by Mark Plemmons (HMA# IL-8-00005-01)

That's right - we're looking for more submissions to the HackJournal! Although we've got quite a few articles that have received editorial feedback, too many of them are languishing without further attention from their authors. We even have articles that could be published, if we only had the author's release form! So if you're one of these authors, or an HMA member who has never submitted an article before, now's the time when we need your help!

You can find full details on submitting an article to HackJournal simply by going to our discussion forums at http://www.kenzerco.com, scrolling down to the HackMaster HackJournal forum, and opening the thread entitled "HackJournal submission FAQ and release form." You can read the FAQ there and download the release form at the same time!

CATEGORIES

Players' Advantage - things important to players (including skills, talents, advice, etc)

GameMaster's Workshop - things important to GameMasters

Behind the Shield - advice on designing adventures, tournaments, and other GM advice

All Things Magical - magical items

Mage's Advantage - articles on magic-user spells, etc.

Havens of Hack - plot hooks / extended encounters

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly - three NPCs (please label each NPC as a "Good", a "Bad", or an "Ugly")

Rustlers of the Night - new monsters

Garweeze Wurld: The Waylands - articles on the fan-created region known as the Waylands (towns, countries, armies, notables, etc)

War Stories - general advice for the game

A Day in the Life - fiction from the point of view of a monster that gives insight into said monster

Ladies HackJournal - articles aimed at female players and characters

Plus whatever else you can think of!

SENDING YOUR ARTICLE

Go to the HackJournal Article Submission and Editing Forum. Start a thread and post your article within. Only you (the author) will see your own threads. Editors will see all threads. (What does this mean to you? It means you'll always know exactly what's going on with your article!)

STAGES OF THE EDITING PROCESS

A group of selected HMA members are your editors. They have the ability to read everyone's articles and post replies (comments) to them.

It is the author's responsibility to consider an editor's comments and make any necessary changes to the article. After changes have been made, the author should repost the revised article in the same thread. If an author disagrees with editorial comments, he should post his problems so that he and the editor(s) can discuss the article in that thread.

Once at least three editors have posted (within that thread) that they approve the article, no more changes need to be made. The third editor to post approval should email HMA HQ and inform them that the article is ready for publication.

"DEAD" HACKJOURNAL ARTICLES

If you already posted an article, and no editor has given a response in some time, then post again in that thread with a reminder request for editors, so it will "bump" your article post back to the top of the list. If more time passes with still no feedback, "bump" your article again. At this point, you may want to email HMA HQ and ask for feedback. (Provide a link to that thread in your email – HMA HQ will respond in that thread or via email.)

LEGAL FORMS

Remember, before we can print your article, we need a signed copy of what we call the Exhibit C, or Assignment of Rights, form. This is your signed permission for us to use what you've written. You can find a PDF of this form simply by going to our discussion forums, scrolling down to the HackJournal forum, and opening the thread entitled "HackJournal submission FAQ and release form."

The fastest method is to fax it to us at 847-680-8950. If you don't have access to a fax machine, you could download the form, print it, sign it, rescan it as a grayscale JPEG (72 to 300 dpi), and electronically attach it to your post. You can also email it directly to hma@kenzerco.com.

Alternatively, you can print it, sign it and mail it to us.