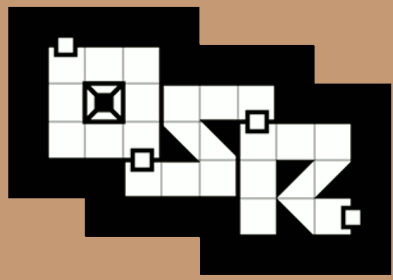# Burgs & Bailiffs

Warfare Too

*Middle Age battles
were some kind of extremely hard-core live RPG
that went on 24 hours a day*

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Burgs & Bailiffs 2: Warfare Too

The Grimdark Crew
or
all those Burgers & Bailiffs
who put their words on paper:
Paolo Greco, Mike Monaco,
Lee Reynoldson, Ghoul Ghast,
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Warfare Too? *Really??*

Burgs & Bailiffs was conceived as a joke. One of those times when I made a mock cover and people got excited. This is the second issue, so I guess at this point the joke is on someone else. Once again:

> *Life in the Middle Ages was some*
> *kind of extremely hard-core RPG*
> *that went on for 24 hours a day*

This second issue collects a mixture of previously unpublished articles and handful of republished blog posts. While it might seem a bit strange, in this issue I wanted to present many levels of approaching the theme of medieval warfare in medieval RPGs, so that you can decide what's best for your specific campaign. All the articles have different approaches, fitting diverse niches.

This time the bastions are defended by Mike Monaco, Benjamin Eisenhofer, Ghoul Ghast and Lee Reynoldson, with Tim Snider cracking the non-metaforical editorial whip and me running around with a bucket putting off fires. B&B2WT would only be a heap of digital rubble on my hard disk without them.

Have fun and *grim onward!*

Paolo Greco

PS: Send feedback, typos, rebuttals and complaints to my email at tsoj-canth@gmail.com.

PPS: Submissions for *Burgs & Bailiffs 3* are open. You know my mail.

Contents

Warlord: a Moldvay Class

by Lee Reynoldson

Warlords are human warriors trained as leaders in combat. Whether they're a humble captain of the guards, or an imperious knight commander they lift the spirits of those they lead, and their grasp of tactics can turn the tide of battle.

The prime requisites for a Warlord are Intelligence and Charisma, and warlords must have minimum score of 9 in both Intelligence and Charisma. If a Warlord has a score of 13 or greater in both Intelligence and Charisma the character will gain a 5% bonus on earned experience points. If the Warlord has an Intelligence of 13 or greater and a Charisma of 16 or greater, that character will earn a 10% bonus on earned experience.

Warlords use a six-sided dice (d6) to determine their hit points. They may wear nothing more protective than chain mail armour, but may use a shield. They may use axes, polearms, spears, swords, and daggers.

Warlord Progression Table

level	Title	XP	Hit Dice
1	Lancepesade	0	1d6
2	Corporal	2200	2d6
3	Serjeant-at-arms	4400	3d6
4	Lieutenant	8800	4d6
5	Captain	17600	5d6
6	Major	35200	6d6
7	Commandant	70400	7d6
8	Colonel	140800	8d6
9	Warlord	281600	9d6
10+	Warlord	+281600	+2HP

Warlord Saving Throws

Level	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16+
Death Ray	13	11	9	7	5	4
Magic Wands	14	12	10	8	6	5
Turn to Stone	13	11	9	7	5	4
Dragon Breath	15	13	11	9	7	5
Spell	14	12	10	8	6	5

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Leadership   When rolling for group initiative Warlords add +1 to their sides' score. Warlords add +1 to all three Charisma bonuses (B7). A Warlord may rally any Retainers that fail their morale check if he can roll under his Charisma score with a twenty-sided dice (d20).

Tactics   A Warlord leading three or more allies (NPC or Player Characters) may employ a number of tactical options:

Shield wall - As longs as they all have shields, don't move, and are not flanked, everyone in the Shield wall gains an additional -1 bonus to AC.

Ferocious Charge - If the Warlord, and his allies, are armed with spears, axes, or swords they can lead a ferocious charge. The charge grants a +1 damage bonus to any hits, but must cover a distance of at least 20'.

Wall of Spears - Warlord leading three or more allies armed with, spears or polearms may marshal them into a well drilled formation granting a +1 to hit bonus as long as they are not flanked.

Great Leader   Reaching level 9 a Warlord will attract a sizeable amount of small companies willing to work under the control of such an important commander. This will happen whether the Warlord owns a castle or not.

*Paolo's Footnote: a Warlord variant - The Warlord as presented is, overall, a worse combatant that Fighters. If you want to perk it up, one of the strategies is to **elfify** the class. Warlords retain all their special abilities, can use all armours and weapons as fighters and roll 1d6 hit points per level. The downside is that, like the Elf, need twice as much XP to gain a level compared to Fighters, so level 2 is attained at 4000 xp, level 3 at 8000 xp, etc.*

Warband: Abstract Skirmishing for Redwald

by Lee Reynoldson

Ðeofas we hatað oð vii men
from vii hloð oð xxxv
siððan barþ here

Less than seven men shall be called thieves,
from seven to thirty-five are a band,
more are an army.

From the Laws of Ine

Eventually, the player characters are going to end up leading a warband of their own. At first, this is likely to be ten or so reluctant Fyrdmen. In the end though, as they become lords in their own right, they're likely to lead a warband of 30 swords and skirmishers. With a few warbands at their command, a kingdom is theirs for the taking.

Abstract Skirmishing

In Redwald, anything between 7 and 35 men are a warband; more than 35 men and you have an army. These rules are aimed more at skirmishing between two warbands rather than between multiple warbands or armies in the hundreds. However, if you wish to do that, it should be easy enough to do. "Abstract skirmishing" means that the action unfolds in much the same way as normal combat: no map, grid, or minis; each to-hit roll doesn't equate to a single blow; and a loss of HP doesn't necessarily represent a wound.

The Warband

The warband's stats are derived from whichever troop type is in the majority. For example, a 12-man warband made up of 10 Frydmen and 2 Thegns, it will use the stats of the Frydmen. So it's always best to make sure the majority of the warband is made up of superior troops. However, each character, elite, or special unit in a warband adds a +1 bonus to the HD, up to a max of +4. The rest of the stat block is taken straight from bestiary entries, apart from HP which are derived from the number of men who make up the warband. Here's a warband made up of 12 Frydmen and 2 Thegns:

AC: 6 [13]; Hit Dice: 1; HP: 12; Attacks: 1 Gár (1d6) or Seax 1d3+1; Special: For Gold and Glory[1]; Move: 10; HDE/XP: 1/30; Morale: 7.

If we add 4 player characters, the warband would look like this:

AC: 6 [13]; Hit Dice: 1+4; HP: 16; Attacks: 1 Gár (1d6) or Seax 1d3+1; Special: For Gold and Glory; Move: 10; HDE/XP: 1/30; Morale: 7.

Some Player Characters also have special bonuses. It's at the referee's discretion as to what bonuses are added by any elite or special NPCs in either the enemy or the allied warbands, and when they apply.

Warriors

Only Warriors can lead warbands. Each race has its own bonuses, which are doubled if the character is the warband's leader.

Dwarf Shieldbrothers add +1 to the warband's morale and -1[+1] to their AC if most of the warband has shields and is in the shieldwall formation.
Wildling Battle Strong add +1 to Morale and Damage if the majority of the warband has Two-Handed weapons and is in the Boar's head formation.
Elven Wood Guard add +1 to Morale and +1 to Move if the majority of the warband is lightly armoured and in loose formation.
Shield Maidens add +1 to Morale and +1 to-hit if the majority of the warband have spears and are in standard formation.

As well as these class-based bonuses, the leader's Int and Chr also provide a bonus. The leader's Chr bonus is applied to Morale, and his Int bonus is added to the warband's to-hit, Move, and Initiative.

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[1]Although as patriotic as any of their kinsmen, it's the chance to improve their lot that really gets their blood boiling. An act of outstanding bravery on the battlefield can earn them gold and silver rings from a generous lord, or even the chance to become a Thegn. They gain +1 to attack, movement, and to morale if there's even a hint of a chance to gain gold and glory.

Magic-Users and Skirmishers

All Magic-Users add +1 to their own warband's Morale and -1 to the enemy's Morale.

All Skirmishers add +1 to-hit (with missiles) and +1 to Move if most of the warband is made up of Skirmishers, with the exception of the Dwarf Death Dealer who adds +1 to Morale, +2 to-hit (with missile), but -2 to Move.
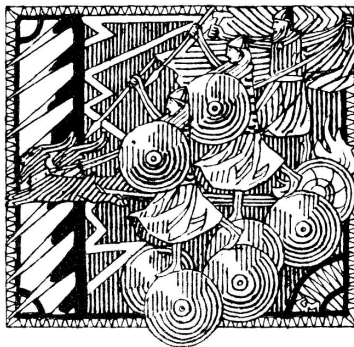
Tactics, Positioning, and Roleplaying

Just as in normal combat, roleplaying, tactics, and positioning should be an integral part of good abstract combat. Positioning, such as attacking from the flank or rear, should be rewarded with a bonus +1 to-hit for flanking and +2 for attacks from behind. Any warband being attacked from behind also suffers a -1 penalty to Morale.

Tactics and roleplaying are almost the same thing when it comes to combat, but it's up to the players to come up with cunning plans and sneaky schemes to gain battlefield advantage. Setting up ambushes, choosing the battleground, using terrain to their advantage, morale-raising rousing speeches, all of these can be achieved via roleplaying before the battle starts.

Pulling off tactical movements during the battle, like screening the warband with Skirmishers to hide formation changes, should also affect the outcome of the battle. Again, these tactics are down to the players to decide upon and the referee to rule on. If in doubt, a bonus (+1 to +3) or a roll (1 in 6 chance modified by Int bonus) to see if the enemy leader realises what's happening are the types of rulings that are always handy.

Formations

There are only a few basic formations utilised by Redwald's warbands. To change from any formation to Loose or Standard formation takes 1 round; to Boar's Head or Shieldwall takes 2 rounds. If a formation change is attempted during melee, a Morale roll must be made first.

Standard Formation Requires at least 20 men. In standard formation, the warriors are organised into two ranks or more. Warriors with reach weapons can attack from the second and sometimes third rank.

Standard formation is prone to missile fire, and enemy skirmishers gain +1 to-hit, and damage. Warriors with anything other than stabbing and short-hafted hacking weapons, such as hand axes, spears, one-handed swords, fight at -1 to-hit and Damage in this formation.

Loose Formation In this spread-out and open formation, warriors are less prone to missile fire (-1 to-hit and damage), but suffer a -1 Morale penalty when going toe-to-toe with, or are charged by, opponents in closed formations. Warriors armed with two-handed slashing and swinging weapons get +2 to-hit in this formation.

Shieldwall The men form into a line and interlock their shields, making it impossible for the enemy to pass or break them unless the shieldwall has been broken (by doing at least 6 HP worth of damage to the warband in one round). The shieldwall adds -2 [+2] to AC and +1 to Morale, +3 if they can't be flanked, but -3 to Move.

If the shieldwall is broken, the warband loses its AC and Morale bonus and, in the next round, attacks at -1 and is attacked at +2 to-hit and damage. Warriors with anything other than stabbing and short-hafted hacking weapons, such as hand axes, spears or one-handed swords, fight at -1 to-hit and damage in this formation.

Boar's Head This is a wedge-shaped formation used for charging and breaking shieldwalls or enemy ranks. It requires the majority of the men to be armed with heavy two-handed swinging and slashing weapons. If most of them are also well-armoured, they gain a +2 Morale bonus. When they charge the enemy, they get +3 to-hit and Damage on their first charge against close formations. After that, the formation breaks up and they fight in loose formation until ordered otherwise by their leader.

Siege Warfare

In Redwald's Dark Ages setting, siege warfare is a very basic affair. Hillforts are the only defensive structure, and ladders and basic battering rams are the only offensive siege weapons. There are three main ways to take a hillfort: starvation, treachery, and assault.

Starving out the defenders or gaining access by treachery can be resolved by roleplaying, but assaulting a hillfort can be played out using these additions to the warband rules for abstract skirmishing. For each defensive element they have to overcome, attackers suffer -1 to Morale.

The defence elements are:

Hill   The hill itself, whether natural or manmade, is a defensive element and, depending on how large and steep it is, the attackers will suffer a penalty of -1 to -3 to their Move score.

Ditch and Dyke   Getting past a ditch and dyke takes 2 rounds to negotiate during which time the attackers suffer a +1 [-1] penalty to their AC from missile attacks.

Spiked Ditch and Dyke   As well as the normal penalties for crossing a ditch and dyke, if it has also been set with sharpened wooden stakes, the warband takes 1d6 damage (half damage if they make their Saving Throw).

Wooden Palisade   Without ladders or a battering ram, the hillfort's palisade walls are impassable. Any attackers milling around the walls are at a +1 [-1] penalty to their AC from missile attackers manning the wall. Palisades have 24 HP and an AC: 8. A battering ram is required to attack them or ladders to scale them. Missile attacks at the defenders are at -2 to-hit.

Gates   The weakest point of the defences. HP 12 AC: 9. A battering ram is required to smash them open. If the defenders are expecting an attack, gates are normally soaked to avoid being burned. If the attack takes them by surprise and the doors are dry, they can be burned. After 10 rounds of burning, they will be weakened (HP 6).

Gate Towers   Crude stone or wooden towers on either side of the gate. They don't add directly to the strength of the gates, but make it much more dangerous for those attacking or storming the gates. Defenders in towers are attacked at -3 to-hit and gain +1 to hit and damage with missile weapons.

Ladders   Crudely made assault ladders. Each ladder requires 4 men to carry. If unopposed, the ladders can easily be put against the palisade and used to scale it. Unopposed, 4 men can scramble over the walls. If opposed, the ladders can be pushed off the wall if there are enough defenders (4 to push each ladder off). If the ladder isn't pushed off before 4 warriors have started scaling it, it can't be pushed off. The first warrior on the ladder will have to fight his way off the ladder and over the wall. Fighting from the ladders incurs a -3 penalty to-hit, -1 to damage, and +2[-2] to AC. Carrying the ladder incurs a -2 Move penalty and a +1[-1] AC penalty.

Ram   A plain tree trunk requires 20 men to use it. They will suffer penalties of -5 to Move, +4 [-4] to AC. A ram on cartwheels with a frame to swing it from is -3 Move, +2[-2] AC. The same ram with a hide canopy is -3 Move, +1[-1] AC. A trunk does 1d3 damage to gates and walls per round; a ram swung on a frame does 1d6 damage per round; and a ram fitted with an iron tip or spike does 2d6 damage.

Battlefield Encounters

by Ghoul Ghast

This set of random encounter tables is conceived for low-level characters (levels 1-6) in historic or low-fantasy campaigns. Acting as common soldiers or mercenaries, the player characters will experience battle as an extremely dangerous and disordered series of fights. Death will always be near, and fleeing will be a reasonable option. However, with some luck, non-yielding heroes may earn treasure and glory. The referee is advised to award bonus experience to each player character per phase of the battle (between 50 and 100 XP, even when nothing special occurs during deployment or flight) due to the high risks of mortality in such a conflict. Should the player characters become particularly powerful through magic, high levels, or by leading their own armies into battle, this encounter system is no longer to be used in that campaign.

The common fighter on the battlefield will not be able to assess the tactics his overlord employs, nor the distribution of forces or the overall situation evolving during battle. Therefore, the referee should describe only the immediate vicinity of the player characters: war cries, shouted orders, arrow flurries, panicking foot soldiers, charging knights, trampled fields, burning hedges, water-filled ditches, and wounded men. This will especially be necessary when changing from one battle phase, i.e., encounter, to the next, to avoid giving the impression of an artificial interruption.

Furthermore, the common or low-level character will probably not be able to significantly influence the outcome of the battle despite his best efforts. The referee is thus encouraged to determine the vanquisher randomly or to predetermine victory depending on the need of the campaign. Player characters will learn the outcome when suddenly either their allies or all their opponents begin to flee.

Phases of Battle

The following encounter tables concern the phases of a field battle, starting with Deployment, during which movement may be hampered by missiles, followed by the Clash, which simulates the impact between tightly moving, charging troops.

During the Clash, player characters should be positioned behind each other, being in an abstract sense responsible for one "row". After just a few rounds of combat, however, the nature of the battle will evolve. One side or the other might be flanked and retreat; the king might rally his soldiers around his banner; a group of knights may charge into the melee and disperse the foot soldiers; or whatever the referee finds an appropriate description.

At this stage, proceed with the Melee phase. It is called a "melee" as it corresponds to the main phase of the battle, though it is rather a series of skirmish-type fights that will follow, as the original marching order breaks up and the battle becomes more and more dispersed in a large area. Player characters will now be able to act as a group, and they will encounter groups of foes. They can fight each other, all the while more or less ignoring the events around them. Dust, smoke, or bad weather will obscure the view, making it difficult to assess the overall situation of the battle.

Morale (ML) is checked with 2d10 whenever non-player characters are faced with a superior foe. For instance, archers check morale when faced with charging knights; 0-level NPCs always check morale when confronted with area-affecting spells; and soldiers check when suffering serious losses or after losing their leader. Unless the PCs decide to flee (Flight encounter table) at an early stage, eventually, the battle will result in either Victory or Defeat, which, for the player characters, will mean Pursuit or Flight, respectively. Pursuit is the best phase of the battle to earn treasure. Particularly dastard or greedy adventurers may return to the battlefield once the dust has settled, after Nightfall, to scavenge what spoils the vanquishers may have overlooked.

Deployment

Roll 1d100	Missile Fire
01 - 50	no missile fire
51 - 90	volley of arrows or crossbow bolts for 3 rounds
91 - 95	volley of sling missiles for 3 rounds
95 - 100	heavy bolt, rock, Greek fire, or from trebuchet or ballista. In a fantastic campaign, this encounter may be replaced by an area-affecting spell. For a late medieval or renaissance campaign, use a stone or iron ball fired from a bombard.

After Deployment proceed with the Clash.

Clash

Roll 1d100	Encounter
01 - 05	2d3 slingers, level 0, ML 6
06 - 10	2d3 archers, level 0, ML 8
11 - 15	2d3 crossbowmen, level 0, ML 8
16 - 30	2d4 infantry with shields and spears, level 0, ML 10
31 - 45	2d3 infantry wielding goedendags, level 0, ML 11
46 - 60	2d3 infantry with pole arms, level 0, ML 12
61 - 65	1d6+1 mounted archer mercenaries from an exotic country, level 1, ML 12
66 - 70	sergeants (mounted fighters below the rank of a knight) with lance, shield, and chainmail, level 1, ML 13
71 - 90	1d3 mounted knights, wearing the heaviest armour available, level 2, ML 14
91 - 95	renowned knight* (known NPC or level 1d6+2), ML 16, riding a griffon or other exceptional steed, and sergeants, level 1, ML 14
96 - 99	war beast (war elephant, trained wyvern, giant lizard, or woolly rhinoceros); if more appropriate, renowned knight
00	king* or duke* leading the hostile army (known NPC or level 1d8+4), ML18, and knights, level 2, ML 15

All encounters marked with an asterisk comprise renowned noblemen. If captured alive, noblemen are worth quite a good ransom!

After fighting a Clash for maximum 1d6+2 rounds, proceed with Melee (80%) or a new Clash (20%). Flight may also be attempted.

Melee

Roll 1d100	Encounter
01 - 15	2d4 infantry with shields and spears, level 0, ML 9
16 - 30	2d3 infantry wielding goedendags (crude spear-clubs), level 0, ML 10
31 - 45	2d3 infantry with pole arms, level 0, ML 11
46 - 50	1d6+1 mounted archer mercenaries from an exotic country, level 1, ML 11
51 - 70	1 dismounted knight, level 2, ML 12, and his henchmen, 1 sergeant (dismounted, level 1), 1 crossbowman, 2 spear men, level 0, ML 10
71 - 80	1d3 mounted knights, level 2, ML 13, and 1d3 sergeants, level 1, ML 12

81 - 85	renowned knight* (known NPC or level 1d6+2), wounded (hit points at 75%), riding a griffon or other exceptional steed, ML 15, and 1d3 sergeants, level 1, ML 13
86 - 90	war beast (war elephant, trained wyvern, giant lizard or woolly rhinoceros) at half hit points; if more appropriate, a trebuchet, a ballista, or a bombard may be conquered from a crew of 6, level 0, ML 9
91 - 94	important cleric** (bishop, archbishop, or patriarch, level and morale as appropriate for your campaign) and 2d6 henchmen, level 1
95 - 98	noble sorceress**, common witch**, or pagan shaman**, and bodyguards (monster or 2d4 0-level retainers)
99 - 00	king* or duke* leading the hostile army (known NPC or level 1d8+4), ML16, and knights, level 2, ML 14

Encounters marked with two asterisks comprise spell casters. If no potent spells exist in your campaign, clerics and "magic-users" will try to flee when opponents fail to be impressed by prayers and mumbo-jumbo.

After a Melee, proceed with a further Melee (70%), Victory and Pursuit (15%), or Defeat and Flight (15%).

Pursuit (in case of Victory, participation is voluntary)

Roll 1d100	Encounter
01 - 40	Corpse field! Treasure type Z as well as one exceptional or magical weapon and one exceptional or magical suit of armour
41 - 50	2d4 frightened peasants; a dirty shovel indicates they just buried their treasure of type R (chaotic or evil act to raid)
51 - 70	1d10 infantry armed with pole arms, ML 7, treasure type M×5, O
71 - 80	1d10 archers or crossbowmen, ML 6, treasure type M×5, O
81 - 95	wounded knight* (level 2, half hit points) and 1d3-1 sergeants (level 1), ML 9
96 - 99	wounded renowned knight* (known NPC or level 1d6+2, hit points 75%) and 1d4 sergeants (level 1), ML 11
00	king* or duke* (known NPC or level 1d8+4), and 2d3 wounded knights (level 2, hit points 75%), ML 10; treasure type G including at least one exceptional or magical weapon and one exceptional or magical suit of armour

Flight (voluntary anytime after a Clash, mandatory in case of Defeat)

Roll 1d100	Encounter
01 - 20	an easy getaway
21 - 40	own troops (2d8 level-0 fighters) join the PCs; roll again on this table
41 - 50	own troops (leader level 1d4+4 und 1d20+10 0-level fighters, ML 13) round up the PCs and lead them back into battle (a new Clash); in case Defeat has occured, the PCs are only to guard the rear of retreating troops
51 - 65	1d20+10 angry peasants (Stufe 0, ML 10) eager to take revenge for some recent atrocities
66 - 90	2d3 hostile knights and sergeants (levels 2 and 1 respectively), mounted, ML 12; they will slaughter commoners, but try to capture gentry
91 - 00	renowned knight (known NPC or level 1d6+2), ML 14, riding a griffon or other exceptional steed, and 1d4 sergeants, level 1, ML 12; they will slaughter commoners, but try to capture gentry

After Nightfall (optional nighttime scavenging)

Roll 1d100	Encounter
01 - 30	wounded warrior in a ditch; 50% friend or foe; 5% nobleman, worth a ransom
31 - 35	a renowned knight's corpse
36 - 50	wenches, looking for fallen lovers
51 - 80	band of 2d6 scavengers, armed and hostile, regardless which side (if any) they fought on
81 - 90	ghouls: either 2d4 undead or a necromancer's 1d4 retainers collecting teeth and eyeballs for their dark master's impending unholy ritual
91 - 00	precious loot: an exceptional or magical weapon or suit of armour

In Battle

by Mike Monaco

The middle ages weren't all back-breaking labor, incurable chronic diseases, malnutrition, and weekly condemnations to hellfire. There was also a constant prospect of warfare!

Like most bad things in life, the burdens of warfare fell disproportionately on the poor and downtrodden who might be pressed into service as cannon fodder and camp followers, forced to build defenses or siege engines, and generally catch arrows and lance points to keep the knights occupied.

Skirmishes and battles were not infrequent, and being adventurers, the player characters are likely to find themselves involved in whatever conflict arises.

So the party is present at a battle. Not a small skirmish that would be practical to play out in the regular combat rules, but a large enough conflict that hundreds, perhaps thousands of men are present on each side. What happens?

If there is a significant fantasy element to the campaign world and monsters and wizards take part in battles, you might be tempted to focus on the "heroic" engagements between player characters and monsters or wizards.

I would still recommend having PCs roll on the following battle tables BE-FORE "zooming in" on the showdown between the PC(s) and the enemy heroes/dragon/etc. This may get them suitably roughed up or otherwise distracted, and force them to expend some of their "resources" (spells, HP, etc.)

The Important Bit: What About ME?

The fate of the PCs depends largely on whether they decide to go and fight attached to a larger unit or hang in the back in relative safety.

PCs not attached to a unit might choose to stay in the baggage/camp, attend the commander/staff, or act as messengers, spies, or assassins. They can roll on the following table for random events that affect them:

Non-combatant Battle Results

Roll d8	Encounter
1	You see the army standard (or *carroccio*, etc.) hard-pressed and in danger of capture! Can you intervene and save it from falling into enemy hands?
2	You see a major NPC (bishop, prince, etc.) hard-pressed and in danger of capture! Can you intervene and save him/her from falling into enemy hands?
3	You become separated from the soldiers you were following and suddenly find yourself surrounded by enemies; they will recognize you as such any moment!
4	Carrying a message across the field, you are spotted by a mobile enemy (mounted, wizard, etc.) who gives chase.
5	You're stationed safely in the baggage, or so you thought! The enemy have sent a detachment of cavalry to loot and burn the camp! You will need to fight your way out of the camp.
6	The battle plan was intercepted! You need to warn the commander, who is near the front lines.
7	Sent to spy on the enemy camp. Perhaps you can find written orders, or locate a weakness in the enemy lines or a vulnerability in the camp itself.
8	You overhear the mercenary captains plotting to double-cross your side! Will you try to change their minds with promises and threats, assassinate them to stop them giving the order to change sides, or desert while you can?

If any PCs attach themselves to a unit/regiment, roll a d10 for events on the following chart (add +1 if the unit is mounted, -1 if archers). Some results instruct you to roll again. Otherwise roll once.

Combatant Battle Results

Roll d10	Encounter
0-1	Your unit is massacred. Take 3d6 incidental damage. If you survive, you find yourself half-buried by the bodies of your fallen comrades. You can try to play dead, escape, or allow yourself to be looted and/or captured.
2	You unit panics and routs. Take d10 attacks (as if from level 1 fighters, d8 damage). You may try to rally the unit or escape the carnage.
3	Bad news, you are captured. If you are a knight or wealthy, you will be held for ransom; otherwise you might be enslaved, mutilated or executed, depending on the outcome of the battle.
4	Charged by enemy cavalry! Take d6 attacks (as if from level fighters 3, first is charging lance damage, subsequent attacks are sword or mace blows). Roll again.
5	The enemy shoots a barrage of archery, darkening the skies! Take d6 attacks (as from level 1 fighters, d8 damage, missile attacks). Roll again.
6	In the swirling melee, you become separated from the unit, and must defeat a group of 2d6 enemies to get back to friendly lines.
7	The enemy have a secret, unorthodox weapon! They unleash wardogs, flaming pigs, or some other unexpected offensive which panics your unit and/or their mounts. Your unit begins to pull back, and it looks like it will turn into a rout if you don't do something fast!
8	A grind of attrition causes heavy losses on both sides. Take d8 attacks (level 2, d8 damage). Roll again.
9	The enemy formation stops short and their champion issues a challenge to single combat! The men in your unit look around nervously, and all eyes fall on the PC with the highest CHA. Will you accept the challenge?
10	You manage to take a prisoner for ransom! He'll be worth 3d6×100 GP if you can get him off the battlefield alive! Roll again.
11	Break enemy unit and pursue them for great slaughter (or is it a ruse? Roll 1d6: 1: they lead you into a trap; 2-3: they begin to rally or find refuge, you may break off pursuit; 4-6: chasing down foemen – save to break off pursuit each turn if pursuing foot, every other turn if chasing cavalry).

Resolving the Whole Battle

At times the DM may want to determine the outcome of a battle with a single die roll. Have each side roll a d6 and add the following:

+2 for cavalry superiority (substantially more cavalry than the enemy)

+2 for numeric superiority (substantially more troops than the enemy)

+1 for weapon superiority (substantially more pikes, ranged weapons, etc. than the enemy)

+1 for superior armour (armoured troops fighting unarmored, etc.)

+1 for drilled or highly trained troops

+1-2 for morale-boosting factors like being led by a king or saint, having a *carroccio* or similar important relic or symbol on the field, etc.

+1-3 tactical advantage (better ground, plans, etc.)

These factors are cumulative. Depending on how engaged the player characters are in making battle plans and so forth, their actions might qualify for bonuses under the morale and tactical modifiers mentioned previously.

High roll wins; if the high roll is double or more than the opponent, it is a decisive victory. Regardless of the odds, the DM might want to grant a win to the roller of 6 in cases where the roll is 6 vs 1.

A victory means the winning side loses no more than 1/3 of their troops and holds whatever the objective was (i.e. they hold the field or take the castle, escape an ambush with supplies intact, etc.) while the loser is forced to withdraw to their camp/fortress or flee; losses for the losing side should be up to 1/2 the total troops. A decisive victory means the losing side's losses are complete – the army is broken as a fighting force and all troops were slain, captured, or routed off the field.

Generally speaking, "lost" troops are not necessarily killed; the majority would be either captured (if the victors have superior mobility or numbers) or have routed. Routed troops normally discard their weapons and shields and will attempt to return to their homes, if possible. If far from home, they may take up banditry or continue to cause trouble as individuals, but in any case it would be just as expensive and time-consuming to re-enlist these troops as it would be to recruit or hire new troops.

An Example: Hastings

So, for example, the battle of Hastings might be considered:

Normans: +1 for weapon superiority (missiles and lances); +2 for mounted superiority, total +3

Anglo-Saxons: +1 tactical advantage for being uphill, total +1

The factors are obviously relative! Neither side in this battle can claim to have better drill or training, both were led by kings or pretenders, and the total numbers were probably close to even.

If the Normans have a good plan – soften them up with archery, then charge, and feign a rout to fool some Anglo-Saxons to pursue, leaving them open for envelopment and opening holes in the line – then they should get an additional +2. While this scenario seems likely, some historians argue the flight of the Bretons was a real rout that the Normans managed to salvage, in which case I guess it was just a good roll!

Assuming the Breton's flight *was* feigned and it was all planned by William ahead of time, he rolls d6+5 versus Harold's d6+1! The Normans *almost* can't lose. But if William rolls a 1 and Harold gets a 6.... historically I think this would be a decisive victory. The Norman losses were heavy (maybe 1/5 killed), but the English army was completely destroyed (perhaps 1/3 killed and the rest routed), and William won the crown!

Conflict Resolution off the Field

The previous method is suggested for field battles only. Sieges should probably just be roleplayed – let the players come up with cunning plans or counter-plans, and play out scaled-down battles at the gates or a breach, etc. Naval engagements could also be scaled down and represented by a boarding action between the two flagships or some other microcosm of the larger battle.

After the Battle

by Mike Monaco

What happens if your are KIA, MIA, or on the losing side?

Cheerfully illustrated with the Maciejowski Bible illuminations

There are many ways to handle large skirmishes and set piece battles in RPGs, ranging from brief narratives possibly based on some rolls to laying out full wargames on a large table with miniatures and scenery. In most situations, what really matters most to the players is "What happens to my PC?"

The following table is provided to provide appropriate results for PCs on the losing side of a battle. Assuming the PC was part of a unit destroyed, routed, or captured in battle, or in a camp or town that was taken, this table gives you some random results for a more specific fate.

In three words: *SAVE OR DIE.*

But instead of just dying, you may want to play some of these scenarios where I assume the PC is already considered lost and you want to know how.
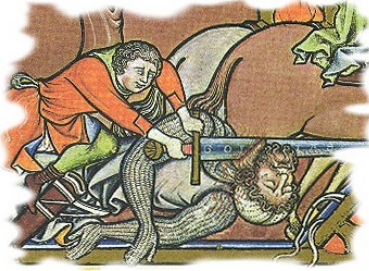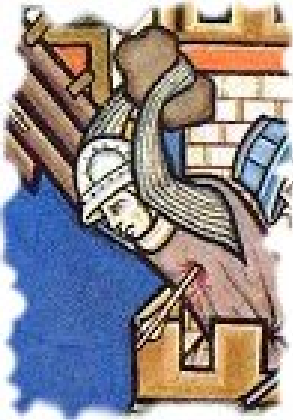
Non-combatants may roll a d12; combatants roll a d20.

Combatant Battle Results
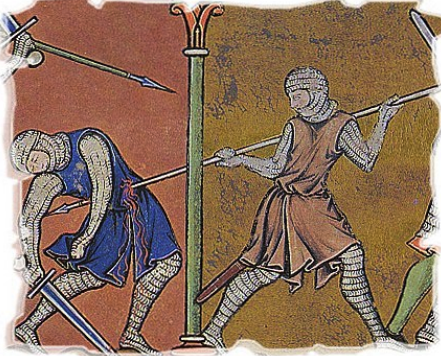
d20	Encounter
1	Wounded in the rout! You take 3d6 damage, but if you survive, you got away!
2	Captured! Tough luck; you are now a prisoner of war. Maybe someone you know can ransom you? Otherwise you are apt to be enslaved or executed.
3	Killed in the rout! Your pursuers were on horseback; you were on foot. So it goes.

4	Captured and taken for a spy, traitor, or assassin, you are hung on the spot.

5	Trampled in the confusion of battle. You are dead.

6	Taken as a prisoner of war, but one not recognized as valuable (or truly worthless for ransom as it may be). Still, you're not worth killing, so they simply hack off your hand or foot to keep you from fighting again.

7	You try to surrender, but are set upon by men-at-arms, camp followers, or other menials desiring revenge.

8	Nice try "playing dead". It turns out the squires are ordered to make sure.

9	Your craven attempt to surrender is viewed with contempt, and you are cut down.

10	The good news is you were not killed in battle, just knocked out. The bad news is that the looters who rob the dead and dying will make sure you don't interfere with their efforts.
11	You lose a limb in the melee and are taken to the rear. Your limb remains on the field though.
12	You go down fighting, covered in blood, wounds and glory. Huzzah!

13	An arrow or bolt pierced your torso before the melee commenced, or possibly a stray arrow got you in the confusion of battle, but either way you are dead.
14	Nooooo! It wasn't supposed to end like this! You are stabbed in the head with a dagger. Not exactly the glorious end you hoped for when the tide of battle turned.
15	Decapitated in the heat of battle. It could be worse.

16	Skull split cleanly in two. No open casket for you, but at least you are mostly in one piece.

17	Run right through by a lance or spear. At least you can have an open casket.

18	Impaled by a lance or spear, but good news! The weapon breaks and you just disarmed a foeman. You die grinning.

19	You are hacked, not quite in two, by a glaive, and your guts spill out like a bowl of spaghetti. Your death will at least be remembered!
20	Well OK, this is about as bad as it gets. You are made an example of – torn limb from limb, perhaps even drawn and quartered, but certainly your corpse is put on display as an object lesson to the others.

The Cost of Castles

by Charles Taylor

This short article aims to give a better idea of the vast resources required to build even a modest stone castle. As there is a wealth of information on this particular castle, I will examine the Chateau de Langeais (c.994), and then generalizing my conclusions to something gameable.

Historical Background

The Chateau de Langeais was built by Fulk, Count of Anjou, during a period of ongoing conflict between him and the neighbouring lord, Odo, Count of Blois. Located only some 24km from Tours, an important city under the control of Odo, the site of Langeais had great strategic significance. Constructing Langeais gave Fulk a strong base of operations from which he could strike at Odo's lands.

While the site of Langeais was technically owned by Fulk, it was under the control of Odo at the time Fulk decided to build Langeais. To test the waters, Fulk built a "hunting lodge" (which was in fact a wooden castle) on the future site of Langeais. Hearing about this, Odo mustered his forces, and launched an attack on the "hunting lodge", but was repelled by Fulk's garrison.

Emboldened by this victory, Fulk set out to hastily construct a small but powerful stone castle to consolidate his victory. During construction, Fulk was obliged to maintain a campaign of constant raids and harassment of Odo's possessions, preventing Odo from mustering a force to prevent Langeais' completion.

Structure

The Chateau de Langeais is a small affair - it consists of a single tower and a surrounding curtain wall. The tower is 16m high, 17.5m wide, and 10m deep ($52 \times 55 \times 33$ ft). The walls average about 1.5m thick. This is thin for a castle of this size, where 2m would be more common, but Fulk opted for thinner walls to speed up construction. As usual for this sort of construction, the exterior walls of the castle were made in a sandwich fashion - the inside and outside of the walls were carefully shaped and mortared stones, but between them was a mix of rubble and mortar which made a sort of rough concrete.

The tower had three wooden floors inside above the ground floor, as well as an accessible roof. A sizable stone pillar ran up the centre of the interior, providing support for the wooden floors and roof.

This gives us a total usable area inside of about 450m2 (4800 ft2) - about the size of two middle-class suburban homes. The main floor had no windows, but there were several windows on the top floor. Access to the Chateau was via a stairway from the bailey to the second floor, which was typical for this kind of building.

Surrounding the Chateau is a curtain wall 250m long and probably about 10m high, creating a bailey of about 3900m2. At key points, the curtain wall was further defended by deep ditches, which served to increase the effective height of the walls. The curtain wall was much thinner than the main keep, probably only 0.1-0.2 metres thick. All of the following figures are for the keep only, not the surrounding curtain wall.

Materials & Procurement

To get the stones used in building the tower, stonemasons spent about 12,000 man-days quarrying and facing stone. Furthermore, making the mortar would have taken 1500 man-days. To obtain the lumber used in the construction, and the firewood used to burn lime to make mortar, lumberjacks spent about 700 man-days. Transporting all of this material to the jobsite took about another 3000 man-days.

To construct all of this, the bill of materials was quite large:

Material	Volume	Weight	For Mortar	Volume	Weight
Stone	1000m3	2500 tons	Sand	225m3	360 tons
Wood	50m3	35 tons	Stone	40m3	160 tons
Nails	3500	50 kg	Firewood	540m3	286 tons
Mortar	350m3	520 tons			

Construction

Langeais was built over the course of about 1.5 to 2 years. Since Fulk was building this in enemy territory, the construction was somewhat rushed. Fulk's other castles would indicate that a more typical castle would have had thicker walls, and taken somewhat longer to build.

The resources required to build Langeais were immense. On average, 140 workers per day worked on it, incorporating unskilled labour, stonemasons, and smiths. The breakdown of labour was about 40:8:1, so on any given day you could expect to need about 115 general labourers, 23 stonemasons, and 2 smiths. This is just an average, however - on some days, far fewer men would work, and on others, far more.

This labour force would have been drawn from Fulk's possessions – peasants owed their lord 15 days of labour to work on fortifications as part of their feudal obligations. However, this labour wasn't free – Fulk had to feed and house the workers while they worked for him. This would have also come out of his possessions. To support that labour force, Fulk would have required the surplus crops of about 600 peasants per year, working about 4000 hectares of land. This would have been the total output of several manors.

To put this in perspective, it took 12 peasants to support a mounted knight in the field. So, for the cost of building Langeais (the work of 600 peasants), Fulk could have maintained a force of 50 knights. However, that cost is an ongoing one, whereas building a castle is a one-time expense. So, for Fulk, the choice was between a fortress in a strategic location which (as it turned out) would last hundreds of years, or the service of 50 knights for two years. Looking at the matter in this light, it is clear why so many castles were built!

Defensibility

Despite its small size, Langeais was a formidable fortification. On two occasions, it was besieged by the forces of Odo, the neighbouring noble, and both times the castle held. The sieges were fairly lengthy, lasting in the neighbourhood of six months each.

It was not, however, impregnable. After Odo's death, it was captured by his son, and then recaptured by Fulk, in two more sieges. The castle survived as a defensive structure for two centuries, changing hands several more times, until finally being razed by the English during the Hundred Years War.

The tower provided room for the permanent garrison (likely about twenty men) and considerable provisions with room to triple or more the garrison. The large bailey provided outdoor accommodations that could offer refuge to hundreds of soldiers in time of need.

Generalizing Time and Labour

If you generalize the costs yourself, you'll find that they don't come out to quite what I put down in the next section - I've taken the liberty of rounding things off to make the numbers a little more friendly.

The tower at Langeais required about 1,200 cubic metres of stone. Since it took an workforce of 140 men about 1.5 years to build it, we can conclude that it takes about 64 man-days per cubic metre of finished castle.

Technological advances through the ages would have reduced this considerably, so say 50 man-days per cubic metre as an average for the period between 900 and 1500AD.

Some of this would need to be skilled labour, as I said before. Iif you didn't have enough masons or smiths, it doesn't matter how much more unskilled labour you put to work, the walls aren't going up any faster. For every 40 unskilled labourers, you need 8 masons and 1 smith.

Additionally, the land and peasantry required to feed the workforce would be about 4 peasants/man, and about 25 hectares/man. This is for a region of high agricultural productivity, though, so this number could be as much as doubled for an area like Norway, where the land is much less productive.

Finally, if you were unable or unwilling to provide for your workforce, it might be possible to buy the labour required on the open market (although the food would still need to be available for the labourers to buy, obviously). Using wages from the middle of the High Middle Ages (i.e. around 1300AD), an unskilled labourer would be paid about 1 d./day (d. stands for silver penny, from the Latin *denarius*, the standard currency of the Middle Ages ? you should be able to convert this to your world's currency by finding what an unskilled labourer would make in your currency). A skilled labourer like a mason about 6 d./day and a smith about 8 d./day. Based on the labour breakdown from before, you'd be looking at about 300 d./day for labour for Langeais, or about 2 d./man.

Over the eighteen-month course of the project, that adds up to a lot of coin - on the order of 160,000 d. Considering the total yearly income for an average upper noble (like Fulk) in 1300AD would be in the neighbourhood of 700,000 d., you can see that even very modest castles were a big expense.

Keep in mind that Fulk had many other expenses - he was building other castles, maintaining garrisons, paying soldiers, conducting trade, maintaining his households and estates, etc. You can see why lords used the feudal obligations of their peasantry rather than paying cash for labour. That said, it was probably the case that some labour would be paid in cash, and some labour would work out of obligation.

Generic Bill of Materials

From this we can prepare a table that would serve a purpose much like that seen in Gygax's original Little Brown Books, but based on something a little more concrete (as far as I can tell, Gygax made up all his numbers).

Per 1m3 of finished stone, consult the following figures. This includes floors, doors, stairs, etc. – minimal interior finishing suitable for a military installation, but no furniture, etc.

Material	Volume	Weight
Stone	1m3	2.5 metric tons
Wood	0.5m3	0.3 tons
Nails	3.5	0.05 kg
Sand	0.225m3	0.36 tons

For figuring out the work order, you can either plug in how many workmen you have and find out when the project will be done or you can plug in when you want the project to be done, and find out what kind of workforce you would need.

For a given project, the number of man-days required to complete it will be roughly equal to the amount of cubic metres of stone required times 66. Divide this total by either the number of days you wish the project to take (to calculate the necessary workforce) or by the number of workers available (to calculate the time required).

Obviously, you can't just keep throwing workers at a project. I would recommend a workforce cap of 20% of the total cubic metres of stone in the project.

Once you know the number of men in the workforce, you can find the surplus food required to support them. Each man in your workforce will require the surplus food of 4 peasants working 25 hectares OR about 2 d./day cash wages.

Examples

Modest Castle, similar to Langeais

This would be a modest castle, suitable for a border outpost for a high lord, or a main residence for a middle lord. The lowest lords would aspire to something like this, and it would be well out of reach for a typical knight.

You will not that the costs here are much higher than for Langeais – that's because I didn't include the curtain wall in my figures for Langeais, only the keep, and Langeais did not have towers guarding the gate.

Keep: 4 stories, 15m tall, 15m×15m, 2m thick (1800 m3)
Curtain wall: 200m, 7m tall, .2m thick (280 m3)
2 × Square Towers in wall gate: 10m tall, 6m×6m, 1.5m thick (360 m3)

Total Cubic Metres of Stone: 2440

Bill of Materials

Material	Volume	Weight
Stone	2240m3	5600 tons
Wood	1220m3	732 tons
Nails	8540	122 kg
Mortar	549m3	878 tons

Work Order

540 days construction time

226 workmen/day – 184 labourers, 37 masons, and 6 smiths.

904 peasants working 13500 hectares OR about 452 d./day

Elaborate Royal Castle

This is the sort of castle that Kings live in, or build to defend key regions. A huge keep, multiple curtain walls, many towers, and two gatehouses make this a more or less impregnable defense, but its defensive value is only matched by its immense cost.

For a point of comparison, this castle as described, would be about twice the size and power of Beaumaris Castle, one of the most powerful castles in England. Beaumaris was so big and powerful that it took 36 years to build, was in serious debt during the whole construction, couldn't pay its workers, and was never actually totally finished. This castle, therefore, would probably be more suitable for a fantastic world with incredible castles than a world more like ours.

Keep: 3 (double tall) stories, 20m tall, 20m×40m plan, 2.5m thick (6000 m3)
First Curtain Wall: 700m long, 10m high, 1.5m thick (10500 m3)
Second Curtain Wall 600m long, 14m high, 2m thick (16800 m3)
8 × Tower 16m tall, 10m×10m plan, 2m thick walls (10240 m3)
2 × Gatehouse 16m tall, 20m×20m plan, 2.5m thick walls (6400 m3)

Total: 50,000 m3

Bill of Materials

Material	Volume	Weight
Stone	50000m3	125000 metric tons
Wood	25000m3	15000 tons
Nails	175000	2500 kg
Sand	11250m3	18000 tons

Work Order

1250 days construction time (3.4 years)

2000 workmen/day – 1633 labourers, 327 masons, and 41 smiths.

8000 peasants working 31250 hectares OR about 4000 d./day

Simple Keep

This would be typical of the sort of border castles we see in Scotland. It would typically be owned by a lower lord, or a wealthy knight, or be built by a community for protection and refuge against raiders. It is simply a stone tower, no curtains walls guarding a bailey, or any other defensive structures.

Keep: 3 stories, 10m tall by 15m by 20m, wall thickness 1.5m (1050 m3)

Bill of Materials

Material	Volume	Weight
Stone	1050m3	2625 metric tons
Wood	525m3	315 tons
Nails	3675	52.5 kg
Sand	236m3	378 tons

Work Order

365 days construction time

144 workmen/day – 117 labourers, 23 masons, and 3 smiths.

575 peasants working 9,125 hectares OR about 288 d./day

Conclusion

Fulk, Count of Anjou, knew well the value of building castles, but also the costs. He was exceedingly rich, but still sought to build the smallest castle that would accomplish his goals.

Fulk won out against his enemies in Blois and elsewhere, largely thanks to his wisdom in building small but strong castles like the Chateau Langeais.

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Goedendag & Franziska

by B. Eisenhofer, P. Greco

Goedentag   The goedentag resembles a combination of a heavy two-handed club and a spear's head. The club is usually five feet (150 cm) long, widening on the upper end, where the spear's head is inserted by a tang. Rumours say that some units drive large nails through the sides of their goedendags to make them more useful against armour. The weapon is easy to use and cheap to produce, and therefore not prestigious at all.

The weapon can be set against a charging enemy, like a spear. The thick knob under the spike stops the charge, hopefully bringing a rider from his horse. Then, when the enemy is halted, the goedendag is used as a club or replaced by another weapon.

Price: 3 gp; Damage: 1d10 (two handed); Weight: 10 lb

Francisca   The francisca is a short, heavy throwing axe. The haft is less than half a meter long and the head is 15 cm long, with an edge of about 10cm ending in sharp points at both ends. The weapon was used by early Middle Ages Franks infantry. Being real chunky and awfully imbalanced it's unusable in melee.

The francisca shines when thrown: not only it could bash through a shied, but apparently it has the nasty habit of bouncing when hitting the ground or shields. This makes them perfect against massed formations: Frankish infantry would throw a volley of these heavy axes just before charging in melee, catching their opponents off guard as they were still coping with the problematic thrown axes.

Price: 2 gp; Damage: 1d6 (throwing only); Weight: 2 lb