

LAMENTATIONS
of the
FLAME PRINCESS
ADVENTURES

The Squid, the Cabal, and the Old Man



Bouchard
Green
Jagosz
Novoa
Pook

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THE SQUID, THE CABAL,
AND THE OLD MAN

BY ANDRE NOVOA

ADVENTURE MODULE FOR LEVELS

I-2



Credits

WRITING: ANDRE NOVOA

COVER ART: YANNICK BOUCHARD

INTERIOR ART: KELVIN GREEN

GRAPHIC DESIGN: JEREMY JAGOSZ

EDITING: MATTHEW POOK

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Author Introduction

In 2007, I graduated with a degree in History. Afterwards, I moved on to other areas of study, such as anthropology and geography, but I never lost interest in the subject. When I came across the *Lamentations of the Flame Princess Weird Fantasy Roleplaying* core rules and adventures, I thought to myself, “what an incredible way to put my diploma to use!” Said and done. This is an adventure based on true historical facts and events. With some twists. Naturally. Have fun with *The Squid, the Cabal, and the Old Man* and please do mail me at novoa.andre@gmail.com with your own session reports. I would love to see how history was re-written by your players.

Also, I would like to express my gratitude to a number of people. First of all, thank you to my cousin Pedro Lisboa, who showed me the ways of RPG gaming. It was him that taught me how to play *Lamentations of the Flame Princess Weird Fantasy Roleplaying* and opened the doors to the Old School Renaissance scene. Secondly, I want to thank my gang of players: Johnny C, McLeod, Miramon, Claudia, my cousin Rita, my cousin Joana, and my girlfriend Adriana. It is for them that I like to write adventures and it is for them that I will keep on writing adventures! Thirdly, I would like to

thank pookie for his awesome editing. Last but not least, thank you to James Raggi for making me a *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* author. I couldn't have asked for a better debut.

Referee Introduction

The module presented here was conceived according to the *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* rules, but it can easily be adapted to any Old School Renaissance (OSR) rules system.

This adventure is designed for a party of three to five characters of First and Second Levels. *The Squid, the Cabal, and the Old Man* is not like most adventures. Its treasure consists not of coins or swords or the like. There are no vaults full of silver pieces to be found, no magic weapons, no precious gems, or streams of gold. There are some valuable goods here and there, spread out throughout the various settings, but the main treasure here is of different nature: knowledge. The objective at the heart of *The Squid, the Cabal, and the Old Man* is not to acquire treasure, but to understand what is going on and return ‘home’ with ‘valuables’ that will serve as proof of their wild discoveries. Valuables in this case include books, mathematical treatises, scientific data, and so on. Will the player characters realise this?

The adventure is a blend of various personal inspirations. First of all, the adventure's background is the scientific revolution. I am a science geek. Over the past few years, it has bothered me that the OSR is yet to publish an adventure that makes use of mad scientists or scientific experiments as its central plot. I do so here. Secondly, it is my personal homage to H.P. Lovecraft. The Inter-Planetary Cult of the Ancient Knowledgeable Squid is a clear-cut reference. Obviously enough, the name came up as a joke. I simply wrote down something I could remember well. It stuck after a while. Thirdly, Umberto Eco's *Foucault's Pendulum* also has a big influence over this adventure, namely when it comes to secret societies and Cabals. Just as in that novel, people construct their reality according to their beliefs. Something similar will occur with one particular NPC in *The Squid, the Cabal, and the Old Man*, or even with the player characters themselves. Fourth and finally, one of the devices in this adventure – The Cube – is an obvious reference to Vincenzo Natali's movie from 1997. Overall though, the adventure can be pitched as the works of H.P. Lovecraft meets Umberto Eco during the scientific revolution.

Historical Background

England. 1684. This is where and when I originally placed this module. By

the latter half of the 17th century, the scientific revolution was well underway and quarrels amongst scientists were rather common. 1684 was the year in which Newton put to paper his theory on gravitational mechanics. In this adventure, I draw upon the known rivalry and intrigue-triangle between three well-known scientists from this period – Robert Hooke, Isaac Newton, and Edmond Halley – to serve as the background to the plot. It began with a dispute between Hooke and Newton, following a meeting that put Hooke, Halley and Christopher Wren around the same table in January, 1684. Together they tried to formulate a scientific explanation that could account for the irregular motion of the planets around the sun; they could not understand why these were elliptical instead of circular. After giving it plenty of thought, all three were still unable to come up with a pleasing conclusion. Later that year, in the summer, Halley happened to visit Newton and found out that the latter had already deciphered the problem, namely with his – at that time – initial formulas on gravitational mechanics. Halley became absolutely obsessed with Newton's work and encouraged him to write everything down in a theoretical book. Even though Newton was much more concerned with the arts of alchemy and the Temple of Solomon, he did manage to write the book shortly after and it

was Halley himself who assumed all of the costs of the first edition. This is the story behind the publication of the *Principia Mathematica*. In the meantime, frustrated by the fact that he was not the one to come up with an answer, Hooke made public his opinion that Newton had stolen his work. This gave rise to a dispute that would

culminate in a presentation to the Royal Society in 1686. By the end of the presentation, Newton was vindicated while Hooke was discredited and left bearing grudge that he would harbour for the rest of his life. It is against this rivalry and dispute that the adventure will unfold. Will the player characters rewrite history?

A Note on Currency

I decided to write this module with values in the silver-piece standard, according to the Lamentations of the Flame Princess rulebooks. I was advised that doing so should make it easier for both the Referee and the players themselves. However, if the Referee wishes to add a degree of verisimilitude to his game, he can use the English system of currency used in the 17th century, which consists of pounds, shillings, and pence, with twelve pence (pennies) per shilling, and twenty shillings per pound. This is written as £12 10s. 6d (12 pounds, 10 shillings, and 6 pence). Numerous coins are used, from farthings (¼ penny) and ha'penny (½ penny) to half-crown (2s. 6d) and crowns (5s). Such coins can be added to scenario or campaign to add verisimilitude.

In terms of income, a wealthy farmer might make £150 per annum, a wealthy merchant £200, while the annual wage for a domestic servant is £2 plus board, fare, and clothing. Artisans earn a substantially bigger annual income, as they have to pay for their own food, lodging, and clothing. Needless to say, women earn much less money than men. A waterman will probably ask 6d to take you from Westminster to London Bridge. A visit to the barbershop should cost roughly the same. When it comes to food, 1½d is enough to purchase a meal in any given public house. 2d will secure you a shared bed in a cheap lodging house; double that amount if you wish to spend the night more comfortably. Clothes are much more expensive, a nice suit going for no less than £6. A poor man's clothing is normally just handcrafted.

Much more complicated than this is to attribute value to the artefacts spread out across the settings of this adventure. Reportedly, famous instrument-maker Richard Reeve sold a microscope in 1664 for £5 10s. It seems reasonable that a telescope will cost much more than that, perhaps as twice as much. Other scientific instruments should be within this price range, unless they are simple flasks and cutting instruments. Even more difficult is attributing value to scrolls and books as during the 17th century there is no fixed market-price. Nevertheless, most of the books will sell for £1 or £2, while the ancient scrolls should be worth at least £10 each, with many easily fetching £50 to £100.

Using this is purely optional. It is up to the Referee to decide whether or not he wishes to do so.

The Plot

The adventure takes place in August, 1684; right after Hooke finds out that Newton was able to solve the problem of the irregular motion of planets. The plot will involve the player characters in a triangle of – fictional-yet-almost-likely – intrigues between Hooke, Halley, and Newton. These three scientists will serve as the central NPCs in *The Squid, the Cabal, and the Old Man*. Their aims are as follows:

(a) Robert Hooke wants to steal Newton's work and thinks that Halley's friendship with Newton might present an opportunity to carry out such a theft. Hooke is an aggravated old man who simply wants to lay his hands on Newton's theories in order to claim them as his own.

(b) Isaac Newton is obsessed with alchemy. He is much more interested in finding the Philosopher's Stone than in science *per se*. He is a member of a Freemason's Lodge with similar aims. However, all of his 'brothers', except for one, died recently – the lodge was formed of seven individuals – and so Newton has become paranoid that there is a Cabal out there trying to kill him. He suspects that Halley is somehow behind this and that he holds an important artefact that will complete his research. The truth is that there is no Cabal out to kill Newton and that Halley holds no such artefact. Newton

'brothers' simply died of natural causes or accidents. Newton's suspicions extend to his new friend, Edmond Halley. He does not quite understand why Halley is so keen on helping him publishing his theories...

(c) Edmond Halley, as the leader of the Inter-Planetary Cult of the Ancient Knowledgeable Squid (how did you think he discovered the comet?), has befriended Hooke in order to kill Newton. Halley wants to murder Newton in order to salvage his brain, because this is what the cult does and has been doing on Earth for many centuries now. The cult has had its eyes on Newton for some years now – rumour has that he is on the brink of making a major scientific breakthrough. Halley made friends with Hooke because the cult wants two things from Newton. The first are his published theories on gravitational mechanics. The second is to harvest his brain itself. Obviously, the first needs to be complete before the second can be attempted, so Halley needs to time this well and Hooke is the best person to verify that Newton has indeed completed his formulas.

In short, you have a grumpy old man that wants to rob another man; the other man is a paranoid Freemason obsessed with alchemy; and you have a cult leader that wants to salvage the

brain of the said paranoid Freemason. It is into this happy situation that your player characters walk. Have fun!

In addition to the three main NPCs, the adventure has three main settings, one for each of those NPCs. They are as follows:

(a) Robert Hooke's house in central London.

(b) Isaac Newton's mansion near Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth, the grounds of which contain a small, underground replica of the Temple of Solomon; plus his laboratory at the University of Cambridge.

(c) Edmond Halley's manor house in Islington (London) and the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, under which is a secret temple of the Inter-Planetary Cult of the Ancient Knowledgeable Squid.

It takes about 16 hours of walking for the travellers to go from London to Cambridge. If player characters

are riding, it should cut it down to 8 hours of travelling. The distance from Cambridge to Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth is roughly the same between London and Cambridge. Greenwich is close to London towards east by the river. It should not take more than a couple of hours of walking.

It is up to the Referee to decide how he wants to handle travel in *The Squid, the Cabal, and the Old Man*. The player characters can simply travel safely between the adventure's locations or they can run into whatever the Referee finds appropriate. For example, the Referee could use *Tales of the Scarecrow* (also published by Lamentations of the Flame Princess) as a side adventure somewhere on the road between London and Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth. Alternatively, he could run a table of random wilderness encounters and test the player characters' luck; this will confuse players – and that's a good thing!



FACTS ABOUT LONDON

In mid-17th century, London is extremely overcrowded and dirty. The streets are full of beggars. The roads are treated like open sewers. The city stank and hygiene is virtually unknown. In a city that had already suffered numerous outbreaks of bubonic plague since 1347, the conditions were ripe for further outbreaks, the last of which was the infamous Great Plague of 1665, which took the lives of 100,000 people, roughly 15% of London's population. The Great Plague had all but petered out when the city was struck by yet another disaster - the Great Fire of 1666. The fire destroyed more than 60% of the city, including the Old St. Paul's Cathedral, countless churches, trade associations, and private houses. Most of the aristocracy relocated itself to new districts such as the

trendy St. James, right next to the royal residence. Merchants began operating near Piccadilly towards the East. The rebuilding of the city saw a move from wood to stone and brick. By the end of the century, London would be back on its feet, racing ahead to become the world's leading financial centre, superseding Amsterdam in the process. The Bank of England would be founded in 1694 and England's maritime interests were laying the foundation for the great empire that would rise over the course of the next century. So, in 1684, the player characters are likely to be witnesses to a vibrant metropolis, rebuilding itself following the great disasters and on its way to becoming the most influential city in Europe.

FACTS ABOUT CAMBRIDGE

By the 17th century, Cambridge has been a university town for almost five centuries with much of the town's commercial and agricultural activity thriving because of the university's presence. Indeed, much of town's life revolves around the university. Founded in 1209, it accommodates some fifteen colleges in the 1680s and due to Isaac Newton's influence maintains an especially strong emphasis on

applied mathematics, particularly mathematical physics. Home to some 5,000 people, the town has benefited from the construction of the Hobson's Conduit, which brought sanitation and fresh water to the centre of Cambridge for the first time in 1614. The town's most famous public house is The Eagle and the Child, which opened in 1667.

FACTS ABOUT WOOLSTHORPE-BY-COLSTERWORTH

Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth is a rural village in the middle of nowhere, famous for one thing only. That it is the birthplace of Isaac Newton. The village has a small church and an inn, and its inhabitants number no more than a

hundred. They will not be surprised should the player characters come to Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth as the inn is occasionally frequented by merchants travelling on the road between Peterborough and Nottingham.

The NPCs

(a) Robert Hooke is a grumpy old man. Actually, he is in his fifties, but looks much older. He is the most obvious choice for introducing the adventure to the player characters – Hooke could hire them to steal the work. He is a deeply frustrated man – and the Referee should show it! No one seems to recognise his scientific discoveries – this is a historical fact – and his manner will be aggressive and suspicious. Nevertheless, absolutely fixated on laying his hands on Newton's work on gravitational mechanics, Hooke is looking to hire a gang of ne'er-do-wells to undertake the task. Although Hooke knows Halley well, he knows nothing of the cult that Halley leads. In Hooke's house, the player characters will find reference to Halley, but not much more than that. Hooke knows that Halley is also very interested in Newton, but he is unaware of Halley's true intentions.

In combat: Armour 12, Movement 100', 2 Hit Dice, dagger 1d4.

(b) A brilliant and respected scientist in his forties, Isaac Newton earned his reputation after years spent in researching the field of optics in the 1660s and the 1670s. His reputation is such that most educated men in England will recognise his name. In addition to studying optics, Newton

has spent half of his life researching alchemy, trying to assemble the Philosopher's Stone, a legendary artefact said to be capable of turning base metals into gold. He is both a biblical and an occult scholar, having made a study of the Temple of Solomon – the First Temple built in Jerusalem that was sacked in 587 BC – from the *King James Bible* and the writings of Vitruvius and other Roman authors. Newton's fascination with the temple was such that he has built a small, underground replica of the Temple of Solomon in the grounds of his house, its architecture and decoration ripe with occult symbolism. It is here that he conducts his alchemical studies away from the eyes of the public. Until recently, the temple was also the secret meeting place for his brotherhood of Freemasons, having been partially conceived as a stage to host initiation and other rites.

Newton is a deeply paranoid man. He sincerely believes that there is a Cabal that is trying to kill him, a Cabal that is keeping hidden secret knowledge about how to assemble the Philosopher's Stone. He also suspects that Halley is in possession of important occult knowledge – knowledge that Newton believes will help him unravel the secrets of the Philosopher's Stone and perhaps the true secrets of the Temple of Solomon. (Of course, Halley is

in possession of important ‘occult’ knowledge – just not exactly what Newton is looking for).

In combat: Armour 12, Movement 120’, 2 Hit Dice, sword 1d6.

(c) Edmond Halley is a man with two sides to his character. On the one hand, he is an astronomer with a growing reputation. Born in 1656 to a wealthy soap-maker, Halley acquired a fine education at Oxford before assisting John Flamsteed, the first Astronomer Royal, in his relocation to Greenwich in 1675 to direct the construction of the Royal Greenwich Observatory. Best known for his trip to St. Helena between 1676 and 1678 to chart the stars of the Southern Hemisphere, upon his return, Halley settled down with his wife in Islington. In public, Halley is a proud, respectable young man who will readily share his experiences on St. Helena and his immense knowledge of astronomy.

On the other hand, Halley is the leader of the Inter-Planetary Cult of the Ancient Knowledgeable Squid. His father led the cult before him, inducting Edmond after he came down from Oxford. Edmond rose through the cult’s ranks quickly before taking over its leadership when his father stepped down in 1678. When the cult learned that it was Halley’s supervisor, John Flamsteed, who was to be put in charge of the Royal Observatory, it began threatening him until ‘The King’s Astronomical Observator’

agreed to let the cult construct its temple under the Royal Observatory in absolute secrecy. After all, given the nature of the cult, it made sense that its new temple would be built here. The cult even forced Flamsteed to have a subterranean tunnel excavated from his cellar leading to the temple, enabling the leader of the cult to come and go with some secrecy. The cult continued to intimidate Flamsteed after the temple was finished, whilst also blackmailing him, threatening to reveal his complicity in the temple’s construction. Thus Flamsteed had no choice but to comply (historiography note: this is why, indeed, Flamsteed left the Royal Observatory in 1684....).

At the present time, Halley is absolutely devoted to the cult. He will have no second thoughts about carrying out its inhuman aims. So, the Referee should act as a respectable man at first, but if unmasked he should turn Halley into a fearsome, cruel cultist.

In combat: Armour 16, Movement 120’, 5 Hit Dice, staff 1d6 plus Squid Summoning (described below), Contact Outer Sphere, and Polymorph Self (add some tentacle attacks if successful).

The Cabal

There is no Cabal. Remember this – Newton though sincerely believes otherwise. If the player characters act suspiciously – for example, if they follow Newton or attempt to rob his house – he will think that player characters are agents of the Cabal. He will be absolutely convinced that their presence is indicative that the Cabal has finally come for him. Well, in a way, his fears are justified, seeing how there is a cult that wants his brain, but Newton thinks that the cult wants to thwart his alchemical endeavours.

The Cult of the Squid

The Inter-Planetary Cult of the Ancient Knowledgeable Squid originated in the Middle East around 100 BC, inspired by early Egyptian astronomic observations. The cult holds that a race of giant, intelligent squid-like creatures resides in a planet called R'Ahz, located in a planetary system more than 200 light-years away from Earth called R'Ahz-Ghi-Le (today known as Kepler-37, in the constellation of Lyra). The cult believes that these creatures feed off knowledge, its sacred transcripts telling the history of such creatures, stating that, at first, they were able to produce enough knowledge to keep themselves fed and alive, but as soon as the population grew, they could not sustain themselves on what they alone knew. The Ancient Squids had no

choice but to navigate to first nearby planets and then nearby star systems consuming all of the knowledge that they could attach their tentacles to. Millennia of consecutive consumption eventually enabled them to develop the technology to navigate through the cosmos at will.

The Inter-Planetary Cult of the Ancient Knowledgeable Squid sincerely believes that the arrival of the Squid on Earth is imminent, and in preparation for the arrival of its masters, the cult has been stocking up on the knowledge produced on Earth. The cult's first grand operation, following its founding, was an assault on the Library of Alexandria. Orthodox historiography states that the burning of the library was as a result of Julius Caesar's actions in Egypt around 48 BC. Little do historians know that it had nothing to do with Julius Caesar, but the burning of Alexandria is so greatly revered within the cult that it has become part of its very foundation-story. Assaults upon other libraries followed through the ages, most notably those upon the Library of Ctesiphon in Persia in 651 AD and the Imperial Library of Constantinople in the Byzantine Empire in 1204 AD. The cult has since spread its influence beyond the Middle East. In 1684, there are about 50 cultists in London and roughly 500 more spread-out across Europe and Asia. Those that can attend an annual conclave will do so, held each year in a

different location – this year they will meet at Stonehenge during the winter solstice. According to the tenets of the cult, besides direct knowledge in the form of books and ancient scrolls, the Squids' favourite food happens to be the brains of famous scientists. They regard them as super-nutritious. Hence, cultists have been carefully collecting

the brains of respected scientists throughout the ages. The brains need to be collected and stored perfectly. Timing is of the essence here. A brain that has been buried for over two months serves no good as it is will have been spoiled by decomposition.

Running the Adventure

The Referee can run the adventure as he likes. I have presented three central NPCs, their respective settings (see below), and an open-ended plot. The Referee can come up with the connections by himself and be creative on his own. In fact, he should be doing so! A good Referee is the one who can creatively reinvent and adjust the plot to work with the style and aims of his own players and their characters. I will nevertheless, give some suggestions and illustrations as to what might happen.

During the play-test of *The Squid*, *the Cabal*, and *the Old Man*, the player characters were hired by Hooke to steal Newton's work. They said yes to the job, but decided to follow Hooke back to his house. At Hooke's house, the player characters found a connection to Halley (see Hooke's office below). They went on to investigate the Observatory. There they killed the guards and located the cult's underground temple below the Observatory. Halley was not there

at the time, as he was already on his way to kill Newton, who had been in Cambridge putting the final touches to his theories on gravity. In the temple, the player characters discovered Halley's true intentions and raced ahead to get to Newton's laboratory before Halley did. When they arrived, Halley was in the process of abducting Newton. They were unable to rescue Newton – Halley had already managed to murder him – but killed Halley. They proceeded to investigate Newton's mansion, stole some books and the adventure was over.

Alternatively, a less suspicious group of player characters might simply accept Hooke's offer of employment to steal Newton's notes and proceed to Cambridge and Newton's laboratory. Although Newton is likely to be in the laboratory at the time, the player characters may not only be able to get his notes, but they may well discover the plans to Newton's underground replica of the Temple of Solomon

on the grounds of his estate in Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth. Once there, searching the temple may reveal Newton's interest in Halley, that he possesses an important artefact that will help Newton complete his alchemical works. They then go on to confront Halley at the Observatory, finding the cult's nest. Once again, Halley is not there because he is on his way to kill Newton. And so on.

Or perhaps he could be at the Observatory this time, and the player characters not only kill him, but discover that he planned to murder Newton. If this is the case, then it is your player characters that will suffer from Eco's 'delusion' in that they will probably believe that there is a Cabal bent on killing Newton. Right?

Or maybe player characters just go to Newton's house and steal his notes, take them back to Hooke and get paid for their efforts – and that is that. Adventure done. Next.

The possibilities are endless here. The Referee should not railroad his player characters into their actions, but should instead let the players choose what their characters do and react to what they do. In the process, there are many choices to be made. Who is where when the player characters come? Is Hooke home when and if the player characters loot his house? Where is Newton when the player characters visit – in Cambridge or Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth? Then there is Halley. Will he be at

the Observatory, or will he be on his way to kill Newton? These choices will be responsible for the script of the adventure. I believe that each time this module is played, a new script will be born. And that's what makes it fun.

Even so, I have come up with a dice generator that determines these choices. It is absolutely optional. It goes as follows:

Once the player characters are in setting 1 (Robert Hooke's house), roll 1d8. On 1-4, Hooke is home. On 5-6, Hooke is in town doing something else. On 7-8, Hooke is on his way to speak with Halley.

Once they are in setting 2 (Isaac Newton's Mansion and Laboratory), roll 1d4. On 1-2, Newton is in Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth. On 3-4, Newton is there in Cambridge.

Once they are in setting 3 (Edmond Halley's House, the Observatory, and the Temple), roll 1d8. On 1-2, Halley is at his house in Islington. On 3-4, Halley is at Hooke's house. On 5-6, Halley is either at the Observatory or the Temple. On 7-8, Halley is on his way to kill Newton.

Bonus roll! If Halley is at the Observatory, roll a d3 once the player characters get to the Temple. On a 3, the cult is having a gathering and performing a ritual. There will be around 50 cultists there. Good luck with that!

Setting 1:
Robert Hooke's House

The first setting solely consists of Robert Hooke's home, which is a normal bourgeois house in central London. The ground floor consists of a dining room, parlour, kitchen, and larder, while upstairs is Hooke's bedroom, his adjacent library/office, a guestroom, and a box room. The servants have rooms in the attic. The house is clean and there is a maid, Martha Snody, resident at all times. Hooke is a confirmed bachelor and will never marry.

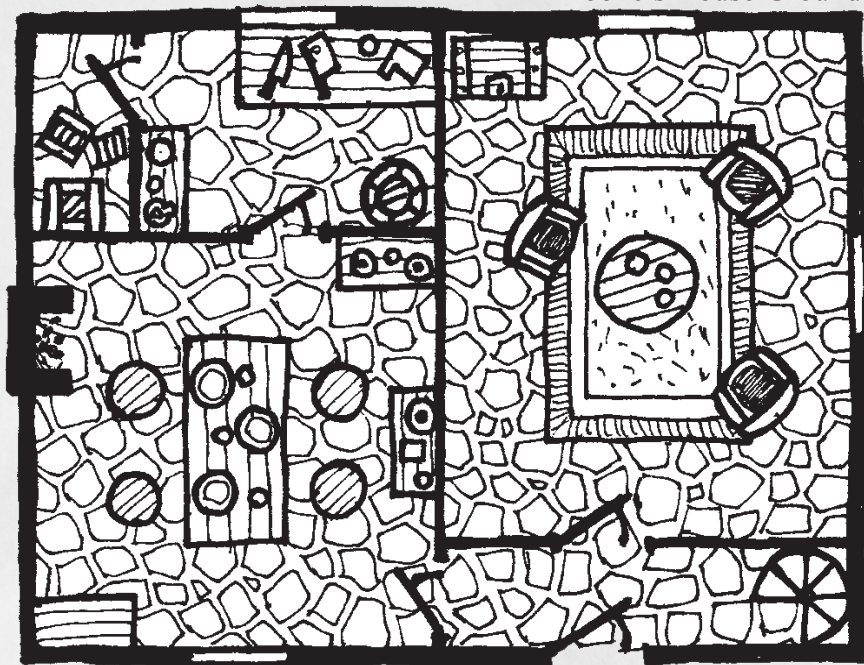
I. THE LIBRARY/OFFICE UPSTAIRS

The library mainly contains works of a scientific and astronomical nature, including *De Nova Stella* by Tycho Brahe, *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* by Nicolaus Copernicus, and a Portuguese copy of the *Esmeraldo de*

Situ Orbis by Duarte Pacheco Pereira. Various glass cabinets hold scientific instruments – an anemometer, a barometer and a microscope amongst others – worth a total of 200 silver pieces. On the desk are more scientific instruments, part of a work-in-progress that attempted to show that musical tones could be generated from spinning brass cogs cut with teeth in particular proportions. Also on the desk is an unsigned letter:

In the fireplace is a half-burnt, incomplete letter, mostly concealed by ash. A comparison with the letter on the desk will confirm that it was written by the same person. The intended recipient is unknown, his identity having been consumed in the fire.

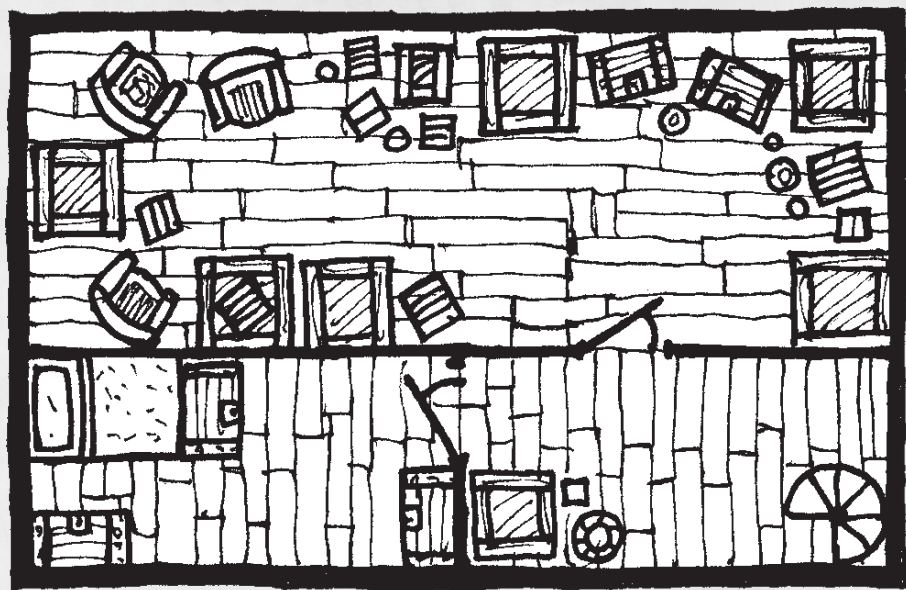
Hooke's House Ground Floor



Hooke's House First Floor

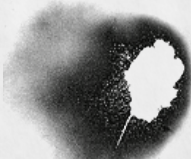


Hooke's House Second Floor



My dear Halley,

It would be my great honour to accompany you to Newton's laboratory should the opportunity arise. His work has been of great interest to me and as I understand it, you have of late become quite close to the great man. Perhaps then, you could arrange for us to pay our respects? Shall I come and pay my respects to you in Islington? Alternately, should I call upon you at the Royal Observatory, given that I am to understand you are engaged in much of your work there?



*That Newton stole my work. Believe
me! I had already completed all the
formulae. How I despise that little
insignificant man! One day, I will
kill him!*



Setting 2:
Isaac Newton's Mansion and Laboratory



This setting is divided into two different locations. One is Newton's mansion in Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth with its secret underground masonic temple in the grounds of the house; the other is his laboratory in Trinity College at Cambridge University. It takes one day to travel between the two. He keeps a small room at the college; nothing fancy – just clothes, a bed, wardrobe, and so on. In his laboratory the player characters will find Newton's notes on celestial mechanics, though unless one of their number is a mathematician, they cannot be entirely sure that they have the right papers. If they return the papers to Hooke, he will be able to confirm that they have the right

ones. The player characters will also find what appears to be the map of an underground temple. Notes on the map mention both 'Woolsthorpe' and 'Temple of Solomon'. Also in the laboratory is a Newtonian telescope worth 500 silver pieces that he is currently in the process of making repairs to.

Note that Newton not only conducts research in the laboratory, he also teaches here too. University staff and students are familiar with Newton and his comings and goings. So while they may be prepared to answer any questions put to them about Newton, they are equally as likely to be curious as to the presence of the player characters in the laboratory.



The Mansion

Newton's actual residence is a large mansion in the village of Woolsthorpe-by-Colsterworth. In addition to a household staff of a maid (Esther Cooke), a cook (Mercy Hardacre), and a gardener/stableboy (Ned Hardacre) who has a room over the stables, Newton also employs a guard, Tobias Malton, hired to keep the place safe, following the recent 'murders' of Newton's Freemason brothers. Separated from the house, stands a small lab that contains Newton's findings and work on Optics – the place looks dusty and unused. Behind the lab is a well, which serves as the secret entrance to the underground temple.

Tobias Malton, Guard: Armour 12, Movement 120, 1 Hit Dice, cudgel 1d6, Morale 8.

Newton's mansion is a typical rural mansion befitting a wealthy gentleman. It is clean and well-maintained, but there are a number of interesting facts about the house. The ground floor consists of a kitchen and larder, a dining room, parlour, games room (complete with billiards table), library, and study, whilst the first floor consists of Newton's bedroom, three guest rooms, and a box-room. Above this in the attic, there are rooms for the cook and the maid each, along with several storerooms.

1. THE LIBRARY

The library holds about one hundred books. Pride of place goes to a *King James Bible* that sits on a lectern, while the other books primarily consist of works on mathematics, astronomy, and natural philosophy. Other books are devoted to the occult, alchemy, and religion.

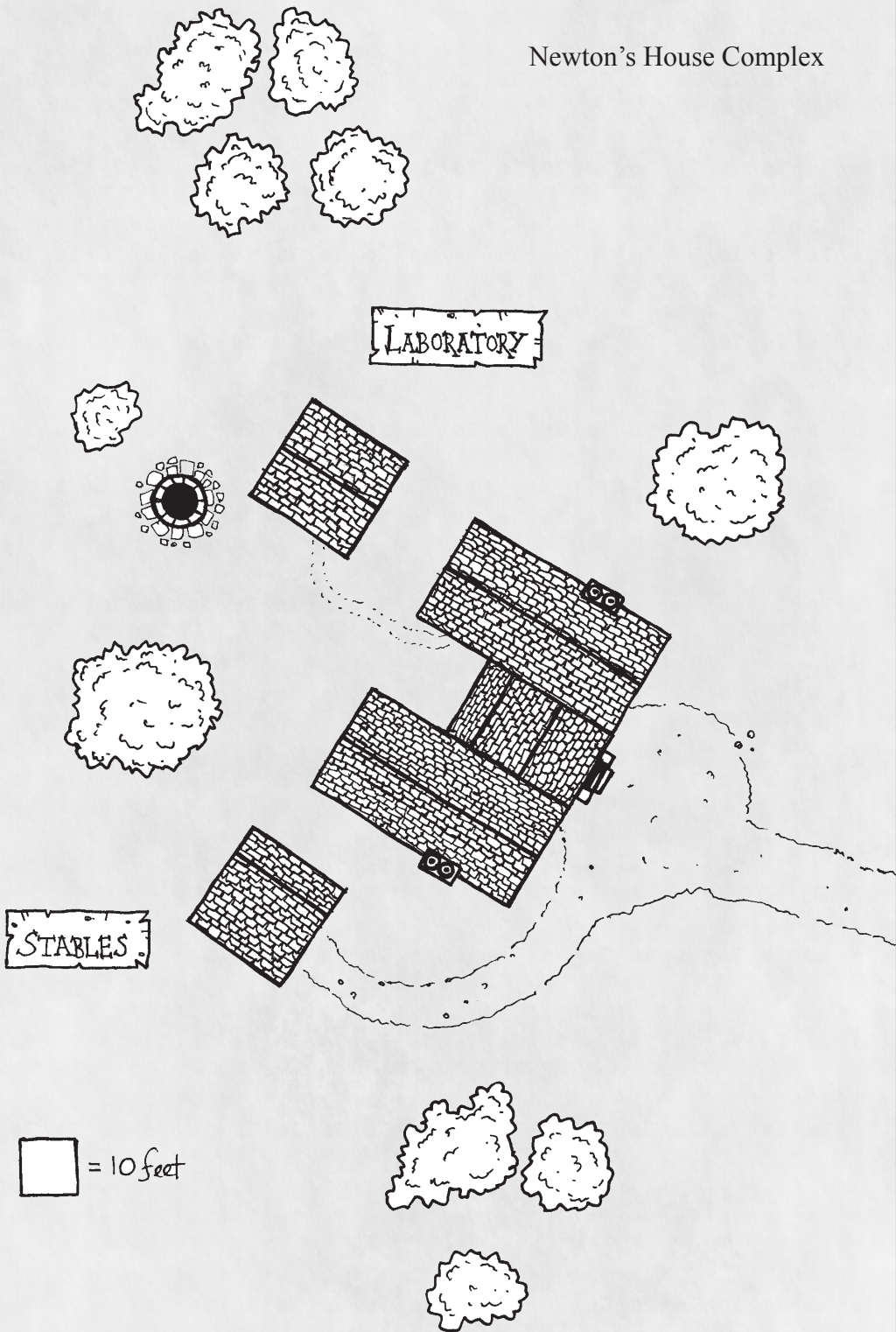
2. THE STUDY

Adjacent to the library is Newton's study. The most notable feature in the room is a cabinet of curiosities. It is filled with horns, tusks, skeletons, and minerals, as well as wondrous sculptures, clockwork automata, and artefacts from around the world. There are also a number of old scientific instruments.

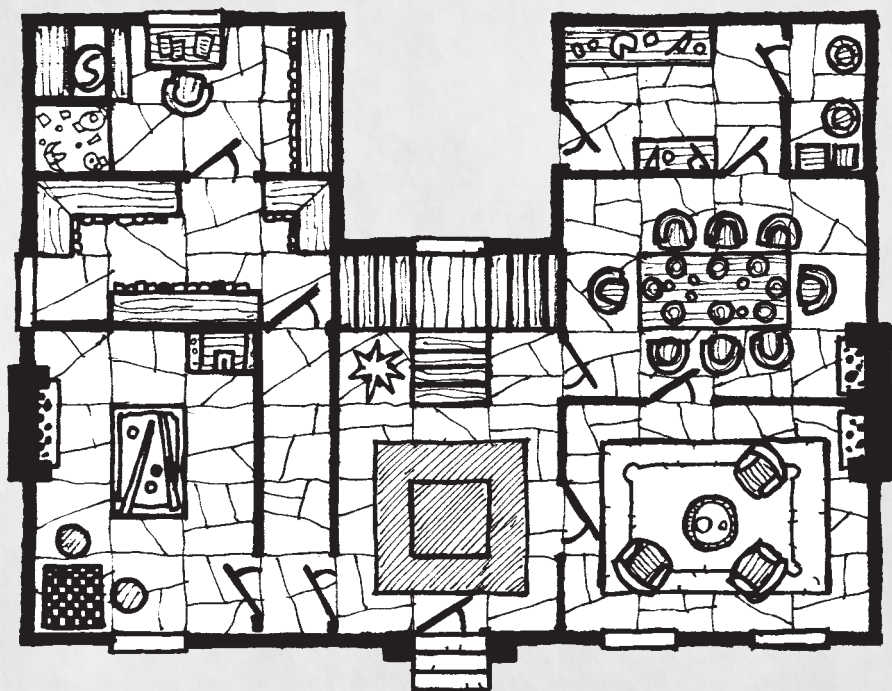
On the desk are two letters. One is to a woman named Isabella, the other to a man named William. They are the only surviving members of Newton's Freemason lodge (hand-outs below).

A wardrobe contains a pair of dark cloaks and a coat. The rear of the wardrobe is a secret panel that opens onto a hidden room built into the end of the house.

Newton's House Complex

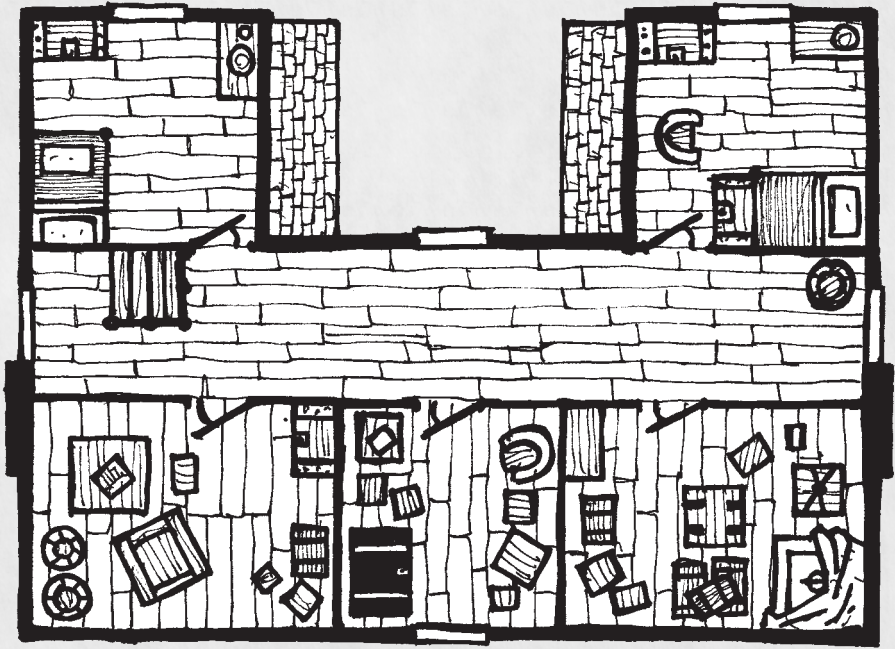


Newton's Mansion Ground Floor



Newton's Mansion First Floor





3. SECRET ROOM (NEXT TO STUDY)

This secret room is accessed via the panel at the back of the wardrobe in the study next door. The only furniture in the small room is a cupboard which contains an apron embroidered in bright colours with a compass and an eye. Also in the cupboard is a big-stone key, used to open a passage to the temple in the Well outside; and a diamond, used to illuminate the underground temple (see below). The diamond alone is worth 150 silver pieces.

HOW MUCH CAN THE PLAYER CHARACTERS STEAL?

There is a one in eight chance that Newton spots that something is missing from his home. The chance is increased

by 1 for each item that is stolen by the player characters. This means that if the player characters steal five items from Newton's house, there is a 5 in 8 chance that Newton will know it and hire a man to return the missing goods. This only happens if the player characters have contact with Newton at about the time that he suspects the items have gone missing. If the player characters steal anything that relates to Newton's alchemical studies or from his Temple of Solomon, then Newton will instruct the man, Ryan O'Flannagan, to take all measures possible to see to the items' return.

Ryan O'Flannagan: Armour 16, Movement 120, 4 Hit Dice, a brace of flintlock pistols 1d6 plus sword 1d6, Stealth 5

Dearest Isabella,

I have never told you this before, but all of those late nights at the laboratory were much more than pure science. I wanted to give you all the gold in the world. I wanted to please you with infinite joy.

I do not have much time now. My days are numbered. All my brothers are dead, except for William. All but him have died recently. I am sure that this had nothing to do with natural causes. They knew I— We were close. They knew we were close to unlocking the secrets— they are coming for me too. I will not live long. They will come for me.

Please stay safe.

Always yours,

Isaac.

William,

We are the only remaining. We have to stay focused. I think we are very close. Sir Edmond Halley has recently become close to me. He keeps writing and insisting that I publish my scientific work. I think he is hiding his true intentions. I think he holds important knowledge, perhaps an important substance, which will complete our works. I have nothing to lose now. I will try to get it.

Somehow.

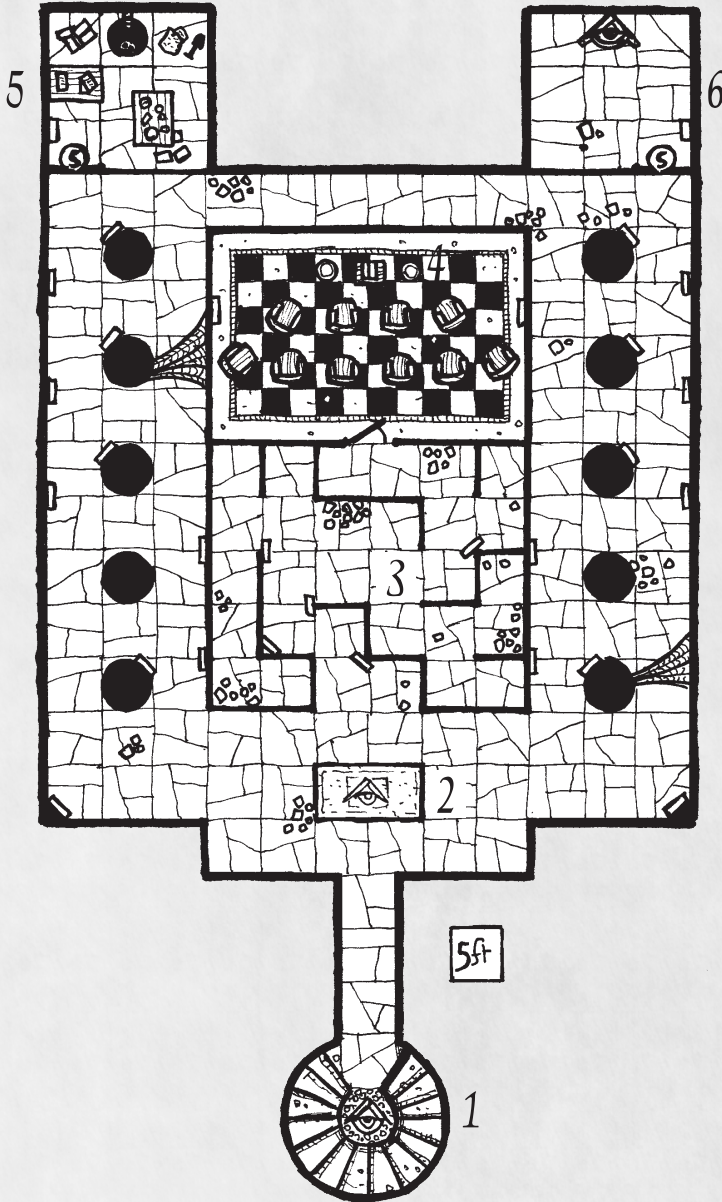
Stay well.

Isaac.

The Masonic Temple

The temple is quite small, dirty and looks almost as if it has been abandoned. In fact, following the deaths of Newton's fellow Freemasons, this place has seen little use – except for the two

secret areas at the rear of the complex. A sharp player character will be able to track footprints that lead to these rooms. The remainder of the temple is dusty.

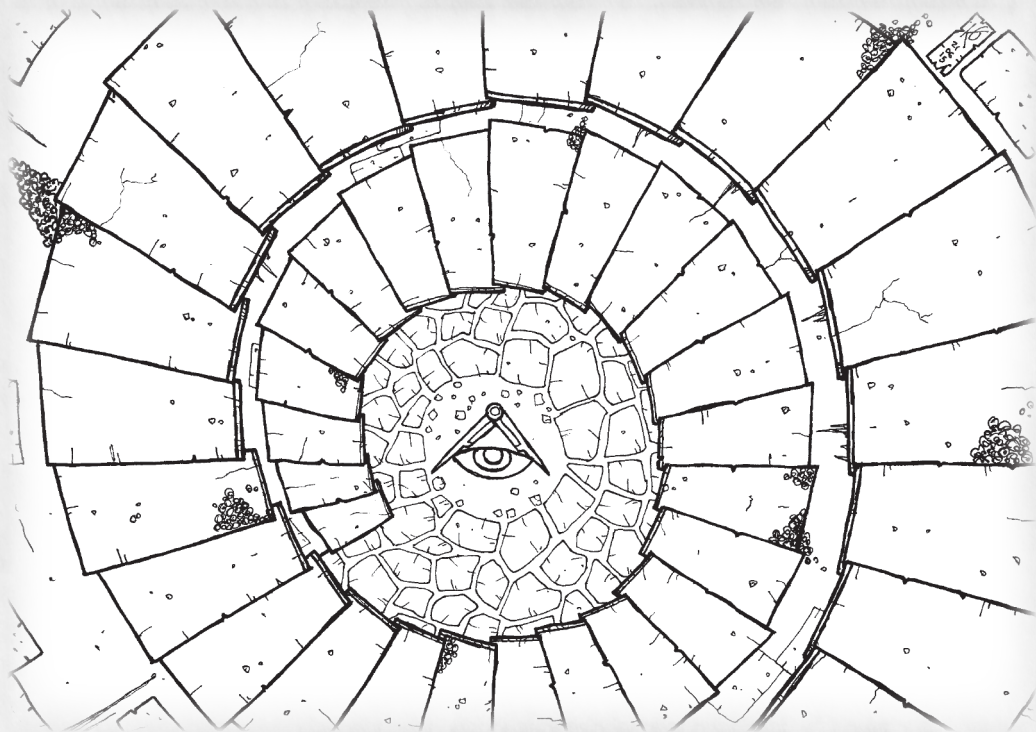


I. THE WELL

The well appears to be a normal, small well. It is dry and it is impossible to see the bottom from above. Somehow, light does not seem to work. If a player character throws a torch down the well, the torch stops emitting light (this was achieved through Newton's work on Optics and only he knows how this is done exactly).

Careful examination of the base of the well wall reveals what could be a keyhole. The key is in the secret room in the mansion. If used, the key will activate a mechanism that somehow makes the well much bigger and wider with a case of spiral stairs running down adjacent to the walls. Natural light

now flows into the well. The problem is that it also activates a trap: it releases a powerful sleeping gas. Anyone caught within 5' of the well will need to make a saving throw versus Breath Weapon or be put to sleep for 1d6 hours with an accompanying loss of memory of the six hours before that. (Note: this is actually how Newton keeps the place safe. It is him who refills the gas every time it is used. He asks his gardener to open the temple for him, so that he doesn't get poisoned, and then relies on the memory-loss effect to simply keep on asking the gardener to open it). If Newton finds the player characters "sleeping", he will see them executed, as he probably thinks this is the Cabal's doing.



The floor of the well is painted with a compass and an eye. A dark corridor leads off the well. Fortunately, a torch will now produce light, but still a very faint one. There is a big lever here. If pulled, it will ‘close’ the well.

The well is also a symbol for the Freemason brotherhood that used to meet here. It means a connection between the sky and the earth, and was used as part of the brotherhood’s initiation rites. Descending the well symbolically meant ‘dying’ – returning to earth; the Labyrinth meant ‘rediscovering oneself’; and the Room with the Sky meant being born anew, as a Freemason brother.

2. THE ALTAR

The altar is quite impressive and made of stone. It has a big compass and an eye engraved into it. During the day there is a ray of light that comes from the ceiling that specifically points to a small metallic structure hanging over the altar. The diamond fits perfectly here and illuminates the whole temple through a complex structure of mirrors – the only exception is the labyrinth, which remains always dark. If the player characters do not have the diamond, the light is very faint down here, even with torches.

The idea behind the initiation rite is that the candidate would go through the Labyrinth in total darkness and then re-emerge in the Sky-room as a new person, as a brother of the lodge. In other words, the rite was about

‘rediscovering oneself’ and being born anew, as a masonic brother.

3. THE LABYRINTH

The only notable feature about the labyrinth is that it is particularly dark. Even Newton’s system of mirrors will not bring the blaze of diamond-light to this part of the temple. Strange noises seem to emanate from the tunnels of the labyrinth, coming from a swarm of bats that decided to move in. Due to the fact that the temple has not been used in some months and also due to its darkness, the tunnels are home to a colony of bats.

Bat swarm: Armour 12, Movement 200’, 1 Hit Dice, Bite attack 1d3, Morale 8.

4. THE ROOM WITH THE SKY

The ceiling of this room is painted to resemble a clear daytime sky. If the room is lit via Newton’s array of mirrors and the diamond, then the painting is so vivid that it appears to be the natural sky itself. The walls are decorated with scientific equations, philosophical quotes (in Latin), compasses, eyes, crosses, roses, and so on. The room contains a pulpit before which are arrayed ten carefully placed chairs. Either side of the pulpit stands a large clay bowl. Each filled with now brackish water, the bowls are decorated with compasses and eyes. In addition to being used as part of the brotherhood’s initiation rite, this is also where the lodge members once met and debated.

5. SECRET ROOM: ALCHEMICAL LABORATORY

This room contains two work benches upon which can be found various alchemical apparatus – cucurbita, ampulla, glass tubes, a crane’s bill, phials and retorts, sublimation vessels, crucibles and earthenware, and iron pots for strong acids. To one side of a forge is a sack of coke, while on the other are stacked several ingots of lead and other base metals. Stacked on the end of one of the workbenches are two books and a sheaf of papers. The books are *The Sceptical Chymist: or Chymico-Physical Doubts & Paradoxes* by Robert Boyle and *On the nature of Quicksilver* by Stefan Nilsson, while the papers are Newton’s notes. Written in Latin, the notes detail his progress to date in creating the Philosopher’s Stone. There is also a significant quantity of gold (25 gold pieces) and silver (250 silver pieces). Although Newton has never made gold himself, he believes that he is close to being able to create the Philosopher’s Stone and thus be able to turn base metal into gold. This room is where he keeps all his work-in-progress.

Secret door: the secret door is engraved on the temple’s inner wall. It opens directly into the room. The secret door is opened by pressing a slab in the wall.

Trap: the secret door contains a trap. If the person pressing the slab is standing right in the front of the door, a pit will open and the player character will have

to making a saving throw versus Breath Weapon to avoid falling and suffering 2d6 damage. The pit is 15’ deep and quite narrow, being only 3’ wide.

6. SECRET ROOM: THE EYE AND THE COMPASS

This room is dominated by a giant eye and a giant compass that seem to hang in the air near the north wall. Closer inspection reveals that both are hung from the ceiling by wires that have been lacquered in black and are so difficult to see. The eye is 3’ across and looks as if it is made of organic material, but is in fact made of Chinese porcelain and Venetian glass. It is a very strange object. At first, it seems as if it does nothing, but if a player character says that he specifically stares at it for more than three consecutive minutes, he will gain one point of Wisdom. Otherwise, it is just a scary, unnatural looking thing. The Compass appears to be just oversized, but attached to it is an embroidered banner that reads, “where is the fourth side of the triangle?” There is no answer to this.

This room is dark unless someone brings a torch or lantern with him. The brotherhood called this the reflection room and would spend time here in meditation.

Secret door: the secret door is engraved on the temple’s inner wall. It opens directly into the room. The secret door is opened by pressing a slab in the wall.



Setting 3:

*Edmond Halley's House,
the Observatory, and the Temple*



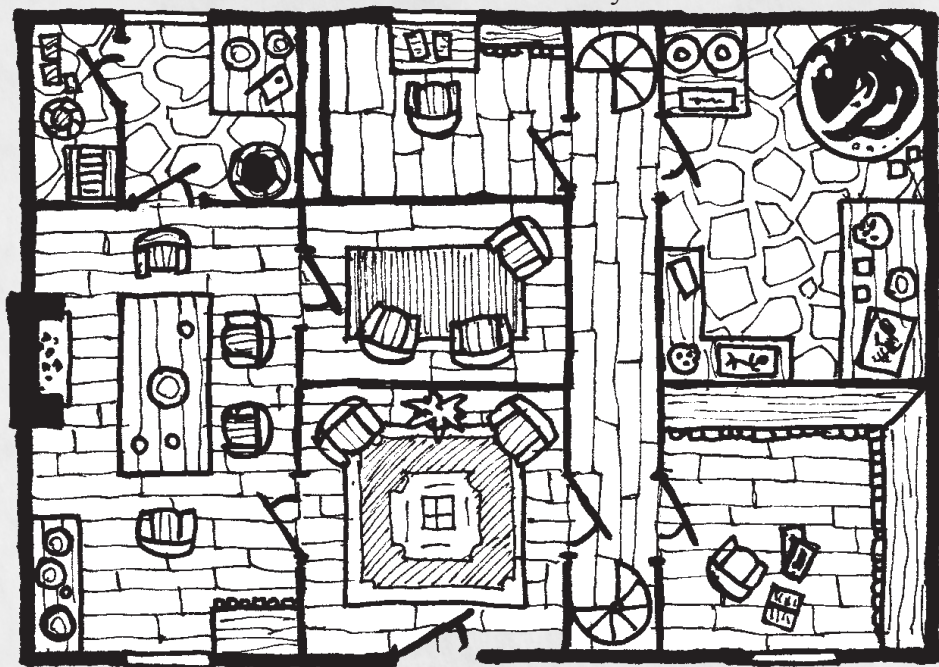
This setting has three major locations: Halley's house in Islington, the Royal Greenwich Observatory, and the underground temple where the London branch of The Inter-Planetary Cult of the Ancient Knowledgeable Squid meets and worships. The temple is built right beneath the Observatory. There are two ways to enter it. The first one is by opening a secret passage right beneath the big telescope in the front yard; the second is through the cellar in the main house, which has a 200' tunnel connecting the two. Only Halley uses the tunnel. The rest of the cultists use the entrance underneath the telescope.

Halley's House

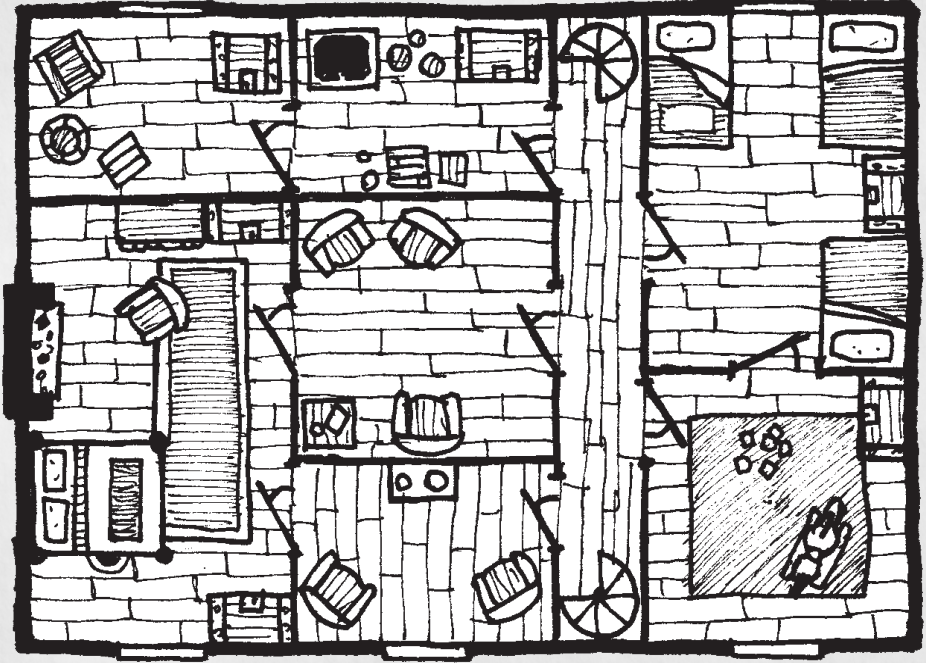
Halley's house is large, clean, and well-maintained. In comparison to Hooke's residence, the two-storey house is larger, slightly more impressive, and much better looked after. The ground floor consists of a large dining room, parlour, drawing room, library, kitchen, and larder as well as Halley's chamber of wonder and his office. The family has its private rooms as does the cook and the maid, while the butler and valet have rooms in the attic. Below the house is the cellar.

Halley lives here with his wife and their young children. The household staff includes a butler (John Snook), a young valet (Ralph Smith), a cook

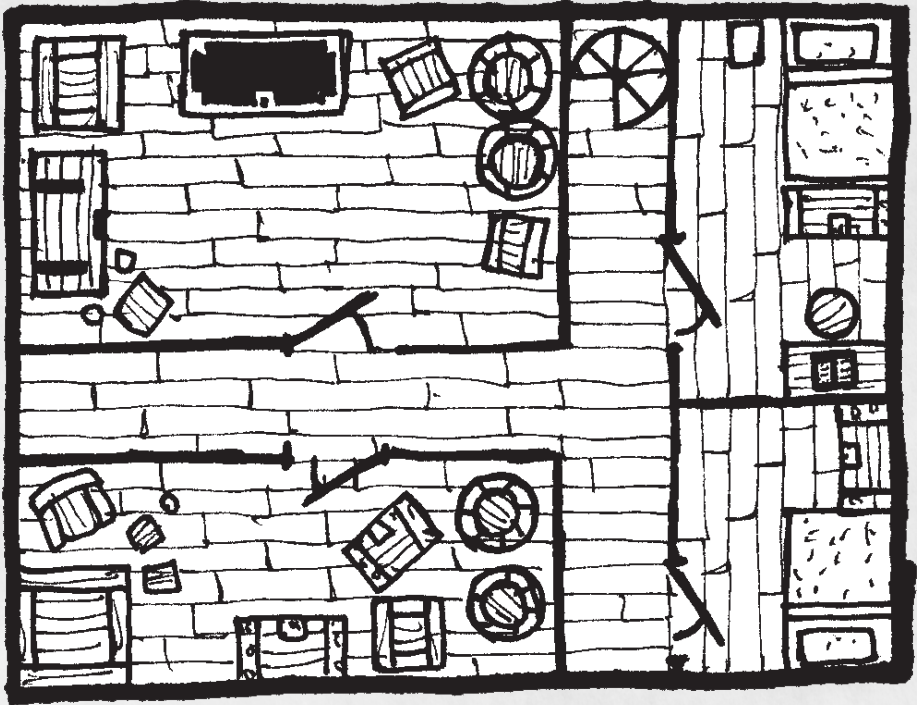
Halley's House Ground Floor



Halley's House First Floor



Halley's House Second Floor



(Anne Bosson), a maid (Charlotty Bosson), and a gardener (Jared Evans). In addition two guards along with five dogs keep the building and its grounds safe.

1. HALLEY'S CHAMBER OF WONDERS

This room displays Halley's collection of wonders and oddities. The majority consists of scientific paraphernalia from across the ages as well as various pieces of flora and fauna from the island of St. Helena. Dominating the room, though, is a large tank of water containing the preserved corpse of a giant squid. Its large eye will appear to follow anyone around the room. The sight of the undead creature has proved so unnerving to Halley's children, his wife insists that he keeps the room locked. Only Halley and his wife have keys to the room.

2. THE LIBRARY

The focus of the contents of the library is science, astronomy, and philosophy. Titles include *Ornithologia libri tres* by Francis Willughby, *De sphaera mundi* by Johannes de Sacrobosco, *Astronomia Carolina, a new theorie of Coelestial Motions* by Thomas Streete, and Descartes' *Discourse on the Method*. One entire shelf is dedicated to the natural history of the seas, including some Nordic mythological texts that tell the tales of the Kraken.

3. THE OFFICE

Halley's office is dominated by his

desk and a table. The contents of the desk are quite mundane – various letters of either a personal or a scientific nature and the household accounts. Spread out on the table is a set of vibrantly painted charts of the night sky and several sheets of mathematical calculations. Both focus on the star Lyra.

Behind some panelling on the wall between the office and the living room is a hidden compartment. Inside this compartment is a dark robe, a sheet of folded plans, and several crystal flasks. The hooded robe can be held closed by a clasp in the shape of a squid; when unfolded, the plans are revealed to be of a cube-room-device with the numbers 233 and 322 highlighted (see below – The Cube); and the flasks contain a strange blue liquid. The vapours given off by this liquid are strong enough to knock the inhaler unconscious. The inhaler must make a saving throw versus Poison to avoid his collapsing immediately. Should someone actually imbibe the blue liquid, he must make a saving throw versus Poison or die. Knowledge of the exact origins of the ancient flasks and their contents have been lost, but the cult knows that the blue liquid has the power to resurrect the corpses of squid and octopi. Certainly no one knows what would happen if the liquid was poured down the throat of the recently deceased. Perhaps he might be resurrected, but slowly transforms into a kraken over the next few months...?

The Royal Greenwich Observatory

Located in Greenwich, the Royal Greenwich Observatory sits atop a small hill. The Observatory is the home of its director, John Flamsteed. Although 'The King's Astronomical Observer' and a man of scientific note, John Flamsteed is tiring of his position, having been held hostage to the cult's threats for a decade now. He is unmarried and has no children. If interrogated about Halley and the cult, he will deny everything – Halley, the cult, his being threatened, and so on. He will say that Halley was once his brightest student and that he is happy to have him working at the Royal Observatory. If the player characters can somehow prove that they are experienced enough to take Halley down, there is a chance that Flamsteed will open up. In which case, he actually begs to be rescued, showing the player characters the secret passage leading from his cellar to the cult's temple (which is supposed to be used by Halley alone).

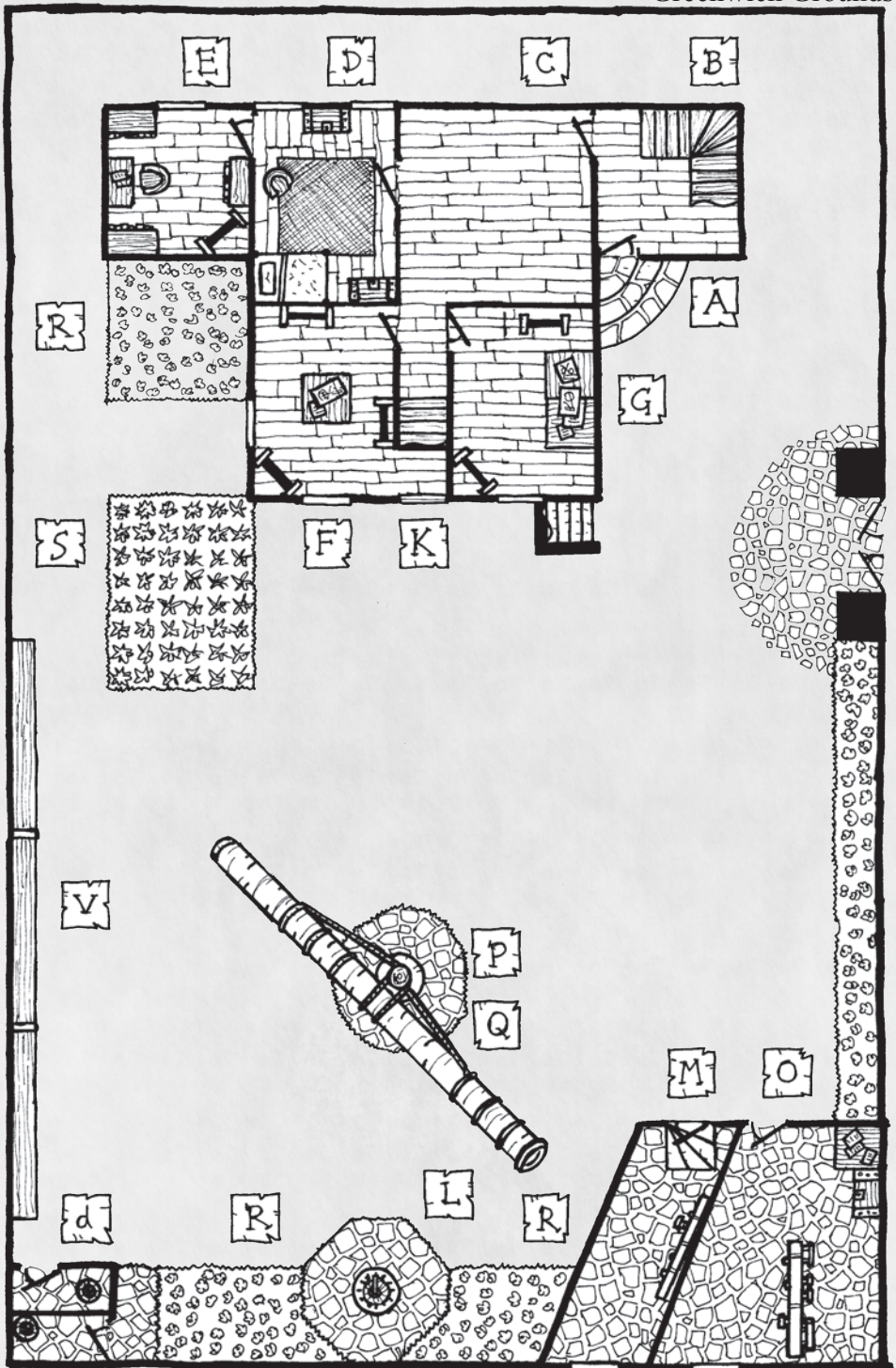
The Observatory consists of three storeys – the cellars, ground floor, and first floor. The cellars are divided into two separate areas. In the first is a kitchen (under F in the map), an unheated parlour (under G), and a cellar (under C) – the secret tunnel connecting the Observatory to the cult's temple can be accessed here via a secret door carved into the east wall. In the second

is a workshop (X) and a washroom (Z) which are accessed through a small yard (Y) rather than the staircase that leads down from the hall on the ground floor to the kitchen.

There are four main rooms on the ground floor – a large hall (C) from where a staircase (K) descends onto the kitchen, Flamsteed's private bedroom (D) with an attached study (E), and two 'astronomers' houses' (F and G), where Flamsteed and his apprentices keep work-in-progress, sky charts, lenses, boards displaying equations, detailed notebooks of observations of the night sky, various astronomical and mathematical treatises. The entrance to house is made through a lobby (B).

The first floor has but one large room, Flamsteed's Camera Stellata (known today as the Octagon Room) – accessed through the lobby (B). This was where Flamsteed made the majority of his observations. The room has several telescopes as well as an impressive 12' pendulum, made by Thomas Tompion. Behind a panelling, there is an access to the roof which is dominated by a 16' telescope.

In the front yard, there is a big 60' telescope, suspended from an old ship's mast (Q and P). The telescope is mounted onto an impressive circular stone, which is actually the main entrance to the cult's temple. There is only one-way to unlock the passage:



operating the cranks and gears until the telescope points to a particular star in the night in the constellation of Lyra, after which a clicking sound is heard and a slab underneath the base of the telescope cracks open. In Halley's office at his home, there is a chart of the sky, which clearly highlights the constellation of Lyra. This is probably the only way to understand how this works. If your player characters do not come across such information, there is only a one in a thousand chance that they will point the telescope correctly, regardless of the time they spent trying. However, even if they do have the info on Lyra, pointing a telescope to a small dot in the sky is definitely not an easy task. Ask your player characters how much time they want to spend attempting this. The minimum time required is half-hour, which has a 1 in 6 success rate. Each half-hour adds a +1 probability to a successful roll. Lifting up the slab reveals a set of clean stone stairs leading down into darkness.

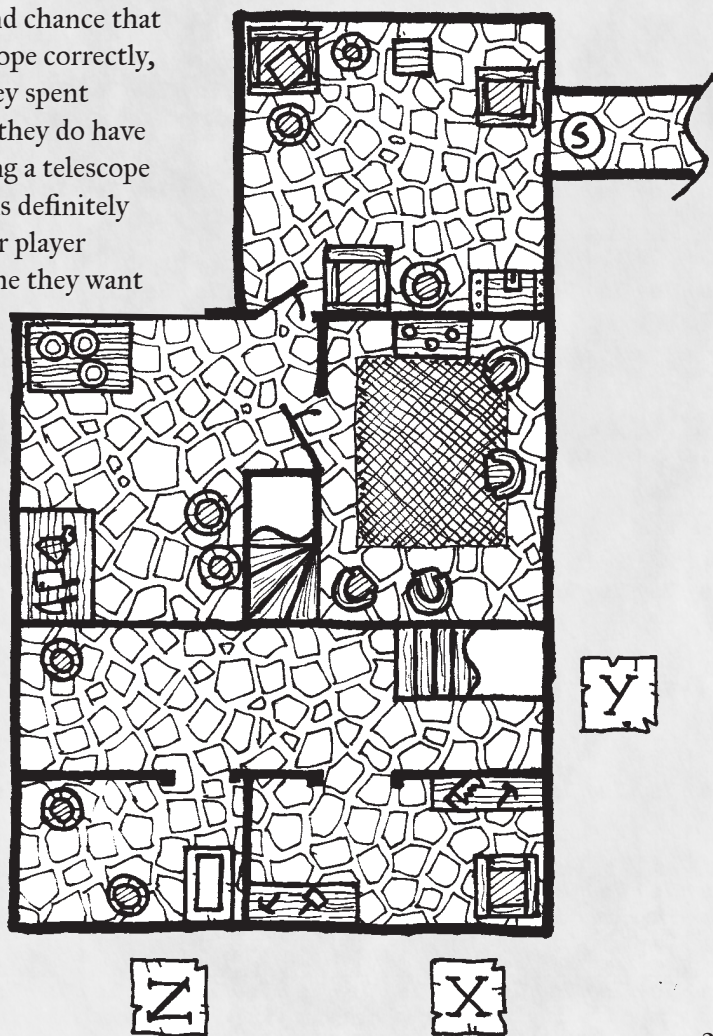
The yard has also bathroom facilities (d, d), a Sextant house (O), and a Quadrant house (M). There is also a place to store the

big telescope (V), a vegetable garden (S), a flower garden (R), and a sundial (L).

The Observatory is busy both day and night. Scientists, politicians, and persons of note are likely to pay it a visit during the day, while astronomers are likely to be observing the sky at night. Two watchmen keep the place safe at night.

Watchmen: Armour 12, Movement 120', 1 Hit Dice, cudgel 1d6, Morale 8.

Greenwich Basement



Cult's Underground Temple

The entire temple is dark. Furthermore, beginning with the entrance room, it seems somehow wet. Almost as soon the player characters enter the temple, they will feel this strange humidity. In fact, it is quite unpleasant. Whenever they inhale it, it seems to rest heavily on their chests and, when they look up, it seems as if the ceiling momentarily disappears to be replaced by the cosmos itself. Strangely, this seems to bring sparks of light to the temple every now and then. One star shines out amongst all the rest – Lyra.

All of the doors in the temple are of a wood that seems to ooze an inky black excrement. The doors are all locked; Halley holds the keys. Direct contact with the ooze has a nasty effect: if a player character cannot make a successful saving throw versus Magic, from now on, every two weeks, a cephalopod sucker will grow on one of his limbs.

I. ENTRANCE ROOM

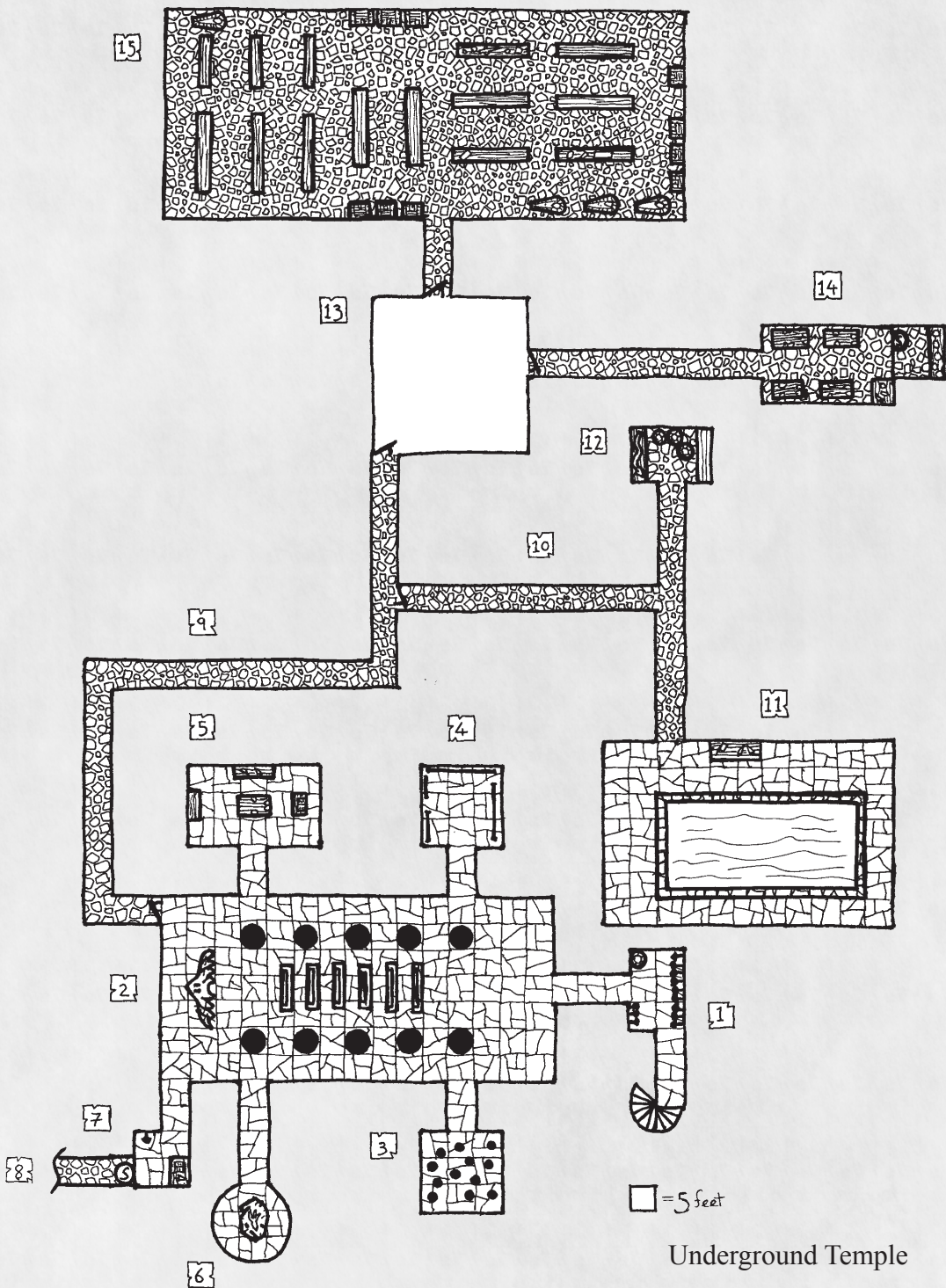
The stairs from front yard, underneath the 60' telescope, lead down to this small room. The only features in the room consist of a row of hooks upon which hang some fifty dark hooded robes, each of which can be held closed by a clasp in the shape of a squid. In one corner sits a barrel of oil along with several torches and a flint and steel. This is where the cultists

enrobe appropriately before entering the temple. If a player character decides to wear one of these robes, he will suffer from night terrors, his sleep tormented by nightmares of his being embraced by the tentacles of a squid as it draws him up to its beak, there to be eaten alive!

2. THE TEMPLE

The Temple of the Inter-Planetary Cult of the Ancient Knowledgeable Squid is a long, high ceilinged room. Down its length run ten symmetrical pillars, decorated with stars, galaxies, and nebulae whilst bas reliefs of squids and other deep sea creatures spiral up around each pillar. Twelve pews cut of the same inky wood as the temple doors run the length of the room. At the far end of temple stands an altar intricately carved in the shape of a squid. The carving of the altar is so life like that whenever anyone looks away from it, it will appear to have moved when they look back at it.

The head of this stone squid serves as a lectern upon which rests the cult's most holy book, *R'Abz-Ghi-Le*. Written in Ancient Aramaic, it details the history of the cult, its strictures, and its rituals. The latter include sewing tentacles and other parts of a squid to the human body, reviving the corpses of squids and controlling them, and the means to control the mythical Kraken. The cult believes that the Kraken



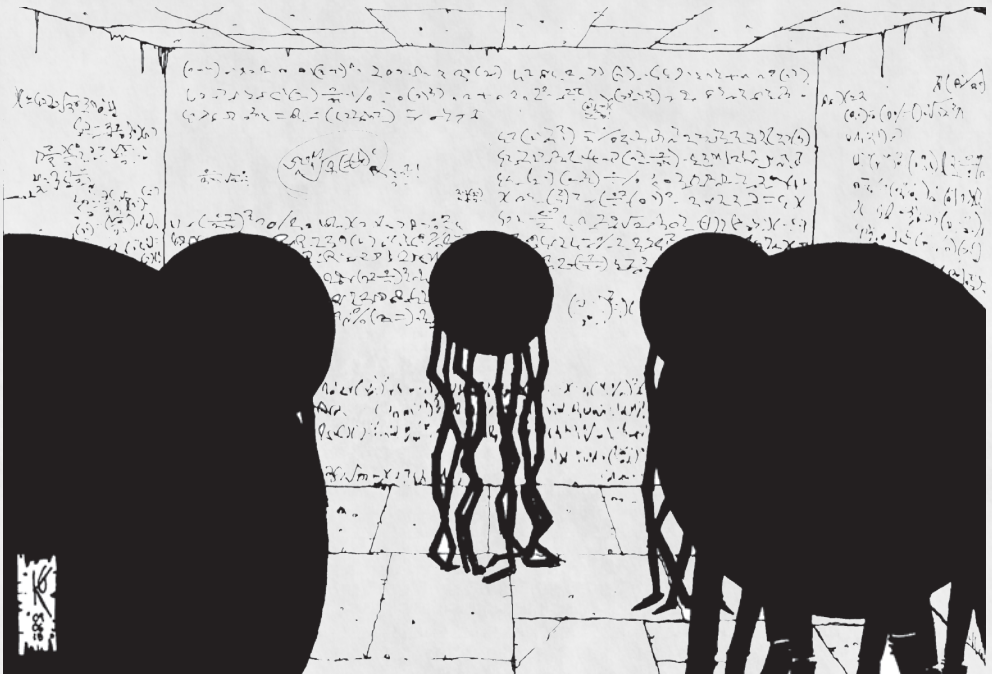
Underground Temple

is actually one of their masters that happened to fall to Earth and got lost. He has adapted to life here ever since.

3. THE SPHERES ROOM

This room has two noticeable features. One is the inscription-covered walls, but the other is likely to grab the attention of the player characters first: twelve spheres that float approximately 3' off the floor. They are jet black, perfectly smooth and featureless except for stone-like cilia that dangle to the floor (see accompanying illustration). No wires or ropes suspend the spheres from the ceiling and apparently there is nothing that keeps them in the air. The spheres are motionless, but can be

moved across the room, though not up and down, and never more than at a sedate pace (so they cannot be used as improvised bludgeons). Nor can one sphere touch another, some innate force preventing this. If the spheres are pushed, they will move around the room before gently arranging themselves equally spaced around the room. Nothing will happen in the room until one or more of the player characters states that he is investigating them. Each time a player character examines a statue, he must make a saving throw versus Magic. If the save is successful, then nothing happens, but if the save is failed, roll 1d8 and consult the following table:



1-3. A strange nausea afflicts the player character. His head starts to hurt. He feels a strong urge to solve a mathematical equation. He cuts himself in the arm and with the blood begins to inscribe a solution to this equation on the wall. This causes 1 point of damage. No-one can stop him until the blood coagulates at which point the player character must make a roll under his Intelligence on 1d20. If successful, the character has completed the equation, but if failed, he must continue the process, inflicting another point of damage each time until the roll against his Intelligence is made.

4-5. The player character starts to uncontrollably recite the whole Pi number. 3,141592653589793238462643... and so on. All of sudden, the player character gains a fundamental understanding of mathematics and can solve complex equations. He gains one point of wisdom.

6-7. A tentacle starts to grow out of the small of the player character's back. Eventually, it will big enough to serve as an extra limb, but makes the wearing of armour or tight clothing uncomfortable. It is possible to cut the tentacle off, but this hurts badly and causes 1d6 damage.

8. The player character disappears and automatically becomes a cultist. The Referee should pull the player aside and secretly explain that his character is now a cultist. The Referee should tell him about the cult, about Newton, and even show the map of the whole complex of the temple. From here on, the primary motivation of the player cultist is to serve the cult, which includes killing his former 'friends' as he knows that their presence here is defiling the temple. He will try to push them to the tank, for instance, or even make sure that they enter the wrong 'cubicles' (see The Cube below). If all fails, he will try to kill his former friends with his own hands. Two rounds after he disappears, the player character will reappear in the same room, but behind the player characters. (Note: this is actually how the cult inducts new members - the sculptures decide whoever is worthy of such honour).

The walls are completely inscribed with mathematical equations and numbers in increasingly paler shades of black, red, and brown. If any player character thinks to ask, then they will realise that the inscriptions on the walls have been written in blood. The equations themselves are of an advanced nature and underpin the physics of the Universe. Perhaps only a few people, if any, from this age have the potential to understand the meanings of these equations. Interspersing the equations is a number of pieces of poetry, including the following:

“For look carefully whenever sunlight pours its piercing rays into dark places of the house: in light from those very rays you will see many tiny particles in empty space mixed up in many ways, as if waging war in endless battles, group by group, not conceding any pause, constantly stirred up by their collisions and their moving apart. From this image you can infer how primary elements of stuff are constantly being tossed around in huge empty space. That’s how much small things can illustrate large concepts and provide traces by which they can be understood. So it is all the more appropriate for you to turn your mind to those bodies one observes moving in great disorder in the sun’s rays, because such confusion shows there is also motion in matter going on underneath, hidden and unseen.” (this is actually a quote from Lucretius’ *On the Nature of Things*,

although it is not referenced on the wall)

4. THE BURNING OF ALEXANDRIA

This contemplation room is reached by a corridor decorated with hieroglyphs that refer to ancient mathematical theories. The walls are hung with engravings and drawings that celebrate the Burning of the Library of Alexandria, which is part of the cult’s foundation myth. Cultists come here to both contemplate and celebrate the destruction of the library.

5. THE RITUAL ROOM

At the centre of this room stands a surgical table. Against the western wall is a cabinet with trays full of surgical and medical tools. Opposite the cabinet on the eastern wall is a lectern upon which rests a sheet of parchment made from the skin of a squid. Inscribed on the parchment is the ritual taken from the *R’Abz-Ghi-Le* that describes how to sew tentacles and other parts of a squid to the human body. This is where the cult’s elite performs this ritual before presenting the results to the rest of the members in the temple.

6. NIGHT CHAPEL

This near spherical room is the cult’s planetarium, its ceiling marked with stars and constellations in near flawless detail. The depiction of the night sky is so accurate that it includes stars and other features that will remain unknown for centuries. To anyone who studies astronomy and is not a member

of the cult, the ceiling of this room is shockingly and vividly revealing. Not only because of its accuracy, but also because it would be almost impossible for anyone to chart the sky to this accuracy in the 17th century. Although an astronomer will be unable to name the many new stars depicted on the ceiling, he will instinctively know that they are accurate.

The only other feature of the room is a stone altar atop which rests a huge rock, roughly 6' in diameter, which contains a fossilised squid. The rock is surprisingly heavy and is actually a meteorite. It is also one of the cult's most sacred artefacts. If the rock is touched by any means, there is a one in twenty chance that the player character is actually transported to R'Ahz. The cult believes that this meteorite may hold such power, but has never successfully used it. If the character is transported to R'Ahz, it is very unlikely that he will ever return to Earth. There is a slight chance that, with magically enchanted lenses, the player characters will be able to spot him using the telescope in the Royal Observatory.

7. PREPARATION ROOM

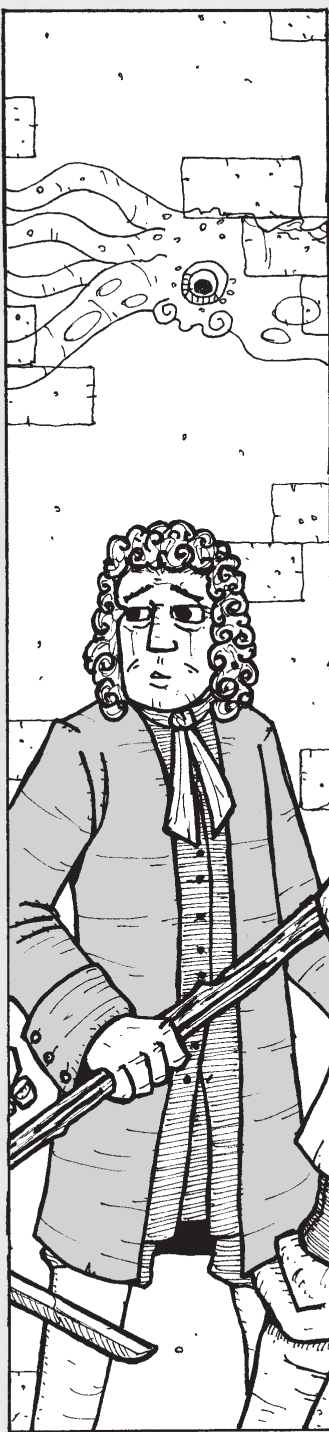
This is where Edmond Halley prepares himself before the start of a ritual. Several hooks are mounted on the wall whilst on a table sits Halley's grimoire and a knife, the Sacred Steel of the Squid. The grimoire contains the following spells: *Squid Summoning*

(see below), *Contact Outer Sphere* and *Polymorph Self*. The handle of the knife is carved from ivory to resemble the body of a squid, with the head and the tentacles clutching the blade, which is actually the sharpened beak of a squid. No one can control it, but its master, who of course, is the leader of the cult. Should anyone pick it up, the knife will twist violently in his hands and attempt to stab the transgressor in his heart. To avoid this, the transgressor must make a saving throw versus Breath Weapon. Success means that the person holding the knife suffers 1d4+1 damage, failure results in instant, bloody death.

When grasped by the leader of the cult, the body and head of the knife organically blends with his hand until the two of them become one. The leader's arm is now a tentacle with a sharp and pointy beak at its end. In this form, the beak grants a +2 attack bonus and inflicts 1d4+2 damage.

8. THE CORRIDOR

The corridor connects the preparation room to the cellars beneath Flamsteed's house. It is used by Halley alone.



9. THE CORRIDOR

The walls of this corridor are of highly polished, but otherwise unmarked stone. There are three cultists lurking here – John C. Maul, Charles McLeod, and Adryana Olivetree (the only female in the cult). They serve as guards.

Cultists: Armour 14, Movement 120', 3 Hit Dice, Squid-headed flails 1d6 plus Squid Summoning spell (once per combat, each cultist will attempt to cast this spell. The Referee should roll 1d6 for each cultist. In a 1-2, nothing happens. In a 3-6, a 1d3 squid-like creatures appear), Morale 12.

Summoned squid-like creatures: Armour 16, Movement 160', 4 Hit Dice, 2 tentacle-attacks each round 1d8, Morale 12. These are humanoid-shaped squid. They have squid-like heads attached to a humanoid body with four tentacles, which they use as legs. They then have two more tentacles attached to their upper body, which they use as arms. In combat, these squid-like creatures attempt to grab and choke their 'prey'. Their tentacles also secrete the same inky black ooze as the doors of the temple. If a player character is struck by one of the tentacles, he must also make a saving throw versus Magic (this saving throw need only be made once per combat, not once per hit).

If failed, from now on, every two weeks, a cephalopod sucker will grow on one of his limbs.

10. THE CORRIDOR

The stone walls, floor, and ceiling of this corridor have been highly polished so that they give the unnerving impression of being deep within the ocean. Their only feature is an extremely life-like depiction of squid carved into one wall. Apparently it does nothing. Except that as soon as anyone enters the corridor, its one visible eye will open and the creature will begin to follow the people up and down the corridor, seeming to swim across the floor, ceiling, and walls, constantly observing the interlopers... The single eye of this squid is telepathically linked to the leader of the cult, who will be warned about the presence of strangers..

11. THE SQUID POOL

The main feature in this room is the pool that has been cut into the floor. Surrounded by a 3' high stone wall, the pool is deep – no one can see the bottom – and is filled with very dark, inky water that is difficult to see into, even with a torch. The pool is home to two massive squids from which the cult harvests the tentacles that it uses in its rituals. Knowing their fate, neither squid will come readily to the surface, but should anyone lean over the stone wall surrounding the pool, they will reach up and attempt to pull him in. Once

their prey is in the water, the squid will attempt to eat him.

The cultists use their ability to control squid to bring these creatures to the surface of the pool and harvest their tentacles. They use a variety of large knives and surgical implements that are stored in perfectly cut recesses in the wall.

Squids: Armour 16, Movement 300' (underwater), 6 Hit Dice, 3 tentacles attacks 1d8, Morale 16. So far each of these squids has had one tentacle harvested.

12. COLD STORE

The temperature in this room is below the freezing point of water. Used to store the squid parts harvested from the Squid Pool, it contains several very long shelves and a number of hooks. Currently there is just one tentacle laid out on one of the shelves, whilst cephalopod heads, octopi limbs and suckers, and a big cuttlefish sit on other shelves or hang from the hooks.

13. THE CUBE

The Cube is a safety device developed by the cult to protect against any treasure seekers or unwanted curious minds. The Brains Room and the Treasury (rooms 14 and 15) beyond the Cube together contain a great number of the artefacts, object d'art, curios, and other items that the cult has gathered in the course of centuries.

The Cube is a complex of 26 interconnected cubicle-rooms ($3 \times 3 \times 3 - 1$). The space left by the 'missing cubicle' allows movement between the other cubicles. Each cubicle is identical, being 15' by 15' with a circular hatch in the centre of each face, for a total of six hatches (if you have seen the movie *The Cube*, then you will get the idea, but do not point this out to the players. Let them make the connection if necessary). The hatches open easily and any number of hatches in a cubicle can be open at any time.

The first cubicle that the player characters enter will be Cubicle A. It has a pair of levers that can be pushed up or down. It is the only cubicle to have such levers. The entire Cube (with all its cubicles) can be rearranged into three different positions, depending on the levers' positioning. When they first enter, both levers are down, so the Cube is in position #1 (as shown below in Position 1). The only way to move the cubicles around is through these levers. So, it is only possible to reassemble the cubicles into different positions in Cubicle A. When both levers are down, the cubicles display themselves as shown in position #1. When one lever is up and the other is down – it does not matter which lever is up and which is down – the cubicles assume position #2. When both levers are up, the cubicles are rearranged onto position #3.

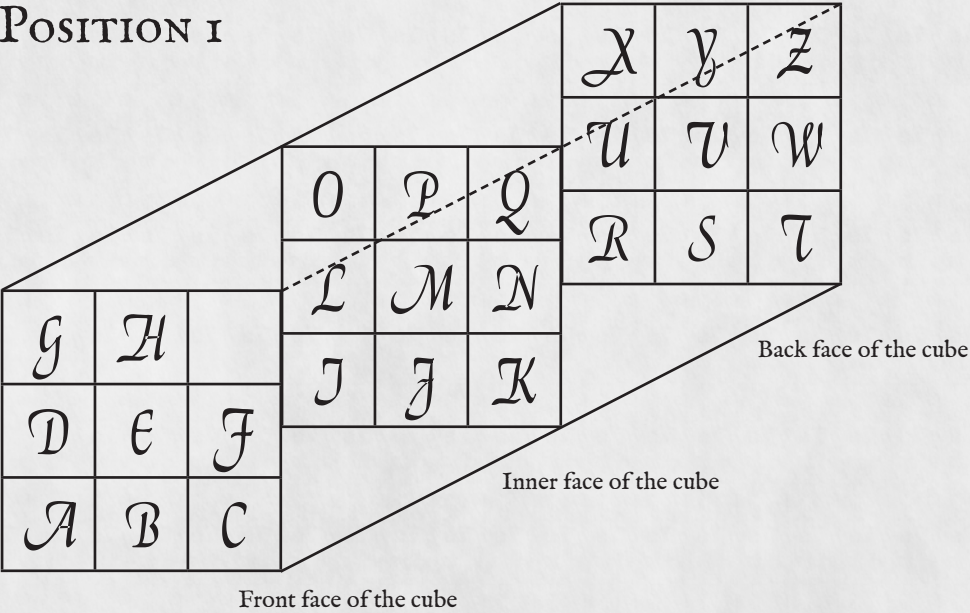
Etched into the surround of each hatch is a series of numbers (three sets of three numbers each) that help the cultists identify where they are at all times in the Cube. The numbers represent the 'x', 'y', and 'z' coordinates of the cubicle in all three positions – the first set is where the cubicle stands in position #1, the second set is where it stands in position #2, and the third set is where it stands in position #3. The cultists memorised all of the combinations so they know all of the rooms (note that the numbers given to each room should be used with the player characters, but not the letters; the letters are for the referee alone).

There are three ways out of the Cube. The first is back down the corridor by which the player characters entered Cubicle A when it was in position #1 (if players rearrange the Cube into position #2, this exit will now be accessed through Cubicle X, as shown in the figure), whilst the other two open onto corridors leading to The Brains Room and the Treasury. There is an entrance to the corridor that leads to The Brains Room from Cubicle Y (if the Cube is in position #1), Cubicle F (position #2), and Cubicle S (position #3). There is

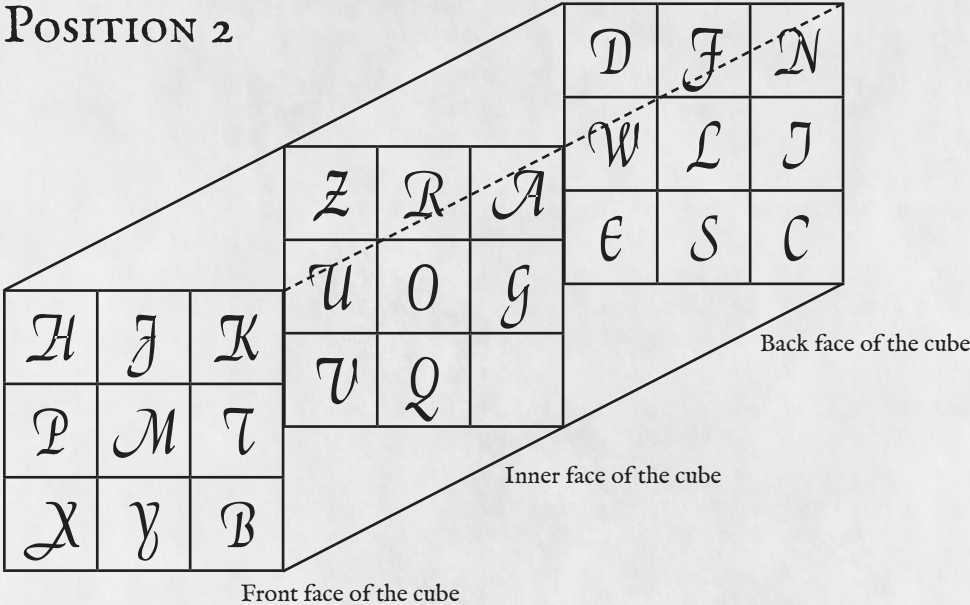
one other entrance to the corridor that leads to The Brains Room from Cubicle N (position #1), Cubicle G (position #2), and Cubicle E (position #3).

The levers are used by the cultists to safely travel across the Cube. If they wish to go to the Treasury, they first enter Cubicle A (in position #1), change the levers to position #2 and make their way to Cubicle F via Cubicle N – neither of these cubicles has any threats or traps. If they want to get to The Brains Room, the cultists would enter Cubicle A (in position #1), put both levers up so that the cubicles are reassembled into position #3 and then go to Cubicle E via Cubicle D – once again, neither of these cubicles is trapped. The only clue on to how the Cube might work is located in Halley's house in the office, where the numbers 233 and 322 are highlighted. These do not actually refer to any cubicle in particular, but rather to the general coordinates where the corridors to The Brains Room and the Treasury are located. As one can see in the figures below, these coordinates have different cubicles depending on which position the Cube is.

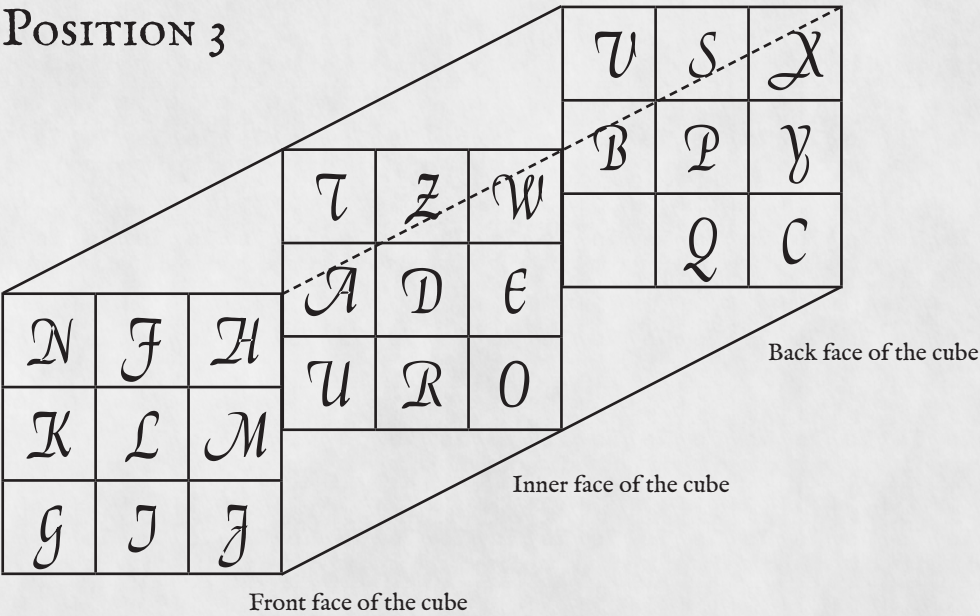
POSITION 1



POSITION 2



POSITION 3



Numbers that appear on each cubicle (the first set of numbers represents its x, y, z coordinates in position #1, the second set its coordinates in position #2, and the third set its coordinates in position #3):

A:	111	332	122	N:	322	333	131
B:	211	311	123	O:	132	222	312
C:	311	313	313	P:	232	121	223
D:	121	133	222	Q:	332	212	213
E:	221	113	322	R:	113	232	212
F:	321	233	231	S:	213	213	233
G:	131	312	111	T:	313	321	132
H:	231	131	331	U:	123	122	112
I:	112	323	211	V:	223	112	133
J:	212	231	311	W:	323	123	332
K:	312	331	121	X:	133	111	333
L:	122	223	221	Y:	233	211	323
M:	222	221	321	Z:	333	132	232

Cubicle A: empty but for two levers.

Cubicle B: filled with salt water, this cubicle is home to a squid. *Armour* 16, *Movement* 300' (*underwater*), 6 *Hit Dice*, 4 *tentacles attacks* 1d8, *Morale* 16. *If water runs out, the squid will die in 1d3 rounds.*

Cubicle C: this cubicle is strung with thin cutting wires from all walls. To cross safely, each player character must make a saving throw versus Breath Weapon. A failed save inflicts 4d6 damage with the possibility of a limb being severed.

Cubicle D: empty.

Cubicle E: empty.

Cubicle F: empty.

Cubicle G: empty except for a big black ball that floats at the exact centre of the cubicle. Perfectly smooth and cool, it does nothing and does not respond to anything done to it.

Cubicle H: empty.

Cubicle I: as soon as anyone enters the cubicle and closes the hatch behind them, a poisonous gas is released. If a saving throw versus Poison is failed, the player character falls into deep slumber for 5 rounds taking 1d3 of damage.

Cubicle J: empty.

Cubicle K: home to a big lurking humanoid creature with tentacles for arms and the eyes of a squid implanted

in his eye sockets. This creature is the result of the ritual described in *R'Abz-Ghi-Le*, the book found on the temple's altar. The creature only responds to the cult leader. Not even other cultists come near it. *Armour* 18, *Movement* 180', 8 *Hit Dice*, 4 *tentacles attacks* 1d10, *Morale* 18.

Cubicle L: a big black ball floats at the centre of the cubicle. It detects carbon dioxide and after a certain amount of breathing has occurred, the ball will explode unleashing a thousand larvae. The explosion alone will cause 1d6 points of damage and fill the Cubicle with a cloud of the larvae. Upon closer inspection, the larvae turn out to be tiny squid which will attempt to worm their way into the orifices of anyone in the room, including those hidden by clothing. If a saving throw versus Breath Weapon is failed, 1d3 of the larvae have burrowed their way into the victim's body, who suffers 1 point of damage for each one. He also suffers 1d3+1 damage in cutting one the larvae out. If a larvae is not cut out, it consumes the victim's body from within as it grows and ultimately reproduces; the victim suffers 1 point of damage on the first day, 2 points of damage on the second day, 3 points of damage on the third day, and so on...

Cubicle M: the ceiling of this cubicle is heavily magnetised. All metal is pulled to the ceiling, including arms and armour. If anyone is wearing iron or

steel armour, then he is pulled up to the ceiling and suffers 1d4 damage. Flying weapons simply inflict 1d2 points of damage to anyone who gets in the way as they are dragged to the ceiling.

Cubicle N: empty.

Cubicle O: filled with salt water, this cubicle is home to a squid. *Armour* 16, *Movement* 300' (*underwater*), 6 *Hit Dice*, 4 *tentacles attacks* 1d8, *Morale* 16. If water runs out, the squid will die in 1d3 rounds.

Cubicle P: this cubicle is strung with thin cutting wires from all walls. To cross safely, each player character must make a saving throw versus Breath Weapon. A failed save inflicts 4d6 damage with the possibility of a limb being severed.

Cubicle Q: the floor of this cubicle is heavily magnetised. All metal is pushed pulled to the floor, including arms and armour. If anyone is wearing iron or steel armour, then he is pulled down to the floor and suffers 1d3 damage. Flying weapons simply inflict 1 point of damage to anyone who gets in the way as they are dragged to the floor.

Cubicle R: as soon as anyone enters the cubicle and closes the hatch behind them, a poisonous gas is released. If a saving throw versus Poison is failed, the player character falls into deep slumber for 5 rounds taking 1d3 points of damage.

Cubicle S: empty.

Cubicle T: empty.

Cubicle U: empty.

Cubicle V: empty.

Cubicle W: empty.

Cubicle X: empty.

Cubicle Y: empty.

Cubicle Z: as soon as anyone has entered this cubicle and shut the hatch behind them, then waves of fire are released from ceiling, floor, and all four walls. Everyone in the cubicle must make a saving throw versus Breath Weapons or suffer 1d12 damage. A successful save means that half damage is suffered instead.

14. THE BRAINS ROOM

Equally spaced about this room are four surgical tables, each surrounded by tables and cabinets containing surgical tools. The four surgical tables have several leather limb restraints attached to them. It is here that cultists salvage the brain of scientists, preferably astronomers. Currently the room looks like it has been carefully prepared to host an 'event'. The tools are spotlessly clean and gleaming, the tables having been wiped down, and so on.

The secret room off The Brains Room contains a big shelf with twelve bottles, each of which holds a brain floating in a strange liquid (the liquid is actually formaldehyde, but this

chemical was not discovered until the 19th century – a player character will have no idea what this is). Each bottle has a tag tied to its neck, each tag having a name written on it. The twelve names are as follows: Lucretius, Gaius Julius Hyginus, Menelaus of Alexandria, Ptolemy, Heraclides Ponticus, Abd al-Rahman al-Sufi, Ibn Yunus, Bhaskara II, Nicole Oresme, Nicholas of Cusa, Galileo Galilei, and Nicolaus Copernicus.

Sat on a table in the middle of the room is a thirteenth jar. It is currently empty, but has a tag labelled ‘Newton’. In one corner of the room sits a sealed barrel containing more of the pungent liquid that fills each of the jars on the shelf.

15. THE TREASURY

The Treasury is where the cult keeps its treasures. There is a mesmerising array of artefacts, object d’art, curios, books, scrolls, and other items stolen from Alexandria, Ctesiphon, and Constantinople as well as collected and purchased from elsewhere. These are stored on the countless shelves that run round the treasury. The books and scrolls are written in almost every language, but Egyptian Hieroglyphics, Ancient Greek, Latin, Coptic Egyptian, Demotic Egyptian, Sumerian, Phoenician, Old Persian, and Aramaic are the most common. Boxes contain old astronomic and scientific objects, while other items are stored wrapped and bound in cloth.

Suggested artefacts, scrolls, and books are included here, but the Referee should feel free to create and add more as he sees fit. This is the perfect opportunity to provide the player characters with something interesting. Some example scrolls include what we now call the *Rbind Mathematical Papyrus*, the *Labun Mathematical Papyri*, and the *Akkmim Wooden Tablets*. Examples of books include an original copy of Ptolemy’s *Tetrabiblos*, a copy of Euclid’s *Elements*, and a copy of the *On the Equilibrium of Planes* by Archimedes. Examples of objects include the *Antikythera Mechanism*, the *Baghdad Battery*, carvings of the *Dendera Light*, and one *Quimbaya Airplane*. All of this together is probably worth more than 10,000 silver pieces, if sold to the right people.

The Treasury is guarded by five mummies that have had their arms replaced by tentacles. The mummies have been here longer than the current members of the cult who believe that the mummies were also stolen during the assault on the Library of Alexandria. Making use of all the knowledge gathered in the Treasury, the cultists were able to reproduce old Egyptian rituals several centuries ago to revive them, adding a special touch – the tentacles – of their own to the beasts.

The mummies will not respond to anyone's commands except those of the leader of the cult, currently Halley. In fact, whenever a new leader is 'crowned', he gains the power to control these beasts. No one enters this area alone, except for the leader of the cult.

Mummy-squids: Armour 18, Movement 120', 6 Hit Dice, hand attack 1d4 plus two tentacle attacks 1d6, Morale 16.





