

A HACKER'S GUIDE TO GARWEEZE WURLD

BENEATH THE LITTLE KEEP

Part One



By Jolly R. Blackburn

Introduction

When I headed up the writing of Module B2: *Little Keep on the Borderlands* a few years ago, the book experienced what can only be called “project creep”. After all the original classic D&D module it was based on (*Keep on the Borderlands*) was merely 24 pages.

Our version ended up weighing in at 144 pages. *HackMaster* fans are a little surprised when I tell them that a good deal of the material we wrote for *Little Keep* never made it into the final module. There was simply no room. While I focused largely on the Keep itself and the backstory the rest of the writing team devoted itself to fleshing out the *Mines of Chaos* — which eventually squeezed out a lot of the material on the Keep I had planned on running.

This special two part series presents some of that missing material. Namely information on the complex of tunnels and passageways rumored to lie beneath the **Upper Bailey**. The first part presents the history and background of the complex. The second part (which ran in *KODT* #100) presents full color maps of the various levels as well as several 3D models of the Keep as it appears today.

Since player-types are likely to see and read this material, GameMasters are encouraged to alter the details and maps to keep their players guessing. Or even to dismiss everything presented here as unfounded rumor. Feel free to populate the complex and fill in the details as you see fit. Nothing ‘official’ is forthcoming that will contradict whatever you decide to do with the information presented.

Update on the Keep

NOTE: *Module B2* is set sometime in the year 174 TR. The following information assumes the passage of ten years. If it disrupts events that have transpired in your campaign feel free to ignore this update or adjust it.

Shortly after *Lady Melanee* left the Keep and it was apparent she wasn't going to return, things took a turn for the worse for *Keep Prefect Bandrus*. Drowning in debt and up to his armpits in scandal, it didn't take long for his superiors back in Arnz to become informed of the situation.

Bandrus was promptly relieved of duty in 176 TR and recalled to Arnz. Only his strong family ties with the powerful Senator *Lymaleeze the Elder* saved his neck. After repaying part of the debt and having the remainder forgiven, Bandrus became an owned-man and ended up serving as the Minister of Gates at Arnz. He's occasionally seen at state dinners amusing fellow dinner guests with tales of his glory days fighting Orcs in *Hell's Throat*. But for all practical purposes his career was in ruins and would never recover.

Bandrus was replaced as Keep Prefect by *General Gorgamaine Jantess*. Simply referred to as “The General” by his men, Jantess made a name for himself fighting the Grevans along the Bal'Tirn River during the **Campaign of 165** (when the Grevans briefly overran the borders of the *Daurkhaud Kingdom* and encroached upon the northern frontier of the *Fanguerian City States*).

Just 36 years of age when he assumed command of Frandor Keep, Jantess immediately set about restoring military discipline to the outpost which had become lax. In 180 TR, the *Moon Barks* (Orcs) dammed the river just upstream from the Keep and managed to attack the Keep via the dry river bed from the north. They managed to desecrate the graves in the *Old Garrison Cemetery* and briefly take control of the **Outer Bailey** before being repelled. The incident infuriated Jantess.

After the battle, Jantess set about making major improvements to the Keep's defenses. He also requested (and was granted) 250 additional troops from Arnz to bolster his ranks. His engineers strengthened the outer walls, raised many of the towers as well as adding roofs to them.

He removed the catapults and ballistae from the towers since they proved ineffective during the Orkin attack and sent their crews back to Arnz, replacing them with experienced archers and Battlemages. The Keep of today is a much more formidable obstacle to would-be invaders moving down the throat than its predecessor.

The 3D models in this file show the Keep after Jantess' improvements. Note that most of the interior details are identical to those given in the module. Manpower on many of the towers has been doubled up resulting in some overcrowding and increased tension among the troops. Periodically, tents are pitched on the parade field of the **Upper Bailey** to house additional troops during times of heightened security. There are plans to build another barracks along the south wall of the **Upper Bailey** just south of the **Shrine of the Standard**.

Beneath the Keep

Several important details were mentioned in the text of B2 that were overlooked by many GMs.

1. The Keep was built upon the rubble/ruins of fortifications that predated it by hundreds, perhaps thousands of years. The *Hell's Throat Timeline* published on page 41 of *KODT 65* [reprinted on following two pages] revealed that the ancient structure was of Orkin construction and that the island itself was considered hallowed ground by the Orcs. The only visible element of this previous structure is the **Sturm Tower** which is still used today and has been incorporated into the Keep's design.

2. The Keep has three different levels. The **Lower Bailey** is 10' above the surface of the island outside the walls. The **Middle Bailey** is 20' above the island surface. And the **Upper Bailey** is 30' feet above the ground level outside the walls.

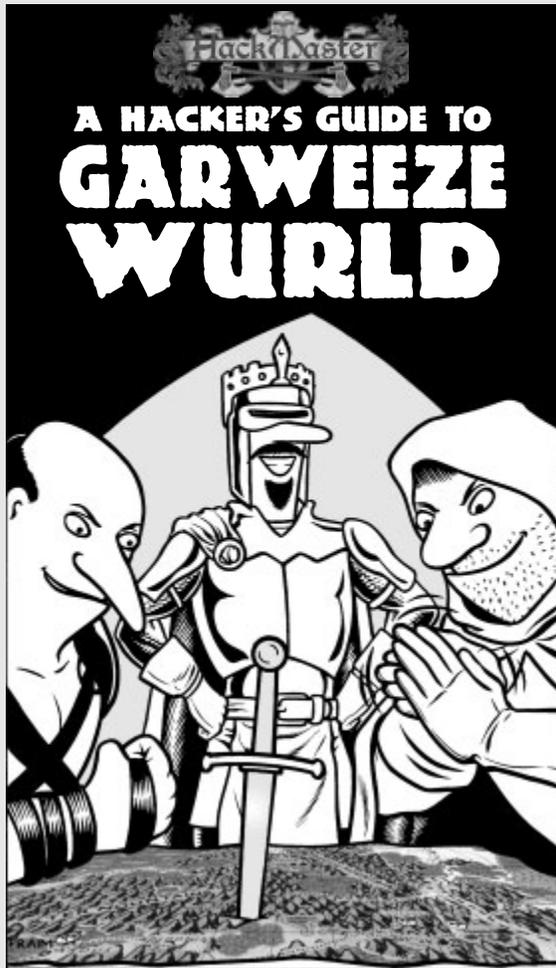
The rough hand-drawn map to the right from my early notes on the Keep should give you a better idea of how the Keep is laid out. As you pass through the gates from one Bailey to the next you ramp up (or down depending on your direction of travel) ten feet in elevation. You see this drop in elevation in the model below if you compare the **Shrine of the Standard** in the **Upper Bailey** to the rooftop of the **Temple of Benyar** in the **Middle Bailey**. This certainly gives the sentries on the walls of the **Upper Bailey** a commanding view of everything that takes place in the lower baileys.

When Fangaerian engineers set about building Frandor's Keep they built the **Upper Bailey** directly upon the Orkin ruins by enclosing them in four walls and filling in the enclosed space with rubble. This accounts for why the **Parade Field** is a good thirty feet higher than the surrounding island.

Beneath the **Parade Field** lies four levels of rooms and tunnels belonging to the older Orkin fortification. The upper levels are still in use — as storage areas for food, grains and weaponry. They also house the infamous “**Dungeons of Frandor**” where prisoners and enemies of the crown are kept. Access to this complex is well guarded and can be gained only from the **Keep Fortress** or **Inner Gate House** of the **Upper Bailey**. However it is rumored there is a secret way into the complex. Anyone who reads B2 carefully will discover the manner of that route.

The lower two levels of the complex beneath the Keep are not in use and are rumored to be inhabited by strange creatures and dark forces. After a team of workers disappeared attempting to gain access to these levels, Jantess ordered the way sealed and off limits.

One popular rumor among the Keep inhabitants tell of a powerful Orkin totem or shrine with mysterious powers. The sage Greytar is said to possess a map of the complex beneath the Keep as well as its history and the secrets of the Totem.



Welcome to “A Hacker’s Guide to Garweeze Wurld!” In this semi-regular column I will be serving as your guide as we unlock the mysteries of the realms. One of the most requested **HackMaster** products is the **Garweeze Wurld** campaign setting. Unfortunately, that monumental undertaking isn’t expected to be completed until the end of the year (with a projected release of Spring of 2003). What’s a GM to do?

Not to fear — we’re not about to leave you high and dry. There are several options for the **HackMaster GameMaster** who wants to base his campaign in **Garweeze Wurld** while waiting for the official seething to be released.

GLEANNING INTELLIGENCE

1. GAME PRESERVES: First off if you flip to the back of the **HMGMG** (page 340) you’ll notice we’ve set aside two ‘game preserves’ (Sector E1 and Sector C8) where GMs can place their own home-brewed settings. KenzerCo has no plans to develop these areas with official material so you should feel confident in fleshing them out yourself. We know how frustrating it can be to have a company come along and trash your own hard work by dumping ‘official material’ over your own home-brewed realms.

2. OFFICIAL HACKMASTER MODULES: Okay, I know this comes off sounding like Weird Pete trying to pawn another **HardEight** product off on poor B.A., but really -- this is a good option. Consider picking up the upcoming module **B2: Little Keep on the Borderlands**. This enormous module isn’t just an adventure — it’s actually a mini-campaign setting. That’s right, **Little Keep** pro-

vides the GM with a small chunk of **Garweeze Wurld** with enough detail (including area maps, encounter tables, Notable NPCs, etc) and adventure opportunities to keep you and your players busy for many months to come. In fact, several of the **HackMaster Modules** are located on the maps which come in **Little Keep** (For example **B1: Quest into the Unknown** is about a day’s ride from the Keep itself).

The area detailed in **Little Keep** will be familiar stomping grounds to most readers of **KODT** — it’s the area in which many of the classic **KODT** strips unfolded. By the time you’ve depleted the adventure-rich environs of the various modules set in this region the full **Garweeze Wurld** campaign setting should be available and ready to take on your players full bore.

3. THE HACK CORPS: Want to put your thumbprint on **Garweeze Wurld**? For those GM’s hungry for details and willing to roll up their sleeves and get involved this option may be just the ticket. A portion of **Garweeze Wurld** (Sector E-6) has been set aside for members of the **HMGGA** to develop in detail as a group effort. Details and on-going progress on this project can be found in the pages of **HackJournal** as well as on the official HMA website (which should be up in the near future.). **Join the Corps -- Build a World!!!**

4. A HACKER’S GUIDE: And finally, details on **Garweeze Wurld** will be appearing here in the pages of this magazine. In future installments, we’ll be discussing the languages of the world, systems of coinage, calendars, etc.

Hopefully, with a little luck and creative dodging, one or more of the options above will tide you over until the full setting is released.

LAY OF THE LAND

One thing GameMasters have been hounding us for since day one is the ‘lay of the land’. Exactly where are things located in relation to each other? Where’s the *Southern Orc League*? The *Dwarves of Praxter*? Or how about the *City of Fangaerie*?

The map in the back of the **GMG** (page 338-339) shows quite a bit of detail as far as place names and geographical features for a very small area of **Garweeze Wurld**. Unfortunately no political boundaries are given, so it’s not really useful for a continuous campaign.

If you look on page 3 of this issue you’ll find a full color political map showing all the political entities of **Sector D7**. (By the way if you’re not familiar with the sector designations simply refer to page 340 of the **GMG**, “**Finding your way around Garweeze Wurld**” for a full explanation).

Sector D7 is the hub of the civilized world of **Garweeze Wurld** and as such is the most likely place GameMasters will be setting their campaigns. (This is the stomping grounds of the **Knights** and **Patty’s Perps**, for example, as well as the stage for Gary Jackson’s **HackMasters of Everknight** novels).

In future installments of this column we’ll begin taking a closer look at the various countries and learning how they interact with one another. Mind you, we’ll be painting with a very broad brush. With 21 countries to cover and limited space, the ‘*meat and potatoes*’ will have to wait for the **Garweeze Wurld Campaign Setting**.

Speaking of limited space, I see I’ve just about reached the end of this issue’s allotment. Since the **Little Keep** on the **Borderlands** is scheduled for release next month, I thought I’d leave you with something to whet your appetite.

On the opposite page is a time-line of events taking place in and around the mountain pass, **Hell’s Throat** (where the **Little Keep** sits, guarding the *Fangaerian City States* from orkin invasion.)

Until next issue — Game On!

Year **Event**

-574 TR FIVE YEARS WAR: Orcs of the southern tribes sweep across the *Gnome Houses* and across the *River Fargruss* into the *Praxter Mountains* where they manage to catch the dwarves off guard. In the bitter fighting that follows the dwarves discover that they are alone in their struggle when none of their allies come to their aid. Eventually they repel the Orcs and claim victory, but they are bitter. They will not forgive the *Gnome Houses* for failing to come to their aid nor will they forget their resulting losses.

-78 TR THE LONG WAR: *The Dwarves of Praxter* move into *Blind Wench Pass* and seize *Drayton's Forge* and the surrounding valley — territory that is claimed by the *Gnome Houses*. Although the reason is never clear, the gnomes believe the dwarves were motivated by the discovery of rich veins of gold in the area. A few months later, the dwarves extend their borders to the shores of *Igdor Lake* (an area also claimed by the gnomes) in what appears to be an attempt to establish more defensible borders in preparation for war with the Gnomes. *Lord Flataroy* of the *City State of Fangaerie* attempts to negotiate a peaceful resolution between the parties. At first, the parties make progress, but when news arrives that the dwarven armies are busy building fortifications in the disputed areas, the *Gnome Titans* feel betrayed and accuse the humans of helping the dwarves by stalling the gnomes long enough for the dwarves to finish their defense works. Ten years of hostilities follow. The war ends with the dwarves agreeing to withdraw from *Drayton's Valley* and the gnomes agreeing to relinquish their claims on *Igdor Lake*.

-08 TR GREAT GNOME UPRISINGS BEGIN: The *Gnome Titans* attack the *Dwarves of Praxter*. *The Fangaerian City-States* enter the war as allies to the dwarves.

-01 TR GREAT GNOME UPRISINGS END: In a political marriage, *Lord Flataroy* of Fangaerie marries the crown-princess of *House Indigo*. The *Gnome Protectorates* are established, guaranteeing the borders of the *Gnome Titan's* realms and granting them territories taken from the southern orkin tribes

YEAR 0 THE GREAT COUNCIL: Orchestrated by *Lord Flataroy*, the *City States* of the *Soult River Valley* agree to meet with an eye on establishing peaceful relations. Little progress is made, but because so many different calendar systems are in use by the various cities, a new diplomatic calendar is proposed and adopted — *Tre-Ratorium* or “Year of the Ferret”.

46 TR THE GREAT PURGING: *The Dwarves of Praxter* launch a campaign to resolve the ‘Orc Menace’ once and for all. After a series of successful engagements, they manage to send the orcs fleeing into the heights of the *Frاندorian Mountains*. The end result, however, is that the ‘orc problem’ is simply shoved off on the human realms to the east.

49 TR ORCS AT THE GATES: The first great orkin invasion sweeps into *Sustain Valley*. The cities of *Purge*, *Arnz* and *Melet* are sacked and looted before being razed to the ground. Armies are raised to confront this new threat but are frustrated by the orcs’ refusal to fight en masse on the field of battle.

51 TR FANGAERIAN CITY-STATES UNITE: After centuries of in-fighting, the *Fangaerian City-States* of the *Eder-Soult* are united under a strong confederation as the result of outside aggression from the ‘orc menace’. The *Council of Seven* (representing the seven mem-

ber cities) set about building a combined army to repel the orcs and secure the *Borderlands*.

52 TR MORE OF THE SAME: A second great orkin invasion lays waste to the newly rebuilt city of *Purge*.

56 TR BATTLE OF HELL'S THROAT: After a third orc invasion, an alliance between the *Meletian Kingdom* and the *City States* of Fangaerie is formed. For the first time, the humans take the battle to the orcs on their own ground. An expeditionary force moves up the mountain pass of *Hell's Throat* (the invasion route favored by the Orcs) and sweeps it clean.

58 TR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FRANDOR'S KEEP: General *Jantez* (Prefect of the *Fifth Varnen'Caras*) is charged with the task of building a keep in the pass of *Hell's Throat* to deprive the enemy of its use as a future invasion route. The General selects *Prying Eye Island* on the precipice of the *Tan'Gra Falls* as a building site. Unfortunately, the island is considered hallowed ground by the Orcs who will specifically target the fortification in the years to come.

64 TR YEAR OF THE FLIES: Plague sweeps the *Frاندorian Mountains*. Known as ‘orc shingles’ the disease proves deadly to the orcs. The orkin population of the region is laid waste. It will be fifty years before the orcs can raise a sizeable army again. In the meantime, relative peace settles over *Hell's Throat*.

149 TR A RISING SCAR: The half-orc priest, **Ahk'Tang**, rises to power and manages to unite the feuding southern orc tribes under one banner. The **Southern Orc League** is born. The orc tribes of the *Frاندorian Mountains* (the *Orkryn Phar'Mos*) are not involved in the movement — being too far removed and cut off by the wedge of the *Gnome Titans* and the *Dwarves of Praxter* which lies between the Orc populations.

152 TR THE GREAT ORKIN REPRISAL: After **Ahk'Tang** visits the area and spreads his ideology, several orc tribes (comprised mostly of hot heads from the *Moon Bark* tribe) of the *Frاندorian Mountains* attempt to join up with the *Southern Orc League*. The far flung tribes around *Hell's Throat* are drawn together. In a two-pronged attack they simultaneously attack the *Dwarves of Praxter* and attempt to seize control of *Hell's Throat*. **Frاندor's Keep** is besieged. After three months of valiant fighting, it finally falls, and its garrison is slaughtered to the man.

154 TR ORCS ARE DEFEATED. After a long war that bleeds the *Fangaerian City States* nearly white, the orcs are defeated. **Frاندor's Keep** is reclaimed, its dead buried and its walls rebuilt.

174 TR CURRENT DAY



Looking up at the North side of the Keep from the Old Garrison Cemetery

BENEATH THE LITTLE KEEP

Part II

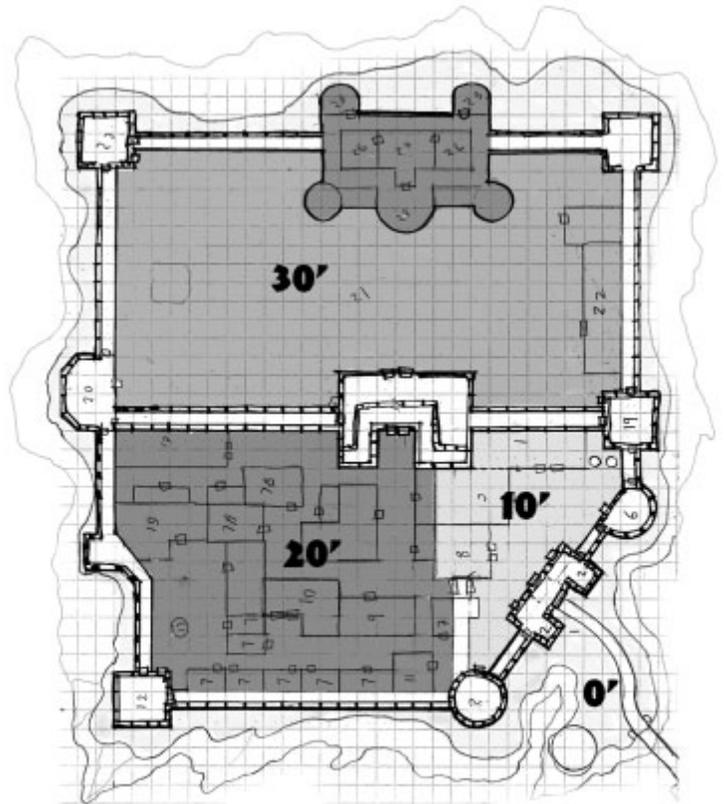
*By Jolly R. Blackburn
Dungeon maps by Craig Zipse
3D models by Jolly R. Blackburn*

As promised, here are the 3D maps that go along with **Beneath the Little Keep**. This file contains many 3D images of the Keep. They make great player aids and hand outs.

Keep in mind the images here reflect improvements the Prefect has made to the defense works in recent months (See Part 1 for details). Also keep in mind that the Keep is built on 3 levels. The **Lower Bailey** is approximately 10 feet higher than the terrain outside the walls. The **Middle Bailey** is approximately 10' higher than the **Lower Bailey** and the **Upper Bailey** is 10' higher than the **Middle Bailey** (which means if you were to stand on the parade field on the **Upper Bailey** you would be approximately 30 feet higher than a person standing outside the walls). As you move through each gate to the next Bailey you are actually ramping up in elevation. This fact was mentioned in the module but wasn't made abundantly clear.

As far as the dungeon maps **Beneath the Little Keep** — they are presented here as copies of maps found by the sage Greytar in the Keep's libraries. It is up to the GM to decide if the maps accurately reflect the legendary dungeons. Feel free to alter them to keep players guessing (just in case they see them here.)

For those of you who aren't familiar with **Frantor's Keep**, it's part of **HackMaster** module **B2: Little Keep on the Borderlands**. Although designed for **HackMaster** it can easily be converted to d20, D&D or most any other fantasy rpg system. □



KEEP ELEVATIONS



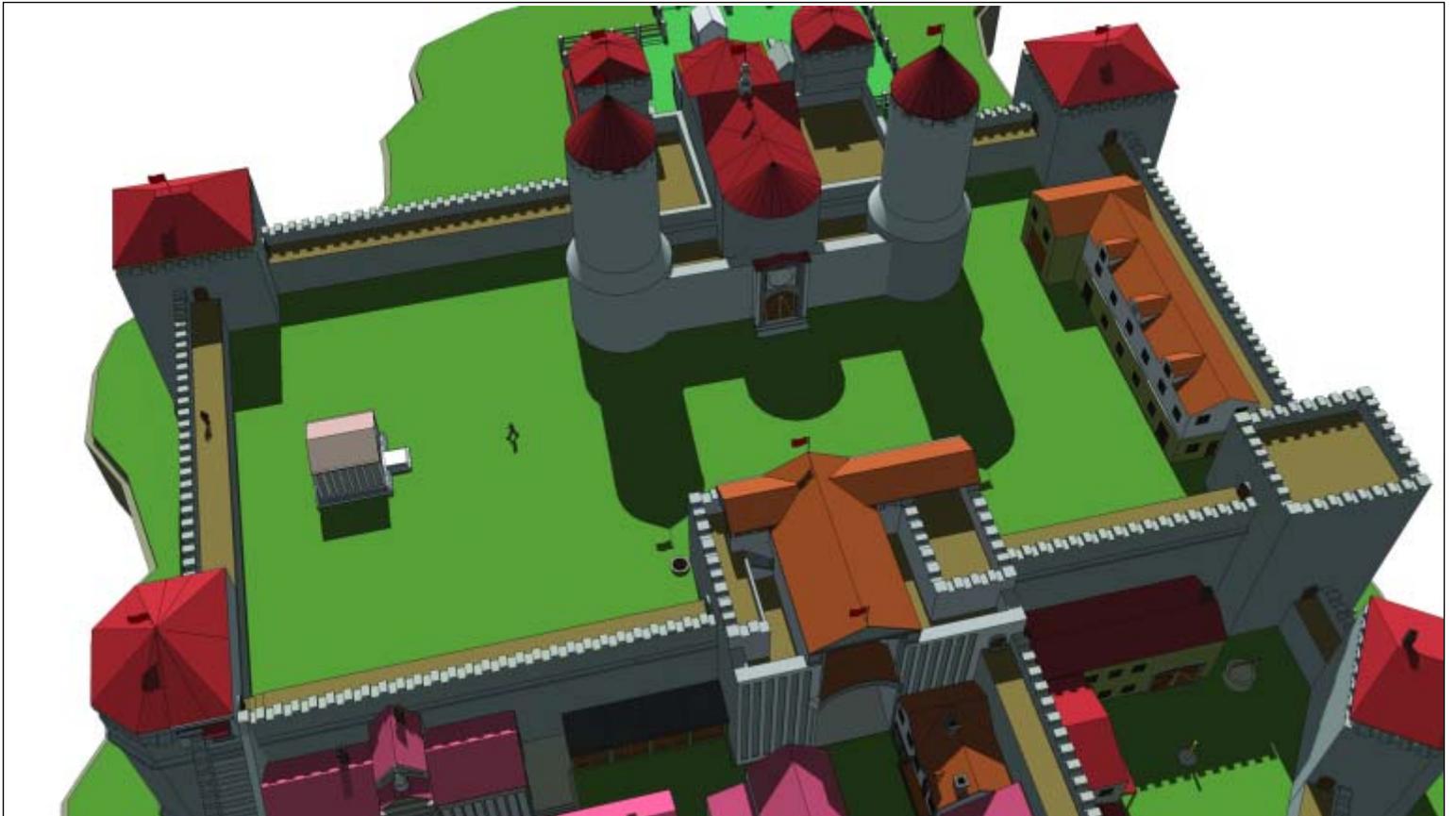
View of the Outer and Main Gates



Aerial View of the Lower Bailey



Aerial view of the Middle Bailey



Aerial view of the Upper Bailey



Little Keep from the east (rough)



Lower Bailey from high elevation (rough)



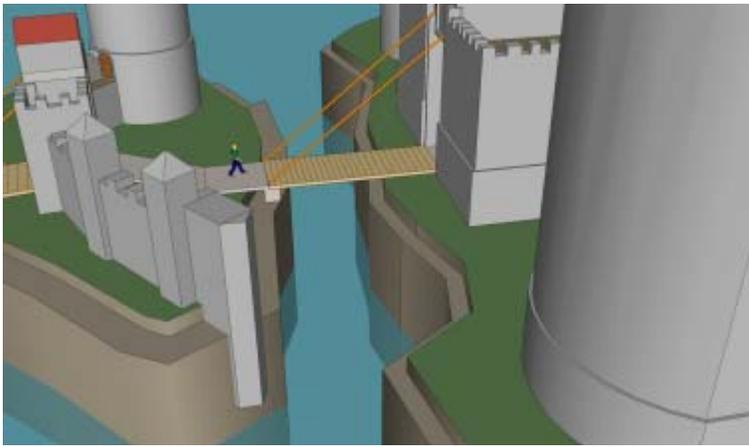
Lower Bailey (rough)



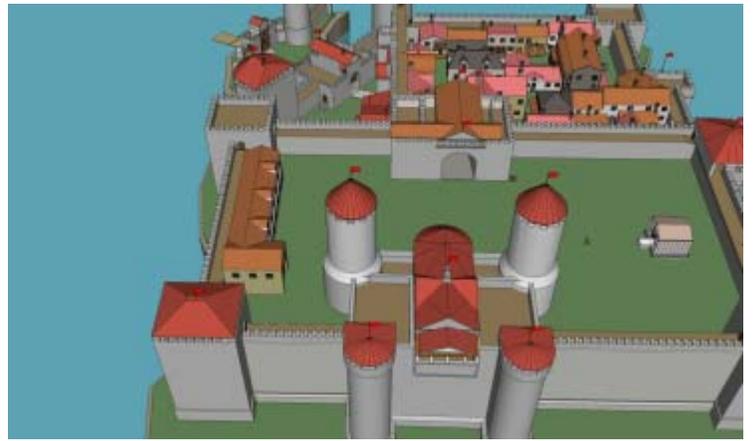
View North from Middle Bailey (rough)



Aerial View of Middle Bailey (rough)



The Drawbridge (rough)



Upper Bailey (rough)



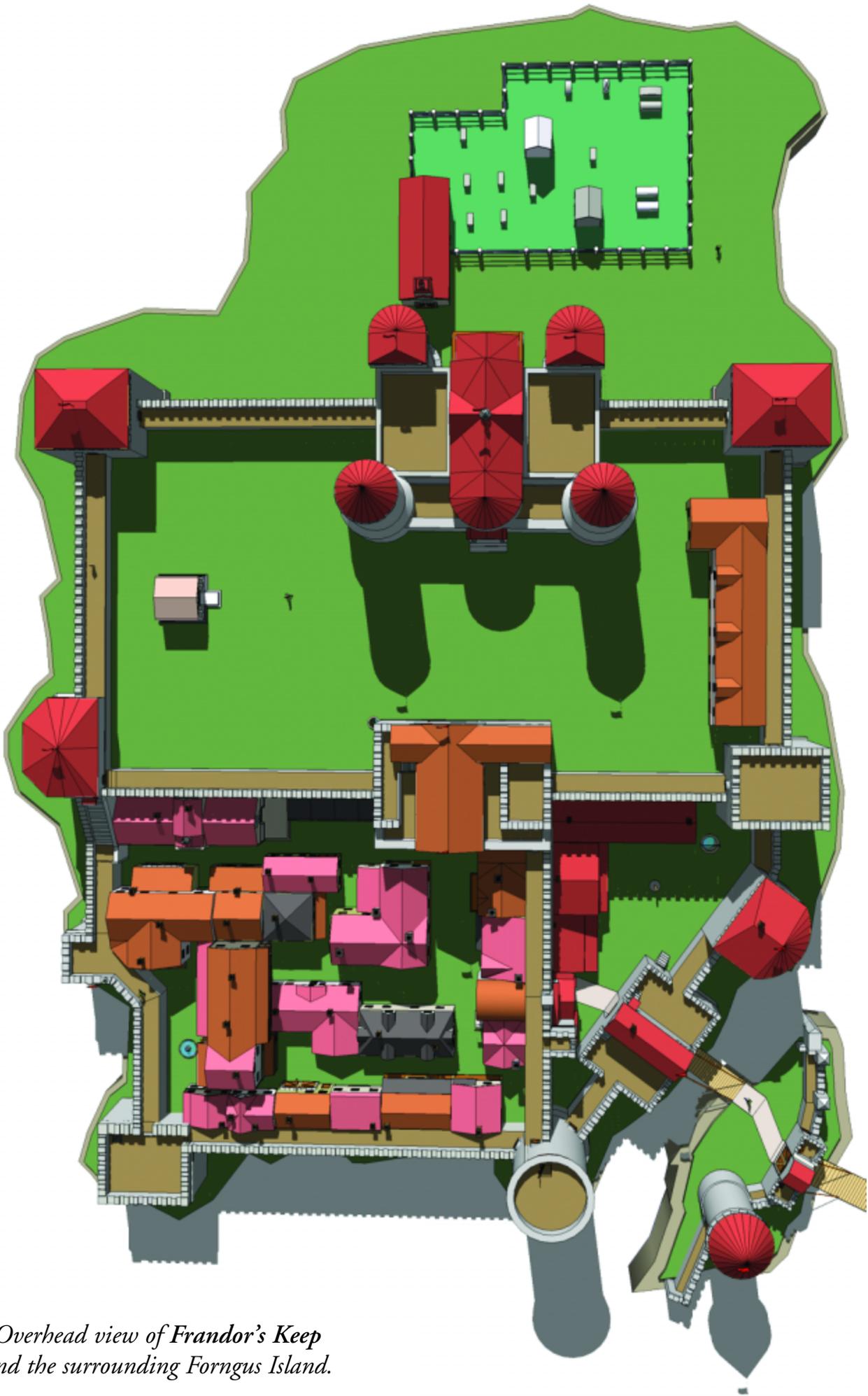
Another bird's-eye view of the Upper Bailey (rough)



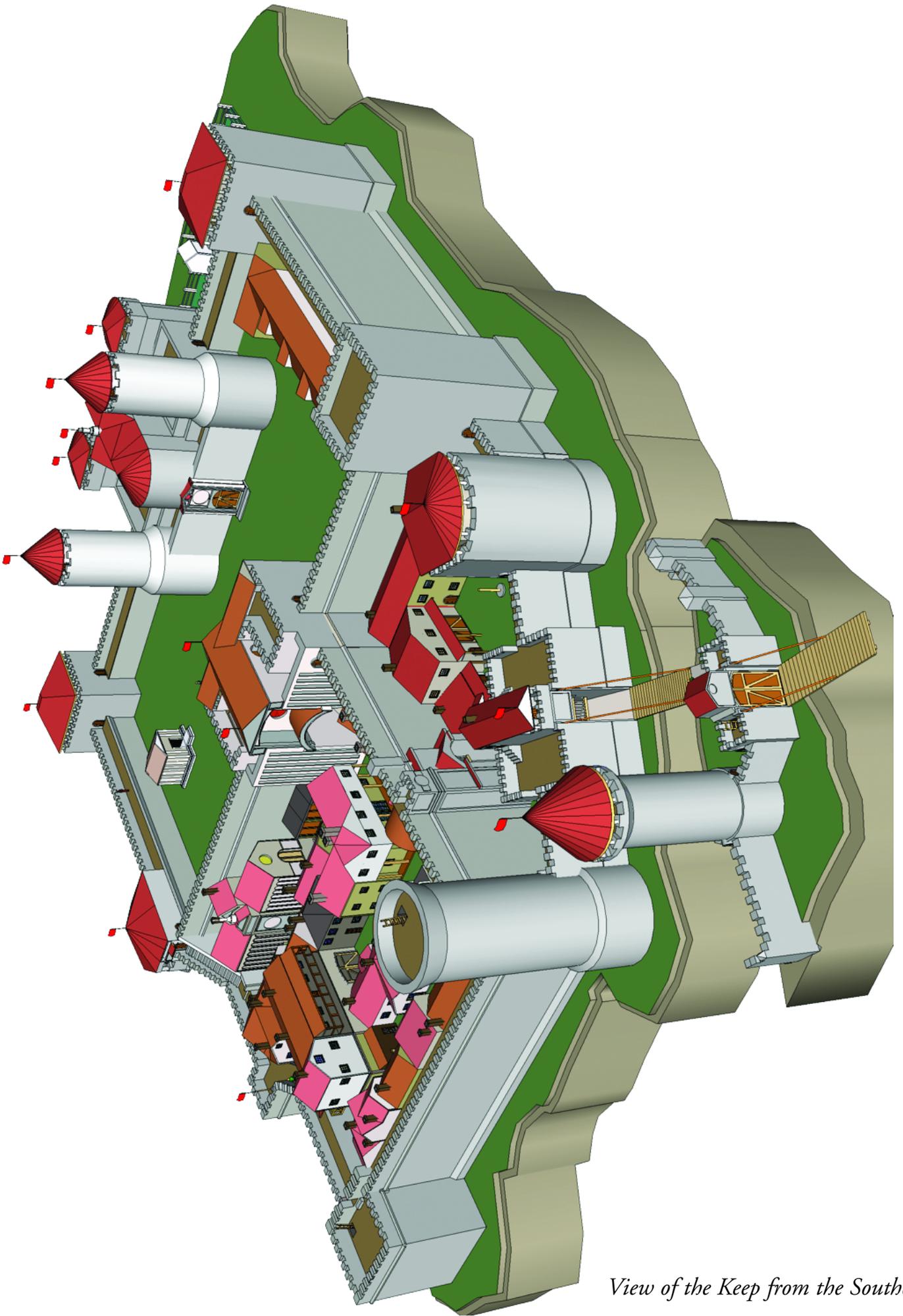
Bird's-eye view of the Lower Bailey (rough)



Bird's-eye view of the Middle Bailey (rough)

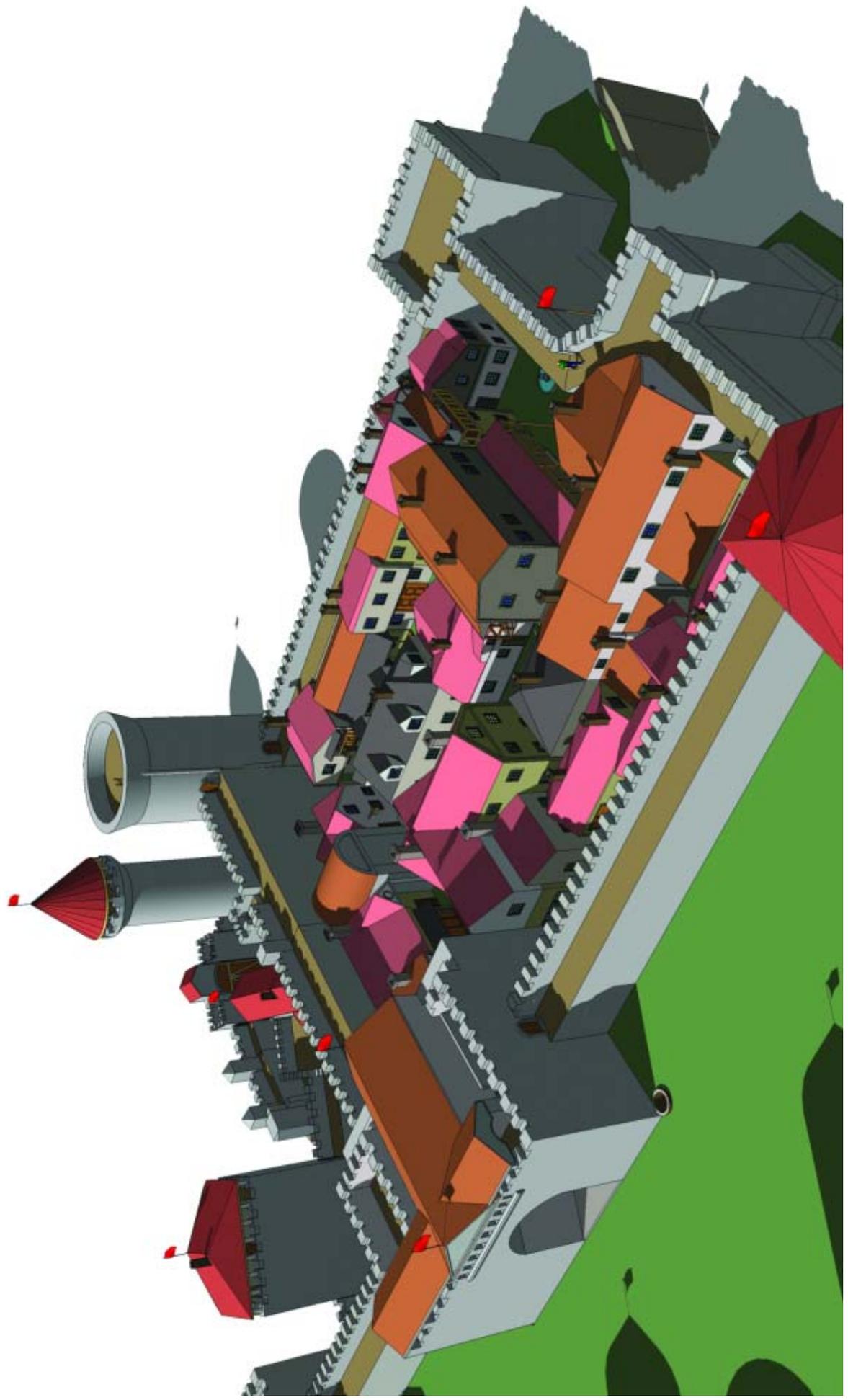


*Overhead view of Frandor's Keep
and the surrounding Forngus Island.*

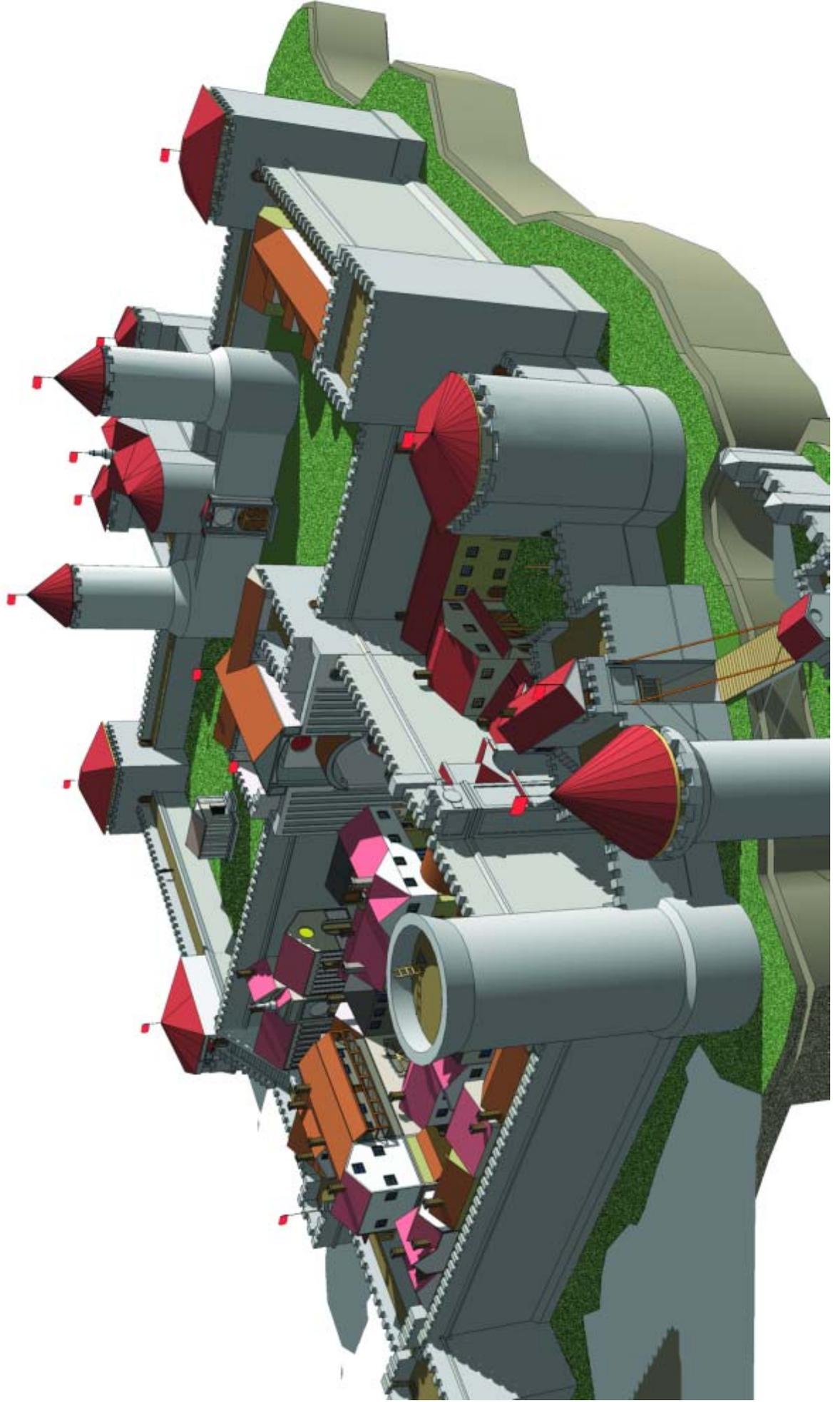


View of the Keep from the Southeast.

*Looking toward the Southeast
over the Middle and Lower baileys.*

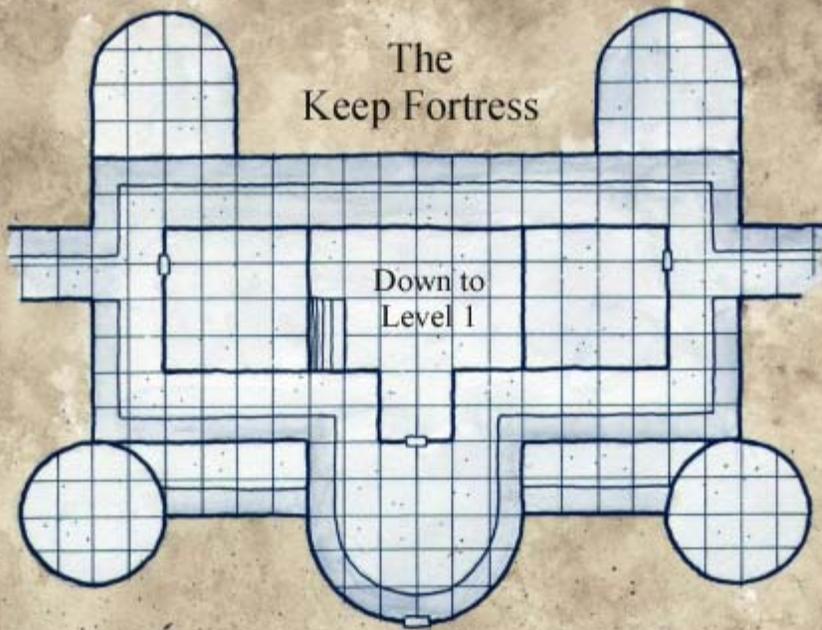


Looking toward the Northwest



Beneath the Little Keep

Level 1
1 square = 5 feet



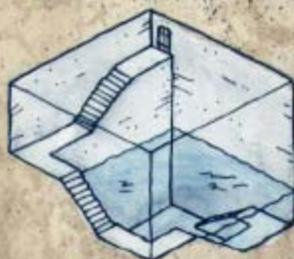
The
Keep Fortress

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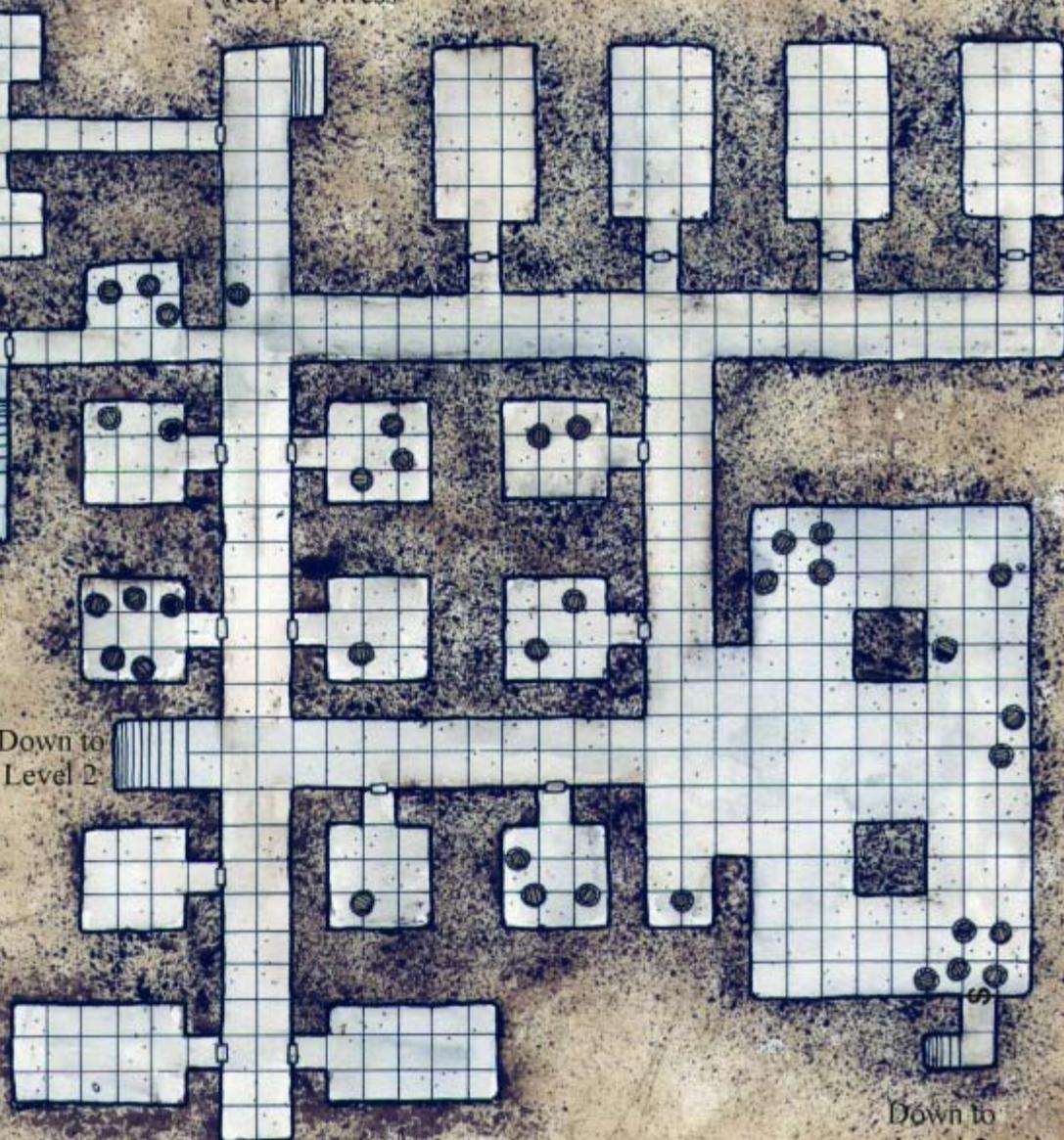
Up to
Keep Fortress

The
Cistern



Another view
of the Cistern

Down to
Level 2



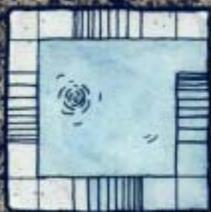
Down to
Level 2

Beneath the Little Keep

Level 3.
1 square = 5 feet



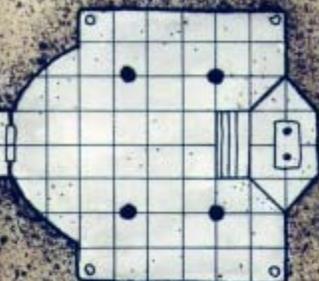
The Cistern



Up to Level 2



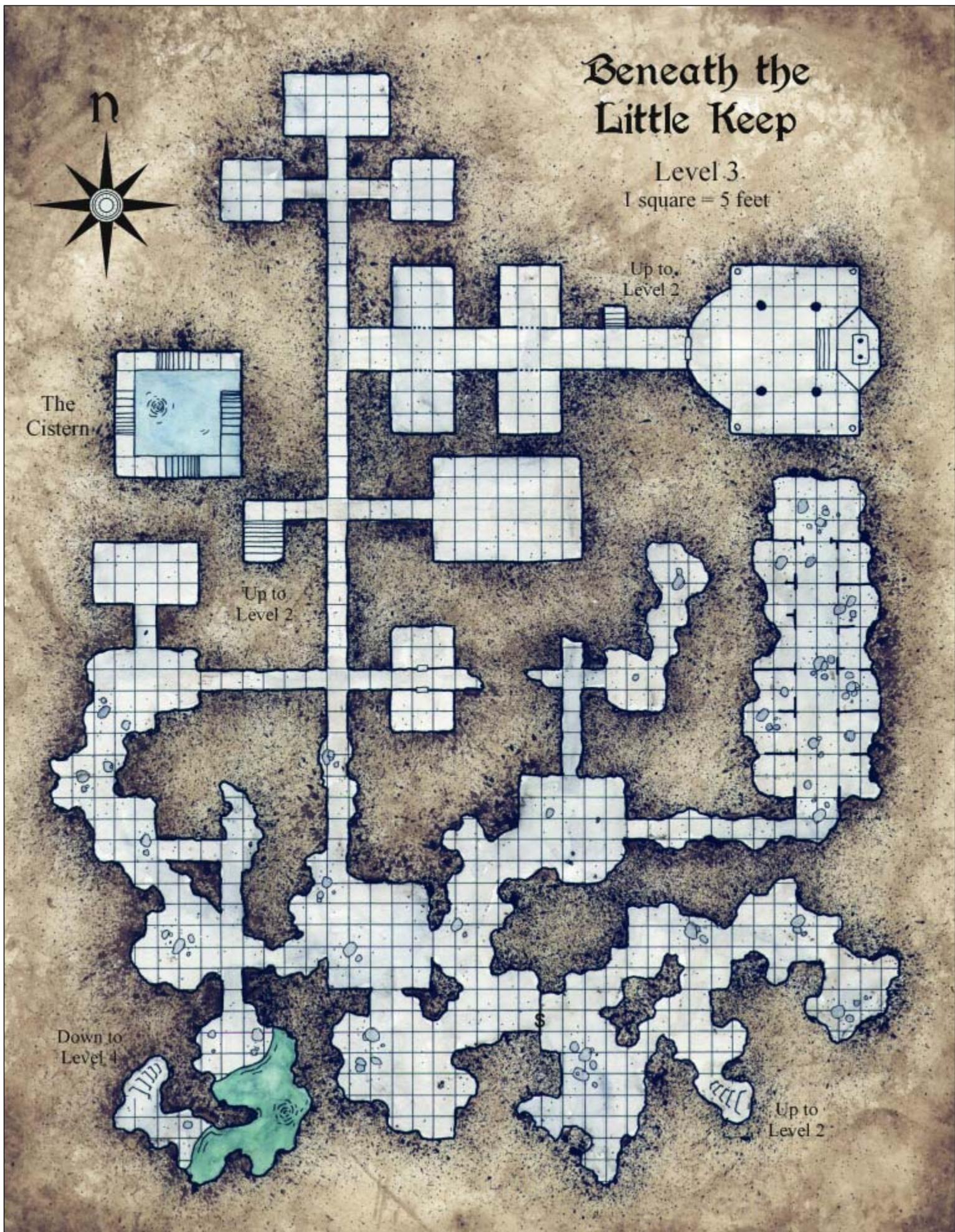
Up to Level 2



Down to Level 4



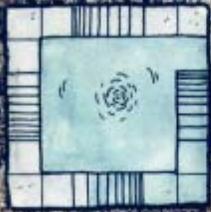
Up to Level 2



Beneath the Little Keep

Level 4
1 square = 5 feet

The Cistern



The Totem

Up to Level 3

Leads to the Well (Area 4)

