

ORIGINAL GAME RULES EDITION

HOLMES SUPPLEMENT

PORTOWN

This game supplement includes maps of the community and surrounding region, along with descriptions of key locations and personalities found within. It can be adapted for use with most medieval fantasy roleplaying game systems.

by RC Pinnell

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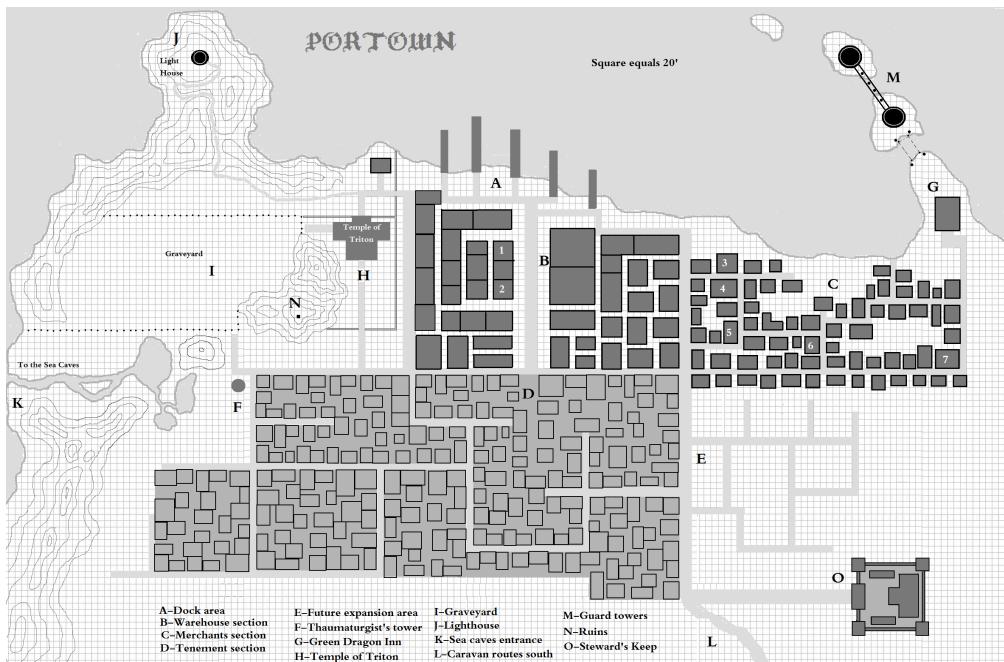
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PORTOWN

FOREWORD

The Dungeons and Dragons "Basic Set" of 1977 is an iconic work. Dr. J. Eric Holmes drew upon the information that appeared in the original game rules (1974) created by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson, and the Greyhawk Supplement 1(1975), by Gygax and Robert Kuntz, and added a little (interpreting) of his own. The debate over how much of the manuscript was overseen and controlled by TSR and Gygax is still being renewed even to this day--some 35 plus years later. We'll leave that for others to determine. The purpose of this supplement to the Holmes rules version, is to provide you with more of what was briefly sketched by the good doctor. But not so much as to be complete--there is as much left blank that is for you to fill in with your own ideas.

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF PORTOWN



Portown is described as a "small but busy city..." in the Holmes Blue Book. For the purpose of this document, its population is set at two-thousand residents, including the garrison at the keep. Add to this a temporary influx of fifty to two hundred desert merchants every few months, and the crews of numerous ships that put to port; neither of the latter remaining for long, as their purpose is only to exchange goods for shipping to other locations.

A DOCKS/WATERFRONT

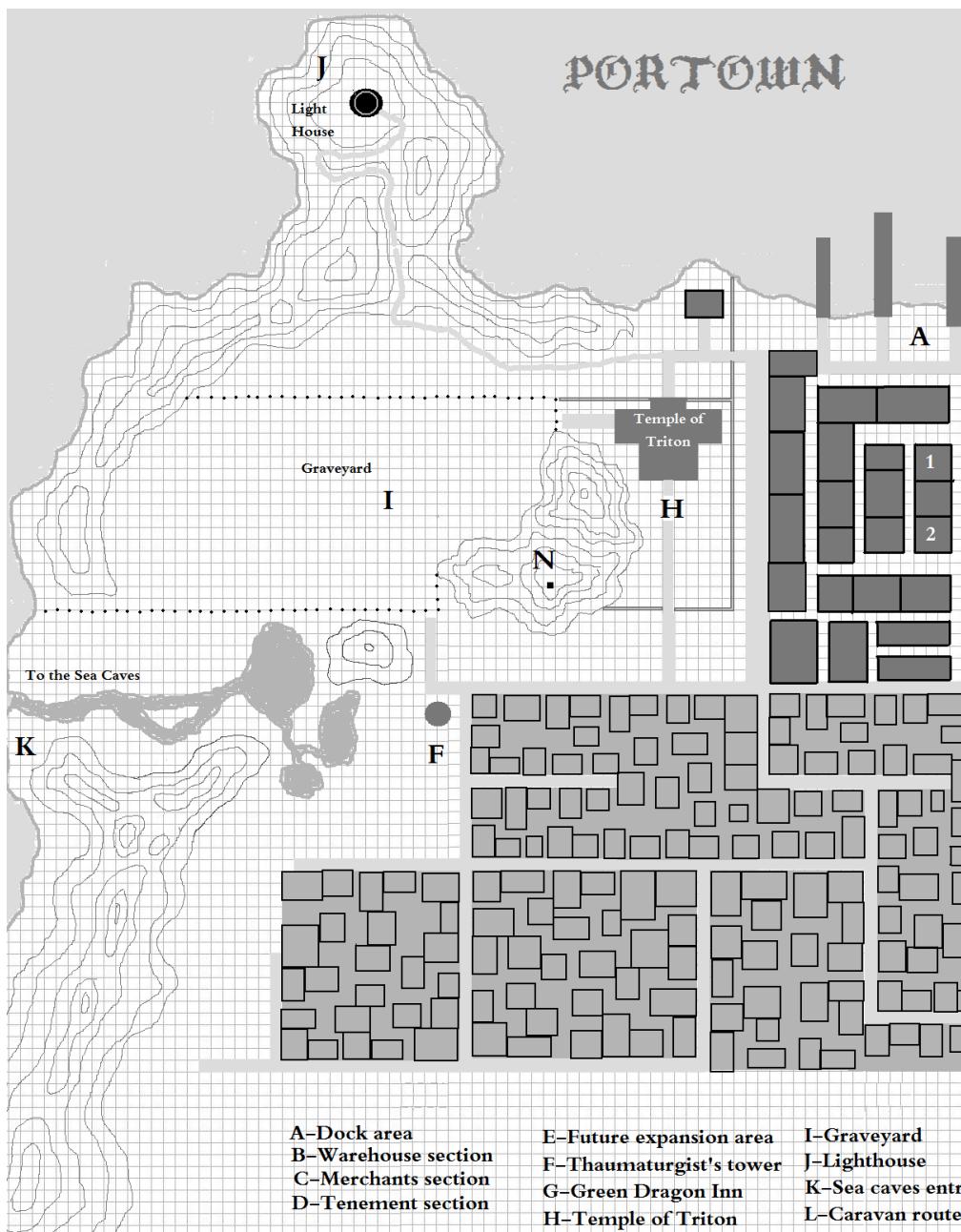
Five piers twenty feet wide with lengths ranging from eighty to over one hundred feet extend from the shore into the bay. Each is capable of easily handling the on/off loading of a large merchant ship, while the longer ones can accommodate two vessels if moored snuggly. The peak season for shipping is between mid spring to early fall. The waters in the area are notorious for having bad weather before or after this period. While ships' crews often stay aboard their vessel while in port, there are plenty of inns and taverns that can put them up during their stay in the city. When the city is filled with caravan merchants and ships' crews the prices of standard items and services experience brief increases.

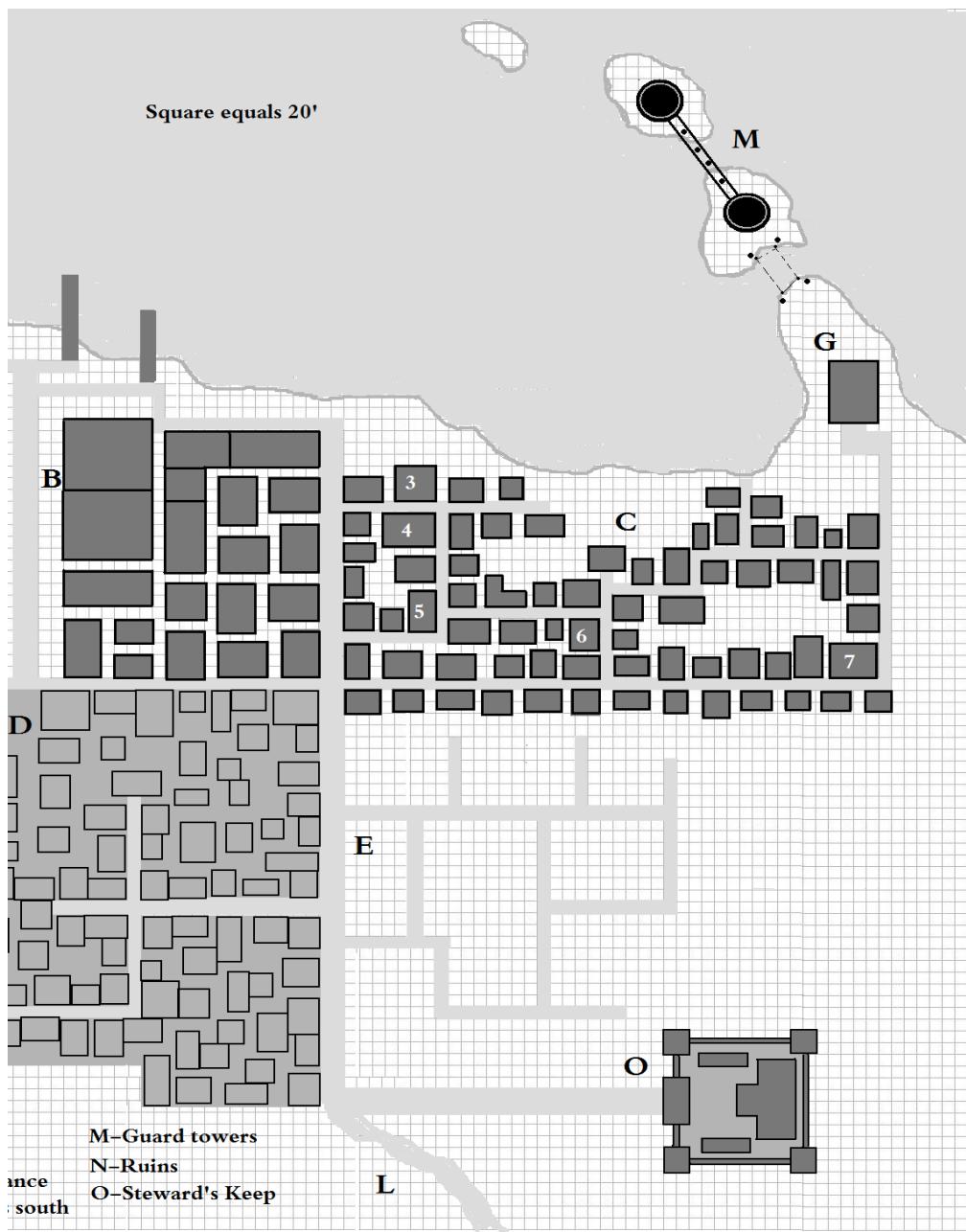
During the shipping season it is not uncommon for this area to be bustling from dawn to dusk. At such times as many as one hundred or as few as twenty seamen might be on or around the docks, involved in the loading or off loading of goods. In addition, caravan merchants in equal numbers may be present during such times. Local shops and businesses will often have barkers strolling the area at this time, or sign carriers, advertising their goods and prices to the visitors.

One local in particular is the lad, **Dill** (S13, I15, W9, C13, D14, CH15. F2MU2T2, 14 hp, Neutral) This rambunctious twelve year old is often hired to roam the dock area soliciting business for the Green Dragon Inn. An orphan, he lives in an abandoned building in the southeast corner of the tenement section of the city. No one knows who his parents are, or were, and his horribly mutilated ears have garnered him much sympathy and support from the local women. In truth, he is a hundred and fifty year old elf, cast out of his homeland for having relations with the elf king's daughter. His ears were chopped off as punishment, and to brand him so all elf folk would recognize him on sight. He has taken great lengths to disguise his other elf like features, and prefers that the Portown humans believe him to be what they think he is. He wears a leather coat, gloves and boots, and carries a concealed short sword at his hip. He knows the spells: *Read Magic, Sleep, and Dancing Lights*.

1. HARBOR MASTER

Angus McCrery is the maritime authority of Portown. He became a sailor at the age of 12 and has navigated all the known seas of the world. After spending 5 decades traveling the globe, he settled here, thinking to retire. But his vast experience with things aquatic was immediately needed and he was recruited to the job of harbor master soon after his arrival. A pleasant man of medium size, he frequents the Green Dragon Inn nightly, where he often recites his many adventures upon the open sea. He spends most of the day patrolling the docks--with his large exotic bird, Cleo on his shoulder--and has complete authority to turn away ships that wish to dock, or unload cargo considered contraband. He carries the rank of Captain, and can call in the militia to assist him in matters of port security.





2. WAREHOUSE MASTER

Lon Fergus is a hulking fellow almost 7 feet tall. In his mid-thirties, he is a member of the militia, (12 hp, S15, I11, W12, C17, D10, CH10) having the rank of sergeant. He is skilled with a broad sword and long knife. He is in charge of assigning space for commodities arriving by ship or inland caravans and keeping such secure until they are removed to other locations.

B. MANUFACTURING/WAREHOUSE QUARTER

Large buildings occupy this section of the city. Used to store goods delivered by caravans from the south or those from ships arriving weekly, the cargo within these structures is awaiting shipment out of Portown; anything designated for Portown is immediately ported to the awaiting merchants and customers directly from the docks or market.

C. MERCHANTS' QUARTER

Seventy-one separate buildings constitute the business section of the city. Only eight (8) -- including the Green Dragon Inn, are described in this volume.

3. SHIP WRIGHT

4. SAIL MAKER

5. ROPE MAKER

6. HOOK & LINE MAKER

7. GENERAL STORE

All of the above are typical 0-level types/citizens, providing the service or product that is indicated. The establishments will include items associated with the type of shop listed. All prices for services and/or products are left for you to determine according to your campaign and rules system.

D. RESIDENTIAL QUARTER

Individual structures of one, two and even three or four stories can be found within this part of town. The condition of each is as varied as the types of residents dwelling within. It is up to you to inhabit them as you see fit. Note: all able-bodied males from the ages of 12 to 40 are members of the militia and/or bay-patrol. This requires that they perform scheduled patrols and man posts according to their assignments. As long as they reside in Portown, they are part of the militia, and provided with arms and protection (according to your discretion). Boys 12 to 18 will generally have 1 to 3 hp, while adult men will have 4 to 7 hp. They attack as 0-level types, doing damage according to their weaponry. Backyards and spaces will usually be filled with clothes lines and women busy performing domestic chores; along with barefooted children playing.

E. UNDEVELOPED ZONE

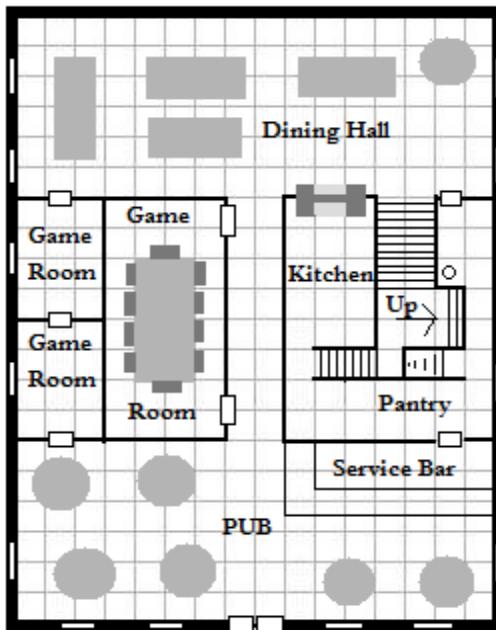
Currently this section is being used to grow crops of various types. But the closeness to the sea and the effects of the briny air make such difficult, and the local leaders plan to move this type of activity inland, south of the town, and build more structures here sometime in the future. You

may use this location as a source of encounters with pests whose nests would be commonly found therein: ants, beetles, lizards, etc. Perhaps there is a labyrinth of nests deep beneath the surface here, awaiting exploration.

F. TOWER OF THE HERMIT MAGE

This is the abode of a level-4 Thaumaturgist spell caster. He is one of at least a dozen similar types that came to Portown after hearing legends and tales of ancient crypts and dungeons beneath the city filled with treasure and riches. (S9 I16, W9, C10, D11, CH12, 9 hp) He is Lawful Evil, wears no armor/protection but carries a scroll of levitation. He knows the following spells: read magic, charm person, magic missile, protection from good, wizard lock and web. He will usually be found in the dungeon beneath the city, which can be accessed through his tower, the ruins on the hill (N) or the sea caves (K). **[Information regarding this--sample adventure--can be found in the final pages of the Holmes Basic D&D 1977 blue book]** The door to the ground floor of this tower is, oddly, open, with the 2nd story accessible via a spiral staircase on this level. A trap door leads to the cellar and dungeons.

G. THE GREEN DRAGON INN (Square=5')



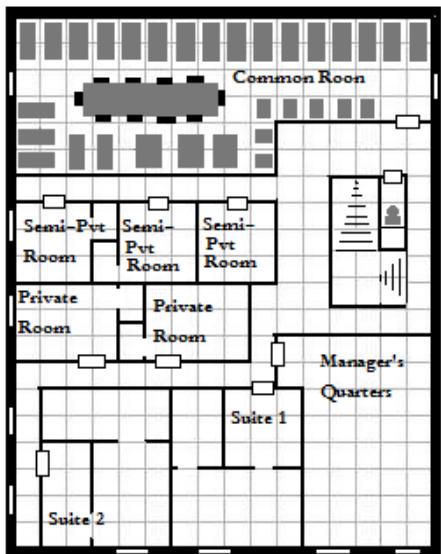
This establishment is owned and operated by two females--**Mya** and **Zephyr**. Both are level one witches of the white order(S9, I14, W14, C10, D14, CH14 having 4 hp and S11, I13, W12, C12, D14, CH16 having 3 hp); none of the local citizens know of their occult behavior. They have entered the dungeons beneath the graveyard, barely escaping with their lives and with little treasure for the effort. And rather than risk further such explorations, gladly sell information regarding the known entrances (F, I, K, N)to novice adventurers that come into the inn.

Prices regarding drinks, food, rooms and services is left for you to determine. In addition, you may populate the establishment with various NPC types as you wish. The following floor plans are provided to allow you to create encounters as you see fit. You can create additional stories (a 3rd, and 4th even) or more cellars by following the templates below.

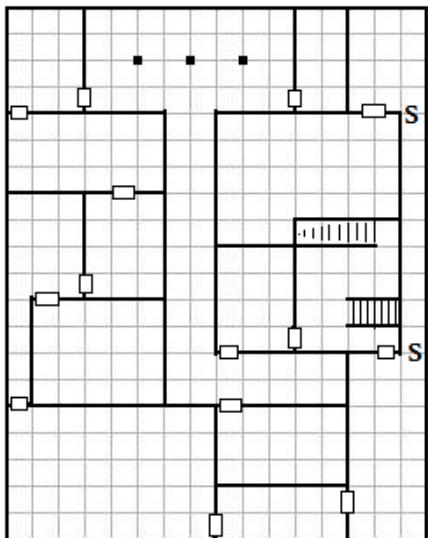
It is also possible to create a dungeon beneath the inn, one that might connect to a series of sewer channels that crisscross beneath the city. Such would be abundant with opportunity for the characters to encounter creatures and discover/retrieve treasures should this be your objective.

square = 5'

2nd Story



Cellars



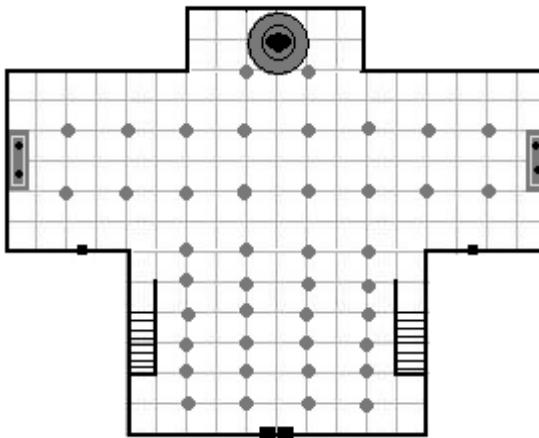
H. THE TEMPLE OF TRITON

This two story structure is the primary place of worship for all those residing in Portown. The priests of the temple conduct services to suit the various needs of all faiths having to do with the sea and the denizens therein. Because of this, the clergy is, for the most part, Neutral in regards to rituals they must perform, and will even tolerate bizarre, chaotic sacrifices--as long as there is a direct link between those participating, and a deity or deities that regards the sea and its elements as part of the deity's domain.

Brother Ramose is a level 3 village priest (S9, I9, W14, C12, D12, CH14, 9 hp). He can cast two(2) first level spells per day. **Father Toluca** is a level 6 Bishop (S7, I13, W15, C8, D10, CH16, 17 hp) and can cast two first and second level spells, and one third and fourth level spells per day.

The two men live in quarters above the temple hall, and subsist on meager diets they derive from the local fields. Any tithes or other donations to the temple are used to maintain the great building, and the cemetery that lies west and south of the structure.

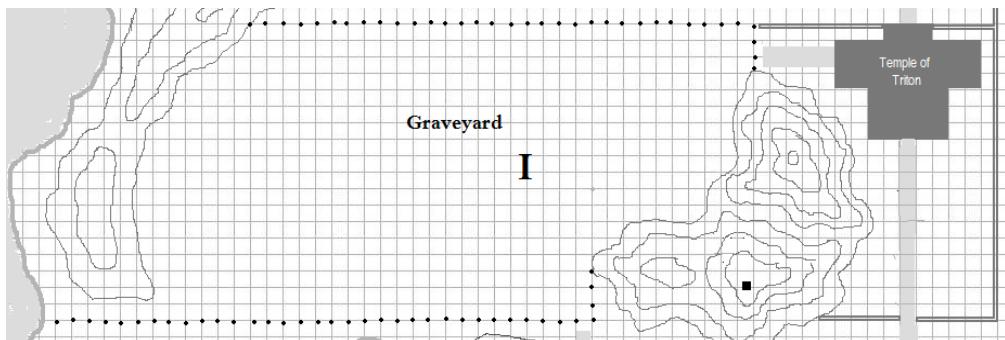
(Square=10')



I. THE GRAVEYARD

Covering an area of roughly 273,600 square feet (180 north to south and 360 east to west) this section of the town is mostly out of sight due to the natural and artificial barriers that surround it. A man made wall runs from north to south just east of the temple, and at 8 feet tall and made of solid stone blocks, it is the first barricade between the graveyard and warehouse district of the city. The wall swings west at its southern most point where it eventually meets with a steeply rising stony mound that reaches several hundred feet upwards. It is upon this that the ruins of the wizard remain(N), and are spoken of in bits of gossip and gander among the citizens. Coastal hills to the south, west and north continue sweeping around and surrounding the graveyard, with several breaks between that allow egress from those directions.

(square = 20')



As mentioned there are coastal hills that rise from the cliffs overlooking the sea west of Portown. These are not unsurpassable, rising only a hundred feet or so. But they are high enough to buffer howling winds that flow west to east when such arise. Counting the contour lines as rises in elevation of about fifty feet each, it is simple to deduce the height of the surrounding hills.

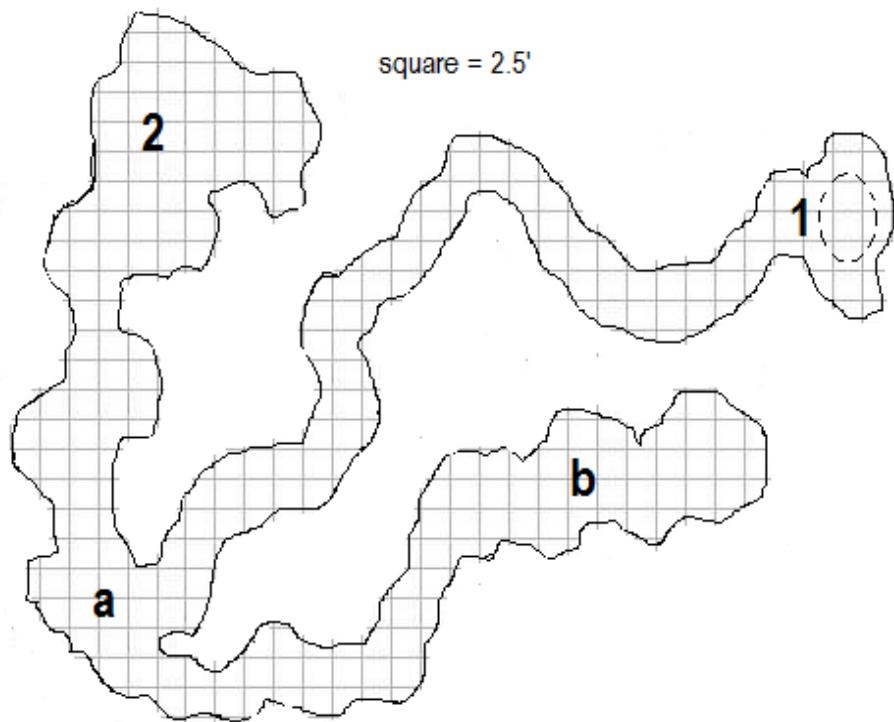
The cliffs west of the graveyard are a sheer drop of seventy five feet to the sea below. This, then, sets the height of the sloping grade that descends the further east one goes, until actual sea level is encountered upon entering the dock area of Portown itself.

The graveyard can be entered from three directions: the west, between the hills; the southeast gate, where citizens are allowed general use; and the northeast, that leads to the temple. The block wall previously mentioned does not enclose the entire grounds (see above). The greater portion of the graveyard is surrounded by a wood fence; this is a simple construction of two posts driven into the ground roughly ten inches apart, standing six feet high, with twenty foot long logs laid on top of one another between them. This is maintained by the townspeople, with repairs occurring generally once a year.

The grass and weeds within the graveyard is kept cut, allowing it to grow no more than at a height of eight inches. The size of the area would require a continuous servicing to keep the grass at such height and the weeds out. It is therefore temple policy to allow the local herdsman to graze their animals in the graveyard from time to time.

There is ample space within the boundaries of the graveyard's perimeter to devise areas where encounters may occur. There can be copses of trees, thick ground cover, small out buildings and such where renegade beings could be in-hiding. And throughout the area, there are literally hundreds of graves, some with headstones and some not, spread about. Burrowing creatures might have established subterranean tunnels and chambers wherein to hide. There is nothing to stop you from designing dozens of encounter areas in and around the graveyard; some might actually lead to the dungeon described in the Holmes' rulebook. These can be as complex or simple as you like. Use the following sample as a template.

THE RAT BURROW



1. This chamber is accessible from the hole (see above) where a grave once existed. It is roughly eight feet beneath the surface. Thick grass hanging down from the lip of the hole conducts rain and moisture into the chamber, causing the floor and walls to be saturated. The height of the tunnels is such that anyone--other than a hobbit or gnome--would have to be crawling on hands and knees to move through them; those smaller types would need only to crouch. Thus, fighting within the burrow will impose a penalty upon beings larger than those mentioned. You are free to establish what this might be. The height within chambers **b** and **2** is about 4 feet. Twenty **Giant Rats** dwell within the larger chamber (2), having 1-3 hp each. There is a broken sword partially buried in the ground at (a), while at (b) there are the rotted remains of a human in chain mail armor. The armor is **magical +1**, but two **Giant Centipedes** (4/2 hp) inhabit the corpse.

It is stated in the 1977 Holmes Basic Rules booklet (p.45) that an "endless maze" of rat tunnels exists beneath the graveyard. Since rats prefer to dwell where a food source is easy to obtain, it would be reasonable to believe that scores of skeletons and corpses have been dragged from their graves back to the rats' lairs. It also goes to reason that treasure, buried with its owner, might end up there as well!

J. THE LIGHT HOUSE

This imposing structure stands upon the sea cliffs at the northwest corner of the bay of Portown. Rising one hundred feet higher than the cliffs, the wood burning lamp built into its upper most section creates a light visible by ships a mile out to sea on all—including the brightest moonlit—nights. A small house is attached to the base of the man-made sentinel, and serves as the abode of the light house keeper. Inside resides **Ollie Pitkin**, a former sailor and octogenarian. He and his roommate—the she goat, **Minerva**—have maintained the device and grounds around it for thirty years. (Minerva's true identity is unknown by anyone in the city besides Ollie. Her true form is that of a sea elf, and she wears a necklace of *illusion* given to her by the old man to keep busy bodies away. He rescued her one day decades past, injured and floating in the nearby waters. Since then he has nourished her back to health, and she has remained at his side for the kindness and affection he conveyed upon her. You are free to make up more back-story regarding who she is and where she comes from.)

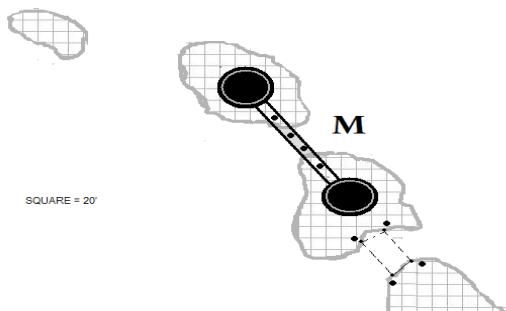
K. ENTRANCE TO THE SEA CAVES

You will have to create your own diagrams for these or utilize those that appear in the 1977 Holmes Basic Rule book.

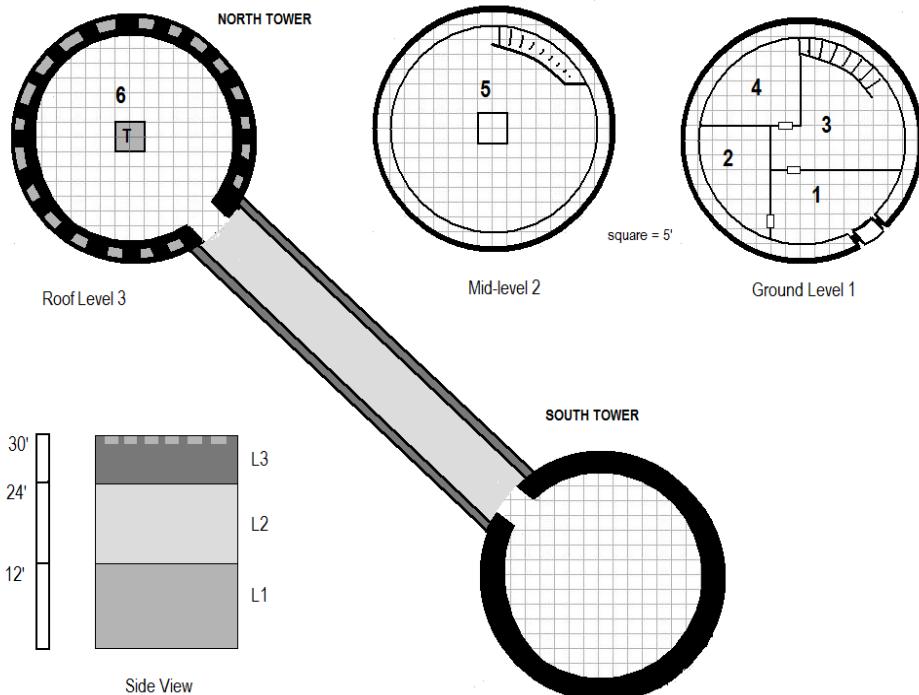
L. CARAVAN ROUTE TO THE SOUTH

This road heads due south then splits, with the left path going more or less east for a spell, and the other more southwesterly, along the coast. Please refer to the greater wilderness map that appears at the end of this supplement. It is reasonable to assume that travel along the latter route will eventually result in encounters with such caravans. The Southern Nomads are a people similar in culture to present day Middle Easterners. They come from a harsh and inhospitable land of shifting desert dunes, parched-dry and crack lands, with little water save for the communal oasis that is separated by hundreds of leagues. They bury water deep in the sand along their frequently used routes, which they share with anyone in need, as long as it is replaced in kind. In order to create encounters with such folk, consult your preferred game rules; for generic meetings, p.68-69 of the 1E Monster Manual is suggested.

M. GUARD TOWERS



The diagram below illustrates the wall height and interiors of the two towers. Note that, while the interior floor plans apply to both, you may have to imagine the door placement in either, depending on which tower you are reviewing. A drawbridge between the south tower and the mainland allows access to the towers. This can be raised by the inhabitants to prevent entry.



Each tower has a foyer(1) that leads to other chambers. The ground floor includes a kitchen (2) and dayroom (3) and quarters for the commanders (4). The middle floor (5) serves as the barracks for the common guardsmen, and storage for arms and supplies. A trap door in the ceiling gives access to the roof(6), and a connecting walkway between the towers.

Each tower is manned by 40 guardsmen of 0-level (assign 1-4 hp to each) that wear leather armor and shield when in melee. Their prime mission is to rain down upon invaders from the sea a continuous assault of arrows from long bows. Besides doing 1-6 hp damage each, one in five guardsmen will shoot flaming arrows at approaching vessels. The range of these missiles is converted from feet to yards for Outside consideration. Thus, consider short range to be up to 210 feet(bonus of +1 to hit), mid-range from 210 to 420, and long range from 420 to 630 feet (penalty of -1 to hit). Each guardsman will have 60 arrows on him when in firing position, and scores more available within reach. In addition to this, each has a hand weapon for use in close quarters combat.

The eighty guardsmen are under the command of four officers--two per tower. The senior one of each being a **level 5 Fighting Man**(assign 25-30 hp each). He will have either Plate armor and +1 shield, or +1 Chain armor and +2 shield (you decide), and a long sword or mace (either being +1). The junior office will be a **level 2 or 3 Fighting Man**(assign 9-10 hp for the former, 11-12 for the latter). These will have a Chain armor and shield, and wield a short sword or axe.

This company of soldiers is a detachment of the Keep of the Steward. While the individual members will rotate with the garrison at the keep, the numbers stated will always be deployed at this location. (You may add more detail to the diagrams provided, as well as the possessions of the guardsmen and furnishings within the towers.) All described are Lawful types.

N. TOWER RUINS

You will have to create your own maps and diagrams of these, as none are known to exist in the available literature. Refer back to the 1977 Holmes Rules booklet (p.41) for more information.

O. STEWARD'S KEEP

This is the residence of **Sir Travis**, a **level 8 Fighting Man/Paladin**. He is the local authority and representative of the king. S15, I14, W13, C13, D12, CH17, he has 40 hp, is AC0 when encountered ready for combat(due to +1 Plate armor, and +1 shield); otherwise he is usually met wearing leather (for AC7) and possibly with a shield (for AC6). He wields a +1 Sword of Sharpness (severs a limb or neck on a roll of 4 more than needed/or on a 19-20 regardless!) that bestows upon him absolute protection vs. magic spells, wands and staves. This function derives from his Paladin status, and does not operate as such in the hands of another. He receives a salary of 120 GP per month from the king, and has total jurisdiction over Portown (unless overturned by the nearest duke, or the king himself). In addition to the troops mention at the two towers (M), he has the following men at his disposal.

Captain/2nd-in-command: Fighting Man 6 (24 hp, plate armor, shield, sword, hammer)

Lieutenants x3: Fighting Man 3(11-13-15 hp, chain armor, shield, sword, dagger)

Sergeants x 5: Fighting Man 2 (7-9 hp each, chain armor, shield, battle axe, dagger)

Troops x 120: Fighting Man 1 (2-5 hp each, leather armor--

40x axe, heavy crossbow;

40x flail, light crossbow;

40x halberd

This concludes the information within this supplement. I encourage you to expand upon what has been provided, adding and deleting whatever is necessary to assist you in implementing the information within.

The North Sea

