

FLASHING BLADES™

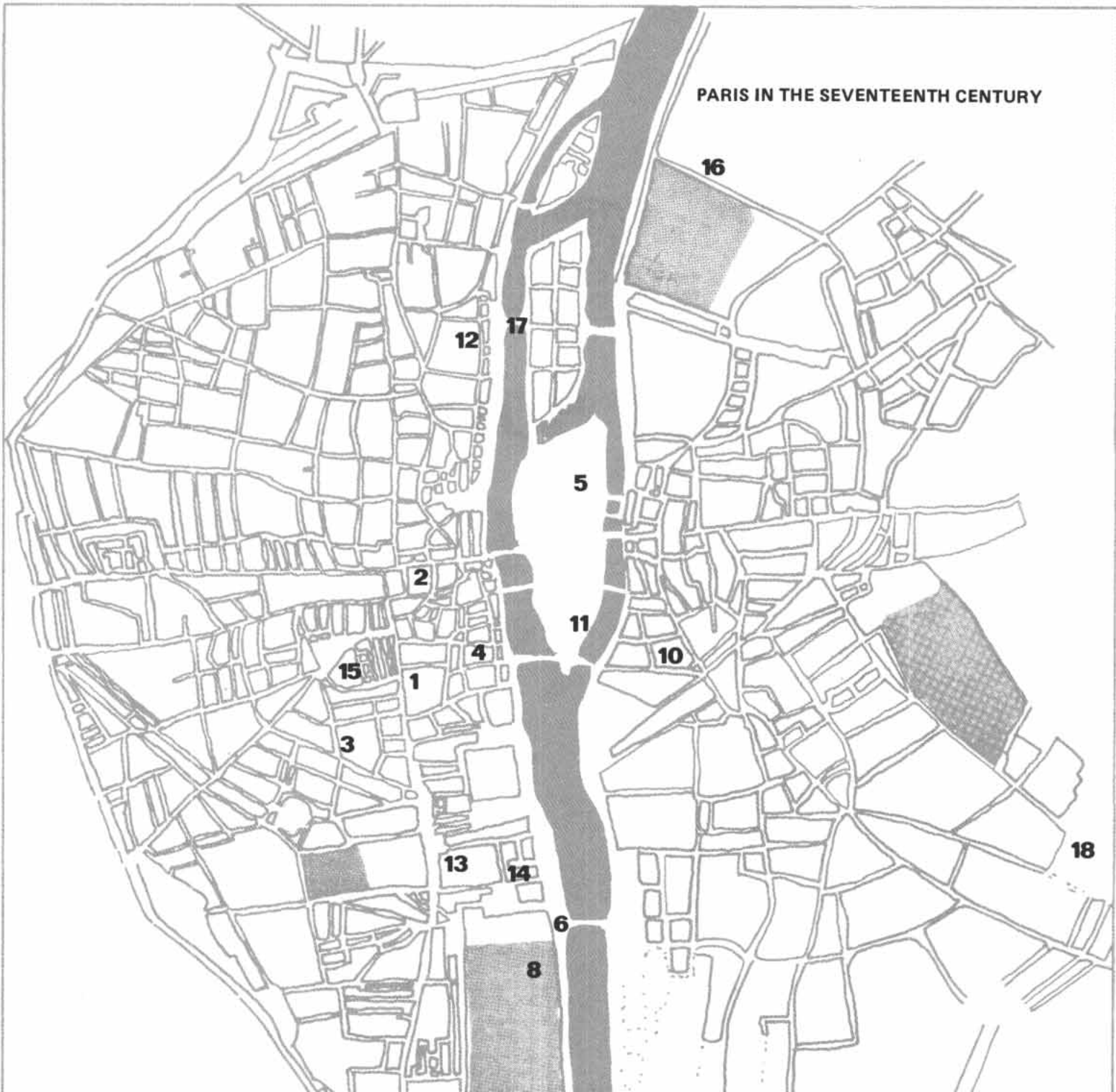
Parisian Adventure

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Parisian Adventures



The Fencing Master

INTRODUCTION

'The Fencing Master' is a short mystery-like adventure for *FLASHING BLADES* characters with an interest in swordplay. The basic plot revolves around the kidnapping and imprisonment of *Maitre* (Master) St. Pierre, head of Fraternity Sainte-Didier, by his arch-rival Signor Sapristi, chief of Fraternity di Giganti. The party (some or all of whom should be students of M. St. Pierre) will have to face several puzzles and dangers to rescue him. An opportunity is provided in this adventure for the Gamemaster to have some old enemies (from previous adventures) return to haunt the player-characters. Any such enemies, who have escaped the characters in the past, may reappear in this adventure, as students of Signor Sapristi. Signor Sapristi himself, as he will almost surely survive the adventure, may become a regular enemy in later adventures.

INTRODUCING M. ST. PIERRE

M. St. Pierre, head of Fraternity Sainte-Didier and fencing Master to several of the player-characters, should be introduced before the adventure starts (the Gamemaster may wish to introduce him briefly in a previous adventure, to give the players the illusion of having known him for a while). He is a sparkling and witty fellow, quick to criticize and slow to praise. These are positive characteristics in a fencing master. M. St. Pierre is reserved in private, observant and intense when giving lessons. Although he trains several wealthy noblemen, including the Viscount de Bouvard, he gives lessons equally to all of his students. This practice tends to keep him at his *Salle d'Armes* (Fencing Hall) most afternoons and evenings giving private lessons.

M. St. Pierre's full statistics are listed below:

M. St. Pierre	(Age: 52)		
Strength	14	Hit Points	18
Dexterity	19	Armor:	
Endurance	18	Leather Jerkin (2 on Chest and	
Wit	18	Flank)	
Charm	17	Gauntlets and Sleeves (2 on	
Luck	17	Arms)	
		Padded Breeches (1 on Legs)	
		Fencing Mask (1 on Head)	

MAP KEY

1. Fraternity St.-Didier
2. Fraternity di Giganti
3. Surgeon's House
4. The Rough Tavern
5. Notre Dame
6. Pont Royal
7. Champs Elysees
8. Tuileries Gardens
9. Site of the Marksmanship Tourney
10. Grand Theatre of the Comedie Francaise
11. Ministry of Justice
12. Townhouse of Signora Cinquedeas
13. Townhouse of Mademoiselle du Bois
14. Manse of Countess Savoyar
15. Les Halles (Central Market)
16. Fox & Vine
17. Madame Julliarde's Maison des Chocolats
18. Estate of the Duchess de Nozze

Attacks:

Foil, Rapier, Longsword, and	Chance to Hit: 21
and Sabre (Expertise 25)	Chance to Parry: 21
Using Main Gauche	Chance to Parry: 24
Unarmed Attacks	Chance to Hit: 13

Skills:

Spanish, Italian, French, and Cavalry Dueling Styles (Master in all), Acrobatics, Etiquette (Master), Fine Manipulation, Oratory, Captainty, Strategy (Master), Horsemanship, Stealth, Speak Italian.



THE VISCOUNT'S DEMONSTRATION

A little while after the player-characters have first been introduced to M. St. Pierre, the news will travel around among his students that he, and several of his assistants and top fencers, are invited to perform a fencing demonstration at a garden party to be held by the Viscount de Bouvard (one of his pupils). The assistants and fencers have not yet been chosen by M. St. Pierre, and he has made it understood that there is to be a tournament within his Salle to determine who will go. Another piece of related news will also make its way through the grapevine: Signor Sapristi, head of Fraternity di Giganti, and rival of M. St. Pierre, petitioned to be the Viscount's fencing master, and volunteered to perform a demonstration to rival M. St. Pierre's. He was refused by the Viscount, and suffered a loss of face.

Player-Characters who wish to perform at the demonstration will have to compete in the tournament at Fraternity Ste.-Didier. Each Player-Character must defeat one opponent in a fencing match to attend the party. Fencers may fight with their preferred weapons (foil, rapier, longsword or sabre). The weapons are blunted, and the fencers wear sufficient padding to avoid normal damage, unless a fencer hits with a roll of 1, in which case his opponent suffers 1d6 damage to a random Hit Location. Fencing matches continue until one fencer scores five hits on his opponent. Left-hand weapons are allowed for parrying purposes, but all special, dirty fighting, and unarmed attacks are not allowed.

Characters who win their matches at the Fraternity may accompany M. St. Pierre to the demonstration, and participate in the exercises. Player-characters may each take one other character with them, to help with their equipment. Thus, all player-characters should be allowed to attend in some capacity.

At the Viscount's garden party, each player-character participating in the demonstration should make rolls against his Expertise (with his favorite dueling weapon), Wit (+3 for Strategy skill), and Dexterity (+2 for Acrobatics skill). If a character makes all three of these rolls, he will be praised by M. St. Pierre and noticed by the Viscount. If he can then make a successful roll on Charm or Luck (his choice, +3 to either roll for Etiquette skill, he will be introduced to the Viscount. They will get to talking, and perhaps become friends. If the character is of Social Rank 7 or below, the Viscount will give him a purse of 50 L as a gift. The Viscount may prove to be a valuable friend and ally, in this adventure, and in later ones.

INSULT AND INJURY

After the Viscount's garden party, the rivalry between Fraternity Ste. -Didier and Fraternity di Giganti will turn to open hostility. Signor Sapristi's students, famous for their black surcoats and bad manners, will start to harass the pupils of M. St. Pierre (particularly those who are beginners). A few duels will result, involving the deaths of two of the members of Fraternity Ste. -Didier, and the injury of three more. Some player-characters may be followed by men in black surcoats (members of Fraternity di Giganti) but they will not be openly challenged or accosted. If pressed, their pursuers will turn and run.

In response to the violence caused by Fraternity di Giganti, M. St. Pierre will fly into a rage. Attempting to provoke Signor Sapristi into a duel, he will denounce him in public as a 'cowardly foreign dog'. No challenge from Sapristi will be forthcoming, however.

THE DISAPPEARANCE

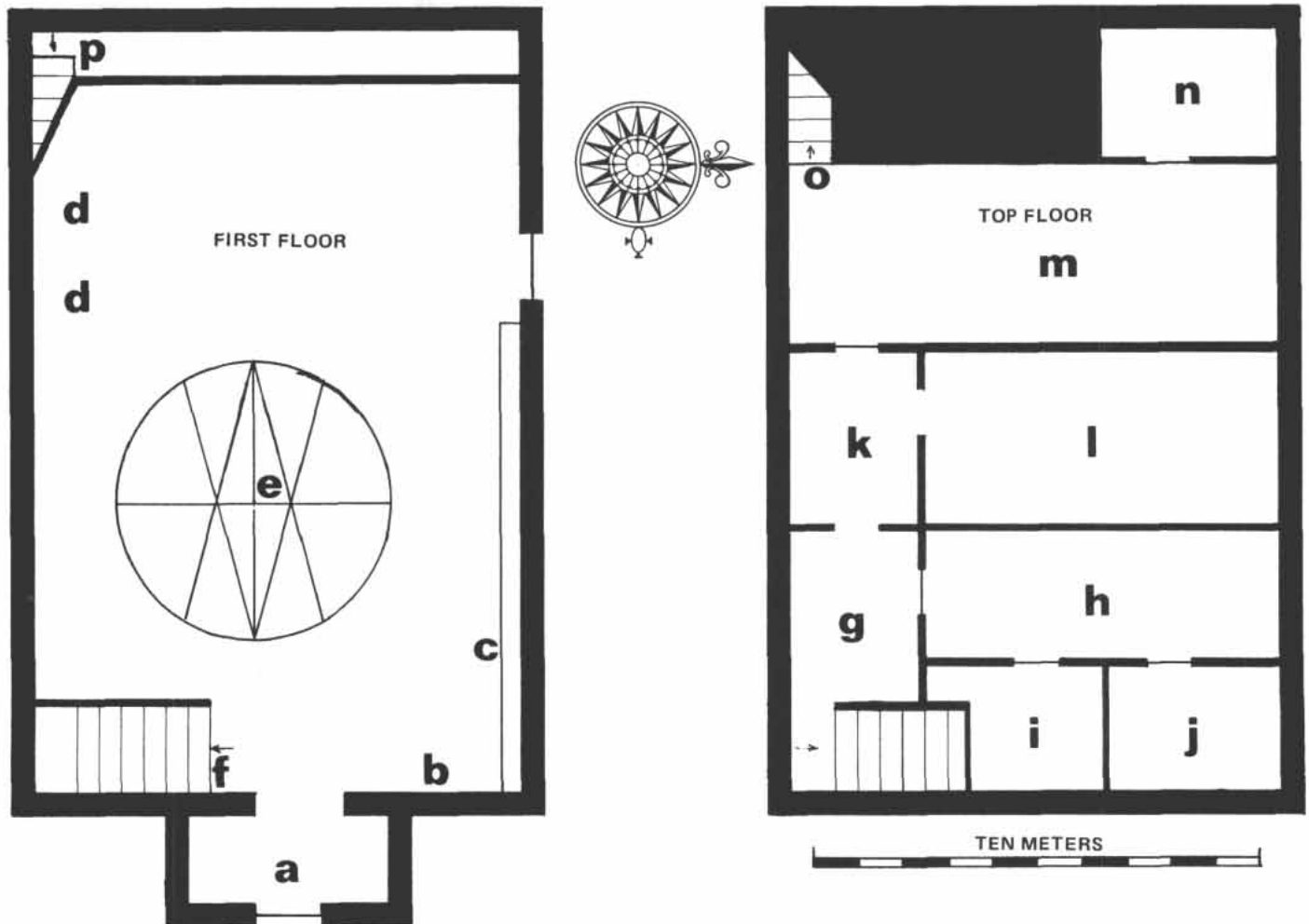
Several days after M. St. Pierre's insult of Signor Sapristi, one of the player-characters will have a private lesson scheduled with M. St. Pierre in the early afternoon. The other player-characters should be encouraged to go with him, to practice and exercise in the main fencing hall, while he receives his lesson.

Upon arriving at the Salle d'Armes Sainte-Didier, the party will find the Fraternity quiet and deserted — not a rare occurrence in the early afternoon, when usually only M. St. Pierre is present for private lessons.

At this point, the Gamemaster should refer to the map of the Salle, and describe it to the party. The Salle is entered through an archway and alcove (A). The doors are left unlocked during the day and early evening to allow members to come in and practice in the main hall. Often, one of M. St. Pierre's assistants watches the door, to take coats and keep out the riff-raff. As it is still early this afternoon, no assistant is present yet.

The entrance alcove leads to the fencing hall, the large chamber used for practice, group exercises and tournaments. The walls are lined with carefully spaced racks of masks (at B) and assorted blunt weapons (chiefly foils and light rapiers, at C). The wall opposite the entrance is covered entirely by mirrored glass, to allow students to observe their own form (this is a rare luxury, mirrored glass was very expensive and delicate in the 17th Century). To one side of the hall stand two clever mannequins (D). These are fencing dummies designed to spin and jab a foil at an opponent, when struck (this exercise is used to quicken parry reactions). On the floor in the center of the hall (at E) is an

Salle d'Armes – Fraternity Sainte-Didier



a: Entrance Alcove
b: Fencing Masks
c: Weapons Rack
d: Fencing Dummies

e: Fencing Circle
f: Stairs to Top Floor
g: Hallway
h: Dressing Room

i: Cloakroom
j: Equipment Storage
k: Annex
l: Waiting Room

m: Private Lesson Room
n: St. Pierre's Office
o: Secret Panel
p: Secret Stairwell & Passage

elaborate circle diagram in the Spanish style, to teach students footwork and distance. A stairway near the entrance (at F) leads to the top floor.

On the top floor, the player-characters will pass through an elaborate hallway (G), decorated with crossed swords on the walls. A door on the side of the hallway gives access to the dressingroom (H), where gentlemen may change from their normal clothes into various protective jackets, vests, and plastrons for their lessons, or for practice with each other. A side room (I) provides hangers and hooks for cloaks and coats. In another side room (J) various fencing equipment and gear is stored.

The upstairs hall leads to a small annex (K) and a waiting parlor (L), where students may prepare for their lessons by reading from a wide variety of fencing books and documents in Spanish, Italian and French, collected by M. St. Pierre. This library includes a full collection of the works of the famous master, Sainte-Didier, for whom the Fraternity is named.

The player-character who is to have a lesson with M. St. Pierre will probably dress for his lesson, and then sit in the waiting parlor. His friends will probably dress and then go downstairs to practice. The character waiting will find that the master does not call him in for his lesson. Sooner or later, he will grow curious or irate, and will venture to the doors of the private lesson chamber. The doors are locked, and there is no sound from within. There will be no answer to the character's pounding on the door.

Eventually the character (or the whole party, if the others are called by the first) will elect to break in the doors, or pick the lock. The lock may be picked on a roll of Dexterity (-3 modifier) by any character with Fine Manipulation skill. There is a key in the door on the other side. A smart player may look in the keyhole first, and finding it blocked, may put a sheet of paper or parchment under the door, and knock the key out of the other side with some instrument. This tactic would allow the party to get the key and unlock the door from its side (any character who thinks up this plan should get a check on his Wit).

Inside, the party will find the private lesson chamber (M) empty. It is a simple room, decorated with wood panelling, and with a large segmented mirror (similar to the one downstairs) on the west wall. There is only one apparent door, besides the entrance. This door leads to M. St. Pierre's office (at N). It has been locked with the same key as the door from the annex. Inside the office is a modest desk and the records for the Fraternity (there is nothing important among them).

Any character who searches the mirror in the private lesson chamber and successfully rolls his Luck or below on a d20, will discover a scrap of black cloth (i.e. of the same sort as the surcoats worn by the students of Fraternity di Giganti) caught between two panels of the glass (at O). This of course suggests a secret door of some sort. Upon close inspection of the panel, any character who can make a successful Wit roll (+1 for Fine Manipulation) will discover the opening device. By pushing one of the other panels, a secret door opens upon a small staircase leading down. The doors stays open for only a moment before whooshing shut again, and any character who stands in the opening for more than a few seconds is in danger of it closing on him (Luck roll to avoid this, 1d6 points of general damage if caught). This is how the scrap of cloth was caught when someone passed through. The party would be wise to leave one member behind to open the door again, if necessary.

Behind the secret door, the staircase leads to a narrow, dusty, secret passageway (P). Signs of a scuffle and fight are apparent on the floor here. In the middle of the passage is a small pool of blood, and a broken sword. The sword is a blunt fencing foil, of a sort used by M. St. Pierre in his lessons. It was apparently broken on purpose to provide a sharp weapon, and there are traces of blood on the tip. Any character with Tracking skill may make a roll against Wit to reconstruct what happened. The man with the foil was pursued through the secret door, and down the staircase. In the middle of the hall, he broke the tip off his weapon, and tried to make a fight of it. He seriously wounded one opponent but was overpowered by three others. He was hit on the back of the head and fell on his face on the ground, he was dragged away through a door at the end of the passage.

The door at the end of the passage (evidently meant as a secret escape route) opens onto an alley by the side of the *Salle d'Armes*, near the entrance to a small chapel.

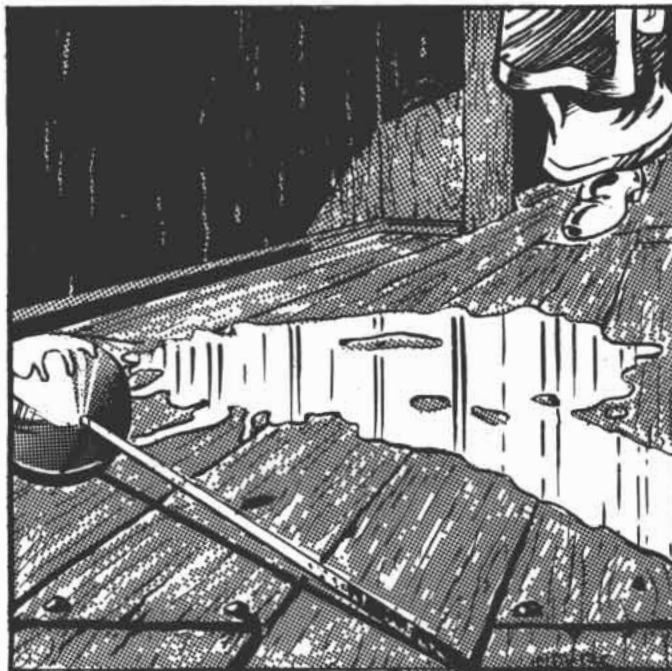
CLUES

Once the party discovers M. St. Pierre's kidnapping, it has a number of options. The most logical of these are dealt with below:

- 1. Reporting the incident to the authorities — this action will achieve nothing. Signor Sapristi (the obvious suspect) has many powerful friends at court. He will not be arrested without con-

crete evidence (i.e. M. St. Pierre's body or testimony), unless some character in the party holds or has influence over a position capable of jailing enemies on false pretenses (a Magistrate in Paris, the Constable General, or Minister of Justice, for example). The formal investigation will turn up no more evidence than the party has already discovered.

- 2. Reporting the incident to the Viscount de Bouvard — this is a good course of action, especially if one or more of the player-characters was noticed at the Viscount's demonstration. The Viscount will be distressed to hear of M. St. Pierre's disappearance, and will offer to help. He is quite wealthy, and capable of funding the party for a rescue operation (he will cover expenses up to 800 L). He also has many contacts and spies who may be able to help the party locate the fencing master. The Gamemaster may wish to have the Viscount contact the party if they don't contact him. If the party cannot figure out where M. St. Pierre has been taken, the Gamemaster may elect to have the Viscount's spies overhear the conversation mentioned in (6) below, and tell the party.
- 3. Looking for witnesses — there were no direct witnesses to the kidnapping of M. St. Pierre, but there was a man on the steps of the nearby chapel who saw the wounded man taken to a surgeon. When the party looks for witnesses, each must attempt a roll against Luck x ½ to find this man. He is a mendicant seller of holy water on the steps of the chapel. If given 5 or 10 L for his trouble, he will tell the player-characters that he saw, around noon on the day of the kidnapping, two men in black surcoats (students of Signor Sapristi) came from the direction of the alley beside the *Salle d'Armes*. One of them was badly wounded in the chest, and the other was helping him. They asked the seller of holy water where they might find a surgeon, and he directed them to a nearby physician. A coach then arrived, driven by another man in a black surcoat. The wounded man and his comrade got in, and the coach headed in the direction of the surgeon's house. The seller of holy water noticed a coat-of-arms on the side of the coach, and he will draw a facsimile if provided with paper and pen, and given another 5 L for encouragement. Any Soldier of character with Heraldry skill who makes a successful Wit roll will recognize the 'coat-of-arms' as the insignia of the Italian Regiment.
- 4. Looking for a surgeon — a smart player may immediately think of looking for the nearest surgeon, as the chances are good that the wounded man would be taken to one (this is the case). This course of action may also be suggested by the conversation with the seller of holy water in (3) above. There is only one physician near the *Salle* of holy water in (3) above. There is only one physician near the *Salle* (the one indicated by the water seller). If the party arrives at his house on the day of the crime, they will find the wounded man still there (although his companions continued on without him, to deliver M. St. Pierre to their master). The wounded man is, indeed, a minor student of Signor Sapristi. He was wounded badly in the chest by M. St. Pierre in the struggle. The surgeon who helped the



man did so under duress (at swordpoint) and would thus be more than happy to turn him over to the party. A 20 L bribe is sufficient to insure his silence. If tortured, the wounded man will tell the whole story (he is too frightened of Signor Sapristi to accept bribes, however). The four students of Sapristi surprised M. St. Pierre alone in his *Salle*, and chased him through the secret door to the passage, where they overpowered him. After dropping the wounded man off at the physician's, the other kidnapper's continued on to the barracks of the 2nd Company of the Italian Regiment, outside of Paris. Signor Sapristi, he says, saved the life of the Captain of the 2nd Company years ago, and is calling in the debt. The plan is to take M. St. Pierre somewhere else, and to guard him with soldiers from the Italian Regt. The wounded man does not know where M. St. Pierre is to be taken after the barracks. If turned over to the authorities, the wounded man will be assassinated in jail by a guard in Signor Sapristi's pay.

- 5. Surveillance — watching Signor Sapristi's *Salle d'Armes* or townhouse is a fairly good tactic, if used early after the crime. On the day after the crime, he will go in his carriage to the barracks of the 2nd Company of the Italian Regiment, just outside of Paris. He will stay there for only ten minutes, and then return (this is to give orders as to where the M. St. Pierre is to be taken).
- 6. Tailing Signor Sapristi's students — these are, of course, easy to spot, as they wear their characteristic black surcoats when going to, or returning from lessons or practice at Fraternity di Giganti. If a Player-Character discreetly follows some of them from their *Salle* anytime more than a day after the kidnapping, he will notice them go into a rough-looking tavern (Tavern Brevage Noir may be used for this if the Gamemaster desires). Provided Sapristi's students don't recognize the character (Gamemaster's option, depending upon how public the character is), the Player-Character may find a seat at a table near them and listen in on their over-loud conversation. They continue to joke about a certain 'baggage' that is in the hands of 'the Italians' and is 'on its way South.' The party may make what it likes of this information.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

The day after the kidnapping of M. St. Pierre, the carriage in which he is held prisoner will start on its trip from the barracks of the Second Company of the Italian Regiment to the monastery of Saint Martin-des-Champs in Dauphine, near the Italian border. There, Sapristi's

men intend to keep him imprisoned indefinitely. The carriage is escorted by twenty horsemen from the Second Company, who will also act as guards at the monastery. A direct attack on the carriage en route is therefore rather suicidal. The most logical course of action for the party would be to follow the carriage to its destination and rescue M. St. Pierre there.

The journey is one of about three hundred miles, or about three days' ride on horseback or in a carriage. It is not difficult to follow the carriage at a distance, as the six horses pulling it and the twenty horses of the guards stir up a lot of dust. Even if the party follows up to a week after the carriage has passed, it will not be difficult to find the trail. All local Inns along the way which had to feed the twenty soldiers will remember them well. After a week has passed, the party may still pick up the trail if any character in the party can make a roll of his Wit/2 or less. After a week has passed, however, the journey requires 1D6 extra days, due to false leads, inquiries at roadside inns, etc., and will cost an extra 1D6 x 10 L for information along the way.

The Gamemaster should roll for encounters on the roads normally as the party heads south. Inns along the way will cost 1 L per character or horse, per night. If the party loses the trail or is sidetracked for some reason, it may always return to Paris, and start again.

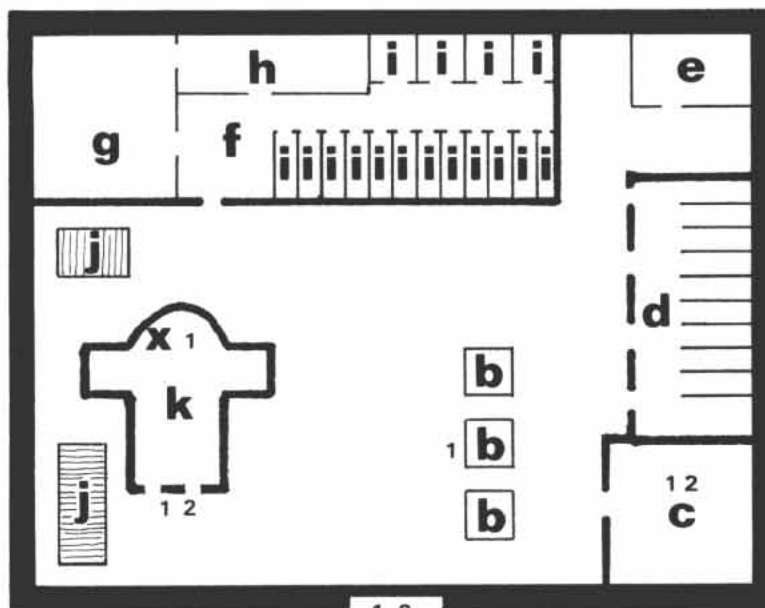
ST. MARTIN-DES-CHAMPS

At the end of the three day journey from Paris, the party will arrive at the monastery of St. Martin-des-Champs, a small complex of brick buildings on top of a short hill. This is where Signor Sapristi has hidden M. St. Pierre. The monastery is guarded/inhabited by the following groups.

(1) The twenty soldiers of the 2nd Company — These guards have set up camp in the middle of the monastery, and are prepared to stay there until word from Signor Sapristi arrives. They have a system of watches, with two soldiers at each guard location. For game purposes, assume that each soldier is armed with a longsword and matchlock musket (Expertise 12 with each), is armored as for a normal fusilier, and has 11 Hit Points.

(2) Two trusted students of Signor Sapristi — These two were sent to guard the prisoner, keep an eye on the soldiers, and protect the monastery. As mentioned earlier, they should be old enemies of the Player-Characters, with scores to settle. If the party has no suitable

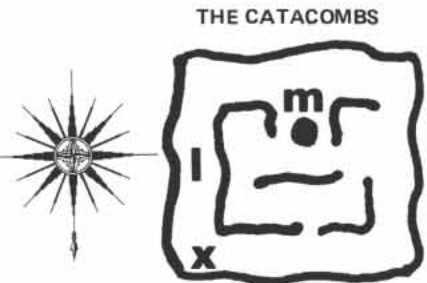
Monastery St. Martin-des-Champs



- a: Road to the Monastery
- b: Soldiers' Camp Tents
- c: Bell Tower
- d: Stables
- e: Chicken Coop
- f: Dormitory

- g: Eating Hall
- h: Kitchen
- i: Monks' Living Quarters
- j: Garden Patches
- k: Chapel

- l: The Catacombs
- m: The Well
- x: The Secret Stairwell
- 1: Day Watch (2 soldiers)
- 2: Night Watch (2 soldiers)



Monastery Walls are five meters high

10 METERS

enemies, assume that these two are armed with rapiers and wheellock pistols (Expertise 15 with each), are armored with a leather jerkin, gauntlets, and boots, and have 16 Hit Points.

(3) Eighteen Monks — The Abbot of this monastery is an old friend of Signor Sapristi, and has been well paid to keep the prisoner in the catacombs beneath the chapel (as detailed below). He will not allow the party (if they are so brazen as to ask) inside the monastery on the grounds that it is a hermitage. Although the monks are loosely allied with Sapristi, they are not at all pleased with the soldiers who are stationed inside their monastery, and would like to see them gone. A monk may sound the alarm if he sees a Player-Character sneaking in, but he will do nothing to help the soldiers stop him. If fighting breaks out, the monks will hide in their dormitory until it is over.

(4) M. St. Pierre — The fencing master is held prisoner in a pit among the catacombs beneath the monastery chapel. He is fed on bread and water, and growing weaker as time goes on. For every three days of imprisonment, he will lose one point of Endurance. He will never descend below 1 Endurance, but the longer he is left lingering away in his dungeon, the less helpful he will be in the escape.

When the party attempts to rescue M. St. Pierre, the Gamemaster must refer to the map of the monastery. A description of the locations inside the monastery is as follows:

(A) This is the only road which approaches the monastery, and it leads to the only gate. The gate is always guarded by two soldiers. The gate may be locked with a crude bolt on the inside. It would require a battering ram to break it down.

(B) In the middle of the monastery courtyard the soldiers of the 2nd Company have set up camp. During the day, two soldiers guard the tents, and there will be four to eight soldiers inside the tents resting. At night, no guard is posted, and twelve soldiers sleep inside the tents. Also inside the tents is an assortment of equipment, armor, weaponry, and a small keg of gunpowder.

(C) This building is the belltower of the monastery, used to call the monks to mass in the chapel or to sound the alarm. The tower rises to a height of ten meters and commands a good view of the perimeter of the monastery. Two guards are always stationed atop it. The bottom of the tower is inhabited by two monks who serve as bellringers, and by the two trusted students of Sapristi.

(D) These are the stables, which are, at present, crammed with the twenty-six horses and carriage of Sapristi's men. There is barely enough room.

(E) The chicken coop provides eggs and chickens for the monks to eat. Many of the chickens have been slaughtered recently to feed the soldiers. The coop is low and small, but it might be large enough to conceal a man, if necessary.

(F) This is the main hall of the monastery dormitory. It is an austere and spartan building. At night, the doors are locked with a bolt.

(G) This is the dormitory eating hall. The monks gather here to eat lunch and dinner together. The soldiers come in four at a time, at various times during the day, to take their meals.

(H) The dormitory kitchen. There is nothing to note here.

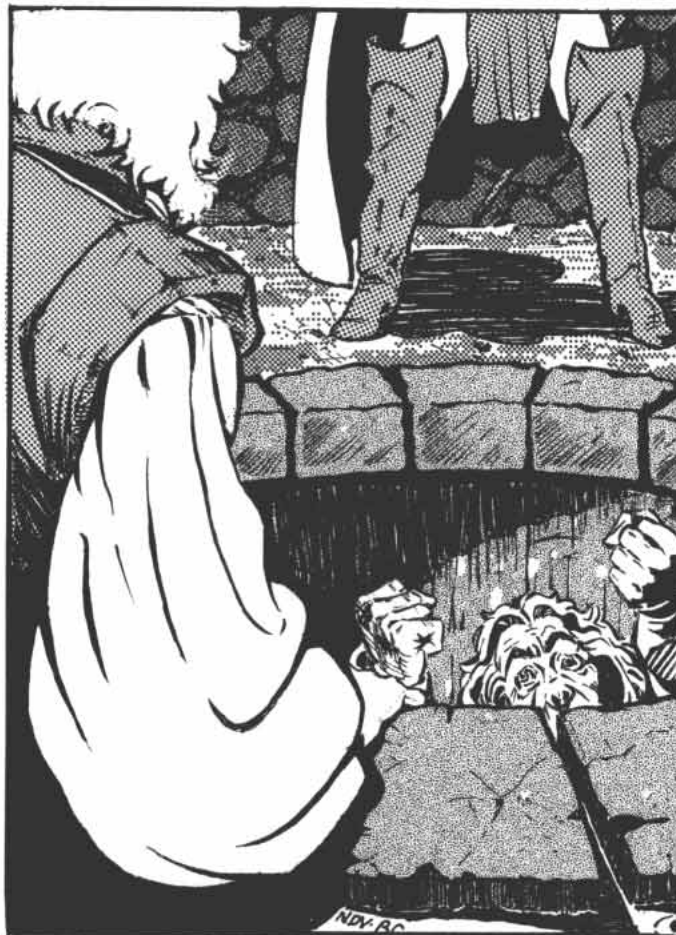
(I) The dormitory cells of sixteen of the monks. Each is small and drab, furnished with only a bed and a table. The Abbot has the cell nearest the kitchen, and has the only fireplace.

(J) These are the garden patches of the monks, used to grow assorted vegetables. During the day, several monks will be found in each of these, tending the gardens.

(K) This is a small marble chapel used by the monks for mass. There are always two soldiers guarding the entrance, and during the day, there are also two guarding behind the altar. Any character who notices this may find it strange. Players should ask themselves: 'Why are they guarding the chapel?' The answer is that behind the altar is a trapdoor leading to a secret stairwell to the catacombs below the monastery (marked by the 'x'). Any character who makes a successful Wit or Luck roll (Player's choice) when searching behind the altar, will spot the trapdoor.

(L) Below the trapdoor is a small maze of catacombs. The monks of St. Martin-des-Champs dug these out of the living rock in the 14th Century to hide in times of war. Sometime in the 15th Century, the monks started using the catacombs to bury their dead. The walls are honeycombed with small crypts, each plastered closed. In places, the plaster has crumbled, and skeletal feet can be seen protruding limply from the walls. Sound carries strangely and echoes in the catacombs. This may be an advantage or a disadvantage, depending upon how the party uses it.

(M) Near the rear of the catacombs is the pit in which M. St. Pierre is imprisoned. It is guarded night and day by two soldiers. The pit is



too deep for him to climb out, but he could easily escape with the help of one man with a rope, or two without. If he is still strong enough to do so, he will aid in his own escape/rescue.

THE ESCAPE

The characters may attempt to rescue M. St. Pierre in a number of different ways. The Gamemaster should allow them the freedom to choose a strategy of their own. If they don't succeed, but are not wiped out, they may try a second time (with greater difficulty, as the guards will be prepared). Some general guidelines for possible strategies are provided below:

(1) Stealth

If the characters attempt to enter the monastery by stealth, they will face several obstacles. To approach the walls of the monastery unseen requires a successful roll against Luck (-6 during the day, +3 at night, +3 for characters with Stealth skill, -2 from the North or West, +2 from the East or South). The walls are five meters high, and require a successful roll against Dexterity to scale (+3 for characters with Acrobatics skill, +3 for using a rope and grapnel). If this roll is failed, the character takes 1D6 - 3 points of general damage from the fall, and he must make a roll against Luck to avoid being heard (+1 for characters with Stealth skill). Within the walls, a character may, perhaps hide in the stables, the chicken coop, or behind the chapel. If a character accidentally drops over the wall into one of the garden patches, his footprints will be clearly imprinted in the soft ground. If characters sneaking into the monastery are spotted, the alarm will be sounded by ringing the bells in the tower.

(2) Assault

This option reflects a desperate strategy, or no strategy at all. It is dangerous, considering the superior position and numbers of the soldiers in the monastery. Nonetheless, a powerful party may do well in an assault. An assault requires three turns spent to approach the walls, and two to scale them. Once inside the monastery, the party may profit by the dispersion of the soldiers on guard duty. At any rate, the party should not be required to fight all of the defenders at once.

(3) Deception

The most subtle means of attacking the monastery would be by

disguise or deception. It is quite possible that a character with Disguise skill could make himself and his comrades up to look like messengers from Sapristi or like Officers of the Italian Regiment (a character with Forgery skill might be able to forge false documents or orders for the soldiers as well). In addition, two monks leave the monastery each week to buy extra supplies for the soldiers at a nearby village. Smart characters might waylay these shoppers and gain entry to the monastery by wearing their robes (one monk looks like another to the soldiers). Deception is a risky but profitable tactic, and the Gamemaster should reward characters for being bold in this respect.

Even if M. St. Pierre is rescued, it remains to escort him back to Paris. Any soldiers left unwounded will pursue the party as best they can, and there may be other dangerous encounters on the roads (roll for encounters normally).

REWARDS

If M. St. Pierre is returned to Paris, Signor Sapristi will flee back to Italy before the authorities can catch him. He will remain an implacable enemy of the Player-Characters, and may return to pester them in later adventures (especially those which take them to Italy).

M. St. Pierre will be eternally grateful to the party, both for saving him, and for helping him to disgrace his rival. He will train each of the Player-Characters for free, as long as he lives, and he will give them so many private lessons that one month of practice will count as two months for experience purposes.

The Viscount de Bouvard will also be grateful for M. St. Pierre's safe return. To each Player-Character of a lower Social Rank, he will give a Social Rank 11 favor. To each character of an equal or higher Social Rank, he will give a gift of an exceptional riding horse (breeding horses is a hobby of his, along with fencing). These horses are slightly faster than normal (they move 12.5 meters per turn with normal movement, and 25 meters per turn at a fast gallop) and have maximum Hit Points (28).

The Grand Theatre

INTRODUCTION

This adventure is designed to be short and comical, and filled with lighthearted swashbuckling fun. The plot revolves around the rivalry between the King's Musketeers (the so called 'Black Musketeers') and the Cardinal's Guards. These two companies are both sent on a mission to recover some stolen secret documents at the Grand Theatre of the Comedie Francaise. As they cannot both recover the documents for their masters, a brawl will ensue at the Theatre between them. Because of the presence of the Archbishop D'Orleans, however, they must be careful not to disrupt the play at the Comedie, for fear of offending him. This should lead to the two rival groups of soldiers, sneaking around the Theatre hall and backstage, and carrying on a brawl — as quietly as possible. Although this precludes the use of firearms, the Theatre is full of ropes, curtains, and chandeliers to swing on, sandbags to drop on opponents' heads, rugs to pull out from under enemies, props to hurl about, and even a harpsichord to roll down stairs. In short, all of the elements necessary for a spirited fight.

THE SITUATION

The King and the Cardinal (either Louis XIII and Richelieu, or Louis XIV and Mazarin, depending on the period) have engaged in a petty rivalry for some time over a chessboard in the evenings. This rivalry is mirrored in the uncouth behavior of their respective guard companies, the King's Musketeers, and the Cardinal's Guards, towards each other. Now, at the start of the adventure, an event takes place which gives the King and the Cardinal, and their companies, a means of healthy competition.

It seems that a number of secret documents concerning French Naval strength have been stolen from the Palais Royal. A spy for the Ministry of Justice has informed the authorities that the thief is an English actor and comedian, currently working at the Grand Theatre of the Comedie Francaise, named Jacob Latchkey. The informant is sure that Latchkey has hidden the documents somewhere within the Grand Theatre, to keep them safe until his return to England.

When this information reaches the King and the Cardinal, they will make a bet, over a small Chateau in Strasbourg, on who can recover the documents. They will then each have an interview with the Captains of their companies, assigning each the task of retrieving the secret papers from the Theatre.

COMPLICATIONS

Those Player-Characters who are in either the King's Musketeers or the Cardinal's Guards, or those who are close friends with a character in either of those companies, may be a member of one of the groups sent to retrieve the documents (this is the best way for the Gamemaster to involve characters in the adventure). If a character has some unusual channels of information (perhaps a Contact or Secret Loyalty) he may hear of the theft and the search, and go to the Theatre on his own. Otherwise, Player-Characters may go simply to enjoy the comedy, and find themselves caught up in the fun.

The two company Captains will be given their missions just before the opening night of another comedy at the Grand Theatre. Each will

send his Lieutenant and eleven other men (probably Troopers). If a Player-Character is one of the Captains, he may elect to go himself. If any Player-Character has encountered enemies from either company in previous adventures (e.g. The Baron D'Ile-de-Batz from *'The Man Behind the Mask'* or *'The Great Marksmanship Tourney'*) he will be among the members in the appropriate group. Otherwise, assume that all non-players are armored in their normal company outfit (without all heavy armor: cuirasses, tassets, and epaulettes), and are armed with longswords or rapiers (Expertise 12 for Troopers, Expertise 15 for Lieutenants). Each has 12 Hit Points (Lieutenants have 14). All Musketeers will also have Brawling skill (Expertise 11). Both groups will be ordered not to kill any members of the other, but a good trouncing will be looked upon favorably.

There is one major complication in the plan which the two groups will be informed of just before leaving for the Theatre: The Archbishop D'Orleans, an elderly but powerful Clergyman, will be attending the new comedy play at the Grand Theatre (a Player-Character who is a Clergyman might be sent along to attend the Archbishop). He has gone to see each of the plays in which Jacob Latchkey has played a part, and finds the man hilariously funny. The two groups searching for the documents must take care not to disturb the Archbishop, or the performance. This means they must be fairly quiet (although the Archbishop is just a little deaf) and no firearms of any sort may be used. Also, the Archbishop's presence precludes any efforts to capture and torture Latchkey for the location of the documents, as he must be on stage during almost the entire play, to entertain the Archbishop.

THE THEATRE

Most of this adventure will be taken up by the two groups searching the Grand Theatre for the secret documents, and their antics when they encounter each other. They will probably split into several groups of three or four each, to cover more ground. The Gamemaster should study the plan of the Theatre carefully, and lead the Player-Characters on a merry chase.

A full description of each of the locations on the plan is provided below:

(A) This is an elaborate flight of marble steps leading into the Theatre. One of the two groups should be allowed to arrive here first (roll randomly to determine which company) and to enter and start searching before the other group arrives. The Gamemaster should avoid starting the brawl on the front steps.

(B) This is the ornate Entrance Hall of the Theatre. The floor is veined marble, and is covered in places by three exquisite oriental carpets. In a brawl, the carpets may be jerked out from under an enemy, to topple him over. Any character walking across this room, unless he specifically states that he is not doing so, has a 5 in 6 chance (roll a D6) of walking on the carpets. Any other character standing by a carpet may attempt to yank it out from under him, with a Resistance roll of his Strength vs. the victim's Dexterity (+3 to the Dexterity roll if the victim has Acrobatics skill). If the rug-yanker wins the Resistance



roll, the victim falls down, losing his remaining actions that turn, and takes 1 point of general damage.

Exits leave from the Entrance Hall to the Theatre Hall and the Side Galleries. A double staircase also leads to the Top Floor. At the head of the stairs can be seen a large harpsichord (early piano-like instrument), which is usually played as the audience enters the Theatre. Three chandeliers hang from the Theatre roof provide light in the Entrance Hall.

(C) These are the two Side Galleries of the Theatre, leading either to the Theatre Hall (with three exits on either side) or upstairs to the balconies. Sound in the Side Galleries is slightly muffled from the Theatre Hall (due to the heavy draperies on the walls), and it is long and wide enough to permit some swordplay.

(D) At the Top of the Balcony Stairs is a small landing, leading to the Balcony Halls. A large harpsichord is kept here (as mentioned above). It is on small wheels, to permit it to be brought into and out of storage easily (any Player-Character who makes a successful Wit roll while inspecting the harpsichord may think of this). If rolled down the stairs at an approaching enemy, the harpsichord will hit, unless the enemy makes a successful roll against $Dexterity \times \frac{1}{2}$ or his Luck $\times \frac{1}{2}$ (player's choice; +4 to either roll for Acrobatics skill). Any character hit by the tumbling harpsichord will be knocked down the stairs, take 1-3 points of general damage (1d6/2), and will be stunned for two turns. A tumbling harpsichord would probably make a great deal of noise (perhaps enough to disturb the Archbishop).

(E) This is the Theatre Hall which houses the common audience. There are eleven rows, with approximately fifty seats per row (thirty in the middle, ten on each side). The closer to the stage, the more expensive the seat. The rabble (about forty of them) are allowed to stand in the back for only three Sous apiece. Above the Theatre Hall can be seen 11 balconies, the largest of which is that of the Archbishop D'Orleans. It is a packed house (i.e. five hundred and ninety people in the hall, and twenty-eight people in the balconies).

Exits lead away from the Theatre Hall to the Side Galleries and the Entrance Hall. A short stairway leads down to the Orchestra Pit, at the stage end of the Theatre Hall. Long curtains and draperies hang down between the balconies above, and a character could climb up one if

he wished (roll against Dexterity to avoid falling, +3 for Acrobatics skill; 1-3 points of general damage for a fall). A character who climbs up a curtain (probably behind one) must make a successful Luck roll (+2 for Stealth skill) to avoid being seen by the Archbishop or member of his entourage.

(F) The Orchestra Pit lies just at the foot of the stage. The orchestra is not large, consisting mainly of several kettle-drums for emphasizing lines from the play, and a harpsichord, played while the actors change scenes. Stairways lead up from the Orchestra Pit to the Stage and the Theatre Hall.

(G) This is the Stage, where, among others, Jacob Latchkey performs in the comedy. A curtain in front of the stage descends when the actors change the props. A curtain behind the stage (raised to reveal various backdrops for scenes) leads to the Backstage Area. The 'X' in the center of the stage is a trapdoor *usually locked from the Basement). If someone were to unlock the trapdoor from below, any unfortunate actor to step on it would fall through (this might disrupt the performance slightly, though good actors should be able to improvise, and make a joke of it for the audience). The Gamemaster might remind characters that the secret documents could be hidden inside some object or prop on stage, prompting them to dress in costumes and go on stage to search for it.

(H) The Backstage Area is cluttered with theatrical machinery, backdrops, props, and actors and actresses waiting to go on. The latter may object to the presence of non-performers backstage, but a playful jab with a sword point should provide a suitable explanation. There are two more trapdoors backstage, like the one on Stage. Again, if opened from below, they could provide a surprise for unsuspecting actors and characters. Also of importance backstage are two devices for raising and lowering the stage curtains. Among the props lying around backstage is a large box of marbles. If a character tips this box over (on purpose or by accident) the marbles will spread out at a rate of 2m per turn. Any character attempting to walk in an area full of marbles must make a successful roll against Dexterity each turn, to avoid slipping and falling (running movement requires a successful roll against both Dexterity and Luck to avoid falling).

Two ladders in the Backstage Area lead up to the shadowy Back-

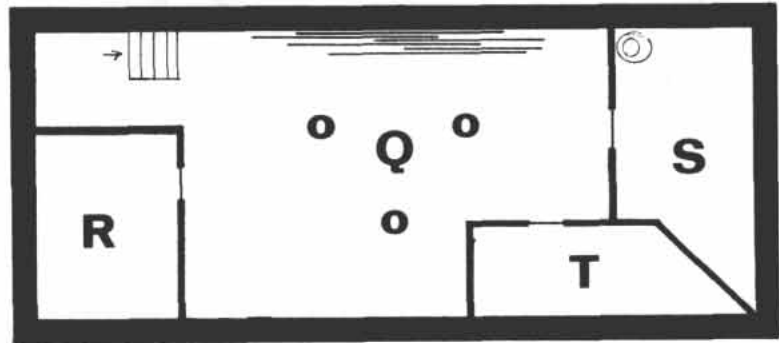
Le Grand Théâtre

- A: Entrance
 B: Entrance Hall
 C: Side Galleries
 D: Top of Balcony Stairs
 E: Theatre Hall
 F: Orchestra Pit
 G: Stage
 H: Backstage
 I: Costume Storage
 J: Women's Dressing Room
 K: Men's Dressing Room
 L: Backstage Exit
 M: Balcony Halls
 N: Archbishop's Balcony
 O: Balconies
 P: Backstage Rigging
 Q: Basement
 R: Costume Storage
 S: Prop Storage
 T: Misc. Storage

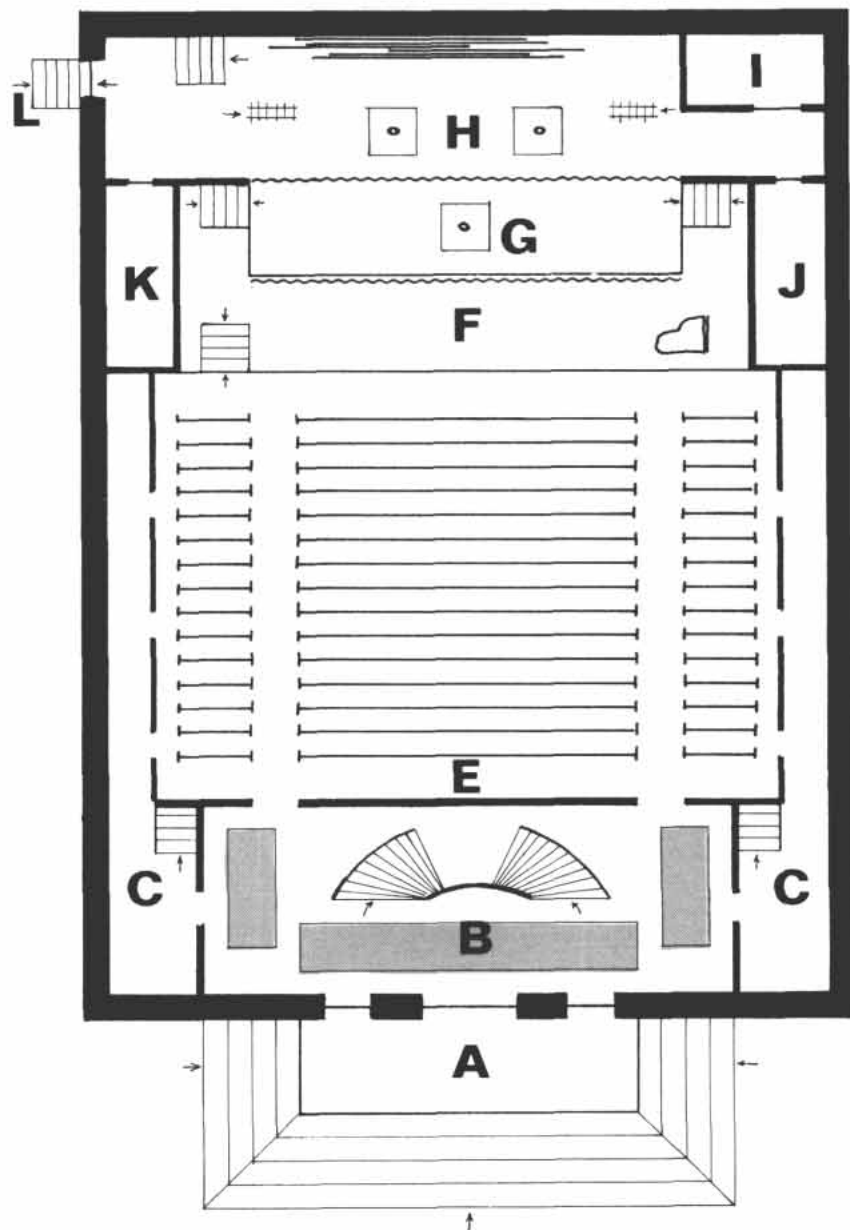
- ~~~~~ Curtain
 ■ Carpet
 □ Trap Door
 ▧ Stairway
 ▨ Ladder
 — Door
 — Wall with Doorway
 — Theatre Seats
 ○ Suit of Armor
 ● Trapdoor Landing Place
 Railing/Bannister
 ○ Balcony with Seats
 ○ Chandelier
 — Rope or Line
 — Beam
 ● Sandbag
 ▩ Harpsichord

TEN METERS

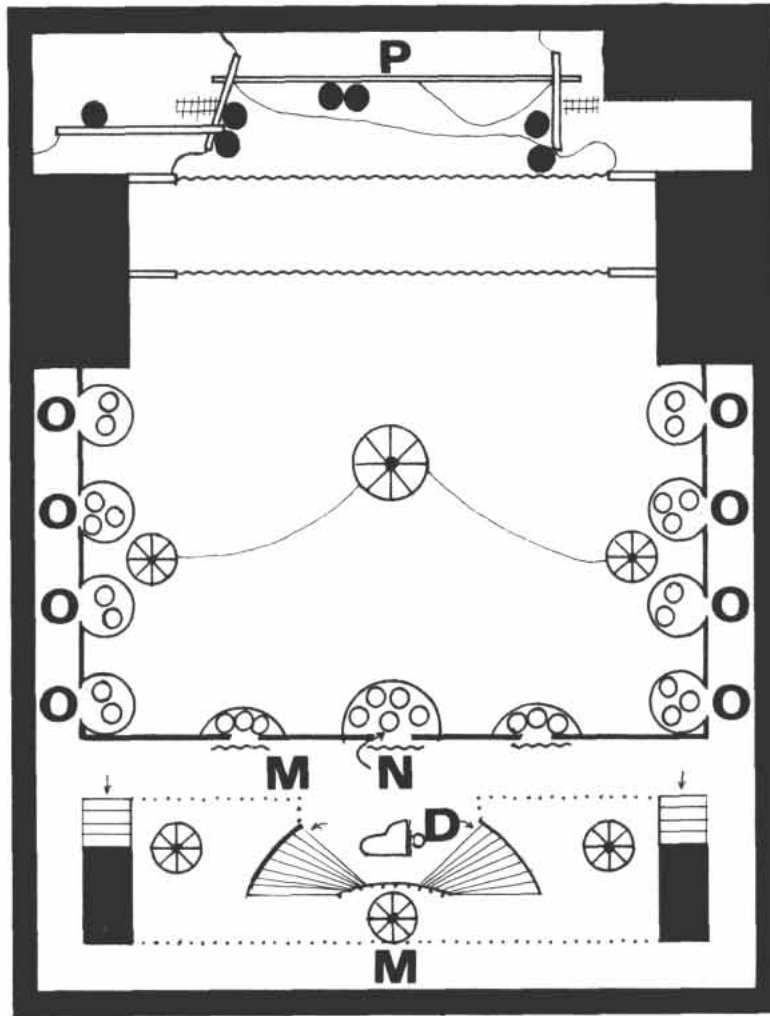
BASEMENT



MAIN FLOOR



BALCONY LEVEL



stage Rigging. Closed doors lead to the Costume Storage Room, and Men's and Women's Dressing Rooms. Stairways lead down to the Basement and the Backstage Exit.

(I) This is the Costume Storage Room, filled with elaborate suits and costumes for the actors. Characters who wish to get onstage for one reason or another, without seeming too conspicuous, may find and put on a costume here. The assortment includes clown, harlequin, and beggar costumes, together with various fake beards, moustaches, eyepatches, etc. (a treasure trove for any character with Disguise skill who wishes to upgrade his collection). At the Gamemaster's option, some Player-Character who thoroughly disguises himself in costume and goes backstage may be mistaken by the Theatre Manager for an actor from the play. This could be especially amusing when the character is shoved on stage, and is expected to say lines he doesn't know (perhaps the other actors will coach him from backstage). The Gamemaster could have a lot of fun with this 'practical joke.'

(J) This is the Ladies' Dressing Room. Several actresses (1d6+2) will be here, getting into or out of costumes, at any time during the play. They will, of course, be shocked if intruded upon by a group of male characters. If the characters cannot make up a good excuse, the actresses will fight back, throwing mirrors (roll to hit as for daggers, using Dexterity as Expertise; mirrors do 1 point of damage if they hit), kicking (as for Vicious Kick, Brawling Expertise 12), entangling (with costumes, dresses, etc., as for the Special Attacks listed in the rules), and throwing powder and make-up in characters' faces (as for Dirty Fighting attack Throw Sand). Of course, no gentleman would strike a lady, so the actresses must be grappled to be subdued (or fled from).

(K) The Men's Dressing Room is similar to the Ladies', except that actors are not immune to sword blades as are actresses, and may be more easily persuaded to overlook the intrusion. There will be 1d6+2 actors here at any time during the play.

(L) This is the Backstage Exit from the Grand Theatre. Smart characters may think of entering the Theatre from here, to get backstage without having to crawl through the Orchestra Pit and sneak across the Stage.

(M) The Balcony Halls on the Top Floor of the Theatre encircle the Entrance Hall below, and extend in galleries down the sides of the Theatre, leading to each individual Balcony. Close to the railings above the Entrance Hall are three chandeliers. Daring characters may jump and swing on the chandeliers (requires a successful roll against Dexterity +3 for Acrobatics). If this is missed, so is the chandelier, and the character falls to the floor of the Entrance Hall, taking 1d6+3 points of general damage, and remaining stunned for ten turns (-2 points of damage if the character has Acrobatics skill).

A chandelier may also be cut down (on a successful Slash attack with any sword doing 2 points of damage or more). A character swinging on it falls to the ground, and is automatically also hit by the falling chandelier. Any character already beneath the chandelier in the Entrance Hall must roll to avoid being hit. If he knows the chandelier is being cut, he may make rolls against Dexterity and Luck. If either roll is successful, the chandelier misses. If the victim does not know that the chandelier has been cut, he may only roll against Luck to escape it. Any character hit by a chandelier takes 1d6 points of damage to the head, and 1d6 points of general damage, and must make a successful roll against his Endurance (-2 modifier) to retain consciousness (these are heavy chandeliers!). Whether a chandelier hits or not, it has a 2 in 6 chance (roll a d6) of starting a fire in the Entrance Hall in ten turns (two minutes).

(N) This is the Grand Balcony, where the Archbishop D'Orleans and his entourage sit to watch the play. As mentioned above, the Archbishop is a bit deaf. Anytime there is a loud sound in the Theatre, roll a d6; on a 4-6 he heard the sound. The first time the Archbishop hears

a loud sound, or notices something odd going on (such as character swinging on the Theatre Hall chandeliers, or two non-actors dueling in the Orchestra Pit) he will send one of his attendants out to investigate (the Player-Character in his entourage, if there is one). After the third disturbance, he will be disgruntled. If the Archbishop is disgruntled, and can identify any of the searchers or their companies, they will be in the doghouse with the King or Cardinal (depending on which side they're on).

(O) Each of these is a private balcony for two or three wealthy Theatre-goers. The two middle ones on either side are quite close to two chandeliers. Characters may swing on or cut these, as for the chandeliers in the Balcony Halls. These chandeliers also have lines between them, allowing a character to make his way, hand over hand, across the room, suspended from the ceiling. By the sides of each balcony are long drapes, which may be climbed down on a successful Dexterity roll (+3 for Acrobatics skill; 1-3 points of general damage for a fall). A successful roll against Luck (+2 for Stealth skill) is required to avoid the notice of the Archbishop's party when shimmying down the drapes.

(P) This is the Backstage Rigging Area, made up of a number of beams and lines strung up to facilitate hanging the curtains, changing backdrops, etc. One must move very slowly along the beams to avoid risk. Moving quickly or fighting on the beams, or swinging on the lines requires a successful Dexterity roll each turn to avoid falling (+3 for Acrobatics). A fall from this height would cause 1d6 +3 points of general damage (-2 points for a character with Acrobatics skill) and would also stun the fallen character for eight turns.



Hung in various places in the Backstage Rigging are seven heavy sandbags, used as balances when raising new backdrops. These may easily be cut, and dropped on unsuspecting victims below. To avoid being hit by a sandbag, a victim who sees it being cut (i.e. is looking up) may roll against Dexterity and Luck. If either roll is successful, he avoids the sandbag. An unaware victim may only roll against Luck for the sandbag to miss. Any character hit by a sandbag suffers 1-3 points of damage to the head, and must make a successful roll against Endurance, or black out for 2d6 minutes. If a sandbag misses, it might hit someone else by mistake (perhaps an unfortunate actor).

(Q) This is the Basement of the Theatre, cluttered with assorted theatrical gear and machinery. The three trapdoors from above land here. A person may not fall through a trapdoor unless the bolt is opened here. Heavy mattresses lie beneath the trapdoors, breaking the fall. Someone who falls through from the floor above won't take any

damage, but will be stunned for three turns after dropping. Closed doors in the Basement lead to various storage rooms.

(R) This is another Costume Storage Room, used mostly for older and more ratty costumes than those housed above. There is still quite a collection of beards, wigs, and make-up for a character with Disguise skill to have fun with.

(S) This is an old Prop Storage Room, packed knee-deep in theatrical junk. There are also a number of pieces of old furniture, and a suit of rusting maximilian armor. It is within the suit of armor that Jacob Latchkey, the English spy, hid the secret documents, and any character who searches the armor will find them.

(T) This room is used to store miscellaneous items used as props, or owned by members of the Comedie Francaise. Hidden in one corner of the room is a crate containing a cache of fine wine.

PERSONALITIES

There are several major non-players, whom the player-characters may encounter at the Grand Theatre. Their personalities and necessary attributes are listed below:

Jacob Latchkey

Although (apparently) a mediocre spy, Latchkey is an excellent actor and comedian, and keeps his audience in stitches. If caught by the characters (during a change of scenes for instance) he will admit himself to their custody — after the play is over. He will not tell them where the secret documents are hidden, until after the play (when he will give up, if they're still there). He knows that the Archbishop D'Orleans is in the audience, and recognizes the strength of his position. He will not sneak away during the play, but afterwards if no one's around (leaving the secret documents if necessary).

The Archbishop D'Orleans

This powerful man has enough influence to make any man who interrupts his entertainment miserable. As mentioned above, after three disturbances (which he notices) he will become irritated. If there is a player-character Clergyman among his entourage, the Archbishop may soothe to the extent that it will take five disturbances to disgruntle him. Petty political matters (such as the retrieval of vital secret documents) do not concern him, and are not worthy excuses for ruining his night at the Comedie Francaise.

M. D'Orville

D'Orville is the manager of the Grand Theatre. He is neither clever nor charismatic (he has Wit 9 and Charm 8) but he keeps things running. His chief philosophy in life is 'the show must go on.' So, despite any interruptions short of wholesale massacre, he will not stop the play. If necessary, he will act as though people swinging from chandeliers, dropping sandbags on each other, climbing up the drapes, etc. are just parts of the play. He will generally be found backstage, tearing hair from his wig by the handful.

Mademoiselle Pompette

The *Prima Donna* of all of M. D'Orville's productions is Mademoiselle Pompette. She is a tall, seductively beautiful woman (Charm 18 with stage make-up, 16 without), with a peevish personality. She will lead the actresses in their attack on intruders in the Ladies' Dressing Room. When not there, she will be on stage. Any Player-Character with the Secret Don Juan will fall instantly in love with her at first sight. This is rather poor luck, as Mademoiselle Pompette is heartless. She will only feign interest if the Player-Character has a title. Her old age plan is to settle down as the wife of a rich Duke.

NOTES FOR THE GAMEMASTER

'Le Grand Theatre' should be run as a light-hearted adventure, full of jokes and tongue-in-cheek fights. Characters should emerge with a few cuts and bruises, but death should not occur unless a character makes a really serious mistake.

The adventure should be something of a search and a chase. Characters should explore most of the Theatre, and have numerous minor brawls with their rivals, before discovering the secret documents. Even then, the documents may change hands several times before the adventure ends.

The Gamemaster may design to have the Player-Characters participate in the play in progress on the stage, while in the adventure. M. D'Orville may mistake characters in costumes for actors, and send them on stage, or characters may go on stage themselves, searching for the secret documents. If the players are familiar with Shakespeare, the Gamemaster may use a Shakespearian Comedy as a model for the play. Alternatively, the play could be a *Comedie Della Arte* piece, or a Punch and Judy-type slapstick show. At any rate, Latchkey should



play the lead male role (and be on stage most of the time) and Mademoiselle Pompette should have the lead female role.

RESULTS

Rewards and punishments will be distributed at the end of the adventure, depending on how each character performed his duties.

If a character was part of a group (either the one sent by the King or the Cardinal) which failed to recover the stolen documents, he will be put on 'KP' for a week, and required to perform an extra month of military service this year, without extra pay. If any member of the opposing group was killed by a character, that character is demoted one Rank (if the documents were recovered) or give a Court Martial for Murder (if the documents were not recovered). If a character killed a civilian, he is tried with Court Martial with a -1 modifier.

If the Archbishop was offended and could recognize a character or his company, the character gets a -1 on his next roll for position and promotion in any hierarchy. If the Archbishop himself was assaulted or threatened, the offending character will be excommunicated.

If a character and the others on his side manage to retrieve the stolen documents, without killing or offending anyone, they will each get a +1 to future rolls for openings and promotion within their companies (i.e. until they reach Captain), and, due to a 'clerical error' they will find their yearly Military salaries for this year have mysteriously doubled.

The King or the Cardinal (whichever won the bet) will be quite pleased with his new Chateau in Strasbourg, and will be happy to pay M. D'Orville for the various damages to his Theatre.

Exotic Items

A variety of exotic items, inspired by real inventions of the period, and by fantastic inventions and items suggested by swashbuckling movies, are listed below, to help the Gamemaster add more flavor and atmosphere to games of *Flashing Blades*. Various items may be taken as treasure, booty, or rewards in uncertain adventures, or may be bought by characters, to develop their personalities, at the Gamemaster's discretion. Exotic items are listed by their general categories, below:

CLOTHING AND ARMOR

Specialty Clothing

Characters should be encouraged to purchase special clothing to fit their personalities, such as capes or doublets with secret pockets, fancy or outrageous wigs (for dandies), boots with hollow heels, masks, ostrich plumes (for hats), embroidered eye-patches, etc. Specialty clothing should be just slightly more expensive than normal clothing. Intricate designs may require a Master Tailor (who should be more expensive, and harder to find).

Fans

Fans, especially folding fans, became very popular in the 17th Century, and were commonly carried by both ladies and gentlemen. Prices for a normal fan might vary from 1 to 3 Livres, depending on the quality. Specialty fans could be custom designed, perhaps with a secret compartment for notes in the handle, or with a small concealed dagger or stiletto.

Spiked Boots

These could be classified as weapons. Spikes on the ends of boots add 1 point of damage to all Kick, Vicious Kick, and Stomp attacks made by a character. Obviously, spiked boots could not be worn in polite company; even wearing them in public might be asking for trouble. They would be most acceptable on Military Campaign. Spiked boots would cost from 7 to 8 Livres, and would be hard to find (many bootmakers would not produce them).

Mouchoirs

Scented handkerchiefs (mouchoirs) and 'sweetbags' (sweet scented herbs wrapped in cloth) were popular among people (mostly dandies) in the 17th Century, to avoid unpleasant scents. A nice mouchoir or sweetbag might cost 1 Livre. In the game, sniffing one's mouchoir constantly around someone might be a good way to insult him or her (and possibly provoke a duel).

Rings and Seals

Rings were popular as male jewelry during the 17th Century. For player-characters, these could be useful if they had specialized seals on them. It was customary in the 17th Century to seal letters with one's private seal (often a coat-of-arms) to validate who sent it, and to show if it had been opened. Characters may have their own seal imprinted on a ring for about 12 to 16 Livres. Rings could also conceal secret compartments for notes, poisons, acids, etc.

Pocket Watches

Towards the end of the century, pocket watches on chains became popular among gentlemen. A typical pocket watch might cost 10 or 12 Livres. A gold chain might cost 3 to 4 Livres. An entire watch of gold might cost as much as 40 Livres.

Iron Codpiece

This is a rather vital piece of armor for those characters whose enemies are not gentlemen. An iron codpiece weighs ½ of a Weight Point, and saves 2 points of damage from any Kick or Vicious Kick attack. Codpieces were also sometimes used in the 17th Century as purses, and a character who wears one may store up to fifty coins in his

(at the risk of being uncomfortable). An iron codpiece costs about 4 Livres, and must be (ahem!) custom designed.

WEAPONS AND ACCESSORIES

Engravings on Weapons

In the 17th Century, a gentleman's sword was rarely plain. It was often decorated with engravings on the blade, guard, and pommel, along with various imbedded gems and jewels, depending on how much he could afford. Markings on the blade might include the owner's name, or that of his mistress, or of the swordsmith. A gentleman's arms could be used as status symbols as well as weapons. In the game, a specially decorated or engraved weapon may cost anywhere from one and a half to two times its normal price. High quality weapons (those made by Master Swordsmiths, Gunsmiths, etc.) always bear the name of the maker engraved upon them.

Miniature Missile Weapons

There are two interesting examples of miniature missile weapons from the 17th Century that might be useful to Player-Characters. The first was an easily concealed tiny pistol, first produced in Italy, called a *Mazzagatto* (lit. 'to kill a cat' or 'cat-killer'). The *Mazzagatto* is so small, that it may only be used at Close or Short range (i.e. less than 8m) but it uses normal Pistol modifiers and damage. The *Mazzagatto* could be produced by an Italian Gunsmith for 80 to 120 Livres in 1d6 months (due to the difficulties involved in constructing the tiny mechanism). A *Mazzagatto* may be hidden up a sleeve, in the lip of a boot, in a pocket, etc.

The second miniature missile weapon was the *Balestrin*, a small crossbow held in one hand. A *Balestrin* could not reach farther than about Medium range (24m) and would do only 2 points of damage. A *Balestrin* was also far less easily concealed than a *Mazzagatto*. Its advantage for player-characters could be its light weight (½ weight point) and its possible uses in Stealth (shooting enemies silently) and Acrobatics (shooting lines or ropes to climb on). A *Balestrin* may be produced by a Bowmaker for 24 Livres in 1d6 weeks.

Throwing Daggers

Player-Characters who become expert at throwing daggers may wish to purchase them specially weighted for this purpose. A throwing dagger may cost from 14 to 20 Livres, and has a +2 modifier to hit when thrown. If used for hand-to-hand combat, a throwing dagger receives a -2 modifier to hit. A leather brace, holding four or six throwing daggers (and worn around the waist or down one arm) may be purchased for 3 or 4 Livres.

Swordbreakers

Some Main Gauches (Left-Hand Daggers) in the 17th Century were provided with special spines and notched edges, designed to catch and break enemy blades. Such weapons were known as Swordbreakers. A Swordbreaker may cost from 20 to 30 Livres. When a parry is made against an enemy attack with a Swordbreaker (and provided the Swordbreaker is not itself broken by the parry) there is a chance that the attacking blade will be broken (roll normally for breakage, but count Swordbreaker's strength as that of a Longsword).

Acids

Dangerous acids may be used by player-characters in combat in a number of ways: small amounts of acid may be placed on bladed weapons, acid may be injected directly into a victim using a glass blade (see Glass Blades below), or it may simply be thrown at Close range from its receptacle (as for the Dirty Fighting maneuver 'Throw Sand'). For game purposes, acids come in three levels; Level 1 may be produced in small quantities by characters with Chemist skill, Level 2 may

be produced by Master Chemist, and Level 3, only by Masters Superior. When placed on blades, or thrown, acids do their level number in damage (i.e. a Level 2 acid thrown at an enemy would do 2 pts. of damage). If thrown acid gets in the enemy's eyes (hits the Head location) the enemy must make a roll against his Luck/2 or be blinded for 2d6 minutes. Acid within a glass blade does 1d6 points of damage per Level (i.e. a Level 2 acid in a glass weapon would do 2d6 pts. of damage) if the blade breaks through the victim's armor. Normally, gentlemen would not use acids, for fear of disgrace. Acids are the perfect weapons for Rogues (who don't have to worry about disgrace) and villainesses in adventure (who have to even the odds against sword-wielding Player-Characters).

Glass Blades

Glass blades, designed generally for daggers, short foil-like weapons, or rapiers, provide an excellent means of dispensing and injecting acids and poisons. A glass blade for a weapon must be constructed by a Master Glassblower, and will cost two times the normal price of the weapon. A glass blade does only one point of damage (regardless of weapon type) and will break upon hitting or being parried. If the glass weapon hits an area with one point of armor or less, the acid or poison inside the dagger will affect the victim.

Hidden Weapons

Weapons hidden inside fairly innocent-looking items were favorite devices of 17th Century weapons-makers. A sword or a gun could be hidden within a walking-stick, for instance, or a dagger could be concealed in a fan or large crucifix (despite the religious ramifications, the crucifix was a popular hiding place). Specially hidden weapons of this sort must be specially constructed by Master Artisans. Each will take 1d6 months, and will cost about two times the normal price for the weapon.

Caltrops

Caltrops were large spiked jacks, dropped in large numbers to impede horses. An enterprising Player-Character (especially a Rogue) might have smaller caltrops produced to similarly impede people on foot. Large caltrops cost about 1 L per dozen. A horse riding through an area covered with caltrops will step on 1d6, unless it goes very slowly, and its rider makes a successful roll against Dexterity (-3 to the roll). Each caltrop stepped on will cause the horse 2 pts. of damage, and has a 1/3 chance (roll of 5 or 6 on a d6) of making it lame. If a horse falls on caltrops, it will be killed. Small caltrops cost about 1 L for two dozen, but must be specially made. Men in boots are unaffected by small caltrops. Men who are wearing only shoes, or who have bare or stocking feet must make a Dexterity roll (-2) when walking through an area strewn with small caltrops. If the roll is missed, the victim steps on several caltrops, and takes 1 - 3 pts. of damage to the legs (-1 point of damage if wearing shoes, -2 pts. for ladies wearing high heels). If a person falls on a number of caltrops, he or she takes 1d6 points of damage.

ENTERTAINMENT AND AMUSEMENT

Tennis

Tennis was very popular in 17th Century France, but was played rather differently from the way it is today. The 'court' was indoors, and the ball could be hit after bouncing off the walls. A fashionable player-character might wish to purchase his own racquet and tennis ball (for about 8 to 10 Livres), and possibly join a tennis club (monthly dues of 1 L). Tennis could get very serious at times, and a particularly hostile match could be occasion for a duel.

Fencing Machines

A variety of fencing machines were designed during the 17th Century, to help swordsmen practice. The simplest of these were revolving dummies, which, when struck, would turn and jab at the attacker. More advanced machines worked on clockwork mechanisms, and would extend several weapons against the attacker, while rotating the target area. Some devices were designed to simulate horse combat. If Player-Characters wish to buy a fencing machine, the Gamemaster should have them design it and propose how it would work. Fencing machines may take from one to six months to construct, and even the simplest would cost well over 100 Livres.

Hunting Animals

Among the rural elite during the 17th Century, hunting was a favorite pastime. Two animals were commonly used in hunting: the falcon, and the hunting dog. A good falcon might cost 30 L, +20 to 30 Livres for training. A falcon would be kept hooded until flying game was in sight, when he would be unhooded and turned loose. For game purposes, falcons have 2 Hit Points, and there is a -4 modifier to hit them in flight. A hunting dog might cost about 20 L, +20 to 30 Livres for each type of training (tracking game, recovering game, and guard dog). Dogs have 1d3 + 4 Hit Points, and may attack with their bite (10 chance to hit, normal 1 point of damage for a hit). A dog whistle may be purchased for 1 Livre.

Pets

Exotic pets, especially those brought from the New World, might be fun and useful to player-characters. Two, specifically, became fashionable in Paris during the 17th Century: Parrots and Spider Monkeys. These pets are very difficult to obtain (a character might have to wait as long as a year after commissioning a sea merchant for one) and expensive. Prices might start around 100 Livres, +50 Livres or so, for each type of training (teaching a parrot to talk for instance, or teaching a spider monkey to do tricks). Clever Player-Characters could, of course, put such pets to unusual uses, such as having a spider monkey pick pockets, or a parrot repeat what people have said nearby it.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Poire d'Angoisse

This ingenious (if somewhat inhumane) item is sometimes called 'the iron pear'. It was a sort of gag, shaped like a pear, and expanded by means of an internal spring. After insertion in a victim's mouth, the *Poire d'Angoisse* stretched it so far that the victim could not utter a word. A *Poire d'Angoisse* might cost 20 to 30 Livres, but would be difficult to find outside of underworld circles and the Bastille.

Spyglasses

A Spyglass (called a '*longue-vue*' in French) might come in handy to player-characters in many different situations. A good spyglass would cost about 10 Livres.

Skeleton Keys

Locks were fairly simple in the 17th Century, making skeleton keys feasible. A set of a dozen skeleton keys (of various sizes and shapes) might be bought for 50 to 60 Livres, but would be impossible for anyone without underworld connections to find. When using skeleton keys, a Player-Character must make a roll against his Luck (x ½ for difficult or unusual locks) to find a key which fits the intended lock.

A Guide to Paris

GENERAL BACKGROUND

Paris, like all cities, has undergone a great deal of growth through the centuries. Many parts of modern Paris were only farmland, small villages, and countryside in the Seventeenth Century. Gamemasters should be careful not to use modern or Napoleonic era maps of Paris for their *Flashing Blades* campaigns as a comparison of such maps to the Map of Paris used within these adventures will clearly show the differences in the city that time has made.

Paris of the 17th Century was just beginning to expand on the Left Bank and it was during this time that the smaller islands at the center of the city were being developed. The city did have paved roads as Louis XIII paved the old fashioned dirt roads with stone. There were no street signs and even house numbers were rare. In fact, where house numbers could be found, they did not follow any logical order. In some areas the streets could be identified by signs carved into the stone on corner buildings, but even these guidelines were not always found by the pedestrian within the city.

Besides the basic population figures for various cities listed in the basic rules of *Flashing Blades*, the following statistics will help to give a picture of Paris during this time period. There were three hundred and ten private carriages in the city in 1662, and no public vehicles were available (cabs or mass transit), though an experiment with public carriages used like buses met with short term financial success before the novelty wore off a few years later.

There were only two hundred and fifteen doctors in the city in 1635, though many citizens of the time sought medical help from other sources ranging from midwives to apothecaries.

The language spoken in the streets and regional differences made for an almost multi-lingual metropolis by today's standards. It was only during the 17th Century that the first French language dictionaries were being prepared and French was spoken differently in the various parts of the country. As Paris was, and has always been, the true center of French culture and society, accents from all parts of France could be found in the city. Modern communications have greatly reduced regional differences in spoken languages, but this was certainly not the case in the 17th Century. In addition, the lower classes often spoke an entirely different (often not understandable) dialect. Fully a tenth of the population of the city was destitute in a way that is difficult for modern readers to understand. They lived in rags in the streets with no hope for employment. This element was forced to criminal activities for survival and the thieves and vagabonds of the period spoke their own dialect, somewhat like the Cockney slang of a later period. This dialect, *Argot*, evolved rapidly and incorporated many foreign and slang terms. It became a secret language for the criminal classes and only characters choosing to learn it by use of a language Skill could hope to understand the jargon.

Like any city, Paris had rich and poor districts and sections that were devoted to particular trades. The following sections will give a sort of 'walking tour' of many of the more important and interesting sections and locales within the city as it was in the 17th Century.

ÎLE DU PALAIS

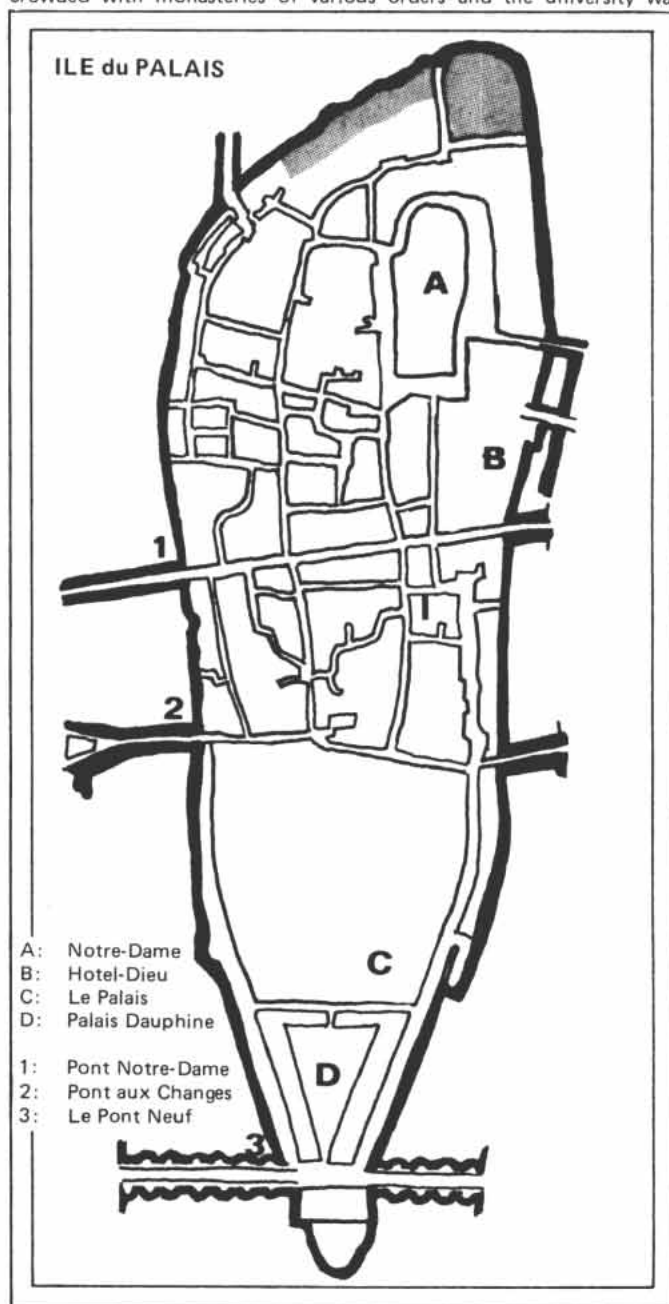
Connected to both banks by bridges, Île du Palais was the location of four important groups of buildings. Two of these were palaces which attracted their share of small palaces and wealthy townhouses to the neighborhood. It was quite common for the nobility and rich merchants to build near royal palaces as such locations were seen as 'fashionable' for obvious reasons.

The bridges to any of the islands of Paris frequently had tolls. Such tolls were used for a variety of purposes, ranging from financing royal hospitals, raising money for specific projects as a form of taxation, or even for the building, repair or upkeep of the bridge itself. The tolls were subject to change and, at times, were only applied to the traffic

going to an island and not leaving the island so as not to unfairly burden island residents as they left the island for the central market and other areas throughout the city.

Notre-Dame

The major cathedral of the city, Notre-Dame exercised tremendous influence through the power of the Church in a Catholic society. In the 17th Century Church power was centered here. The city was crowded with monasteries of various orders and the university was



also run by the Church. In a time when royal power was paramount over the power of the other temporal lords, the Church still remained largely beyond the power and authority of the crown.

Hôtel-Dieu

A large, government sponsored hospital, Hôtel-Dieu rapidly grew in size throughout the century. It filled several blocks along the river and even added small buildings as annexes across the river by the end of the century. There were facilities here to treat several thousand patients, all at government expense.

Le Palais

Also known as the Palace of Justice, Le Palais was the central courts and official offices for the legal authority of the city. It housed the Ministry of Justice and was the center for the, as yet unestablished, police forces. Military units and militia fulfilled police functions at this time and received their instructions from the Ministry of Justice.

Palais Dauphine

As with all the palaces of Paris, Palais Dauphine served more than one function. Though intended as the residence of the Crown Prince or Dauphine, it also served as the headquarters and offices for various parts of the royal bureaucracy.

Pont Neuf

Of all the bridges connecting Île du Palais to the rest of the city, Le Pont Neuf is by far the most interesting. It was lined with shops, primarily those of booksellers. This would be the source of unusual books on virtually any subject or maps to the best knowledge of the time. As Paris was somewhat short of pleasant areas to stroll in the 17th Century, the entire neighborhood became quite popular as a place for short excursions. The crowds attracted pickpockets and other criminal elements which prompted the stationing of a company of troops permanently at the bridge (making up the first unofficial police station in Paris).

On the right bank (note that the Paris map in *Flashing Blades* shows the right bank on the left side) at the foot of Le Pont Neuf was a district of cheap taverns much frequented by army recruiters. Potential enlistees were encouraged to join the army with great show of rich provisions and fine uniforms, much like similar areas anywhere in Europe right through the end of the nineteenth century. It was also in this neighborhood that one would find the Hôtel des Mousquetaires where D'Artagnan had his lodgings. This was a popular residence for those members of the King's (or the Black) Musketeers. It is worthy of note that members of this regiment usually had the financial ability to maintain residences outside of their official barracks. Officers of most regiments followed similar customs.

ÎLE ST.-LOUIS

This island, connected to Île du Palais, was originally owned and administered by the Church at Notre-Dame. It was a barren mudflat until the 17th Century, at which time the Church agreed to sell its rights to a group of developers. Early in the century the island was developed, over a period of only a few years, into a rich and fashionable neighborhood that attracted many of the wealthiest families of Paris. The developers received rentals on all property on the island for a period of years, more than adequately repaying their investment.

Pont Marie

This bridge connected Île St.-Louis with the Right Bank (left side of the map). It had five arches and was lined with houses that had shops on the ground floor. As the island was a fashionable and expensive area of residence, these tended to be shops of a similar nature.

QUAI ST. BERNARD

This is the area on the Left Bank around Pont de la Tournelle which connects Île St.-Louis with the Left Bank (right side of the map). In the area are several interesting and important locales.

Jardin des Plantes

This area of open fields was converted in 1635 as a government sponsored park for the growing of useful and medicinal herbs. The intention was to aid in the education of physicians and apothecaries (or chemists) in the useful nature of such plants, which would normally be hard to find within the environs of a city.

The Salpêtrière

The name 'salpêtrière' means literally 'saltpeter' or gunpowder. This was the location of a major military gunpowder factory and arsenal throughout parts of the century. The Armory had been the

site of several serious explosions at the beginning of the 17th Century and it was seen as great wisdom to move the production of gunpowder away from the crowded Right Bank to the farmlands of the less well-developed Left Bank. Gunpowder was produced for the military arsenals at the Salpêtrière from 1634 to 1648, at which time it was decided that the population of the area had grown to such an extent that this was no longer a good site for such dangerous activity. The structures sat idle until 1656 when it was converted to use as the General Hospital, a hospice for indigent women.

The Hospital provided housing and religious counselling for women in poverty, wealthy women with families that wished them cut-off from rascally lovers, and even for prostitutes. Poverty was deep for fully ten percent of the population of the city and prostitution was an illegal source of income. Lower class prostitutes were basically imprisoned at the Hospital and often later sent to North America to become wives of the colonists there. Others were sent to the Caribbean islands held by the French for similar purposes, once their health had been checked at the Hospital. Wealthier women might have luxurious apartments here and were cloistered as protection from whatever it was the caused their families to request residence for them at the Salpêtrière.

Quai St.-Bernard

The area along the shore was actually a wealthy area, which was probably an extension of the development of Ile St.-Louis just across Pont de la Tournelle. This was also the most popular area for swimming in the Seine, which was still quite legal in the 17th Century.

Chateau de la Tournelle

Despite the name 'chateau,' this was merely a tower fortress built into a part of the old city wall. In the late 17th Century it was used as a holding area for prisoners condemned to service in the galleys. As the French fleet in the Mediterranean was building at the time, the need for galley slaves grew proportionally. Criminals, and later Protestants, were often condemned to such service for a period of years and were branded with the letters 'GAL' on their foreheads. These slaves were chained together and marched from the fortress at Tournelle to the coastal ports of France in long lines twice each year (in the Spring and late Summer).

HÔTEL DES INVALIDES

This was a large set of structures, virtually a palace, built to house retired and wounded veterans of the Royal Army. There were facilities here for some four thousand such retirees.

THE LATIN QUARTER

This sizable area included the University and a large number of monasteries and other educational facilities. It truly was a separate city within a city as the Church and the University had great authority in civil matters throughout the district. The Church retained life and death authority in law and the area was administered by the Church and the University, which was controlled in great part by the Church. Latin was, indeed, the official language of the quarter as foreigners were extremely common studying at the various colleges that made up the University and helped make it the foremost center of learning of Europe of the time.

The University

The University was composed of, as it is today, a wide variety of colleges specializing in almost every imaginable area of study. The Sorbonne and other well known colleges made up parts of the University, which was established in the Middle Ages under Church auspices. Latin truly was the *lingua franca* of the area since students, and instructors, came from all over Europe to the University. Experts could be found here in virtually every field of knowledge.

The University of Paris recognized only the authority of the Pope as its superior and granted little authority to the crown.

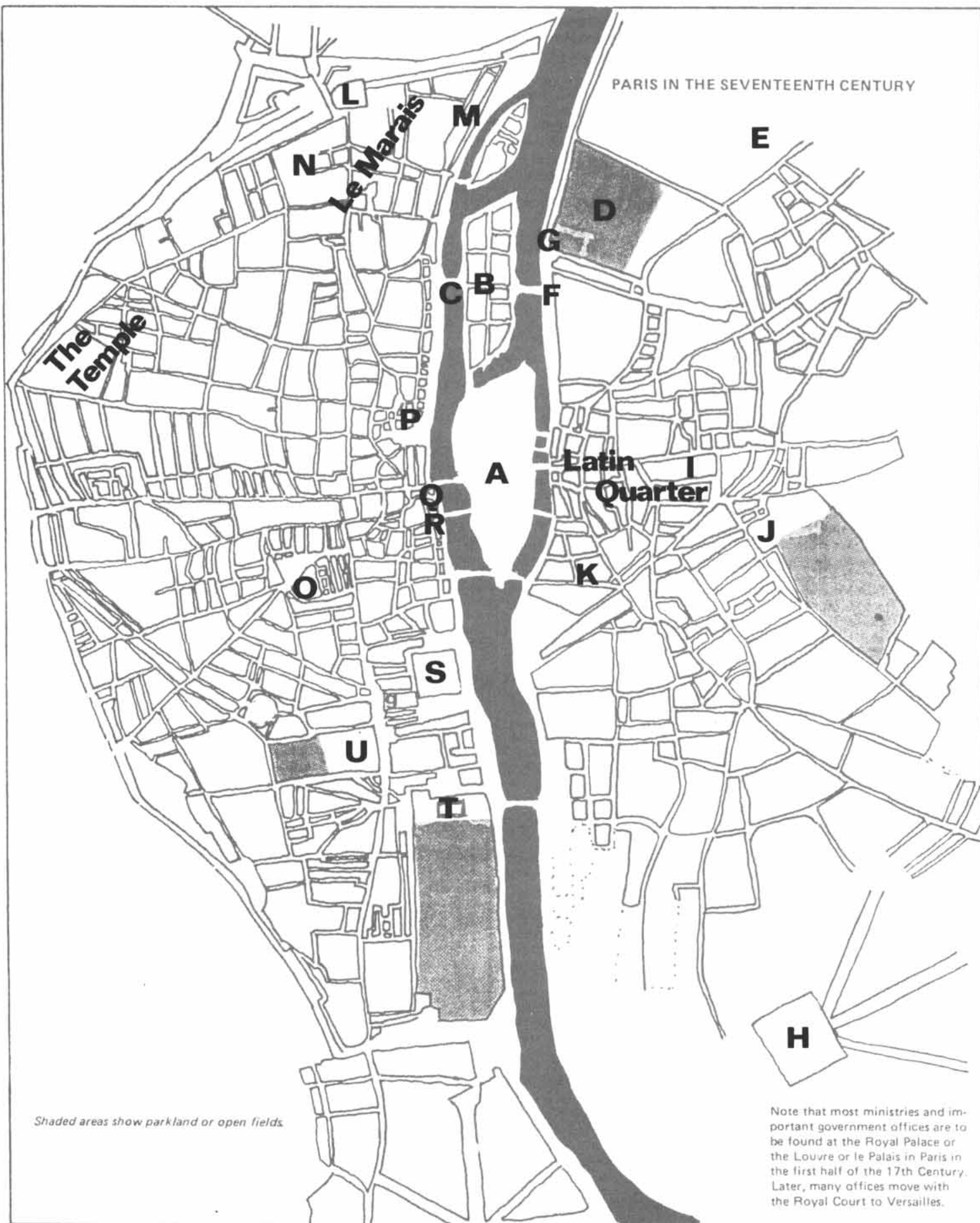
PALAIS DU LUXEMBOURG

This palace was built by the widow of Henry IV and was never the residence of either Louis XIII or Louis XIV. It, with its grounds, simply made up one more of the many royal palaces within the city.

COMÉDIE FRANÇAISE

The royal theatre company was put together by combining several well-known companies in the city. Though the actual theatre shown on the map was built somewhat after the period of *Flashing Blades*, the company did perform in various parks, theatres (sometimes within palaces), and squares throughout this period. As the game period is

PARIS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY



somewhat flexible to reflect the literature of the swashbuckling adventure story, this theatre is included on the maps as it figures so widely in the popular fiction of the era. The theatre only opened at the very end of the 17th Century.

It is worthy of note that actors refusing roles in this royal company would often be imprisoned (comfortably) in royal prisons, like the Bastille, until such time as they saw the error of refusing royal requests.

LE MARAIS

This sizable district on the Right Bank was a marsh in medieval times. Despite its name (meaning 'marsh'), the area had long since been drained and included some of the more fashionable districts of Paris.

La Bastille

The prison at La Bastille was centered in a working class neighborhood of the city. It was a tower and fortress within the city wall and served as a Royal Prison. Such prisons were for holding royal prisoners, not the run-of-the-mill thieves and cut-throats. Prisoners were generally well-housed and well-treated, in much the same manner as prisoners at the Tower of London. Despite its fame from the later French Revolution, the Bastille was a symbol of royal power, but not a horrible dungeon for the incarceration of criminals. Its rooms were often more like quality apartments and its inmates could afford fine food and drink.

To be sent to the Bastille required a *lettre de cachet* which was issued by the King and had to be countersigned by one of the Royal Ministers. Such warrants were not issued for common thieves and were frequently reserved for political prisoners or for prisoners of great power, such as major titled lords.

The Arsenal

This was the original gunpowder factory for the Royal Army, though several major explosions caused the production of gunpowder here to be suspended by early in the 17th Century. It remained a military armory throughout the period.

Place Royale

Originally intended as a working class housing project from its inception under Henry IV. As Paris did not have many public areas of beauty for strolling, the intention was to create an attractive square with thirty-six buildings of four stories. But, Henry IV did not survive to see his project completed and Louis XIII did not agree with the concept of 'housing projects.'

Place Royale was completed as a luxury housing 'development' and it attracted many of the wealthy and powerful families of France, perhaps due to the attractive layout first designed under Henry IV. It was here that Cardinal Richelieu made his private residence among other notable personages.

LES HALLES

The central produce market for all of Paris, Les Halles was supported by the royal government and maintained with government funds. Always too small and crowded for its intended purpose, the traffic along the narrow streets to and within Les Halles was always monumental.

THE HÔTEL DE VILLE

The 'Town Hall' of Paris had great importance from the central position held by Paris in terms of government and society in France. It was here that the Chief Magistrate of the city, the *Prévôt de Paris*, had implemented the penalties of execution he had ordered. Public executions took place in a small square at the front of the Hotel de Ville and, later, the guillotine of the French Revolution was located here.

Public executions were regarded as a form of entertainment in the 17th Century throughout Europe and were often accompanied by street vendors of refreshments and the like.

QUAI DE GESVRES

This section of the river bank facing Ile du Palais was the central slaughterhouse and butchershop of the city. Along the river the mud reeked with the odor of a slaughterhouse and this was a prime area for the purchase of meat.

The Grand Châtelet

This was a prison with a reputation for torture. As with many of the prisons of Paris, it was built upon an old fortress. It was also at the Grand Châtelet that the *Prévôt de Paris* (Chief Magistrate) heard cases and decreed punishments for criminals. In this way it functioned as a central municipal court.

The Grand Châtelet should not be confused with the area along the Quai de Gesvres known as Châtelet, which was the location of the butcher shops. The actual quai or bank area was the area of the Grand Châtelet and it overlooked the slaughterhouses along the river.

THE ROYAL PALACES

The royal residence varied with the monarch and the period within his reign. After 1680 the royal court was moved to Versailles by Louis XIV. Until that year, the various palaces housed members of the royal family and the king himself, with the appropriate members of the bureaucracy.

The Louvre

This was the primary royal palace of the period and it was the residence of Henry IV, Louis XIII, and of Louis XIV, until he moved to Versailles in 1680.

Palais des Tuileries

Frequently the residence of the widowed queen while her son wore the crown and took up residence in the Louvre. It was also the tradition for each king to add sections to the Louvre and while this was done in the reign of Louis XIV, the King took up residence in the Tuileries for some three years until the construction work on the Louvre was completed.

There was also a theatre within the Tuileries at which the Royal Company (Comedie Francaise) presented private entertainments for the royal court.

Palais-Royal

The Palais-Royal was the residence of Louis XIV until he reached the age of fourteen and moved to the Louvre.

It should be noted that all of the royal palaces attracted a number of smaller palaces and luxurious townhouses to their vicinity. The various nobles and wealthier merchants all wished to live in proximity to a palace as it guaranteed a well-heeled class of people in residence.

The Temple

Originally the chapter house of the Knights Templar in Paris, the building is now used as a prison. The name is far more important as applied to the district in which it is located.

In this area can be found the banks of the major Italian banking families. As the French national bank was not founded until the beginning of the Eighteenth Century, The Temple is the major banking center for purposes of *Flashing Blades*.

MAP KEY

A: Île du Palais
B: Île St.-Louis
C: Pont Marie
D: Jardin des Plantes
E: The Salpêtrière
F: Quai St.-Bernard
G: Chateau de la Tournelle

H: Hôtel des Invalides
I: The University
J: Palais du Luxembourg
K: Comédie Française
L: La Bastille
M: The Arsenal
N: Place Royale

O: Les Halles
P: Hôtel de Ville
Q: Quai de Gesvres
R: Grand Châtelet
S: The Louvre
T: Palais des Tuileries
U: Palais Royal

The Rumormill

When the Gamemaster wishes to add some color to his or her game, or to introduce a new adventure, the Rumormill is a good way to do it. Player-Characters may encounter rumors almost anywhere; they may hear them from drunkards in taverns, travelers in roadside inns, neighbors, street urchins, etc. Rumors may be wholly true, half true, or totally false (at the Gamemaster's option). They may lead to adventures, dead ends, red herrings, or embarrassing situations, all depending upon how the Gamemaster runs them, and how the players react.

A Gamemaster should make up his own rumors most of the time. The table below is provided to give the Gamemaster a head start in the right direction. The Rumor mill below is designed for rumors in a large urban area (specifically, Paris). After each rumor, in parentheses, a number of ideas for adventures and things each rumor could lead to are provided.

Whenever the Player-Characters find themselves in a position to hear a rumor (at a tavern, for instance) roll 1d20 on the Rumormill below:

Roll	Rumor	
1	A Theologian from Grenoble is to be brought to Paris to be burned for his heretical writings. (For an adventure, someone might wish the characters to rescue the Theologian, or perhaps a Lawyer character will be asked to represent him at his trial or appeal; alternately, a Lawyer or Clergyman character could be given the task of prosecuting and/or basting the unfortunate heretic).	
2	The Provincial Governor of Marche has been plagued for the past year by a masked highwayman who calls himself 'Le Chat Noir', the Black Cat. This bandit/freedom-fighter apparently robs Clergy and Noblemen on the roads, and gives the money to the poor, to rectify the grave poverty caused by the Governor's harsh taxes. The Governor of Marche has offered 1000 Livres to the man who can bring him the head of 'Le Chat Noir'. (After hearing this rumor, the character might wish to journey to Marche and attempt to catch Le Chat Noir and receive the reward, or, perhaps to join the reckless bandit in his fight for justice; this rumor might also prompt a character in the Bureaucracy to look into the Governor's excesses and make a report on him to higher officials).	
3	Monsieur Le Faquin, an up-and-coming young Banker and investor in Paris, and the Club Treasurer of L'Epee du Grand Henri, has predicted that the coming year's economy will be Very Strong. (This could lead to many Player-Characters investing in Finance and Foreign Commerce — only to discover that Le Faquin is wrong).	
4	A band of Gypsies has camped near the city, and several have been arrested for theft and cutpursing. A mob of vigilantes and prejudiced citizens are gathering to drive them away by force. (Player-Characters might decide to warn or protect the gypsies or to notify the local constabulary about the mob; this could also lead to an adventure, perhaps involving a Gypsy Prince who wishes the characters to rescue his jailed brethren, or defend them in court).	
5	A famous Benedictine Monk from a monastery near Avignon has come to Paris. He is said to be able to heal the sick by the 'laying on of hands'. (This rumor could excite players' curiosity, or a number of characters in the Bureaucracy, or scholars, might be assigned by the government to test whether the Monk's powers are genuine; if the Gamemaster wishes, the Monk may really have curative powers, and characters who are missing body parts, are wounded, or who have diseases, may be healed by him).	
6	A dangerous prisoner has escaped from the Bastille without leaving a trace. He is a professional assassin who murdered	
	the Marquis D'Angoumois, and was sentenced to death. (The authorities may send characters in the Military after this escaped prisoner, or they may go as bounty hunters, seeking a reward; the Gamemaster may elect to have the Marquis D'Angoumois a member of a character's Order or Club, thus making the capture of the assassin a means of advancement within an organization; if these ideas don't suit the Gamemaster, the assassin may just turn up by accident in a later game, desperate, and on the run from the authorities).	
7	A rich Parisian gentleman is looking for a competent fencer (Expertise 18+ with Foil, Rapier or Longsword) to instruct and tutor his twelve year old son in the art of swordsmanship. He is offering very good pay (30 Livres/month). (Any character who qualifies, and is down on his luck, might be interested in this job; it could lead to various situations, such as: the boy is fond of playing pranks, sometimes dangerous ones, or perhaps he will be kidnapped on his way to a lesson, etc.).	
8	People say that the Huguenots are plotting to kill the Cardinal. (Player-Characters may be assigned to infiltrate a Huguenot community, and find out more, or maybe, to guard the Cardinal himself, as undercover agents; Huguenot characters might be in on the plot, or suspected even if they aren't involved).	
9	The Queen's Fusiliers (Regiment No. 8) suffered heavy casualties in the last Campaign. It is very easy to join now, and officer's ranks are cheap to buy, as the army is trying to refill the Regiment. (This should prompt characters who are not in the military to enter, and it might allow them to buy a good rank quickly; on the other hand, a Regiment filled so quickly is bound to be 'green', and the Gamemaster might make it take heavier casualties than normal during the next Campaign).	
10	A local 'fool', the Idiot of Porte St. — Martin, has been jailed after creating a 'public disturbance' (he had an epileptic fit). A group of citizens from his neighborhood are preparing to petition a Magistrate for his release. (The Player-Characters could be asked to help with the petition, particularly if one of them is a Lawyer or a Student of Law; a character who is a Magistrate may be the one petitioned; characters who are soldiers might be summoned by the Magistrate in case the petitioners get violent).	
11	One of the finest horses owned by the Viscount de Bouvard (an NPC first introduced in <i>The Fencing Master</i>) has been stolen. It is apparently valuable for breeding purposes, and the Viscount is offering 600 Livres to anyone who can find and return it. He is also offering 400 Livres for the head of the thief. (This rumor could lead the party off in search of the stolen horse; remember, the horse could've been taken anywhere — Germany, Italy, England, or even the New World — for breeding).	
12	Lady Malfleur, a fashionable Parisian 'prima donna' (first introduced in <i>The Man Behind the Mask</i>), is going to throw a huge costume ball. Attendance is by invitation only. (Characters could try to crash the party, as anyone who got in would be hard to recognize in costume; characters with whom Lady Malfleur has something to settle, such as successful characters who have played in <i>The Man Behind the Mask</i> , may be invited. . . . at their own peril).	
13	Several French colonies in the New World have been attacked by pirates and English privateers. The King's Navy has been sending 'press gangs' around Paris to 'recruit' (by choice, or not) healthy, young men of Social Rank 4 and below. (This rumor may be a warning to characters who are potential victims of the press gangs; some characters, especially those who have racked up a lot of enemies, may welcome a chance to escape to the New World; low-ranking soldiers might be sent to the New World to garrison colonial towns).	
14	The Archbishop of Paris has dismissed three members of his Curia, for embezzling from his funds. He is presently	

looking for replacements. (Any character in the Clergy who is a Priest, Curate, or Pastor may try for one of the positions; higher level Clergymen may be assigned to look into the embezzlements).

15 A Master Gambler, who calls himself 'the King of Diamonds' has issued a challenge to any gambler in Paris. He says that he can beat anyone in any game of chance. So far, no one has dared to take him up on his challenge. (Player-Characters who are gamblers might wish to try and make names for themselves, by playing against the King of Diamonds; other characters might be hired by the various clubs to see if the King cheats, and if so, what his tricks are).

16 The Colonel of the Horse Guards Regiment was captured in the last Campaign, on the German Front. The enemy has refused to ransom him. (For an adventure, the characters may be assigned to find and rescue the Colonel; also, if the Colonel does not return, a new officer's position will open in the Horse Guards Regiment and characters may move up).

17 Chevalier du Vallier has fallen upon hard times, and is offering to sell his prized Small Country Estate in Bordeaux for only 9000 Livres. (Characters who are interested in buying land may wish to grab this offer while they can; other

characters who have large property investments may also be interested in the estate; it is possible that the estate may be in bad disrepair).

18 Noblemen at the Royal Court have been plagued by a series of fatal poisonings. The Ministry of Justice has looked into the affair, and it appears that there may be a ring of women poisoners operating at court, revolving around the King's Mistress! (Characters may enjoy an adventure around this rumor in a number of ways: they could be sent to further investigate, they could be assigned by the King to protect his Mistress' reputation, Lawyers and Magistrates could be involved in the trials, Titled characters might be targeted as new murder victims, etc).

19 Bishop's Club is nearly bankrupt, due to the mysterious disappearance of some club funds. (Characters could be asked to investigate the possible embezzlement, and report back to the Club Chief).

20 The enigmatic Archduke deMainz (first introduced in *The Man Behind the Mask*) has been arrested and jailed in the Bastille, by the Minister of Justice, on the charge of High Treason. (Characters in the Archduke's service will of course wish to come to his aid; other characters may be hired to rescue and defend him, or assigned to guard him; Lawyers and Magistrates may participate in the Trial).



The Great Marksmanship Tourney

INTRODUCTION

It is the end of the year's Campaign, and the French military forces have returned victorious. The King (either Louis XIII or Louis XIV, depending upon the period desired by the Gamemaster) has decreed that there shall be a Grand Defile in Paris — a large parade and show of military arms, followed by a *Te Deum* (religious ceremony thanking God for the victory) at Notre Dame de Paris, and then a great Marksmanship Tourney, to demonstrate the skill of French soldiery.

This adventure is designed primarily for player-characters in the Military, but others may be allowed to participate. Beneath the veneer of pageantry run a number of plots, revolving around the Tourney. There is thus a chance for intrigue as well as sport for the player-characters.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT

Upon the return of the Military forces from the Campaign, the King will announce the Grand Defile for the returning heroes. The events of the Grand Defile are scheduled as follows:

- (1) A parade, composed of the returning Regiments, and those normally stationed in Paris, will enter the city through the Port Royal, march across the Seine as the Pont Royal, and from there, down the Champs Elysees and back again.
- (2) Stationed around the Tuileries, the gardens of the Louvre, the Army will stand at attention, in the presence of the King and Queen, while Decorations by the Field Maréchal and Field Promotions are publically given. The Field Maréchal will make a quick speech praising the Bourbon Monarchy.
- (3) Reveling will begin. A few companies, accompanied by the King, the highest ranking Clergymen in Paris (including either the Cardinal Richelieu or Mazarin), and a large crowd of spectators, will move to the cathedral Notre Dame, where a *Te Deum* will be said.
- (4) After the *Te Deum*, the King will return, along with the participants and spectators, to the Champs Elysees, to witness the great Marksmanship Tourney. The King offers a purse of 1000 Livres and an instant promotion (or commission as a Lieutenant) to the winner of the Tourney, and purses of 500 Livres each to the two runners up.

All player-characters in the Military may participate in the parade. Those who are officers may attend the *Te Deum* inside the cathedral, and may invite one friend each, of Social Rank 7 or higher. All characters who are Clergymen may also attend the *Te Deum*, and those of the rank of Pastor or Vicar General or above may be invited to speak. All characters in the Military with Firearms skill may participate in the Marksmanship Tourney. Other characters with Firearms skill may participate if they are of Social Rank 9 or more, if they have a Contact or Favor of Social Rank 12 or greater, if they manage to bribe the overseeing officials (100 L bribe required, and a successful roll against Luck, +4 for Bribery skill), or if they are Masters in Expertise with either a muskets or arquebuses.

THE PARADE

The Parade is a grand affair. Leading it is the carriage of the Field Maréchal and his top Generals. Each Regiment, Battalion, Squadron, Troop and Company of the Army Royal on Campaign follows, led by its commanding Officers. Crowds of citizens turn out to see the returning heroes. The parade is full of gleaming muskets and armor, colorful

plumes and proud soldiers.

Player-characters will undoubtedly march in the parade or watch it from the sidelines. If a Player-Character makes a successful roll against his Luck $\times \frac{1}{2}$, a person near him in the crowd or parade will point out one of the favorites for the Marksmanship Tourney, a young Subaltern from the Swiss Guards named Alban de Bergen, and comment 'they say he can shoot an even hole through a coin thrown in the air!'

Characters who watch the crowd carefully will also notice the carriages of two separate noblemen parked discreetly near to the parade for observation. A character with Heraldry skill will recognize each on a successful roll against Wit (+2 modifier). One is the carriage of the Baron D'Ile-de-Batz (the Gamemaster should recall that he was the villain of the adventure '*The Man Behind the Mask*', and in the pay of the Cardinal; if the characters have already been through this previous adventure, the Baron will probably be their sworn enemy). The second carriage belongs to Grandee Baltasar, a Spanish nobleman who has lived in Paris for nearly a year, functioning as a minor diplomat (Grandees of Spain are recognized as Dukes of France, and vice versa). Any character who recognizes the Grandee Baltasar may make a roll against his Wit $\times \frac{1}{2}$ to remember something more about him (+6 for Espionage or Bureaucratics skills). The Grandee has proposed several under-the-table agreements and treaties to the French Government, each of which has been rejected by the Cardinal (Richelieu or Mazarin, depending upon the time period). This has led him to hold a deep enmity towards the Cardinal.

Any character who watches the Grandees's coach for a few moments will notice a tall blond figure open the door and leave it, carrying an arquebus and a small leather pouch. Any character in the Military will recognize him as Sergeant Lultzhausen, a German mercenary from the Brothers of St. Mark Regiment, and another favorite in the Marksmanship competition. Characters who are not in the Military must make a roll against Luck $\times \frac{1}{2}$ to recognize Sergeant Lultzhausen (+3 if they are also in the Marksmanship Tourney). Sergeant Lultzhausen will swiftly leave the Grandee's coach and disappear into the crowd by the parade.

THE CEREMONY IN THE TUILERIES

After the parade, the Regiments and spectators will gather around the Tuileries to witness the awards of decorations and promotions to brave soldiers. Any characters who earned decorations or received field promotions in the Campaign will be honored at this ceremony. The King, seated under an awning outside the Louvre, with the Queen seated by his left hand, and the Cardinal by his right will witness and congratulate the victorious heroes. When a Player-Character receives a decoration or field promotion, he may attempt to make a roll against his Luck $\times \frac{1}{2}$ or his Charm $\times \frac{1}{2}$ (player's choice, +4 to either roll for Etiquette skill). If this roll is successful, he is noticed by the King, and allowed to kiss the monarch's hand. If his Charm is 16 or above, the Queen may flirt with him, and allow him to kiss her hand as well. The honor of approaching the King's presence grants the character +1 on his next rolls for Opening and Promotion in the Military, Bureaucracy or within an Order.

A character watching the crowd at the ceremony in the Tuileries will again notice the carriage of the Baron D'Ile-de-Batz parked at an inconspicuous distance.

Another competitor in the Marksmanship Tourney is introduced in the Tuileries. General Rolland, an aging but vigorous soldier who is

decorated by the Field Maréchal at the ceremony, will be pointed out as a fine marksman by a person in the audience near the Player-Characters.

THE TE DEUM

The *Te Deum* at Notre Dame de Paris is another regal ceremony. Those invited inside (officers and their guests, along with assorted royalty, nobles, and clergymen) are seated in the great chamber within. A crowd of soldiers and spectators gathers outside, however, and news of everything that happens inside is relayed by a Priest at the door.

Inside, a special hour-long mass is held to thank God for the French victories on Campaign. Numerous prayers are led by various Clergymen. Any character of the rank of Pastor or Vicar General or above may lead a prayer if he wishes. He should be asked to ad lib a short prayer before the players by the Gamemaster. If the prayer is rousing (in the Gamemaster's judgement) the character gets a +1 to his next rolls for openings and promotion in the Clergy.

At the *Te Deum*, the King and the Royal household sit at attention, apparently quite piously. The Cardinal sits apart, near an alcove. Any character who watches him through the mass will notice the Baron D'Ile-de-Batz, a powerful and cruel-looking man with an eyepatch, approach the Cardinal and whisper in his ear near the middle of the ceremony.

PREPARATION FOR THE MARKSMANSHIP TOURNEY

An hour after the *Te Deum*, the first round of the Marksmanship Tourney will begin. Before this time, several events may occur.

All Rogues, and other characters with underworld connections, will hear, several days before the Tourney, that many bookmakers in Paris are taking bets on the winner of the competition. At the Gamemaster's option, various Clubs, to which Player-Characters belong, may also take bets on the winner. The odds for payback for each of the competitors are listed below:

Competitors	Odds
Alban de Bergen	3 - 2
Sergeant Lultzhausen	3 - 2
General Rolland	1 - 1
Baron D'Ile-de-Batz	1 - 1
Chevalier Tarbes	1 - 1
Viscount De Praz-de-Lys	1 - 1
All Others	2 - 1

For example, if a character bet 200 L on Alban de Bergen and he won, the bettor would get 300 L back (i.e. a profit of 100 L total). The 'others' or non-favorites listed at the bottom include all Player-Characters, unless they are well known as marksmen (then give them even 1 - 1 odds). If a character bets on a competitor who comes in second or third, he loses only ½ of his bet.

Before the competition, the participants meet in the Palais Royal to have their equipment checked by judges. Competitors may use either Arquebuses or Muskets, of any quality, in the Tourney. Player-Characters will also get a chance to meet their opponents. There are twenty-five (other than the player-characters). The principle favorites are as follows:

(1) As mentioned above, Alban de Bergen is an excellent marksman. He is a Subaltern in the Swiss Guards, and is friendly with the other competitors. He uses a Musket, and has Expertise 22, Dexterity 16, Wit 15, and Luck 14.

(2) Sergeant Lultzhausen of the Brothers of St. Mark Regiment is Alban de Bergen's chief opponent. He is aloof, proud and unfriendly. He uses an Arquebus, and has Expertise 21, Dexterity 15, Wit 13, and Luck 17.

(3) General Rolland was once the finest marksman in France, but he is aging now, and his eyesight is getting weak. He is still a worthy opponent, however. He uses a finely-made Arquebus (+1 to hit) and has Expertise 18, Dexterity 14, Wit 16, and Luck 13.

(4) The Baron D'Ile-de-Batz (the Cardinal's agent) is also a fairly good marksman. If he sees the player-characters, he will avoid them. At the soonest opportunity, he will report the identities of all of the competitors in the contest to the Cardinal. The Baron uses an Arquebus, and has Expertise 17, Dexterity 15, Wit 15, and Luck 14.

(5) Chevalier Tarbes is a Knight Captain of the Royal Order of the Knights of the Dagger. He is tall, aristocratic man, friendly, but aloof. He uses an Arquebus, and has Expertise 16, Dexterity 16, Wit 13, and Luck 13.

(6) The Viscount De Praz-de-Lys is a nobleman with a keen interest in hunting and marksmanship. He is rich and has no use for the prize. He competes only for the sport of it, and may be quite friendly with

the player-characters. He uses an Arquebus, and has Expertise 16, Dexterity 15, Wit 12, and Luck 14.

In addition, one of the Player-Characters competing in the Tourney (preferably the one with the highest Charm, or one with Don Juan as his Secret) will be in an alcove cleaning his weapon, when another competitor, dressed in a heavy cloak, a wide hat, and a black mask, walks by, and stumbles. As this opponent stumbles, the player-character will see the mask slip off for a moment, revealing an attractive young woman (Charm 17). If she realizes he noticed, she will beg him not to tell anyone, and she will explain why. She is the daughter of the General Rolland, Mademoiselle De Rosieres, and she is competing against her father's wishes (and the rules). He father taught her how to shoot like a boy, when she was young, and she is quite good. She wishes to compete to prove her independence to her father. At the Gamemaster's option, Mademoiselle De Rosieres or the player-character who notices her, or both, may fall in love. If a character wishes to avoid this, he must make a Resistance roll of his Luck vs. her Charm (no character with the Secret Don Juan can avoid falling in love). Of course, a heartless character may reveal Mademoiselle De Rosieres to her father, and have her disqualified from the Tourney (one less competitor). If she is not turned in, falls in love, and wins the Tourney, Mademoiselle De Rosieres will split her prize purse with her beloved (the Player-Character). Mademoiselle uses an Arquebus, and has Expertise 17, Dexterity 16, Wit 15, and Luck 14.



Besides Mademoiselle De Rosieres, there are more dangerous intrigues afoot at the preparations for the Tourney. A minor competitor, jealous of Alban de Bergen's skill and marksmanship, has designed to even the odds. He has bribed one of the judges inspecting the weapons to give de Bergen's weapon to him for a moment. During this time, he will sneak away, and tamper with it. Any Player-Character participating in the competition has a chance equal to his Luck x ½ (+1 for Espionage skill) of spotting this man being handed de Bergen's musket (it is conspicuous because he is the only one of the major competitors using a musket and not an arquebus) and sneaking away with it. If followed, he will be seen to hide behind a tapestry, and meddle with the weapon. The result of this fellow's cheating will be that Alban de Bergen will shoot with a -6 modifier to his normal chances on every roll he makes during the Tourney. If the Player-Character witnessing the cheat turns him in, the man will be thrown out of the competition (and perhaps given a few weeks in the Bastille to consider his misdeeds) and the musket will be repaired. If the cheat is turned in, Alban de Bergen will be very grateful. He will split any prize money

he wins with the character who helped him, and will invite him to go out and carouse after the Tourney. He may become a loyal friend of the character and his party. If, on the other hand, the character who notices the cheat decides not to turn him in, de Bergen will suffer a major disadvantage due to the sabotage.

A final plot is brewing among the competitors of the Tourney. Sergeant Lultzhausen designs not to win the Tourney at all, but to assassinate the Cardinal. He has been paid 800 Spanish Reals (1000 Livres) for this service by Grandee Baltasar (this took place at the parade; by the time the Tourney starts, Baltasar will be on his way South in a fast carriage). Lultzhausen's plan is to drop out of the first round of the competition, and sneak away to the top story of a townhouse on Rue St. Honore, overlooking the Champs Elysees and the King's awning. From there he hopes to take advantage of the normal gunfire of the Tourney to hide the sound of his own shot for him) aiming for the Cardinal's chest. After the assassination, he will flee downstairs and out of the rear garden of the townhouse, where he has a fast horse awaiting.

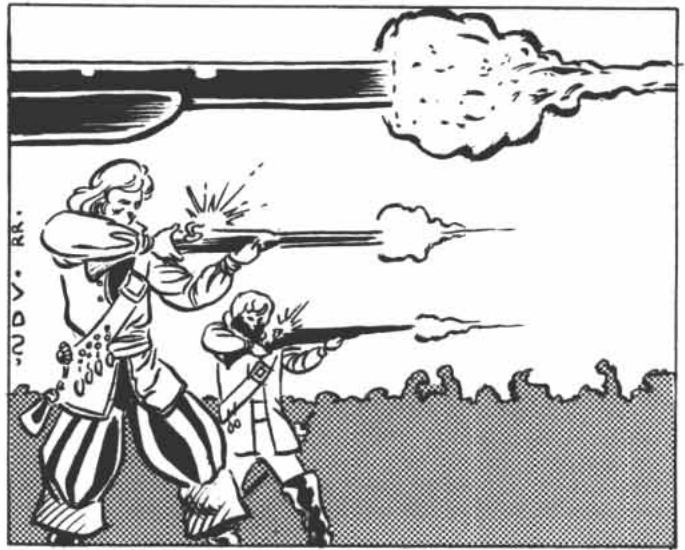
The player-characters should already have a hint of Lultzhausen's intentions from his mysterious behavior exiting Grandee Baltasar's coach at the parade. When he drops out of the competition in the first round, all characters who know about his marksmanship (i.e. the other competitors) or the odds (i.e. the bettors) will suspect that he has purposely missed his targets for some reason. Player-Characters within the crowd of spectators are in a good position to follow him to the townhouse when he sneaks away (any character in the crowd must make a Luck roll to follow him through the crowd to the Rue St. Honore). At the townhouse, a fight will probably take place. If Lultzhausen kills or subdues the Player-Character(s) without being observed, he will continue with his plan (if he is noticed, he will flee). If the Player-Characters kill or subdue him, the Reals and a note from Baltasar, both hidden on his person, are ample proof of his evil intention. For combat, assume that Lultzhausen is armored in Guards' armor (without the Epauettes and Tassets) and that he is armed with his arquebus (Expertise 21) and a sabre (Expertise 17). He has 17 Hit Points.



The player-characters should be impressed with the fact that there is not enough time to call the Cardinal's Guards to help, and that they must go after Lultzhausen themselves to save the Cardinal. The Baron D'Ile-de-Batz, however, has also figured out that Lultzhausen is not what he seems, and has warned the Cardinal (at the *Te Deum*). Unbeknownst to anyone at the Tourney, the Cardinal (clever man that he is) has replaced himself under the King's awning by a look-alike dressed in his robes. If, for some reason, the Player-Characters are unable to follow or stop Lultzhausen, and he gets a chance to fire, it will only be a double who dies in the Cardinal's place. Even the Baron does not know this, however, and he, like the player-characters, will make an attempt to get to Rue St. Honore and stop Lultzhausen. This may lead to an almost humorous situation, in which the party, and its sworn enemy, the Baron, must work together to save the (supposed) Cardinal's life.

THE TOURNEY

The actual marksmanship competition is to be held in three rounds.



The first round consists of attempting to hit a small round target (buckler size, or about 1/3 meter in diameter), at Medium range. Each competitor is given three shots, and must hit at least two targets to progress to the second round. Because of the tiny size of the targets, each roll to hit not only has a negative modifier of -5 to hit, but also requires a successful roll against Wit or Luck to sight successfully. Competitors are allowed to brace (aim for one turn, give a +3 modifier to hit) but are not allowed to use a stand, such as a pole-brace, and must fire from a standing position. Do not bother to roll for all of the non-player characters in the first round, only for player-characters. Assume that, among the non-players, Alban de Bergen, General Rolland, Baron D'Ile-de-Batz, Chevalier Tarbes, Viscount De Praz-de-Lys, and a mysterious stranger in a cloak and mask (Mademoiselle De Rosieres, in disguise) progress to the second round. Sergeant Lultzhausen drops out (mysteriously) with poor shooting, after hitting only one target. If de Bergen's musket has not been repaired after the sabotage, he will miss one target but still go to the second round; otherwise, he will hit each target dead center.

The second round consists of shooting at the same targets at Long Range (still with a -5 for size, -4 for range with a must, -2 for arquebus, +3 for bracing). Again, a successful roll against Wit or Luck is required to hit, as well as the normal roll. This round roll for each of the non-players as well as the Player Characters to determine who progresses to the next round. Two targets must be hit in three shots for a character to progress to the third round.

The third round consists of shooting at a row of ten wine jugs at Long Range (there is now a -7 penalty due to the small size, -4 for range with musket, -2 for arquebus, +3 for bracing). In addition to the normal roll to hit, another successful roll for sighting must be made on Dexterity, Wit or Luck to sight for each shot. In this round, the competitor who hits the greatest number of jugs wins the Tourney. If there is a tie for first, second, or third place, the tied competitors repeat the third round, until one of them shoots more bottles than another. Also this round, Sergeant Lultzhausen will attempt to shoot the Cardinal from the townhouse on Rue St. Honore (he will automatically hit unless foiled by the player-characters).

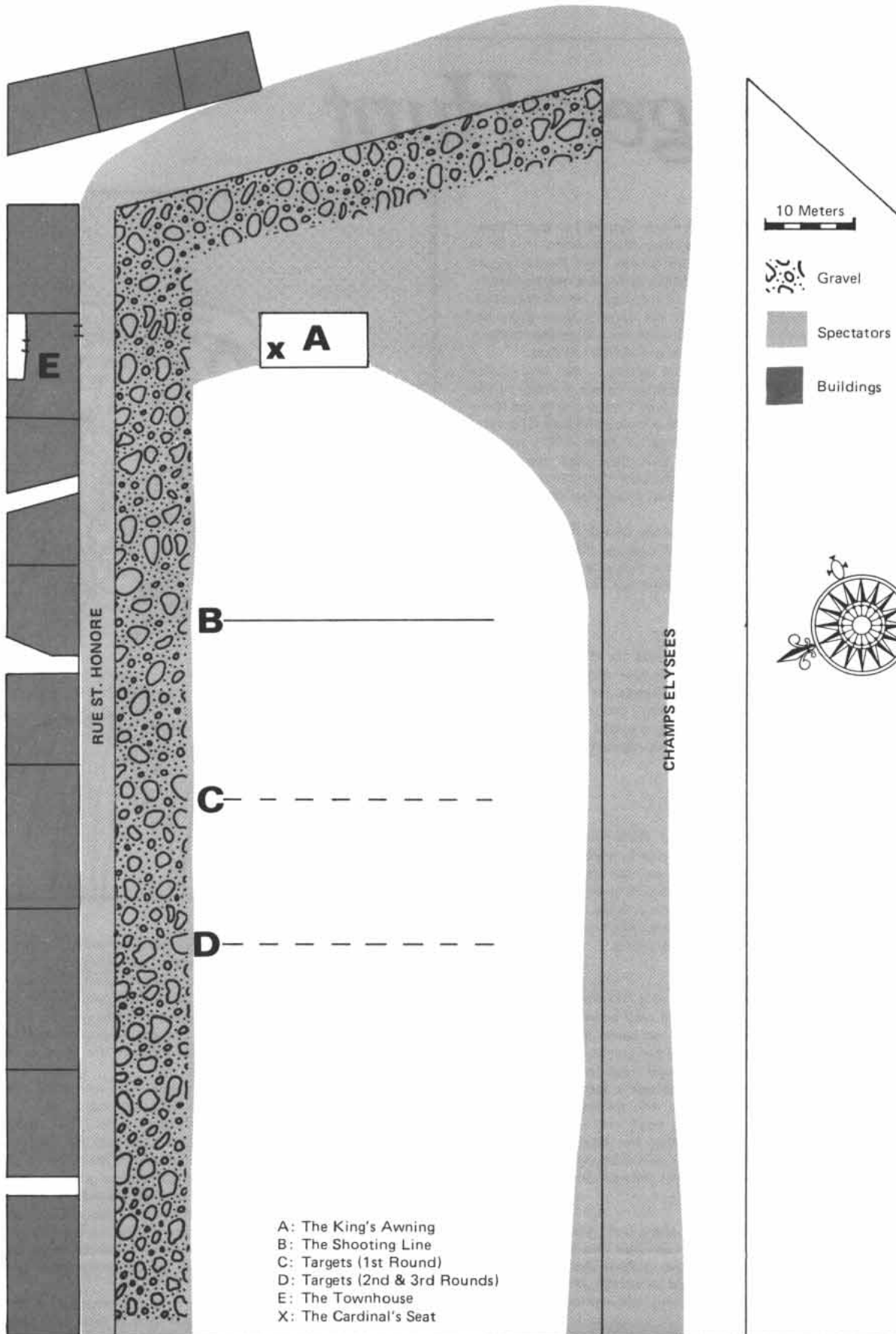
REWARDS

This adventure ends with the final round of the Marksmanship Tourney, although the Gamemaster may wish to continue it in later games if Sergeant Lultzhausen escapes (perhaps an adventure spent tracking him and his employer, Grandee Baltasar, down).

Rewards for the Tourney are as listed above: a 1000 L purse for the winner, plus an instant promotion in the Military for a soldier, or a commission as a Lieutenant for a non-soldier, in the Regiment of his choice. The second and third best marksmen each get a purse of 500 L.

Those who save the life of the Cardinal (or rather that of his double) will each receive a Social Rank 19 favor, in a private interview with the Cardinal, and are asked to never speak a word of what they know about the assassination attempt to anyone. It would be wise to take this advice.

The Great Marksmanship Tourney



Scavenger Hunt

INTRODUCTION

Scavenger Hunt is a light-hearted adventure, designed to give Player-Characters a rest from the mortal danger they face so often. It is set in Paris on a hot Summer Saturday. One young beau from the party goes to visit his beautiful mistress, while his friends drink at a nearby tavern. He discovers from his mistress' maid that, distressingly, he has forgotten that it is his mistress' birthday, and that she expects to be given her three favorite presents. Returning to his friends, he enlists their help in combing Paris for the gifts. It is not as easy as it appears at first.

This basic plot assumes one fact at the outset — that one of the Player-Characters has a mistress. If this is not so, have a member of the party (preferably one with the secret 'Don Juan') meet one of the three possible mistresses listed in the next section of this adventure (if several Player-Characters desire mistresses, all three of these NPC's may be wooed). An alternate problem could be that more than one Player-Character has a mistress. In this case, have the adventure revolve around a character with the secret 'Don Juan', then choose by the character with the lowest Luck.

If many of the Player-Characters are female and/or the basic theme of this adventure is offensive to any of the players, the plot could be reversed. A lady-swashbuckler could discover that it is her boyfriend's birthday, with the same results as before. *Scavenger Hunt* is designed to be amusing (and inoffensive) either way.

POSSIBLE MISTRESSES

If no character in the party has a mistress (or if one or more are looking for one) the Gamemaster should choose one from the three listed below. Each must be courted for 2d6 weeks (at an expense of 10 Livres per week for flowers, jewelry, gifts, etc.) before she consents to be a Player-Character's mistress. Subtract two weeks from the total if the character is handsome (Charm 13+) or has Seduction skill; subtract four weeks if both handsome and seductive.

The possible mistresses are:

Signora Cinquedeia (Charm 16, Wit 13).

The Signora is a beautiful dark-haired Italian woman. She tells fortunes at the marketplace, but is maintained in a wealthy manner by an inheritance. She lives in a large townhouse near the Seine, and will not even look at any character of Social Rank 5 or below. If she meets a high-status character (Social Rank 9+) she will try to entice him by offering to read his fortune. Signora Cinquedeia has a nasty temper, and is not likely to stay with any one man for very long.

Mademoiselle du Bois (Charm 17, Wit 10).

Mademoiselle is the petulant daughter of a rick Parisian merchant. She has blonde hair and blue eyes. She will only be interested in handsome or dashing characters (Charm 13+, or some 'dashing' quality; player must find some way to convince the Gamemaster that he is 'dashing'). She lives in a townhouse owned (and frequently visited) by her father. Monsieur du Bois (Mademoiselle's father) is very protective, and wishes his daughter to marry into money and status. He may thus frown upon a poor, low-status boyfriend. If Mademoiselle becomes particularly petulant or upset with her boyfriend, she may 'tell on him to daddy'. Monsieur du Bois could be very dangerous to the career of any character in Banking or the Bureaucracy.

Countess Savoyar (Charm 19, Wit 17).

The Countess (or supposed Countess, there is no proof of her title) is a clever, elegant woman with long brown hair and grey eyes. The Countess lives in luxury at her own manse in Paris, but her funds are rapidly running low. She is very interested in wealth, and requires two weeks less of courting if the wooer has money and estates amounting to 5000 Livres or more.



THE PROBLEM

Scavenger Hunt starts on one pretty Summer Saturday morning in Paris. The party gets together, perhaps designing to go to the weekend market. One Player-Character has also promised to go see his mistress that morning. Believing it will be but a brief (ahem!) visit, he leaves his companions at a tavern near her house, while he goes to see her.

After carefully combing his hair and purchasing a single red rose from a flower vendor (for 1 Livre). He mounts the steps to his mistress' house, and is let in by her maid, Fanny.

When Fanny sees him she exclaims, 'Oh, where are the gifts?' and then 'What is that?!' eyeing the rose with loathing.

The character may be confused for a moment, but after questioning Fanny, everything will become clear. He will be told that it is his mistress' birthday (he either never knew the date, or forgot) and that she fully expects to be given her three favorite gifts: a bouquet of lilies, a bottle of plum wine, and a box of cherry bonbons. If she fails to get these gifts, she will be in a very bad humor. Also, she is allergic to roses, and would fly into a fury if brought one by her boyfriend (who ought to know better). Fanny will push the player-character back out the door, saying 'Don't bother to come back without those gifts — and get rid of that rose!'

The Player-Character will return to the tavern, and tell his friends about his problem. It will be 11 AM at that time, and the party must

find and buy the three gifts by sundown (about 7 PM). The task is not as easy as it seems. The party should split up into three groups, each searching for one gift. They could even make (at the Gamemaster's option) a wager on which group will return to the tavern with their gift first. It should be a fun romp through the city.

HAZARDS

Scavenger Hunt is set on a market day, so travel on horse will be nearly impossible, and travel on foot difficult, due to the crowds. Along the way, on their various quests, the Player-Characters (and especially the unfortunate boyfriend character) will be victim to two kinds of hazards: delays on the streets, and humiliations. The Gamemaster should use these carefully, to add flavor and laughs to the adventure.

Roll for delays when indicated in the sections below. A delay occurs on a roll of 4, 5, or 6 or a d6 (or on a 5 or 6 if all of the potentially delayed characters have Lucks of 13+). If a delay occurs, roll a d6 on the table below (note that delays should not be repeated in an adventure, roll again or make-up a new one in case of repeats):

Roll	Delay
1	A group of 2d6 beggars surround the characters asking for charity. They may be driven away in ten minutes by giving each mendicant a Livre (but don't tell the players that). Otherwise they will dog the characters and delay them for half an hour.
2	A group of troubadours have started a show in the middle of the street, and a crowd has gathered. Two play lutes, two flutes, and one the tamborine, while a beautiful (Charm 17) gypsy girl (named Morgiana) dances. The crowd will delay the characters ten minutes. Any character who fails a Luck or Wit roll (player's choice; -3 for the secret 'Don Juan' will become infatuated with Morgiana (this might delay him indefinitely).
3	In a small square, a platform has been set up for a number of public brandings. The Royal Torturer is a popular attraction, and a large crowd has gathered to watch the entertainment. This crowd will delay the characters for ten minutes. If there is a Rogue among the characters, there is a chance (a 5 or 6 on a d6) that one of the prisoners being branded is an acquaintance.
4	A young nobleman's carriage has broken down, blocking the street. A mob of rabble have gathered to heckle and jeer at him, as he and his coachman try to replace a broken wheel. The delay will be ten minutes. If the characters help (by replacing the wheel and/or dispersing the rabble) it will delay them an extra ten minutes, but they will each receive a Social Rank 11 favor, and the eternal gratitude of the young Viscount d'Amiens.
5	While bustling through a crowd, the Player-Character with the lowest Dexterity will accidentally step on the toe of a young Subaltern from the Gascon Regiment. He is a hot-tempered bravo, Bertrand de Vanille by name, and he will immediately challenge the offending character to a duel. Even if no duel occurs, the ensuing argument will delay the character for ten minutes. If taken up on his challenge Bertrand will meet the character (and his second) at a secluded park in half an hour (this time must be spent in preparation). The duel will only be to the First Blood. Bertrand's mouth is more practiced than his sword arm: he uses a longsword (Expertise 12), has 10 Hit Points, and wears Arquebusier's armor.
6	An entertainer, a sword swallower, has started to perform his act in the middle of the street, and has attracted a small crowd. To prove that his ability is genuine, he calls the characters over, offering to swallow their swords (as the people watching are mostly poor, the characters are the only ones around wearing swords). If the characters refuse, the crowd will jeer, and perhaps try to take the swords forcibly (some of the rabble have clubs). The act, or the altercation, will delay the characters ten minutes. Incidentally, the sword swallower is adept at sucking jewels off the hilts of swords as he swallows them. If handed a richly decorated sword, he will try to practice this art.

Humiliations are similar to delays, but they are chiefly designed to make characters look silly. When a humiliation roll is called for in the section below, roll a d6: on a 5 or 6 (for the boyfriend character) or on a 6 (for the other characters) a humiliation occurs. If a humiliation should be used twice; if this happens, roll again, or make up a new one):

Roll Humiliation

- 1 A carriage passes swiftly in front of the character, and through a large puddle of mud, splashing him from head to toe. A Player-Character who wakes his Wit roll (+2 for Heraldry) will recognize the insignia of the Archbishop of Paris on the offending vehicle, as it passes out of sight.
- 2 A farmer's cart, on its way to Saturday market, topples its load as the character walks by. The character (and any others nearby who fail to make successful Luck rolls) are buried waist deep in over-ripe cabbages. Until the victims bathe they will smell like skunks.
- 3 The character walks quickly by a tavern, and bumps into a man smoking a clay pipe. Thick black tobacco is spilled all over the character's front. The man with the pipe (who is a large and brawny fellow) will become angry, and demand money (1 Livre) for his lost tobacco. If not recompensed, he will start an argument that will delay the character for ten minutes.
- 4 While the character is standing, waiting to cross a street, a number of playful urchins will sneak up behind him and attack a long donkey's tail to the back of his coat. If he makes a successful Wit roll, he will turn around just in time to see the children running away, but won't see the tail. Most people won't inform the character about his tail (although he may notice them laughing at him) but his friends will notice, and may tell him (or not, if they think it's funny...).
- 5 The character is forced to walk close to the facade of a building, as a cart passes on the street. Too late, he hears a sound from above. A man, balanced on a small painter's scaffold, is touching up the facade with gold leaf. As the character walks below, the bucket of paint falls, and the character is instantly gilded. If he goes home to change clothes, the character may be able to scrape off 3d6 Livres worth of gold leaf.
- 6 The character is walking just a little behind a cart filled with sacks of coal. Just as he notices this, a sack falls off the cart, in front of the character. As it hits the ground, a cloud of coal dust flies up, and leaves a thick residue on the character's face and clothes. At the character's startled exclamation, the driver of the cart will stop, climb down, and pick up the fallen bag, all the while thanking the character for alerting him to its loss.

When a character (especially the boyfriend character) is humiliated, he may wish to return home and change clothes and possibly, take a bath). This will take half an hour (or a full hour if a bath is included). A character who has been 'cabbaged' (2 above) but does not have time to take a bath, may go quickly to a perfumer to mask the stench (this action takes only half an hour, but does not include changing clothes).

THE SEARCH FOR THE LILIES

Those characters who go off in search of a bouquet of lilies will probably go first to the market flower-vendors. Searching around the market will take an hour, before they discover that all the lilies there have wilted beyond hope. If the ask about for lilies at the vendors, they will be told that a travelling flower vendor left the market at 11:30 to sell them around the city. The characters may attempt to follow her to get their lilies.

It will take an hour for the characters to spot the travelling flower vendor. During this time, roll twice for delays, and once for humiliation (per character). At the end of this time, they will see the vendor in the distance, and must try to catch up with her. Every ten minutes of chasing the vendor, roll a d6: on a roll of 6 (or 5 or 6 if one of the characters has Tracking skill) the characters catch her, and may buy a bouquet of unwilted lilies; on a roll of 1 or 2, roll for delay. If a delay occurs, at least one character must make a successful roll against his Wit/2 (+3 if he has Tracking or Espionage skill) or the characters will lose sight of the vendor, and must start searching for her all over again.

Once the characters find the vendor, they must pay 1 Livre for a dozen white lilies. It will take them half an hour to return to the tavern, during which they must roll for one delay and one humiliation (per character). If the character carrying the bouquet is humiliated in some way which soils the lilies (mud, tobacco, paint or coal dust will soil them) then the flower vendor must be found again, and a new bouquet brought.

THE SEARCH FOR THE PLUM WINE

The characters who set off in search of the bottle of plum wine will, undoubtedly, first try the taverns and liquor establishments near



their starting place. They will quickly find, however, that plum wine is rare. After searching for an hour without luck, they will be referred to the Fox & Vine, the only wine shop in the city which stocks plum wine.

Getting to the Fox & Vine will take half an hour. During the journey, roll for two delays, and one humiliation (per character). At the Fox & Vine, the characters will find the establishment deserted. After close inspection, the proprietor, Philius Sebastian le Fou, will be found, asleep, in a dead drunk, on the stairs to the cellar. It will be impossible to wake and sober him in less than eight hours.

The alternative is, of course, for the characters to descend into the cellar, and find some plum wine. If the characters do this they will find the cellar full of over sixty different wines, in unmarked bottles.

This presents a further problem, to which there is only one solution: the characters must sample each of the wines, until they strike the plum wine. This is a long and tedious chore, but not entirely unpleasant.

A character may sip five different wines every ten minutes. Each time a character sips a new wine, roll 2d6: if the roll is a 12, he has found the plum wine. On the average, this means it shouldn't take more than thirty six sips to find the correct bottle. If the players roll poorly, however, it may take more sips than there are bottles! This may be because the characters are too drunk to recognize the correct wine, or because they can't remember which they've already tried. Either way, keep trying until someone rolls a 12!

Characters will gradually become more and more drunk, with each sip. To find the effects, consult the table below (characters with an Endurance 13+ may have two more sips without feeling the effects; characters with Carousing skill may have four more):

Number of Sips	Condition
8 to 12	Happy — Character begins to see how amusing the whole situation is, and starts to make toasts (-1 to Dexterity and all Expertises).
13 to 16	Silly — Character begins to giggle uncontrollably and laughs at any joke (-½ of his normal Wit, Charm and Dexterity).
17 to 20	Hilarious — Character decides that he was 'born with the gift of laughter and the sense that the world was mad' (whatever that means).
21 to 24	Boozed — Character is beginning to have trouble focusing both eyes at the same time.

25 to 28	Zilched — Character is feeling a little woozy and may have trouble standing (-¼ of his normal Endurance, +½ to his normal Luck).
29 to 32	Totally Bombed — Character may have forgotten why he came to the Fox & Vine, but by now, he doesn't care.
33+	Dead Drunk — Character passes out for 1d6 hours.

If a character takes a break from drinking, he may recover from 1 sip for every half hour he waits.

When the characters have found the plum wine, they must attempt to take it back to the tavern where they started. This will take half an hour if they are sober or happy (roll once for delays, and once for humiliation, per character). Otherwise it may take longer, as shown below:

Condition of Characters	Time required to return
Silly or Hilarious	45 minutes
Boozed	1 hour
Zilched	2 hours
Totally Bombed	3 hours

THE SEARCH FOR THE CHERRY BONBONS

While their friends are racing through the streets after flower vendors or drinking in the cellar of the Fox & Vine, other characters will go in search of a box of Cherry Bonbons. After searching candy booths at the market, and the major confectioners for an hour, the characters will learn that the only place cherry bonbons are to be found is at Madame Julliarde's Maison des Chocolats.

It will take half an hour to get to Madame Julliarde's. Roll twice for delays, and once for humiliation (per character). At Madame Julliarde's the characters will be told that the cherry bonbons have been very popular this Summer, and that the last box was just sold ten minutes before they got there. It takes at least a day to make a fresh box of cherry bonbons, so it is too late to order a new batch. The last box was bought by the Duchess de Nozze.

Any character will recognize the name of the Duchess on a roll of his Wit/2 or Luck/2 (player's choice; +5 for characters with Heraldry skill). The Duchess de Nozze is a large middle-aged noblewoman, with a liking for all chocolate delicacies. Her husband, the Duke, is a Lt. General in the Royal Army, and a very powerful man. They often stay at their manse in Paris during the Summer. It seems that to get their cherry bonbons, the characters must go to the de Nozze estate, and

somehow get them from the Duchess. It will take half an hour to reach the estate (roll once for delay).

Several strategies could be used here. If the characters go to the Duchess's house, those of Social Rank 7 or above will be admitted by a servant (all others will be told to scram). The characters could offer the Duchess a great deal of money for her bonbons, but this would be fruitless (she is already rich). They could try to trick her out her bonbons somehow (by telling her they are not worthy of a Duchess, and offering to bring her a box of truly royal chocolates, perhaps). This would require a good idea from the players (as judged by the Gamemaster) and a successful roll on Charm (+2 for Oratory or Etiquette skill; +4 for both).

Characters who are not admitted, and especially Rogues, might decide to try to steal the bonbons. The bonbons are kept in a salon on the second floor of the manse, and are guarded by a butler (because the Duchess is afraid the maids will eat some of her candies). It would require Acrobatics skill and a successful roll on Dexterity to scale the facade on the outside of the house, and a Luck roll to avoid being seen (+3 for Stealth skill). Inside, it would require 1d6 x 10 minutes to find the right room, and Stealth skill (and a successful Dexterity or Luck roll, player's choice) to sneak up behind the butler. He is unarmed, and something of a wimp (only 8 Hit Points). The most dangerous thing he could do would be to yell for help. He is a coward, and also bribable, however, and if threatened with a weapon or given some money, he will stay quiet. After the thief grabs the bonbons, he must escape the way he came.

Perhaps the easiest way to get the box of candies would be for one of the characters to seduce the Duchess. The Duchess is very partial to young men. It requires a successful roll against Charm (+1 for Etiquette skill, +3 for Seduction skill). If the roll is successful, she will agree to hand over the candies to his friends (if he has any with him), and will then lead him to the bedroom. If the roll is missed, the character will be unceremoniously dumped outside the house by two burly doormen.

In the Duchess's bedroom, a potentially romantic interlude to the day's adventures will be interrupted after ten minutes, when the Duke de Nozze arrives home unexpected. The terrified Duchess will tell the character to hide while she stalls the Duke in her boudoir. The character will have three choices of hiding places: under the bed, in the walk-in-closet in the corner, or behind the drapes.

The Duke and Duchess will enter the bedroom a moment after the character has hidden. If the character is under the bed, the Duke will take off his smelly riding boots and leave them by the side of the bed. The character will have to endure the aroma while the Duke climbs into bed for an afternoon nap. After 1d6 x 10 minutes it will be safe to sneak out (with promises to the Duchess to return some day). Surely the character will be happy to have escaped so easily, with his bonbons still intact.

If the character hides in the closet, he will hear the Duke and Duchess enter and begin to quarrel. He will have to wait half an hour + 1d6 x 10 minutes, before the Duchess gives the signal that it is safe to come out. A character with Disguise skill may notice a chance for escape when he sees the women's clothing piled in the closet. If a character with Disguise wishes to leave quickly, he may dress himself as a maid, bodyservant, lady, etc. (player's choice) in ten minutes. As he leaves the closet, the Duchess (who thinks quickly) will make some excuse, such as 'this is my new maid, dearest'. The disguise will be believable if the character can make a successful roll against his Wit (+1 for Oratory skill, +1 for Etiquette skill, +3 if he has ever dressed in wo-

men's clothing before). However, if he fails to also make a successful Luck roll, the disguise will work too well, and the Duke will take an amorous interest in the new maid. As the character attempts to leave the house, he will follow, attempting to 'introduce' himself properly. The best thing for the character to do is grab the bonbons and leave quickly.

If the character hides behind the drapes, he will again have to wait a half an hour + 1d6 x 10 minutes, while the Duke and Duchess argue and fight. If he has Acrobatics skill, however, he may open the window and climb out. If he misses a Dexterity roll while climbing down he will fall (taking 1d6 points of general damage) and make a lot of noise (possibly attracting the attention of the Duke).

Any character who must escape the de Nozze manse after going to see the Duchess in her bed chamber may be noticed as suspicious by one of the house servants or neighbors on a roll of 5 or 6 on a d6. The description of an indiscreet character will be given to the Duke. The character should be careful to avoid the Duke after being noticed, or he may be challenged to a duel.

After the characters get the cherry bonbons (one way or another) they must return to the tavern meeting-place. This takes one half hour (roll once for delays, and once for humiliation, per character).

CONCLUSION

At the end of the day's adventures, the party will meet up again at the tavern where they started, and the main character (the boyfriend) may take as many of the gifts as they have managed to find to his mistress.

When the character returns to his mistress' house, his romantic fate will depend on how the Scavenger Hunt has gone. Figure his success by adding up his victory points:

For each gift.	+1
For being wounded or hurt getting the gifts.	+1
For wearing dirty or soiled clothes when he returns to his mistress.	-1
For smelling bad (due to being 'cabbaged')	-1
For being late (after 7 o'clock)	-1
For being 'silly' drunk or worse when he returns.	-1

After adding the character's victory points, consult the table below to see what his mistress thinks:

Victory Points	Result
1 or less	Furious — Mistress has her doorman throw the character out, and never wishes to see him again.
2	Suspicious — Mistress suspects that it might have been a last-minute job, and is a little irked. The character will have to spend 2d6 x 10 Livres on her over the next few weeks to redeem himself.
3 or 4	Delighted — Mistress is very happy and pleased with her gifts. The character will be in good favor with her, for a while at least.

When the character has finished receiving his just reward (one way or the other) he will pass Fanny the maid, on his way out. She will wink at him, and it would be polite to give her 5 Livres or so for her thoughtful warning. It would also be only fair for him to buy his faithful friends a round of ales at the tavern for their troubles.



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