



## CASTLE ZAGYG: THE WORKHOUSE of Yggsburgh Town

by Jeffrey P. Talanian

*"When life is fraught by debt or indigence, the most impoverished citizens of Yggsburgh are sentenced to serve at The Workhouse . . ."*

The Workhouse of Yggsburgh is a large, walled in, cruciform-shaped complex where debtors, orphans, paupers, the elderly and infirm are placed for relief of want. Treated briefly in *Castle Zagyg Vol. I, Yggsburgh* by Gary Gyga, this comprehensive version of the encounter area is drawn directly from the forthcoming module, *Yggsburgh Town: Town Halls District* from Troll Lord Games.

Within this encounter you will find such notable non-player characters as the Warden of Debtors, Brandon Beasley; the corrupt Captain of the Guard, Basil Holdar; and the rotund cleric of Berchta, Pious White. Workhouse security and staff are also detailed, as well as officer and inmate uniforms, workhouse life (admission, inmate classification, rules & regulations, daily routine), and detailed descriptions of the entire complex. This excerpt also includes an adventure hook, detailed maps, and a malign fey-creature drawn from folklore, the spriggan.

### THE WORKHOUSE

**Reason:** Should the characters suffer indigence or are otherwise sentenced to serve for debts accrued, this is the place they will be sent.

**Sign:** Under the Yggsburgh coat of arms, an inscription reads, *"For the Instruction of Youth, The Encouragement of Industry, The Relief of Want, The Support of Old Age, and The Comfort of Infirmary and Pain."*

### ENCOUNTER: Released from the Workhouse.

The Workhouse is a large building complex of 120-foot frontage, with basement and four floors above it. It has a staff of 14 guards and 16 servants. The average inmate population is around 170 persons, though up to 250 inmates can be accommodated. The Office of the Warden of Debtors is located here. He is in charge of the Work House and income paid down on the debt by inmates.

This structure is built of rough-hewn, ashlar stonework, a walled in cruciform design with supervisory octagonal hub. The square-walled perimeter is a 12-foot single-story structure containing workshops and utility blocks that enclose the inmates' exercise yards.

**Guards.** There are 14 guards serving here. In charge is the Warden of Debtors, Master Brandon Beasley, a square-jawed man with beady eyes and broad shoulders. He is assisted by Captain of Guards, Basil Holdar, a tall man of grizzled countenance and gray-streaked hair. Neither involve themselves in combat save in the direst of circumstances, such as if the town is at war. They supervise four Serjeants of the Guard and eight guards, together maintaining order in the Workhouse.

**WARDEN OF DEBTORS, MASTER BRANDON BEASLEY** (He is a 5th level, lawful neutral, human fighter whose vital stats are HP 25, AC 12/18. His primary attributes are strength, constitution, and dexterity. His significant attributes are strength 13, dexterity 16. He carries a longsword, club, and dagger. When arrayed for battle he wears chainmail hauberk and also carries a medium shield)

**CAPTAIN OF GUARDS, BASIL HOLDAR** (He is a 6th level, lawful neutral, human fighter whose vital stats are HP 30, AC 12/17. His primary attributes are strength, constitution, dexterity. His significant attributes are strength 16, dexterity 16. He carries a bastard sword, club, and dagger. When arrayed for battle he wears a chain hauberk.)

**SERJEANTS OF THE GUARD x4** (They are 3rd level, lawful neutral, human fighters, HP 15, AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry scale mail, shortsword, and club.)

**GUARDS x8** (They are 2nd level, lawful neutral, human fighters, HP 10, AC 13. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry studded leather, club, and dagger.)

**Priest.** There is one cleric serving the Workhouse. He is in charge of examining admitted inmates (casting *cure disease* as necessary), holding chapel services, and instructing youths. Pious White is a rotund man, tonsured, with heavy jowls, ruddy cheeks, pointy nose, and close-set eyes. He is a priest of Berchta, the major goddess of cleanliness and industry. He wears a black cassock (long, close-fitting garment), sandals, leather phylactery, and a helmet-shaped cloth hat colored magenta. Pious White is entrusted with the religious education of boys and girls, three hours per day, six days per week. He is unsparing of the rod with naughty boys.

**PIOUS WHITE** (He is a 7th level, lawful neutral, human cleric of Berchta whose vital stats are HP 27, AC 10. His primary attributes are intelligence, wisdom, charisma. He carries a staff and 4 potions of *cure disease*. Clerical spells: 0-5, 1st-4, 2nd-3, 3rd-2, 4th-1.) He is not given to combat save in direst of circumstances.

**Staff.** The serving staff of sixteen attends to the aged, infirm, and youngsters under seven years of age. They tend to the stable and see to the conveyance of materials trucked in and out of this location. They also oversee the kitchen, larders, and bakehouse, among other duties. Some of the staff reside in loft apartments above the stable house just outside the workhouse proper. The serving staff are paid though must pay for their own food and accommodation space, so they net about a copper a day.

**SERVING STAFF x16** (These are simple commoners.)

**Law Officer Uniforms.** The uniforms of the Law Officers working here are indigo (navy blue), yellow-striped surcoats and stockings, like cloaks in colder weather. All surcoats and cloaks have a red badge on them. The Warden has one with a gold mace, his Captain a silver one. Serjeants have three silver staves in upright position, the guards have a pair of them.

**Inmates Uniforms:**

**Men.** Men are provided shirts of a pattern of broad, vertical stripes of washed out blue on an off-white background, with ill-fitting trousers tied with cord below the knee. In cold weather, they may be afforded a coarse jacket while working in the yard.

**Women.** The women wear a shapeless, ankle length dress of similar pattern. Beneath these exterior garments underdrawers are worn, a shift and long stockings, with a poke bonnet on their heads.

**Boys.** Boys are provided a uniform like that of men, though these are often improperly sewn and too long, so as to provide for growth but impeding movement nonetheless.

**Girls.** Girls are provided a dress of stout woolen material, good for winter, but generally worn all the year round.

### WORKHOUSE LIFE

The Workhouse employs paupers and the indigent at profitable work, whether they be needy or criminal, young or old, infirm, healthy, or insane. It is difficult to distinguish this place from a house of correction, and this is the intent. Conditions are deliberately harsh and degrading in order to discourage the poor from relying on relief.

*Admission.* A pauper requesting relief or a debtor so sentenced to serve must sit in the waiting room prior to being interviewed. They are searched, then conveyed to the appropriate receiving ward -- men, women, boys, and girls; families are thus split up at this point. At the receiving ward the inmate is stripped (former clothes being cleaned and stored), washed, and issued a uniform. Here they remain until examined by the attending cleric (Pious White), who will treat them (if necessary) and determine to which classification (see below) they belong. The inmate is then conveyed to the appropriate ward.

*Inmate Classification.*

- Children (boys and girls) under 7 years of age.
- Boys ages 7 to 12.
- Able-bodied men, and young men of age 13+.
- Aged and/or infirm men
- Girls ages 7 to 14.
- Able-bodied women, and young women of age 15+.
- Aged and/or infirm women.

*Rules and Regulations.*

1. All inmates (except the sick, aged and infirm, and young children) shall rise, be set to work, leave off work, and go to bed as dictated. They shall be allowed intervals for their meals as notified by the ringing of a bell. During such times of meals, silence, order and decorum shall be maintained.
2. Boys and girls shall for at least three of the working hours every day be instructed in the principles of the Tenoric Faith, and other such instruction so calculated to train young people habits of usefulness, industry, and virtue.
3. Diet of the inmates shall be so regulated as in no case to exceed in quantity and quality of food so prescribed, with the ordinary diet of the able-bodied laborers be greater than that of the aged and infirm.
4. Any inmate residing in the workhouse of his or her own free will (and not sentenced to serve by judge or law enforcer) may quit the workhouse at any time. The Warden must be provided three hours previous notice; however, no able-bodied inmate having a family may so quit without taking the whole of such family with him or her, unless the Warden otherwise directs. Nor shall any inmate, after so quitting the house, be again received into the house without a court order.
5. Any inmate who neglects to observe the rules as are applicable to him or her; who shall make any noise when silence is ordered; use obscene or profane language; by word or deed insult or revile any other inmate in the workhouse; who shall not duly cleanse his or her person; neglect or refuse to work; or pretend sickness; and/or disobey any of the legal orders of the Warden or other superintendent, will be deemed disorderly and shall be placed in apartments provided for such offenders or shall otherwise be distinguished in dress and placed upon such diet as the Warden shall prescribe.

*The Daily Routine.* The workhouse day begins when the rising bell rings out at dawn. After prayers, breakfast follows. Inmates then work (see below) from 7:00am until noon. After an hour for lunch, work resumes until supper from 6 to 7pm. This is followed by evening prayers, then bed by 8pm at the latest:

- breaking stones to be sold for road making (this done in the exercise yard)
- oakum picking — teasing out the fibers from old hemp ropes to be sold to the shipwrights.
- corn grinding using mill stones to make flour
- crushing gypsum (used in plaster manufacture)
- chopping wood (this done in the exercise yard)
- laundry— cleaning uniforms.
- sack making (cloth and burlap)
- kitchen duty — cooking or serving food to other inmates, stocking the stores and larder.
- piggery duty — cleaning the piggery, feeding the pigs, slaughtering the pigs.

- shoveling coal, carting coal
- Inmates can also be hired out as cheap labor to other locations as dictated by the Warden per need of the town, such as the Municipal Plumbing Supply (*Town Halls District #1*) or Town Lumberyard (*Town Halls District #4*).

*Discipline.* Discipline is strict, and unruly inmates are dealt with harshly. Refusal to work or attend a chapel service can result in a bread and water diet and/or confinement, as will impertinent language used against a guard. Indecent language or profanity can result in hard labor for three weeks. Fleeing the workhouse with an inmate uniform will result in a flogging at the whipping post; fleeing debtors sentenced here may be branded and sent to the gaol. Naughty boys will be flogged at the whipping post, and this happens nearly every day, as all boys are naughty -- it's axiomatic!

**GROUND FLOOR**

*Waiting Hall.* Where inmates wait to be processed.

*Searching Room.* Where inmates are stripped, searched, and cleaned before being sent to a receiving room.

*Porter's Room.* Where staff will store inmates clothes and possessions; where inmates uniforms are stored.

*Boys and Girls School.* Where boys (up to age 12) and girls (up to age 14) are instructed in virtues of the Tenoric Faith by Pious White, including lectures on being industrious and responsible citizens.

*Bread Room.* Where bread from the Bakehouse is crated and stored.

*Bakehouse.* Where dough is rolled on a large table and bread is baked in a large brick oven.

*Flour and Mill room.* Where flour is ground and stored in cloth sacks.

*Coals.* Where coal (brought up from the basement) is stored for the central hub furnaces, kitchen, and bakehouse.

*Work Rooms.* There are five work rooms. One for women, girls, and boys, respectively, and two for men. (Refer to "The Daily Routine" above.)

*Receiving Rooms.* There are four such wards where admitted inmates spend two days being treated and interviewed. Washing rooms are adjacent to these.

*Laundry.* Where female inmates launder.

*Refractory Ward.* Where rule-breakers can be confined.

*Dead House.* Where the dead are placed until cremation at a local temple.

*Piggery and Slaughterhouse.* Where pigs are raised and butchered.

*Kitchen, Larder, Scullery.* Where inmate nourishment is produced.

*Day Rooms.* Of variable use. Where the old and infirm sit during the day, and also children under 7. When inmate population is high, these rooms can be converted to bedrooms.

*Yards.* The yards are used for both work and after lunch break time/exercise. The men's yard has a well.

*Serjeants' Station.* Where the four Serjeants of the Guard keep office and station, with water closet within.

**FIRST FLOOR**

*Guard Station.* Where the entire guard staff of 14 meet to break shifts, discuss duties and issues, etc. Adjoining here are a Captain's office, strong room (with 500-1,500 gold in mixed coin), and closet.

**GIRLS' BEDROOM.** Eight double beds here in which up to 25 girls (ages 7-14) can sleep.

**MEN'S BEDROOMS.** Two rooms, each with 10 single beds. These two bedroom usually reserved for the aged and infirm, as less stairs are involved.

**WOMEN'S BEDROOMS.** Two rooms, each with 10 single beds. These two bedroom usually reserved for the aged and infirm, as less stairs are involved.

**DINING HALL.** Where meals are served in shifts to men, women, and children.

**CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS.** These are the private quarters of Captain Basil Holdar who resides here alone, with no external family to speak of. He is provided a water closet and storage closet. Holdar has a good eye for talent. He will summon select inmates whom he believes can be of other use -- the young and clever orphan with a knack for thespianism, for example. Such persons are conveyed to the Beggarmaster, "Alf" Drumly (*CZY encounter #51*) for training. A young man or woman who declines the "offer" is threatened with pillory time at the gaol. A secret tunnel is located in the coal storage wing of the basement, and this is where the conveyance takes place. The Warden is unaware of this operation. (See **basement** for more.)

## SECOND FLOOR

**BOARD ROOM.** Where the staff is assembled by the Warden of Debtors to discuss issues and policies. Clerk's office is used by staff who scribe paperwork, with adjacent records storage and supply closet.

**BOYS' BEDROOM.** Eight double beds here in which up to 25 boys (ages 7-12) can sleep.

**MEN'S BEDROOMS.** Two rooms, each with 10 single beds.

**WOMEN'S BEDROOMS.** Two rooms, each with 10 single beds.

**CHAPEL.** Devoted to Berchta, the major goddess of cleanliness and industry. In the northwest and southwest corners are *holy water* basins. Oak pews line the center of the nave, with side aisles for standing. In fresco running between the windows north and south walls is a pastoral scene of laborers threshing a field of corn. They are all handsome, smiling people, seemingly joyful to be at work. The pulpit has a beechwood altar, and behind the altar are stained glass windows. Two staff members assist Pious White in services; he also has choir boys sing at the dawn service. When holding a service or ceremony, the priest will don a surplice (white gown with wide sleeves) over his cassock and a fiddleback chasuble (sleeveless, hooded vest) over all. The vest is magenta, embroidered with runes of the Tenoric faith and a depiction of Berchta -- an old woman with beady eyes and a long nose.

**PRIEST'S QUARTERS.** This is where Pious White resides alone. He has a vestry closet (also with propitiate materials) and a water closet.

## THIRD FLOOR

**Children's Bedroom.** One large bedroom with 15 double beds in which up to 50 children (boys and girls under 7 years of age) are placed.

**Women's Bedroom.** One large bedroom with 23 single beds.

**Men's Bedroom.** One large bedroom with 23 single beds.

**Warden of Debtors Office.** Where the Warden of the Workhouse will hold private meetings with select individuals, such as politicians, judicial officials, and noblemen.

**Warden's Lounge/Dining Hall.** Where the Warden's family gather. Master Beasley has a wife, Mistress Constance, and two young children. Dining table, bronze wall sconces, brass chandelier, imported rug from the Far East (worth 500 gp), ivory chess set (worth 250 gp), cushioned chaise lounge, and family portraits.

**Warden's Master Bedroom.** Where the Warden and his wife rest; four-poster, oak armoire, oak bureau, and bookshelves. One drawer in the bureau has a false bottom under which 750 gp worth in assorted gems are stashed.

**Guest Bedrooms.** One for the children, the other kept vacant for guests. Each with two beds, bureau, and armoire.

## BASEMENT

The basement of the Workhouse is a low-ceiling (5-foot) flagstone slab floor with surrounding foundation of stone block and mortar. It is of cruciform shape, like the building above, the central hub being noted for its large furnace where inmates will shovel coal.

**Hub.** The furnace pipes heat to the entire central hub, lead flues running in the walls.

**North Wing.** Emergency Ward. Kept with several pallets and straw mattresses in the instance that the Workhouse becomes overpopulated. Up to 50 additional inmates can be placed here in dire circumstances.

**South Wing.** Storage area for surplus tools (many in need of repair) and materials used in the work rooms.

**East Wing.** Where food stores are kept, such as kegs of beer, barreled wheels of cheese, and sacks of lentils and grain.

**West Wing.** Where coal and chopped wood is stored for the furnace. Coal is trucked to the ground floor coals room, then conveyed to this location, for lack of a basement service entrance.

There is a secret door here that leads to the Thieves' Guild Underground (CZY encounter #52). When the Captain of the Guards Basil Holdar so arranges, young inmates of potential are sent here to shovel coal. From here they are conveyed to the Beggars' Brotherhood (CZY encounter #51) via secret passage by a pair of spriggans -- malign little people with furry bodies, large luminous eyes, and long tails. The potential "beggars" are brought directly to the Beggarmaster by recommendation of the Captain, who receives supplemental income from this endeavor. The Warden of Debtors is

quite unaware of his main man's duplicity, this potentially resulting in conflict between the two should the Castle Keeper wish to further develop this hook.

**SPRIGGANS x2** (*These chaotic evil creatures are HD 1d8, HP 7, AC 17.*

*Their primary attributes are physical. They carry a dagger and two darts.*

*Special: invisibility, confusion.)*

The spriggans will always arrive *invisible* before the scheduled meeting time so as to assess the situation. If they feel the situation is dangerous or otherwise threatens the secrecy of the Underground, they will hide and then flee to inform their leader. When attacking they will do so while *invisible*, one attempting a touch attack to *confuse* the opponent while the other attacks with a weapon.

## ADVENTURE HOOK: Released from the Workhouse.

What follows is a hook that "brings the party together" at the first level when running an Yggsburgh campaign -- the way the characters come to know one another, as it were, at The Workhouse. The characters are of lowly beginning, having fallen on hard times and consequently convicted of indigence, either for debts accrued, or possibly having checked themselves in for lack of any other alternative. Having been stripped of their clothes and washed, issued uniforms and set to work, they are of the more capable sort as compared to the very young or the old and infirm. They've been shoveling coal, breaking stone, chopping wood, crushing gypsum, etc.; they attend services at the Chapel, and they sleep in rooms as appropriate to gender. Perhaps a few of the characters have gotten to know one another.

One morning, the Warden of Debtors summons them to his office. By guard the characters are conveyed to his third floor office where they are served brandy, wine, salted fatback, and cheese -- the finest grub they've eaten in weeks! The Warden informs them that he's had his eye on them each and all, having been apprised of their capabilities by Pious White. He knows that they are each capable of much more than the Workhouse. He has an offer . . .

The offer is the purview of the Castle Keeper, who can use this hook as a segue to other adventures in this series. Perhaps the Warden offers them preset equipment, armor, weapons, and transportation; alternatively, he may offer them a sum of gold to be split and so used to purchase equipment. Either way, the Warden should have a reason for this sponsorship: an item he desires, a percent of the future coinage won, or perhaps political recognition by his peers should the characters perform some good deed in his name.

## NEW MONSTER:

### SPRIGGAN

**NO. ENCOUNTERED:** 2-5

**SIZE:** small (or large)

**HD:** 1 (d8) + 3 (or 4d8 + 5)

**MOVE:** 40-ft

**AC:** 17 (15)

**ATTACK:** by weapon type (dagger, darts)

**SPECIAL:** Spells and Thief Skills

**SAVES:** Physical

**INT:** Average

**ALIGNMENT:** Chaotic Evil

**TYPE:** Fey

**TREASURE:** 1

**XP VALUE:** 60 + 3

Spriggans are ugly, malign little (2-foot tall) people with furry skin, long tails, and luminous eyes. They are found on the fringes of society -- sewers, abandoned buildings, vacant areas, etc. In their natural state they are sometimes mistaken for cats. They revel in causing mischief of the most sadistic species, and are noted for being proficient thieves.

**Combat:** Spriggans often work in tandem, using their *confusion* and *invisibility* powers to rob their victims and escape before violence. Rare spriggans may also use a special form of *alter size* in which they transform to 10-foot height. In giant form, they become 4d8 (+5) HD creatures, AC 15.

**Spell-like abilities:** *confusion*, *invisibility* (1/day), as if by a 5th level caster. 1 per 10 spriggans can use a variant of *alter size* (giant) at will.

**Thief abilities:** Spriggans have all the abilities of a 5th level thief with 19 dexterity.