

# Wormfood

## SURVIVING THE AGE OF WORMS ADVENTURE PATH

While the pages of *DUNGEON* magazine present everything the DM needs to run the Age of Worms Adventure Path, every month *DRAGON* gives the players of that—or any other campaign—tools to enhance their gaming experience.

Having a home is important for any band of adventurers. Critical to planning future quests, stashing valuables, and recuperating from injury, a home is more than just another way to spend hard-earned gold. It is often mandatory. Frequently, characters stay at an inn or rough it in the wild. Presented here is an inexpensive opportunity for a more permanent dwelling.

Located on the outskirts of the Diamond Lake community, a ruined mine office and dwelling sits unoccupied, without an owner. This crumbling office is the site of the PCs' first meeting in "The Whispering Cairn" (appearing in *DUNGEON* #124). The previous owner of the building, the mining manager Ulgo Fant, abandoned the place more than fifty years ago when his mine ran dry. When he died over a decade ago, the property was left without an owner. Few have bothered to visit this wreck since its abandonment. Young children from the town often come up to the building on a dare and a few years back an inexperienced thief took up residence here before moving on to more lucrative trade routes.

This building can easily be imported into any campaign. If set within a city, it was owned by a merchant and his family



who moved on years ago for unexplained reasons. In this case, the local land office would be more than happy to turn over the building to anyone willing to repair it (perhaps for a small fee).

### THE YARD

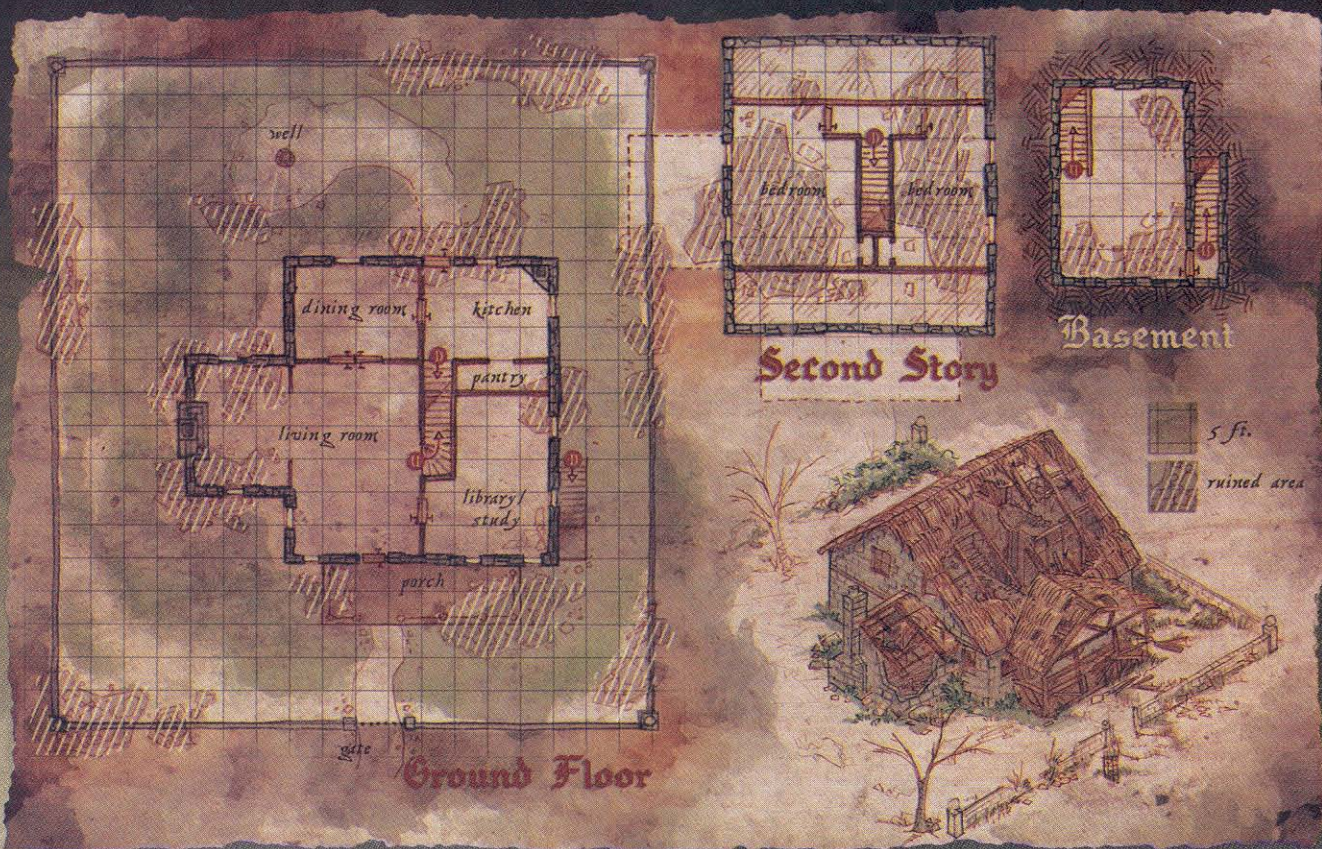
*A modest dwelling squats upon the crown of a small hill. While the rough stone walls of the first floor look mostly intact, the second floor has completely collapsed. A half height wall rings the house, but it too is in a state of severe disrepair. Rubble and dense weeds choke the yard.*

The entire yard is considered difficult terrain except for the small path leading up to the building. Clearing the yard requires 20 total hours of work and makes the yard normal terrain. Behind the

building, a stone well rises up out of the weeds. Although the bucket is gone, the water is clean, if a bit brackish. In the back, the remains of a wooden outhouse lie in an unrecognizable heap. Rebuilding the small structure requires DC 10 Craft (carpentry) skill checks until the value of the completed structure reaches 20 gp. There is no cost for this construction as all the raw materials are present.

### THE BUILDING

*Made of smooth stone blocks, this building stands in shambles. Thick vines creep up the side and most of the windows are broken. The front door hangs open, barely on its hinges, under a sagging and partially collapsed porch.*



Part of the front porch has collapsed, but it still allows entry to the building. The two exterior doors are damaged but are still sound and easily repaired with an hour's worth of work and a successful DC 15 Craft (carpentry) skill check. The locks on the doors are rusted beyond repair and must be replaced (see page 128 of the *Player's Handbook* for prices). The walls and doors have the following statistics.

**Wooden Doors:** 1-1/2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 15; Break DC 18.

**Stone Walls:** 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 90; Break DC 35; Climb DC 20 (15 with vines).

Clearing the debris from around the building and the second floor requires a total of 40 hours of work. Most of this debris is still suitable for repairing the building and offsets much of the cost. Repairing the outer structure of the building requires DC 15 Craft (stoneworking) skill checks until the value of the completed structure reaches 200 gp. This repairs all the walls on the first floor, including those in the living room

## CRAFT 101

Although the mechanics are fully detailed in the *Player's Handbook*, few make use of the Craft skill. However, for the purposes of this article, familiarity with this oft-overlooked skill is vital.

Craft skill checks can be made in one of two ways, depending upon the time available. If the check is made at the end of one week's work, the result times the DC equals the amount of work completed in terms of sp. If instead the check is made at the end of one day, the amount of work completed equals the check result times the DC in cp. The work is completed when its total value is reached. Multiple characters can contribute to this work. If the skill check is less than the DC then no progress is made in that time. If the skill check fails by 5 or more, half of the raw materials are ruined and you have to pay that cost again. In this case, such a loss equals half the cost of the construction to be completed (even if no raw material costs were required).

and the porch. The second floor requires much more work and is completed when the value of the structure reaches 500 gp. This construction requires only 1 gp of raw material for every 10 gp of construction completed if the present materials are used (as opposed to half the cost).

The windows cannot be repaired and must be either boarded over or replaced. Replacing a window costs 2 gp and 1 hour of work for each window.

## THE INTERIOR

*Small mounds of debris litter the floor of the building's interior. Loose stones, dead weeds, and grime cover virtually every surface. Paintings must have once adorned the place as indicated by the particular stain patterns marring the walls. The only light comes from thin shafts sneaking in from outside illuminating clouds of dust dancing through the stale air.*

## CAN'T SOMEONE ELSE DO IT?

To avoid spending valuable adventuring time on construction, you might want to hire others to clean up and repair the building. Listed below is each individual task, the cost to hire an expert to do it, and the amount of work an expert can do in one day (in hours for tasks that do not require Craft checks and in terms of sp completed for those that do). Where skill checks are needed, the expert is assumed to have a +8 bonus on the check.

Task	Expert	Cost per Day	Amount per day
Cleaning the yard	Laborer	1 sp	8 hours per day
Rebuilding the outhouse	Carpenter (craftperson)	3 sp	18 sp per day
Clear the debris	Laborer	1 sp	8 hours per day
Fixing the first floor	Stone carver (craftperson)	3 sp	27 sp per day
Fixing the second floor	Stone carver (craftperson)	3 sp	27 sp per day
Cleaning the interior	Laborer	1 sp	8 hours per day
Renovating the first floor	Limner	6 sp	8 hours per day
Renovating the second floor	Carpenter (craftperson)	3 sp	27 sp per day

Adding an architect to this process costs an additional 5 sp per day, but increases the amount of work performed each day by stone carvers (to 30 sp per day) and carpenters (to 20 sp for the first floor and 30 sp for the second floor per day).

Generally, no more than six carpenters and eight stone carvers are available at any one time to work on a project of this size. Assuming that the maximum number of craftsmen are hired along with an architect, a limner, and a laborer, the reconstruction requires 21 days worth of work at a cost of 87.5 gp for the experts alone. This is in addition to any costs for raw material (roughly 400 gp depending upon the construction options chosen).

The first floor of the manor consists of five chambers. The largest of these is the living room, part of which has completely collapsed. Directly to the right of the living room space is what was once an office. The bookshelves and desk have thoroughly rotted and what few tomes and mine maps remain are ruined and illegible. Adjoining the living room is a sizable dining room. Any furniture that remains in the room is completely soiled *and worthless*. The kitchen contains an actual fire pit, but the chimney is blocked and must be cleared before it can be used. The pantry, attached to the kitchen, has a number of empty and broken shelves along with two empty barrels. A staircase in the living room is choked with debris and leads to the remains of the second floor. Another in the kitchen leads to a crude cellar.

The second floor of the manor is in complete ruins. Although there is no roof in its current state, the floor above prevents most of the rainwater from leaking into the first floor.

The cellar is partially collapsed, but stable at the current time. Along one wall, a crumbling wine rack still stands, although others have already plundered it, leaving a pile of empty and broken bottles at its base.

The interior can be cleared of debris with 20 hours of work. The first floor can then be renovated with an additional 40 hours of work and 50 gp in supplies (paint, replacement floor boards, and plaster). Renovating the interior of the second floor requires successful DC 15 Craft (carpentry) skill checks until the value of the construction reaches 200 gp. Since the damage here is so extreme, the PCs must pay half the construction *value for raw materials*.

Stocking the manor with the appropriate furniture and necessary supplies requires 200 gp. This cost includes beds, chairs, rugs, tables, and kitchen supplies. This makes the place basically functional and comfortable enough for complete bed rest (see natural healing on page 146 of the *Player's Handbook*). Increasing this expenditure to 1,000 gp along with repairing the rest of the structure as noted earlier, gives the owners a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks made inside against those impressed by wealth (typically the poor and merchant classes).

### USES FOR THE DM

PCs with an established base offer a number of opportunities for future

adventure. While giving the characters a use for Craft skills, a home also ties them to a location, giving them a stake in the town and a focus for their efforts.

The manor presented here also opens up a number of options for side plots and can act as a springboard for entire adventures. The deed to the property could be located elsewhere, requiring the PCs to go pick it up. *A group of monsters moves into the area, forcing the PCs to deal with the problem.* Maybe one of the maps in the office is not as crumbled as the others and contains an odd set of runes. What is buried under the collapsed part of the cellar? Might it be one of the former occupants or was it sealed on purpose, hiding other deeper chambers? The options are endless.

Whatever you decide, giving the PCs a home is a boon to everyone involved, but be careful not to make it a hassle. Too many monster attacks or thieves in the night will ruin the usefulness of a home, turning a focal point for the group into a burden not easily disposed of.

**Next month:** "Worm Food Part 2: Shopping at Taggin's General Store." 📖