

## ***THE WELL-PROTECTED CASTLE: Special Castle Fortifications in AD&D.*** *by R. N. Bailey*

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In most RPG fantasy settings stone-and-mortar castles and fortifications—just like they did in our very real world—protect and defend territories from aggressive and hostile enemies. In a fantasy world this is made more difficult due to the existence of powerful monsters with the ability to teleport, sneak in undetected, or simply to smash walls. Furthermore, spellcasters possess an arsenal of spells that can reduce a castle or similar fortification to rubble in a short amount of time. You might say that fireballs, lightning bolts, disintegration, and so forth are the gun-powdered artillery of the fantasy world.

All of this means traditional castle walls do not provide adequate protection with just walls and towers. Few spells exist to protect fortifications against the threats of devastating spells and monster abilities. Even if more of these did exist, finding a high-level spellcaster to cast the spells is easier said than done. However, one can assume that builders of fortification not only developed alternate, low-technology protection, but also incorporated these into castles, towers, dungeons, and other strongholds. Without these protections, they would not stand a chance against the power of an archmage or high priest bent on its destruction.

A Dungeon Master can use the following methods to fortify NPC strongholds, or for player characters when constructing their own.

### **Mundane Methods of Protection**

**Ethereal Protections:** A major threat to castles comes from immaterial creatures breaching their stone walls by simply walking through them. This includes use of *plate mail of etherealness*, *oil of etherealness*, *plane shifting* to the Ethereal Plane, or natural abilities (like a ghosts). This also includes the ability to phase from spells like *dimension door* and *phase door*, or a phase spider's ability.

The most common method of protecting a building against these opponents is to incorporate the blood of a creature with connections to the Ethereal Plane in its building. Blood from gorgon, gorgimera, basilisk (greater & lesser), cockatrice, catoblepas, dracolisk, medusa, or creatures similar ethereal connections all offer protection against ethereal or phased creatures.

Typically the blood is added to stone mortar, as this is the most effective method. Should no mortar be used, blood can be added to the internal filler of a wall or made in to an interior plaster that is spread on interior surfaces. Ethereal and phased creatures cannot pass through a building protected thusly.

The blood of one gorgon, greater basilisk, gorgimera, and dracolisk will cover up to 10,000 cubic feet of wall when added to mortar (and still be effective); lesser basilisk and catoblepas 5,000 cubic feet; medusa 2,500 cubic feet; cockatrice 1,000 cubic feet.

**Wall Protections:** The ground-up essences of shape-changing creatures (such as vampires, druids, protein polymorphs, lycanthropes, boggarts, spriggans, and so forth) gives walls a save of 14 versus alteration magic (*disintegrate*, *passwall*, *stone shape*, *transmute rock to mud*, etc.) when added to building mortar. The essence of an earth elemental-type creature (xorn, xaren, khargra, etc.) gives a save of 12 versus these types of spells. Roughly one man-sized creature will protect up to 2,500 cubic feet.

The blood of a disenchanter, if added to the mortar of a wall or building, protects it by adding a +4 to saves, or a save of 12 if no save category versus the material exists, against all magics used against it. The blood from one adult disenchanter can protect up to 8,000 cubic feet of space.

Mortar or plaster created with the blood of powerful creature from the lower outer planes, such as powerful demons, rakshasa, night hags, and so forth, act as a *protection from good* spell to creatures native to the upper outer or inner planes. The creature must be of at least seven Hit Dice. The blood of one human-sized creature will protect up to 5000' cubic feet of area. These areas will radiate a medium level of evil if a *detect evil* is used. Those of Good alignment will feel uneasy if they reside with such a building for more than a week. Note that this method provides no defense if created using non-evil, extraplanar creatures or creatures from the Inner Planes. Thus, slaying a deva and using its essence in the construction of a wall will not repel evil extraplanar creatures.

**Metal:** Metal sheets on the outside of stone walls or building are an easy and inexpensive method of defeating the use of *passwall*, *stone shape*, *stone to flesh*, and *transmute rock to mud*. A stronger and more permanent method is to reinforce the stone structure with a latticework of iron rods, much like rebar in a foundation. This will stop the use of *passwall* completely. *Stone shape*, *stone to flesh*, and *transmute rock to mud* will not be completely defended against, but will provide an additional barrier.

**Lead:** Lead, and similar very dense metals, can provide an excellent and relatively cheap form of protection from a number of magical effects. Rooms protected with lead sheets have a 100% chance to prevent teleportation, phasing, ethereal creatures, all forms of scrying, and all psionics from passing through the walls. Meteoritic iron, if fashioned

into sheets, prevents all teleportation and phasing into and out of the area warded. Lead added to plaster has only a 40% chance to protect an area. If added to paint and used to paint a room this is reduced to a 15% chance. For rooms to be fully warded, all walls, floors, ceilings, and doors must be covered.

**Radiation:** Summoned (also gated, created, or conjured) extraplanar creatures pose another major threat to fortifications and their defenders. Radioactive material, such as found in naturally occurring uranium, can ward off such beings. These materials also have the added benefit of preventing the use of teleportation. However, this method has a major drawback since radioactivity is also poisonous to living creatures. Thus, engineers typically use these materials sparingly.

These materials are often forged into stones that can be locked in lead boxes when not needed. When an attack occurs they can be placed in front of a gatehouse or similar portal acting as a *protection from evil* (or good) 10' radius. At least four ounces of material must be used to repel one Hit Dice of creature. (Creature type base Hit Dice only; do not add up Hit Dice for multiple creatures.)

The other method is to grind up the material and add it to a building's mortar. Less commonly it is fashioned into metal sheets or added to wall filler and plaster when ground. In this case one pound of material is required to repel 1 Hit Dice of creature per 10' x 10' section of wall or room.

There are three main types of radioactive sediments. The strongest of the three is carnotite. This material has a 100% chance to repel extraplanar creatures. However, with 12 months of continuous exposure living creatures have a chance develop a severe blood disease and mild skin disease (see 1<sup>st</sup> edition *Dungeon Masters Guide*, pg. 14; save versus poison every two months to avoid). Prolonged exposure (more than 18 months exposure) results in the blood disease advancing to a terminal case. Those exposed are allowed a save versus poison each year to avoid contracting the terminal effects.

Autunite has a 60% chance to repel out extra-planar creatures. This material is slightly less dangerous to the living than carnotite. Severe blood disease occurs after 18 months of continuous exposure, then save versus poison with a +2 bonus every six months thereafter to avoid. Terminal cases must be saved for with a +4 to the save every three months of continuous exposure.

The safest but least effective material is serntite. This material has only a 30% chance to repel extra-planar creatures. This is the material most often added to building mortar. Living creatures continuously exposed to this material must save versus poison every 12 months to avoid the severe blood disease and mild skin disease.

At least 10 feet of earth or stone will block the radioactive poisons of these materials. It is possible for an underground complex to be built under a rock layer containing veins of these elements. Or a layer of this material could be placed over the complex with a shielding earthen layer in between. This will prevent the use of teleportation into or out of these areas, but is not strong enough to repel extraplanar creatures. It has been reported that vast areas of the Underdark sit under these radioactive layers, making it impossible for spellcasters (or adventurers) to quickly teleport from these areas.

**Defensive Stonework:** Certain types naturally magic-resistant stone make excellent sources of fortification building material. Chief amongst these are damoclase, maurentar granite, and amlula marble.

- *Damoclase* is a bluish-green stone shot with black and gray flecks. Strong enough to create the largest of towers, this material has an innate magic resistance of 20-50% (1d4+1 x 10) depending on the quarry it comes from. Other varieties of this stone can offer up to 100% magic resistance. However, this material extremely rare in quantities greater than 1000' cubic feet.
- Fine-grained and often banded, *maurentar* is a very strong type of granite. The stone is so sturdy that only a few races (dwarves being one) possess the knowledge of how to work and shape this stone. They jealously guard this knowledge. This stone is completely resistant to all types of magics that alter its physical form (*passwall*, *stone shape*, *disintegrate*, *transmute rock to mud*, *stone to flesh*, etc.).
- *Amlula marble* is a milky white stone shot typically with fine wispy bands of pale azure. This type of stone has the strength of the densest granite with the additional property of being able to be shaped into delicate forms. Further more building constructed entirely of this material blocks all forms of scrying and all psionics, and prevents Ethereal and phasing creatures from entering.

**Invisibility Protections:** Another area that would prove a problem with fortifications is infiltration by invisible enemies. In fantasy worlds, invisibility is readily available to most low-level magic-users and those with enough cash to buy a potion or a spell. Defenders of castles and rulers would be open to scouting by invisible spies creeping around looking for intelligence.

A number of methods exist to root-out unwanted invisible guests. The most low-tech approach is covering the floor with something that would give away the invisible creature's tracks. This could be flour, dust, or ash. However, this method is impractical on a sustained basis—most places will simply have too many people moving around that could disturb the dusting. Also, these must be someone to watch for the tracks. Otherwise, the invisible creature will be long gone by the time anyone notices the tracks. This method actually works best is it is suspected that an invisible creature is near. An area can be dusted and guards set up to watch for tracks to appear.

A similar method of detection is created by a type of rock called *heat stones*. The stone are often fashioned into flagstones or tiles that absorb the heat of passing creatures and hold it for a period of time. Warm-blooded creatures that

walk across these stones appear as dark tracks and are visible for up to 15 minutes after it passed by. However, these stones do not work in temperatures higher than 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Additionally, in temperatures of 32 degrees or lower time the stones hold the heat is halved or quartered.

Possibly the best method of detecting invisible creatures is by use of other creatures' heightened senses. Dogs and geese (yes, geese and swans have good senses and have been used as alarm animals) would protect manors, keeps, castles, temples, and other such buildings by raising an alarm. These creatures would be specifically trained to sniff out hidden and invisible creatures, barking or squawking loudly only when these are detected. (Much like bomb or drug sniffing dogs.) These animals could also be trained to sniff for magic or specific types of creatures (undead). Blink dogs, boggles, and other similar creatures could be trained as guards.

Untrained animals have a 30% chance to detect any hidden or invisible creature passing within 30' (double if 10' away). Trained animals have a 60% chance to detect hidden and invisible creatures within 50' (80% within 25', 95% within 10'). Additionally, all "animals" of semi-intelligence (4) or less can detect undead (even ethereal) and powerful, strongly-aligned monsters with the same chances detecting those hidden or invisible.

### **Protective & Defensive Item Costs**

<u>Material Type</u>	<u>Unit Amount</u>	<u>Cost</u>
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Amlula marble	1 cubic foot	10 gp
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Autunite	1 cubic foot	3 gp
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Carnotite	1 cubic foot	3 gp
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Damoclase                    1 cubic foot    10 sp<sup>1</sup>

Dog, trained<sup>2</sup>                    n/a            35 gp

Heat stones                    1 cubic foot    2 gp

Maurentar granite            1 cubic foot    4 gp

Paint, leaded                    1000 sq. feet    10 gp

Plaster, leaded                    1000 sq. feet    15 gp

Rod, metal                    10' length      30 sp

Sermtite                    1 cubic foot      3 gp

Sheet, lead                    1 sq. feet      1 sp

Sheet, metal                    1 sq. feet      5 cp

Sheet,      meteoritic      1000 sq. feet      8 gp  
iron

1: Per point of magic resistance.

2: These animals are specifically trained to spot hidden or invisible creatures.

### **Magical Method of Protection**

The previous methods involved relatively low-tech, non-magical methods to protect keeps, castles, and strongholds. Other methods of protecting these fortifications entail casting defensive wards or binding of a powerful creature to the structure itself. Only the most powerful of archmages will attempt to use the following spells.

### **NEW MAGIC-USER SPELLS**

**Fortification Ward** (Abjuration)

Level: 6  
 Range: 0 Components: V, S, M  
 Duration: Permanent Casting Time: 3 turns  
 Area of Effect: One structure or wall Saving Throw: None

This spell places a ward that confers invulnerability to one specific type of magic or effect on a building or structure, wall, or underground room or complex. Buildings can be from 10' x 10' to a grand castle and only the structure's outer walls, floors, roofs, and points of ingress (i.e. doors and gates leading into or out of) are warded. Walls can be of any height but no more than 200' long; any door and gates leading out are also warded. Underground rooms or complexes of up to 10,000 square feet are warded including all outer walls, floors, ceilings and points of entry.

Once placed, the structure has 100% resistance to magical forms and fully immune to normal forms of one of the following effects that is selected at the time of casting: fire, lightning, acid, etherealness (device spell, device, or creature), teleportation (including *dimension door* and other similar spells and effects), stone-affecting spells (*passwall*, *stone shape*, and *transmute rock to mud* or similar magical effects or abilities), or disintegration.

Whenever a building has more than one ward placed upon it, it has a 20% cumulative chance for each additional ward to cause all wards to fail. Once this happens, the structure can never hold another fortification ward again (will automatically fail upon casting).

An *anti-magic shell* will disrupt the ward's protections in the area of effect and for its duration. A *limited wish* has a 50% chance and a *wish* will automatically remove one fortification ward. All other spells will not harm the ward once in place.

Unless cast upon the time of the structure's creation, it automatically fails.

The material component for each ward is a finely crafted talisman of at least 1,000 gp value that is buried in the structure's foundation.

#### **Invulnerable Edifice (Enchantment)**

Level: 7  
 Range: 0 Components: V, S, M  
 Duration: Permanent Casting Time: 1 day  
 Area of Effect: One structure or wall Saving Throw: None

This spell creates a permanent enchantment to strengthen the walls of an existing building or wall. The building must be a freestanding structure such as a house, tower, castle, or similar construction, or single defensive wall up to 500' in length. The enchantment doubles the structure's defensive points, including its main entrance doors or gates. It also imparts 25% magic resistance against spells used against the structure. Furthermore, all extra-planar creatures are barred from entering any building warded with this spell.

The material components for this spell are 1,000 gp in treasure (coins, magic, or crafted goods) for wood structures and 5,000 gp for stone. The treasure is burned at the time of casting the spell (all materials are irrecoverably destroyed).

#### **Entomb Spirit (Conjuration, Enchantment)**

Level: 9  
 Range: 0 Components: V, S  
 Duration: Permanent Casting Time: Special  
 Area of Effect: Special Saving Throw: None

By means of this spell a magic-user seeks to bind the spirit of a powerful being to a structure. The bound being then increases the defensive potential of the structure. Structures must be freestanding and constructed mostly of stone. These usually are keeps, castles, or city walls. If used on any other type of structure (wooden building, ship, dungeon complex, etc.) the binding will automatically fail and release the spirit which will then seek to exact revenge on the spellcaster.

The exact type, and subsequently Hit Dice, of the being bound depends on the size of the structure.

<b>Creature</b>		<b>Defensive</b>	<b>Magic</b>
<b>Hit Dice</b>	<b>Structure Type</b>	<b>Increase<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Magic Resistance</b>
9-12	tower, manor, temple	+200%	50%
13-15	small keep, cathedral	+250%	60%
16-18	large keep	+300%	70%
19-21	small castle, small city walls	+350%	80%
22-24	large castle, medium city walls	+400%	90%

25+ grand castle or large city walls +400% 100%+  
spell-turning<sup>2</sup>

1: Increase in overall Defensive Points (1<sup>st</sup> edition *Dungeon Masters Guide*, pg. 110).

2: As per *ring of spell-turning*.

The following beings can be entombed in a structure: archon, daemon, demodand, demon, deva, devil, dragon, elemental (including para- and quasi-), genie, modron, or slaad. The exact type depends on the spellcaster's alignment and/or the temperament (alignment) of those that will reside in the structure. Typically, evil spellcasters will bind evil creatures; Good will bind good creatures; all alignments can bind neutral creatures. This spell does not summon these creatures; it is wholly up to the spellcaster as to where the creature comes from and how it is subdued for the purposes of the spell.

The being must be physically present at the site in which it is to be entombed in. Once the magic-user begins casting the spell the being cannot take any action until the spell is complete. It is not allowed a saving throw, nor does magic resistance apply to avoid the effects of the spell. (That is unless it is a powerful, unique being, such as a demon lord or duke of Hell. However, it would take a crafty and powerful wizard to bind such a being. In any case, no being of lesser god or greater status can ever be bound.) The entombed being's physical form turns into spirit and enters the structure. In this form it does not age, it does require any sustenance, and cannot communicate.

Once bound the being confers additional strength and magic resistance to the structure itself, but not to attachments or residents. Protections extend to any immediate walls the structure possesses.

Spirit entombing works better on newly created structures. This spell has a 1% chance of failure for each year that has past since the completion of a structure's construction. Additionally, a structure has a 1% chance every five years that the enchantment binding the spirit has deteriorated enough to release the entombed being. Once this happens the being unleashes its fury upon the walls that entombed it.

Once entombed, the spirit cannot be removed by anything short of a *wish* and then the structure gains its magic resistance against the action.

This spell takes one turn per Hit Dice of the being to cast. It also ages its casters one year for every Hit Dice the entombed being possesses and reduces his Constitution to 5 for once month (only the passing time or a wish will hasten the return of lost points).