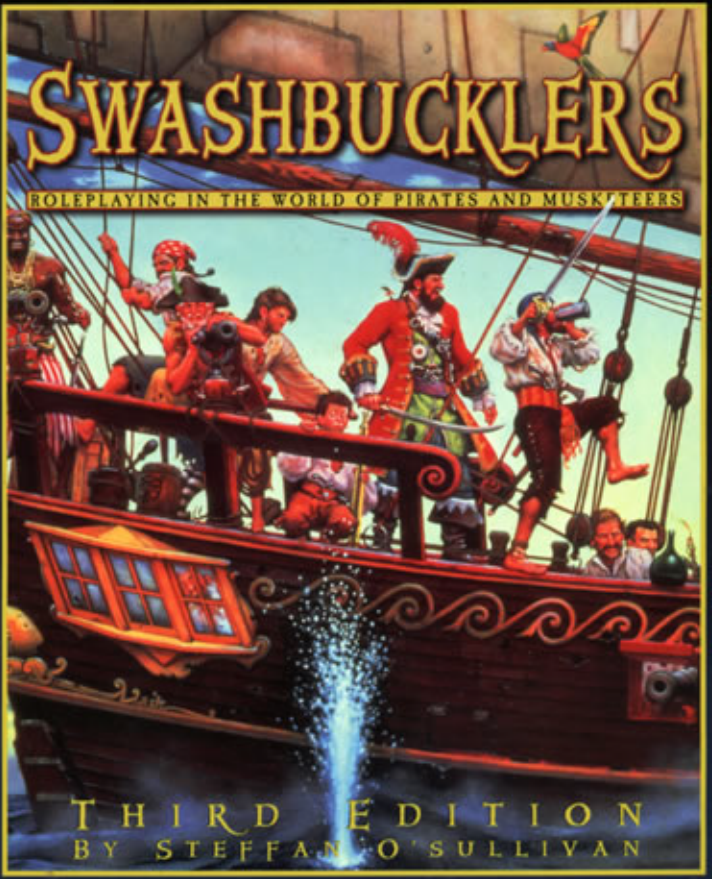
GURPS

SWASHBUCKLERS

ROLEPLAYING IN THE WORLD OF PIRATES AND MUSKETEERS



THIRD EDITION

BY STEFFAN O'SULLIVAN

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

GURPS

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ROLEPLAYING IN THE WORLD OF PIRATES AND MUSKETEERS

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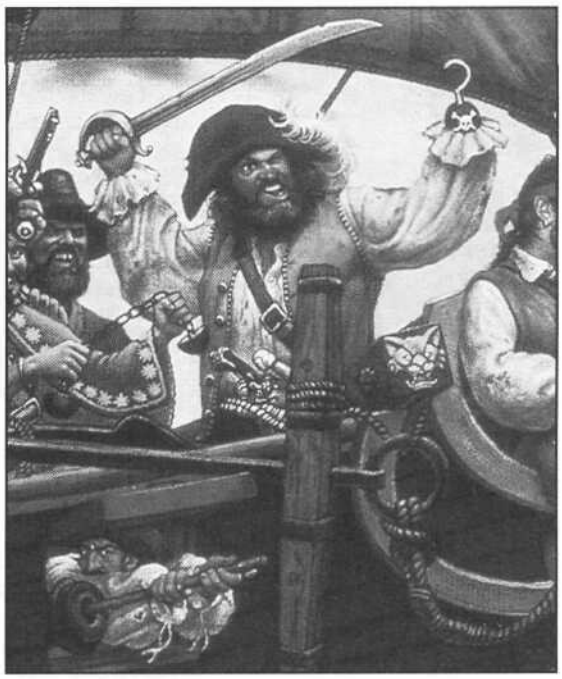

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This book is fondly dedicated to my three favorite Swashbuckling authors, without whom this book would be sadly lacking in spirit: Alexandre Dumas, Rafael Sabatini, and Mike Hurst. The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the following people: Mark Evans for research on the job table; Dr. David Switzer of Plymouth State College, NH, for advice on everything relating to ships; Dean O'Sullivan for research, rental, and co-enjoyment of the movies; the staff of the Lamson Library, Plymouth State College, NH, for patience and competence in answering esoteric and sometimes inarticulate questions - especially Robert Fitzpatrick, who won the "Help me translate the money to modern dollars" contest; Xyquest, Inc., for a superb word processor (Xywrite); Dr. and Mrs. Donald Otto, Walter Milliken, the New Hamster Gamesters, and all my family and friends for general support. Thanks everybody! - *Steffan O'Sullivan*

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ISBN 1-55634-394-9

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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INTRODUCTION

Swashbuckler. There's no other word in the English language that describes a certain type of character so concisely. Errol Flynn, Douglas Fairbanks (Senior or Junior), Basil Rathbone, D'Artagnan, Sir Francis Drake, Zorro - all these names and more come to mind.

The great era of the swashbuckler is the 17th century. It began earlier, in the Renaissance, and may never end - isn't Luke Skywalker a swashbuckler? But the 17th century saw the height of the deeds of derring-do that have come to define the word.

GURPS Swashbucklers is an attempt to recreate the 17th century, as it should have been, for gaming. Some new rules are introduced, some new situations are provided, and adventure ideas are included. But the heart of the book is background: the social, cultural, and political environment of a swashbuckler - both historical and fictional!

This book, coupled with the ***GURPS Basic*** *Set* and ***Compendium I,*** contains all you *need* to game in the 17th century. A bibliography is provided for those who want to do more historical research, or sample some of the enjoyable swashbuckling novels and movies available.

And so, friends, let us be off! The action awaits us!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steffan O'Sullivan is a storyteller, clown, *Commedia Dell'Arte* actor, performing arts teacher, and ***GURPS*** author. He has degrees in European history and Physical Theater, and lived in Europe for over two years. Gaming is his foremost hobby, not surprisingly, and has been since 1961. When not gaming, his hobbies include hiking, cross-country skiing, and reading. Steffan's favorite baseball player of all time is a Pirate, which he thinks qualifies him to write this book. He is also the author of ***GURPS Bestiary, GURPS Bunnies & Burrows,*** and ***GURPS Fantasy Bestiary.***

ABOUT THE REVISORS

Russell Godwin is the Print Buyer and Production Manager for SJ Games and lives in Austin, TX. His wife Vikki and their two cats live in Indiana, while she finishes her Ph.D. program. Revising ***Swashbucklers*** is his first cover-worthy credit in the industry, but his name can be found on the title pages of over a dozen ***GURPS*** and ***In Nomine*** books. His other noteworthy credit is as one of the developers of the card game ***Chez Geek.*** While he loves pirate movies and can often be found buckling swashes in a roleplaying game, Russell has never (to our knowledge) plundered booty on the high seas.

Bryan J. Maloney began life in the capital of the world: Lafayette, Indiana. During those rare times he wasn't playing ***GURPS,*** he acquired a formal education in biology. Likewise, he studied Aikijutsu and Shorinji Kempo under Soke-Dai Thomas Burdine. This was also when he began his interest in 18th-century and Renaissance living history. After moving to New York, he encountered *Maitre d'Armes* Adam A. Crown - a Lakotah fencing master - who taught him the difference between a fencing foil and a rapier.

He currently lives as an ordinary Irish-American in Ithaca, with his wife Kirsten, his two sons Eoin and Bryan, two cats, two gerbils, and four fish. Were it not for the tireless aid of the aforementioned wife, Bryan would have accidentally done himself in long ago. He has only had fleas once.

ABOUT **GURPS**

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the ***GURPS*** system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

Pyramid (**www.sjgames.com/pyramid**). Our online magazine includes new rules and articles for ***GURPS.*** It also covers the hobby's top games - ***Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, Traveller, World of Darkness, Call of Cthulhu, Shadowrun,*** and many more - and other Steve Jackson Games releases like ***In Nomine, INWO, Car Wars, Toon, Ogre Miniatures,*** and more. And *Pyramid* subscribers also have access to playtest files online, to see (and comment on) new books before they're released.

New supplements and adventures. ***GURPS*** continues to grow, and we'll be happy to let you know what's new. A current catalog is available for an SASE. Or check out our Web site (below).

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us - but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all ***GURPS*** releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request. Or download them from the Web - see below.

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Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at **www.sjgames.com** for an online catalog, errata, updates, and hundreds of pages of information. We also have conferences on CompuServe and AOL. ***GURPS*** has its own Usenet group, too: rec.games.frp.gurps.

GURPSnet. Much of the online discussion of ***GURPS*** happens on this e-mail list. To join, send mail to majordomo@io.com with "subscribe GURPSnet-L" in the body, or point your World Wide Web browser to **http://gurpsnet.sjgames.com/**.

The ***GURPS Swashbucklers*** web page has updates, resources, errata, and links at **www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/swashbucklers**.

PAGE REFERENCES

Any page reference that begins with a B refers to ***GURPS Basic Set,*** *Third Edition Revised; e.g.,* p. B144 refers to page 144 of ***Basic Set.*** CI refers to ***Compendium I,*** CII to ***Compendium II,*** and MA to ***Martial Arts.*** See ***GURPS Compendium I,*** p. 181, for a full list of abbreviations for ***GURPS*** titles. Or find an up-to-date list online at **www.sjgames.com/gurps/abbrevs.html**.

Chapter 1

CHARACTERS

This chapter describes some common types of adventurers in the era of the swashbuckler. While it might be difficult to imagine characters of very different social classes adventuring together, extreme situations can produce extreme results.

The swashbuckling age begins halfway through TL4 and ends in the middle of TL5. Certain advantages, disadvantages, and skills have special meaning in this period, and are discussed after the character types.

CHARACTER TYPES

Clergy

Clergy in this era have a tough job. If they end up on the wrong end of a religious war, they can find themselves executed. If they are of a minority faith (e.g., Roman Catholics in England), they will be under constant suspicion of foreign loyalty and might even face pressure by their hierarchy to spy on or commit treason against their own country.

Many clergy left the safety of Europe to bring Christianity to the Americas, with variable success and purity of purpose. In some parts of Europe and America, the clergy would be the most educated people in the region. They often acted as the local public recorders in Europe and maintained this function in some American colonies.

Advantages/Disadvantages: The Clerical Investment advantage (p. B19) is required, as is Literacy. The religion must be clearly stated at the time of character creation. Many clergy of this era are Fanatic about their religion. Some have Vows. For example, common Roman Catholic clergy vows are celibacy, obedience, and poverty. Many clergy have a Sense of Duty (p. B39) to their congregation, and many (of all faiths) were martyred for refusing to abandon their flock. See also *Jesuits, p.* 78.

Status is not necessary to be Clergy. There are distinctions between the various classes of Clergy, and the upper levels of the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches are reserved for the nobility. Parish priests come from the lower classes, while Franciscans might be of any class.

Skills: Clergy would know the appropriate Theology and Religious Ritual at 12+. Roman Catholic Clergy would have at least a smattering of Latin. Many Clergy are masters of social skills.

Diplomats

Diplomacy is very important in the 17th century. Travel time is much slower than in modern times and diplomats have more power of decision than their modern counterparts. They also face greater risk, acting as hostages to their leaders' acts. Diplomats were often (accurately) accused of being spies, and reporting on goings-on at their posts was expected of them.

Advantages/Disadvantages: A high IQ is the prime requisite; Voice and Charisma help. Cultural Adaptivity (p. CI23) is the hallmark of a truly great diplomat. Diplomatic Immunity (p. CI24) has not yet been invented. Avoid Truthfulness as a disadvantage!

Skills: Anything having to do with manipulating and understanding human behavior would serve a Diplomat well.

Duellists

Some European countries (France, Germany, but not ***Swashbucklers'*** England) had a tradition that a nobleman could legitimately hire a professional to replace him in a duel against a commoner. Likewise, gentlemen who were obviously too physically frail or crippled to duel could legitimately seek professional aid. It was a very dangerous life, but a potentially lucrative one.

Advantages/Disadvantages: In addition to the obvious combat-enhancing advantages, a duellist would do well to have Contacts, a Patron, or Allies. Other Duellists could be Enemies, as could the families of a duellist's former opponents. Some duellists might already be under sentence of death for having killed in a duel and be operating under an assumed identity; this would be an extreme Secret. Ethical duellists might have a Sense of Duty to their employers.

Skills: Other than combat skills, Streetwise, Fast Talk, and Savoir-Faire will help a duellist locate and procure work. Acting could be put to good use to convince a client that the duellist had actually given his all when taking the better part of valor.

Entertainers

Entertainers include musicians, bear wrestlers, stage magicians, dancers, acrobats, buffoons, freaks, fortune tellers, jugglers, fighters, and *Commedia Dell'Arte* performers (see sidebar, p. 48). In Calvinist areas, Social Stigma (Minority Group) applies, except in extreme cases (Cromwell's England) where Outlaw applies! In Roman Catholic, Anglican, or Lutheran areas, entertainers make ideal spies. Many people are on the alert for thieving entertainers, so any IQ rolls to detect a known entertainer pickpocketing or shadowing are +2.

If fortune tellers of the 17th century aren't careful, they can be mistaken for witches, accused of cursing rather than predicting. Most people believe that dreams are portents; fortune tellers are consulted to decipher puzzling dreams. Fast-Talk is the primary skill involved, though a good roll on Literature, Theology, or even History might remind one of an ancient precedent to quote.

Any type of combat skill can be used for entertainment. There are fighters who make the rounds competing for prizes at fairs, and fencing and boxing are fairly common in taverns. See

Combat as Entertainment, pp. 50-52, for more detail on combat exhibitions.

Advantages/Disadvantages: In addition to Voice and Charisma, many entertainers had noble Patrons. Entertainers often suffered from a poor reputation.

Skills: Fast-Talk, Savoir-Faire, Carousing, and Sex Appeal stand any entertainer in good stead. The skills appropriate to that entertainer's specialty are often very well developed.

Explorers and Colonists

Most European countries have colonies as far away as the Caribbean, Canada, North America, India, Indonesia, and West and South Africa. All governments are interested in finding "rich" areas, whether that means precious metals, jewels and spices, or good crop land. Explorers never know what they will find. Colonists face many hazards: Natives on the warpath, foreign powers, pirates, severe weather, and slow news and supplies. Intrigue in the colonies is rampant as European powers try to get the better of each other in every theater of action.

A member of an exploration party can be of any social standing, although only Status 2+ individuals will *lead* such a team. Pay will be similar to that of the army. A high IQ is probably the most important attribute, though *all* attributes and many skills will be strained before any journey is over. Very few explorers are actually cartographers, which is a scientific occupation requiring a good math background. Rather, they merely have a good eye for detail, and some drawing skill - see *Artist,* p. B47. (The most famous cartographer of the New World, Mercator, never left Europe! He made his maps based on sketches and logs of explorers and his mathematical abilities.) PCs skilled at Surveying (p. CI158) can be hired to travel around all of Europe, and later during this era, the world.

Colonists are gentleman plantation owners and bureaucrats, Status 0 artisans and merchants, or negative Status indentured servants and slaves. Indentured servants become Status 0 freemen when their fixed term (usually seven years) of servitude are over. Most are promised goods worth roughly $200 and a plot of land when they leave service; others are cheated out of their dues. Some have generous masters and receive up to $1,000. A newly-released indentured servant would make an excellent PC with a good excuse for being in the Caribbean.

A creative campaign can be run dealing with Lost World civilizations. This might mean a Mayan or Aztec society, long-lost descendants of a Viking settlement, Prester John's kingdom, abandoned colonies of Atlantis, or even time-travelers or an extraterrestrial outpost! Since people of this era *believe* there are monsters in the unexplored regions, why not put a few in? There are also many works of fiction that feature remote areas where prehistoric creatures still roam the earth - see ***GURPS Dinosaurs*** for appropriate animals.

Advantages/Disadvantages and Skills: Since the intent of many European colonists was to re-create Europe (or a "perfected" version) in another land, virtually any character could fall into this category. Most colonists would be fairly ordinary people, having devoted most of their attention to the skills needed to make a living. Explorers should be adept in outdoor skills (and naval skills, if appropriate) to survive.

Fencing Masters

Every European city of any size could boast at least one swordmaster. Large cities had several, some of whom were constantly feuding. In addition to providing combat instruction, fencing masters were considered experts on matters of honor. Their *salles* were a gathering point for gentlemen, and many a man divided all his free time between the *salle* and the tavern.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Many swordmasters became quite rich and influential, so Wealth and high Status can be appropriate. However, many other swordmasters were ill-paid and ignored. Charisma seems to have been very common among the most successful fencing masters. Wealthy Patrons were common, as were students as Allies or Dependents.

Skills: Successful fencing masters learned to cater to the tastes of the wealthy; Savoir-Faire was simply a must for them. Teaching and Leadership are also very useful. An academic fencing master (see p. 28) could be rather mediocre in skill yet develop quite a following if his Fast-Talk were good enough.

Footpads

Footpads are unmounted city thieves and robbers. They might be actual muggers who use violence, or pacifist "second-story" men who prefer burglary. Highwaymen consider themselves well above footpads, but the footpads don't care. They often serve as fences for the more snooty highwaymen, and make a decent profit from them.

They have the advantages, disadvantages, and skills that thieves throughout the centuries share. Many pirate and highwayman skills would be useful here, but footpads are unlikely to have Riding or Seamanship. Dai Blackthorn (p. B12) fits perfectly into the 17th century.

Highwaymen

Loved by the poor, hated by the rich, these roadside bandits occupy a unique spot between romance and history. They are covered in the *Highwaymen* sidebar, p. 80. Robin Hood is one example; Captain James Hind (p. 81) really existed.

Advantages/Disadvantages: None required. Highway robbery might be easier with Absolute Direction, Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense, Night Vision, Peripheral Vision, Rapid Healing, or Toughness. Wealth would be rare, but

fictional highwaymen might have Status. Many highwaymen have Alcoholism, Greed, Compulsive Gambling, a Code of Honor, Social Stigma (Outlaw), or Enemy (the State). Honesty is not recommended, nor scotophobia (fear of the dark).

Skills: Riding and Black Powder Weapons are required for success. Other common skills include Area Knowledge, Disguise, Fast-Talk, Fencing, Gambling, Merchant, Savoir-Faire, Sex Appeal, Shadowing, Stealth, Streetwise, and Teamster.

Itinerants

There are many itinerants in Europe at this time - it is an era of great upheaval. Artists, craftsmen, mechanics - even philosophers - wander the roads and take employment where they can. A foundry worker is welcome anywhere (cannon are the most common items cast), as are gunpowder manufacturers. Artists paint portraits of the local nobility and move on. Cabinet makers learn their craft in Paris or London, then move out to make furniture here and there. Scholars are employed to teach young noblemen. They are often students trying to raise enough money to return to the university.

Gypsies are not uncommon, but are distrusted. They have Social Stigma (Minority Group). Many entertainers are also itinerants (see p. 5).

Advantages/Disadvantages and Skills: Itinerants can have any combination of skills and abilities, since they are simply defined by rootlessness, a state made common by the conditions of the 17th century.

Mercenaries

The wars of religion give great scope for mercenaries, but more as individuals than as organized companies. There is no stigma to serving in the army of a foreign nation as long as you do not attack your home. Many merchants hire bodyguards, as do nobility and diplomats. A bodyguard might easily be an ex-soldier, so military skills without Military Rank are possible and even logical.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Individual martial prowess is less important than stolid determination. Strong Will, High Pain Threshold, and Toughness would count for more than would Ambidexterity or Combat Reflexes. Laziness, Gluttony, and Compulsive Carousing are virtually stereotypical of ordinary soldiers of the era.

Skills: Black Powder Weapons, Polearms, Spear, Packing, Savoir-Faire (Military), and Hiking are common to infantry. Cavalry would know Black Powder Weapons, Broadsword, Lance, Savoir-Faire (Military), and Riding. Soldiers often pick up a smattering of other languages.

Merchants

Merchants are plentiful and many travel. Although one might think that piracy and war would curb merchant activity, the potential profits in trading with (and exploiting) the colonies and Eastern countries far outweigh the dangers. A poor investment for a merchant is a 20% return, while a fairly common return is over 200%. Every now and then one will make a killing - over 1,000% return! Of course, it is also possible to lose the whole investment. See *Money*, p. 17, for more about merchants and business practices.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Strong Will is helpful, as are Appearance, Charisma, Empathy, and Voice. Language Talent can be very handy for international merchants.

Skills: Acting, Administration (for bribing officials), Area Knowledge, Detect Lies, Diplomacy, Economics, Fast-Talk, Gesture, Jeweler, Languages, Law, Merchant, Savoir-Faire, Shipbuilding, Streetwise, and Theology are all useful skills. Some merchants know Shiphandling, though most hired ship-masters.

Military

There are many other military outfits besides the King's Musketeers! Characters might be involved in espionage or escort missions for any country, or for other French units. Duty and Black Powder Weapons are always required; Military Rank might be necessary. Many artillerists were armed with short-swords as backup weapons. Other advantages, disadvantages, and skills are as for Musketeers (see below).

Musketeers

Strictly speaking, a "musketeer" is any soldier who wields a musket. In ***GURPS Swashbucklers,*** "Musketeers" refers to members of the elite guard serving the King of France. See Chapter 3 for more details.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Status 1+ and Literacy are required. Useful Advantages for Musketeers include: Alertness, Charisma, Combat Reflexes, High Pain Threshold, Rapid Healing, Toughness, and Wealth. Duty (to King, on 12 or less), Sense of Duty (to Musketeers), and Gentleman's Code of Honor are required. These mandatory disadvantages do not count against the -40 limit, granting them an "extra" 30 points. Other common disadvantages for Musketeers include Compulsive Carousing and Compulsive Gambling, Gluttony (for quality food, only) Impulsiveness, Jealousy, Lecherousness, Odious Personal Habit (boasting), Overconfidence, Stubbornness, and Truthfulness.

Skills: Required skills are Black Powder Weapons (Musket and Pistol), Fencing (as part of a martial arts style, p. 28) or The Sword! (p. 14), and Riding. Musketeers would likely know Acrobatics, Carousing, Gambling, Jumping, Literature, Savoir-Faire, Sex Appeal, Tactics, and possibly some Artistic skills.

Pirates

Nowhere in history is there such a relatively small "community" more daring, more fearsome, more mobile, and more influential than pirates. Their brief Golden Age (see Chapter 4) found a remarkably diverse group willing to risk their lives for adventure and the promise of riches. PCs of any background can scavenge the high seas - perhaps they are trying to escape their past.

Advantages/Disadvantages: None required. Absolute Direction, Alertness, Combat Reflexes, High Pain Threshold, Immunity to Disease, Rapid Healing, and Toughness are all useful. Wealth would be very rare for a starting pirate. The GM should consider disallowing it; pirates usually acquire their possessions the hard way. The GM may require a Wealth level of Struggling or less for pirate PCs.

Other common disadvantages include: Alcoholism, Bad Temper, Bloodlust, Code of Honor, Compulsive Gambling, Greed, Impulsiveness, Odious Personal Habits (lots of these), One Eye, One Hand, Overconfidence, Poverty, Sense of Duty (to Shipmates) (-5 points), Sense of Duty (to the Brethren of the Coast) (-10 points), Social Stigma (Outlaw) and Enemy (most Governments!). Avoid Honesty and thalassophobia (fear of oceans)!

Skills: Seamanship is required. Most pirates are also skilled in Axe, Black Powder Weapons, Boating, Brawling, Carousing, Climbing, Gambling, Knife, Knife Throwing and Shortsword (Cutlass). Many pirates would also be proficient in the Chausson or other martial arts styles (pp. 28-31). A few pirates may have studied other schools of combat. Other useful skills include Meteorology, Stealth, Survival (Island/Beach, Jungle), and Swimming. Some pirates in each crew also have Acting, Carpentry, Disguise, Fast-Talk, Gunner (Naval Cannon), Languages, Merchant, Tactics (Naval), Navigation, Shipbuilding, Shiphandling, and Thief skills. Pirates in certain valued positions (doctor, cooper, master gunner, etc.) would likely stay behind in a boarding action.

Primitives

The Caribbean is a likely home for a primitive. It is easily possible for a native American Indian or escaped African slave to join a group of buccaneers. Most buccaneers share the common European prejudices against non-whites, but some are tolerant, having been hunted themselves.

Africans or natives of India, the Philippines, Indonesia, or Indochina are all possible characters in the piracy of the Red Sea. Indians (from India), Incas, Mayas, Aztecs, Cambodians, etc., are not really primitives, but are considered so by Europeans. Likewise, there are some powerful, developed African kingdoms at TL2/3.

Most primitives are TLO to TL2, with some familiarity with TL4 weapons. They may have Physical skills related to the higher TL, but not Mental skills. Shamans are tribal healers, and Physician/TL0-2 is appropriate. Many primitive peoples have a good grasp of herbal medicine and are adept at healing local fevers that might puzzle European doctors.

***GURPS** Voodoo* is recommended for anyone interested in using a shamanistic magic system.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Primitives must have the Primitive disadvantage. Social Stigma (Barbarian) is virtually *de rigeur*. Primitives might also have a positive Reputation (Favored curiosity), depending upon how exotic they are. A 10-point Unusual Background *advantage* may be required if the campaign is set in the steamy jungles of Central America (and European characters would be the Barbarians!)

Skills: Area Knowledge for their homeland could prove invaluable if they act as guides. They would also be conversant in any skills needed for their daily life, like Spear or Bow.

Privateers

Privateers (see sidebar, p. 60) are very common during this period. They can be played in any number of ways, from the most wicked pirate to the noblest hero.

Advantages/Disadvantages: As for pirates. Charisma, Literacy, Status, and Wealth are all very possible here, though. Greed is common, as is Code of Honor. Very few disadvantages are out of place; only the more severe physical ones and thalassophobia would be serious problems.

Skills: As for pirates.

Rebels

A rebel is a warrior, clan lord, or city dissident who takes action against his oppressors. Rob Roy (p. 91) is a fine example. Rebel PCs often have Social Stigmas , gaining Reputations and Enemies as their fame increases. Many have Diplomacy, Leadership, Strategy, and Combat/Weapon skills. For more details, see *The Celtic Lands*, p. 88.

Smugglers

Smugglers are specialized merchants; they prefer to avoid violence and most smugglers are not thieves. They usually consider themselves honest merchants who are circumventing unfair laws. Both England and Spain have strict trade regulations in the 17th century - only their own licensed ships are allowed to trade with their colonies. Smugglers prefer small, fast ships. They are welcomed by most colonists, as the regulated shipping rates are outrageously expensive. A good smuggler can sell selected merchandise, honestly bought, for half what the licensed merchants charge, and still make 100%+profit.

They should have skills similar to privateers and merchants. They are usually *not* pirates, though pirates often do a little smuggling themselves, on the side. See *The Smuggler Campaign* (p. 125) for more background.

Spies

Every country employs hundreds or thousands of spies. Some are soldiers, but more often they are privately contracted individuals. Milady de Winter in *The Three Musketeers* (see p. 49) is a prime example of a semi-successful spy. Richelieu, and later Cromwell, have the most efficient spy networks of the 17th century, but others aren't far behind.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Military spies might be required to have Military Rank. Useful advantages are Absolute Timing, Alertness, Charisma, Double-Jointed, Eidetic Memory, Empathy, Intuition, Language Talent, Literacy, Status, Strong Will, Voice and Wealth.

No disadvantages are required, except possibly Duty - though to which side should be a closely guarded secret! Other suitable disadvantages for spies include Fanaticism, Greed, Jealousy, Lecherousness, Overconfidence and Sense of Duty. Former spies might have remarkably circumscribed lives, reflected in unusual disadvantages. The Chevelier d'Eon, for example, was required to dress as a woman for the last few decades of his life.

Skills: Useful skills for spies include Acrobatics, Acting, Area Knowledge, Climbing, Dancing, Disguise, Fast-Talk, Fencing, Forgery, Knife, Languages, Lip-Reading, Lockpicking, Performance/Ritual (to infiltrate religious services), Poisons, Research, Riding, Savoir-Faire, Sex Appeal, Stealth, Shadowing, Streetwise, Surveying, Theology, etc.

Swashbuckling Women

A few bold women outshone their expected roles to earn a place in history and fiction. Anne Bonney and Mary Read (p. 72) were well-known pirates. Moll Cutpurse was an active and successful thief. Aphra Behn spied on the Dutch for Charles II of England while writing abolitionist novels and bawdy plays. Queen Christina of Sweden (see sidebar, p. 90) abdicated her throne in order to live her life riding, hunting, fencing, and intriguing. Perhaps the greatest of the lady swashbucklers was Julie la Maupin (pp. 53-54), whose skill with the sword and outrageous exploits equal any fictional hero's. See ***GURPS Who's Who** 2* for details on two pirate queens: Grace O'Malley and Cheng Shih.

In the real 17th and 18th centuries, women were second-class citizens, and any realistic campaign should require that Social Stigma for female PCs. (Noble ladies are second-class citizens compared to noblemen but not compared to commoners.) If players want to play female characters that are different from the Lady de Winter mold, they can do so. They will need to work out one of two things, though: either a plausible background within a realistic world, or a fictional world background to operate in.

If the game is set in a realistic world, a female swashbuckler can expect strange reactions from many people she meets. Many NPCs will be hostile. Somebody who is rescued by a woman may be astonished, but probably won't complain too much. Reactions of friends will vary from pleas to give up her strange ways to hero worship from some youngsters. There will be no neutral reactions. Once she's proven herself, she'll be considered a friend - otherwise, a freak or worse. A secret identity would not be necessary. Oddly enough, many people would simply not believe a competent fighter to actually be a woman unless she proves otherwise.

In a fictional world, the player and the GM should discuss the expected reaction to a female swashbuckler. Encountering a woman with a sword may be rare (but not unheard of) or there may be nothing unusual in it at all.

Alcohol Tolerance *see p. CI19*

Drink is a vital component of carousing in the Swashbuckling era - even more so than today. Any character who has Alcohol Tolerance gets a +1 bonus to Carousing (p. B63). Likewise, characters who display behavior that reveals this advantage or the Light Hangover or No Hangover advantages will gain a +1 Reputation among military men, duellists, and other tavern- frequenters.

Claim to Hospitality *see p. CI21*

A form of this advantage is automatically enjoyed by any European who is at least Status 1 or Military Rank 3. If meeting an NPC who is at least of this Rank or Status and no more than one level higher, characters can expect a civil greeting and at least a single night of lodging and board for themselves and companions. However, they are likewise expected to extend the same hospitality if they are able to do so. This *noblesse* extends even to time of war, although hospitality would consist of more comfortable imprisonment and palatable rations. Lower status characters are treated like the dogs that they are.

Clerical Investment *see p. B19*

Anyone who is a priest, minister, or cleric must take the Clerical Investment advantage. Clerics will be addressed by an appropriate title - Master for Protestant ministers (the title Reverend came later), Father for Roman Catholic priests, Brother for monks, Friar (from the Latin for "Brother") for Franciscans. Foreign titles may be used for atmosphere: Padre and Fray for Spanish priests and monks, Père and Frère for French ones.

Some Roman Catholic clergy (e.g., Jesuits, and the Dominicans in charge of the Inquisition) receive a -6 reaction from Protestants. Even from Roman Catholics, the Inquisition clergy receive a -2! They are usually obeyed by lay people of the same Status or lower, though, so the cost is the same.

Christian nuns do not have the Clerical Investment advantage; they are not ordained and have neither the legal nor spiritual authority of a priest. Monks may or may not be ordained as priests; most are not. Both monks and nuns are required to take the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and get a +1 reaction from those of their own faith.

Disease-Resistant *see p. CI24*

See Immunity to Disease, below.

Immunity to Disease *see p. B20*

Health-related advantages, including Disease-Resistant and Rapid Healing, become very important when playing in this genre. There is no magical healing, modern medicine or futuristic cure-all. A chest wound requires at least a month of recuperation in this era, and people of European stock are very prone to tropical diseases. Some GMs won't want to use the optional Fever rules (see sidebar, p. 108), so a player should check with the GM to determine if Immunity to Disease is worth taking.

Iron Hand *see p. CI26-27*

Some bare-fisted fighters in Europe and the Americas had a reputation of preternaturally hard hands. In a Cinematic campaign, this would be the Iron Hand advantage.

Light Hangover *see p. CI27*

See Alcohol Tolerance, above.

Literacy *see p. B21*

TL5 ushers in the era of free Literacy advantage. However, it is hard to draw the line when the literate population surpassed the illiterate. Therefore, until 1750, Semi-Literacy (p. CI29) is the norm. Note that many otherwise illiterate people can write and recognize their own names.

Military Rank *see p. B22*

The concept of a standing army has not yet really evolved in European consciousness in the early 17th century. Every gentleman (Status 1+) is expected to be trained in the arts of war and to serve his king when needed. Landholding nobles are to raise troops and report to the king. Consequently, anyone of Status 3 or more could have Rank 4 or 5, if desired. They could also serve as Rank 0 troops in an elite outfit, such as the King's Musketeers.

Individual standing units do exist as the core of major armies. These are well-trained - there has been enough war often enough for the soldiers to have become hardened. Regular army units at the beginning of the swashbuckling era are *proprietary*. They are the property of their commander. If he is replaced (except for some crime) he must be paid the value of his command. This is originally why ranks are bought and sold. The value of a company (captain's command) is $5,000. The value of a regiment (colonel's command) is $10,000.

By the end of the swashbuckling era, proprietary military units have been virtually eliminated, although the purchase system for officer rank (3+) survives in many countries. Sergeants and Corporals never purchase their ranks but are promoted from among the men.

Ranks above colonel are not directly available for purchase; they are a royal gift. Officers above colonel are nominally also commanders of at least one regiment and one company; day-to-day command is exercised by their lieutenant-colonel and lieutenant. *(Lieutenant* literally means "place-holder.") A colonel or major also normally has the command of one company in his own regiment.

An officer can sell his command for cash, but only to an acceptable buyer. The GM decides if a buyer is acceptable; normally women, enemy aliens, clerics, those of low class, and blatant incompetents are not acceptable. If the command is sold, the seller does not get back the points spent for Military Rank.

The level of the rank is given in parentheses in the following discussion. The company is the basic unit of men, and this varies from ten to 100 men. Basically, a company has a captain (4) and his lieutenant (3). The entire army is commanded by a captain-general (8), later shortened to general. He is assisted by his lieutenant-general (7), and has other staff members such as the quartermaster-general (6), scoutmaster-general (6), and fire-master-general (6 - in charge of artillery, although actual gunners were very often *not* military personnel during this period, but were civilian contractors). The companies may be formed into columns or regiments under the command of a colonel (6). If he has any assistants, they are sergeants-major (5), later shortened to major and not to be confused with sergeants. Enlisted men are privates, Rank 0. There may or may not be sergeants (2) or corporals (1). Note that every country uses a different system, and certain ranks might not exist in a given army - but the rank costs remain the same. Treat all colonels as Rank 6, for example, even if there are no majors.

While common members of the elite guard units for the various European monarchies (like Musketeers) are Rank 0, at least one level of Status is required for membership. This reflects not only their social status but also their military status. These troops earn respect from ordinary soldiers - and women! The captain of the elites is often a lieutenant-general (7). The King is the general.

Most men of Rank 5 have Leadership at 13+. Those of higher rank vary considerably. Those who rise through merit will have even higher Leadership abilities, while the king's favorites might or might not have any Leadership skills! It is strongly recommended that no PC be allowed to start the game with a Military Rank above 5.

Military Rank, unlike Social Status, costs no money to maintain. While extreme incompetence or cowardice is usually met with dismissal from the military, ordinary stupidity is tolerated as a fact of life.

Anyone of Status 1+ with enough charisma or money can be a captain. All that is usually required is to raise some troops or pay a noble or bureaucrat to grant a commission. Often a father will buy his son a commission, hoping to turn a dissolute boy into a man. One *cannot* get into elite troops this way, however. It is also possible to rise through the ranks in the 17th century - less so in the 18th century. Those that rise through the ranks have a minimum Status of one for each three levels of rank; others use their own level of Status.

Naval rank is different, and doesn't become stratified until the 18th century. An admiral is Rank 8; commodore, Rank 7. The commander of any ship is a captain. His relative rank depends on the power of his ship. The captain of a ship-of-the-line is Rank 6; of a frigate, Rank 5; and of a sloop, Rank 4.

Lieutenants are all Rank 3 and petty officers (boatswain, gunner, carpenter, etc.) are Rank 2. Merchant-service titles are not military ranks.

No Hangover *see p. CI28*

See Alcohol Tolerance, above.

Patron *see pp. B24, C128*

A wealthy mistress can count as a patron – Porthos, for example, made good monetary use of his mistress. The GM is referred to chapters 29-34 in *The Three Musketeers* for an idea of what a man may have to go through to maintain a wealthy mistress' favor. Likewise, a wealthy man can be a patron for a swashbuckling woman who is his mistress. La Maupin made such use of her noble lovers.

Rapid Healing *see p. B23*

See Immunity to Disease, above.

Ridiculous Luck, Serendipity, Super Luck *see pp. CI29, CI30, CI46*

Luck is the constant companion of the swashbuckling hero. Serendipity is appropriate for any level campaign. Ridiculous Luck might fit in a slightly cinematic campaign. Both Ridiculous and Super Luck are quite at home in cinematic swashbuckling.

Trained By a Master *see p. CI31*

This advantage is required to learn any of the cinematic skills or maneuvers associated with the martial arts styles described in Chapter 2.

NEW ADVANTAGES

Style Familiarity — *1-25 points*

This indicates a *general* knowledge of (but not training in) one or more fighting styles. A fighter who lacks Style Familiarity with a given style defends at -1 against an adversary who uses that style. When a fighter encounters an opponent using a familiar style, he will recognize it after the first round of combat. On an IQ roll, he will recognize it *before* combat, from the opponent's weapons and guard position.

Anyone trained in a style is assumed to be familiar with it for free; additional familiarities cost 1 point apiece. Familiarity with all *known* styles in the game world costs 20 points; to be familiar with secret styles as well, add up to 5 points more (GM's decision). To acquire familiarity during play, a student must not only spend character points, but must also have access to appropriate teachers - a single day of sparring with a teacher is enough.

Weapon Master — *Varies*

A Weapon Master is someone with a high degree of training or unnerving talent with muscle-powered weapons (swords, bows, etc.). He is familiar with, if not proficient in, every sort of primitive weapon within a given class (see below). Within his area of expertise, he has an improved default skill: all relevant Physical/Easy Combat/Weapon skills default to DX-1, Physical/Average ones to DX-2, and Physical/Hard ones to DX-3.

When using a suitable weapon, a Weapon Master gets a damage bonus equal to 1/5 his skill with that weapon, reflecting his knowledge of where to strike the human body for deadliest effect. He also gets one additional attack and parry each turn per three full levels of skill over 12: two attacks/parries at skill 15, three at skill 18, etc. These benefits do not apply to default use, and never apply to guns of any kind.

A Weapon Master may also learn any cinematic skills allowed in the campaign (like Power Blow or Pressure Points), as long as they could reasonably be used with his weapons of choice. The GM is the final arbiter in all cases.

The Weapon Master must choose the class of weapons to which these benefits apply:

- All muscle-powered weapons. *45 points.*
- A large class of weapons; e.g., all blades, all one-handed weapons. *40 points.*
- A medium class of weapons; e.g., all swords, all pole weapons (polearms, spears, quarterstaves, etc.), all ninja weapons. *35 points.*
- A small class of weapons; e.g., fencer's weapons (rapier, smallsword, buckler, cloak, etc.), knightly weapons (broadsword, shield, lance, etc). *30 points.*
- Two weapons normally used together; e.g., rapier and dagger. *25 points.*
- One weapon. *20 points.*

In all cases, if a weapon can be thrown, then the benefits above also apply when throwing that weapon.

DISADVANTAGES

Code of Honor — *see p. B31*

Codes of Honor come in many forms. In *Swashbucklers*, the four most common are the Gentleman's Code (p. B31), the Pirates' Code (p. B31), the Highwayman's Code and the Gaelic Code.

- *The Highwayman's Code of Honor* (-5 points). The Highwayman's Code of Honor is unique to England of the 17th and 18th centuries. These bold robbers (see p. 80) call themselves "knights of the road," and many of them hold certain principles sacred. One principle is courtesy - they are always polite if not resisted. Another is generosity - they return enough money for the traveler to spend the night and get home by coach. A highwayman with this Code of Honor will not refuse a request for money from any poor person. A third point is graciousness to the ladies and a flirtatiousness that many women find flattering. Often a lady will be able to redeem some of her husband's gold with a kiss, something everybody but the husband enjoys. (And if the robber is a Cavalier (see p. 81), it will be some kiss!) An honorable highwayman may not rob the poor, and Cavalier highwaymen will not rob Royalist supporters during the Commonwealth.
- *The Gaelic Code of Honor* (-10 points). Highland Scots and Irish are extremely proud people. They have ancient codes of behavior followed to the death. Vengeance is essential - if you (or your clan, your religion, a bard, etc.) are insulted, you *must* demand an apology. If it is not forthcoming, you must issue a challenge. If you are beaten, you must try again, though you are allowed to recuperate first. If a truce is called, it must be observed - only Englishmen violate a truce. The back line in battle is dishonorable - you *must* try to be the first into combat. (Highland Scottish battles against the English were lost because the clans would race each other across the battlefield to be the first at the enemy. Carefully-laid battle plans would be ignored to further clan honor.)

Lying to an ally is impossible, though standard diplomatic subterfuge is allowed with an enemy. You may agree to a plan of action that an ally proposes just to shut him up. Of course, in the actual battle, you will do whatever honor demands, not necessarily what you agreed to do. You are not allowed to take advantage of an unsuspecting enemy. Killing a single opponent from a distance is dishonorable; it is preferable to inquire his name and issue the correct challenges before killing him. In actual war, of course, this last bit of politeness can be neglected.

You will also be distrustful of other clans, as admitting that they might be respectable is to lessen the honor of your own clan. Most Celts also have the Sense of Duty (to Clan) disadvantage. See pp. 88-91 for more on clans.

Cowardice -15 points (see p. B32)

In this age of duelling and honor, a coward receives a -3 reaction rather than the -2 as listed on p. B32. For that reason, plus the fact that one's cowardice is more likely to become known (an insult cannot be ignored), this Disadvantage is worth -15 points for campaigns in the 17th and 18th centuries. Even in a pirate community, societies are so conscious of honor that there is a -3 reaction to cowardice.

Delusion (Genteel Proficiency) -15 points (see p. B32)

The "English Delusion" is a belief that an untrained combatant of sufficient breeding can defeat anyone - "Blood will tell, old boy." The character will refuse formal instruction in any combat skill unless a Will-2 roll is made. Combat skills purchased at character creation are at double cost and cannot exceed the character's DX (skills are raised normally during play). The character can also take an Odious Personal Habit: Publicly insults trained combatants. The point value of this Delusion reflects the physical threat it poses to its bearer in combat, not public reaction.

See sidebar, p. 28, for a related major Delusion.

Intolerance see p. B34

Intolerance of other religions is the norm. There is no point value for Intolerance (Religious) (p. CI91). Blatant religious *tolerance* can be an Odious Personal Habit (see below).

Intolerance toward other nationalities is a disadvantage. If it is toward *all* foreigners, it is worth -10 points. If it is only toward one commonly-encountered nationality, it is worth -5 points. If it is toward an uncommonly-encountered nationality, it is a -1-point quirk.

Lecherousness see p. B34

The French and some Latin cultures are famous for their weakness for romance, and Lecherousness is a *very* common disadvantage in *The Three Musketeers* (hardly surprising if one reads a biography of Dumas). It may be more refined than the term Lecherousness implies, but whether the lecherous character woos with flowers and courtly bows or with leers and grabby paws, the desired reward is the same.

Lover's Distraction see p. CI91

This is a cinematic disadvantage, even in ***GURPS*** *Swashbucklers.*

Odious Personal Habits see p. B26

A very common disadvantage for all types of swashbucklers is the Odious Personal Habit of Boasting. In fact, "swashbuckler" originally meant a braggart. This can be either a -5 or -10 point disadvantage, and can be coupled with Cowardice (see Capitano in the *Commedia Dell'Arte* sidebar, pp. 48-49) or with Overconfidence for someone similar to Porthos, who believes his own boasts!

Openly advocating religious tolerance of Christian groups other than the dominant sect of the region is an Odious Personal Habit worth either -5 or -10 points. Openly advocating religious tolerance of non-Christian faiths is worth -15 points if the campaign takes place in Europe or the respectable circles of European colonies.

Reputation see p. B17

A Reputation is a common advantage/disadvantage in this world. In an age when Paris has only 200,000 people, and no TV or movie actors to talk about, many people will have heard of anyone connected with the Court. This includes any heroic members of the King's Guards - and any cowardly ex-member of the King's Guards! Cowardice is probably the worst reputation available during this time.

A "bad" Reputation is not necessarily a Disadvantage. Blackbeard's and Bartholomew Roberts' reputations eventually led to their deaths but also gave them years of easy pirating. They each had a distinctive, well-known Jolly Roger, and most ships surrendered without a fight. They might have died much sooner if they'd had to fight more often. No one molested them in the ports they were allowed to enter, though many ports were closed to them. The GM must decide each case individually.

Self-Centered, Selfish see p. CI94

The pride inherent in these behaviors may overlap with a Code of Honor, and at the GM's discretion, characters with either can have the value of their Code reduced accordingly.

Social Stigma see p. B27

Being of a minority religion might qualify as the Social Stigma disadvantage if it's obvious from appearances - a priest in his habit, a Quaker using his distinctive thee and thou, or a Roman Catholic crossing himself in a Calvinist area.

Barbarians needn't be from outside Europe. An Irishman or Highland Scot who spends the entire campaign in England would be labeled a "barbarian" by the British. In fiction, Irishmen and Scots are too proud to attempt to modify their

accents or abandon their traditional dress. If a Celt were to attempt to act like the English, the disadvantage is only -10 points (Minority Group), but there is a -2 reaction from other Celts. If the Celt is able to speak English without an accent and tries to hide his origins, this should be a Secret worth -5 points.

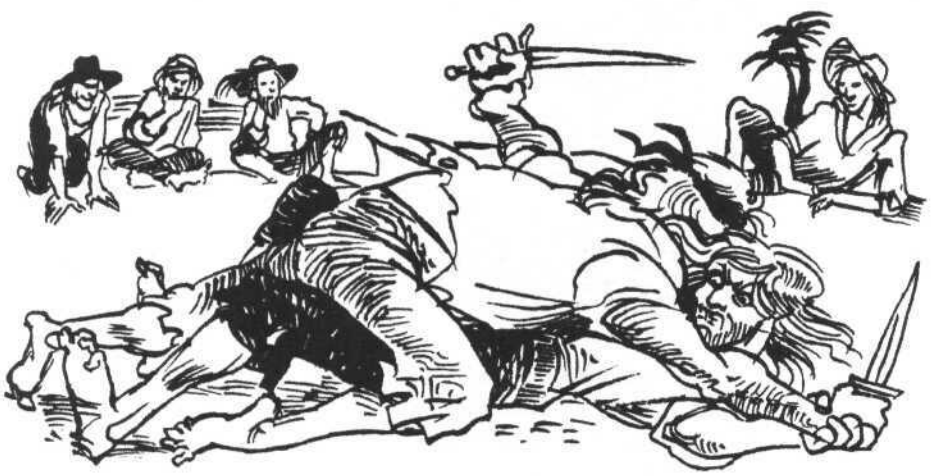
Any foreigner might have a -5 or -10 Social Stigma, even in the most enlightened areas. This does not apply if the PC expects to spend a significant proportion of his time in his home country.

SKILLS

This section describes skills with notes relevant to ***Swashbucklers*** campaigns. Readers are referred to ***GURPS Basic Set*** or ***Compendium I*** as other skills are encountered in other sections of this book. Of particular note to swashbucklers are: Acrobatics, Broadsword, Buckler, Cloak, Cooperage, Fast-Draw Knife from Teeth, Gambling, Gunner, Shiphandling, Shortsword, and Surveying.

Black Powder Weapons — *see p. B49*

Matchlocks, wheellocks, and flintlocks each count as an unfamiliar weapon to one who normally uses another. It would be common for a fighter trained before 1700 to be familiar with all three types. One trained after 1700 would probably be familiar only with flintlocks.



Boxing, Brawling, Judo, Karate, and Wrestling — *see pp. B242, B50, B51, B243*

Contrary to popular prejudice, the science of pugilism had *not* been lost since the fall of Rome. What *is* true is that most upper-class gentlemen eschewed the European unarmed arts in the mid-17th century and did not rediscover them until the middle of the 18th (although some unarmed techniques were still taught by swordmasters).

To learn any unarmed combat skill except for skills explicitly associated with a fighting style (pp. 28-31) in any campaign set between 1650-1820, a character of Status 1+ must take a 10-point Unusual Background (Consorts with low-lives). For campaigns set between 1650-1750, a similar 5- point Unusual background is charged for status 0 characters who want to learn any unarmed combat skill not part of a rapier or smallsword style. See sidebar, p. 27, for use of these skills in a ***Swashbucklers*** campaign.

Fencing — *see p. B50*

The ***GURPS*** Fencing skill is almost cinematic. See the sidebar on p. 19 for a more realistic way to handle fencing.

Savoir-Faire — *see pp. B64, CI160*

This is an era when a *faux pas* can end a life. Whenever the PCs have to explain themselves to someone of higher Social Status, add ⅛ Savoir-Faire (rounding down, and *not* from default) to any Fast-Talk roll (to reflect toadying).

Tactics — *see p. B64*

Characters may specialize in Tactics (Naval) which defaults to IQ-6, Tactics (Land)-2, or Strategy (Naval)-6. Land tactics is assumed unless the character sheet states Tactics (Naval). Both Tactics specializations mutually default at -2.

Theology — *see p. B62*

To pass as a member of another faith, a successful Theology+2 (or IQ-4) roll is needed. To pass as a member of the clergy, a successful Theology roll is needed to fool a lay person. Roll a Contest of Theology to fool a clergyman. Knowledge of a religion's beliefs does not guarantee skill in performing its rituals. That requires the Performance/Ritual skill (see p. CI147).

NEW SKILL

The Sword! (Physical/Hard) — *No default*
Prerequisites: Special; see below

The Sword! is a cinematic skill, unsuitable for use in realistic campaigns. It is meant to model the unearthly affinity for swords of 1930s-era swashbuckling movie heroes.

The Sword! allows one to use *any* one-handed sword with all the benefits of the Fencing skill (p. B50); i.e., a Parry equal to 2/3 skill and extra parries. It does *not* work with weapons other than swords - even those that can normally be used with sword skills. If the fighting styles on pp. 28-31 are used, The Sword! can stand in for all one-handed sword skills, and any maneuver that normally defaults to such a skill can default to The Sword! instead.

In addition, you may substitute The Sword! for any DX, Acrobatics, Climbing, or Jumping roll made during a sword fight. Examples include the DX roll to stay standing when

someone yanks the rug you're standing on, or the Acrobatics rolls to slide down banisters and swing from chandeliers.

Finally, you may roll vs. The Sword! to resolve *any* action performed with your sword, subject to GM approval. For instance, it could replace Throwing skill to flip a dropped weapon back to an honorable foe, or Pickpocket skill to fish the keys off the jailer's belt . . . provided you use your sword!

To learn The Sword!, you must first have the Weapon Master advantage (p. 12) and Fencing at 14+. You must also have at least two points invested in each of two or more of the following: Acrobatics, Body Language, Brawling, Broadsword, Carousing, Climbing, Cloak, Dancing, Enthrallment (any), Fast-Talk, Intimidation, Juggling, Jumping, Katana, Knife, Lasso, Navigation, Performance, Poetry, Punning, Riding (Horse), Sailor, Savoir-Faire (any but Servant), Sensitivity, Shiphandling, Shortsword, Singing, Streetwise, or Tournament Law.

Characters from fiction who have The Sword! include any swashbuckler portrayed by Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. or Errol Flynn.

LANGUAGES

Most languages that swashbucklers will speak are Mental/Average (see p. B54-55). The exceptions might include non-Indo-European languages from Africa, America, Indonesia, etc.

Many European languages have some default to each other, especially the written forms. The Romance languages include Latin, French, Spanish and Italian. French defaults to either Italian or Spanish at -5, Latin at -6. Spanish, and Italian default to each other at -2, Latin at -3.

German and Dutch default to each other at -3, and the Scandinavian languages to them at -6. Danish and Norwegian default to each other at -1, and Swedish to each of them at -3. English and Dutch default to each other at -5. English and German default to each other at -7. (While much of the vocabulary of English might be Romance-based, more of it is Germanic, as is its underlying grammar.)

Gaelach (Scots Gaelic) defaults to Ulster Gaeilge (Irish) at -2, Connaught and Leinster Gaeilge at -3, and Munster Gaeilge at -4. Welsh and Breton default to Gaeilge or Gaelach at -8 (-3 to each other).

Some American Indian languages will default to each other at -2 to -6, but don't expect an Algonquin to understand Aztec!

Languages defaulting to each other should *not* be taken to mean that there is a word-to-word correspondence.

For time travelers, the languages of the 17th century default to their 20th-century descendents at -2. Sentences such as, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," take a little getting used to. It would not be difficult for a 20th-century person to pass as a foreigner in England, but it would be nearly impossible to pass as a native - even for a modern Englishman!

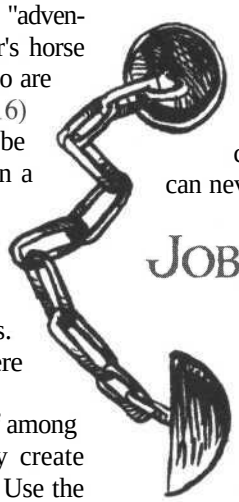
WEALTH AND STATUS

Average starting wealth in ***GURPS*** *Swashbucklers* is $1,000. For swashbuckling campaigning, the GM may allow PCs up to Wealthy to spend all their money on personal "adventuring" gear; it is easy to spend $5,000 on a Musketeer's horse and gear - and one still needs a lackey! Adventurers who are Very Wealthy, Filthy Rich, or Multimillionaires (p. B16) may only spend 20% of their starting wealth on items to be used directly in the campaign; 80% must be tied up in a home, furniture, clothing, etc. Of course, this wealth may also form the down payment on a ship.

One's life was defined by the class he was born into. The exceptions are Status 0 and Status 1 - these years were the time of the rise of the middle classes. People in these classes could hope to rise, if they were good or lucky enough at what they did.

Though a bold and lucky fellow might find himself among the higher levels of society eventually, players may create beginning characters of no higher Social Status than 3. Use the *Status and Cost of Living* table on p. B191 as an idea of Status in the Swashbuckling era. Status for Musketeers is covered in the sidebar on p. 46; for Celtic countries, see sidebar, p. 88.

Cost of Living



Cost of living is determined by the PC's Status. Use the table on p. B191 for player characters.

Note that living below your Status level may reduce your Status! Roll vs. IQ each month; a failure means Status drops by 1. The point value of a character drops if his Status drops. A noble's Status can never go below 1.

JOBS AND INCOME

In civilized areas, PCs may find jobs to provide income while they are not in play. Of course, not every job is available in every part of the world - there is little call for a slaver in Paris! Jobs can help cover the PC's cost of living. The *Job Table* on the next page lists a number of possible. Some have skill or experience prerequisites (default values don't count here; at least a half-point must be invested in the skill).

JOB TABLE

Job (Required Skills), Monthly Income	*Success Roll*	*Critical Failure*
Poor Jobs		
Beggar* (no qualifications), $50	10	-li/3d
Farm Laborer (ST 9+), $50	12	LJ
Street Thief* (DX 11+, Stealth 11+, Lockpicking or Pickpocket 10+), $70	Best PR	2d/3 months in jail**
Street Vendor* (no qualifications), $60	IQ-1	-2i/1d
Tenant Farmer (Agronomy 12+, ST 10+), $50	12	-1i
Struggling Jobs		
Clerk (Literacy, Accounting 12+), $125	PR	LJ
Foot Soldier (Black Powder Weapons 12+), $75 plus room and board	PR	2d/4d
Laborer (ST 10+), $75	ST	LJ
Minstrel* (Musical skill 12+), Skill×$8 plus other musical skill	PR-2	-1i/-2i
Petty Thief* (four Thief skills 11+), $150	Best PR	2d/3 months in jail**
Porter (ST 12+), $100	ST	LJ
Sailor/Merchant Marine (Seamanship 10+) $75 plus room and board	PR	2d/3d
Servant/Lackey (Savoir-Faire (Servant) 13+, Status -1 or higher), $75 plus room and board	PR	LJ
Thug* (Brawling 11+ or any Weapon 11+), $150	PR-2	3d/1 year in jail
Traveling Artisan* (Craft skill 11+), $100	PR	-1i/-2i
Average Jobs		
Animal Handler/Trainer (Animal skill 13+), $450	PR	LJ/4d
Army/Navy Officer (Status 1+, Leadership 12+ *or* Wealthy+, Tactics 10+), Rank× $100	Best PR	2d/-1 Rank
Bureaucrat (Administration 12+, Literacy, Status 0+), $400	PR	LJ
Doctor* (Physician 12+, Status 1+, Literacy), $500	PR	-li
Duellist* (Fencing 13+, Fast-Talk 13+), Fencingx $20	Fencing	-1i, 1d/-3i, 4d, roll vs. HT-1 or be crippled, Roll vs. Fast-Talk or be sentenced to death
Fencing Master* (Teaching 13+, Any Sword Skill 15+, Savoir-Faire 13+, Fast-Talk 13+), Teachingx $30	Best PR	-1i/3d, roll vs. HT or be crippled (lose an eye or hand)
Gambler* (Gambling 11+), Skillx $25	PR-2	-1i/2d
Merchant* (Merchant 13+), Skillx $30	PR	-1i/-2i
Musketeer/Cardinal's Guard (Status 1+, Fencing 14+, Black Powder Weapons 12+, Musketeers: Riding 12+), $200	Best PR	2d/3d
Opera Singer (Singing 14+, Acting 12+, Dancing 13+), $300	Worst PR	lose job/2d, lose job
Parish Clergyman (Theology 12+, Clerical Investment, Literacy, Status 0+), $400	Worst of PR, IQ	-1i/accused of heresy: flee or face trial
Shop Owner* (Professional skill 12+, Status 0+, a shop), Skillx $25	PR	-1i/-2i
Skilled Craftsman* (Craft skill 13+, Status 0+), Skillx $25	PR	-1i/-2i
Thief* (Four Thief skills 13+), $500	Best PR	2d/6 months in jail**
Town Watch/Guard (Spear 12+, Black Powder Weapons 10+, One sword skill 12+), $400	Best PR	LJ/4d
Comfortable Jobs		
Army General/Navy Flag Officer (Strategy 10+ or Politics 10+) Rankx $200	Worst PR	1d, -li/3d or reduced to Rank 6
Lawyer* (Law 13+, Status 1+), $1,500	PR	-3i/-10i, disbarred
Master Craftsman* (Craft skill 15+, own shop), Craft skillx $120	PR	-2i/-4i
Merchant Ship Captain (Navigation 10+, Shiphandling 11+, Leadership 10+), $1,000 plus room and board	Worst PR	-1i/-6i
Slaver* (Merchant 10+, Diplomacy 10+), $1,200	PR	-2i/3d and -4i
Smuggler* (Merchant 10+, Streetwise 12+, Shiphandling 11+), $1,200	PR-2	3d/3 years in jail
Surgeon* (Surgery 14+), $1,500	PR	-2i/-6i
Wealthy Jobs		
High Church Official (Status 5+, Theology 12+, Administration 12+, Clerical Investment), $3,000	Best PR	Income drops 10%
Professional Investor* (Status 2+, Filthy Rich, Merchant 14+), $5,000	PR	-3i/-10i
Ruling Nobility* (Status 5+), $3,000	Status+8	-2i/-1 Status (might face treason accusation)

* Freelance occupation - income is earned when roll is made exactly. See pp. B192-4 for more information on jobs and freelancing.
** Shipment to penal colony on second critical failure.

MONEY

The easiest way to handle money is to simply call the ***GURPS*** dollar by the name of a coin in the country the campaign is set in. In France, for example, $1 would be called "one livre," while in England the term might be "one shilling." Pirates, of course, would gloat over "pieces of eight" and "doubloons." Simplicity has a lot going for it.

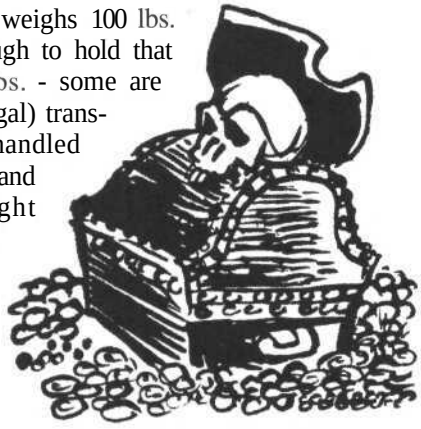
For those who demand more realism, though, read on …

The American dollar did not exist in the 17th century, but the term "dollar" was already in use in England by 1581. The first dollar in America was the Dutch "lion dollar." The most common coin in the colonies in those days was the "piece of eight" *(peso de ocho* - although "peso" actually means "weight") minted in New Spain. It was called "the Spanish dollar," and became the standard coin simply because there were more of them than anything else.

There was no national paper money. Gold, silver, and copper coins were the currency of all nations, silver being the most common. Each colony also had its own currency, so the proliferation of types of money is staggering. This is not really so much of a problem as it seems, however, since all the coins were made of the same metals. Merchants took coins by metal type, not by national origin. They would weigh the lot and give value based on current local rates. Thus the cliche of a highwayman weighing a purse in his hand and assessing the value is actually realistic. A successful Merchant skill roll allows one to guess the value of a purse of silver or gold to within 20% simply by hefting it - the better the roll, the better the estimate.

Even in areas where foreign coins are scarce, weighing money is a common practice. Many rogues shave some silver off each coin, gradually saving enough to melt down and sell. Weighing the coins effectively reduces the risk of getting less than one bargained for. The phrase "$100 worth of silver" may be the simplest way to express the concept of $100 in the game, and isn't even out of character in a cosmopolitan campaign. The coin names do help set the mood, though!

During the 17th and 18th centuries, $1,000 in silver weighs one pound and $32,000 in gold weighs one pound. Since there is no paper money and gold coins are rare, this usually means that $500 is a half-pound of weight. The GM can usually ignore this, except in pirate campaigns where the plunder is often over $100,000 value, all in silver coins! ($100,000 in silver weighs 100 lbs. A chest large enough to hold that adds at least 40 lbs. - some are heavier.) Large (legal) transactions are often handled by bankers' notes, and governments might issue letters of credit. Port Royal, Jamaica even issued letters of credit to buccaneers and pirates!



The following charts show the value of selected currencies in the 17th and 18th centuries:

Spain:

	*Doblon** *(Gold)*	*Pistole*** *(Gold)*	*Peso*† *(Silver)*	*Real*‡ *(Silver)*	*Maravedi (Copper)*	*$*
1 Doblon	1	2	5	40	1,360	$100
1 Pistole		1	2½	20	680	$50
1 Peso			1	8	272	$20
1 Real				1	34	$2.50
1 Maravedi					1	$0.07

* Also called a Doubloon. In the 16th century, a Doubloon was worth 16 Pesos.

** Not to be confused with the French pistole.

† Piece of Eight.

‡ Pronounced "ray-AHL," also called a *pieca* or bit.

France:

	*Louis d'Or** *(Gold)*	*Ecu*** *(Silver)*	*Livre (Silver)*	*Sou (Copper)*	*$*
1 Louis d'Or	1	3	9	180	$60
1 Ecu		1	3	60	$20
1 Livre			1	20	$6.67
1 Sou				1	$0.33

* Also called a (French) Pistole.

** Also called a Crown.

England:

	Guinea (Gold)	*Pound* (Acc't)*	*Crown (Silver)*	*Shilling (Silver)*	*Penny (Copper)*	*$*
1 Guinea	1	1/20	4/5	21	252	$105
1 Pound		1	4	20	240	$100
1 Crown			1	5	60	$25
1 Shilling				1	12	$5
1 Penny					1	$0.42

* There was no pound coin at this time; it was strictly a unit of account, e.g. a banker's convenience.

Holland:

	Ducat (Gold)	*Lion Dollar (Silver)*	*Florin* (Silver)*	*Stuiver (Copper)*	*$*
1 Ducat	1	2½	5	100	$40
1 Lion		1	2	40	$16
1 Florin			1	20	$8
1 Stuiver				1	$0.40

* Also called a Gulden, or Guilder.

The English also had half-crowns, ha'pennies and farthings, and the Dutch had schellings, groots, pennings, ducatoons, ryder, and rijksdaalder. The list above should suffice unless you also want to include escudos, ducados, marks, krone, thalers, cruzados, tostaos, dobroas, ackies, taccae, reis, lira, skillings, piastres . . . and many more - *all* of which, by the way, are likely to be found in pirates' hauls!

COMBAT

"La pointe d'une epee est une réalité qui fait disparaitre bien des fantômes."
– "The point of a sword is a reality that well dispels fantasies."

The swashbuckling genre is ultimately based on this principle: the sword is the absolute arbiter. Villains don't come to their senses and repent; ruffians aren't talked out of a fight. Matters are *expected* to come to blows.

Europe has as extensive a history of combat skills as can be found anywhere in the world. Thus, the combat techniques of the Swashbuckling era are handled as martial arts and described using the rules in ***GURPS Martial Arts,*** summarized here for those without that text. The rules in this chapter can be used for dueling (pp. 54-56), boarding ships (pp. 119-120), or melee rounds in mass combat (pp. 56-57).

MANEUVERS

A *maneuver* is a specific type of attack or defense. Maneuvers are treated like skills: each one defaults to one or more prerequisite skills, or to DX, usually at some penalty. Some maneuvers can also default to other maneuvers (a special exception to the "double defaults" restriction on p. B45). When figuring a maneuver from default level, always use the best default.

When a maneuver defaults to "any Combat/Weapon skill," it means that a version of the maneuver is available for any hand weapon or unarmed combat skill. Others are restricted to weapon skills, or to a specific subset of weapon skills. For maneuvers like these, a separate version is required for each skill (see *Specialization*, below).

Learning Maneuvers: If a style (see p. 28) teaches a particular maneuver, a fighter *who knows that style* can study and improve it. Otherwise, he can only have it at default. Maneuvers are improved as follows:

Level	*Average*	***Hard***
Default	0 points	0 points
Default+1	½ point	1 point
Default+2	1 point	2 points
Default+3	2 points	4 points
Default+4	4 points	6 points

Further increases cost 2 points per level. Maneuvers will also improve when DX or the prerequisite skill is increased. Some maneuvers can be improved *beyond* the level of the controlling skill; others cannot. This is noted for each maneuver. Note that a fighter with *no* points in a maneuver may still use the default!

Specialization: Most maneuvers require specialization to a particular skill. They can default from *several* skills, but the user must name the specific skill(s) for which the maneuver is learned. He can learn the same maneuver for several different skills.

Movement: Certain maneuvers (e.g., Attack and Fly Out) allow two hexes of movement as the "step" portion of a step and attack (p. B104). To use these maneuvers, the attacker must have Move 2+. If using *Increased Step for High Move* (p. CII72), these maneuvers count as a *single* step (e.g., someone with a step of 2 could execute Attack and Fly Out and still step 1 hex).

Mounted Combat: Most maneuvers are possible when mounted. Remember that mounted combat uses the *lower* of Riding skill and weapon skill (see p. B136). If this would lower effective weapon skill, all maneuvers that default to it are lowered by the same amount.

A mounted man may only use the Bind, Close Combat, and Corps-à-Corps maneuvers against other horsemen. An opponent on the ground is too distant to be targeted with these techniques.

Maneuvers which give an extra step (Attack and Fly Out) or which require a step (Esquive, Pass, Slip) are *impossible* on horseback; even an expert cannot get a mount to respond fast enough for such footwork! To launch a moving attack, do an ordinary step and attack while your horse moves. At Move 6+, this gives -2 to hit but +2 damage. The GM may allow this -2 to be bought off as a Hard maneuver based on weapon skill.

FENCING SKILLS

The Fencing skill (p. B50) is intended to let lightly-equipped swordsmen fight like 1930s cinema heroes. It offers huge advantages over other weapon skills: a Parry equal to 2/3 skill and extra parries on top of that. Of course, this book is titled *Swashbucklers* for a reason, and it is likely that most GMs will *want* swordplay to work this way (many will opt to allow The Sword!, too; see p. 14). Thus, this chapter assumes that the GM will use Fencing as written. The *only* necessary change to ***Basic Set*** is that Fencing now requires a specialty: one of Fencing (Rapier), Fencing (Saber), and Fencing (Smallsword), which mutually default at -3.

As written, though, Fencing skill is *not* realistic. First, it grants defensive bonuses beyond any other *GURPS* combat skill. Second, it is associated with a suspiciously wide variety of weapons. Anyone who has handled a late-18th-century smallsword and a late-16th-century rapier will immediately notice that they are less alike than a broadsword and a shortsword! GMs who would prefer a realistic, historical treatment of sword skills should consider the following *optional* rule:

Broadsword skill requires specialization in either broadsword (the basic weapon described under Broadsword skill, p. B50) or rapier. These specialties default to one another at -4.

Shortsword skill requires specialization in one of shortsword (the basic weapon described under Shortsword skill, p. B52), smallsword, court sword, hanger, or duelling saber. These specialties mutually default at -4. The fencing saber was originally developed as a training weapon for the dueling saber; those who specialize in the fencing saber should take Shortsword Sport (Duelling Saber).

Broadsword (Broadsword) and Shortsword (Shortsword) can be abbreviated "Broadsword" and "Shortsword," and default to each other at -2, as before. This is the only direct default between Broadsword and Shortsword specialties.

Fencing skill is restricted to the epee, smallsword, dress smallsword, and light duelling saber (does swing-2 cutting damage). These specialties default to each other at -3. Fencing (Light Duelling Saber) also defaults to Broadsword (Broadsword)-5 and Shortsword (Duelling Saber)-3. Use of the foil is covered by Fencing Art/Sport (Smallsword) or Fencing Art/Sport (Épee). An ultralight weapon (see sidebar, p. 20) wielded with Fencing gets two parries per turn and any number of parries on an All-Out Defense, exactly per p. B50.

Continued on next page . . .

FENCING SKILLS (CONTINUED)

Parry is ½ skill - not ⅔ skill - for *all* of these skills. During the 16th century, however, Italian and Spanish masters began to experiment with making sword parries more efficient. They discovered that alterations in stance, footwork, and guard could improve matters greatly. In a realistic ***GURPS*** campaign, this should be modeled with a maneuver:

Improved Parry (Special)
Defaults to sword skill
Prerequisite: See below
Cannot exceed prereq. skill+4

This maneuver replaces the user's sword skill for the sole purpose of calculating Parry. It is Average for ultralight weapons, Hard for all others (see sidebar, p. 20). In an historical campaign, it can only be learned for Broadsword (Rapier), Shortsword (Duelling Saber or Smallsword), and Fencing (any). It can also be learned for Broadsword (Broadsword) for styles developed from the 18th century on. This maneuver relies on footwork, and can only be used by a fighter with no more than light encumbrance. A more heavily encumbered swordsman always parries at skill/2.

OPTIONAL RULE: WEAPON WEIGHT AND SPEED

As duelling evolved in Europe, swords were optimized for thrusting and use against unarmored opponents. As a result, they became lighter and shorter, and the balance moved closer to the hand. This changed the basic handling characteristics of these swords, especially compared to military swords and early rapiers. The following optional rule can be used to represent this in the game - although it's probably too detailed for a carefree *cinematic* campaign!

All weapons are divided into "weight classes," each with a *weight modifier* (WM):

Ultralight weapons include smallswords and modern fencing weapons (épée, foil, light duelling saber), knives and daggers, and all variations thereon. In general, any balanced weapon weighing 1.5 lbs. or less. *WM +2.*

Continued on next page . . .

REALISTIC MANEUVERS

The following maneuvers are *possible* for real-world fighters, but may not all be *known* in certain times and places.

Attack and Fly Out (Hard) Defaults to DX-3 or Acrobatics-3
Cannot exceed DX or Acrobatics skill

Some of the manuscripts consulted to design "The Old School" (p. 28) instructed combatants to follow any attack with an immediate retreat. To attempt this, roll against Attack and Fly Out *immediately* after a step and attack (p. B104). On a success, you may step one yard directly away from your target. You may still retreat (see p. B109) that turn. On a failure, you step away but are off balance: -1 to active defenses until next turn, and you may not retreat. Critical failure results in a fall! This differs from an ordinary step and attack in that it lets you step forward, attack, and step back - all in one turn.

Bind (Hard) Defaults to weapon skill
Prerequisite: Any appropriate weapon skill (see below); must specialize. Cannot exceed prerequisite skill+3

Until the 18th century, the majority of European swords had *quillons:* a cross-guard which protected the hand and could be used to trap and hold ("bind") an enemy's blade.

To bind his opponent's weapon, a fighter must first successfully parry or attack that weapon with his own, which must have quillons. Immediately after attacking (or on his turn, if he parried), he must roll a Quick Contest between Bind and his foe's weapon skill. If he has a second weapon that can bind, and chooses to commit it, he gets a bonus equal to ⅛ his Bind level with that weapon (round down). If he wins, his opponent's weapon is bound and *both* fighters are at -1 on all other combat rolls until the bind is broken.

To free his weapon, a bound fighter must *win* a Quick Contest between his weapon skill-1 and the binding fighter's Bind level. He may attempt this once per turn. Retreating *(not* Esquive) gives +2 to this attempt. The fighter who initiated the bind may end it at any time; if he used two weapons, he can maintain the bind with just one, but by doing so loses his bonus for the second weapon.

The fighter imposing the bind may attempt a thrusting attack with the weapon he is using to bind (or either weapon, if he used two). His intended victim defends at -2 unless his defense is a parry with the bound weapon. In that case, roll an immediate Quick Contest to free the weapon (as above); the bound fighter has an extra -1. If the defender wins, he frees his weapon and parries automatically (and may Riposte or Counterattack); if he loses, his weapon remains bound and his parry fails.

Unlike Corps-à-Corps (p. 21), this maneuver locks hilts, not blades, and is *not* restricted to close combat.

Close Combat (Average) ***Defaults to any close-combat weapon skill-2 or other weapon skill-6***
Prerequisite: Any weapon skill; must specialize
Cannot exceed prerequisite skill, or skill-3 for long weapons

In close combat, weapon attacks with legal close-combat weapons are normally at -2 (see p. B112), while longer weapons may not be used to attack at all. This maneuver can be learned to eliminate the -2 for using a close-combat weapon at reach C, or to allow longer weapons to attack in close combat.

For a legal close-combat weapon, this maneuver can be improved to allow the weapon to be used at no penalty, although Close Combat cannot exceed the prerequisite skill level. For a longer weapon, this maneuver allows a normal attack to be made at a reach 1 hex short of its normal range, but at -6. This requires at least 1 hex of clearance behind and to one side of the attacker. By improving this maneuver, the penalty for using a longer weapon can be reduced to as little as -3.

One-handed swords can also be used to "pummel" or "hilt punch." This usually gives +2 to punching damage, but only +1 for the lighter smallsword and transitional rapier. This attack is made using DX, Boxing, Brawling, or Karate at -2. Close Combat (Pummeling) can be learned to facilitate this. It defaults to any of these skills at -2, and cannot exceed the prerequisite skill level.

Corps-a-Corps (Hard) ***Defaults to weapon skill***
Prerequisite: Any weapon skill for a weapon with a hilt; must specialize. Cannot exceed prerequisite skill+2

This maneuver lets a fighter keep his foe in close combat by locking blades. To do this, he must begin his turn in one of his opponent's front hexes, step into close combat, and win a Quick Contest of Corps-a-Corps vs. his opponent's weapon skill. If he has a second weapon and chooses to commit it, he gets a bonus equal to ⅛ his Corps-a-Corps level with that weapon (round down). Win or lose, this counts as an attack.

If the attacker wins, the blades are locked and *both* fighters are at -2 on all other combat rolls. His opponent is free to perform any action that doesn't involve his sword, but if he wishes to leave close combat with his weapon, he must win or tie a subsequent Quick Contest between his weapon skill+2 and the attacker's Corps-a-Corps. If he succeeds, he may immediately step out of close combat. An escape may be attempted once per turn, and counts as an action. Escape is automatic and a free action if the target drops his weapon, but his opponent may then flip the dropped weapon to any adjacent hex with a weapon skill roll.

The fencer who initiated corps-a-corps need not do anything to maintain it, and may release his opponent's blade at will. If he used two weapons, he can maintain the corps-a-corps with just one, but by doing so loses his bonus for the second weapon.

The target of Corps-a-Corps may respond with Riposte (p. 24). This is resolved *before* Corps-a-Corps.

Counterattack (Hard) ***Defaults to prerequisite skill-5***
Prerequisite: Any Combat/Weapon skill; must specialize
Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

The theory behind Counterattack is to hit without being hit, launching an offensive action while your enemy is focused on attack. This maneuver works just like Riposte (p. 24), with three differences: First, the default is skill-5. Second, the initial defense may be *any* active defense. A dodge, or a parry with the weapon that will be used to attack, is at -1; a parry with a second weapon, or a block with a buckler, cloak, or shield, is at no penalty. Third, if this defense fails, the attack still goes ahead! A Quick Contest of Counterattack vs. the foe's Combat/Weapon skill determines whose attack lands first.

OPTIONAL RULE: WEAPON WEIGHT AND SPEED (CONTINUED)

Light weapons include transitional rapiers, shortswords, and their variations. In general, any balanced weapon weighing more than 1.5 lbs. but less than 3 lbs. *WM +1.*

Normal weapons include all balanced weapons that weigh 3 lbs. or more: broadswords, cavalry sabers, quarterstaves, etc. This also includes bare hands, which are the lightest weapon of all, but which cannot match the speed of the business end of a weapon. *WM 0.*

Heavy weapons include all unbalanced weapons. Treat as normal weapons in the hands of someone strong enough to ready them every turn (see p. B104). *WM -1.*

In any Quick Contest of Skill where weapon speed and maneuverability matter, the fighter with the higher WM has a bonus equal to the *difference* between modifiers; e.g., a fighter with a smallsword (WM +2) would get +3 against someone with an axe (WM -1). This includes feints (p. B105), Quick Contests of weapon skill in wait situations (p. B106), and Quick Contests of Fast-Draw skill. Some maneuvers give other benefits; some highly speed-dependent maneuvers give bonuses *in addition to* the above, effectively double-counting WM for lighter weapons! Finally, only light and ultralight weapons get the multiple parries bestowed by Fencing skill, whether as defined on p. B50 or in the sidebar on p. 19.

The disadvantages of lighter weapons? They break more easily (see pp. B110-111), and in situations where added heft and leverage would be an advantage (which definitely includes Bind or Corps-a-Corps), the modifier above is *reversed,* favoring the fighter with the heavier weapon. In addition, light weapons are at -8, and ultralight weapons at -12, to parry flail weapons (a change from the blanket prohibition on p. B50). The shortsword is an exception to the latter limitation: being quite stout, it parries flails at only -4.

Weapons can be made one or two weight classes lighter (but no lighter than ultralight); this was done with sport cudgels. Swing damage and Min ST are both -1 per weight class lighter (and heavy weapons suffer an *extra* -1 damage if made lighter). As well, a one-step reduction lowers weight and weapon hit points to ⅓ normal, while a two-step reduction lowers them to ½ normal. Finally, making a weapon one step lighter doubles cost; making it two steps lighter triples cost. Less material is needed, but prodigious workmanship is required to get the balance right.

How LONG Is MY SWORD?

GURPS recognizes the importance of weapon length to combat: some weapons have superior reach, and the longer weapon strikes first in a wait situation (see p. B106). However, weapon *length* can make a critical difference to combat even when it is insufficient to change reach in ***GURPS*** terms. George Silver recognized this in the 16th century when he advised Englishmen how to fight against rapiers when wielding a "short sword" (a broadsword, in ***GURPS*** terms).

This raises the question "Which weapons are longer?" In general, one can rely on common sense, but there are some gray areas. For game purposes, all hand weapons fall into one of the following length categories *relative to other weapons of the same reach:*

Extremely Long: polearms, quarterstaves, spears.

Very Long: javelins, two-handed axes/maces, two-handed flails, two-handed swords.

Long: bastard swords, rapiers, slashing rapiers.

Medium: axes, broadswords, dueling sabers, epees, maces, morningstars, picks, transitional rapiers.

Short: batons, hatchets, small maces, shortswords, smallswords.

Very Short: blackjacks, daggers, fists, knives.

A weapon of longer reach always goes first in a wait. Optionally, if two weapons have equal *reach* but one is of greater *length* (as defined above), then the wielder of the longer weapon gets +1 in the Quick Contest to see who strikes first. For instance, a spear and a rapier may both have reach 2, but a spear is "extremely long" while a rapier is merely "long," so a spearman would get +1 in a wait against a rapierist.

After 1590, some rapierists became enamored of extremely long blades, partly to keep the foe at a distance, partly for fashion. A rapier can be up to % the swordsman's height plus 6" in length before it becomes unwieldy. Divide excess length in inches by 6 and round up to nearest whole number. This is the penalty to all attacks, parries, and other maneuvers made using such a weapon. However, a 6" difference in length also means that it is considered "longer" for the purpose of determining combat distance.

Broadswords can also be made longer, but the ideal length for this weapon is *half* the wielder's height plus 6". An extremely long broadsword is *not* a bastard sword; most of the extra length of a bastard sword is in the grip, not in the blade!

Disarming (Hard) ***Defaults to prerequisite skill***
Prerequisite: Any Combat/Weapon skill; must specialize
Cannot exceed prerequisite skill+5

A fighter may use this maneuver instead of weapon skill when attempting to disarm with the *Knocking a Weapon Away* rules on p. B111.

Esquive (Hard) ***Defaults to any combat skill-3***
Prerequisite: Any Combat/Weapon skill
Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

At some point in time, the European masters discovered that one did not have to retreat from one's *opponent* to retreat from his *attack.* If the timing were correct, a combatant could effectively "retreat" by moving a mere few inches to the side. Methods for rendering outright retreats more effective were also discovered. This technique was perfected over several centuries, and came to dominate defense until the advent of ultralight weapons (see sidebar, p. 20).

A successful Esquive roll gives the fighter a bonus to his active defenses similar to that for retreating (p. B109), but without necessarily giving ground. If he sidesteps within his hex, the bonus is +2. Stepping into an adjacent, empty hex that is neither closer to nor further from the foe gives +3. An actual retreat gives +4 (instead of +3). He cannot step *closer* to his foe (but see *Slip,* p. 25). To use Esquive against a cutting attack (except one aimed at the head), the defender *must* step out of his hex. If an Esquive-enhanced defense fails, the fighter has launched himself upon his opponent's attack for +1 damage.

A failed Esquive roll means the defender did not move fast enough to get a bonus (he may still step aside or back, however). Critical success means the attack is evaded automatically. Critical failure means the defender falls down!

The Esquive roll takes a penalty equal to the user's encumbrance level. The weight modifier (see sidebar, p. 20) of the attacker's weapon is also applied; e.g., Esquive is at -2 vs. a smallsword. Esquive may be attempted against *one* attacker per turn; the defense bonus applies only against attacks from that foe. This uses up the fighter's regular retreat, and cannot be combined with a Slip.

Feint (Hard) ***Defaults to any Combat/Weapon skill***
Prerequisite: Any Combat/Weapon skill; must specialize
Cannot exceed prerequisite skill+4

This maneuver is identical to the feint described on p. B105. It can be raised up to 4 levels past the prerequisite skill level. A feint does not have to be a "fake" attack; it can be any move intended to hinder the opponent's defense: beats, pressure, opposition, etc.

A player should not know in advance whether his opponent is attacking or feinting, since his character would not know (the GM should do the same for NPCs). A fighter who thinks that his foe is attacking *can* react with Counterattack (p. 21) or Riposte (p. 24). His maneuver will work normally, but he will resist the feint at -3!

When using two weapons, the benefits of a feint apply to any attack with *either* weapon on the following turn - or to *all* attacks on the following turn in the event of an All-Out Attack. A feint and attack on the *same* turn constitute an All-Out Attack, even if the attacker has two weapons; in a cinematic game, though, the "attack" portion may be a Dual-Weapon Attack (p. 26).

At the GM's option, Feint can default to Acrobatics skill in a cinematic campaign. Players should be required to describe their ploys! ("I run, jump, push off of the wall, spin around, and spear my opponent while he is dazzled by my footwork!")

Floor Lunge (Hard) ***Defaults to Fencing-4***
Prerequisite: Fencing
Cannot exceed Fencing skill

This maneuver consists of a Lunge (p. 24) so long and low that the fencer loses his balance and places his free hand on the floor to support himself. Treat this as kneeling; he will have to spend a turn getting up, during which he will not be able to retreat (see p. B109). The floor lunge adds 1 hex of reach to the fencer's attack and gives +2 damage. All active defenses by the attacker are at -2 on the turn of the lunge. If he has multiple attacks, this takes the place of two normal attacks.

This low-line attack can surprise fighters who are unfamiliar with it: the -1 defense penalty for lack of Style Familiarity (p. 12) is doubled to -2.

Glide (Hard) ***Defaults to Fencing (Rapier)-4***
Prerequisite: Fencing (Rapier)
Cannot exceed Fencing (Rapier)

This is a thrust made by sliding your blade along your opponent's, which theoretically guides the point past his guard. Damage is unchanged, but the attack is parried at -2. There is no modifier to block or dodge the attack, nor to parry with a second weapon. Glide can only be used with a thrusting attack.

Glide is similar in intent to the unarmed Shuto maneuver on p. MA54 (which defaults to Karate-3 or Boxing-4), but differs in execution.

Hit Location (Hard) ***Defaults to prerequisite skill-3***
Prerequisite: Any Combat/Weaponskill; must specialize
Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

This maneuver lets the attacker reduce the penalties for hit location. The fighter does not roll against Hit Location; instead, he has a bonus that can be used to offset hit location penalties: +1 for Hit Location at skill-2, +2 for skill-1, and +3 for Hit Location at full skill. No further improvement is possible. This can never result in a net bonus to hit; it can *only* be used to offset hit location penalties.

OPTIONAL RULE: PRIMACY OF THE POINT

The rantings of George Silver in the 1590s notwithstanding, European sword masters understood the value of a point attack from at least the 14th century. GMs who want to simulate the speed advantage of a thrust over a swing can optionally rule that in a wait situation (p. B106) where one fighter is attempting a thrusting attack and the other a swinging attack, the thrusting fighter gets +1 in the Quick Contest to see who attacks first. This is in addition to the effects of weight modifiers (p. 20) and length (p. 22), if applicable.

OPTIONAL RULE: CLOSING THE GAP

A ready weapon is a powerful deterrent against being charged. *Step and Wait* (p. B106) and *How Long Is My Sword* (p. 22) address this in a "wait" situation, but ***Basic Set*** has no rule to discourage charging an armed opponent who is *not* waiting. In a reality, this can be dangerous: an active fighter isn't just standing there *en guarde,* but is attacking and parrying, his weapon a whizzing hazard to all who would approach him! The following optional rule reflects this (and makes life much tougher for unarmed fighters):

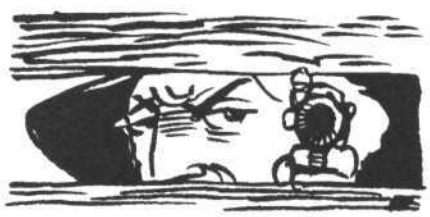
If a standing, armed fighter just *attacked* or *parried* with his weapon, and if his weapon is still ready, draw an imaginary line from the center of his hex to the center of the hex of the foe he last attacked or parried. Anyone who moves closer to him through any hex touched by this line must evade his weapon to approach unhindered. When the moving fighter enters the first "danger hex," roll a Quick Contest of the mover's DX or Combat/Weapon skill vs. the standing fighter's weapon skill. If the mover wins or ties, his approach is unhindered. If he loses, he must either complete his action without entering *any* "danger hex" that turn, or take a half-damage blow from the standing fighter's weapon as he closes the gap. He may defend normally against this, but he may not retreat. This does *not* count as an attack for the standing fighter!

Note that this rule will always apply when you charge a foe who has just attacked or parried you. This rule does *not* apply when approaching an unarmed foe, a stunned foe, or someone who is not standing.

See *Slip* (p. 25) for another way to close the gap.

RAYGUN AND CUTLASS

Space opera is, in many ways, ***Swashbucklers*** in space. Those who prefer the sonic swords and force swords of ***GURPS Ultra-Tech*** can still use these rules! Just replace Fencing skill with Force Sword (p. B50) and allow sword maneuvers to default to that skill. Energy swords rate as ultralight (see sidebar, p. 20) and qualify for extra parries. If the GM permits parries at 2/3 skill with Fencing skill (see *Fencing Skills*, p. 19), he should permit them with Force Sword as well. In some settings, Force Shield skill will similarly replace the Buckler, Cloak, and Main-Gauche skills. See *Force-Swordsmanship* (p. MA114) for a swashbuckling style dedicated to ultra-tech weapons. For notes on swashbuckling in space, see the sidebar on p. 122.



IL BOTTE SEGRETE

For centuries, at every *salle*, school, and academy, there have been rumors of *il Botte Segrete* - the Secret Technique, reserved for the most loyal students of the great masters. In the 16th and early 17th centuries, this was considered to be some sort of attack against which no defense could be mounted. In the late 17th and 18th centuries, it became a "Universal Parry" which no attack could penetrate. As far as can be determined, the reality was far more prosaic: the original *Botte Segrete* was most likely the lunge. The 18th-century Universal Parry was probably nothing more than the reliance upon sword parries permitted by the smallsword.

In a realistic campaign, the GM should have no true *Bottes Segretes*, and should simply treat a style's maneuvers as "secrets" in the sense that an untrained swordsman would not be able to execute them well (much as the special training of any craft was once considered a "secret" or a "mystery"). In a cinematic game, these secret moves could be the cinematic abilities (see p. 28) attached to the various styles. In either case, the absence of *il Botte Segrete* doesn't mean that people won't believe in secret techniques; well-roleplayed period characters probably *would* believe in them. Some might even have Delusions about invincible moves!

Continued on next page . . .

Lunge [cut or thrust] (Average) ***Defaults to sword skill-2***
Prerequisite: Appropriate sword skill (see below); must specialize. Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

This is a full-extension attack, with the attacker stepping as widely as possible to reach as far and as fast as he can. This adds 1 hex of reach to the fighter's attack and gives +1 damage. All active defenses by the attacker are at -2 on the turn of the lunge.

There are two variations on Lunge: Lunge [cut], which defaults to any sword skill that permits a swinging attack, and Lunge [thrust], which defaults to any sword skill that permits a thrusting attack. These must be learned separately for each weapon.

Off-Hand Weapon Training (Hard) ***Defaults to Combat/Weapon skill-4***
Prerequisite: Any Combat/Weapon skill; must specialize Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

Anyone who has learned to use a weapon with the master hand can learn to use the same weapon with the off hand. This maneuver allows one to eliminate the -4 off-hand penalty, but only for that particular weapon.

Pass [cut or thrust] (Average) ***Defaults to weapon skill-2***
Prerequisite: Appropriate weapon skill (see below); must specialize. Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

Pass lets the attacker both close the distance and put his weight behind his attack. Treat as a step and attack (p. B104), but the step *must* bring the attacker closer to his foe. A Pass does +1 damage, but is vulnerable to Counterattacks: the attacker is at an extra -1 to defend against this maneuver, and if weight modifiers (p. 20) are being used, he takes an *extra* penalty equal to the weight modifier of his foe's weapon (i.e., a total of -2 vs. light weapons and -3 vs. ultralight ones). If the Pass fails, the attacker must roll vs. DX or lose his balance (-2 to defenses until next turn); critical failure means he falls down.

There are two variations on Pass: Pass [cut], which defaults to any weapon skill that permits a swinging attack, and Pass [thrust], which defaults to any weapon skill that permits a thrusting attack. These must be learned separately for each weapon.

Retain Weapon (Hard) ***Defaults to weapon skill***
Prerequisite: Any weapon skill; must specialize

Your level with this maneuver can replace DX, ST, or weapon skill whenever someone tries to disarm you by any means.

Riposte (Hard) ***Defaults to prerequisite skill-4***
Prerequisite: Any Combat/Weapon skill; must specialize Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

This maneuver consists of a quick counterattack after successfully parrying an attack. The fighter must first parry his opponent's attack. If he succeeds, he can instantly attack (or feint) with the weapon used to parry, rolling vs. Riposte. His foe is at -1 to defend against this attack (he is still recovering from his own attack), with an *additional* -1 per point by which the riposting fighter made his defense roll. Passive Defense improves Parry normally, but does not count for the purpose of calculating the target's defense penalty.

If weight modifiers are being used (see sidebar, p. 20), the target adds the weight modifier of his weapon to his defense penalty and subtracts that of his foe's weapon; e.g., if the target has a heavy weapon (WM -1) and the fighter executing the riposte has a light one (WM +1), the target is at a further -2 to defend. This can never result in a net bonus to defense.

Halve the final defense penalty (round down) if the riposting fighter is using a Fencing Art/Sport skill learned before 1800. Such fencers were taught to give their opponent time to recover safely before riposting. After 1800, the fencing mask came into common use and this pause was no longer taught, so the full penalty applies.

Riposte cannot be attempted while retreating (see p. B109). It *can* be used with Esquive (p. 22) when done without retreating. Like PD, the Esquive bonus improves Parry without increasing the target's defense penalty.

Riposte uses up your attack for the turn; in effect, you attack early, right after your opponent and before any other battlefield events can interfere. When your turn comes, you are already considered to have attacked, and may do nothing but take a step.

A combatant who simultaneously defends with one weapon (e.g., a buckler) and attacks with another (e.g., a broadsword) is not riposting but making a Counterattack (see p. 21).

Slip (Hard) ***Defaults to active defense-3***
Prerequisite: Boxing (for Dodge) or any Combat/Weapon skill (for Parry); must specialize
Cannot exceed underlying defense

Slip is an attempt to duck or push aside an opponent's attack and step inside his guard. It can be used instead of a dodge or a parry against any attack aimed above your waist (areas 3-11 on p. B211) by an attacker in a front hex. If you succeed, you avoid his attack and step one hex closer to him, possibly entering close combat. Critical failure means you walk *into* the attack and take +1 damage!

Slip defaults to Dodge-3 (counts as a dodge) for Boxing skill, Parry-3 (counts as a parry) for other skills. The bonus to Dodge given by Boxing skill adds to a Dodge-based Slip. A Slip roll benefits from PD like any active defense. Slip may only be attempted once per turn, and *cannot* be combined with Acrobatic Dodge (p. B48), retreating (p. B109), or Esquive (p. 22).

Sweep (Hard) ***Defaults to prerequisite skill-3***
Prerequisite: Polearm, Spear, or Staff; must specialize
Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

This is an attempt to sweep the adversary's legs out from under him. If the attack is not successfully parried or dodged, roll a Quick Contest between Sweep and the victim's DX; the stronger fighter gets +1. If the victim loses, he falls down unless he can make an Acrobatics-5 roll to somersault in the air and land safely.

Unarmed fighters call this maneuver "Sweeping Kick," which defaults to Karate-3, Kicking-1, or Sumo Wrestling-3. See p. MA56 for details.

Il Botte Segrete (CONTINUED)

Le Coup de Jarnac

One such delusional move was the famous *coup de Jarnac.* This was the blow with which Guy de Chabot de Jarnac killed François de Vivonne de la Chataigneraie (one of France's greatest swordsmen) on July 10, 1547, in France's last legal duel. Over the years, a mythology grew up around this stroke, guaranteed to grant victory in any duel, regardless of skill. In reality, it was nothing more than a feint followed by a cut to the hamstring muscle. When this works, it renders the foe effectively immobile, ending the fight. La Chataigneraie refused medical aid and permitted himself to bleed to death because he was mortified to have been defeated in such a fashion by an inferior! Dishonest fencing masters might claim to teach a *"coup de Jarnac"* to gullible (and wealthy) students - especially those who are unlikely to fight an actual duel.

Le Coup de D'Artagnan

In *The Three Musketeers,* D'Artagnan learned a *Botte Segrete* that nearly cost him his life. This *coup de D'Artagnan* didn't work nearly as well in a real fight as it did in theory. PCs can certainly learn such maneuvers, and sadistic GMs should encourage this by having sword masters regale the swashbucklers with inflated claims for pet secrets.

Coups de D'Artagnan are too varied to be listed individually, but can be modeled as Hard maneuvers defaulting to weapon skill or Acrobatics at -2 to -4; most cannot be raised above skill+4. When used in combat, roll a Quick Contest between the attacker's maneuver and the target's best Combat/Weapon skill, Body Language, or IQ (whichever is highest). If the attacker wins, his foe's active defense is reduced as per a successful feint. If he loses, his adversary *automatically* parries or dodges his attack (defender's choice) *and* the attacker is at -3 to defend against his opponent's next attack. If his opponent's next attack is a Counterattack or a Riposte, the -3 is *in addition to* to the normal penalties associated with those maneuvers.

Those who know a *coup de D'Artagnan* will be given all manner of dire warnings about using it only when absolutely necessary. Since only the ignorant or insane would actually *trust* these wild moves in a real fight, the GM might permit a swordsman to get back half the points spent on a *coup de D'Artagnan* as a Delusion ("My secret maneuver actually works!").

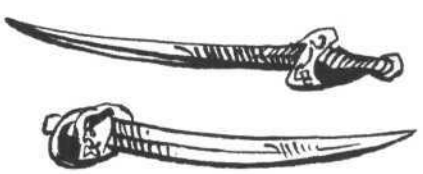
FAST AND FURIOUS

Some players may feel that the rules for maneuvers and styles read more like a fencing manual than like a swashbuckling tale, and offer excessive detail for cinematic campaigns. The GM is free to ignore the detailed rules and to "roll and shout" instead, applying skill modifiers and assessing effects as the situation requires. Instead of using Lunge, Pass, and the like, players describe their actions and the GM applies beneficial modifiers (e.g., a bonus to damage or a penalty to the defender's Parry) at a fair cost (e.g., a risk of falling, a penalty to the attack roll, or a penalty to the attacker's defenses). The GM can get a feel for what is fair by reading the maneuvers in the main text. For instance:

Player: "I leap over the railing, sword extended, and land between Lady Isabel and the assassin, impaling the brute!"

GM: "Very well. I'll give the assassin -2 to defend, since he didn't see you up there, and you'll get +2 damage for the extra momentum. But you must make an Acrobatics roll first or you'll simply splat into the ground; and even if you succeed, you'll have -2 to hit."

The dramatic needs of a swashbuckling adventure often encourage such "cool moves" by allowing them to succeed more often than they should. The GM can model this as follows: the more dramatically appropriate a move is, the more likely it is to succeed. Similarly, inappropriate or caddish moves are penalized. Bonuses for the Daredevil advantage (p. CI23) or an appropriate Higher Purpose (p. CI26) should always apply to *appropriate* cool moves!



CINEMATIC ATHLETICS?

The Acrobatics and Jumping skills are listed as "cinematic" by certain styles in this chapter. This does *not* mean that they are reserved for Weapon Masters, or that they are unrealistic. This placement is simply intended to indicate that these skills would not be taught by a sword master in a realistic campaign, but are *de rigeur* for swordsmen in cinematic games.

CINEMATIC MANEUVERS

These maneuvers are dubious or dangerous (to the user!), and should normally be reserved for cinematic campaigns, but the GM is free to allow them in realistic campaigns if he wishes.

Dual-Weapon Attack (Hard) ***Defaults to prerequisite skill-4***
Prerequisite: Any one-handed Combat/Weapon skill; must specialize. Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

This is a simultaneous attack with two weapons, aimed at the same foe or two adjacent ones. Roll vs. Dual-Weapon Attack to hit; e.g., to attack with smallsword and dagger, roll against Dual-Weapon Attack (Fencing) and Dual-Weapon Attack (Knife). The weapon in the off hand is normally at -4 to hit. If aimed at a single foe, his attention will be divided, giving him -1 to defend against *both* attacks.

This maneuver can be used to make a pair of feints, in which case a single target resists both feints at -1 *and* the attacker may choose the better result of the two.

Enhanced Block, Dodge, and Parry ***Special***

These "maneuvers" are treated as advantages. Each one gives +1 to a specific defense: Enhanced Block (Buckler, Cloak, or Shield) gives +1 Block with the specified Combat/Weapon skill, and costs 6 points. Enhanced Dodge gives +1 Dodge, and costs 15 points. Enhanced Parry gives +1 Parry with bare hands (6 points), one specific weapon (6 points), or *all* weapons in the style (10 points). The maximum bonus is +1.

Flying Lunge (Hard) ***Defaults to Fencing-7***
Prerequisite: Fencing
Cannot exceed Fencing skill

Some rapier masters claimed the ability to thrust at incredible distances. Furthermore, early descriptions of the Lunge (p. 24) could be mistaken for actually hurling yourself at the enemy.

Flying Lunge lets you hit anything you can reach with a standing or running broad jump (see p. B88); you *can* run your full Move, jump, and launch a Flying Lunge! Thrusts made with this maneuver do +2 damage and are parried at -3.

To launch a Flying Lunge, roll vs. Jumping or DX-4. If you succeed, you may roll against Flying Lunge to hit. Otherwise, you must roll Acrobatics-4 or DX-8 to avoid falling and taking 1d-3 crushing damage for every 2 yards traveled. Active defenses are at -4 during this maneuver, which counts as all of your actions for the turn.

Initial Carving (Average) ***Defaults to prerequisite skill-4***
Prerequisite: Any weapon skill for a sharp weapon; must specialize. Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

A swashbuckler may attempt to carve an initial while fighting. Determine the number of strokes necessary; e.g., a "Z" takes three. The first cut is an attack made at weapon skill, with no extra penalty to hit. The remaining strokes are more difficult to place accurately, and are made at Initial Carving level instead. This must be improved separately for each letter.

To leave a mark, an attack must do at least 1 point of cutting damage (an impaling weapon may make a 1-point scratch for this purpose). Anything but hard materials (like metal) will be marked: skin will be scarred and cloth (but not armor) ripped.

At the GM's option, Initial Carving can form the basis for "Bodice Cutting" and other cinematic maneuvers. The GM may also allow Initial Carving with Whip skill, but this is trickier: all rolls are at an extra -2.

Sentiment de Fer (Hard) *Defaults to Fencing-2*
Prerequisite: Fencing (Rapier or Smallsword) at 14+

If this maneuver does not appear in a style, the default is Fencing-4, and it cannot be improved.

This technique involves leaving your blade in contact with your opponent's at all times, which lets you "feel" his intentions and counter them more easily. To use Sentiment de Fer, make a Fencing+2 roll; this indicates that you have made contact with your adversary's blade. Every round after that, you must *win* a Quick Contest of Sentiment de Fer vs. your foe's weapon skill to remain in contact. While you are in contact, you attack and parry that foe at +2. You cannot dodge without losing contact, however.

Unarmed fighters call this maneuver "Sticking," which defaults to Judo-2. See p. MA60 for details.

Sweeping Counter Parry (Hard) *Defaults to weapon skill*
Prerequisite: Any weapon skill; must specialize

This maneuver lets a skilled fighter brush aside a large number of minor foes. The idea is to make the foes' weapons unready, buying yourself time to act.

To perform a Sweeping Counter Parry, you must take an All-Out Defense and declare this maneuver. The usual All-Out Defense rules are not followed. Instead, wait until all of your foes have rolled to hit, then roll a simultaneous Quick Contest of Sweeping Counter Parry vs. their weapon skills. You roll at -2 per foe beyond the first (e.g., -4 vs. three swordsmen). Each foe makes one skill roll and matches it against yours.

If you win, you parry that foe's attack and unready his weapon. If you tie, his attack is parried but his weapon is still ready. If you lose, he hits you and his weapon is still ready.

Any critical failure means a dropped weapon. A critical success by an attacker is handled normally. A critical success by the defender means that *all* the foes' weapons are parried and unready *and* the foes are mentally stunned for one turn by the brilliance of the maneuver!

Many of the old masters made a point of praising the two-handed sword for permitting a man to stand down any number of lesser-armed opponents. Therefore, two-handed weapons get a +2 bonus when making a Sweeping Counter Parry against one-handed weapons.

Whirlwind Attack (Hard) *Defaults to prerequisite skill-5*
Prerequisite: Broadsword, Katana, Staff, or Two-Handed Sword; must specialize
Cannot exceed prerequisite skill

Whirlwind Attack allows a beleaguered fighter to attack *every* foe adjacent to him with lightning speed! If used, it counts as all of his actions for the turn.

Whirlwind Attack is a special form of All-Out Attack. The attacker spins in place, attacking all foes in adjacent hexes in clockwise or counterclockwise order (attacker's option). Each attack is resolved before proceeding to the next one, rolling vs. Whirlwind Attack to hit. All attacks must be swung attacks. This cannot be combined with other maneuvers, and hit locations are determined randomly. The targets may defend normally. If any of the attacks is a critical miss, then that attack and all remaining attacks are critical misses. Roll on the Critical Miss Table once per attack!

The attacker may end his Whirlwind Attack with any facing; if foes remain standing, he will not want to put his back to them! As a result of his Ail-Out Attack, he is now defenseless.

UNARMED TECHNIQUES

Practical swordsmen (as opposed to "academic" combatants - see sidebar, next page) should have at least some skill at unarmed combat. Real-world swordplay often degenerated into close-in scuffling, and fencers had to be ready in the event that they were disarmed, so sword styles frequently evolved alongside unarmed ones and included unarmed moves; see *"The Old School"* (p. 28) for a classic example.

Brawling, Boxing, and Karate

These three skills can be used at -2 for "pummeling": striking with the handle of a sword (see *Close Combat*, p. 21). They also give an unarmed parry; this is of limited utility against weapons (see p. B101), but better than nothing. Finally, as every swashbuckler knows, nothing beats a swift kick when you have more foes than you do hands!

Brawling is most suitable for the realistic swordsman; Boxing is more appropriate for a career pugilist. "Scientific" unarmed combat styles were known in the swashbuckling era, and Karate skill *is* appropriate for students of such styles, but given that Karate is hard to master and includes many techniques that are redundant when you have a sword, it is best left to the most dedicated students of the blade (and cinematic swashbucklers, of course!).

Judo and Wrestling

Some sword styles include Judo skill, which may seem odd at first; it is unlikely that European swordsmen visited 19th- or 20th-century Japan! In ***GURPS,*** however, Judo represents *any* comprehensive body of locks, throws, trips, rolls, etc. . . . and many practical schools did supplement their armed techniques with such training. The breadth of techniques implied by Judo is realistic for dedicated masters and their full-time students. Rough-and-ready fighters who cannot dedicate their lives to training are more likely to learn Wrestling - which is Physical/Average to Judo's Physical/Hard, and thus easier to master.

ACADEMIC FENCING

From the fall of Rome to the end of the 16th century, the sword was usually studied in deadly earnest. Later on, however, changes in warfare relegated the sword to a specialized tool for cavalry and an ornament to status, which gave rise to the "academic fencer." This person would not have used the sword in warfare, and perhaps not even in a duel. In response to this, schools of swordsmanship appeared to cater to wealthy fencers who did not fight. Academic fencing reached its zenith in the 18th century, when the combination of squeamish gentlemen and the lack of simple protection like the mask (invented around 1750 but not popular until the next century) resulted in a remarkably stately academic style, ill-suited for real combat.

Any of the fighting styles presented here can be made "academic." Replace all of its primary and secondary Combat/Weapon skills with Combat Art/Sport versions, deleting redundancies, and remove all unarmed combat skills (ungentlemanly, after all). The better schools might still offer real combat skills as optional skills. Some schools might even operate parallel training programs, teaching an academic form to some students and a "practical" version to others.

In realistic games set after 1670, GMs may require European characters of Status 1+ to take a 5-point Unusual Background if they wish to spend more points on practical Combat/Weapon skills than on Combat Art/Sport skills. (The GM may waive this requirement for soldiers with substantial military experience.) Furthermore, those who have studied *only* academic styles may take a -10-point Delusion: "My sports knowledge is fully effective in serious fights." These academic fencers tend to get into dangerous situations, much as if they have Overconfidence, and often annoy serious fighters by talking to them as equals or even superiors. A similar -15-point Delusion (Genteel Proficiency) is detailed on page 13.

STYLES

Each school of swordplay is a *fighting style.* Styles are elaborated on in ***GURPS Martial Arts.*** For our purposes, it suffices to say that a style is a prescribed mixture of skills and maneuvers that collectively represent schooling in a particular form of fighting. Styles include the following elements:

Primary Skills: A student of the style *must* spend at least one point on each of these skills. These points are included in the style cost (see below). No difference greater than two levels is allowed between primary skills.

Secondary Skills: Until all primary skills are at 15+, secondary skills must remain at least *one* level below the student's lowest primary skill. Once all primary skills reach 15, the student *must* put at least 1 character point into each secondary skill before he can further raise his primary skills.

Optional Skills: Until all primary skills are at 15+, optional skills must remain at least *two* levels below the student's lowest primary skill. Optional skills never have to be learned.

Maneuvers: A student of the style must spend at least ½ point on each Average maneuver and 1 point on each Hard maneuver. Some styles require more points in certain maneuvers. This is taken into account in style cost (see below). Required maneuvers will always default to primary skills. Advanced students may learn versions of these maneuvers for secondary and optional skills, but this is *not* reflected in the style cost.

Cinematic Skills and Maneuvers: These aspects of a style exist only in a cinematic campaign, and are restricted to characters who have the Weapon Master advantage (p. 12). For those students, these become primary skills and maneuvers, and add their cost to the cinematic style cost (see below). Cinematic martial arts skills are beyond the scope of this book; GMs who wish to allow them are directed to pp. CI137-145 or MA36-40.

Style Cost

The point cost of a style is the minimum number of points that must be spent to gain free Style Familiarity (p. 12) with that style. This allotment is equal to 1 point (or the stated minimum expenditure, if this is greater) for each of the style's primary skills and maneuvers. This lets the student meet or exceed the requirements above. Styles list two costs: the lower is the "realistic" cost, and reflects primary skills and maneuvers; the higher is the "cinematic" cost, which adds cinematic skills and maneuvers.

STYLES OF EUROPE

"The Old School" — *18 points/44 points*

The old combat styles didn't instantly shrivel up and blow away before the rapier. For example, the manuals of old-style military combat published in Italy by Marozzo and Dell'Aggochie at the end of the 16th century were in print nearly to the end of the 17th century! The combat they taught wasn't as *de mode* as the rapier, but their battlefield pragmatics earned them a place among men who lived by the sword. Contrary to the claims of Victorian antiquarians, this was a mobile style that relied on active footwork, not just standing and bashing.

The abilities below are a composite of techniques taught by these older schools, as would be found across Europe to the end of the 16th century. By the end of the 17th century, this would be much rarer - although nations on the fringe (Scotland, Russia, etc.) might still prefer it.

Primary Skills: Broadsword, Buckler, Judo, Main-Gauche, Shield, Two-Handed Sword.

Secondary Skills: Brawling, Cloak, Lance, Polearm, Riding (Horse), Savoir-Faire (Training Hall), Spear, Staff, Tournament Law (Tourney).

Optional Skills: Animal Handling, Combat Art/Sport (any Combat/Weapon skill in style), Savoir-Faire (Military).

Maneuvers: Attack and Fly Out, Close Combat (Broadsword or Main-Gauche), Counterattack (Broadsword, Main-Gauche, or Two-Handed Sword), Esquive [2 points], Feint (Broadsword or Two-Handed Sword), Hit Location (Broadsword), Off-Hand Weapon Training (Broadsword or Main-Gauche), Pass [cut] (Broadsword, Polearm, or Two-Handed Sword), Pass [thrust] (Broadsword or Two-Handed Sword), Slip (Broadsword), Sweep (Polearm). Those with ***Martial** Arts* should add the following Judo maneuvers: Arm Lock, Choke Hold, Disarming, Head Lock. This increases style cost by 4 points.

Cinematic Skills: Immovable Stance, Kiai ("War Cry" or "Battle Cry"), Power Blow.

Cinematic Maneuvers: Enhanced Block (Buckler *or* Shield), Enhanced Dodge, Sweeping Counter Parry (Two-Handed Sword), Whirlwind Attack (Broadsword or Two-Handed Sword).

Italian School — *19 points/39 points*

Unlike the English, who squabbled over whether or not the rapier belonged in their country (much less in the same school as older weapons), the Italians saw it as a natural outgrowth of older swordsmanship. Thus, Italian schools often taught the rapier side-by-side with older weapons. This practice was carried across Europe by Italian masters and their students.

The Italian school is daring, emphasizing *stesso tempo,* counterattacks in "one time," over *dui tempi,* or parry-riposte combinations. It also favored thrusts over cuts. This style was popular in Italy until the end of the 18th century, and could still be found up to the middle of the 19th century in some places. The Italians preserved the use of secondary weapons (dagger and cloak) for longer than any other European country.

Primary Skills: Broadsword, Buckler, Fencing (Rapier), Main-Gauche.

Secondary Skills: Body Language, Cloak, Fencing Art/Sport (Rapier), Judo, Main-Gauche Art/Sport, Savoir-Faire (Training Hall), Shield, Tournament Law (Fencing), Two-Handed Sword. After 1640, replace Judo with Wrestling.

Optional Skills: Brawling, Combat Art/Sport (any other Combat/Weapon skill in style except Judo), Lance, Polearm.

Maneuvers: Bind (Fencing or Main-Gauche), Close Combat (Broadsword, Fencing, or Main-Gauche), Counterattack (Broadsword or Fencing) [2 points], Disarming (Broadsword or Fencing), Esquive, Feint (Broadsword or Fencing), Glide, Hit Location (Broadsword or Fencing), Lunge [thrust] (Broadsword or Fencing), Off-Hand Weapon Training (Broadsword, Fencing, or Main-Gauche), Pass [cut] (Broadsword or Fencing), Pass [thrust] (Broadsword or Fencing), Riposte (Broadsword or Fencing), Slip (Fencing).

Cinematic Skills: Acrobatics, Jumping. (See *Cinematic Athletics?* on p. 26.)

Cinematic Maneuvers: Dual-Weapon Attack (Broadsword, Fencing, or Main-Gauche), Enhanced Dodge, Flying Lunge, Initial Carving (Broadsword or Fencing).

La Destreza Verdadera — *14 points/42 points*

The Spanish were the first to recognize that civilian combat was a world unto itself, with features distinct from military conflicts. Combined with the Spanish sensitivity regarding personal honor, this led Spain to develop the earliest schools of rapier and refine their techniques specifically for civilian encounters. They called their art *La Destreza Verdadera* - "The True Skill." Students were required to learn geometry and natural philosophy, deemed vital for understanding efficient timing and methods of attack and defense. They were also taught to read their opponent's every cue, moving at *precisely* the best moment. Finally, they were trained to maintain contact with their opponent's blade, and were given access to defensive techniques purported to be effective even in the dark of night.

In combat, a *Diestro* (as practitioners called themselves) was to remain detached and project dignity and grace. Extreme movements were to be avoided, as was any "vulgarity" in form or technique. The *Diestro* held himself perfectly erect, his point always upon his enemy. Attack would occur only when he had obtained *desvio:* redirection of - or possibly indifference to - his opponent's weapon.

BASKET HILTS

A basket hilt is a metal guard on the hilt of a sword, wrapping around the swordsman's hand. It is intended to protect the hand from blows and can itself be used as a weapon.

A basket hilt weighs 1 lb., acts as PD 3, DR 5 armor for the sword hand, and adds 25% to the cost of a good-quality weapon. The added cost is not modified for weapon quality or other improvements, but any amount can be spent on additional decoration. The hilt also gives PD 1 to the entire body, like a very small shield - but only against melee attacks (not missiles), and only if the weapon has been used to parry that turn (a change from p. CII23).

A normal basket hilt is not large enough to permit one to wear anything heavier than a leather glove on the sword hand. A hilt could be custom-built with room for an armored gauntlet, but this would double the price of the hilt and make the weapon unwieldy: -1 to attacks, parries, and other maneuvers (another change from p. CII23).

Any basket hilt changes the balance and handling of a weapon, imposing a -2 unfamiliarity penalty until the user spends a day practicing with the weapon.

A basket hilt counts as brass knuckles in close combat, giving +2 to punching damage. Roll vs. DX, Boxing, Brawling, or Karate to hit, at -2 for a weapon in close combat (see p. B112). This penalty can be eliminated by learning Close Combat (Basket Hilt) based on any of the skills above; see p. 21.

WHEN A SABER ISN'T A SABER

The *Ancient/Medieval Hand Weapon Table* on pp. B206-207 is intended chiefly for medieval (TL3) campaigns. Out of regard for the generic nature of ***GURPS,*** it includes some "fencing weapons," but these are by necessity over-generalized. In particular, the "saber" on p. B206 did not exist until the 19th century. It was invented by either the Italians or the Hungarians specifically for duelling, and has no place in a campaign set before c. 1840. It has nothing to do with the cavalry saber, which is closer to a broadsword.

In the same vein, the "rapier" on p. B206 would only be appropriate for an extremely light, extremely late weapon - a smallsword in all but name.

Basic Set Weapons

Several weapons appropriate for ***Swashbucklers*** are adequately described in ***Basic Set***. See the table on p. 35.

Hand Weapons

Boarding Axe: Treat as an axe (p. B206). Not made for throwing (-2 to skill). Common on ships.

Boarding Pike: Treat as a spear (p. B206). Not made for throwing (-2 to skill). Common on ships.

Claymore: Treat as a bastard sword (pp. B206-207). A common weapon of the Scots, and occasionally the Irish, up to 1700. Not found elsewhere, but the Russians use something similar. In most European cities, it is illegal to carry a sword larger than a rapier.

Musket (p. B209): Muskets can be used three ways in hand-to-hand combat. First, if the musket has a bayonet, it can be used as a spear. Treat this as a spear held in two hands (p. B206), but reach is 1 and skill is Spear-1. Until 1700, bayonets were of the "plug" type, stuck directly into the barrel. On any turn when the musket is used as a spear, roll 1d; the bayonet falls out on 1-3. After 1700, socket bayonets came into use. These will not fall out, and allow the musket to be fired at -1 to skill when fixed in place.

Second, a musket can be "clubbed": held by the barrel and swung two-handed. Treat it as a maul (p. B206), but damage and Min ST both drop by 2, and skill is Two-Handed Axe/Mace-1. Clubbed muskets were used to deadly effect by British regulars against Canadian colonial mutineers. Throughout the entire swashbuckling era, muskets were stout enough to be used in this manner without sustaining damage.

Finally, a musket butt can be used as an improvised weapon: treat as a punch made using DX or Brawling, at -2 to skill but +2 to normal punching damage.

Ranged Weapons

Bows (p. B207): American Indians used self bows, equivalent to shortbows. Europeans used longbows, composite bows, and crossbows at the end of the 16th century, but firearms generally replaced them by 1620, except for hunting, sport, and stealth operations.

Thrown Weapons (p. B207): Any weapon that could be thrown was thrown. Tomahawk throwing appears to have been a sport in the Americas for all of recorded history. Many American tribes used the spear thrower or *atlatl* (the word is Mesoamerican in origin).

La Destreza trades speed for focus. This is represented by giving the *Diestro* -\ Speed when determining the turn sequence (reflecting his careful, observant manner) and by increasing the Min ST of his sword by one (due to his stance and the angle of his sword). In return, he gets +1 to resist any feint, and opponents without Style Familiarity (La Destreza) are at -1 to resist his feints and have an *extra* -1 to defend against his Counterattacks. These abilities roughly balance each other, and are worth no points.

Primary Skills: Body Language, Fencing (Rapier).

Secondary Skills: Cloak, Main-Gauche, Mathematics.

Optional Skills: Combat Art/Sport (Combat/Weapon skills above), Philosophy (Hermetic), Savoir-Faire.

Maneuvers: Bind (Fencing), Counterattack (Fencing), Disarming (Fencing), Esquive [2 points], Feint (Fencing), Glide, Hit Location (Fencing) [2 points], Off-Hand Weapon Training (Fencing), Retain Weapon (Fencing), Slip (Fencing).

Cinematic Skills: Blind Fighting, Light Walk, Mental Strength, Precognitive Parry.

Cinematic Maneuvers: Dual-Weapon Attack (Fencing), Enhanced Dodge, Enhanced Parry (Rapier), Initial Carving (Fencing), Sentiment de Fer.

Transitional French School — *15 points/24 points*

As the 17th century passed, rapiers grew lighter and shorter. Masters emphasized the use of the sword alone for offense and defense. Likewise, armor fell out of use by Europe's major armies, removing the need for the lance and other heavy military weapons. The era between the long Italian rapier and the 18th-century smallsword is now known as the "Transitional Era." At the time, it was simply seen as an improved way to use the rapier.

French *maîtres d'armes* led the way in developing this style, which appeared around 1640. It emphasized defense over offense and was more academic than the Italian school. Elegance of execution was as important as technical effectiveness. Nevertheless, the earnest duel was still the object of study. In France, this school was completely replaced by the Smallsword style (below) by 1720.

Primary Skills: Body Language, and either Fencing (Rapier) or Fencing Art/Sport (Rapier).

Secondary Skills: Broadsword, Fencing Art/Sport (Rapier) *or* Fencing (Rapier) (whichever was not chosen above), Tournament Law (Fencing).

Optional Skills: Buckler Art/Sport, Main-Gauche, Two-Handed Sword Art/Sport.

Maneuvers: Close Combat (Fencing), Corps-à-Corps (Fencing), Counterattack (Fencing), Disarming (Fencing), Esquive, Feint (Fencing), Floor Lunge, Glide, Hit Location (Fencing), Lunge [thrust] (Fencing), Retain Weapon (Fencing), Riposte (Fencing) [2 points].

Cinematic Skills: Acrobatics, Jumping. (See *Cinematic Athletics?* on p. 26.)

Cinematic Maneuvers: Enhanced Parry (Fencing), Initial Carving (Fencing).

Smallsword (French School) — *18 points/33 points*

Nothing succeeds like success. Duellists of the Transitional school realized that a lighter weapon was easier to use in the new riposte-oriented style. The ultimate end of this arms race was the smallsword, which appeared in the 18th century. It was a short, stiff thrusting sword, barely larger than a large knife. The style associated with it emphasized elegance above all, although proponents insisted that its defensive techniques could be applied to all forms of combat. The smallsword era was the heyday of academic fencing (see sidebar, p. 28). Masters of the day were still expected to train cavalry in the use of the saber (broadsword), and some also taught the use of the cutlass (shortsword). This style lasted until circa 1830.

Primary Skills: Fencing (Smallsword), Fencing Art/Sport (Smallsword), Tournament Law (Fencing).

Secondary Skills: Broadsword, Shortsword, Wrestling.

Optional Skills: Main-Gauche, Riding (Horse), and Combat Art/Sport forms of Broadsword, Buckler, Main-Gauche, Shortsword, Staff, and Two-Handed Sword.

Maneuvers: Close Combat (Fencing), Corps-à-Corps (Fencing), Counterattack (Fencing), Disarming (Fencing) [2 points], Esquive, Feint (Fencing) [2 points], Hit Location (Fencing), Lunge [cut] (Fencing), Lunge [thrust] (Fencing), Retain Weapon (Fencing), Riposte (Fencing) [2 points], Slip (Fencing).

Cinematic Skills: Acrobatics, Jumping. (See *Cinematic Athletics?* on p. 26.)

Cinematic Maneuvers: Enhanced Parry (all weapons), Initial Carving (Fencing), Sentiment de Fer, Sweeping Counter Parry (Fencing).

ADDITIONAL STYLES

The combat styles in this chapter are intended as rough summaries of the styles found across Europe in the "swashbuckling era." They should not be taken as the absolute limit of what was known. The easiest way to provide variety is to turn "or" into "and" in the skill and maneuver lists of styles found in large cities - or to truncate those lists for smaller schools or those devoted exclusively to the use of a single weapon. For example, Vincenzio Saviolo's school in London of the 1590s taught only the rapier (used with the dagger and cloak).

Likewise, many styles from ***GURPS Martial Arts*** are appropriate for a swashbuckling campaign. Professional Boxing, Professional Wrestling, and Savate (see pp. MA98-100) are similar enough to their ancestor styles to be adopted "as is." A style similar to Capoeira (p. MA79) was practiced by French sailors under the name *Chausson;* just delete Dancing, Musical Instrument, and Portuguese. French Fencing (pp. MA80-81) and Italian Rapier Fencing (pp. MA84-85) would be appropriate as truncated, gentlemanly versions of their parent styles - although Acrobatics would be a cinematic skill. Most Asian martial arts would require an Unusual Background, however.

MASTERS

In times and places where martial skill is highly valued - including Europe in the swashbuckling era - mastery at arms can result in influence out of proportion to social status. As a rule of thumb, a swordsman is considered a master only if he knows every primary skill of his style at level 15+, has at least 1 point in every secondary skill, *and* has at least 2 points in each of his style's maneuvers (unless this would raise the maneuver above its maximum) - including all variations and options. Masters who wish to take students must also have Teaching skill at 12+. These qualifications will speak for themselves in the swordsman's duels, and in those fought by his students. Word of his mastery will be spread by disciples and adversaries alike.

The GM should permit true masters to buy Ally Group (students), Patron (local noble), Reputation (as a fine swordsman), and Wealth (fees paid by wealthy students); he may even allow a master to have Status 1 or 2 without being of gentle or noble birth.

Of course, anyone can call himself "master" – especially if he's wealthy or powerful enough to have challengers escorted out of his presence by armed bravos. This kind of "mastery" is of no social value, requires no special skills, and sooner or later results in either injury or death in a duel, or loss of face for refusing a duel.

IMPROVED ARMOR AND SHIELDS

Armor of Proof: Plate armor, breastplates, and metal helmets can be purchased as "pistol-proof." This is 2.5 times normal cost, 1.25 times normal weight, and +2 DR. "Musket-proof armor would be 3 times cost, 1.5 times weight, and +4 DR.

Mail: TL4+ mail is extremely strong yet light and flexible. Any of the mail accoutrements on p. B201 can be purchased in a TL4 version for double cost. This reduces weight by 20% and gives +1 DR (no effect on PD).

Fine-Mesh Mail: Used by some rapierists, this can be concealed under normal clothing. It grants PD 3, DR 3 against cutting and impaling attacks unless the impaling attack comes from a weapon with a blade less than one inch wide (like a transitional rapier or smallsword), in which case protection is PD 0, DR 1. Protection against crushing attacks is only PD 1, DR 1. Fine-mesh mail costs three times as much as normal mail and weighs the same.

Bucklers: Bucklers can also be made the size of a small (PD 2) or medium (PD 3) shield. Treat as a shield of that size, but use Buckler skill instead of Shield skill.

LOCATING A MASTER

Those who wish to learn new styles in play will have to find a master first. Unlike the martial-arts masters of the Mystical East, European sword masters did not usually become contemplative hermits on distant mountains, even in legend. The greatest masters lived in the greatest cities, where they could attract the highest-paying students (although charlatans are also far more common in large urban centers). The occasional great master might commit a sufficiently grave *faux pas* to find himself stranded in a backwater (even then, those of sufficient skill could still attract students), but the rule of thumb is "The bigger the city, the more likely one will find a great teacher . . . and the more he'll charge." In London, the *monthly* fee demanded by a popular fencing master could equal the *annual* pay of an Anglican vicar!

Swashbucklers are famous for flashy maneuvers with ordinary objects. Chandeliers come to mind immediately, as well as clever ploys with tables, chairs, curtains, banisters, and rugs.

Carpet Yanking

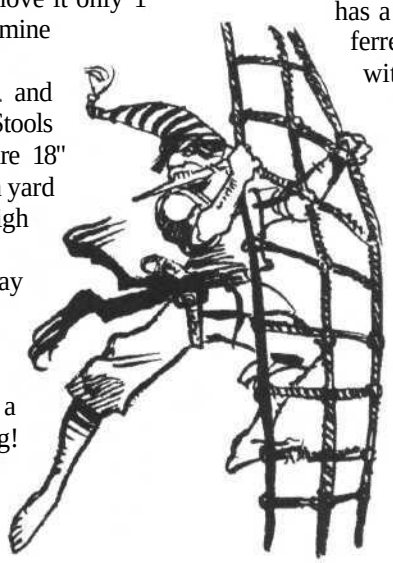
A carpet may be yanked while a foe is standing on it. To yank a carpet, one must be crouching or kneeling, or standing at a lower elevation (in an orchestra pit, for example). Since crouching can be done as a free action at the beginning of any turn (p. B103), a fighter may crouch and yank a carpet in a front hex in one action. He can yank up to 25x his ST in pounds. An average carpet weighs about 2 lbs. per square yard. Thus, if there is a heavy table (80 lbs.) and a large man (200 lbs.) on a small carpet, a ST 12 character could yank it without a ST roll. Lesser ST characters would need to use the *extra effort* rules on p. B89. In general, assume that anyone can yank a carpet with a single foe on it, but it takes at least ST 13 to yank a carpet with two men on it without a ST roll.

Someone on a yanked carpet must make a DX-3 roll to keep on his feet - otherwise, he falls down! He moves 1 hex closer to the yanker, whether he keeps his footing or not, as do all furniture, bodies, chests, etc.

Shoving and Throwing Furniture

Tables are shoved into heroes in every swashbuckling movie, and stools are tossed about like confetti. Use the *Throwing* rules on p. B90 for how far a heavy object can be *shoved.* Anything that weighs over 5x ST requires two hands to shove. A ST 13 character can shove a large table (80 lbs.) 2 yards without a ST roll. Weaker fighters can move it only 1 yard. Use the *extra effort* rules on p. B89 to determine ST rolls.

A good-sized table in this era weighs 80 lbs. and stands just over 2 feet high - treat it as 2 feet. Stools weigh 10 lbs. each and are a foot high; benches are 18" inches high and weigh 50 lbs. Barrels are usually a yard high (some are larger, casks are smaller) and weigh 40 lbs. empty; they are *very* heavy full.



A fighter who has a table shoved into him may retreat if he saw the shove and is able to retreat. He may also try an Acrobatics roll at -4 to jump to the top of the table, landing in a crouching position. On a critical success, he can go *over* a 1-yard wide table, if he prefers, and land standing! An Acrobatics roll at -4 will put him safely *under* the table, lying down, if he so desires. If he fails his Acrobatics roll or doesn't retreat for some reason, he must make a DX roll to avoid falling and a HT roll to avoid being stunned. Critical failure on either roll does 1 point of damage.

To actually flip a table over takes both hands and a ST-2 roll. The table lands in the adjacent hexes. Someone who sees a table being flipped at him may retreat. Otherwise, he takes 1d crushing damage.

Curtains and Wall Hangings

Wall hangings are *heavy* (20 to 60 lbs.), and so are most curtains of this period. They are designed to keep drafts out, and some weight is needed for that. They tend to be securely fixed at the top, though the movie variety come down easily.

To pull a curtain or wall hanging down with one hand requires a roll against ST-2. To get it to fall in the adjacent hex then requires a roll against DX-2 - otherwise it falls straight down (not on anyone unless they were hiding behind it). To accomplish the same thing with two hands requires two rolls, at ST+2 and DX+2, respectively. With successful rolls, the tapestry or curtain can be made to fall on any hex it is adjacent to.

A victim who sees it coming may retreat. If unable to retreat, or if his back was turned, he is then enveloped in the curtain. To get out requires 3 turns, during which he can see nothing outside the curtain. A tapestry or curtain provides 1 PD and 1 DR, though!

Chandeliers and Other Things to Swing On

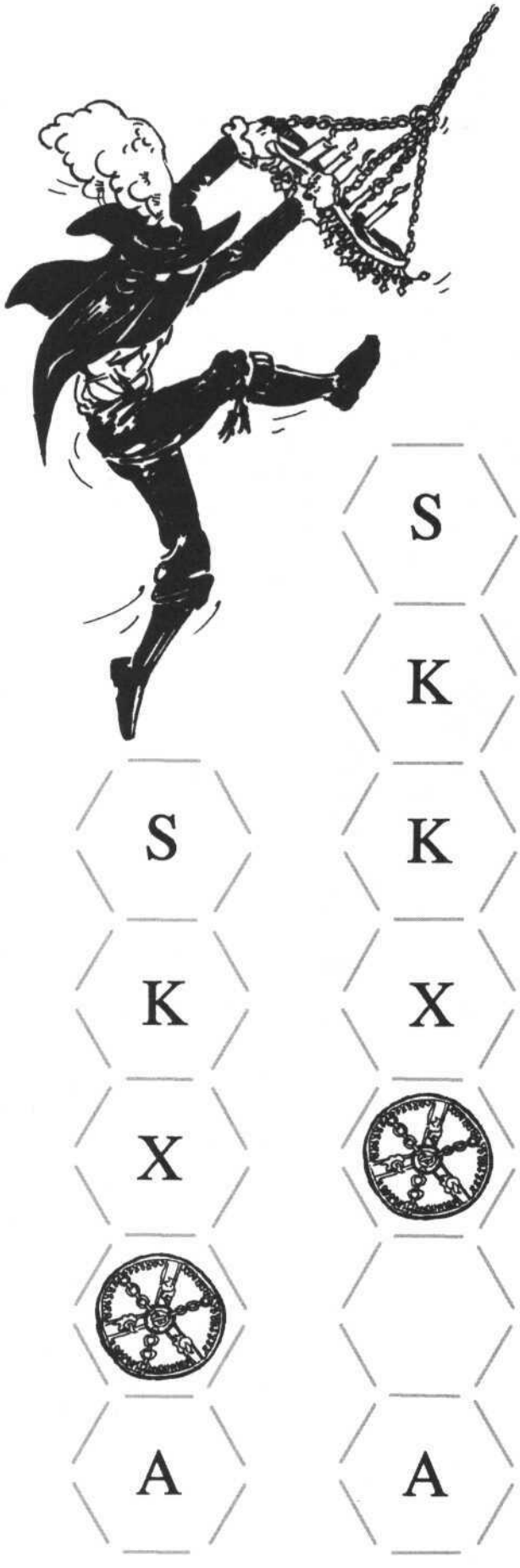
Every tavern and castle dining hall has at least one chandelier, of course. Many chandeliers can be lowered by a rope for ease in lighting and snuffing. Others require long-handled "matches" and snuffers, and are hung by chains.

The GM should allow a character an IQ roll to determine whether or not a chandelier will hold him - most heroes automatically check such things out at the first sign of trouble, or even as they enter a room! GMs may assign a likelihood of breaking (1 in 6, 50%, etc.), and roll when it is grabbed.

There are two common types of taverns. The ordinary type has a low ceiling (7 to 9 feet high); the type preferred by Hollywood is a two-story building with the common room ceiling extending all the way up to the roof, and balconies all around leading to the second-story private chambers. The only gaming differences will be in how low the chandelier hangs, plus any balcony action.

In the low-ceilinged taverns, a chandelier hangs down to just over six feet above the floor. Such a chandelier can be easily reached while standing on the floor, 1 or 2 hexes away (see diagram on the next page). In fact, it is a distinct hazard to someone fighting on top of a table! These chandeliers won't be very large, but there will be several if the room is good-sized. In a really low-ceilinged room (7 feet), only 1-hex swings are possible.

In the Hollywood-style rooms, they might hang that low, but are more likely to come down to around 8 feet above the floor, best reached from a table-top. Such rooms often contain large chandeliers, sometimes up to 3 hexes in diameter. Treat any part of the chandelier as being the whole for swinging purposes. If a chandelier is seven feet above the floor, someone can jump onto it from up to 2 floor hexes away. One 8 feet high can



be reached from an adjacent floor hex. Anything higher *must* be reached from a table or raised place. Two horizontal hexes is the farthest that someone can jump and grab the chandelier without a Jumping roll. The GM may allow those at farther distances to attempt a Jumping roll to reach the chandelier, and then an Acrobatics roll to grab it. The Acrobatics roll in that case is at -2 for each hex over 2 hexes away from the hex that the character jumped.

No real swing is possible by jumping onto a chandelier from directly beneath it, but it would be easier to climb that way.

The distance away from the chandelier anyone may land is equal to the distance jumped to reach the chandelier +2 - he *must* go at least as far as he jumped to reach the chandelier. The distance he can kick an enemy is equal to the distance he jumped to reach the chandelier +1. Thus, in the diagram, a swinger in hex A could swing to hex S or attempt to kick a foe in hex K or X. The hexes marked S and K are the only hexes he may *land* in. He may not grab a chandelier if someone is in the hex beneath the part he wishes to grab, or between him and that hex.

Chandelier swinging is done at Acrobatics (or DX-6). Only one roll is needed both to swing and land, but a DX or Brawling roll is also needed to kick a foe. The player announces his intent ("I will grab the chandelier and swing to this hex") and makes his roll. If the Acrobatics roll is missed, the swing is puny and doesn't go as far as the player intended, unless there was a Jumping roll required to reach the chandelier. In that case, failure on the Acrobatics roll means the jumper missed the chandelier altogether! Critical failure results in either missing the chandelier completely and falling down, or possibly swinging into a disastrous situation – the GM should be creative!

Anyone may swing on an easily-reached chandelier from 1 hex away to an empty hex directly opposite without a skill roll.

Ship's rigging: A sailing ship is designed so that swinging from one part of a ship to another (or from one ship to another) is fairly easy. However, loose lines are never allowed simply to hang free. All loose lines are belayed (secured) in some fashion, and must be freed before they can be swung on. In an impending boarding action, this is done at the last possible minute. Standing too long with a rope in hand makes one a good musket target.

To free a rope from a belaying pin is a simple matter, requiring two seconds. A successful Seamanship roll will release it in one second - critical failure snarls the rope, meaning it takes three seconds to free!

Distances swung on a ship can be fairly large - up to 20 yards, though most swings will be under ten. No Acrobatics roll is required for simply standing and swinging on a rope that is secured forward overhead. However, to land in a particular hex requires an Acrobatics roll, at -1 per hex over 10 hexes traveled. If that roll is missed, roll randomly to determine which side of the target hex is the miss direction. The distance off-target is the amount the roll was missed by, up to a maximum of the distance between the starting hex and target hex. Use this procedure to determine random swings, rolling against DX-6 if the character does not have Acrobatics. To kick someone still requires a DX or Brawling roll.

Damage from a Kick while swinging is swing+1.

Banisters

Sliding down a banister is a *fast* way to get down stairs. When sliding, one reaches a speed of 5 (15 steps per second)! Since travel on stairs is ordinarily at half speed, this is quite speedy. A slider may travel more slowly than that, squeezing with his legs as a brake. Unfortunately, banister sliding is not easy to do . . .

Each second that a character slides down a banister, he must make a DX-6 or Acrobatics-6 roll. A failed roll means he is no longer sliding. A miss by up to 4 merely means he ends his move on the steps, on his feet. The more he misses the roll by, the less distance he travels before stepping off the railing. Missing by more than 4 results in falling down the stairs. Treat it as regular falling damage, p. B131 - Acrobatics does *not* reduce damage by five yards in this case. Critical failure means he falls on the *wrong* side of the banister!

The slider may attempt to attack any one opponent that he passes on his descent. This is treated as a Wild Swing, p. B105. Anyone who chooses the Wait maneuver may attack him as he goes by (but 25-point NPCs wouldn't think to Wait, of course). Roll for damage normally in each case, but add 1 to any impaling damage done if moving 4 or 5 hexes per second.

Warning: If there is a finial on the bannister and the slider does nothing to remove it first, he takes 2d damage to a very sensitive part of his anatomy.

Balconies and Other Climbable Objects

Most climbing modifiers can be figured out by referring to p. B89. The GM may allow generous pluses to a Climbing roll, or reduced time if the climber makes a successful Acrobatics roll. Likewise, jumping from balconies to chandeliers is easily possible for most swashbucklers - allow a good Acrobatics roll to swing the PC to any reasonable spot.

Let a player get a handhold on a high balcony or other object with a Jumping roll - see p. B88 for distances. Allow a ST roll to pull himself up quickly, and an Acrobatics roll to vault over the railing in one second instead of climbing over it in two or three. Failure in any of these rolls merely means the PC needs to take an extra second or two to accomplish the task - only critical failure means disaster. In general, allow swashbuckling PCs to climb faster than the times given if they make good rolls.

Throwing Items in the Face

What is there to throw? Drinks are popular, as are hats and candelabra. It takes an action to ready such an item ("I ready the beer" needs to be clarified: to drink or to throw?). Grabbing an item from a table doesn't require a DX roll, unless the attacker is also trying to Fast-Draw a weapon or perform a similar action in the same turn.

Tossing a beer in the face is treated as tossing anything else. A DX-3 or Throwing roll is needed to hit, with any modifiers for unaimed shot, off-hand, -5 to target the face, etc. Treat the SS number (see p. B115) for such improvised weapons as 10, Acc 1, Max 3. ½D does not apply, as this discussion is about items too light to damage anyone. Heavier items are covered on p. B90. Thrown items may be dodged or blocked; a cloak can be used to block in this case. Such small items can be parried at -2, except for liquids or *very* tiny objects.

If a non-harmful substance hits someone in the face, a Will roll is required to avoid flinching. A failed roll means a flinch. The victim is -2 to any further defenses that turn, and -2 to any DX roll or awareness roll the next turn. Critical failure means the eyes are hit. The defender is blinded for 1d seconds (the GM rolls secretly). A successful roll means he doesn't flinch - no game effect, unless he has Bad Temper.

The GM may rule that an Alcoholic character may be distracted from the battle (make an IQ roll) should he be doused with spirits . . .

Fast-Talk and Sex Appeal During Battle

During a fight, a swashbuckler may attempt to Fast-Talk his opponents into letting down their guard in some way - especially useful against many enemies at once. Although talking counts as a free action, to be convincing the Fast-Talker really has to look as if he is seeing a rabid, frothing dog charging down at the group as he shouts, "Look out, mad dog!" This means he is at -2 to any physical action and defense until his next turn - this can be a risky maneuver. Roll a Quick Contest between the bluffer's Fast-Talk or Acting and each of the opponents' IQ. The GM may allow a bonus to a deceitful PC's skill if the player comes up with a truly plausible diversion. Characters may substitute their Sex Appeal-2 for Fast Talk. Positive modifiers for high Appearance apply in this case, as does the +2 for Voice and +1 per level of Charisma. The target must be normally amenable to sex appeal from the would-be seducer in the first place. If the target is Lecherous, he or she suffers a -2 to resist this attempt. It was a tradition at the very end of the Swashbuckling era to duel stripped to the waist, and some lady duellists would observe this. In such a case, a Lecherous character would be at -5 to resist!

If the Fast-Talker *wins* the Quick Contest, the loser is considered Mentally Stunned for 1 turn only - he may make no action and his defense is at -4. He has turned his head, or checked his shoelaces, or whatever. Critical failure by the duped party or critical success by the liar is treated like *total surprise* - see p. B122. The deceiver may then make any legal action that turn, but any DX-based maneuver is still at -2.

If the other foe ties or wins the Quick Contest, he gets his normal action on his turn - he's not taking his eyes off his man, even if there *is* a mad dog charging down on him!

Jumping Through Windows

Of course swashbucklers will want to jump through windows. The GM can allow this with an Acrobatics roll, and may also require a Jumping roll if the window is more than 4 feet off the ground or floor. The jumper must have at least 1 movement point left after making contact with the window. Making the Acrobatics roll by 5 or more means that he ends up in the hex directly on the other side of the window, on his feet and unhurt - nicely done! Making the roll by less than 5 means he takes 1d-3 cutting damage, but ends up on his feet as above. A person will protect his face as he jumps through a window, so no damage is taken there. Use the DR of the least armored part of the rest of the body to figure damage taken.

If the Acrobatics roll is failed, the jumper takes 1d-3 cutting damage, *and* he falls down in the 2 hexes directly on the other side of the window. Critical failure means something disastrous - he ends up as for regular failure *and* drops his sword and is stunned, or he ends up draped across the windowsill (taking 1d-1 cutting damage) or he misses the window entirely and takes damage as if he were thrown against the wall (p. B90), falls down, is stunned, etc. The GM should choose whichever option is most embarrassing for the victim at the time!

Going through a window ends a fighter's turn - no further movement or action is possible.

Incidentally, TL4 glass is somewhat more opaque than modern glass. Treat this as -3 to any vision rolls for casual observation through a window. Intense peering through such glass *will* reveal whatever there is to see at no penalty, but will take three times as long to see anything as through TL6+ glass. Many places deliberately have *very* opaque glass - nothing but silhouettes can be seen through such windows.

WEAPONS

Many weapons of this era are adequately described in the ***GURPS Basic Set,*** albeit under different names. These weapons are listed in the *Basic Set Weapons* sidebar, p. 30.

MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Skill	Damage Type	Damage Amt	Reach	Cost	Wt	Min ST	Notes
Backsword	Broadsword	cut	sw+1	1	$550	3	10	Has a full basket hilt
		imp	thr+1	1				
Cavalry Saber and Scimitar	Broadsword	cut	swing+1	1	$500	3	9	
		imp	thrust+1					
Sword-Rapier	Fencing	cut	sw+1	1	$500	2.75	10	Can also be used with Broadsword skill; same stats
		imp	thr+1	1,2				
Heavy Cloak	Cloak	see p. 36		1+	$50	5	–	PD2, DR1; see next page
Light Cloak	Cloak	see p. 36		1+	$20	2	–	PD1, DR1; see next page
Rapier	Fencing	imp	thr+1	1,2	$500	2.75	9	No maximum damage
Slashing Rapier	Fencing	cut	thr+1	1,2	$1,000	3	9	No maximum damage
		imp	swing	1,2				No maximum damage
Transitional Rapier	Fencing	imp	thr+1	1	$500	2	8	Max damage 2d
Transitional Rapier, with cutting blade	Fencing	cut	thr+1	1	$700	2	8	Max cut damage 1d+2
		imp	sw-1	1				Max damage 2d
Smallsword	Fencing	imp	thr+1	1	$400	1.5	–	Max damage 1d+1
Dress Smallsword	Fencing	imp	thrust	C,1	$300	1	–	Max damage 1d
Main-Gauche	Main-Gauche	cut	thrust	C,1	$50	1.25	–	Max cut damage 1d+1
		imp	sw-3	C,1				Max thrust damage 1d+2
Stiletto	Main-Gauche	imp	thr-1	C	$20	0.3	–	Max damage 1d+1
Cutlass	Shortsword	cut	swing	1	$300	2	7	
		imp	thrust					

Backsword - This single-edged sword was the common military sword of the Elizabethan English gentleman and was also a favorite of Scottish Highlanders. It has a full basket hilt (see sidebar, p. 29). Likewise, its stronger construction means that it takes 10 points of damage to break in a single blow.

Cavalry Saber and ***Scimitar*** - Slightly curved broadswords designed primarily for cutting at foes from horseback. In the 17th and 18th centuries, they were considered functionally equivalent to backswords, according to the manuals. While many sabers had basket hilts (see sidebar, p. 29), many did not.

Sword-Rapier - This weapon never actually existed. It has no place in a historical campaign. Weapons that have been classified as "sword-rapiers" by Victorian antiquarians would actually be Broadswords in ***GURPS*** terms. However, it would still be appropriate for a cinematic campaign and for one strongly linked to the Victorian fictional sources. It is the quintessential weapon for the skill The Sword! (p. 14).

Cloaks - While swordmasters taught the use of cloaks in combat, the cloak was considered a defense of last resort, to be used if one didn't have a buckler or dagger handy. See p. B242 for a full discussion of cloaks and how to use them.

Rapier - Rapiers underwent a great deal of evolution very quickly in the scant century they were popular. While they originally were capable of cutting, experiments were soon made in creating a blade built entirely for thrusting. It was rediscovered that a triangular cross-section would make for an efficient thrusting weapon, and one that could be made lighter without sacrificing strength. An average rapier takes 8 points of damage to break in a single blow. Likewise, they still had a fairly broad cross-section and do not have a maximum damage. Due to their weight, they can only be used on one parry per turn. This style of rapier was used from 1560-1640 and often had elaborate guards equivalent to basket hilts (sidebar, p. 29).

Slashing Rapier - Originally, the rapier was as heavy as any broadsword and had a blade that could be used for cutting. This is modeled with the "Slashing Rapier" in the Melee Weapons Table. If such a weapon is properly made, using it to cut does not unbalance it severely. Only a *cheap* slashing rapier is overbalanced by its blade. If an average rapier is used to cut, the user is at -1 to initiative the next turn. Due to their weight, they can only be used on one parry per turn. Slashing rapiers routinely had elaborate guards equivalent to basket hilts (sidebar, p. 29) An average rapier takes 8 points of damage to break in a single blow. Likewise, rapiers were every bit as capable of dealing lethal damage as any broadsword. Thus, they have *no* maximum damage (this is a change from CII). The "Slashing Rapier" on p. CII22 should be considered a poorly made version of a proper slashing rapier. This style of rapier was in use from 1560-1640.

Transitional Rapiers - Rapiers used after 1630 were often lighter and shorter than their predecessors. These transitional rapiers were often no longer than broadswords. Cutting blade transitional rapiers can be broken with 6 hit points of damage. Other transitional rapiers take 6 points of damage to break. Both types of transitional rapiers have "narrow" blades for the purpose of penetrating mail. The "late rapier" in CII is a type of transitional rapier. Due to their weight, they can only be used on one parry per turn.

Smallswords - While smallswords began to appear around 1650, they did not become popular until after 1700. They were very short, *stiff* thrusting swords. Only smallsword *practice foils* were flexible. Most smallswords are broken after suffering 6 points of damage. A smallsword can be made with a diamond cross-section to do sw-1 cutting damage. These cutting smallswords break on 4 points of damage, as do Dress Smallswords.

THROWN WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon Type	— Damage — Type	Amount	Min ST	SS	Acc	1/2D	Max	Weight	Cost
Tomahawk (metal)	cut	sw+1	8	10	2	STxl.5	STx2.5	2.5	$45
Tomahawk (stone)	cr	sw+1	9	11	1	ST	ST×1.5	3	$10
Heavy Cloak	see p. B242		–	12	1	–	*2*	5	$50
Light Cloak	see p. B242		–	12	1	–	2	2	$20

FIREARMS TABLE

Weapon	Malf	Damage	SS	Acc	1/2D	Max	Wt.	RoF	Shots	ST	Rcl	Cost	TL
Matchlocks													
Arquebus, .65	14	3d-2++	16	3	100	700	9	1/60	1	10	-2	$100	4
Musket with rest, .80	14	4d++	18	5	100	900	20	1/60	1	12B	-2	$400	4
Caliver, .75	14	3d++	15	5	100	700	11	1/60	1	10	-2	$50	4
Target Rifle, .85	15	2d++	16	9	200	1,000	14	1/90	1	10	-1	$600	4
Wheellocks													
Pocket Pistol ,50	14	ld+	11	1	40	300	1	1/60	1	10	-3	$200	4
Belt Pistol, .60	14	1d+1+	13	1	75	400	3.25	1/60	1	10	-3	$200	4
Horse Pistol, .75	14	2d+l++	12	1	90	500	4	1/60	1	12	-3	$1,500	4
Double-Barrel Carbine, .60	14	2d-l+	14	14	70	600	11	2~	2	10	-2	$1,100	4
Jager Rifle, .85	14	4d++	12	7	150	1,000	12	1/90	1	12	-3	$800	4
Flintlocks													
Naval Pistol, .51	14	2d-l+	11	1	75	450	3	1/20	1	10	-1	$200	5
Duck's Foot Pistol, .40	14	1d+1+	11	1	40	300	2	4~	4	13	-4	$50	5
Highland Pistol, .52	14	2d+	11	2	55	400	2.75	1/20	1	10	-2	$400	5
Durs Egg Holster Pistol, .60	14	2d+l+	12	2	50	400	2.75	1/20	1	11	-2	$50	5
Wogdon Dueller, .45	15	2d-l+	10	3	75	450	2.75	1/20	1	9	-1	$2,000	5
Blunderbuss (shotgun), 8g	14	5d	14	3	15	100	12	1/15	1	13	-4	$5	5
Fusil, .65	14	3d-2++	14	5	100	800	9	1/20	1	10	-2	$75	5
Brown Bess, .75	14	4d++	15	5	100	1,500	13	1/20	1	11	-3	$10	5
Charleville, .69	14	3d++	15	5	100	1,500	11	1/20	1	10	-2	$10	5
Musketoon, .69	14	3d-1++	15	4	100	1,100	8	1/20	1	11	-3	$10	5
Pennsylvania Rifle, .45	14	5d+	15	7	400	2,000	7	1/40	1	10	-2	$40	5

Main Gauche - While any knife can be used with the Main Gauche skill (gaining ⅔ skill parry), a true Main Gauche has a very stiff blade and a basket hilt (see sidebar, p. 29).

Stiletto - Legend has it that this knife was a favorite of artillerists, who would use notches in its very narrow, stiff blade for making measurements. It can also be thrown.

Cutlass - A slightly curved shortsword, usually with a crude basket hilt (see sidebar, p. 29) - reflected in the cost above. Most cutlasses were *cheap* weapons - not reflected in the cost above. The "C" reach for a cutlass in CII is simply the use of the basket hilt in combat.

Price and availability of firearms changed greatly during the period. At the beginning they were rare and expensive; at the end they were cheap and common. For a 17th-century campaign, matchlocks and wheellocks are the only common firearms. Anyone with a flintlock must have a 10-point Unusual Background and a story that satisfies the GM as to why he has that rare kind of gun. Price of flintlocks is 50 times that listed. For pirate campaigns before 1650, the same is true. For pirate campaigns after 1650, and for any campaign after 1700, the only guns available are flintlocks at the listed price. Wheellocks and matchlocks are antiques; they might be encountered in a stock of obsolete weapons. See ***GURPS Basic Set*** and ***GURPS High-Tech*** for more information on Black Powder Weapons.

Terms Defined:

Weapon: The weapon's name.

Malf: The die roll on which the weapon misfires.

Damage: The die roll to make for a weapon's damage. A "+" or "-" after damage means a caliber-based *wounding modifier* (p. HT7) applies to remaining damage after subtracting DR: "-" means halve damage; "+" means multiply by 1.5; "++" means double remaining damage.

SS: The final to-hit number, after all modifiers, that must be matched or exceeded to avoid a -4 snap shot penalty.

Acc: The Accuracy modifier added to the firer's effective skill if the weapon is aimed for one turn.

1/2D: The range at which Acc is ignored and damage is halved.

Max: The maximum distance that the shot will carry.

RoF: The time it takes to reload between shots.

Shots: The number of shots the weapon holds. All the guns in the table hold only one shot. They could be made as double (or more) barreled guns. Cost is doubled for each additional barrel; Wt is increased by ½; each barrel holds one shot.

ST: The minimum strength that allows firing successive shots from the same weapon without an extra turn to recover from recoil. "B" means a bipod is standard - see ***High-Tech.***

Cost: The ordinary cost of the weapon on the legal market. Pirates normally steal guns; soldiers are issued them. Thus, price is only of interest to honest civilians. The price for duelling pistols is for a matched pair.

Rcl: The amount subtracted from skill for successive shots from the same weapon in the same turn (maximum 2). Rcl modifier is doubled if the firer is below minimum strength.

TL: The Tech Level of the weapon.

Ammunition cost: $2 per 100 shots.

Ammunition weight: pistol, 15 shots per pound; long gun, 10 shots per pound.

Immediate Action: If a gun malfunctions, either on the Malf number or on a jam or misfire result on a critical failure, the firer can try Immediate Action to correct the problem. This requires a roll against Black Powder Weapons/TL or Armourer/TL+2, made by the GM. The GM also rolls for the amount of time that immediate action will take. The firer does not know whether Immediate Action will work, only that he is attempting it. He can stop Immediate Action at any time, but this leaves him with a non-working weapon. At the beginning of the firer's turn the GM asks if he is continuing Immediate Action; if he is, the GM will then say whether the weapon will work that turn. A critical success by the GM on the Immediate Action roll restores the weapon to service on the next turn. An ordinary success restores the gun to service in time rolled by the GM (3d+12 seconds for matchlocks, 2d seconds for wheellocks and flintlocks). A failure on Immediate Action simply means that it didn't work in the amount of time that the GM rolled. At the end of that time, if the firer is continuing Immediate Action, the GM rolls again for success and time and continues. A critical failure on Immediate Action means the gun must be repaired by an Armourer; the firer can use Armourer skill (GM rolls) to see if he recognizes this.

Grenades: Grenades are very similar throughout the swashbuckling period, and are considered Black Powder Weapons in ***GURPS.*** A roll against that skill is necessary to prepare a grenade, with a fuse of the desired length (usually 5 seconds), for throwing. Any success prepares the grenade; any failure is simply an unlit fuse; the grenadier can try again in 1 turn. The grenade weighs 2 pounds and does 2d concussion and 2d fragmentation damage (see pp. B121-122). Distance and accuracy of the throw is based on the throwing rules on p. B90 and p. B119. The GM rolls to see if the grenade works properly. A success goes off when expected; a failure does not explode. See ***GURPS High-Tech*** for more complete explosives rules.

Water: All black powder weapons malfunction more readily if they are wet. In light rain or spray, matchlock and grenade Malf is -1; wheellock and flintlock Malf does not change. In heavy rain or spray, matchlock and grenade Malf is -3, wheellock and flintlock Malf is -1. In gale-force rain, matchlocks will not fire at all, grenades can't be lit, wheellocks and flintlocks misfire on a 10 and guns can't be successfully loaded.

Weapon Quality

After 1700, melee weapons are cheaper; fine melee weapons cost what good weapons had cost and good weapons cost what cheap weapons had. There is no change at the extremes of the scale; cheap and very fine weapons cost the same as before 1700. Bows and crossbows have no price change; scarcity balances the lower cost of materials. The list price for guns is a reflection of the price when that sort of weapon was the most common type. After 1700, flintlocks are cheap, matchlocks are scrap-metal and wheellocks are expensive toys. Before 1700, matchlocks are the standard and both wheellocks and flintlocks are expensive and rare. GMs must use discretion. As a rule, there is some kind of working gun available at less than a month's pay for a foot-soldier. Soldiers and sailors are *issued* their weapons; pirates steal theirs.

Shields

While the buckler (p. B50) is fairly common in the 17th century, the shield is not, although it was used at the end of the 16th century. Even small shields are inappropriate, unless the adventurers have an Unusual Background. Shields are in use at this time only in "backward" areas such as Russia, the Celtic lands, and the Ottoman Empire. See *Improved Armor and Shields* (sidebar, p. 31) for more shields.

Armor

The military is in transition in this period, and there are a lot of different types of armor worn. Much of it is worn beneath outer cloaks, so it isn't obvious in the pictures of the era.

Ordinary soldiers (and Musketeers) generally wear *no* armor, especially in Paris. At war, they might wear leather armor (called a buff coat), heavy or light, as well as a pot helm. The GM may allow the heroes to wear leather armor on a mission for the king or queen, but it should be worn under the clothes. In the 17th century armor attracts attention, especially from town guards, border patrols, etc.

Infantrymen wear leather armor or none at all if they use muskets - however, they will often wear a pot helm. Pikemen wear scale or plate breastplates and pot helms, leather or cloth on the arms and legs.

Cavalry often wear breastplates of scale or plate; some wear leather, most wear a pot helm. Many cavalry also wear metal armor on the off-hand (the hand holding the reins) that covers the whole arm and back of the hand (cost equals armor for one arm and one hand). This is so they won't lose control of the reins if attacked on the off-hand side - they don't bother to dodge such a blow, as the horse would interpret it as a command! Generals and other important figures usually wear plate armor into battle. King Gustavus Adolphus was killed on a day he decided not to wear his plate armor, as it irritated a minor wound he had received earlier.

The Spanish wear corselets (or sometimes breastplates) and pot helms, as do many of the palace guards throughout Europe. The arms and legs will have leather or no armor.

Pirates tend to go without armor at all - indeed, without shirts at all. It is sweltering in the Caribbean and very damp. Armor requires a lot of care in moist climates. Some pirates wear leather; a very few wear captured Spanish breastplates. Many will put on a pot helm during a battle. No pirate ever wears armor between battles - it is simply too uncomfortable.

See *Improved Armor and Shields* (sidebar, p. 31) for armor and relevant ***GURPS*** statistics.

EQUIPMENT

Wages and prices in this book have been roughly converted to the standard dollar in the ***GURPS Basic*** *Set.* Therefore, use the price list found on p. B212. Additional items available include:

Candles

Candles are available at TL2 and above. At TL4 and 5 they are available in two styles (taper and pillar) and two qualities (tallow and wax). Tapers are 1″ or less in diameter and weigh ¼ pound for a 12″ length. Pillars are 3 or more inches in diameter. They weigh 10 times as much as a taper of equivalent length, and cost 30 times as much. (They are more expensive to make since they have to be molded rather than dipped.) Wax candles cost 10 times as much as tallow. Tallow candles produce more smoke than wax and they stink and sputter loudly as they burn. The sputtering of a tallow candle is audible within 10 yards with a Hearing roll; the smell at 20 with a Smelling roll. Wax candles are -3 to either roll unless perfumed. Either smell or sound can be overwhelmed by ambient noise or odor, of course.

One candle produces enough light to read a map or document, or to light a 3-yard by 3-yard room well enough to distinguish colors.

The burning rate of candles varies. In still air, a wax taper burns one inch in 3 hours. A pillar candle burns one inch in 6 hours. Tallow burns twice as fast as wax. A candle-lantern allows still-air burning rates even in the wind.

At TL4, a 6" tallow taper costs $1. At TL5, six similar candles cost $1.

Surveying Instruments

A set typically includes compass, transit, chains, flags, plotting boards and drawing instruments. Cost is $300; weight is 300 lbs. (most of this is the weight of the surveying chains). A surveying crew is usually three or four men. Starting from a known point, in one day, a crew can locate any point within 5 miles to an accuracy of 1″. Surveyors are in constant demand for road, bridge and fortress construction. In the new empires they are needed to survey land grants.

Surveying parties are an excellent cover for espionage. On the other hand, one of a spy's jobs is frequently surveying. The best course of action is to make the cover and the mission the same, by surveying for the enemy!

Navigating Instruments

These include compass, sextant (or its precursors, cross-staff and astrolabe), dividers, lead line, log (to toss overboard to figure speed), and sand-glass (to measure time). An attempt to navigate without proper instruments is at a -4; you can do without everything except lead-line and log, and those can be improvised.

The cost of a set of ordinary navigating instruments, *without* telescope (see below) is $100; weight is 30 lbs., including chart books. $500 will buy a set of fine, extra-precise instruments, suitable for wide-ranging nautical survey. These give +1 to any Navigation roll.

Telescope

A typical telescope weighs 5 pounds, and is 3 feet long when extended. Magnification is 8 power - it increases the apparent size of objects by eight. It costs $100. It can be used as a light club, and is fairly well balanced as a weapon, but will never again be useful as a telescope.

A telescope is a symbol of authority for military officers; portraits of officers of the period, especially naval officers, usually show the "spyglass."

Surgical Kit

Lancets, bone saw, scalpels, arrowhead/bullet remover, cautery, needles and gut, tooth-drawing pincers, all in a leather case. Cost is $100; weight is 2 lbs., +1 to a Surgery/TL4 roll or a First Aid roll if simple surgery is required.

Logarithmic Table

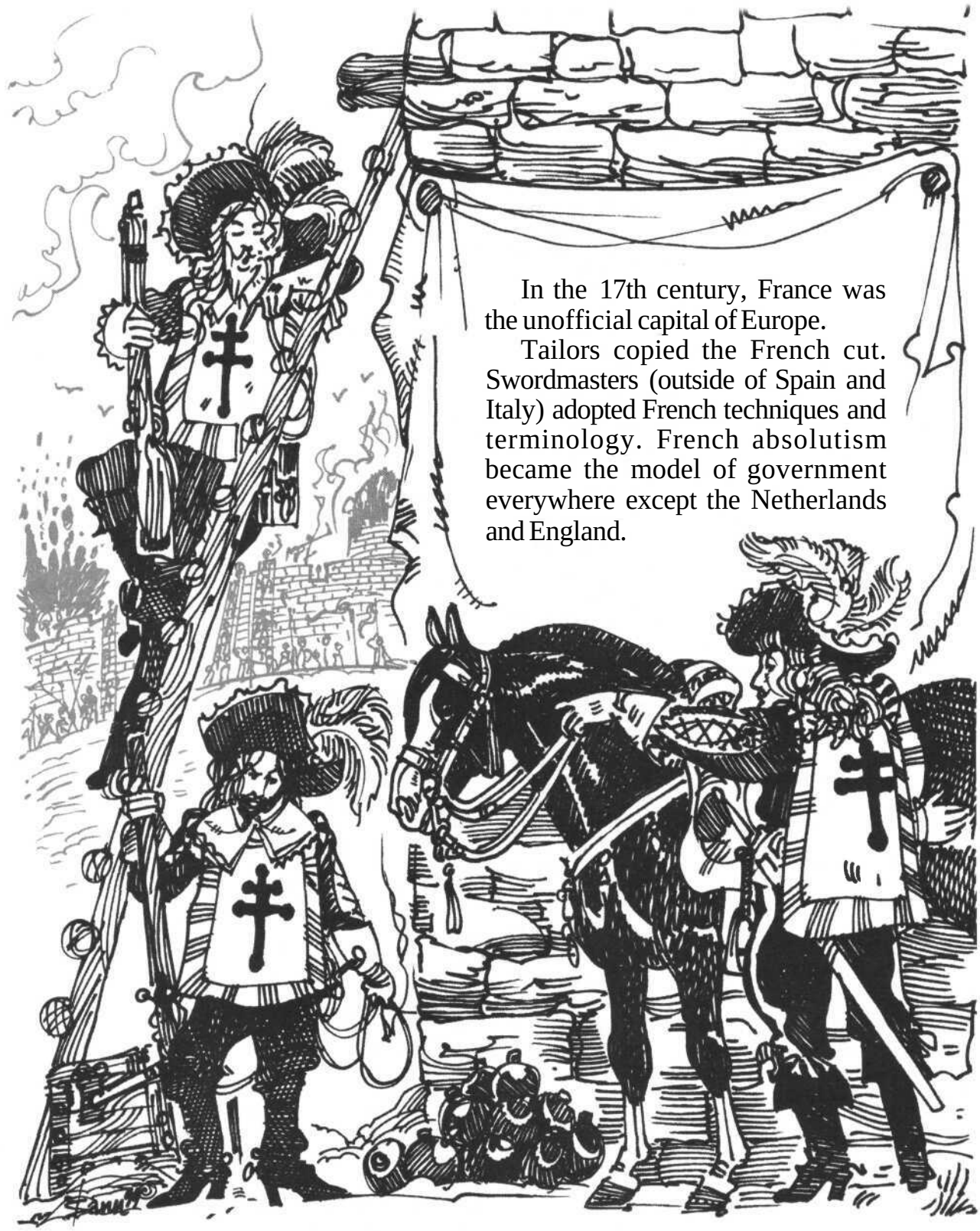
Napier developed the first "log tables" in the mid-17th century; they were on sale by the end of the century. Use of such tables halves the time required to perform complex arithmetical procedures. A book of logarithms might cost $50 in 1700 (far more than an ordinary book), and weigh half a pound.

Slide Rule

An early version of the slide rule was available in the first part of the 18th century. A good slide rule can speed arithmetical operations by a factor of 10! Cost is $50 and up. Weight ranged from negligible for a small one to a couple of pounds for a large one. A big one, made of hardwood, could be used as a baton if the mathematician found himself in dire straits. It would probably not be accurate thereafter.

Chapter 3

THE PARIS CAMPAIGN



In the 17th century, France was the unofficial capital of Europe.

Tailors copied the French cut. Swordmasters (outside of Spain and Italy) adopted French techniques and terminology. French absolutism became the model of government everywhere except the Netherlands and England.

Italy might claim that *haute cuisine* was merely Italian cookery with French ingredients and that French music was merely a copy of Italian, and Spain might claim that France had appropriated *their* grand sense of *noblesse* and the Spanish love of style, but only in France did all the ingredients come together.

The center of French culture and society was Paris - at least until Louis XIV moved his court to Versailles. He left Paris because even he felt unable to dominate the City.

PARISIAN DISTRICTS

Paris straddles the river Seine in the center of the *Isle de France,* the heart of French royal holdings from the Merovingians onward. The oldest part of Paris is the *Île de la Cite* (Island of the City). The Cathedral of Our Lady *(Notre Dame)* and the *Palais du Justice* (high Court of Justice) are on this island.

North of the river is the Right Bank. It plays host to the administrative buildings of Paris, including the *Palais des Tuileries,* the Louvre, the *Palais Cardinal* (the Cardinal's residence) and City Hall. In the 17th century, the Right Bank is also the home of Paris's unsavory elements and poor neighborhoods. The city arsenal, the infamous Bastille, and the Knights Templars *Commanderie* (a prison at this time) are on the upstream end of the Right Bank.

The Left Bank is the most fashionable part of the city at this time. The residences of Louis XIII and queen mother Marie de Medici are here, as are the most exclusive fencing *salles* and the most popular duelling locations. It is also home of the Latin Quarter - the Sorbonne University district, which even in the 17th century had a reputation for wild living.

Refer to the map of Paris on the next page for a closer look. The map of Swashbuckler's Europe on p. 78 shows the rest of the continent around 1630.

THE PARIS UNDERGROUND

While the Romans used open-air quarries to build the earliest settlements that later became Paris, French building projects from Hugh Capet on *mined* the stone blocks, generating underground quarries. This left extensive networks of galleries and tunnels under parts of the city, including areas that became hotbeds of intrigue and duelling action in the 17th century. Some galleries are as large as the greatest halls aboveground. Some tunnels are barely narrow enough to admit a single man. The quarries are not completely interconnected . . . as far as anyone knows. Secret tunnels and rooms are likely!

Rogues could easily disappear into their depths. Likewise, they could host any number of conspirators. The quarries are mostly on the Left Bank, and total nearly 200 miles of twisting tunnel length. The most extensive single network is more than 60 miles long and lies under or near the Sorbonne, the *Club Cordelière* (an exclusive nobles' fencing club northwest of the Sorbonne), the *Carmes-Deschaux*, the Medici's Palace, the St. Germain Fair (a flea market), and *La Charité* (free meals for the poor). The majority of the other networks are found outside the city proper, south of the Left Bank. The residences of the cardinal and the king are not over a quarried district. Neither are the Louvre, the *Tuileries,* the *Palais du Justice,* nor the Templars prison, by amazing coincidence. The only quarries north of the Seine are outside the city proper, but just east of the Bastille and the Arsenal . . .

Note that while these quarries are often called "catacombs" today, they were not used for this purpose until the Napoleonic reconstruction of the city required the removal of several graveyards. "Informal" funereal use was likely, of course.

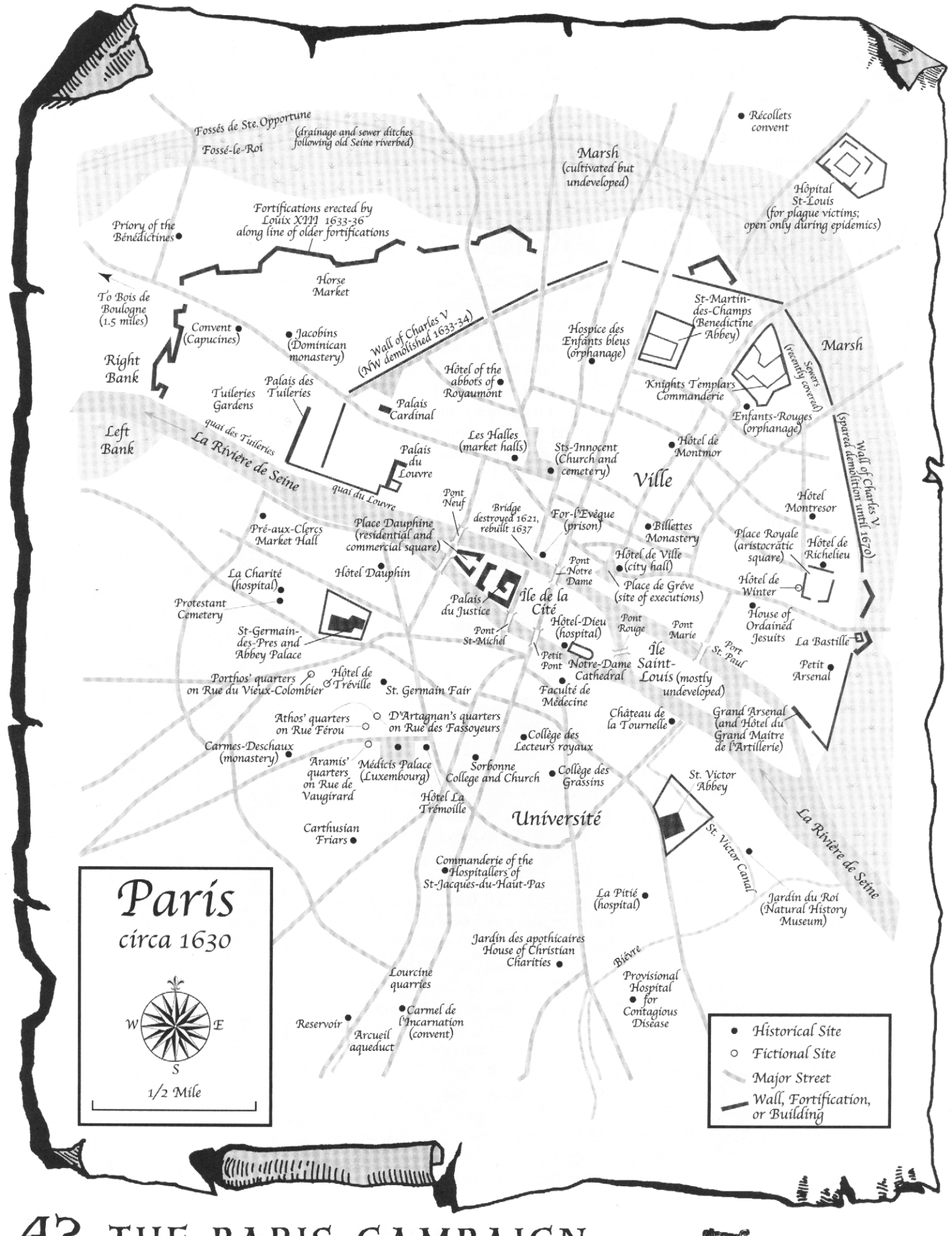
The famous sewers of Paris did not exist until the Napoleonic era.

BYGONE PARIS

Many of the features we automatically associate with Paris did not exist in the swashbuckling era. The Eiffel Tower and the Arc du Triomphe are 19th-century creations, as are the current Opera House, *le Bourse,* and the Pantheon. The Louvre was not an art museum until the mid-1700s, although it had been turned over to the Royal Academy (of science) during the reign of Louis XIV. *Les Invalides* hospital did exist, but not until the reign of Louis XIV.

The famous boulevards of Paris also didn't exist. Except for the grounds immediately surrounding palaces and the finest *hotels,* Paris was still a medieval city of twisting narrow streets, dead ends, and haphazard layout. The broad streets and centralized design we know today are a product of 19th-century military engineering – designed to make the city easier to defend by a limited number of mobile troops and prevent the construction of barricades by rebels. Entire neighborhoods were demolished for this project. Paris did not even have the name "City of Lights" until the Napoleonic reconstruction.

A historical ***Swashbucklers*** campaign set in Paris should reflect these differences. This can be a great help to GMs who know less about modern Paris than do some of their players. Players who try to use out-of-character knowledge of the post-Napoleonic city will find themselves stymied. A Cinematic Paris, of course, can be as airy, open, and grand as the GM desires.


Paris
circa 1630
W
E
S
1/2 Mile
Historical Site
Fictional Site
Major Street
Wall, Fortification, or Building
Fossés de Ste. Opportune
(drainage and sewer ditches following old Seine riverbed)
Fossé-le-Roi
Marsh
(cultivated but undeveloped)
Récollets convent
Hôpital St-Louis
(for plague victims; open only during epidemics)
Priory of the Bénédictines
Fortifications erected by Louix XIII 1633-36 along line of older fortifications
Horse Market
To Bois de Boulogne (1.5 miles)
Convent (Capucines)
Jacobins (Dominican monastery)
Wall of Charles V (NW demolished 1633-34)
Hospice des Enfants bleus (orphanage)
St-Martin-des-Champs (Benedictine Abbey)
Marsh
Sewers (recently covered)
Right Bank
Tuileries Gardens
Palais des Tuileries
Hôtel of the abbots of Royaumont
Knights Templars Commanderie
Enfants-Rouges (orphanage)
Palais Cardinal
Left Bank
quai des Tuileries
La Rivière de Seine
quai du Louvre
Palais du Louvre
Les Halles (market halls)
Sts-Innocent (Church and cemetery)
Hôtel de Montmor
Ville
Wall of Charles V (spared demolition until 1670)
Pont Neuf
Bridge destroyed 1621, rebuilt 1637
For-l'Evêque (prison)
Hôtel Montresor
Pré-aux-Clercs Market Hall
Place Dauphine (residential and commercial square)
Billettes Monastery
Place Royale (aristocratic square)
Hôtel de Richelieu
Pont Notre Dame
Hôtel de Ville (city hall)
Hôtel Dauphin
Place de Grève (site of executions)
Hôtel de Winter
La Charité (hospital)
Protestant Cemetery
Palais du Justice
Île de la Cité
House of Ordained Jesuits
Pont St-Michel
Hôtel-Dieu (hospital)
Pont Rouge
Pont Marie
La Bastille
St-Germain-des-Pres and Abbey Palace
Petit Pont
Notre-Dame Cathedral
Île Saint-Louis (mostly undeveloped)
Port St. Paul
Petit Arsenal
Porthos' quarters on Rue du Vieux-Colombier
Hôtel de Tréville
St. Germain Fair
Faculté de Médecine
Athos' quarters on Rue Férou
D'Artagnan's quarters on Rue des Fassoyeurs
Château de la Tournelle
Grand Arsenal (and Hôtel du Grand Maitre de l'Artillerie)
Collège des Lecteurs royaux
Carmes-Deschaux (monastery)
Aramis' quarters on Rue de Vaugirard
Médicis Palace (Luxembourg)
Sorbonne College and Church
Collège des Grassins
St. Victor Abbey
Hôtel La Trémoille
Université
La Rivière de Seine
Carthusian Friars
St. Victor Canal
Commanderie of the Hospitallers of St-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas
La Pitié (hospital)
Jardin du Roi (Natural History Museum)
Jardin des apothicaires
House of Christian Charities
Bièvre
Lourcine quarries
Provisional Hospital for Contagious Disease
Carmel de l'Incarnation (convent)
Reservoir
Arcueil aqueduct

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

The following summary of *The Three Musketeers* is offered for those who have never read the book and sadly never intend to. If you wish to read it - and it is highly recommended - then this brief sketch might ruin your enjoyment of the book. The names Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and D'Artagnan are scattered throughout ***GURPS Swashbucklers,*** and refer to the four main characters of this book. Prominent historical personalities in *The Three Musketeers* include Cardinal Richelieu, King Louis XIII, Anne of Austria (the Queen of France), and the Duke of Buckingham (the Prime Minister of England). Milady de Winter is the fictional villain of the book.

SUMMARY OF DUMAS' NOVEL

The Three Musketeers follows the adventures of a young Gascon, D'Artagnan, in the years 1626-1627. Gascony, in the south of France, is one of the poorer provinces, and sure enough, D'Artagnan has very little money and few possessions. He is of noble birth and possesses a fiery temper and some skill with a blade. The book opens as he nears Paris, to seek his fortune. His father had given him a letter of recommendation to present to a friend of his youth, Monsieur de Tréville, the Captain of the King's Musketeers. Unfortunately, the only horse the elder D'Artagnan could give his son is quite old, decrepit, and fit primarily as a butt for jokes.

The 19-year-old D'Artagnan, very sensitive, picks a fight with a nobleman he assumes is laughing at him and his horse. The nobleman's henchmen overcome D'Artagnan, and his letter of recommendation is taken from him. This sets up a running sub-plot throughout the book. D'Artagnan attempts to avenge himself on this unknown nemesis, who turns out to be the Comte de Rochefort, the right-hand man of Cardinal Richelieu, who is the most powerful man in France!

Arriving in Paris, D'Artagnan shows up at M. de Tréville's *hotel,* and inadvertently proceeds to insult three Musketeers, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, in quick order. They set up times to duel, and are just commencing when they are arrested by five of the Cardinal's guards - for duelling, of course, which is illegal. D'Artagnan quickly sides with the three Musketeers, and together they defeat the guards. The four become fast friends and after another duel with a guard, D'Artagnan is appointed to another company of the King's bodyguard. He yearns to be an elite Musketeer, however, and spends his time with them.

D'Artagnan becomes involved in the queen's affairs through his pretty young landlady, Constance Bonacieux. He falls in love with Constance, and as her husband is a boorish, middle-aged merchant, she becomes enamored of him. She is one of the queen's ladies-in-waiting, and has volunteered her husband to go on a dangerous mission to save the queen's honor.

D'Artagnan and the three Musketeers set off for England on the queen's mission . . . and the plot continues to thicken. The young Gascon soon shows his mettle and performs a deed of such heroism that he is accepted as a Musketeer. In the end, D'Artagnan wins the respect of the fearsome Cardinal himself, and (of course) defeats the arrogant Comte de Rochefort in three duels. The book ends with D'Artagnan a lieutenant of the King's Musketeers.

There are two sequels: *Twenty Years After* and *The Viscount of Bragelonne* (usually excerpted in English as *The Man in the Iron Mask).*

How TO BE FRENCH

Taste extends to every aspect of a Frenchman's life. The French taste is apparent in fashion, of course, and Parisian styles already dominate European fashions by the 17th century. Why would a Frenchman wear something unappealing when something stylish is fairly easy to acquire? This is true for everything - even the mailboxes and dogs are aesthetic first, practical second.

Food is a special case. Here is where the French go beyond the merely artistic. Other folk eat to live, it is said, while the French live to eat. Even the poorer families have well-prepared food as a matter of course, and anyone of Status 1+ has one meal each day that would qualify as a gourmet meal anywhere in the world. There are a number of courses, each with the appropriate liqueur. There is time between each course so the meal can be savored a bit at a time. Conversation is polite and cultured and no one dominates. Even a cup of coffee, taken at a cafe in mid-morning, is thoroughly enjoyed. Meals are never hurried; in fact, nothing that could be enjoyed is ever hurried in France. Everything is an art; a Frenchman's taste is with him always.

Reverence for their culture and language is part of the French national character. In the darkest days of the Middle Ages, France kept the fires of civilization burning on the Continent. It was the French that bore the brunt of halting Attila. It was the French that stopped the Moslem invasion of Western Europe through Spain. The French will never let the rest of the world forget this.

They respect their ancestors' customs, and are slow to change traditions. They value independence fiercely, and have revolted against their governments more than once. However, they have never thrown off reverence for the basic tenets of French society as handed down through the ages. Socially, they are a conservative people - even today it is not generally accepted to call unexpectedly upon friends in France.

The French love their language and love to hear it spoken properly. The mother of Louis XIII, Marie de Medici, never learned to speak French well, and French historians have nothing but contempt for her. They still ridicule her accent, citing that she said *soucre* for *sucre* and committed other barbarous crimes against the language. A foreigner is disdained more for his poor accent than for the misfortune of being born elsewhere.

Continued on next page . . .

How TO BE FRENCH (CONTINUED)

This attitude is less prevalent outside of Paris, unless the person affects Parisian airs. An outsider with a good accent (French at 13+) is given a certain patronizing respect anywhere in France. The usual phrase to describe others is, "He speaks French like a Spanish cow." This is one of the main reasons that most foreigners get a negative reaction in France.

Romance is essential to the French. We think of the French appetite for romance as being something lascivious, but they go about it tastefully. The niceties *must* be observed in taking a lover, and modern American practices would be fatally gauche to a 17th-century Frenchman. Flowers, music, walks in the park, love notes, a rendezvous, wine, and food are all handled tastefully, in the correct order, at the right pace. Discretion is a must. Both parties are excited by the courtship or it ceases quickly.

Mutual admiration and respect between the sexes is strong, and *vive la difference!* might well be the national slogan. Flirtatious behavior is ingrained into the French culture and may mean little or a lot, depending on the circumstances. The PCs would be very likely to be flirted with regularly, but it is up to them to determine if the person is just passing time pleasantly, has the Lecherous disadvantage or is playing a more deadly game. Sex and spies have gone together for many centuries, especially in France!

PARISIAN ADVENTURERS

The people of Swashbuckling Europe are among the most intriguing characters and NPCs of any genre. The historical information and character sketches that follow only hint at the drama around every corner.

MUSKETEERS

A Musketeer is a member of an elite corps of guards serving the King of France in the 17th century. They are trained in the use of muskets, of course, as well as the sword and pistol. They are a mounted unit but not cavalry; they dismount to fight. Musketeers use rapiers and later (after 1720) the smallsword. Each Musketeer carries his musket, sword, and two pistols when on a campaign or guard duty, and just the sword in town. There were from 60 to 200 Musketeers at one time.

A Musketeer wears a blue cloak with a white cross or a blue tabard (a short surcoat with no sleeves) with a white cross on the front. They also wear a wide-brimmed hat with a plume added for decoration.

During a war, the Musketeers stay with the king. If the king goes to the front, so do they. Some of them might also be sent to the front as an elite unit to crack a tough defense. Not all of the Musketeers would be sent, however. The captain remains with the king to advise him. If the king stays in the capital, one of the lieutenants has the honor of leading the portion of the troop that goes to the front.

During times of peace, their duty consists of guarding the king's palace, a task Musketeers share with other units. An unofficial duty in the time of Louis XIII is to augment the king's pride. Musketeers are supposed to be the manliest troops in town so the king can feel superior to Cardinal Richelieu. This is not easy for the king, since the cardinal is superior to him in so many ways - see p. 50. Duelling is illegal in France at this time, but if a Musketeer should best one of the cardinal's guards, the king would be pleased enough to overlook it - sometimes even reward it!

Musketeers (and the cardinal's elite guard) are recruited from the best swordsmen in Europe - there are some foreigners in the troop. For the most part, they are free to spend their leisure hours as they please, and many of them congregate at the captain's *hotel* for fencing practice, carousing, gambling, and boasting. Above all, a Musketeer is expected to be conspicuously honorable, courageous, and impressive at all times. He serves the king every minute of his life and does so with pride.

The Musketeers' headquarters is near the king's palace, and a barracks is available, though not mandatory. Many Musketeers rent a room in the area. They report for guard duty on a schedule, and to the captain's *hotel* as they please - or as the captain pleases. If the captain has granted certain favors in the past, such as a pass from guard duty, he may ask a Musketeer to perform some discreet service.

The Captain of the Musketeers is a high-ranking position. Since these are the King's Musketeers, the captain of the troop is responsible only to the king himself. Therefore the captain of the Musketeers has a rank comparable to a lieutenant-general. To join the Musketeers, one must perform two years service in another troop, or some significant act of glory.

The Captain of the Musketeers (M. de Treville in *The Three Musketeers* - see p. 51) is always looking out for the best interests of the king, the queen, his men, and himself, in that order. M. de Treville is a close personal friend of the king and is often privy to his secret anxieties. He uses his Musketeers in any service that the king needs. It is not a time of strict schedules. The GM should be lenient in cases where the PCs need to be gone on semi-official business.

THE CARDINAL'S GUARDS

Cardinal Richelieu is the true ruler of France during the reign of Louis XIII. The king listens to his advice on everything. In addition, the cardinal (usually referred to as His Eminence) commands a superb network of spies that report directly to him - the king is largely unaware of this network. The cardinal also has his own guards with distinctive uniforms of their own. They are simply known as the Cardinal's Guards. They travel with the cardinal when he leaves Paris and guard the *Palais Cardinal,* his residence and office. The *Palais Cardinal* is conveniently adjacent to the government offices in the Louvre. (It is now called the *Palais Royal.)* Occasionally the cardinal will slip away from the guards on truly nefarious business - but nobody questions him.

The Cardinal's Guards can barrack near the *Palais Cardinal,* or can rent rooms if they choose. They have a similarly free schedule. Their uniform is very similar to that of the Musketeers, but red instead of blue.

The Cardinal's Guards are a close match for the Musketeers. The cardinal recruits from all over Europe and is likely to have nearly any nationality of soldier serving in his unit. Despite his position as a Prince of the Church, the cardinal is not above hiring Protestants for his Guard - if they are superior swordsmen! Most of the Cardinal's Guards mentioned in *The Three Musketeers* are honorable, brave men, if somewhat fond of harassing Musketeers. They are an extension of the cardinal's ego, as the Musketeers are of the king's. If they can prove superior to the Musketeers, the cardinal will reward them - and Richelieu is famous for generosity. Naturally, the guards will only harass Musketeers for a good purpose - if they catch them breaking the law, for example. Of course, this includes duelling and gambling, laws they don't bother to enforce on themselves or anyone else. Still, they won't annoy peaceful Musketeers beyond a mild taunt or two, and should either actually be threatened by thugs or foreign agents, the other will come to their aid. They *are* working to protect France, after all. The cardinal's spies, on the other hand, are known to be unscrupulous, underhanded, unethical, and deadly.

THE *HOTEL*

An *hotel* in 17th-century France is basically a city version of a noble's estate. A noble or wealthy gentleman will build a compound or building in Paris, often taking up an entire block, with double doors large enough for horses and carriages to pass through.

The *hotel* has guards' and servants' quarters on the street level (as well as stables), and entertainment rooms on the first story (what Americans would call the second story). The upper stories are the noble's private quarters, as well as those of any personal valet or maid.

Hotels are the social centers of Parisian life throughout the swashbuckling era. There might be dinner parties with a private theatrical show afterwards, or a ball or masque, or simply gaming and swapping lies. The more intellectual nobility have literary discussions or demonstrations of the latest scientific discoveries as an evening's amusement. Hostesses vie with each other to have the most extravagant entertainment - the PCs might well qualify as that, if they can behave themselves!

Any PC trying to be inconspicuous at an *hotel* affair needs at least Status 2 to do it without a skill roll. Status 0 and 1 characters need a successful Savoir-Faire roll, and characters with lesser Status than that need Savoir-Faire-4.

Hotels vary considerably in size, the largest having over 90 rooms! The "average" *hotel* might have 3 or 4 stories, and be 30 yards on a side. There is usually a large ballroom - perhaps 80% of the third story - and another level with smaller sitting rooms, ranging from 3x4 yards to 8x10 yards. Some hostesses pride themselves on furnishing each room in a different extravagant fashion.

The *hotel* of the Captain of the King's Musketeers can be a very important place in a Parisian adventure. It is where Musketeer PCs and their friends will gather throughout an adventure. There will be a courtyard instead of a place for a coach – for practicing fencing, of course. There will be inner chambers where drinking, gaming, and boasting go on at any hour of the day. The captain himself will have a modest suite, with an office large enough to receive eight to ten Musketeers at once.

There will always be a few Musketeers at hand, even if the captain is not present, and the *hotel* is open to any who wear the uniform. It will not be far from the barracks, should the PCs decide to stay there. The *hotel* should not be large by wealthy standards, but adequate to hold up to 80 men at a time. Chapters 2 and 3 of *The Three Musketeers* take place in M. de Tréville's *hotel,* and the GM is referred there for a model.

SOCIAL LIFE OF A MUSKETEER OR GUARD

STATUS

Status and Rank are not simple things in 17th-century France. This is a time of flux; there are different levels of society that effectively share the same Status, but are not at all the same.

The nobility includes all gentlemen. Even impoverished gentlemen are still of *some* status - and this is an era when many of the nobility are impoverished. D'Artagnan comes from a noble family; that is, he is a gentleman. He can read - that's a given - and he has the Gentleman's Code of Honor - also a given. But he has little money; in fact, he has the Struggling disadvantage. Any impoverished noble in ***GURPS Swashbucklers*** may have Status 1 or 2, but no higher or lower. The loss of wealth results in a loss of some status, though never all of it. The family may have been Status 4 or 5 a century earlier, but if the noble cannot support the lifestyle, his Status is less.

Any gentleman is expected to have a servant, or lackey as he is called in *The Three Musketeers.* It doesn't matter that he can't afford one; he *must* have a lackey. So we see the comic results of this in the book, in which the *very* down and out serve the merely down and out. Lackeys could be of Status 0 or -1, and are usually chastised if they presume to act like gentlemen.

The bourgeoisie have taken over the wealth that some of the nobles have lost. They are not "well-born," but they can afford all of the symbols of status: large houses, fine horses, lots of servants, carriages, libraries (even if they can't read!), fancy clothes, etc. They can never manage the noble manner, though. The older bourgeois families (Status 2) come close; the *nouveau riche* (Status 1) are comic in their attempts. Any character with 20 points of wealth *may* buy Status 1 or Status 2 at the normal cost. Status 2 is *required* with 30+ points of wealth.

Status 1 or higher is a prerequisite to being a Musketeer, but a Status 1 *nouveau riche* character does not qualify. If the character's background is bourgeois, then Status 2, the Old Money, is required. Any Noble Status is sufficient, with or without money.

See p. 11 for a discussion of a Musketeer's rank.

These men have time on their hands. Their duties are actually fairly light - guarding the king's palace (the Louvre) every third day. They assemble at the captain's *hotel* and gamble, drink, boast, practice their swordsmanship, and generally behave as adolescently as the king wishes he could (even the Cardinal's Guards do this, somewhat to Richelieu's chagrin). Their salaries are insufficient for their expenditures. They are expected to have outside sources of income; these range from inheritances to mistresses to gambling winnings to performing services for the wealthy bourgeoisie. These services often are no more than showing up at social dinners! The bourgeoisie have their own status symbols, one of which is the number of nobles and well-known people they are able to count as friends - or at least invite to dinner.

A mistress is almost required for a Musketeer. Only a very self-possessed man such as Athos could keep face without a mistress. French morality at that time is a little hypocritical. Married women are expected to take a lover; husbands are expected to have a mistress, though one must be discreet. Nonetheless, it is a fact of French life, and when Porthos was introduced to his mistress' husband as her cousin, no one was deceived. Jealousy is a common disadvantage; however, it is usually a matter of reputation, not feeling. As long as discretion is maintained, all is well.

There are many gambling houses in Paris at this time. They are all illegal. However, the city watch is either very inefficient or very bribable, for there are few instances of raids and thousands of records of gambling. Gaming is a national pastime, whether for coppers or gold. Members of every stratum of society spend hours each night at the gaming tables. Fortunes are often lost, but rarely won that way. Most Musketeers gamble - even Athos, though he always loses.

MAJOR PERSONALITIES OF THE ERA

Here are some of the major figures likely to be encountered or at least gossiped about in a Parisian campaign. Complete stats are given only for the people of action. Fictional characters are marked with an asterisk (*). While the Musketeer saga is technically set before the beginning of the Transitional era, characters from these novels are given the skills of the Transitional French School (p. 30) since it fits the flavor of the books better than the more rough-and-tumble Italian rapier school that actually dominated France until the 1640s.

*D'Artagnan**

Age 19; 5′ 10", 160 lbs.; Musketeer, dark hair and mustache, dark-complected, with a long face, hooked nose and prominent cheek bones.

Attributes: ST 12, DX 13, IQ 12, HT 12. Speed 6.25; Move 6. Dodge 6; Parry 12.
Advantages: Appearance (Attractive)+1; Alertness +2; Danger Sense; Literacy; Luck; Patron (Captain of the Musketeers, on 9 or less); Status 1.
Disadvantages: Bad Temper; Code of Honor (Gentleman's); Delusion (the Coup de d'Artagnan really works); Duty (to King); Enemy (Small group of the Cardinal's Guard, on 9 or less); Impulsiveness; Overconfidence; Sense of Duty (Companions); Struggling; Stubbornness.
Quirks: Wants to be a Musketeer; Enjoys duelling; Loyal; Naive; Romantic.
Skills: Body Language-16; Black Powder Weapons-12; Broadsword-12; Climbing-12; Fast-Talk-11; Fencing (Rapier)-18; Fencing Sport (Rapier)-15; Gambling-11; Riding-15; Savoir-Faire-11; Shadowing-11; Stealth-13; Tournament Law (Fencing exhibitions)-12.
Maneuvers *(Transitional French School)* (all specialized maneuvers are for rapier): Close Combat-13; Corps-à-Corps-18; Coup de d'Artagnan-20; Counterattack-15; Disarming-19; Esquive-3; Feint-20; Floor Lunge [thrust]-18; Glide-16; Hit Location-18; Lunge [thrust]- 18; Retain Weapon-19; Riposte-18.

D'Artagnan is the brash hero of *The Three Musketeers.* This is D'Artagnan as a young man. There was a real D'Artagnan who influenced Dumas. However, the differences are striking enough to warrant calling *this* D'Artagnan fictional.

*Athos**

Age 29; Musketeer, somber appearance, average build, noble and graceful mien.

Attributes: ST 12, DX 14, IQ 13, HT 12. Basic Speed 6.5; Move 6. Dodge 6; Parry 11.
Advantages: Charisma +2; Common Sense; Literacy; Patron (Captain of the Musketeers, on 9 or less); Status 5; Wealth (Wealthy).
Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Gentleman's); Duty (to King); Intolerance (of Englishmen); Odious Personal Habit (Melancholy); Secret (Disgraced Noble); Sense of Duty (Companions); Truthfulness.
Quirks: Always calm and dignified; Doesn't have a mistress and distrusts all women; Gambles though he usually loses; Speaks little; Trusts D'Artagnan totally.
Skills: Black Powder Weapons-16; Body Language-16; Broadsword-13; Falconry-17; Fencing (Rapier)-17; Fencing Art (Rapier)-15; Heraldry-17; Latin-14; Literature-14; Riding-15; Savoir-Faire-20; Tactics-13; Tournament Law (Fencing exhibitions)-13.
Maneuvers *(Transitional French School)* (all specialized maneuvers are for rapier): Close Combat-14; Corps-à-Corps-16; Counterattack-16; Disarming-18; Esquive-4; Feint-18; Floor Lunge [thrust]-16; Glide-16; Hit Location-17; Lunge [thrust]-17; Retain Weapon-18; Riposte-17.

Athos is the oldest of the three musketeers, and also the steadiest and calmest. He also has the most sense. He would, indeed, be a noble lord with a large following were he not emotionally scarred from his marriage. He must hide his identity, as he executed his wife for being a branded thief. The disgrace was too much to bear, and he joined the Musketeers.

LACKEYS

A lackey is an essential adjunct to any gentleman who wishes to command respect. There are certain tasks that gentlefolk do not do themselves - shopping, running messages, answering the door, etc. A lackey is necessary to keep the Reaction bonus that 1+ Social Status enjoys.

Lackeys are best handled by the Hireling rules on pp. B194-195. They do not usually qualify as Allies or Dependents. While the PC may become attached to his lackey, he is not bound to protect him and is not penalized if the lackey dies.

The average lackey will have 20 to 30 points. The job is one or two wealth levels lower than the PC's wealth level. Planchet, D'Artagnan's lackey, received the luxurious sum of $10/day when D'Artagnan was wealthy - much less at other times. Mousqueton, Porthos' lackey, demanded only good clothing, lodging and two hours a day free to earn the rest of his funds. Chapter 7 in *The Three Musketeers* introduces the reader to four lackeys whose characters are filled out in the book.

PCs may start the game as lackeys but would be rather extraordinary servants. Most hired help of that type are *not* hero material. Still, if someone is Dead Broke or Poor, it might not be a bad way to begin a career - there *is* historical and fictional precedent.

SAMPLE NPCs

Average Town Watch

ST 12, **DX** 11, **IQ** 9, **HT** 10.
Move 5; Parry 5.

Advantages: One of: Alertness +2; Combat Reflexes; Reputation; Common Sense; Danger Sense; High Pain Threshold; Toughness +1.

Disadvantages: One or two of: Alcoholism; Bad Temper; Bully; Duty; Greed; Honesty; Intolerance; Impulsiveness; Laziness; Megalomania; Overconfidence.

Skills: Area Knowledge-12; Black Powder Weapons-11; Brawling-13; Carousing-11; Interrogation-9; Law-8; Merchant-9; Shadowing-8; Shortsword-11; Spear-12; Streetwise-8 .

One of the Cardinal's Guards

(A worthy opponent)
ST 11, **DX** 14, **IQ** 12, **HT** 12.
Move 6; Parry 10.

Advantages: Literacy; Status 1; and two of: Ambidexterity; High Pain Threshold; Night Vision; Rapid Healing; Toughness; Wealth (Comfortable).

Disadvantages: Duty (to Cardinal); Fanatic (loyal to the Cardinal); Gentleman's Code of Honor; Sense of Duty (to Fellow Guards).

Quirks: Likes to taunt Musketeers; Romantically inclined; Enjoys good wine; Easily insulted; Considers his plumed hat his "badge of honor" - don't mock or abuse it!

Skills: Acting-11; Area Knowledge (Paris)-ll; Black Powder Weapons-15; Brawling-13; Fast-Draw (Rapier)-13; Fencing (Rapier)-15; Knife-13; Riding-13; Savoir-Faire-10; Stealth-13.

Maneuvers: One point in all appropriate maneuvers of the Transitional French School.

COMMEDIA DELL'ARTE

The *Commedia Dell'Arte* is a type of theater that ruled the European stage for over a century. It originated in Italy in the 1550s, and was brought to France by Queen Marie de Medici in the early 17th century. The *Commedia* caught on and spread all over Europe. It was popular with all classes of people, and the actors had an excellent sense of how to play to different audiences.

The name simply means "professional comedy," and its standards are high. There are no scripts; it is all improvised. The same plot can be used over and over again, and the shows will never be the same. The major characters are the same over the centuries, different actors interpreting the roles in only slightly different ways. Harlequin is always recognizable as Harlequin. Most of the actors wear half-masks, allowing speech.

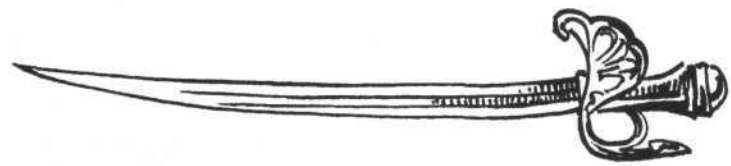
Continued on next page . . .

*Porthos**

Age 25. Musketeer, a large, strong man with a booming voice and strutting walk.

Attributes: ST 15, **DX** 12, IQ 9, HT 13. Speed 6.25; Move 6. Dodge 6; Parry 10.
Advantages: Appearance (Handsome)+2/+4; Literacy; Patron (Captain of the Musketeers, on 9 or less); Status 1.
Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Gentleman's); Compulsive Carousing; Duty (to King); Odious Personal Habit (Boasting); Odious Personal Habit (Showoff); Overconfidence; Sense of Duty (Companions).
Quirks: Vain; Extreme extrovert; Jovial; Loves to gamble; Talks of women frequently.
Skills: Body Language-10; Black Powder Weapons-16; Carousing-15; Fencing (Rapier)-15; Gambling-12; Riding-15; Sex Appeal-18; Tournament Law (Fencing exhibitions)-9.
Maneuvers *(Transitional French School)* (all specialized maneuvers are for rapier): Close Combat-12; Corps-à-Corps-17; Counterattack-11; Disarming-16; Esquive-3; Feint-16; Floor Lunge [thrust]-12; Glide-15; Hit Location-12; Lunge [thrust]-15; Retain Weapon-16; Riposte-15.

Porthos is the likable, rowdy strong man of the group. He is brilliant at wheedling money from older bourgeois women and pretends his mistress is a Duchess. A thoroughly delightful personality, his lackey has similar characteristics and, in addition, a high Lasso skill that allows him to retrieve wine bottles (full) from a distance!



*Aramis**

Age 24. Musketeer, short, handsome. He is gentle and patient - when he's not insulted!

Attributes: ST 11, DX 12, IQ 14, HT 11. Speed 5.75; Move 5. Dodge 5; Parry 11.
Advantages: Appearance (Handsome)+2/+4; Literacy; Patron (Captain of the Musketeers, on 9 or less); Status 2.
Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Gentleman's); Duty (to King); Lecherousness; Sense of Duty (Companions); Truthfulness.
Quirks:: Aspires to be a clergyman; Lies about his mistress, even though he doesn't lie well; Likes to write poetry; Polite; Pretends to be reading theology when visiting his mistress.
Skills: Body Language-15; Black Powder Weapons-13; Diplomacy-12; Fencing (Rapier)-17; Fencing Art (Rapier)-17; Latin-13; Poetry-16; Riding-14; Savoir-Faire-14; Theology-15; Tournament Law (Fencing exhibitions)-14; Writing-13.
Maneuvers *(Transitional French School)* (all specialized maneuvers are for rapier): Close Combat-13; Corps-à-Corps-18; Counterattack-17; Disarming -18; Esquive-4; Feint-19; Floor Lunge [thrust]-14; Glide-16; Hit Location -17; Lunge [thrust]-17; Retain Weapon-18; Riposte-17.

Aramis was in the seminary from his ninth to twentieth years. His manhood was insulted, and he spent the next year learning fencing in order to avenge himself! The scandal of killing his enemy forced him to leave the seminary, but he yearns to return. In the meantime, he enjoys a noble mistress, delightful wine and rich food, duelling, and adventures - a man drawn to two different worlds.

King Louis XIII (reigned 1610-1643)

By and large, Louis XIII is a weak king given to vanity and petty jealousy. His father was Henry IV, a strong and much admired man, who was assassinated when Louis was a boy. Louis tries to live up to that impossibly strong, boyishly unrealistic image of kingship and is doomed to condemn himself for failure his whole life. In the years of his youth, his mother (Marie de Medici) was the regent, and treated him with contempt. She doesn't have much influence with Louis in his manhood and is eventually banished to her homeland of Italy in 1631.

By the time he is 20, he has already picked out the name he wishes history to remember him by: Louis the Just. Flatterers will call him that after any decision he makes - it calms his nerves and makes him feel better. In general, he is uncomfortable making important decisions and defers to Cardinal Richelieu in nearly everything. Occasionally he will take control of the army during a war and surprise everyone with true bravery and sound military judgment. Perhaps if he'd had more self-confidence he would have been a great soldier.

The GM should play Louis as vain, petty, absent-minded, and pathetically eager to be liked. He needs assurance from anyone he admires and trusts. He shouldn't remember Musketeers' names until they have rendered him some great service. He will reward service with a purse of perhaps $1,000-4,000.

*Milady de Winter**

Age 26; beautiful, fair-complected, blonde hair with black eyebrows, blue eyes, tall, with a good figure.

Attributes: ST 9, DX 11, IQ 14, HT 12. Speed 5.75; Move 5. Dodge 5.

Advantages: Appearance (Very Beautiful); Charisma +2; Empathy; Literacy; Strong Will +2; Voice.

Disadvantages: Greedy; Jealousy; Odious Personal Habit (Vengeful); Secret (Outlaw).

Quirks: Always acting; Ambitious; Fears no one but the Cardinal; No scruples; Selfish.

Skills: Acting-18; Dancing-12; English-15; Fast-Talk-16; Forgery-13; Interrogation-13; Knife-13; Pickpocket-12; Poisons-12; Savoir-Faire-16; Sex Appeal-20; Shadowing-11; Sleight of Hand-16; Stealth-14; Streetwise-14.

The villain of *The Three Musketeers*, Milady has been a model for villainous females ever since. She hides her past well, appears to be innocent of all wrongdoings, and is even capable of "seducing" a Puritan! Simply reading her Quirks and Skills will give a strong sense of her personality.

Commedia Dell'Arte (CONTINUED)

The major characters are Harlequin, the innocent fool; Pantalone, the lecherous old miser; Dottore, the pedantic know-it-all who gets it all wrong (if he's a medical doctor, he speaks excellent Latin but his patients all die); Pierrot, the romantic; Brighella, the master thief; Pulchinella, the crazy hunchback; Columbine, the earthy maid; Isabella, the heroine; Capitano, the boasting Spanish terror who claims to have slain a million men but runs away in panic if there's an unusual noise on stage; and Scaramouche, the little skirmisher who starts battles and then slips away while others fight.

A troupe of *Commedia Dell'Arte* performers would be a good cover for a party of PCs. They travel across borders regularly, wear masks on stage, are expected to do foolish things (the word "zany" originated in the *Commedia),* and aren't taken very seriously. The more successful ones are often invited to nobles' estates and *hotels* for private shows.

They always put local gossip into their performances - the perfect excuse if caught asking too many questions. Free passes to the show are a cheap bribe, and actors are often admired enough that people are flattered simply to be seen in their company.

There are some disadvantages, though. The show must go on, and the troupe won't last if they keep missing engagements. At least three shows a week are expected from a troupe.

Actors are occasionally banished from France for a few years at a time and often from individual towns and duchies - sometimes the humor is offensive to the ruling class. The Puritans banished *all* actors from England when they came to power (and even burned all theaters). Calvinists in general are opposed to theater as sinful.

Many people look on theatrical people as rogues, thieves, wantons, and congenitally lazy no-goods - which unfortunately describes many PCs very accurately.

The minimum requirements for a successful *Commedia Dell'Arte* actor are Performance, Bard, and Fast-Talk (for the improvisation) at 12+, plus at least one of the following at 12+: Acrobatics, Dancing, Musical Instrument, or Singing. Merchant, Carpentry, and Italian (or French, if the actor *is* Italian) are recommended. Absolute Timing, Musical Ability, and Voice help.

This list is no exaggeration. Commedia is the most difficult form of Western theater to do well, and the troupes make their own props and sets. It is a Struggling job; the pay is $8 x the average of four skills: Performance, Bard, Fast-Talk, and either Acrobatics or a Musical/Dancing skill ($10 x the average if the character has Absolute Timing, which, of course, is the essence of comedy).

THE PARIS OPERA

Commedia couldn't reign forever, and in France it was replaced by the opera. Originally brought to France under the patronage of Cardinal Mazarin, it found no support from Louis XIV until Jean-Baptiste Lully, who had been writing ballets for the King's pleasure, developed a style suitable for the French idiom.

Lully's French opera differed from the Italian in that it required a very broad range of skill from its performers, with several ballet interludes and music that followed the diction of spoken French - requiring the singers to also act. Likewise, the music was complex and the libretto in very formal verse.

Lully's new operatic form was an immediate hit with the King and his smash success at Versaille was repeated at the new *Academie Royale de Musique* in Paris. After his death in 1687, his successors slavishly adhered to his model for at least 50 years and worked mightily to quash any variation.

This conservatism plus the royal patronage enjoyed by the *Academie* establishment made the opera an excellent front for political criticism.

The *Parlements* of Paris had been stripped of their traditional right of legal ratification in 1624. Richelieu, Mazarin, and Louis XIV had progressively eliminated all other forms of legitimate political expression. The opera became a metaphor for the government. Those who wished to criticize a policy would cast it in terms of some aspect of the opera. Those who defended the court would respond in kind.

This practice was typical of French society and not confined to the opera. Any disagreement with which the King had some involvement was prone to becoming a proxy for suppressed political dissent. In response, the government tightened observation and censorship . . .

COMBAT AS ENTERTAINMENT

Going out to watch the fights may be older than civilization as we know it. In the 17th century, combat entertainment took two major forms, the exhibition and the contest. An exhibition was done entirely by professionals (or amateurs who fancied themselves such) who were paid either from admission charged or with money tossed onto the stage.

Continued on nextpage . . .

Anne of Austria

Raised in Spain, Anne of Austria is Louis XIII's queen until his death in 1643, at which point she was regent for Louis XIV until 1652. She was chosen for him by his mother when he was young, and neither of them really wanted to marry the other. Nonetheless, Anne is very beautiful, and Louis wishes she were completely in love with him. On her part, Anne wishes Louis would trust her and put some energy into wooing her. They are two spoiled children who never really grew up.

Rumor has it that Richelieu lusted after Anne. She put him off, and he begged. She asked that he dance in a buffoon's costume for her, and he agreed, providing they were alone. He appeared one night in her apartments with bells and a fool's cap on and danced around the room. Unfortunately, the queen had hidden a friend, the Duchesse de Chevreuse, in the room, and the two women burst out laughing. Thus was born the enmity of the cardinal for the queen.

Anne was ardently wooed by the Prime Minister of England, the Duke of Buckingham. She responded with blushes and some small gifts, but no more than a kiss did the Englishman win from her. She was faithful to Louis, hoping he would come to desire her. Buckingham never gave up, and was in love with her the rest of his life.

Anne is a prisoner in her palace. The king mistrusts her and is jealous of any who go near her. His pride won't let him woo her himself, though - he is the king!

The cardinal is out to disgrace her. Any letter from her home country of Spain is viewed with the greatest suspicion - she is suspected of treason. Likewise, England is France's enemy, and every attempt Buckingham makes to contact her brings more risk of suspicion of betrayal in more ways than one.

She is nearly powerless, and any Musketeer helping her will be discreetly and graciously thanked, but will gain nothing in Reputation or Status. She may reward great service with a jewel - D'Artagnan received a diamond ring worth over $4,000! But, then, his service was *very* risky and *very* timely. No one else could have helped her and, had he failed, she would have been utterly disgraced.

After her husband's death, her status improved immensely. She became the center of power in France, only sharing it with Cardinal Mazarin (see next page) until 1651. She then retired from political life and died in 1666.

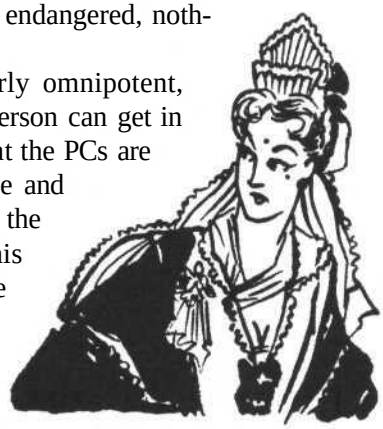
Cardinal Richelieu

Armand Jean du Plessis de Richelieu is a duke and cardinal, and the most powerful man in France. He has a weak constitution and is often sick with some fever or cold. His will is of iron, though, and his mind as sharp as any in his day. He is the master diplomat, the grand schemer, and the power behind the throne.

There is genuine friendship between Richelieu and Louis XIII. There is also a friendly rivalry, because the cardinal has the abilities while the king has the throne. The king *can* overrule the cardinal at any time, and Richelieu is well aware of this. So are his numerous enemies. There are continual plots against

Richelieu, both within France and from without. Sometimes they become mixed, as the Spanish, Austrians, or English gain an ally in the French court. In 1631, as the king lay so ill he thought he was dying, he actually ousted Richelieu to honor his mother and wife. When he recovered, the cardinal returned to power, and the Queen Mother left France.

Cardinal Richelieu has a firm grip on the political situation of Europe at any given time. He has the most extensive, powerful, and efficient spy network in the world. His henchmen will commit murder for the cardinal, and he is fully capable of ordering such drastic measures, though he prefers to use the Bastille. He is generous to his friends, implacable to his enemies. He has an amazing ability to win foes to his side - this happens more than once in *The Three Musketeers.* If he considers France to be endangered, nothing will stop him from removing the threat.



The GM should treat Richelieu as a nearly omnipotent, omniscient being - he *is* as close to that as a person can get in the 17th century. He has ways of knowing what the PCs are up to; he has the fastest messengers in Europe and can send a message anywhere, usually before the PCs can get there. There are areas where his power is weak, but there is no place where he does not have at least one pair of eyes and ears. In Brittany, he is especially powerful, and his loyalist servants will happily die for him. All in all, Richelieu is a powerful man to have as either a friend or an enemy. Any attempt at assassination should fail. Richelieu died of natural causes in 1642.

More detail on Cardinal Richelieu can be found in ***GURPS Who's Who I***.

*M. de Tréville**

M. de Treville is the Captain of the King's Musketeers. Dumas never reveals his first name, and indeed, it is hard to imagine anyone using it. (M. in French stands for Monsieur.) The Musketeers would never be allowed to, the king simply calls him Treville, and we never hear if he is married. A most useful NPC, he is a close friend of the king and often hears his private desires. He is a powerful figure in *The Three Musketeers;* one gets the impression of high ST, DX, IQ and HT. The king claims he is the best blade in the country, and one can imagine him occasionally fighting in a bout to keep his Musketeers humble.

If a Musketeer is ever in trouble with the authorities, M. de Treville will be there to help him as soon as he can. If a Musketeer needs to be off on a journey, even one of such a delicate nature that he can't reveal it, M. de Treville is quick to offer a furlough. All in all, M. de Treville is a potent patron for Musketeer PCs and should be paid for as such if the GM intends to use him to help the PCs.

Cardinal Mazarin

De facto ruler of France from the death of Louis XIII until his own death in 1661, Guilio Mazarini began his career as a soldier in the Papal army. His first visit in France was as a Papal nuncio, when he was recruited in 1639 to serve Cardinal Richelieu. Upon Richelieu's advice, he was elevated to the rank of Cardinal in 1641, even though he was not and never became a priest. The next year, Mazarin was appointed to replace Richelieu on the Privy Council of France after the elder Cardinal's death. A year after that, Louis XIII was dead, Anne of Austria was regent, and Cardinal Mazarin found himself Prime Minister of France.

COMBAT AS ENTERTAINMENT (CONTINUED)

Shooting exhibitions could be with bow or firearms and could include not only target shooting but "trick" shooting similar to that seen today at fairs and carnivals (with similar deceptions and sleights). Fencing exhibitions could be two skilled combatants displaying their art with each other or a "playing of the prize," which was *not* a prize fight. Rather, it was a sort of final exam for prospective weapon masters.

Combatants of great repute might be hired specifically to display their prowess at an *hotel* or estate, where they could find themselves in the awkward position of defending their ability against an inebriated nobleman who could make life quite difficult should he be seriously injured or embarassed.

Contests were even more varied. One common form of a country boxing competition was for the current champion to challenge anyone in the crowd to last so many falls or minutes with him in a roped-off area. The crowd pays to watch and the challenger splits the take *if* he lasts the stipulated time. Another common format was for two professionals to face off against each other. A "round" would last until one of the boxers lost his footing (or sat down). The match did not end until one boxer was unconscious or had given up.

Common tactics of the day would get a fighter thrown out of the ring in the modern era. Biting was the only technique not allowed. Professional boxers would be sought out by gentlemen to train them in unarmed self-defense, and they preserved and developed effective martial arts styles.

The most common format for fencing competitions was similar to modern professional boxing. Lesser lights would fight bouts with blunts or sharps until the main event was ready. This would often be a result of an explicit challenge, where one swordmaster would meet another after a week or two of proper publicity. While blunts were acceptable for the preliminary bouts, masters often insisted upon meeting each other with sharps, at least in England, where cut-only bouts were more popular. Given the lethality and difficulty of treating an impaling wound, Continental swordmasters were more tolerant of blunt weapons.

Tournament formats more familiar to modern tastes, like single elimination, double elimination, and round-robin did exist in the professional fighting venues, but they were much more common at "amateur" competitions, like those found at fairs and the Cotswald Olympics.

Continued on next page . . .

COMBAT AS ENTERTAINMENT (CONTINUED)

Competitions could also take place at fairs, open to anyone who wished to sign up. In such case prizes might be as low as $50 at small fairs, or up to $1,000 at the large ones. Archers and musketeers fire at targets, while swordsmen play at blunt weapons (see below) or to first blood. Some sword contests go further: The first three touches win.

Stickfighting competitions often went until a combatant's head was "broken" by a blow. In ***GURPS,*** this would be whenever a combatant received a blow that does 5 or more points of basic damage. The resultant pressure cut does not usually bleed enough to present a threat.

Refer to ***Compendium II,*** pp. 81-83, for more about tournaments and non-lethal combat.

Blunt Weapons

Blunt weapons have the same size, weight, and balance as their sharp or lethal counterparts, but they are not as dangerous. Sharp edges are blunted and wrapped in leather; crushing surfaces are padded. Blunt weapons always do crushing damage, regardless of the damage type of the weapons on which they're modelled.

Furthermore, they are designed to sting rather than really injure, and so they do half the damage appropriate for the weapon. Roll the proper damage for the weapon, divide it by 2 (rounding down), and then subtract the DR value of the armor. The result, if any, is the number of hits actually inflicted on the victim.

PROSTITUTION

Prostitution is part of any human society. This is especially true of the licentious days of the swashbuckling era. It was illegal and socially unacceptable, and women would certainly prefer to be respectable wives or properly kept mistresses, but there was always demand for this profession.

Prostitutes were allegedly recruited as informers and spies, and the line between "actress" and "whore" was often quite thin. Furthermore, women whose lives were disrupted by war or famine, both of which stalked Europe in those days, found nowhere else to turn. Bawdy houses were notorious hangouts of military men and other swashbucklers. One 18th-century swordmaster actually ran his school from such premises!

Mazarin labored under burdens that Richelieu never knew. First, he was a foreigner. Second, he was the prime minister of a foreign woman who merely happened to be regent - at least that was how Mazarin's enemies saw it. It was often rumored that he and Queen Anne were secretly married soon after Louis XIII died. Nevertheless, he was able to negotiate a favorable peace for France at the end of the Thirty Years War (see sidebar, p. 87), defeat armed rebellion by the old feudal nobility of France, and hand over a country primed for absolute rule to Louis XIV upon his own death in 1661.

No matter how competent he might be, Mazarin is no Richelieu. His style was less brilliant and more accomodating. He was forced to flee France for a time during the *fronde* rebellion (1649-1651), something that Richelieu probably would never have done. While he has control of a spy network, it is not as extensive as Richelieu's, nor does Mazarin have any local power base within France. He is, to the end of his days, a foreigner living entirely upon the sufferance of regent Queen Anne and later Louis XIV.

To his credit, Mazarin is every bit as loyal to France as Richelieu was, and he takes a genuine interest in seeing to it that the young king has the finest political, diplomatic, and military education to be had. Furthermore, he is able to turn the most adverse situation to his advantage, given enough time for his methodical competence to bring a solution to bear.

GMs should play Mazarin not as omnipotent or omniscient as they would play Richelieu, but also not as ruthless. He has another advantage: he has the trust of Anne of Austria *and* of Louis XIV.

King Louis XIV (crowned 1643, reigned 1661-1715)

If one man is the culmination of all French monarchical heritage and aspirations, it is the Sun King, Louis XIV. None before him reigned as long nor as powerfully; all after him are disappointments or flashes in the pan. He *looks* majestic. He *acts* every bit a king. He is happy to preside over excruciatingly dull council meetings, tirelessly absorbing minutiae of France's administration and then ruling upon them without worrying about the subtleties of carrying out his orders - so long as it was done.

While his father had an impossible model of kingship to live up to, Louis XIV merely had to be better than Louis XIII. Like his father, this Louis's approach to reign was shaped by a childhood trauma. He was held captive for a time by *fronde* rebels at the age of 12. From that point on, he knew that he could never trust anyone with power unless they received it directly from him.

After 1661, Louis has no prime minister - *"L'état, c'est moi."* ("I am the state" - it rhymes in French.) This is possible because Louis is able to permit his underlings to do their jobs, and he ensured that they *did* do their jobs. In 1661 he has his finance minister, Nicolas Fouquet, arrested by d'Artagnan for excessive extravagance.

He deals with the aristocracy by feeding them what they craved - pageantry and honors, no matter how empty they might be. He allows the old nobility to jealously guard their privileges while ignoring them for his administrative and professional military posts, although he makes sure that there are plenty of hollow ranks for them to fill.

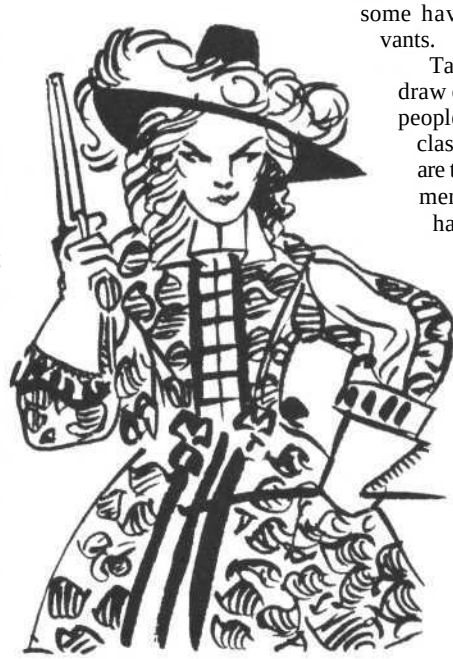
Early in his reign, Louis throws himself into the role of King with gusto, enjoying administrative tasks and the rigid ballet of the court as much as he does the charms of his uncountable mistresses. The early part of his reign reflects

this. It is a time when France was never greater in Europe. During this period, he should be played as the perfect despot - tireless, intelligent, willing to listen, imposing authority through balance.

Around 1685, Louis's style changes dramatically. He is no longer happy to play off factions against each other. He marries his last mistress, Madame de Maintenon (Queen Maria Theresa had died some time before, having provided a suitable heir) and remains faithful to her. His policies ossify, and he begins to demand uniformity instead of balance. During this period (to his death in 1715), Louis becomes less willing to listen to dissent and more convinced of his own infallability. GMs should play him as more of a tyrant, still intelligent, but convinced of his own authority in all matters.

Julie la Maupin

Age 25; very fair skin, auburn hair, blue eyes, tall and androgynous, but with perfect breasts.



Attributes: ST 10, DX 13, IQ 13, HT 11. Speed 6.00; Move 6. Dodge 6. Parry 12.

Advantages: Appearance (Beautiful); Charisma +2; Combat Reflexes; Daredevil; Literacy; Selfish; Strong Will +2; Voice; Patron (Louis-Joseph d'Albert, later Duc de Luynes, 6 or less); Patron (Comte d'Armagnac, 6 or less).

Disadvantages: Bad Temper; Impulsiveness; Intolerant (Braggarts); Lecherousness; Odious Personal Habit (Blatantly bisexual); Secret (Under sentence of death, only during 1690-1691).

Quirks: Likes to wear male clothing; Boastful and flamboyant; Fickle.

Skills: Acting-14; Artist-11; Body Language-16; Broadsword-12; Carousing-12; Dancing (French style)-13; Fast Talk-14; Fencing Art (Rapier)-18; Fencing (Rapier) -18; Literature-11; Musical Notation-12; Performance-14; Riding-11; Sex Appeal-13; Singing-14 (incl. Voice); Streetwise-13; Tournament Law (Fencing exhibitions)-13.

Maneuvers *(Transitional French School)* (all specialized maneuvers are for rapier): Close Combat-15; Corps-à-Corps-19; Counterattack-16; Disarming -20; Esquive-3; Floor Lunge [thrust]-17; Glide-18; Hit Location-18; Lunge [thrust]-18; Retain Weapon-20; Riposte-18.

The life of Julie la Maupin could have filled any number of swashbuckling novels. Unlike the Musketeers of Dumas, la Maupin and her adventures were *real.* La Maupin can be a formidable foe or ally. She is brash, forthright, even brazen, and is the worst nightmare of any braggart or chauvinist. Her habit of dressing as a man was notable but apparently accepted as an eccentricity appropriate for an entertainer.

She was born Julie d'Aubigney and learned swordsmanship from her father, the secretary of the Comte d'Armagnac. While her adventures were too many to fit the limits of this work, a few highlights should give sufficient flavor.

She took her first lover when she was 16 - the Comte d'Armagnac. He arranged a show marriage to a colorless civil servant named Maupin. When the affair ended, she refused to follow her husband into provincial obscurity and began her life of adventure.

TAVERNS

Taverns in the 17th century are as close to the generic fantasy tavern as one could hope to get. There are traveler's alehouses along country roads that accommodate all classes of people. These have bedrooms upstairs, with a kitchen and dining room on the main floor. There is a large common room for drinking and gaming, with small private rooms available at a modest charge for the gentry who prefer not to mingle. Most are honest establishments although some have dishonest owners and/or servants.

Taverns in cities and towns tend to draw clientele from a narrower range of people. There are upper-class, middle-class, and lower-class taverns. Some are the haunts of thieves and highwaymen, some of honest laborers. Sailors have their favorite bars by the wharf while gentlemen prefer to patronize taverns that have clean cups and decent wine, ale, and *hypocras* (a mulled, spiced wine very popular in the 17th century). Both types occasionally go into other pubs for adventure, variety, and excitement, however. Prostitutes use disreputable taverns as an office, and many con artists find their "marks" there.

A gentleman walking into a lower-class bar is conspicuous, even if not in a fancy uniform. A successful Acting roll *and* Disguise roll is necessary for a gentleman to pass himself off as a lower-class person, and even then it is nearly impossible for very long. The accent, vocabulary, body posture, and bearing are all difficult to fake for a long time. Likewise, a lower-class person disguised as a gentleman will have a difficult time. Substitute a Savoir-Faire roll for the Disguise roll to see if anyone is fooled.

Taverns usually have simple, graphic names. The populace at large is not yet literate, and many pubs have signs with only a picture. *All* tavern signs have a picture, even if they also post the name on the sign. Animals are popular names for taverns: the Lion, the Lamb, the Fighting Cocks, the White Horse, the Eagle, the Fox and Goose, the Unicorn, the Bear's Head, the Sleeping Cat, the Golden Louse, the Old Blue Boar, the Drunken Duck, the Cat and the Fiddle, and so on, are all easily recognizable symbols. Dumas mentions the Nannygoat (where D'Artagnan lives in his 30s) and the Spinning Cat.

DUEL AU MOUCHOIR

Perhaps the deadliest form of duel is called *au mouchoir* (with handkerchief). The duellists each hold a knife (or pistol!) in one hand, and one end of the same handkerchief in the other. The handkerchief is integral to the duel - to release it is to admit that the opponent is right. A duellist who released the kerchief and then killed his opponent would be named a coward and utter knave.

A *GURPS* duel *au mouchoir* requires a Contest of ST for each combat round. The winner goes first. A win by 5 or more allows the loser no active defense for that turn. (He has been forced off-balance - even pulled to the ground if he fails a DX roll.) All attacks and parries are at -2; the handkerchief is always in the way. The fighters must be in Close Combat or in adjacent hexes; to move further away requires releasing the handkerchief and forfeiting the duel. Neither party can strike or grapple with the handkerchief hand.

This form of duelling was not at all common among the upper crust, but a survivor would be recognized as a vicious and determined man!

DUELLING AND REPUTATION

Someone with the Honesty disadvantage would not refuse to duel; however, he would be very likely to turn himself in to the law afterward. He would almost certainly turn himself in if his opponent were seriously hurt or no longer breathing. Even under the most intense interrogation, he would not reveal the identities of others in the party (of either side). Not to duel would be more out of character for anyone in this era than duelling illegally.

Invested Clerics can refuse to duel; it is a privilege of the cloth. Theological students, however, are often known as duellists - Aramis was preparing for the priesthood, for example. At the University of Jena, in Germany, theological students were allowed to give and receive wounds to the body, so that in later life they would not be embarrassed to take the pulpit with visible duelling scars. (German students considered a duelling scar on the face to be a sign of courage and manhood. Most German students duelled simply to receive such a scar!)

In a society such as Paris in the 17th century, duelling can profoundly affect a reputation. The worst possible reputation is that of cowardice. If there is any hint of refusing to duel, one's reputation is ruined forever. Dishonor is also possible if there is a rumor of cheating or taking unfair advantage of an opponent.

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Circumstances forced her to leave Paris and she made her living giving fencing exhibitions and singing. It was at this time that la Maupin began to wear men's clothing - much more practical for fencing than a gown. She didn't conceal her gender - the unusual spectacle of a lady fencer was used to draw audiences.

It turned out that she was far too skilled for some people's expectations. At one exhibition, she was accused of being a boy disguised as a woman. Her response was to rip open her shirt upon the stage, settling the argument immediately.

Her other adventures included (but weren't limited to) seducing a nun, a duel with a man who became her greatest love, duelling at least three men at once at a ball hosted by King Louis XIV's brother, and attracting the romantic attentions of the Elector of Bavaria. On top of this, she managed to be a star of the Paris Opera and work as a professional duellist.

GMs wishing more information on this real-world swashbuckler equal to any d'Artagnan are directed to Jim Burrows' *The Adventures of La Maupin* at **http://www.ma.ultranet.com/~brons/LaMaupin.html.** There is currently no book in English print focused on this magnificent woman. The novel *Mademoiselle De Maupin* by Gautier is *not* recommended as a source, since it is neither a swashbuckling novel nor is its protagonist more than the palest travesty of the true Julie la Maupin.

DUELLING

The duel has long been a favorite way to resolve conflict; it persists even in the modern era. Two high school kids squaring off after school is as much a duel as D'Artagnan fighting Rochefort. The *Code Duello* may be different; the essence is the same. The *Code Duello* has always been a matter of custom, not law. Indeed, duelling is usually illegal - it was certainly so in swashbuckling times.

THE GENTLEMAN'S CODE

A duel, as distinct from a *bagarre d'armes* (brawl with weapons), is a formal matter. The duelling party is made up of *principals, seconds, friends* and, whenever possible, a *surgeon.* The principals are the men with the quarrel. The seconds are representatives of the principals; they are charged by each to guarantee that the affair is conducted with honor and propriety. Friends are just that; they accompany the principals to ensure fair dealing. Gentlemen duel to *first blood, serious wound,* or *death.* The severity of the result depends on the severity of the difference.

SEVERITY OF DUELS

While some duels are to first blood, this did not become common until the 19th century. It was scoffed at in the 16th and 17th centuries. Such a duel ends when either principal is wounded. The honor of the victor has been vindicated; the courage of the loser has been publicly demonstrated; all are satisfied. Classical "one touch" epee fencing rules are derived from this practice.

In the 17th century, an insult or a personal dislike demands a more severe chastisement. The fight continues until one opponent is pierced through the torso (most fencing wounds are on the arm or leg). In *GURPS Basic Combat,* damage of ½ HT is a serious wound. If the *Parts of the Body* table (p. B203) is used, any wound to the brain or vitals and any wound to the body that does ½ HT is seri-

ous. Again, the victor is vindicated; the loser proves his courage. The surgeon's authority is usually considered final, should he decide that such an injury has been inflicted.

A duel to the death is a serious matter. Since duelling is illegal, the survivor risks a trial for murder - so do the seconds, friends, and even the surgeon! A duel *a l'outrance* (to the extreme) is the climax of a long enmity, is forced by the necessity to silence someone, or is in response to a mortal insult. The fighting continues until one principal is dead or physically unable to continue.

The most realistic way to run a duel, whatever the conditions, is to not permit the players to know how many points of damage have actually been taken. An observer can make a roll vs. best weapon skill-3, Medicine-1, or First Aid-2 to see if a wound just received might count as "serious." A duellist who has just been wounded can attempt a similar roll at an additional -5. The optional wound rules on pp. CII154-157 are also highly recommended for formal duels.

THE PARTICULARS *of* THE DUEL

The Challenge

The challenge itself is usually just words - the glove in the face is both earlier (armored gauntlets) and later (dress gloves). The challenger is usually pretty prosaic. Not many people have great command of language while fuming mad. A poetic, "Sir, if your courage is equal to your impudence, I will meet you at your earliest convenience with sword in hand," is found more often in books (and games!) than life. The ideal process requires formal composition and presentation of a *cartel* outlining the offense, composition and presentation of a counter-*cartel*, and theoretically can take a month or more to arrange matters. The ideal was rarely achieved.

Arranging the Details

After the initial insult, the seconds meet (if the principals have the patience to abide by the niceties). The seconds often try to avoid bloodshed by working

DUELLING AND REPUTATION

(CONTINUED)

Simply fighting duels will not give anyone an adverse reputation - to the contrary, a duellist is usually admired. However, a skilled swordsman who challenges a person known to be inept is sneered at, and possibly even prosecuted for murder if the outcome is fatal. Duellists who do this continually are loathed and sometimes sought out by a vengeful relative.

Losing a duel does not automatically mean a man is looked down upon. He has demonstrated his courage, and courage is valued above skill. It is only when a loser is *supposed* to be highly skilled, like a Musketeer or Cardinal's Guard, that there is a blot on his reputation. This blot is largely in his own opinion - the outside world may still consider the duellist to be brave and highly skilled, but the loser himself feels shamed. After a period of recuperation, he will often try again. Most Parisians would still consider the highly-skilled loser to be a great swordsman, just not the best.

Note that people of an earlier age considered the death of a slain duellist as evidence of his guilt. In Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part Two,* King Henry speaks of the dead Horner after his duel with Peter:

"Go, take hence that traitor from our sight;
For by his death we do perceive his guilt:
And God in justice hath reveal'd to us
The truth and innocence of this poor fellow . . ."

An honorable winner, who only fights worthy opponents, will find his reputation enhanced. He will be invited to parties and dinners, courted by ladies, and possibly come to the king's attention. If he is of the Cardinal's Guard, the king will censure him publicly and envy him privately. The censuring will not be too painful - usually a simple announcement of royal displeasure.

If the winning duellist is a member of the King's Musketeers, the king will be as happy as a child, though he must still publicly denounce such illegal activities. Privately, he will reward the duellist with a purse of money and - more importantly - he will remember the Musketeer's name with a smile when they next meet.

A man who actually kills his opponent in a duel, however, can expect no mercy from the king. This is murder by the laws of the country, and many a nobleman has been forced to flee into exile to save his life. The penalty for murder is death: hanging for commoners, beheading for the nobility. This reputation may haunt a man for life. Some of the Caribbean pirates were known to be noblemen who had killed in duels, and were especially feared even in that fearsome society.

WEAPONS OF THE DUEL

The choice of weapons falls to the challenger (the offended party) on the Continent and to the challenged in English-speaking countries. It is possible to abuse either system. Both parties must use the same weapon; the one with the choice of weapons can often force an unfamiliar one on his opponent, although one book on duelling stated that a man could require pistols - if he were willing to admit that he was "no swordsman." Though the sword is usual, any weapon is allowed. It is common practice to announce the length of your sword at the time of the challenge. If pistols are chosen, they should be a matched pair. Providing properly-prepared pistols is a responsibility of the seconds.

The Duel with Swords

When the parties are ready to duel, they face each other, points touching. In ***GURPS*** *Advanced Combat,* that means duellists with 1-hex reach weapons will have 2 empty hexes between them. Rapier fighters will have 4 hexes, and so on. One of the seconds gives the signal to start, and the duel commences. A Quick Contest of Weapon Skills, with Combat Reflexes granting a +1, should determine who has the first action. In case of a tie, the highest Speed goes first. Roll a die to break any ties of Speed.

At the time of the *The Three Musketeers,* seconds and friends usually joined in the fight. This was simply a custom of the times, and doesn't seem to be related to the nature of the insult at all. They would fight alongside their principal if there was any sign that the opposing principal's friends wanted to join the fight. One side would not outnumber the other in a true duel, however. If not fighting, friends watched out for ambush and the approach of the city guard, either of which was a fairly common occurrence.

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out a mutually acceptable compromise. This is usually an apology, so delicately phrased that both parties can claim to be vindicated. Many duellists (though not the French) considered that to be the prime function of a second. Some commentators on the *Code Duello,* therefore, prohibit infidels and Irishmen as seconds. Infidels are prohibited because their eagerness to see Christian blood will not let them work out a compromise. Irishmen, as all know, love fighting so much that none would ever agree to stopping a fight before it started!

Time and Place

It is up to the seconds to arrange the time and place. Duels can be fought at any time. Immediately after the insult is common. Dawn or dusk is the usual pre-arranged time.

Duels are socially acceptable, but illegal. The setting is most likely to be an out-of-the-way place where clashing weapons won't bring the *gendarmerie.* In Paris, the *Carmes-Deschaux* has large gardens with many trees and shrubs. The grounds of the Medici Palace and of the *Pré-aux-Clercs* also have large, sheltered gardens. All are popular for meetings of honor. In the 18th century, when Paris is more populated, the *Bois de Boulogne* is a popular duelling place. Cemeteries, pastures, race-courses, and untenanted houses are all useful for a little private business between gentlemen.

Once the duellists are at the chosen site, it is not possible to withdraw with honor. There must be at least one wound, or one exchange of shots. After that, either party can apologize without loss of face.

MASS COMBAT

GURPS Swashbucklers is primarily a game of individual glory. There are times when a PC is in the military (the Three Musketeers served at the siege of La Rochelle, for example).

Since much of this game is historical in nature, the GM may already know the result of a battle before it begins. There is room to change history, though, so the Game Master may let the dice decide the outcome of the battle. If so, a Contest of Strategy between the opposing leaders is rolled. GMs wishing more detail are referred to ***GURPS Compendium II.*** The following list summarizes troop types likely to be found in a ***Swashbucklers*** campaign.

ARMY ORGANIZATION

This is an era of mass troop maneuvers. Warfare is based upon large groups of men in tight formation, either charging each other with pike and sword (16th and early 17th centuries) or shooting each other with black powder weapons (afterwards). The great inaccuracy of firearms means that military units should be viewed as enormous shotguns. Organization varied widely from country to country and across time. The "Modern" organization on p. CII113 can be a rough approximation, with the following adjustments:

Squad and *file* are often synonymous. *Battalion, brigade,* and *regiment* are often used interchangeably. *Division* has no formal definition. *Corps* and *army* are interchangeable. See *Military Rank,* pp. 10-11, for details on specific positions.

Troop Strengths

The following troop types should cover most swashbuckling campaign needs. Since this era covers two Tech Levels, many troop types will have two strengths listed, separated by a slash. The first number is for TL4, the second for TL5.

Infantry

Pikemen: Heavy infantry armed with very long spears. Used in the earliest part of the 17th century. Morale is Green to Elite. TS value 5.

Infantry: Unarmored infantry wielding muskets. Green to Elite morale. TS 7/8.

Grenediers: Unarmored shock infantry with high-quality weapons. Morale is Average to Elite. TS 8/9.

Pirates: Irregular unarmored infantry, usually armed with muskets and swords. Morale is Green to Veteran. TS 5/5.

Woodland Indians: Unarmored or lightly armored irregulars. Armed with bows and axes. Often more familiar with local terrain than Europeans, so used as scouts and terrorists by European powers. Morale is Green to Veteran. TS 3 (TS 5/5 if armed with muskets).

Rangers: Unarmored irregulars raised from local settlers. Often used as scouts and terrorists. Given enough time, can develop Regular status. Morale is Average to Elite. TS 5/5 (TS 7/8 if Regular).

Aztecs: See p. CII125.

Hobilars: Mounted unarmored infantry, armed with muskets. Includes the French King's Musketeers. Morale is Average to Elite. TS value 9/10.

Cavalry

Lancers: Unarmored or lightly-armored troops on light horses, wielding lances. Morale is Green to Veteran. TS value 4.

Light Cavalry: Unarmored or lightly-armored troops on light horses with pistols and sabers. Morale is Green to Elite. TS value 5.

Dragoons: Corseleted cavalry on heavy horse, with carbines. Morale is Average to Elite. TS value 11/12.

Artillery

Regimental Attached Guns: Carries a piece like the British 3-pound infantry gun. These small cannon, pulled by one horse, were usually attached to an infantry regiment for fire support. Morale is at least Average. TS value 28.

Light Horse Guns: As for Light Artillery (below) but with horse-drawn guns. TS value 30.

Artillery: The larger batteries of the era. Uses everything from the culverin to the heaviest siege guns, usually horse-drawn. Morale is at least Average. TS value 55.

Weapons of the Duel

(CONTINUED)

Pistol Duelling

Pistols are not a popular duelling weapon with swashbucklers. They are used more in England and English America than in Europe. The French, especially, disdain them, at least until the late 19th century. Distance between opponents is from 7 yards (rare) to 20 yards (also rare). The most common range is about 12 yards. A duel is a test of courage, not a test of marksmanship.

The antagonists stand facing each other. Pistols are in hand, but not readied. On a signal from one of the seconds, they both ready their weapons and fire. Deciding which duellist gets the first action can be resolved by a Quick Contest of DX, with Combat Reflexes granting a +1. In a tie, they fire simultaneously. A cool duellist might take a second or more to aim. A very cool duellist might allow his opponent to fire first - a rushed shot may very well miss. Even if it hits, there is the chance that the wound will be slight enough not to interfere with a carefully aimed return. A realistic campaign would also require Will rolls, with a penalty to fire equal to the amount by which the roll was failed.

The duelling cliche of pacing-off, back to back, is a later American practice. Feel free to use it, though, if duelling's just not the same without it!

Distances Within Europe

Use the chart on p. B187 to determine travel times within Europe. Treat a courier, changing horses every four hours, as traveling twice the *No Encumbrance* distance. A coach travels at *Medium Encumbrance.*

Paris to:	***Miles:***
Amsterdam	325
Calais	180
Genoa	600
La Rochelle	300
Madrid	900
Marseilles	500
Strasbourg	275
Tours	150
London to:	
Dover	65
Edinburgh	400
Southampton	75
Dover, England, to:	
Calais (5 hours) by sea	25
Amsterdam (1 day) by sea	160

Chapter 4

THE PIRATE CAMPAIGN

Freebooters *and* filibusters, marooners and privateers, buccaneers and Brethren – no matter the name, pirates were the scourge of the seas. Still, many adventurers yearned to sail the ocean blue and prevail in a life of excitement. This chapter details these hearty souls, their society, and their ports in the Golden Age of Piracy (1640-1725).

THE GOLDEN AGE OF PIRACY: A BRIEF HISTORY

THE CARIBBEAN

Before the Europeans came, the Caribbean was inhabited by many tribes of Indians, from the civilized Maya, to the peaceful Taino, to the savage Caribs, whose name is preserved not only in the word "Caribbean" but also in "cannibal." When Columbus first landed, it was the Taino, wearing gold nuggets in their noses, that he met. Spain was quick to respond to the discovery, and a community was established on Hispaniola in 1493. The gold of the Aztecs was first seen by the Spanish in 1518, and that of the Incas in 1524.

Colonization was swift and brutal. The natives who resisted were massacred and ravaged with European diseases. Those that could be enslaved, were, and Spaniards became intensely feared and hated by most Indian tribes. The proud civilizations of the Incas and Aztecs were destroyed by 1540. The Portuguese and English shipped African slaves to the Caribbean; these rapidly replaced the dying Indians as labor. By 1550, only the tribes in the remote interior had been untouched by Western culture.

The major Spanish settlements included Havana, San Juan, Maracaibo, Portobelo, Cartagena, Vera Cruz, Santo Domingo, and Panama (see map, p. 61).

The Organization of the Spanish Treasure Fleets

The fleets that carried the wealth of the New World to Spain were governed by strict regulations. There were two fleets from Spain, which joined together in Havana to journey back as one. The fleet that went to New Spain (Mexico) was called the *flotas* and sailed from Spain about April or May. The fleet that went to the Spanish Main left Spain in August and was simply called the *galleons.* Each journey took about four weeks to get to the first island in the Caribbean, then another three weeks to get to their eventual wintering place. They returned home together in January.

That was the pattern after 1628, when the Dutch captured the New Spain fleet. Before that, the fleets did not winter in the Indies, returning to Spain individually in the fall.

The fleets consisted of a varying number of merchant ships carrying cloth, foodstuffs, and other goods. There would be anywhere from 15 to 50 merchant ships. There would also be a number of galleons, large ships carrying soldiers as well as gold, silver, and jewels. The galleons numbered from four to 25, depending on how many the king could spare and how atrocious the pirates and enemy fleets had been the year before. No pirate would attack the entire fleet, but ships do get separated in storms . . .

Other Countries' Settlements

Not until the 1620s was there real infringement on Spanish claims to the Caribbean. The English, French, and Dutch all established bases in that decade. The lesser Antilles (see map, p. 61) had been ignored by Spain as too small and poor to bother with. Unfortunately for the Spanish, they ignored the wind. Since the wind blew fairly constantly from the lesser Antilles, the countries with bases there could raid the Spanish settlements with ease. Not only was it easy sailing to the older ports, but there was less warning when a ship was sighted - the wind carried it in to attack fairly quickly. Any Spanish ships coming out of port to

LETTERS OF MARQUE

Privateers are ships (and the men on them) that carry letters of marque . . . licenses granted by a government to attack enemy ships. Originally they were issued only as reprisals (a way for robbed merchants to legally attack ships that had robbed them). By the 16th century they were issued as a cheap way of enlarging a country's navy and bringing in some extra income.

They were supposed to be issued only to upright, responsible citizens, but after 1660 the colonial governors were allowed to issue them - which means anyone with a $2,000 bribe and Fast-Talk skill could get one.

Many buccaneers and pirates carry letters of marque from several sources and the distinction between privateer and pirate is a fuzzy one at best.

Most pirate crews were privateers at one time. Often a war ends, letters of marque expire, and the privateers simply continue what they do best. Privateers are supposed to prey only on ships of a nation at war with the issuing government.

Neutral countries' ships are issued passes to show any privateer that stops them; they often have passes from both sides in a war. Privateers sometimes run up the flag of the enemy and, when the merchant ship produces the pass signed by the enemy, they are seized as "legal" prey! Often the license is interpreted so loosely that it's reduced to an absurdity.

The advantage of letters of marque comes with capture. If a privateer can produce the papers, he isn't a pirate. Of course, the enemy might hang him anyway (the Spanish, for example, never admitted the legality of letters of marque!). The country issuing the letters of marque was supposed to get a privateer off the hook — it rarely happened. Captain Kidd had letters of marque against French ships and the two ships he captured sailed under French passes. But that evidence was suppressed at his trial for political reasons, and the government that issued the papers hanged him for utilizing them! The distinction becomes almost meaningless when the privateer Kidd is labeled a pirate and the pirate Drake a privateer. It boils down to the fact that Drake was successful; Kidd, a failure.

PIRATES, PRIVATEERS, AND BUCCANEERS

There is little difference in the actions of pirates and privateers. Both despoil weaker ships on the high seas. The major difference is in the way a ship is owned and operated. Privateers are privately-owned ships with a real captain. The captain might be the owner, or the ship might be owned by a group of merchants. The captain has complete authority to dole out punishment, as on any naval or merchant ship. The crew receive no pay if no prize is captured, but the owners receive a large share when prey *is* captured - 40 to 70% - and the king or governor 10 to 20%. The crew divide the remainder. Compare this with the way pirates run a ship (p. 63).

Buccaneer is a term that is applied only to the Caribbean Brethren of the Coast. They are privateers when they can get letters of marque (from the French governor of Tortuga or the British governor of Jamaica), and pirates when they can't. It doesn't much matter to them; the Spanish are their main opponents, and the Spanish label *anybody* in the Caribbean a pirate. Morgan was the only buccaneer we know of who was always careful to have letters of marque.

The term buccaneer refers to their origin as cow-hunters. Escaped cattle and pigs ran free all over the island of Hispaniola, and refugees from the religious wars in France took to hunting them for a living. They learned the art of smoking the meat from what few Indians had escaped the Spanish. The Indians called the greenwood grill a *boucan.* The boucaniers sold their jerky (Spanish, *charqui*) to passing ships and gained a reputation that led to the Spanish hunting them. This in turn led to their hatred of the Spanish and the rest, as they say, is history.

There are many other words for pirate. "Freebooter" is an old English word, related to booty. The French couldn't pronounce this and changed the word to "*flibustier.*" This word passed back into English as "filibuster," which meant pirate until the 19th century. They are also called "marooners" from their habit of marooning people (see sidebar, p. 69). ("Maroon" itself comes from the Spanish word for an escaped black slave; a maroon went to remote places.)

defend the city were at the lee disadvantage (see sidebar, p. 113). Also, if the Spanish tried to raid the outer settlements, their sails were seen long before their ships could get to the harbors - plenty of time for the defenders to muster a counter force (with the weather gage) or flee to the hills.

The English settled Nevis and St. Kitts in the 1620s (Barbados had been settled in 1605). The Dutch took Aruba, Curacao, and Statia, while the French settled Guadaloupe, Martinique, and Tortuga. The Spanish retained Dominica and Trinidad in the lesser Antilles.

The English took Jamaica in 1655. They didn't mean to - they wanted Hispaniola but failed in that attack, and so sailed with the wind to the next target. They took Jamaica, and managed to keep it, thanks to the buccaneers.

Caribbean Piracy

Piracy in the Caribbean had a distinct flavor all its own. Sir Francis Drake started it in the 1570s, and Queen Elizabeth was so enthralled with the booty that she forgave him his piracy (he'd had no letters of marque). She also accepted a share of the loot, even though it meant trouble with Spain.

Elizabeth later invested money and letters of marque in another voyage of his and was angered when he took three years to circumnavigate the globe. The anger melted when his haul was revealed to be the equivalent of over $10,000,000! This is the deed he was knighted for.

The word got about that there were riches to be had in the Caribbean. Spain claimed all the land, however, so there was no base of operations available. Spain's claim to the New World was sanctioned by the pope, who had granted Spain all the land west of 52° longitude - the Line, it was simply called. There were only occasional raids into the Caribbean until the 1630s, when the buccaneers managed to organize themselves into war parties. Soon the phrase "No peace beyond the Line" was born.

The buccaneers need some introduction. No one has been able to trace their origins or passage completely, but they were largely French at first. Somehow, French criminals and refugees (political and religious) made it to the Caribbean by 1620. There they were hunted by the Spanish as transgressors. They hid in the jungles of western Hispaniola (now Haiti) and lived in TLO style to avoid detection and capture. There was little competition - the Indians of Hispaniola had largely been exterminated by this time, and major settlements of the Spanish were on the eastern side of the island. They began to sell meat to the English and

Dutch ships in the area - see the sidebar, p. 60. This led to the Spanish hunting them down, which turned out to be a big mistake.

The buccaneers began to retaliate. Using dugout canoes, they took small Spanish fishing boats as prizes. These in turn were used to capture larger vessels. Eventually they had full-sized ships and began to raid Spanish shipping in earnest. By 1630, they had captured the island of Tortuga and were using it as a base. By 1640, they had long ceased to make jerky - piracy was becoming big business. Their ranks were swollen by English, Dutch, French, and other nationalities, and were largely criminals, escaped indentured servants, and out-of-work sailors, but with an occasional gentleman adventurer.

From 1640 to 1665, the buccaneers slowly grew in power and boldness. This is an excellent era to game in, the beginning of the Golden Age of Piracy. The buccaneers called themselves the *Brethren of the Coast* (see sidebar), and were loosely organized in one of history's few true democracies.

They weren't very effective on a large scale, however, until the rise of Sir Henry Morgan. Morgan, unlike Drake, was never a pirate. He wasn't even a good sailor or naval tactician. All of his captures were made with letters of marque; all of his brilliance lay in land battles. Morgan commanded a fleet of ships filled with buccaneers who would land near a Spanish town and sack it as an army would. His greatest exploit was sacking the city of Panama, on the Pacific coast. He led 36 ships and 2,000 men to the Atlantic coast of the isthmus, and marched the men nine days across to plunder the richest Spanish city in the New World. This was in the 1660s and early 1670s, the height of the buccaneers' power. Morgan was later knighted and made lieutenant-governor of Jamaica, and began to crack down on his former comrades.

THE BRETHREN OF THE COAST

The Brethren of the Coast was what the buccaneers called themselves. They were not only outcasts from society, they were the most famous outlaws of their time. They founded their own society, with their own rules, and the rest of the world became the outsiders.

They were loyal to each other. Even crews of different ships on different raids wouldn't cheat each other. Brethren captains had the least power of any pirate captains - they were often voted out and a new captain voted in, if the crew felt they were incompetent - or too power-hungry. Any deals with another pirate crew had to be okayed by the majority - the captain's word was *not* law, except in battle.

No Brother of the Coast stole from another Brother. No Brother cheated another at gambling, sold something at an outrageous price, hid knowledge of treasure, or otherwise tried to get the better of any other Brother.

The bonds they had grew out of adversity. The earliest Brethren of the Coast were hunted viciously by the Spanish; later they were hunted by all governments. The bond of shared hardships was a strong one and it wasn't until the 1680s that the Brotherhood broke up. This was largely due to war between England and France - approximately half of the Brethren were of each nationality.

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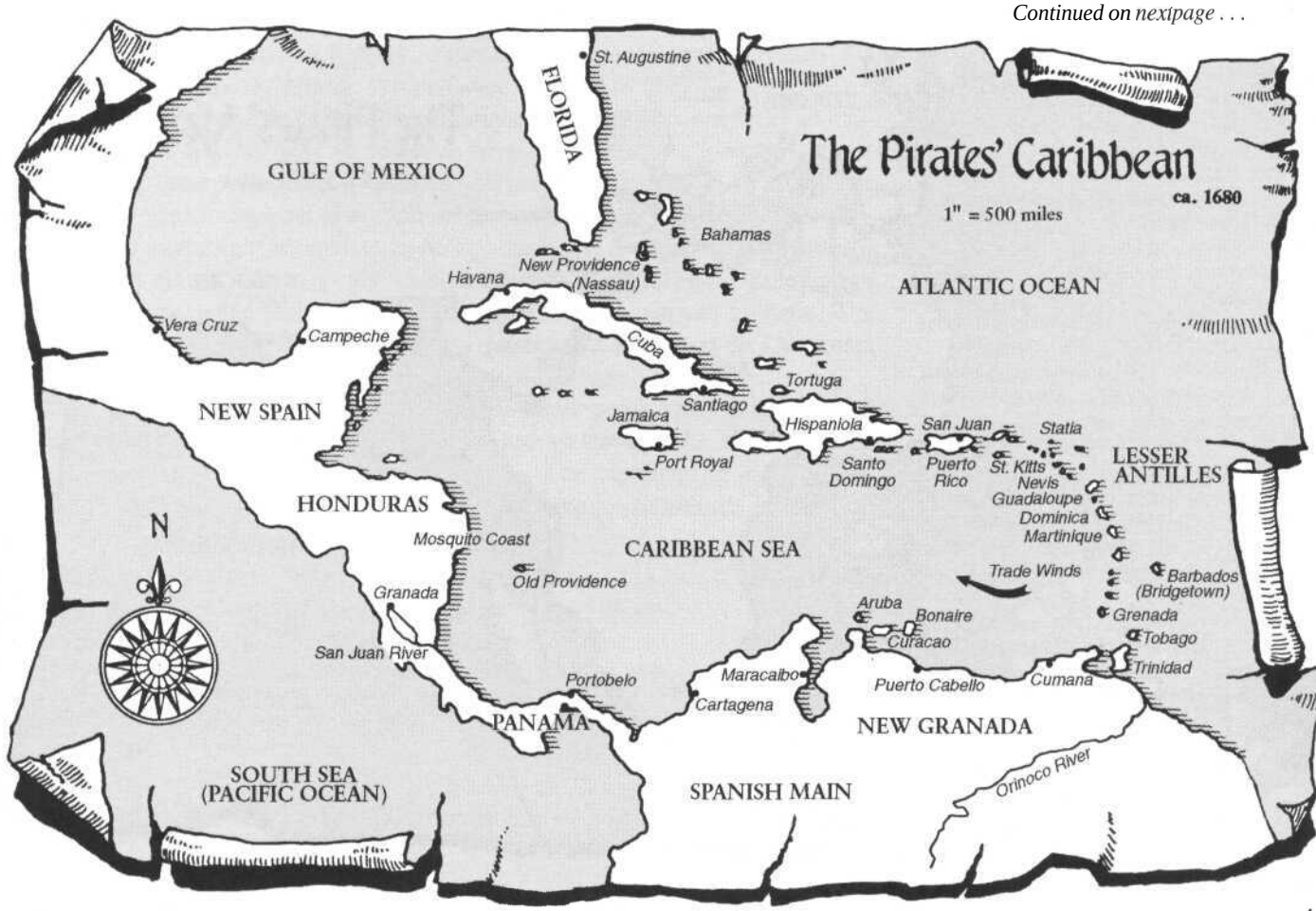


THE BRETHREN OF THE COAST

(CONTINUED)

At that time, piracy was attracting different people, too. Word of how easy it was to become rich drew the dregs of Europe to the Caribbean and the Red Sea. These people hadn't endured anything together - they came from the dog-eat-dog slums of Western Europe. The old Brethren of the Coast were dying off or retiring and pirates could no longer trust each other. There *was* still some camaraderie among pirates, but not the complete trust of the 1640-1680 period.

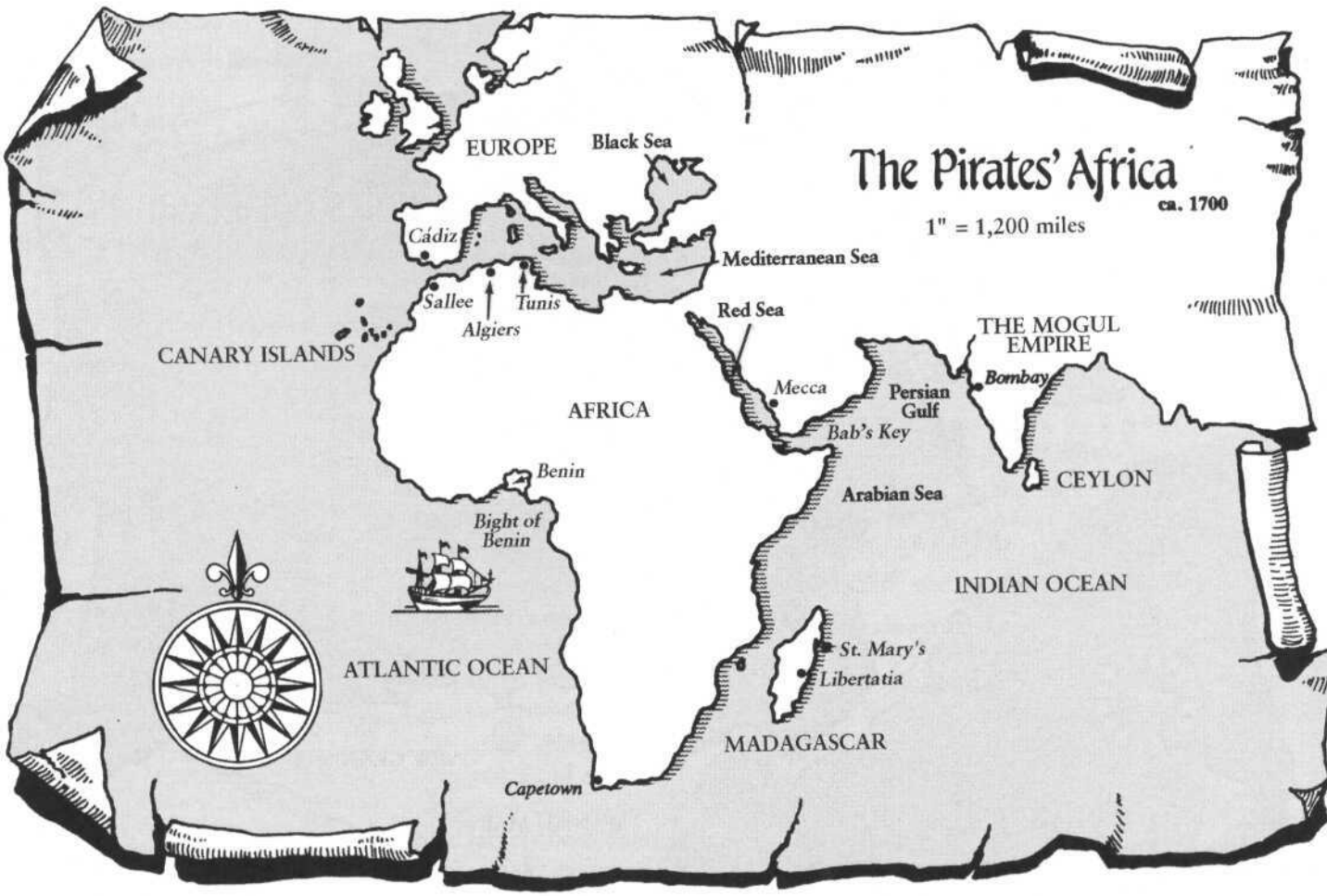
After that time, the buccaneers gradually gave way before a newer breed of pirate, to whom the name *Brethren of the Coast* could not be applied. The pirate arena was also expanding, as the technology of shipbuilding began to improve to TL5.

THE RED SEA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN

By the 1690s, the Caribbean was becoming less profitable for pirates. The Spanish were finally taking strong security measures and the English were becoming well enough established in the area to want to put down piracy. There had been some pirate settlements in Madagascar in the late 1680s, but they grew slowly until a significant event occurred. In 1697, Captain John Avery set sail from the Caribbean for the Red Sea as a pirate. Avery made only one capture: The ship of the Great Mogul's daughter on pilgrimage to Mecca. The loot from this haul was estimated at the modern equivalent of a few million dollars and is probably the greatest single robbery in history. Avery retired from piracy, and soon pirates were headed for the Red Sea/Indian Ocean area - word traveled fast.

Many pirates set sail for the East, and Madagascar became the new pirate capital of the world. By this time, there weren't many of the original buccaneers left, and the pirates of one ship might prey on another pirate ship, an unheard-of situation in the earlier years. This was still a rare enough occurrence that most pirates would trust others, but they'd be on their guard (a Streetwise or Detect Lies roll might give a clue as to whom to trust).

The pirates raided the rich ships carrying the treasures of the East to Europe, and then sailed across the Atlantic to sell them in the American colonies. The colonials were happy to buy the goods, as the pirates could undersell the British merchants who had a legal monopoly on the trade to America. Many a colonial



governor, ordered to hunt pirates, would instead warn them of naval ships coming to hunt them!

The island of St. Mary's off the Madagascar coast was an ideal haven for pirates. It had taverns, a warehouse, a careening yard, and even a fort. There was a pirate republic called Libertatia (see p. 70) on the mainland of Madagascar. The setting was ideal; it was easy to raid ships going around the capes of Africa or headed toward Suez. The journey to America was long, but soon traders started making runs from New York to Madagascar, saving the pirates the need to go that far. Wine, beer, gunpowder, and ship's supplies such as rope, tar, and sulfur were the goods most commonly brought to the pirates. Gold, silver, jewels, spices, tea, and silk were given in exchange.

The last and greatest of the pirates of this era was the Great Pirate Roberts (see p. 73). He never lost a battle the first four years of his career and often sacked four or five ships at a time with his single vessel. He was the terror of the seas, ranging from the Indian Ocean to the West Coast of Africa to the Caribbean to the Carolinas. He was finally killed in battle in 1722, and with his death, the Golden Age of Piracy came to an end. Oddly enough, Bartholomew Roberts was one of the more humane pirates, yet still the most hated and notorious of his day. Piracy continued, but navies were getting larger and bolder, and the glory days were over.

THE BARBARY PIRATES

The Moors of the North African coast had been pirates for centuries. They operated exclusively in the Mediterranean Sea until the 17th century, when they expanded to the Atlantic Ocean. A Dutch renegade, Simon de Danser, taught the Barbary corsairs how to make and handle modern ships in 1605. They then began to raid ships returning from the Americas as well as their usual traffic. A few bold captains raided the English, Spanish, and French coasts. Nearly the entire town of Baltimore, Ireland, was enslaved in a raid in 1631.

The Barbary pirates dealt in captured goods, of course, but primarily in captured Christians. Slavery was so common in the Moslem countries that it was estimated that there were 25,000 Christian slaves in Algiers alone in 1635. The women were sent to harems if attractive; the unattractive were sold as houseworkers. The men might be sold as anything, the worst fates being stone quarriers and galley slaves. There is only a single account of a successful galley slave revolt and escape; most galley slaves died slaves or were rescued in battle. The two most famous captives of the Barbary pirates were Miguel de Cervantes (who was ransomed) and St. Vincent de Paul (who escaped).

Algiers, Tunis, and Sallee were the biggest pirate ports. They paid the local *Bey* (governor) 10% of any booty taken, including slaves. The rest would be divided among the crew, as with Christian crews. The captains had more power, however, and received larger shares. In the 17th century, two-thirds of the captains were Christian renegades!

PIRATE SOCIETY

Pirates had an interesting form of anarchy as the main feature of their society. In the Caribbean, there was so much loyalty that one pirate cheating another was practically unknown. The very few recorded instances of this were met with astonishment and banishment. The Buccaneers of 1640-1680 were especially loyal to one another, and the loyalty extended to all buccaneers, not just shipmates.

AN EXCERPT FROM BLACKBEARD'S JOURNAL

"Such a day, rum all out. Our company somewhat sober. A damn'd confusion amongst us! Rogues a-plotting, great talk of separation - so I looked sharp for a prize."

(Later): "Such a day, took one, with a great deal of liquor on board, so kept the company hot, damn'd hot; then all things went well again."

SAMPLE ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

The Articles of Agreement that follow are from fairly late in piracy, 1723. The language is closer to our modern English than those of the previous century. These articles are unmodified, and contain a rare instance of pirates agreeing to flogging as a punishment (Moses's Law means 39 lashes). Compare these Articles to Black Bart's on the next page.

"1. Every man shall obey civil command; the captain shall have one full share and a half in all prizes; the master, carpenter, boatswain and gunner shall have one share and quarter.

"2. If any man shall offer to run away, or keep any secret from the company, he shall be marooned with one bottle of powder, one bottle of water, one small arm and shot.

"3. If any man shall steal any thing in the company, or game, to the value of a piece of eight, he shall be marroon'd or shot.

"4. If at any time we should meet another Marrooner that man that shall sign his articles without the consent of our company, shall suffer such punishment as the captain and company shall think fit.

"5. That man that shall strike another whilst these articles are in force, shall receive Moses's Law on the bare back.

"6. That man that shall snap his arms, or smoke tobacco in the hold, without a cap to his pipe, or carry a candle lighted without a lanthorn, shall suffer the same punishment as in the former article.

"7. That man that shall not keep his arms clean, fit for an engagement, or neglect his business, shall be cut off from his share, and suffer such other punishment as the captain and the company shall think fit.

"8. If any man shall lose a joint in time of an engagement he shall have 400 pieces of eight; if a limb 800.

"9. If at any time you meet with a prudent woman, that man that offers to meddle with her, without her consent, shall suffer present death."

BARTHOLOMEW ROBERTS' ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

Here are the articles of agreement used by Bartholomew Roberts' crew in 1720:

"1. Every man shall have an equal vote in affairs of moment. He shall have an equal title to the fresh provisions or strong liquors at any time seized, and shall use them at pleasure unless a scarcity may make it necessary for the common good that a retrenchment may be voted.

"2. Every man shall be called fairly in turn by the list on board of prizes, because over and above their proper share, they are allowed a shift of clothes. But if they defraud the company to the value of even one dollar in plate, jewels or money, they shall be marooned. If any man rob another he shall have his nose and ears slit, and be put ashore where he shall be sure to encounter hardships.

"3. None shall game for money either with dice or cards.

"4. The lights and candles should be put out at eight at night, and if any of the crew desire to drink after that hour they shall sit upon the open deck without lights.

"5. Each man shall keep his piece, cutlass and pistols at all times clean and ready for action.

"6. No boy or woman to be allowed amongst them. If any man shall be found seducing any of the latter sex and carrying her to sea in disguise he shall suffer death.

"7. He that shall desert the ship or his quarters in time of battle shall be punished by death or marooning.

"8. None shall strike another on board the ship, but every man's quarrel shall be ended on shore by sword or pistol in this manner: at the word of command from the quartermaster, each man being previously placed back to back, shall turn and fire immediately. If any man do not, the quartermaster shall knock the piece out of his hand. If both miss their aim they shall take to their cutlasses, and he that draweth first blood shall be declared the victor.

"9. No man shall talk of breaking up their way of living till each has a share of 1,000. Every man who shall become a cripple or lose a limb in the service shall have 800 pieces of eight from the common stock and for lesser hurts proportionately.

"10. The captain and the quartermaster shall each receive two shares of a prize, the master gunner and boatswain one and one half shares, all other officers one and one quarter, and private gentlemen of fortune one share each.

"11. The musicians shall have rest on the Sabbath Day only by right. On all other days by favour only."

LEADERSHIP

The captain was chosen by vote, as was the quartermaster, who was often the more important figure. The captain's authority was strictly limited to battle, during which his word was law. The image of a pirate captain as a domineering tyrant who killed any crewman who questioned him arose because most non-pirates only saw pirates in battle, where the captain *did* have absolute command. There was no real commander at other times, though the quartermaster's word carried the most weight. A new captain or quartermaster could be chosen at any time, except during battle.

The vote for leadership was usually unanimous, being preceded by enough debate to convince everybody. A split vote usually resulted in a split crew; the two differing factions went their separate ways after the next capture. The better ship was given to the larger group, and each ship then headed for port to make up a full crew. Such split-ups were common enough that there was no rancor. The GM needs to be able to roleplay any dissenting voice if the PCs want a ship's meeting. Many pirates were strong-willed characters who wouldn't spinelessly go along with whatever a PC proposes. Make them earn the right to have their own way!

Pirates "owned" their ships in common. Since the ships were stolen by the labor of all, it was only right that all shared in the ownership. The captain had no say over what to do with a ship, and he could only suggest routes and goals. Since the best strategist and tactician was customarily chosen as the captain, his ideas were usually listened to, but were not automatically followed.

The captain's authority ended when the fighting ended, and the quartermaster's began immediately. The quartermaster was responsible for deciding what booty to take from the captured ship and whether or not to take the whole ship in to port. Gold, silver, and jewels were mandatory, but he decided on such articles as silks and spices, based on the amount of free space in the hold and the nearest market to unload such goods. A good Merchant skill is needed for a quartermaster. The quartermaster also oversaw the division of the loot, which was done as soon as possible. Since the pirates operated on a "no prey, no pay" basis, this was an important and eagerly awaited task. He would divide coins into equal piles and distribute them, then auction off larger items. As can be well imagined, these auctions were wild times.

The quartermaster also tried to patch up quarrels between pirates. If they were adamantly hostile, the ship headed to a deserted stretch of shore for a duel. The quartermaster would count out the paces and give the order to fire. If both missed, cutlasses were drawn and the fight would go until first blood was drawn.

Otherwise, things were decided by vote. Where to head, how long to stay, what to do if no prey came in a certain amount of time, etc., were all subject to debate. Even deciding who made up a boarding party (the most hazardous task) was decided by the group. Some crews decided by lot, others by rotation - none that we have record of relied on volunteers. In general, things ran smoothly.

Anarchy tends to work for small groups, as most parties of PCs bear out. In case you haven't recognized it by now, pirate society closely resembles a group of roleplayers.

ARTICLES of AGREEMENT

Most pirate ships (as well as privateers) drew up articles of agreement before a voyage. These covered the division of shares and whether any nation's ships would be exempt from attack - patriotism still lurked in many a piratical heart, and they were loath to attack a ship flying their native flag. The agreements sometimes spelled out infringements liable for punishment: attacking another crew member, cowardice in battle, withholding booty, cheating another crew member at gambling, and refusing to accept a surrender. Sometimes a reward was listed for being the first to spot a prize or the first to board an enemy ship - usually first pick of the captured weapons.

The articles also included an "insurance" plan. A typical plan was:

For loss of the right arm	$12,000
For loss of the left arm	$10,000
For loss of one leg	$12,000
For loss of one eye	$2,000
For loss of both hands	$36,000
For loss of both legs	$30,000
For loss of both eyes	$20,000

In some cases, the afflicted crewman was allowed to take captured prisoners as slaves instead of money, at the rate of one slave per $2,000. Not many pirates took prisoners as slaves, however.

Articles of agreement usually spelled out shares of the booty very clearly, and piracy was often referred to as "going on the account." Each pirate received one share of the spoils, while the captain received anywhere from 1½ to 2½ shares. The quartermaster, ship's surgeon, pilot, cooper, carpenter, and first mate either received 1½ shares each or a fixed salary. Food and any repair material for the ship were given a fixed estimate and deducted before any sharing. These figures depended on the length of the voyage, ranging from $1,000 to $2,500 total for food and an equal amount for materials.

IN PORT

There were a number of pirate havens in the Caribbean, on the Atlantic Coast of America, in Madagascar, and in Ireland (and the Barbary States for Moors). In addition, pirates could often drift into other towns in small groups, relatively unnoticed. Any pirate with enough money and appropriate social skills (Fast-Talk, Diplomacy, or Streetwise) could usually do as he pleased; then, as now, money talked. On average, $50 per guard could get even the most notorious pirate an undisturbed night on the town, while $1,000 could buy enough time to perform minor repairs on a ship. For those with a *lot* of money, $10,000 could bribe most colonial governors into granting a pardon for all past misdeeds, but there's no point in that until one is ready to settle down - it wouldn't cover

THE PIRATES' DUELLING CODE

Pirate duels follow a different code from the Gentleman's Code on p. B31. If the antagonists are on ship, petty grievances are fought out with fists, with a ring of cheering shipmates to keep them going until one drops unconscious. Often water is sluiced over their heads to prolong the fight - it's great entertainment, after all.

For serious enmity, they are landed at the nearest deserted beach to fight it out. They are armed with the usual pirate weapons: a pair of pistols and a cutlass. Each man chooses his own equipment; there is no nonsense about an exact match of weapons.

The antagonists face each other, pistols in hand, at 12 to 15 yards distance. At a signal (usually by the quartermaster), they begin the fight. The normal tactic is to fire both pistols, then charge with the cutlass. They usually fight until one is disabled or dead. They would probably be amazed to learn that duelling is illegal - though it wouldn't stop them. Piracy is also illegal!

Another duelling procedure is found in part 8 of Black Bart's Articles of Agreement (sidebar, p. 64).

In port, a pirate "duel" is more likely to be a brawl. The probable locale is a barroom. The probable sequence of action is - insult, blow, general melee. Weapons are anything at hand; participants are everyone present; rules are conspicuously absent.

An occasional social-climbing pirate might be tempted to ape the gentleman's duel. The Code in this case is what the pirates can remember or invent. There is room for a lot of entertaining roleplaying, especially for Robert Newton impressionists: "Ahr, lads - first we measure yer swords, harkee. Then ye stands back-ta-back - or was it side-ta-side?"

PIRATES AND RELIGION

The major exception to the ubiquitous religious intolerance of the era (see p. 13) is in the pirate community. Even pirates believe in religion - most ships carry a Bible for swearing an oath on and such oaths are usually kept. Most of them feel they are damned, though, so fraternizing with heretics can't hurt them any worse. In the Caribbean, the Anglican English, Calvinist Dutch, Catholic French, and occasional Lutheran German or Scandinavian mingle well in their common hatred of the Spanish. (As an interesting note, there are so many refugees from religious wars in the Caribbean that a crew of buccaneers is as likely to be made up of Catholic English and Protestant French as the other way around!)

There were a few unpleasant instances, though. A largely French crew sacked a Spanish town and asked the Spanish priest to say a Mass for them. Someone laughed during the ceremony and the French captain promptly shot him dead. When the priest hesitated in fear, the captain explained that all was well, the service should continue, and that the victim was just an ignorant Protestant who wouldn't disturb the ceremony again. For the most part, though, things go smoothly between pirates of different religions and nationalities - if they fight each other, it isn't over religion or politics.

future crimes. However, one never knew when the government might change, and a formerly friendly port might mean imprisonment! This happened fairly often - if a governor was *too* corrupt, he might be replaced by a "law and order" man.

The most common pastimes for pirates in a town were drinking, gambling, and whoring, in that order. Brawling is a natural consequence of the first two pastimes and goes without saying. Pirates actually didn't stay ashore very long. The call of the sea is addictive, especially when you're your own boss. After a month ashore, most pirates were ready to "go on the account" again. Besides, even if the money he earned on a voyage was equal to an English farmer's yearly wages, a pirate could easily spend it in a month. Some pirates did manage to "swallow the anchor," as giving up seafaring was called. They often took their savings and opened an inn or tavern in a port. Such places always welcomed pirates and were popular with them. Others might buy an inland farm to forget their past life. This is the type who sets off with an oar over his shoulder and won't settle until someone asks him what it is.

PIRATE CRUELTY

Pirates are often accused of atrocities. For the most part, this is erroneous, or at least misleading. Walking the plank, for example, was a fiction of the Victorian era - the earliest reference to it is in the 19th century! Most pirates never killed or hurt anyone who voluntarily gave up his wealth. In fact, private passengers and sailors were usually not robbed of their personal possessions. This was good policy; word got around among sailors that if they simply surrendered they would lose nothing and not be hurt. They usually cared little for some merchant's cargo - it wasn't worth risking their lives for! Consequently, simply demanding surrender usually worked.

If a ship were to resist, however, that was a different story. The Jolly Roger (skull and crossbones flag) was a demand to surrender. If the prey did not, the Jolly Roger was hauled down and a solid red flag was raised - war with no quarter (unconditional surrender or a to-the-death fight). When the ship was boarded, the fighting was to the death, and often surrendering at that point was too late for mercy. Those that were spared the cutlass were held for ransom, cast adrift, marooned, tortured, or enslaved. Again, this was good policy - ships learned not to resist.

Pirates often *were* very cruel by most 20th-century standards, but not by contemporary standards. Prisoners that had resisted were often tortured to reveal the location of treasure (jewels are small, while a ship is large and sometimes sinking). Torture is hardly unique to pirates; all European countries, even religions, at this time used torture as a means of extracting information. Many of the pirates were escaped slaves and criminals who had been tortured themselves and copied techniques they knew first-hand to be effective. There may have been sadists among the pirates who enjoyed torture for its own sake, but no greater percentage than among the general population.

One type of punishment that was not seen very often in pirate crews was flogging. Flogging was the most common punishment in navies and merchant marines in those times, and most pirates had served on other ships before "going on the account." Sailors were flogged for very minor offenses in those days, and it was thoroughly hated. Consequently, the pirates would not flog their victims, with one exception: They would ask the surrendered crew if their captain was cruel. If the answer was yes, the pirates would flog him gleefully - and to the joy of the unfortunate captain's crew!

Centers of Piracy

There are various ports where pirates are welcome throughout this time and others where they are banned (or hanged, imprisoned, enslaved, blown out of the water, etc.). The ports' attitudes shift as the politics of the age shift. Throughout the entire era, only the bases of the Barbary pirates remain constant - although they suffer from periodic Christian attacks. They are not open to freelance Christian pirates; conversion and agreement to work for the local Bey are necessary prerequisites for safe harbor.

Otherwise, until 1720, pirates always have a safe port - but this might not be the same port they left from. Starting in the 1690s, pirate voyages begin to last longer, and by this time treaties and wars are growing shorter between nations. A pirate ship that leaves an English port to plunder the Spanish might find itself in trouble for attacking England's new ally when it returns! There is always somewhere to go, though.

Tortuga

Tortuga is a small island off Hispaniola. The Spanish claimed it, of course - they claimed *all* lands in the New World - but never occupied it. After they began to persecute the buccaneers in Hispaniola, Tortuga was used as a buccaneer base and was colonized by the French government. It is rocky and has a good, easily defensible harbor.

The first settler of influence was a man named La Vasseur, an engineer who helped defend La Rochelle from Richelieu's attacks. Utterly paranoid and eventually megalomaniacal, he directed the building of a huge fortress on top of the hill overlooking the harbor. He then proclaimed himself king and was promptly murdered by his subjects. The fortress was magnificent, though.

PIRATES IN THE AMERICAN COLONIES

Pirates in the 17th and 18th centuries have often been associated with the British colonies in North America. There is a good reason for this - they were encouraged by the colonials for many years. England passed the Navigation Act in 1662, which allowed only English ships to transport goods to or from England or its colonies. English ship-owners promptly jacked up their cargo rates and the colonials complained - to no end.

So when pirates showed up offering goods at a quarter of the cost, they were welcomed in most colonies (though, of course, not by everybody). Boston, New York, Newport, Philadelphia, New Burn, and other ports became "free ports" for pirates - places where they could walk the streets in utter safety, repair ships and buy supplies as if they were honest men.

Merchants and judges even offered financial backing to pirates, and many fortunes were made this way. There was no legal way to get one's money back, if the pirates didn't return. Yet, there are very few cases of people losing money on a pirate venture. Captain Kidd's voyage (well-financed by government officials and bankers) comes to mind as the only real money-loser.

The governors of these colonies in the 1690s were especially corrupt (except for Virginia, which was hostile to all pirates). Bribes were so common as to be handled in public, and honest citizens who complained were curtly shown to the door. Boston even went so far as to try to lure pirates from Newport, much as large cities today vie for factories and conventions!

It is true that Massachusetts was largely Puritan, and the famous minister Cotton Mather railed bitterly against the pirates. Boston itself had grown more cosmopolitan than the rest of Massachusetts by this time, however, and Cotton Mather railed against so many things that many people ignored him. Money talked louder and more clearly to most Bostonians and other colonists.

Continued on next page . . .

PIRATES IN THE AMERICAN COLONIES

(CONTINUED)

An honest governor arrived in New York in 1698, and the city became closed to pirates. In 1699, Virginia's governor personally pursued and captured a pirate vessel by offering the navy sailors gold out of his own pocket to fight. Captain Kidd's trial in 1700-1701 brought to light the depths of the corruption, and a purge was soon underway.

The War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714) saved most pirates by legalizing them. Letters of marque were issued to fight and loot the Spanish and French. After the war, only North Carolina was still open to pirates, and that's where Blackbeard had his lair. By 1719, the colonies were as hostile to pirates as was all of Europe.

SAMPLE SEAFARERS

Ordinary Seaman

ST 11, DX 11, **IQ** 9, HT 11.

Move 5; Parry 5.

Advantages: One of: Alertness +2; Combat Reflexes; Immunity to Disease; Toughness +1.

Disadvantages: One of: Alcoholism; Cowardice; Greed; Impulsiveness; One Eye; Odious Personal Habit.

Skills: Area Knowledge (ports of call)-9; Black Powder Weapons-10; Boating-12; Brawling-11; Climbing-12; Cooking-9; Knife-12; Seamanship-11; Shortsword-10; Streetwise-8.

Extraordinary Seaman

ST 12, **DX** 12, **IQ** 10, **HT** 12.

Move 6; Parry 6.

Advantages: One or two of: Alertness +2; Ambidexterity; Combat Reflexes; Empathy; Immunity to Disease; Literacy; Peripheral Vision; Toughness +1.

Disadvantages: One or two of: Alcoholism; Bully; Cowardice; Greed; Honesty; Impulsiveness; Jealousy; One Eye; Odious Personal Habit; Sense of Duty (to Ship and Crew).

Skills: Area Knowledge (ports of call)-12 ; Axe/Mace-10; Black Powder Weapons-12; Boating-14; Brawling-14; Carousing-12; Climbing-12; Cooking-9; Gunner-11; Knife-15, Knife Throwing-14; Navigation-10, Shiphandling-8; Seamanship-13, Scrounging-10; Shortsword-12; Stealth-12; Streetwise-10; Survival (Beach)-ll.

Marines

For marines, modify the above seamen: lower Seamanship and Boating skills, raise Black Powder Weapons and other combat skills, and add Tactics. Marine PCs are covered fully in *GURPS Warriors,* pp. 84-85.

The Spanish attacked Tortuga a few times and took it more than once, but never kept it long - they had too few troops and far more valuable islands to defend. The French and their buccaneer friends kept returning, and it was used as a buccaneer base as long as the buccaneers existed.

It had no great drinking and gambling district like Port Royal, but it was nonetheless a safe harbor for a buccaneer to get supplies, walk unmolested, and speak French - a welcome relief for French buccaneers who spent too much time in Port Royal. There *were* taverns and brothels, of course, but truly outrageous behavior was discouraged by the governor, who had a fair bit of power. Not only was the harbor's openness dependent on the governor's good will, but he had a strong fortress to live in ...

The Wickedest City on Earth: Port Royal

From 1656 to 1671, Port Royal, Jamaica was the capital of the buccaneers. Many still lived on Tortuga, and there was much passage between the two islands. England had "conquered" Jamaica in 1655 (it was not heavily defended) when their attack on Hispaniola failed.

Jamaica was not recognized as an English colony by Spain, and there was always the threat of a Spanish invasion. The English navy was busy elsewhere, however, so the governor and major plantation owners of Jamaica invited buccaneers to live there and even offered letters of marque to fight the Spanish. No further word was needed, and Port Royal was soon swarming with buccaneers.

Sugar-cane was the major crop, and the plantation owners were largely upper-class Englishmen trying to make a fortune quickly and retire wealthy to England. They didn't mix well with the rough buccaneers, but tolerated them for their military value.

Port Royal was divided into a buccaneer quarter and a genteel quarter, the latter being the smaller. The buccaneers didn't bother the "toffs" much, except

with their noise. The elected leaders of the buccaneers were usually well-bred, literate men, who spent an equal amount of time in both quarters. For the most part, relations went smoothly. Both factions hated and feared the Spanish, and both loved Spanish silver and gold.

The pirates' quarter of Port Royal became one of the most infamous cities in the world. Every manner of sensual pleasure was available to those with money. Brothels, gambling houses, and taverns lined the streets for blocks. Many people quoted gloomy Biblical prophesies and mentioned Sodom and Gomorrah as precedents, but the ribald life went on. Buccaneers loved Port Royal; they could refit their ships, take on new crew, and carouse in peace.

Three forts were built, and cannon captured from the Spanish lined their walls. The planters avoided the pirates' quarter, but didn't try to stop any of the goings on. Often Henry Morgan would arrive in Port Royal flushed with victory from a daring raid. He would set a huge cask of Spanish wine in the middle of the street and commandeer all who passed to stop and have a drink with him. Victory celebrations in the streets could last for days.

Spain and England were allied against France in 1671, and the buccaneers became *personae non grata.* They were still able to slip into Port Royal in small groups for entertainment, but no longer did they have the run of the town.

The wildness of Port Royal continued but at a lesser pace. Sailors from merchant and navy ships, and those pirates who missed the action enough to risk capture, kept it alive. In 1692, a terrible earthquake destroyed Port Royal, and "the wickedest city on earth" ceased to exist. Many ministers seized on this as proof of God's vengeance, and sermons against piracy and wild living thundered out of many pulpits.

In far away New England, Cotton Mather preached against the evils of piracy, citing Port Royal as an example of what would happen to Boston if the pirates were allowed to stay. It was years before Boston closed its ports to pirates, though, and years more before pirates ceased to talk about the wonders of Port Royal.

St. Mary's, Madagascar

After the Caribbean became unprofitable and dangerous, pirates moved to Madagascar. The island was perfect for pirate needs. It was claimed by no European country (no government!). It was large (four times the size of Britain), with thousands of hidden coves to careen in.

It was also relatively close to the Red Sea and Malabar Coast, where rich ships were to be found. It was rich in fresh produce and meat and inhabited by semi-friendly natives. The native Madagascans warred constantly among themselves, and pirates were welcomed as powerful allies. Many pirates enjoyed this game of petty warfare, and many had native wives and slaves captured from the enemy. Some even set themselves up as kings.

St. Mary's was an island off the coast of Madagascar, with an excellent harbor. There was a trading post there, founded by an English pirate/merchant. His name was Adam Baldridge. He started as a pirate, but had no love for the sea. He settled in Madagascar early in his career, and found it more to his liking to provide services for other pirates. He built a fort, a huge warehouse, a few inns and taverns, and a general store - where *anything* could be bought.

Baldridge didn't try to enforce any rules, and so was very popular with the pirates, who behaved themselves well with him. His diary reveals that in eight years of dealing with pirates, he was never robbed or swindled! He gave fair prices for stolen merchandise (about one-tenth value, which is good for a fence in the middle of nowhere), and offered cheap warehouse rates for those who preferred to sail to America and try for more money.

MAROONING

Marooning is abandoning someone on an uninhabited island. The most famous marooned person in history was Alexander Selkirk, the model for Robinson Crusoe. It was a fairly common pirate punishment, and the marooned victim was usually left with a little water, food, ammunition, and his weapons - but no boat and usually no tools.

Crewmen who violated the pirates' articles of agreement were often marooned, while captured prisoners were more likely to be set adrift in a ship's boat, usually with some provisions, but no weapons. Pirate captains who angered their crew were more likely to be shot or abandoned in the next port, or simply murdered.

If a PC is marooned, the GM and player have to work out the results from many options: rescue by a friendly or neutral party, capture by the authorities, survival a la Robinson Crusoe, boat-building with a knife, or starving to death. Historically, the latter is probably the most common outcome, but PCs are uncommon characters. The GM should be kind if all the survival rolls begin to go bad - at least send a prison ship! Then again, if the player hasn't learned his lesson from one marooning, there is no need to be kind . . .

PLACES IN THE CARIBBEAN

Hispaniola is the island that comprises Haiti in the west and the Dominican Republic in the east. The eastern part was an important Spanish colony.

New Spain is now Mexico.

The Spanish Main is now the coastal area of Panama, Colombia and Venezuela.

New Granada is now called Colombia and Venezuela.

The Mosquito Coast is now the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua.

PIRATE GLOSSARY

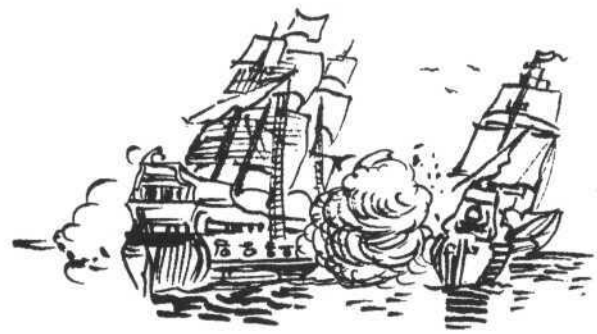
Being a guide to talking like a pirate . . . or, at the very least, understanding someone *else* who is trying to talk like a pirate. Genuine maritime terms can be found in the *Nautical Terms* sidebar, p. 109. Arrrrrr!

aft - Short for "after." Toward the rear of the ship.
Ahoy! – "Hello!"
Avast! - "Hey!" Could be used as "Stop that!" or "Who goes there?"
Bilge! - Nonsense, or foolish talk.
Black Spot: To "place the Black Spot" on another pirate is to sentence him to death, to warn him he is marked for death, or sometimes just to accuse him of a serious crime before other pirates.
Blimey! - An exclamation of surprise.
bosun - Boatswain; a petty officer.
buccaneer - A general term for the Caribbean pirates.
bucko - Familiar term. "Me bucko" = "my friend."
cat o'nine tails, or just cat - a whip with many lashes, used for flogging. "A taste of the cat" might refer to a full flogging, or just a single blow to "smarten up" a recalcitrant hand.
chandler, or **ship-chandler - see Sutler**.
chantey - A sailor's song. Also spelled "shantey" or "shanty."
chase - The ship being pursued. "The chase is making full sail, sir" = "The ship we're after is going as fast as she can."
crow's nest - A small platform, sometimes enclosed, near the top of a mast, where a lookout could have a better view when watching for sails or for land.
Davy Jones' locker - The bottom of the sea.
deadlights - Eyes. "Use yer deadlights, matey!"
dead men tell no tales - Standard pirate excuse for leaving no survivors.
flogging - Punishment by caning, or by whipping with the **cat.**
forrard - Toward the front end (fore) of the ship.
Gangway! - "Get out of my way!"
grog - Generically, any alcoholic drink. Specifically, rum diluted with water to make it go farther.
gun - A cannon.
hands - The crew of a ship; sailors.
handsomely - Quickly. "Handsomely now, men!" = "Hurry up!"
Jack Ketch - The hangman. To dance with Jack Ketch is to hang.
Jack Tar, or **tar** - A sailor.

Continued on next page . . .

He kept a few fast sloops out to look for non-pirate ships. When powerful East Indiamen were spotted, the sloops would warn the pirates in time to leave the area. Some would sail the ships to nearby hidden coves and the bulk of the men would simply melt into the jungle. The Indies merchantmen, most of whom carried papers authorizing them to capture pirates, never found any pirates in St. Mary's, but found wonderful trading bargains.

Baldridge has Merchant skill at 18, and Charisma +3 - enough that any group of pirates present would act as bodyguards for him and probably track down any PC who robbed him.



Every now and then a ship from the American colonies would arrive to trade. They would bring beer, wine, rum, tar, sulfur, medicine, and other ship supplies. The pirates would rejoice and bring their best goods out of Baldridge's warehouse, vying with each other to get the first keg. There is no record of pirates stealing from each other's warehouse booty!

St. Mary's was a place of wild times where gambling and drinking went on all night and the neighbors didn't complain. There were no guards, but the society policed itself. There might be a pirate ship in at any time, often looking for crew. Sometimes there would be many ships, or there might be no callers for months at a time. Pirates would stay for months, leaving a ship they were tired of, and then sign on a different ship when life on land got boring or their money was all spent. There was always a ready crew for any adventure that would bring in loot, and they'd all work for shares of the promised plunder.

Libertatia, Madagascar

Libertatia was either an amazing experiment in democracy, or a myth created by one man. Captain Charles Johnson is our only source for this story. Thomas Tew was well known; nothing else in the story is verifiable.

According to Johnson, Libertatia was founded about 1690 by a French captain, Misson, and an Italian pirate priest, Signor Caraccioli - their first names are unknown. Misson and Caraccioli apparently had amazing persuasive abilities, for they convinced their crew to rob without offering their victims any violence and not to curse. Any slaves they encountered they freed, and they behaved with utmost courtesy to all. They sailed under a white flag with *Liberté* written on it.

Eventually, they had enough loot to settle down, so they went to Madagascar. Here they married native women and built a new town, Libertatia. There was no private property in Libertatia; all money was owned in common. They built ships and a fort and houses with no fences. Slavery was illegal. They were joined by Dutch, Portuguese, American, and English pirates, all of whom agreed to live by the laws of Libertatia.

Thomas Tew was the most influential newcomer, so much so that he is credited with much of the founding of the town. Misson, Caraccioli, and Tew were elected "chancellors" of Libertatia for a three-year term.

The town served as a base for pirate operations for a few years before disaster struck. Tew's ship was wrecked in a storm, and he wasn't able to get back to Libertatia for a few months.

In the meantime, four British men-of-war had found the town and opened fire. They were not able to take Libertatia, but they ruined it; Caraccioli was killed in the bombardment. Misson and the survivors escaped in a ship only to be killed in a hurricane. Tew returned to Rhode Island, and Libertatia was at an end by 1696.

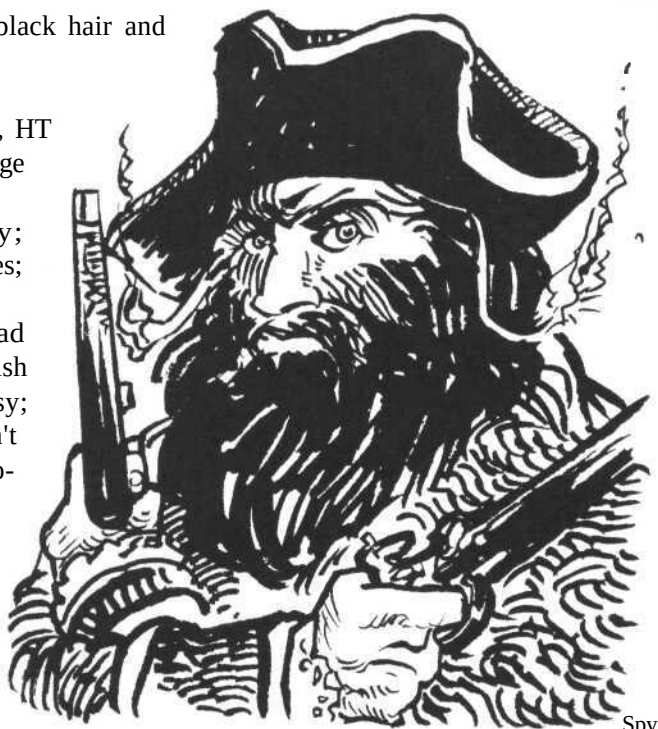
The PCs may use Libertatia as a base, but many will be uncomfortable; pirates who insist on private wealth are evicted! Visitors will be welcomed, given provisions, and told the laws. If they do not agree to surrender all their wealth into the common pot, they will not be allowed to stay. Any slaves the characters have will be set free, and woe to the pirate who tries to re-enslave anyone! Attempting to rob Libertatia is possible, but risky. These pirates may appear to have the Cannot Kill disadvantage, but that turns out to be the Self-Defense Only disadvantage if they are robbed or attacked! They are still pirates - cross them at your own risk. Also, one never knows when the British men-of-war will finally arrive . . .

HISTORICAL PIRATES

Herein are sketches of a few of the figures from the Golden Age. ***GURPS*** statistics are given for a few of the pirates, a brief narrative for others. The sidebars contain some fictional pirates; they are also identified with an asterisk (*).

BLACKBEARD

Pirate; large man with long black hair and thick black beard, 250 lbs, 6′3″.



Attributes: ST 16, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 13. Speed 6.25; Move 5. Dodge 5; Parry 8.

Advantages: Ambidexterity; Charisma +2; Combat Reflexes; Literacy; Toughness.

Disadvantages: Alcoholism; Bad Temper; Bully; Enemy (British Government); Greed; Jealousy; Odious Personal Habits (don't ask!); Overconfidence; Pyromania; Social Stigma (Outlaw); Stubborn.

Quirks: Wore 12 pistols across his body at all times; Liked to hang burning "slow matches" from his hat, intertwined with his beard; Yelled rather than spoke.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Carolinas to Caribbean)-16; Axe/Mace-13; Black Powder Weapons-18, Carousing-16; Climbing-14; Fast-Draw (Pistol)-13; Gambling-13; Knife-15; Knife Throwing-14; Leadership-13; Merchant-12; Meteorology-13; Navigation-16; Seamanship-13; Shiphandling-17; Shortsword (Cutlass)-16; Streetwise-15; Survival (Beach)-12; Tactics (Naval)-15.

PIRATE GLOSSARY (CONTINUED)

Jolly Roger - The pirates' skull-and-crossbones flag. It was an invitation to surrender, with the implication that those who surrendered would be treated well. A *red flag* indicated "no quarter."

Lad, lass - A way to address someone younger than you.

Line - A rope in use as part of the ship's rigging, or as a towing line. When a rope is just coiled up on deck, not yet being used for anything, it's all right to call it a rope.

Lookout - Someone posted to keep watch on the horizon for other ships or signs of land.

Me - A piratical way to say "my."

Me hearties - Typical way for a pirate leader to address his crew.

Matey - A piratical way to address someone in a cheerful, if not necessarily friendly, fashion.

On the account - The piratical life. A man who went "on the account" was turning pirate.

Rope's end - another term for flogging. "Ye'll meet the rope's end for that, me bucko!"

Sail ho! - "I see a ship!" The sail, of course, is the first part of a ship visible over the horizon.

Scuppers - Openings along the edges of a ship's deck that allow water on deck to drain back to the sea rather than collecting in the bilges. "Scupper that!" is an expression of anger or derision: "Throw that overboard!"

Scuppered: thwarted, defeated, or killed.

Scurvy - A derogatory adjective suitable for use in a loud voice, as in "Ye scurvy dogs!"

Shiver me timbers! - An expression of surprise or strong emotion.

Sink me! - An expression of surprise.

Smartly - Quickly. "Smartly there, men!" = "Hurry up!"

Splice the mainbrace - To have a drink. Or, perhaps, several drinks.

Spyglass - A telescope.

Sutler - A merchant in port, selling the various things that a ship needed for supplies and repairs. Also "chandler."

Swab - A disrespectful term for a seaman. "Man that gun, ye cowardly swabs!"

Weigh anchor - To haul the anchor up; more generally, to leave port.

Yo-ho-ho - A very piratical thing to say, whether it actually means anything or not.

LONG JOHN SILVER*

Pirate; one-legged, 6′ 1", about 50 years old, pleasant, smiling, round face.

ST 13, **DX** 14, **IQ** 12, **HT** 12.

Basic Speed 1, Move 1.

Dodge 1, Parry 8.

Advantages: Charisma +3; Empathy; Literacy; Reputation (+4, small group: all pirates, all the time); Strong-Willed +2; Toughness.

Disadvantages: Greed; Lame (One-Leg); Odious Personal Habit (Hypocrite).

Quirks: Friendly; Charming; Cheerful; Loves to tell stories.

Skills: Acting-20; Area Knowledge (Caribbean)-16; Boating-15; Brawling-15; Cooking-18; Diplomacy-13; Fast-Talk-20; Knife-16; Leadership-16; Merchant-16; Navigation-12; Seamanship-16; Scrounging-15; Shortsword-16; Streetwise-18; Throwing-18.

Long John is one of the most endearing rogues in literature, the true protagonist of *Treasure Island.* He is crafty and lovable at the same time, to friends and enemies alike. He lost a leg late in his sailing career, but is fairly dexterous on his crutch - and at throwing it! He has a parrot named Cap'n Flint that serves as a sentry (hears on a 14, Combat Reflexes).

Hired as the cook on a treasure hunting voyage, he is the captain of the pirates who secretly make up most of the crew. When the pirates abandon him, his resourcefulness serves to get him on the winning side of the matter. One gets the impression that he'll always land on his feet, so to speak. Both Wallace Beery and Robert Newton have turned in excellent performances as Silver on screen.

Blackbeard was one of the most famous pirates of all time. His real name is lost to history, though most scholars believe it was Edward Teach, Tache, Thatch, or possibly Drummond. He apparently served under numerous pirate and privateering captains in his youth, for when he broke into public notice in 1716, he was a formidably-skilled man. Some say he was born in Jamaica, others England, others the Carolinas. He commanded a ship of 40 guns and always burned captured ships. His reputation for brutality is probably undeserved, as he always put the captured crew safely on shore first. He never fought a single battle as captain until the day of his death - his reputation as a ruthless slaughterer prompted every ship he met to surrender without a fight. He was killed in a long, intense battle in 1718, by Lieutenant Maynard, who had spent months hunting him.

MARY READ

Pirate, of average appearance.

Attributes: ST 11, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 11. Speed 5.75; Move 5. Dodge 5; Parry 8.

Advantages: Alertness +3; Combat Reflexes; Rapid Healing; Strong Will +3; Toughness; Unusual Background.

Disadvantages: Impulsive; Jealousy; Social Stigma (Outlaw); Social Stigma (Second-class citizen).

Quirks: Disguised herself as a man most of her life; Fought duels to save her lover; Belittled the threat of hanging; Courageous.

Skills: Acting-15; Black Powder Weapons-14; Carousing-13; Climbing-12; Disguise-15; Knife-15; Knife Throwing-14; Riding-12; Seamanship-14; Shortsword (Cutlass)-17; Streetwise-13.

Mary Read was born in England in the 1680s. Her mother was not married and disguised her from birth as a boy, since she was taking care of a male baby whose mother had died. The boy baby died, and to avoid the shame of an illegitimate child, Mary was raised as that boy. Mary fought in Flanders disguised as a man, then drifted to the Caribbean when the War of Spanish Succession was over. She joined a pirate crew and revealed her sex to a man with whom she fell in love. They lived faithfully in a common-law marriage.

They shipped with Calico Jack Rackham, a pirate captain who brought along his lover, Anne Bonney, also disguised as a man. Anne had had a normal upbringing; she just didn't want to be parted from Jack. The two women became friends and were the only two who wouldn't surrender when their ship was taken in 1720 by the famous pirate-hunter, Woodes Rogers. They were knocked unconscious and lugged off to jail. At the trial, it was revealed that they were

women and both were pregnant. They couldn't be hung (it was the law - unfair to the babies), but they were sentenced to long prison terms. Mary died in 1721 in childbirth, but Anne survived to be ransomed by her father. She mourned Calico Jack (hanged after the trial) for the rest of her life.

Francois L'Ollonois

One of the crudest pirates ever to have lived, L'Ollonois (the name is spelled many different ways, in true 17th-century style) was born in France. He was sent to the Caribbean as a slave, escaped, and became one of the cow-hunting buccaneers. One of the earliest buccaneering captains, his cruelty was so notorious that he usually found abandoned Spanish villages when he came to raid. He boasted that he never let a prisoner live and is famous for torturing information out of people. He led over 2,000 men in raids on Spanish settlements and once sacked Maracaibo. He was famous for his fierce temper - if anyone crossed him, he flew into a killing rage. As a leader, this was usually a valuable trait.

Dates are vague, but it seems he died in the early 1650s. He was so notorious that a tribe of Spanish-hating Indians actually allied with the Spanish in order to exterminate his crew of pirates. He was torn limb from limb and the pieces tossed into a bonfire, to extinguish such cruelty from the earth.

Sir Henry Morgan

The greatest leader of the buccaneers, Henry Morgan was knighted later in life, after he gave up his pillaging ways. He always had letters of marque, and so cannot really be considered a pirate. He arrived in the Caribbean in 1654, when the buccaneers were a rising force. The English had just captured Jamaica and were building towns, planting sugar and tobacco, and wishing for a navy to keep the Spanish from retaking it. No navy was forthcoming - no English navy, that is. The buccaneers came, and Henry sailed with them, raiding Spanish settlements. By 1664, he had risen to buccaneer leader. For the next seven years, he led them to victory after bloody victory over the ever-weakening Spanish.

Port Royal, Jamaica, was Henry Morgan's home. These were the years of the buccaneers' greatest triumphs, and Morgan their (almost) undisputed leader. The buccaneers were so fiercely independent that small groups were always splintering off, and once the whole French contingent sailed away rather than attack the strongly-held Cartagena. But for the most part, if Morgan proposed a raid, the buccaneers agreed. Morgan led whole fleets of buccaneers - as many as 36 ships and over 2,000 men! They sacked many Spanish towns, and so many pieces of eight flooded into Port Royal that it became the legal coin of Jamaica. See p. 62 for the story of his raid on Panama.

Morgan was a poor sailor, but a great general. He was full of life and roared out his speeches even in small rooms. In the 1680s, as Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica, he hunted pirates and hung them. He lived with gusto and died in bed, a corpulent, roaring man. He would be a potent ally for any pirate in the 1660s, a terrible foe in the 1680s. He died in 1688.

Bartholomew Roberts

Known as the Great Pirate Roberts and Black Bart, he was the last of the prominent pirates of this era. A notably brave man, Roberts engaged in some battles at sea that would be the envy of Lord Nelson. He once took on 22 ships

CAPTAIN PETER BLOOD*

Pirate of Irish and English descent, tall and spare, swarthy as a Gypsy, startling blue eyes, long, black hair that falls in shoulders-length ringlets. Mid-30s.

ST 11, **DX** 13, **IQ** 15, **HT** 11.

Basic Speed 6, Move 6.

Dodge 6, Parry 10.

Advantages: Charisma +3; Empathy; Intuition; Literacy; Luck; Reputation (+4, small group, all the time); Strong Will +2; Voice.

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Gentleman's); Enemy (Spain, Stuart England); Overconfidence; Reputation (-4, large group, all the time); Sense of Duty (Brethren of the Coast, England, Women); Social Stigma (Outlaw).

Quirks: Dresses in black, as a dandy; Hates senseless violence; Enjoys quoting Horace; Likes to disguise himself as Spanish; Hates King James II.

Skills: Acting-16; Black Powder Weapons-15; Detect Lies-14; Diagnosis/TL4- 15; Disguise-15; Fast-Talk-17; Fencing-16; First-Aid/TL4-18; Forgery-12; Leadership-15; Literature (Specialized: Latin poets)-18; Physician/TL4-15; Shiphandling-14; Savoir-Faire-16; Strategy -16; Tactics (Naval)-18.

Languages: French-12; Latin-12; Spanish-18.

The hero of three excellent books by Rafael Sabatini, Doctor Blood was sent as a slave to Barbados for giving medical aid to an Irish rebel. He and his fellow slaves escaped on a stolen ship of 50 guns, and since he had military training (and was the most educated and charismatic of them), he was elected captain. He then declared a private war against Spain, refusing to harm an English ship or settlement. He later learned other skills, such as Area Knowledge (Caribbean), Boating, and Navigation.

An excellent judge of men and endowed with a sense of humor, he was known as a great leader of outrageously bold raids on Spanish settlements. Much of his success was due to his choice of followers, though his was always the guiding mind. Don't miss these books . . . swashbuckling at its best! You should also watch Errol Flynn as Captain Blood - but the books are better!

THE ORDER OF THE HOLY TRINITY AND THE REDEMPTION OF PRISONERS

Over a period of six centuries, this Catholic order of monks worked hard to liberate over 20,000 Christians held captive by the Moslems. The Order dates back to the time of the Crusades and was very active during the 17th and 18th centuries. At that time, the Barbary pirates held many Christians captive, and the Order raised money to free some of them, as well as collected Moslem slaves to trade in return.

Player characters that get themselves caught by the Barbary pirates *might* be liberated this way, though the percentage of redeemed prisoners was actually small. If the PCs' own attempts to free themselves fail utterly, the GM may consider this option. Also note that the Catholic monks will *not* liberate a known Protestant. A Protestant must make a Theology +2 roll (IQ-4) to convince the monks he's Catholic, if there aren't any Catholics to vouch for him. Intolerant or Fanatic Protestants pretending to be Catholic should receive no experience points. The Protestants finally organized redemption agencies in the late 18th century.

with his single ship! Another time, he calmly sailed into the midst of 43 merchant ships being guarded by two men-of-war. He helped himself to over half a million dollars worth of gold and cargo, then sailed away before the Portuguese fleet could do anything to defend itself.

He raided ships and settlements from 1719 to 1722. He roamed from the coast of Africa to Brazil to Newfoundland to the Caribbean and back to Africa. He was fearless and ruthless - in one three-day period he sacked 15 ships, including one that out-gunned him. He sailed into ports under the guns of their forts to sack ships at anchor. His crew threatened personal mayhem to all passengers who didn't give up their valuables, and threw overboard what they didn't want. He quickly became so infamous that for three years he was *the* pirate - others were forgotten. By 1721, he had single-handedly brought Caribbean shipping to a halt. Without shipping to prey on, he had to leave and went to West Africa, looking for ivory, gold and slaves.

Roberts was a brilliant navigator, and once sighted land on an Atlantic crossing within one mile of where he was aiming. He was constantly changing ships, simply taking a better ship as it came along. He renamed most of them *Royal Fortune*. He had anywhere from 20 to 40 guns and by the end of his career had three ships for a total of 60 guns. He ran into two British ships that had been hunting him for six months - each had 60 guns. True to form, Roberts attacked. He did not survive the first broadside, however, and his men eventually surrendered. Most of them were hanged.

Intelligent, charismatic, bold, and contemptuous of law - Roberts was the last of his breed. For more information, see ***GURPS Who's Who I,*** pp. 84-85.

TIMES DISTANCES BY SHIP

Schedules as 20th-century Americans know them did not exist in the swashbuckling era. We are upset if a plane scheduled to land at 4:20 arrives at 5:20. Our ancestors weren't upset if a ship scheduled to arrive in April didn't show up until June. They began to worry in July and were often relieved when it showed up in August. When a ship finally *does* pull into port, it's a cause for excitement in all but the busiest cities. Merchants hurry down to check out the cargo and arrange for shipping goods they have in storage or on order. Prostitutes strut their wares; little boys offer to act as guides; innkeepers send lackeys to advertise their premises; and other seamen will want to talk about any problems on the voyage. The ship will probably stay in port for at least three days, to unload and load cargo, take on provisions, allow recreation for the crew, gather local news, conditions, instances of pirates, etc.

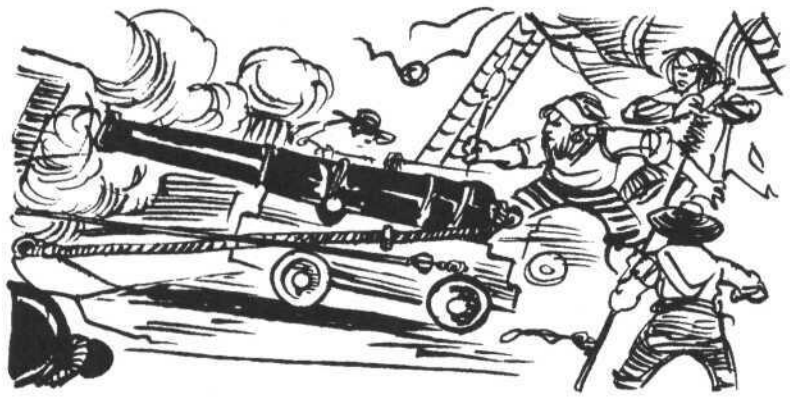
Distances and travel times during this period can only be approximate. One never knew when the winds would be favorable. So even though "average sailing times" are given here, time can vary considerably, shortening the voyage by as much as 25% or prolonging it up to 500% (or infinitely!). The average run from England to Boston was about a month and a half, but there are *many* instances of three-month voyages. One 1640 voyage lasted six months!

Travel times are not the same in both directions, due to prevailing winds and currents. This is especially true in the Caribbean, where the prevailing winds are from the southeast the entire year. Figure times normally, except when the destination is to the southeast of the departure point. Then, multiply travel times *by five*. Ships moving directly from Europe to North America take longer than ships sailing in the opposite direction. Also, contrary winds can prevent a ship from actually making harbor even if it gets close. One ship was held off the North Carolina coast for 17 days before being able to land!

Mileage Within the Caribbean

Treat all entries from North America as being to Nassau, and all entries from Europe or Africa as being to Barbados. In reality, the English landed first at Barbados; the Spanish, at Trinidad or Dominica; the French, at Martinique; and the Dutch, at Statia. These are close enough to each other to call travel time from Europe the same. Statia and Martinique are closer to San Juan than Barbados; otherwise, use Barbados for figuring mileage.

	Barbados	Cartagena	Havana	Nassau	Old Providence	Port Royal	Portobelo	San Juan	Tortuga
Cartagena	1,100								
Havana	2,000	1,170							
Nassau	1,400	1,120	380						
Old Providence	1,420	420	800	1,250					
Port Royal	1,200	540	800	680	450				
Portobelo	1,440	320	1,100	1,250	290	620			
San Juan	600	880	1,150	850	1,150	700	1,200		
Tortuga	1,000	780	650	460	790	350	870	470	
Vera Cruz	2,500	1,770	1,000	1,300	1,350	1,350	1,620	2,070	1,600



Travel Time in Days between Caribbean Ports

See the map of the Caribbean, p. 61. For sailing downwind or crosswind, such as Barbados to Havana or San Juan to Portobelo, use the travel times listed below. For sailing upwind, such as Havana to Barbados, multiply the listed time by five.

	Barbados	Cartagena	Havana	Nassau	Old Providence	Port Royal	Portobelo	San Juan	Tortuga
Cartagena	7								
Havana	12	7							
Nassau	8	7	2						
Old Providence	9	3	5	7					
Port Royal	7	3	5	4	3				
Portobelo	9	2	7	7	2	4			
San Juan	4	5	7	5	7	4	7		
Tortuga	6	5	4	3	5	2	5	3	
Vera Cruz	15	11	6	8	8	8	10	12	10

TRADE ROUTES

Prevailing winds and trade possibilities set the main routes. For the entire swashbuckling era, ships would often travel from Europe to Africa (Kingdom of Benin) to trade cloth for slaves, then via the southern trade winds to the Caribbean to trade slaves for rum, tobacco, sugar, salt, dyes, timber, and other products. The return to Europe was by the northern winds, which blew predominately from the west. This is the famous "triangle route" that many English, Dutch, and French merchants followed.

The Spanish were constrained by laws to export everything directly from Spain, which meant that slaves had to be shipped to Spain before being shipped to the Caribbean. All Spanish shipping to the west went through the Canary Islands. Treat any shipping leaving the Caribbean as leaving via Nassau.

DISTANCES AND AVERAGE SAILING TIMES

	Distance in Miles	*Travel Time in Days*
Southampton, England to		
Barbados	4,400	50
Benin	3,900	35
Boston	3,200	40
Cadiz	1,300	12
Cádiz, Spain to		
Benin	2,800	27
The Canaries	900	8
The Canaries to		
Dominica	3,000	25
Holland to		
Cádiz	1,600	14
Cape Town	7,700	70
Statia	4,700	52
New fork to		
Boston	435	3
Nassau	1,100	10
Norfolk	330	3
St. Mary's	10,800	96
Benin to		
Barbados	3,900	35
Cape Town	3,300	27
Norfolk	4,900	44
St. Mary's	5,900	50
Nassau to		
CMz	4,400	39
St. Mary's	10,800	96
Southampton	4,700	42
St. Mary's to		
Bab's Key	2,200	26
Bombay	3,000	26

Chapter 5

BACKGROUND

This chapter covers the major historical events of 1560-1725, the eras of Queen Elizabeth I, *The Three Musketeers*, and the Golden Age of Piracy.

Historical Overview of the Era: 1559-1815

England began this period in trouble and ended as the strongest country in the world. It was a time of turbulence; after the strong Tudor monarchs, a series of foolish kings followed by foreign kings led to the gradual rise of Parliament. England's constant game was balance of power - join the weaker side to offset the stronger, so that no one nation could grow too strong. It eventually worked.

France began this period in a mess and ended in a mess. However, it was the most powerful country in the Western world for over a hundred years in the middle of the era.

The Netherlands (or Holland) began this era under Spanish rule. After a long, and eventually successful revolt against Spain, the Dutch became a world power for nearly a century. By the end of this era, however, Holland had lapsed to a second-rate position.

Spain began this era the most powerful nation on earth, and by its end was frankly third-rate. Spain ceased to be a power after 1700, and became instead a puppet and battleground. Before 1700, however, Spain will be formidable.

The rest of this section covers the era in greater detail. The map of Swashbucklers' Europe (p. 78) will help players visualize the area.

European Powers: 1559-1620

England

Elizabeth I dominated the first 45 years of this era. England had no navy worth speaking of, and little wealth to build one. Spain, on the other hand, had a large navy, a powerful army, and a vast income. Therefore, Elizabeth needed to tread lightly in her dealings with Spain. After 1570, when the Pope declared her a heretic and demanded her overthrow, things were especially delicate. King Philip II of Spain was proud of his hereditary title "Most Catholic Majesty." His father, Charles V, had earned the title by vigorously persecuting Protestants, and every King of Spain was expected to continue this practice. Philip had also been the husband of Queen Mary of England, and had been called "King of England" at that time - and many Englishmen feared he would attempt to rule if he overthrew Elizabeth. While Mary, the Catholic Queen of Scots and heir to the English throne, was alive, Philip would have simply made her queen.

In 1587, Mary, Queen of Scots, was executed for treason - plotting the assassination of Elizabeth. This left Philip in a quandary; if he invaded now, who would he put on the English throne? This question postponed the building of the Armada and allowed England the necessary time to build a navy.

Socially, PCs can expect a tense and exciting time during Elizabeth's reign. Plots against Elizabeth were common; no one knew when the Spanish would attack, but everyone expected it. Privateering was encouraged and profitable. Coaches were introduced to England at this time, but there was a law forbidding men to use them - it would "sap the strength of manhood" if men got used to riding in coaches! The Jesuits were infiltrating the country in disguise, urging the overthrow of Elizabeth. The Puritans were plotting the same thing so they could outlaw drinking, dancing, and other sinful pastimes. Raleigh introduced tobacco and potatoes, and tea was first imported. Drake boldly destroyed Spanish ships in their harbors. Vagrants were impressed into the army, while "bawds, roisterers, lay-abouts, gamblers, and idle rascals" were impressed into the navy. Witchcraft was outlawed and witches were persecuted, the plague

HISTORY AND FICTION

Although much fiction has been written about the swashbuckling era, much of it bears little resemblance to history. The Victorians were especially bad at warping reality to fit their concepts of morality. Consequently, pirates suffer from the dual disadvantages of being over-romanticized and over-brutalized. They were either bold, dashing heroes or the cruelest villains to walk the earth. In fact, of course, most of them were somewhere in between. They were no more cruel than the average person of their time, and probably no bolder - piracy was safer than the merchant marine!

However, since fiction is closer to the spirit of gaming than reality is, the history in this book is not intended to replace any fictional notions, but to allow more complete roleplaying.

Should history be changed in a game? Yes, no, and maybe.

Yes, change dates and names to keep the players on their guard. As an example, Port Royal, Jamaica was destroyed by an earthquake on June 7, 1692. If the players know this, they'll keep their characters out of Port Royal that day. The GM might have the earthquake strike in 1691, 1700, 1685, not at all, or twice! In another setting, the *players* might recognize the name of their patron, while their *characters* should be ignorant (Oliver Cromwell in 1630, for example). The GM should feel free to change names to allow the gamers the pleasure of playing in the dark. By this method, reading a little history provides the GM with an unending supply of plots.

No, don't grossly alter the lives of major personalities. For example, there were many plots to kill Queen Elizabeth I. The PCs may become embroiled in one of these on *either* side, but Elizabeth should not be assassinated. If she is, the game embarks on an alternate time line, and all of history after that date is radically affected!

And maybe, if it bothers you that pirates never made anyone walk the plank, then by all means, introduce plank-walking! But don't feel obliged to.

JESUITS

A Jesuit priest was a specialized soldier in the pope's war on Protestantism. Highly trained in Theology, Philosophy, History, Law, Diplomacy, Latin, and Greek as well as modern languages, he specialized in casuistry, a word which needs some explaining these days. Casuistry is the art of rationalizing another's conscience, using subtle argument and precedents drawn from history, to make one's point.

As an example, let's say Father de Cedar has been sent to a French duke on the German border to get him to stir up trouble with the Protestant nation that is his neighbor. Things have been too quiet lately, and the king needs an excuse to attack (ostensibly to convert the heretics to the true faith, but really because he wants the land). However, things are going well between this duke and his neighbor - they have a non-aggression pact, and he would be a cad to break it. So the king and the pope conspire and Father de Cedar is the answer. He is sent directly from the pope as the duke's confessor, and of course the duke is flattered.

Continued on next page . . .

occasionally swept through the land, and Sir John Hawkins began the Africa-America slave-trade.

England weathered the Armada (see p. 79 for a description of the battle) and a serious Irish rebellion. When Elizabeth I died in 1603, England was beginning to be self-sufficient.

James Stuart VI of Scotland became James I of England on Elizabeth's death. He promptly disbanded the navy, ordered the Bible translated to English, and set about making England an autocratic state.

France

France was crippled by religious wars between the Catholics and the Huguenots (see *Religion*, pp. 92-93). There were periods of peace, but the weak kings could do nothing to prevent warfare from breaking out again. For a while around 1589, it wasn't even clear who was king, and three factions were warring over it. The named successor, Henri of Navarre, was a Huguenot, and therefore ineligible to be king by a law which stated that the sovereign of France must be Catholic. Henri finally agreed to become Catholic, and became King Henri IV.

The Edict of Nantes (1598) granted a respite from internal strife by allowing Huguenots to control 100 fortified towns, hold office, and be tried by a chamber of judges of mixed religion. However, their status was still inferior to Catholics. The Catholics, meanwhile, were suspicious of Henri's leniency - was he secretly still a Protestant at heart? Neither side was happy, but the fighting ceased, which allowed Henri IV to involve himself more in foreign wars (the main enemy was the Habsburg family, rulers of Spain and the Holy Roman Empire). He was assassinated in 1610 by a Catholic, after he had allied France with the Protestant German princes.

French espionage at this time was primarily internal. The kings were opposed to the Huguenots as well as to the Catholic League (an extremist group devoted to the extermination of Protestantism and alliance with Spain). All three sides used spies. The most dangerous missions were deep into territory held by the opposite religion. External espionage was primarily aimed at the Habsburgs, but England, Holland, and the German States were targets as well.

There was plenty of work for soldiers of fortune, but the pay was not good. Still, for the adventurous, a daring assassination raid into an enemy stronghold might mean promotion and glory.

Holland

Holland began to rise as an economic force at this time. The Portuguese route to the East Indies bypassed the Italian source of wealth, and Venice began to decline as a banking power. However, the Portuguese had no interest in banking, so the Dutch sailed down and bought Eastern goods to resell in Holland. As owners of Holland, Spain was taxing them heavily for this privilege, which led to resentment. The Dutch, under William of Orange, rebelled in 1572. They had become Calvinists by this time, so there was an added incentive to break from Catholic Spain. Dutch privateers, the Sea Beggars, raided Spanish shipping and colonies from the North Sea to the Sea of Japan. The war of independence was long and bloody, and the Dutch were aided by the English and French, both of whom wanted to see powerful Spain weakened. The Spanish assassination of William of Orange in 1584 did not end the revolt; his 17-year-old son, Maurice of Nassau, took over the leadership. A 12-year truce began in 1609, and when the hostilities were renewed, the Dutch War became part of the Thirty Years War. In 1648, Spain finally renounced all claim to the Netherlands.

Spain

Spain, the wealthiest country in the world, was the object of jealousy and greed. King Philip's father, Charles V, had inherited Spain from his mother and the Netherlands and the Austrian Habsburg lands from his father. He had split his holdings between his son and brother (Philip getting Spain and the Netherlands), but the rest of Europe was still leery of the power of the Habsburgs. England encouraged the robbery of Spanish ships; France plotted against her when not warring within itself, and Holland revolted against her rule. The Spanish had been firmly entrenched in the Americas since the 1490s. The wealth she took from the Indians is staggering - and caused her undoing. Too much wealth led to the decline of Spanish trade and industry, rampant inflation (worse than the 20th century!), and eventual bankruptcy once the flow of gold and silver was cut.

Spain was involved in many wars during this time. The powerful Turks were finally defeated in the naval battle of Lepanto in 1571. In 1572, the Netherlands revolted, and in 1580 King Philip conquered Portugal. War with England broke out in the 1580s and lasted until 1606. King Philip tried diplomacy, even wooing Elizabeth, in order to win England as an ally. He had remarkable patience in the face of England's piracy and privateering. Elizabeth did not want war, tried hard to avoid it, and was only partially convinced Spain was her enemy. She had no navy to speak of, and Spain was *very* powerful.

By 1587, Elizabeth was convinced Spain would eventually attack. Sir Francis Drake made a daring raid into the harbor of Cadiz (see map, p. 62) that spring and destroyed or damaged so many ships that the invasion had to be postponed a year. The great admiral Santa Cruz, who was to have led the Armada, died the following winter, and King Philip appointed the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, who was neither a military nor naval man, as his successor. Philip wanted someone he

JESUITS (CONTINUED)

Over a period of weeks, the priest slowly brings up the possibility of attack. References from the Bible about the errors of tolerating heathens are quoted, historical instances are cited, and the richness of the neighboring land is pointed out. Soon the duke's sense of duty to Catholicism (and possibly his greed) is aroused and his conscience numbed. Before long, a border skirmish gives the king all the provocation he needs to attack.

Casuistry can be handled as a combination of Theology, Diplomacy, and Fast-Talk. Roll a contest of skills between the *lowest* of the Jesuit's skill in these three areas and the victim's IQ. Allow the Jesuit a bonus if the player comes up with good arguments. Winning a casuistry contest adds +1 to +3 on a reaction roll to determine if an NPC is influenced by the Jesuit.

Jesuit PCs should be trained in all of the above skills, plus possibly Acting, Disguise, Stealth, Detect Lies, Occultism, Research, Administration, etc. They were not assassins, but a few were advisers to armies and knew weapon skills. They had no dictum against fighting in a war, though they were too valuable in terms of training to be risked that way. Some were brave, good men, martyred for their faith, while others were simply power-hungry schemers. Aramis, of *The Three Musketeers* fame, became a Jesuit in the sequel.

HIGHWAYMEN

Knights of the Road, they called themselves. Other people were less poetic, and called them bandits, brigands, outlaws, highway robbers, thieves on horses - and many unprintable names. Some of them were called Robin Hoods, though, and were well loved by the poor. This was especially true in England in the 17th century.

There have always been highwaymen, of course, but in the 1640s in England a singular breed evolved. These were turbulent times, as the king and Parliament fought over who would rule England Although not great kings, the Stuarts inspired a certain romantic loyalty in many people. Highwaymen came to love and serve the king as some of his best soldiers.

Many of the highwaymen had secret identities. Some played a role in society, and thus learned some interesting facts about the movement of wealth. Others went completely underground and favored taverns where the clientele was equally outlawed. Most of them had expensive habits - gambling, drinking, mistresses – even aiding virtuous widows with the rent requires a lot of money!

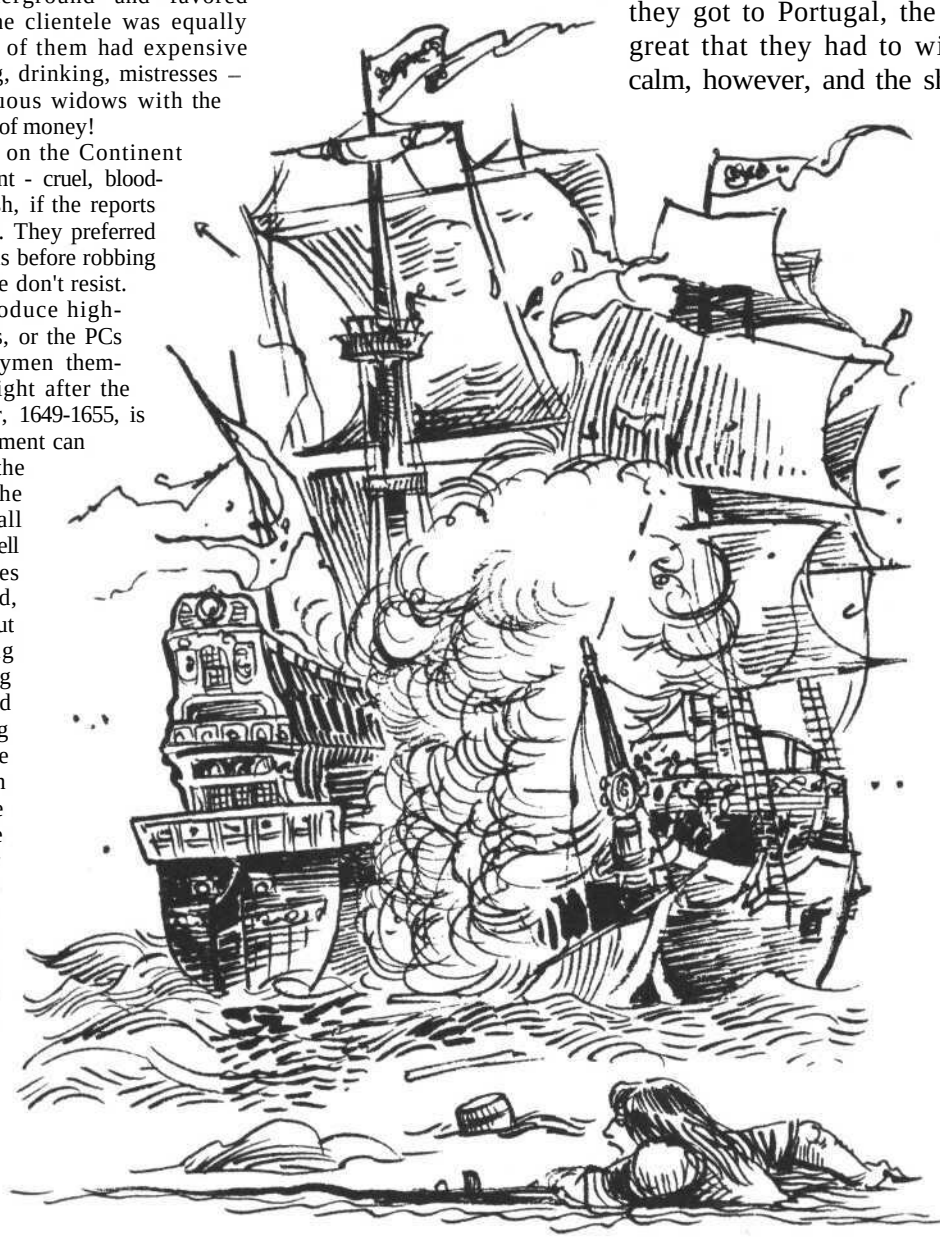
Highwaymen on the Continent were very different - cruel, bloodthirsty, and selfish, if the reports are to be believed. They preferred to kill their victims before robbing them - dead people don't resist.

GMs can introduce highwaymen as NPCs, or the PCs can play highwaymen themselves. The era right after the English Civil War, 1649-1655, is ideal. The government can be considered "the bad guys" if the characters are all Royalists. Cromwell has efficient spies who can be foiled, or used to ferret out the PCs. King Charles II is living in France and Holland, plotting his return, and the highwaymen can be involved in the plotting. The Stuarts *always* need money (perhaps the "donations" of the Puritans can be saved for the king's war chest), and there are plenty of poor people who need help, as Cromwell's soldiers are a hard lot.

could control in charge of the fleet - old Santa Cruz had been too independent for Philip's liking. The great Armada was therefore led by a sea-sick farmer.

Someone in the provisions department was dishonest - the food was rotten, and as a result, over half the sailors were sick. The fleet consisted of 128 ships and 30,000 men and was to convey the Spanish army in the Netherlands to England. It was met by the English fleet, a hastily assembled conglomeration of privateers, navy, and even merchant ships pressed into service. The English ships were, on the average, smaller and more maneuverable, and the English captains had years of tactical experience at sea. (They also had 193 ships, despite tales about the size difference of the fleets!) After breaking the Spanish formation and chasing the smaller clumps of ships, the English retreated to their harbors in time to avoid the storm that came up and swept the Armada through the North Sea and around Scotland. So thoroughly were the Spaniards battered that only 65 ships with 10,000 men survived. The English had sunk two ships, captured two, and damaged five more enough to cause them to wreck on the Continent. The rest of the Spanish ships that were lost went down in the storm.

England had its own disaster the following year. A fleet of 200 English ships carrying 20,000 men invaded Portugal. Sir Francis Drake led the fleet. When they got to Portugal, the land resistance was so great that they had to withdraw. The wind was calm, however, and the ships couldn't leave. The Spanish had one oared galley that sank four English ships before the wind picked up. By the time they arrived home, rough seas and rotten food had left only 5,000 survivors.



By the time Elizabeth died in 1603, Spain was too rigid to take advantage of King James' leanings. James *liked* Spain and stopped the war against the Spanish. However, since James disbanded the English navy and army at the same time, piracy increased. Sailors couldn't get work and took to piracy to make ends meet. Most of these early 17th-century pirates operated out of Ireland, which had the requisite number of lonely, hidden coves. These mostly raided the Spanish, so there was no real respite.

EUROPEAN POWERS: 1620-1650

England

These were turbulent times for England. King James ruled until 1625. He did not prove to be popular, though at first the people were enthusiastic about his reign. His unwillingness to prosecute Catholics, his fondness for Spain, his attempts to rule without Parliament - even his foreign (Scottish) upbringing - all estranged him from the English.

People had hopes in 1625 that Charles I, James' handsome young son, would prove better - but this was not to be. It is difficult to find record of a single promise that Charles kept. Charles tried to pass laws without Parliament. He declared martial law solely for the powers it gave him. He imprisoned his critics (without trial), impounded and sold property, and imposed forced "loans" to finance his government. He devised new and creative "non-taxes" to raise money for troops. If anyone complained, Charles quartered troops in his home - and demanded they be fed! Parliament forced him to sign the Petition of Right in 1628, relinquishing these practices. He abolished Parliament in 1629 and ruled without it for the next 12 years. Charles couldn't tax anyone without Parliament, but continued to invent dozens of other ways to raise money.

When Charles finally had to recall Parliament in 1640 (he needed tax money to bribe the Scots not to invade), they promptly passed a number of laws, including one which stated that Parliament had to meet at least once every three years. They refused to cooperate with the king at all, and when he attempted to have five of their leaders arrested, civil war broke out. Armies were raised, and battles began in 1642. Parliament was largely Puritan. They wore plain clothes, short hair and were called Roundheads. Opposing the Parliamentary forces were the Royalists, called *Cavaliers.* They were very dashing in their stylish clothes, handsome beards, and long ringlets.

Many highwaymen fought for the king - Puritans weren't much fun and frowned on ostentatious wealth (they hid theirs). Many of the more romantic souls of the era also joined the Royalist party. Anyone could join and leave the army as he chose in those days; discipline was not strictly enforced. In fact, the Parliamentary party began the first modern, disciplined British army. In 1646, the king surrendered to the Scots, who sold him to Parliament for $4,000,000. He ruled with Parliament's permission for two years. In 1648, war broke out again. This time the Scots sided with the king.

The king was again defeated, and this time beheaded, in 1649. Meanwhile, Parliament had been taken over by a small group of Independents (radicals), led by Oliver Cromwell, who abolished the House of Lords and arrested two-thirds of the House of Commons. Parliament now consisted of only 60 men, who had been elected in 1640. There were no further elections until 1660, and Cromwell became the dictator of England under the title Lord Protector.

France

France slowly stabilized under the competent and forceful Cardinal Richelieu. The Habsburgs had to be countered; the French had to be united; it was essential that France become the most powerful nation on Earth - these were Richelieu's goals for the last 25 years of his life. To this end, he reduced the tension between Catholics and Huguenots, allied with the foreign Protestants in the Thirty Years War, and managed to eliminate all French fortresses except those needed for national defense. Without their local forts to hide in, the French were forced to stop fighting each other. He even reduced the Huguenot fortress of La Rochelle, but did not curtail any Huguenot privileges.

CAPTAIN JAMES HIND, HIGHWAYMAN

ST 10, **DX** 12, **IQ** 14, HT 13.

Speed 6.25, Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 6.

Advantages: Appearance (Handsome); Charisma +2; Literacy; Luck; Reputation (+2, the poor, all the time).

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Highwayman's); Enemy (English Government); Greed; Intolerance (Puritans); Reputation (Outlaw)(-4, the rich, all the time).

Quirks: Romantically inclined; Sense of humor; Robs only regicides and their supporters; Enjoys taking chances.

Skills: Acting-13; Area Knowledge (England)-20; Black Powder Weapons/TL4-18; Broadsword (Cavalry Saber)-12; Carousing-12; Disguise-12; Fast-Talk-16; Merchant-13, Politics-12; Riding (Horse)-18; Savoir-Faire-14; Tactics-15; Theology-11.

Captain Hind was the first of the courteous, generous, romantic highwaymen; the one who established the Highwayman's Code of Honor. He was a staunch Royalist in the English Civil War and declared a private war on the regicides after they beheaded Charles. He robbed many Parliamentarians and served Charles II in his abortive attempt to seize power in 1650.

Captain Hind worked with a group at first, but the others were captured so he began to operate alone. Occasionally, he would take a partner or two for a large job, but is best known as a solo highwayman.

He was generous with his takings, returning a bit to his victims and sharing it more freely with the poor. Always gallant with the ladies, he nonetheless relieved the wealthy Commonwealth women of their gold. The prettier ones were often asked for a dance or kiss to win back part of their money - most complied. He would argue theology as he robbed Puritan preachers and politics as he robbed civil employees. In 1652, he was hanged for treason.

POLAND

Poland in the 17th century was a romantic, proud land. There was great gallantry as Poland continually fought off the might of her aggressive neighbors. One of the finest moments in European history occurred when King John Sobieski arrived with a Polish army barely in time to defeat the Turks at the Siege of Vienna. The Holy Roman Empire had long been at war with Poland, and Sobieski had to overcome great prejudice to get his army to march to the aid of their long-time enemy. Being a devout Catholic, Sobieski felt the Moslem Turks to be the greater threat. He was probably right, but those who resisted helping the Empire felt vindicated when Poland was later carved up by Russia and the Empire.

The capital of Poland until the end of the 16th century was Krakow, a beautiful city rich with culture and tradition. In 1596, Warsaw became the capital and was a new city in the early days of the 17th century, with many people streaming in, looking for work. There would be a lot of expansion going on, and PC spies might easily get employment if they speak reasonably good Polish.

Poland's traditional enemies were Russia, Sweden, and the Holy Roman Empire. Anyone offering aid against any of those countries would be welcome. Poland was (and is) one of the bastions of Catholicism, so any attempts to get them to ally with a Protestant country would probably end in failure - unless things were *very* desperate. There is no penalty for playing a Pole.

The personality of Richelieu cannot be overemphasized. He *was* France, for all intents and purposes, during this period. Although many see him as the villain of *The Three Musketeers,* even in that book the Musketeers recognize that he serves France above himself.

By 1631, France was active in the Thirty Years War (see sidebar, p. 87). Through careful diplomacy and espionage, Richelieu was able to achieve his objectives, and France was strengthened by the end of the war in 1648.

The final eight years of this period were after Richelieu's death. It was a time of uncertainty in France and of the rebellion known as the *Fronde,* which stemmed from resistance to tyrannical decrees by Cardinal Mazarin (Richelieu's successor) and Queen Anne. Common people as well as some nobility took part, but the rebellion was suppressed by soldiers returning from Germany. Political and social intrigue was constant; Mazarin was ousted and returned to power a number of times. Cyrano de Bergerac was active as soldier, author, and duellist.

Holland

The Dutch were active politically and commercially during this time. Many intrigues involved Holland, and most commerce had at least one Dutchman in the process. First Antwerp, then Amsterdam, became the financial capitals of Europe. There would not be very many Dutch swashbucklers in Paris during Louis XIII's reign, though. They were needed to fight Spain at home.

In the Caribbean, the Dutch can be found as privateers, pirates, and colonists. The Dutch seamen became a major thorn in Spain's side, and much Spanish treasure found its way to Holland.

Spain

This was the age of the Spanish Empire on the brink. Had they met the challenge of their northern enemies with flexibility and resourcefulness, the Spanish might have maintained their supremacy. As it was, the bureaucracy that Philip II had built up inhibited flexibility.

The Dutch, rebels since the 1570s, began to be a serious problem for Spain. They raided ceaselessly, realizing that if the gold and silver of the Americas never reached Spain, she was doomed. The greatest disaster was the capture of the New Spain fleet by the Dutch Admiral Piet Hein in 1628, at the battle of Matanzas. This netted the Dutch some $90,000,000!

Spain was heavily involved in the Thirty Years War as part of the effort to recapture Holland and reduce French power. However, the Caribbean was untenable, the war in Germany and Holland was too far away, and the Protestant armies were too strong for her - Spain slowly began to crumble. In 1640, Portugal revolted and won her independence. By 1648, Spain had relinquished all claims to the Netherlands but still held most of the Caribbean. Unfortunately, there were many foreign strongholds by then, and the stage was set for the great depredations of the buccaneers (see p. 60).

EUROPEAN POWERS 1650-1725

England

England went through many phases in this period. The first ten years were Cromwell's dictatorship, which though not outrageously tyrannical, was still stifling. Theaters were burned, sports and games banned, alehouses closed, and prostitutes and gamblers shipped out to the colonies as slaves. The Irish were ruthlessly suppressed - thousands were massacred and thousands more were shipped off to the Caribbean as slaves. Highwaymen increased in number at

first; many were veterans of the Civil War and put their training to good use. They were mostly Royalist supporters, and some of them carried on the war long after the king was dead. However, the Parliamentarians were active in hunting them down, and highwayman activity was almost nil by 1659.

Cromwell died in 1658, and his son tried unsuccessfully to carry on his father's programs. He resigned in 1660, and the country invited Charles II (son of Charles I) to be King. Charles, who had been in exile in Holland and France, promised good behavior and the monarchy was restored.

The people were tired of the somberness of Puritanism. Charles II was determined not to suffer his father's fate, so he turned more of his energy toward having a good, bawdy time than toward politics. Within a month, he had introduced his mistress to the queen. Actresses were allowed on stage for the first time in English history, so that Charles could ogle them and find new mistresses. Some poetry and plays were so lewd that they weren't allowed to be published again until 1961! A general amnesty was proclaimed in 1660 - only regicides were exempted. Many thieves and murderers were released, as well as many innocent people. Highwaymen were happy again, the colonies were thriving, and piracy in the Caribbean was very profitable - this was the era of Henry Morgan (see p. 73).

In 1665, the bubonic plague struck London. Nearly 70,000 people died (over 10% of the population), and it took the Great Fire of 1666 to end it. 13,000 houses were burned in four days, and the fire was finally stopped only by blowing up houses before the flames could get to them. Fire insurance was introduced in 1667, as well as the first fire codes and fire engines. Much of London had to be rebuilt -- the architect Christopher Wren was active and Sir Isaac Newton became well known.

Charles II had some difficulties with Parliament - he *was* a Stuart, after all. But he always remembered his father, and never angered Parliament *too* much. Louis XIV gave Charles II $12,000,000 to stay out of the war - Charles promptly suspended Parliament and stayed out of the war. He also sold Dunkirk to Louis for $30,000,000!

Charles had Catholic sympathies and his brother, James, Duke of York, was openly a Catholic. James got the childless Charles into a great deal of trouble, because James was the heir to the throne.

Charles II died in 1685, and James II became King. He was not popular, and people only put up with him because he was over 50 and had only Protestant heirs - Mary and Anne. At the beginning of his reign, there was an imposter - Monmouth - who claimed to be the legitimate son of Charles II and therefore the true king. Not many people believed him, but he landed in the west of England and raised an army that was cut to pieces. The survivors were ruthlessly hanged or sent off to the Caribbean as slaves - including one Peter Blood, if Sabatini is to be believed (see p. 73).

James II tried to rule without Parliament and filled the army with Catholic officers who boasted that all of England would be Catholic soon. In 1688, his Catholic wife gave birth to a son, and England had had enough. The rumor went around that the child had died at birth, and an impostor had been smuggled in to

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The Ottoman Turks were a problem for Europe for centuries. They began expanding in the Middle Ages. In 1453 they captured Constantinople, and so invaded Europe. Fanatically Moslem, they led a religious as well as expansionist war against Christian Europe.

Suleiman the Magnificent, who died in 1568, was a great soldier who conquered the Balkans: Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece, the Crimea, and most of Hungary. His son was defeated at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, but the Turks remained a threat for over a century. They reached their greatest extent in 1683, when they laid siege to Vienna itself for two months.

The Sultan of Turkey had one of the best spy systems in the world at that time, and many renegade Europeans worked for him. The Turks conquered most of the Barbary States and exacted tribute from them, but never made it as far as Morocco. Therefore, complaining to the Turkish Sultan about the Corsairs out of Sallee *(The Barbary Pirates,* p. 63) would only infuriate him - it would remind him that he wasn't getting any of their loot!

Turkish PCs are *not* recommended unless the whole campaign is Moslem-oriented. There would be too many penalties to have a Moslem PC in a Christian environment. Even a convert to Christianity would be suspect and not even allowed to enter Spain. He would never be trusted.

A Christian renegade serving Turkey as a Barbary pirate is a possible role for an adventurer. Conversion to Islam is a difficult process (involving circumcision, among other things). Once converted, any attempt to leave Islam is considered both treason and heresy. The punishment is either death or slavery in the galleys or quarries.