

CHILLINGHAM CASTLE

There are many ruined castles throughout the lands, forgotten and abandoned, but few indeed are left to shadows when they are still intact and unbroken by siege, but such is the terrifying truth of this one, a castle vacated because it is haunted . . .

PREPARING TO PLAY: When you are all gathered to play, and every one of the Players is prepared, begin the adventure by following the steps given below.

Background: The Adventure will begin with your reading the following narrative, thus setting the stage for the adventure that is to follow.

The road of adventure has led you to the dismal moors between two Kingdoms. Here many roads vanish into the misty downs and dark forests, but you have trusted to the right signs and taken the right road, and as night approaches you find the warm windows of an inn beckoning to you.

The patrons in the common-room are friendly enough, but rather quiet and kept to themselves. They seem to lean over their ale as if concerned someone might hear them breathing. The barkeep says they have been telling tales again, tales of a nearby castle whose very name curdles milk and makes the dogs cower in the corner.

You need not be told. You've heard it before in lands afar. Chillingham Castle. It has an evil name for a hundred miles around, no matter who speaks of it. It is an old keep used largely as a torturer's castle. Royal decree has often stated it is simply abandoned because peace reigns in the land, but the villagers who live under its shadow know better—it is haunted, and it is evil. Locals whisper fearfully how it is not even of this land or this world any longer, but moves through time and space—when the mists are thick, it may be found by unwary travelers if it wishes to be, or it may not be there at all.

What is not spoken of beyond the borders of this village is the treasure it keeps. The locals, a few drinks later, speak to you of a hoard taken from Orc slavers. Kept at the castle to back the King's treasury, it was in these times of peace forgotten, whether in truth or by design, but still forgotten, except in legend . . .

Rumors: In town, or perhaps earlier in their lives, the party can amass a total of 3 rumors from the following chart. Re-roll duplicate results.

Rumors

Value	Rumor about the castle
13	If the cursed heir of the castle could be given last rites and so allowed to rest in peace, he would only seize the throats of his saviors. Beware! (false)
9	A young boy was buried alive inside the castle, and this brought a curse upon the walls (partially true)
6	The road to the castle is called 'Devil's Lane', for there isn't a tree along it that didn't hang at least one prisoner, and the ones who fled were shot down by arrows and now they haunt those woods (true)
4	Priests have often been asked to bless the grounds, but all turned away, feeling the evil of the castle overwhelm them (true)
2	There is a secret tower above the library where the treasure is hidden (false)
1	It is said "Be gone from Chillingham by night, or else you will face horror beyond all Mortal ken (true)

A CASTLE OF TERROR: Once the party seeks the castle, it will prove easy enough to find, across a misty moor not but a few miles from town. But if sought by day, the party will find only the mist upon the moors, the castle able to be found only during the night. However, other than that, it will prove to be a rather basic castle layout which most adventurers will understand easily enough, so there is no real chance of getting lost inside. Still, most of its rooms are empty. As the party explores it, they will find only a steady rise in their heartbeat until they come to the next true horror. Indeed, tell the tale of their exploration through these chambers by using the following Encounters one and all and in the order they are presented.

1) Devil's Lane

The road to the castle weaves through dark trees, obscuring the grim face of its parapet for now. A thin mist obscures the ground.

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Prisoners used to be hung from these trees or allowed to 'flee' while archers hid along the road and shot them down. Now, the Ghosts of 4 such prisoners lie in wait amongst the trees, ready with a Critical ambush upon the living. If the party has heard rumor of this or simply suspects an ambush, it is only Challenging to avoid it.

2) Banquet hall

The door creaks open to reveal the greathall. The ceiling is obscured by thick spiderwebs, reaching down all the way to the high-backed chairs lined up around a longtable. Full dinnerware is set on it, but caked in dust, and rings of blue fire float above the goblets like cold halos.

A 'Supernatural lore' Skill Check can realize that the halos are only the 'fingerprints' of Ghosts, and that the spirits are not present.

Each Round spent here, there is a cumulative chance in 6 that despair overwhelms a randomly determined Character, 'Blighting' him.

3) Ballroom

Beyond the greathall you enter a grand ballroom. A huge pipe organ dominates one wall, and you do not doubt that its haunting music once kept its guests oblivious to the screams of torture that may have escaped the dungeons. Yet the organ has fallen silent, and there are no longer guests to grace the floor... actually, there is! Even as you watch, the pale ghost of a Lady materializes before you.

This Wight was in life named 'Mary', and she will Parley with the living guests. If someone asks to dance with her, this Parley can be remade or, if not yet attempted, gain a +2 bonus. Though she is evil, Lady Mary will hesitate to attack the party if she is not threatened. If she proves to be 'friendly' she will inform the party that she was buried alive beneath this very ballroom. Breaking open the floor requires a feat of 'breaking doors', but one of 20 Damage instead of 15. Below is a pit holding her skeleton and her treasure, free for the taking, or so they think—she set this up as a Critical ambush.

4) Library

After finding many empty chambers, you enter a library where there is much to beguile you; The walls are covered in many places with tapestries, the books appear ransacked, one table is piled up with a dozen human skulls, and the dust swirls about the floor as if kicked up by unseen feet.

Behind one of the tapestries is a passage that has been bricked shut. To open it requires a feat of 'breaking doors', but one of 20 Damage instead of 15. Inside is a niche containing the skeleton of a young boy. Note if it is given last rites.

5) Master bedchamber

You explore many empty chambers, expecting to meet death waiting around each corner or behind each door. Death waits patiently. Perhaps she is here, in the master bedchamber... there is a ring of blue fire surrounding the bed...

If the boy's bones in Encounter 3 were given last rites, its blue Ghost will appear to anyone that steps inside the ring, and inform them as it fades to seek the castle's secret behind the fireplace. Yet there is no fireplace. If one makes a true fire here, it will reveal the outline of an otherwise unfindable secret door, leading to Encounter 6.

6) Torture chamber

The stone wall opens to reveal a secret treasure room, hidden in the walls of the castle.

The hoard totals 12 treasures of Value 'D'. It is also trapped—unless disarmed, when anything is taken, the stone door will slide shut and close the room forever. One can try a Challenging Dexterity Check to get out in time.

FINISHING THE ADVENTURE: Those who can claim ownership of any of the castle's treasure will gain +1 to their Legend Score.