CRIMEFIGHTERS

BY DAVID COOK

Dark Night Dan settled into the recess of the window, knowing there was not long to wait. If his informer was right, the enemy saboteur would try to destroy the secret war material tonight. Dan would be ready in the fog to meet him...

Hours later, soft footsteps drifted toward him through the muffling fog. As silently as possible, Dan loosened the scabbard of his sword cane. A match flickered below, and harsh outlines of the agent's face were brief/y visible. Throwing himself out-

ward, Dan sprang from his perch and whipped his sword cane from its case. The enemy agent whirled and drew a revolver, aiming at the black, hurtling form. In mid-leap, Dan twisted his body and lashed out with his sword. There was a booming roar, and the flash of a bullet past his right side. The sword had found its mark, deflecting the thug's gun hand and sending the shot wide of its mark. Cursing, the criminal dropped the gun and clutched at his now-useless arm.

CRIMEFIGHTERS
PLAYING THE HEROES OF PULP FICTION

CRIMEFIGHTERS is a game where players take the roles of heroes, agents, detectives, and adventurers attempting to stop nefarious criminal masterminds and destroy their rackets and plans. Such characters and situations are modeled after the famous personalities of the pulp novels and comics — Doc Savage, the Shadow, Agent X-9, and others. The times depicted range roughly from the late 1920's through the 1940's. However, the actual historical conditions of this period have been played down in favor of the atmosphere presented in the pulp navels.

At least 2 people are required to play the game, and play is usually best with 4 or 5 players, Since this is a role-playing game, no board or counters are provided. All that is given are the rules needed to handle most of the situations that might arise in the course of play.

Before play can begin, one person must volunteer or be designated the Gamemaster (GM). This person must have adequate time to do the preparation required and should have several days (if not more) to create a scenario before the actual game begins. The other people (referred to as players from now on) must generate characters according to the rules. These characters will then be controlled by their respective players, reacting to and acting within the imaginary situation prepared by the GM. It is not necessary for the players to have knowledge of the rules; only the GM must be thoroughly familiar with how to do things, However, an understanding of how to play a role-playing game will help the players immensely.

To play the game it is necessary to have an assortment of dice, graph paper, note paper, and pencils or pens. Other items that are not necessary but useful include notebooks, reprints of pulp novels, and miniature figures of the characters and villains involved in the game.

CHARACTER GENERATION

Before play can begin, it is necessary for the players to create characters. Each player will need a pencil, paper and percentile dice. On the paper the player should note the following attributes: Physical Power, Mental Aptitude, Willpower, Accuracy Left, Accuracy Right, Agility, and Presence. For each attribute, percentile dice are rolled and the number obtained is noted next to the appropriate listing. In addition, Physical Power, Mental Aptitude, Accuracy Right, and Agility are modified as follows:

Unmodified Die Roll	Addition
01-25	**+25**
26-50	+15
51-65	+10
65-80	+5

Each attribute is explained below.

Physical Power: This attribute measures the character's overall musculature and ability to perform feats of strength. A higher score will improve the character's hit points melee combat value, his or her ability to cause damage from striking, movement rate, and leaping distance, besides the obvious benefits in weight-carrying capability and lifing power.

Mental Aptitude: This provides a measure of the learning capacity, intelligence, and mental resources of the character. It has a direct bearing on the number of mental skills the character may learn as well as the ease with which those skills may be employed.

Willpower: In stressful or crisis situations, this attribute defines how well the character is able to impose his or her will on his or her self. Hence, this attribute is useful when resisting gases, drugs, pain, and hypnotic effects. This attribute is also directly related to the number of hit points a character has.

Accuracy Left and **Right:** These numbers represent the character's base chance to hit when attacking with a gun, missile, or thrown weapon. The chance to hit may be modified up or down according to circumstances or equipment.

Agility: The Agility score represents the character's general quickness and ability to use his or her body in a controlled and trained manner, The attribute has a direct bearing on the number of Agility Skills the character is allowed, and on melee combat ability.

Presence: All heroic characters have some degree of presence, the ability to impress and command others simply through the use of voice and appearance. The greater the Presence, the greater the chance the character is striking enough (in some way) to get what he or she wants. It is important to note that Presence does not necessarily mean the character is handsome or pretty, rather that he or she is dynamic, personable, or noteworthy. The use of Presence requires an exertion of the character's Willpower, and every time the use of presence is attempted, the character's Willpower will temporarily drop by 20 points. Willpower temporarily lost will be regained at the rate of 10 points per hour of sleep.

Presence may also be used to extract information from minor thugs or defuse potentially hostile situations involving such opponents. However, once a combat has begun in earnest, the use of Presence will have little or no effect on hostile non-player characters.

Mental Skills and Agility Skills

After determining the basic attributes of the character, each player must select skills which that character knows at the start of the game. Skills are selected in the areas of Mental Aptitude and Agility. Skills are arranged by level of difficulty, with more difficult skills costing a greater number of points. The number of points a character has to "spend" on skills is equal to the Mental Aptitude score for Mental Skills and the Agility score for Agility Skills. Players may not acquire more skills than they have points for, nor may a particular skill be chosen more than once by the same character.

10-Point Mental Skills

Any Language: Besides his or her native language, the player may select any other known language to be able to read and speak. This skill assumes that the character is fluent in the chosen language although his or her accent will not fool a native speaker 30% of the time. Certain languages do not have written components, in which case this part of the skill is forfeited.

Driving: This skill gives the character the ability of a professional race car driver. Although reaction times and quickness

are important to fast driving, professional racing is a learned skill that takes thinking and concentration. This skill will allow the character to use all modifiers that apply to professional drivers on the automobile tables (see Automobiles).

PO-Point Mental Skills

Engine Repair. If the character is given time and equipment, even makeshift. he or she will be able to repair any steam, coal-burning, gasoline, or diesel engine used in any kind of vehicle or device. The GM should determine the amount of time and equipment needed, based on the extent of damage to the engine. The character will also know what measures to take to stop or damage any engine.

Lockpicking: Given lockpicks, or something similar to these, the character has a 75% chance of opening any normal lock. This chance is reduced by 10% for every level the lock is greater than level I (i.e. 65% for a level II lock). This skill does not apply to combination locks.

Mimicry: Trained to control his or her voice, the character has the ability to duplicate the voices of those he or she has heard, or create the sounds of animals or things, though the volume can be no greater than the normal volume of the character's voice. When impersonating a person, the character has a 95% chance of success if he/she knows the sound of that person's voice well, a 60% chance of success when using that of a casual acquaintance, and a 40% chance of success when the character has only heard the voice a few times or has only heard it in a distorted version. These percentages will be modified up or down according to many factors the GM must decide upon, including whether it is over the phone, knowledge of the listener, etc. It is important to note that the percentile rolls do not account at all for what is said. If this is highly out of character for the person being impersonated, it is unlikely that the voice will be believed, no matter what the roll is.

Piloting: The character may fly any type of aerial craft of the period. This will include aeroplanes, autogyros, gliders, and airships (dirigibles, zeppelins, and balloons). The character's skill at flying will be extraordinarily high.

Sailing: As per piloting, the character is able to sail any type of water-going vessel of the period (rafts, sloops, yachts, liners, oilers, etc.) and navigate by the stars. Note that for most vessels, a crew of many skilled sailors is required.

Ventriloquism: The character may throw his or her voice to any place within 20', provided the desired location can be seen. If the character has the skill of mimicry, it may be combined with ventriloquism. The success of ventriloquism in diverting attention depends heavily on circumstances and must be judged on a case-by-case basis, depending on what is said, where the voice comes from, the mood of the hearer(s), and other factors. The GM must decide the result in such cases.

30-Point Mental Skills

Demolition: This skill will allow the character to prepare and use time bombs, booby traps, satchel charges, and grenades; package and transport explosives with reasonable safety; attempt to defuse explosive devices; and blow small locks, doors or otherwise engage in demolition work. Explosives and their effects are explained in the section on combat. When transporting explosives, a demolitions expert has only a 5% chance of serious accident when the material is roughly handled or jostled. However, this percentage may be lessened or increased by the GM according to circumstances such as the power of the explosive, the care taken in packing, and the degree of rough handling it receives. It is important to note that although explosives appear in the combat section, only those skilled in demolition may effectively use these weapons. This skill may be combined with safecracking to open otherwise impregnable safes, or with engineering to engage in major demolition work (blowing bridges, bringing down buildings, etc.).

Disguises: Through the use of make-up, wigs, false beards, putty, and the like, the character may appear to be nearly any age and sex he or she wishes. The basic chance for successfully fooling someone is 90%, with the following (cumulative) modifiers:

Minus 10% if disguised as opposite sex.
Minus 20% if disguised as someone 5 years or more younger.
Minus 10% if disguised as someone 10 years or more older.
Minus 30% if disguised as someone of a different race.
Minus 40% if disguised as a specific person known to viewer.

Forgery: Given the proper forms or copies of them, equipment, and time, the character will be able to forge identification, signatures, and documents. These will automatically fool people unfamiliar with the specific item forged, although this will not guarantee that the person fooled will believe the character is what he or she claims to be. Cursory examination will reveal forged documents as false 15% of the time, while an exacting examination will be successful 85% of the time. Those with forgery skill may discover other forged documents 95% of the time when making an exacting examination.

Safecracking: With this skill, the character may attempt to open most models of safes. When attempting to open a safe without any special aids or devices, the character has a 50% chance of opening a class I safe. For every class the safe is greater than I, the chance of success decreases by 15% therefore making it impossible to open class IV or higher safes without aids of some sort. The safecracking skill may be combined with demolition to blow open a safe.

Stage Magic: The character is familiar with the tricks of large-scale magic (disappearing, finger flashes, rope tricks, cutting people in half, etc.) and may use the equipment required for such tricks. Given time to work unobserved, the character may also improvise such illusions. Note that the player is stilt required to tell the GM what he or she is going to do if an attempt to improvise is made. When stage magic is combined with lockpicking, the character has the basic skills of an escape artist. He or she will have a base 70% chance of slipping free from ropes and other bindings. This does not include locks or handcuffs as lockpicking skill is used for these. The character also has a +50% chance of finding a secret panel or exit if the correct spot is searched.

40-Point Mental Skills

Astronomy: The character has knowledge of the stars and planets. As such, he or she may use celestial navigation and will

not become lost so long as there is a clear sky overhead. The character may also select one extra language.

Botany: With this skill, the character may recognize all known plant types (and make good guesses at unknown types), describe whether the plant is edible or not, and prepare simple plant poisons or drugs from the proper plants or fungi if they are available. The character may also select one extra language.

Cryptology: The character has working experience with codes, cipher machines, and decoding devices. However, instead of merely receiving the solution to any code the character might find, the GM should prepare a coded message and present it along with a few clues (appropriate to the skill of the player) to the player. It is then the player's responsibility to solve the code. The GM should be able to find several books dealing with codes in his or her public library. NPC's with cryptology skill will be able to break a code 70% of the time, although this may be adjusted according to the difficulty of the code.

Engineering: An expert in engineering techniques, the character may use his or her skill in any standard engineering manner (the supervision of construction, design of useful structures, repair of structural damage). The character may also supervise the placement of demolition charges, which are 90% effective so long as the placement is done by a person skilled in demolition.

Oceanography: The character has all the skills given under sailing and also has knowledge of the oceans and seas of the world, their currents, the creatures that live in them, and the types and habits of the sailors that ply them. The character also gains 2 extra languages, one of which must be that of a sea-going people.

Zoology: As with botany, the character can recognize all but unknown animals or insects, describe specific habits of creatures and suggest known methods to avoid or counter creatures (these may not always be effective). The character also has a +20% chance of success in all dealings with animals that the GM resolves by a percentile roll. The character may also identify the Particular animal to have caused a death, if the victim was killed by an animal. The character may also select one extra language.

60-Point Mental Skills

Archeological: Armed with his or her knowledge of ancient cultures, the character may identify artifacts of known civilizations, and may make sound speculation concerning "lost" cultures. The character may also read and speak the following languages: Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit. (GM note: This skill has little use in most normal situations. However, should the characters travel to or discover a lost culture in some isolated place, the skill should become very helpful. The GM may wish to caution players on the limitations of this skill, if he or she has no plans to incorporate a "lost world" setting somewhere in the campaign.)

Chemical: An extremely useful skill, the character can create any known (for the period) explosive, gas, acid, alkaline, poison, drug, or antidote of a chemical nature. Doing so requires space, equipment and time. For each level of difficulty of the chemical (as assigned by the GM), $100 and 1 day (or less) is needed to create the item. Sleeping gas would be a level 1 chemical, while a sleeping gas that affects only animals might be a level 10 or greater. Nitroglycerine, for instance, is a level 3 chemical.

Electrical: Another highly useful skill, the character may build pr repair any electrical device current to the period of the game, given the following: An expenditure of $100 to $10,000 (depending on the difficulty and scope of the project) and at least one day per $500 spent. Those characters with electrical skill may also build new devices of specific and limited function, subject to the GM's approval and restrictions on the device.

Legal: A certified lawyer, the character is able to represent others in legal actions. His or her skills are such that there is a 75% chance of success in court, barring damning testimony, witnesses, or evidence. Likewise, the character may stall legal proceedings with the same chance of success. The character has an 80% chance of discovering any legal or court-related information, given access to records, contacts, journals, etc. The character may also select one extra language.

Medical: With this skill, the character is considered an expert in one general field in medicine of his or her choice (suggestions include surgery, pathology, cardiology, etc.). He or she will have the ability to do emergency medical treatment, preventing the loss of further hit points due to combat. The character may also select one extra language.

10-Point Agility Skills

Flips: This skill requires free use of the hands, but when used will break a character's fall, reducing damage by one die. Thus, a character might fall a short distance, using this skill to reduce damage substantially, but would not benefit relatively as much if the fall were from a great height.

Juggling: The character may juggle with expert skill, handling up to 5 items at a time. The character may also attempt to catch (and throw back) items thrown at him or her by making a successful melee hit to catch the item.

Rope Swings: The character may swing by ropes or other items of a similar nature with great accuracy and skill. If the selected landing place is wide and deep, there will be no chance that the character may also accurately judge the safety of any item used to swing upon.

Vaults: If given a running start, the character may high-jump any obstacle equal to or less than his or her own height, or vault over any obstacle up to one foot higher than himself or herself. Given a flexible pole, the character may pole vault up to 15 feet in the air.

20-Point Agility Skills

Climbing: Trained in most types of mountain-climbing techniques (except any obscure ones the GM wishes to limit), the character may climb nearly any surface. Only smooth or outward-hanging faces are beyond the skill of this character. When climbing is done without aids of any type, there is only a 30% chance that a character skilled in climbing will fall for every 100 yards of the climb. If a rope or other equipment is used, the chance of falling is reduced to 3%. The character may climb upward at a rate equal to half of his or her walking movement rate.

Hand Over Hand: Through continual practice, the character has developed the ability to swing hand over hand on a rope (or other device) or walk on his or her hands for great distances. The distance travelled in this manner may be equal to or less than the physical power of the character times three (PPx3 = number of feet travelled).

Stealth: The character has the ability to move with great silence and has the knowledge to use protective or concealing cover well. When so desired, the character has a 70% chance of moving unnoticed past others, provided there is cover or some distraction to prevent careful observation. This percentage may be increased or lowered by the GM according to other factors of the situation (watchfulness, bad light, how close or far away, etc.).

30-Point Agility Skills

Dives: The character is skilled in aquatic and trapeze dives. Provided the water depth is adequate, the character may safely dive into water from heights up to 200 feet. When leaping or diving to the ground, the character will suffer one less die of damage. Hence, a character with both diving and flips skills would take 2 dice less of damage from a fall.

Giant Swings: The character is able to do giant swings similar to those done on the high bar. This will also allow the character to grasp a bar, branch door frame, pipe, or other grip and swing up out of sight or to the upper surface of that object.

Sleight of Hand: The character is practiced in the small, manipulative tricks of magicians and may perform them, given the proper materials. If pre-arranged properly, the character may palm items or pass them to others without the act being noticed by onlookers. The character may also attempt to pickpocket a person with a base 65% chance of success, plus or minus the difference between the agility score of the victim and his or her own.

Tightrope: The character has only a 5% chance of falling when attempting to walk a rope, narrow ledge, beam, etc. Balancing aids such as a long pole or umbrella will reduce this chance to 3%. One check should be made for every increment of the walking movement rate that the character covers.

40-Point Agility Skills

Aerials: Aerials are flips done in the air, without the use of the hands. As such, they are useful for escaping from captors in surprising ways, and to cross obstacles with style. The character may do an aerial to a height no greater than he or she is able to spring (see Movement) and may go no further forward or back than he or she is able to leap. Characters who choose aerial skill also automatically gain all the benefits of the flips skill.

Catches: This skill is necessary to perform trapeze-like catches, grasp items (or people) at the end of long dives, or try to make amazingly quick grabs to prevent items or people from falling. A character may catch up to 3 times his or her Physical Power in weight.

Fencing: The character is skilled in the use of the epee, rapier, saber, and other long-bladed weapons. When using one of these weapons, the character may add 10 points to his or her melee combat value. The character will also gain the obvious benefits of the weapon, as explained in the combat section.

Judo: The character is an expert in weaponless fighting, as typified by the art of judo. He or she may add ten points to his or her melee combat value when using weaponless combat. In addition, the character may choose to pin or immobilize an opponent whenever a hit is scored, provided that opponent has no weapon or judo skill. Note that should this option be used, the character may take no other action as long as he or she is occupied in holding the opponent.

Mysterious Powers

Each character has a 5% chance of having a mysterious power at the start of the game. Percentile dice are rolled and if 01-05 is obtained, that character has a mysterious, power. Unlike the other skills, this power is randomly selected on a d10. The possession of the power has nothing to do with the ability scores of the character, although the effectiveness of the power does.

In the descriptions of the powers, it is sometimes noted that a "focus" is required. A focus is an object or device (GM's choice) that must be displayed prominently before the power will take effect. The focus must be eyecatching and unusual in nature and of some significant value. Such items typically include amulets, rings, gems, clasps, watch fobs, and pendants. Beginning characters do not possess a focus; they must find or make one. If the GM wishes the character to find his or her focus, it is necessary that the GM place the item in some location where it can be found and then provide the character with some incentive or clues to investigate that location. When a character finds his or her focus, he or she will instinctively realize its true value. Some locations where a focus might be found (aside from the den of some criminal) include curio shops, junk dealers, museums, or the bric-a-brac shelf of the character's maiden aunt.

Mysterious Power Table

1 - Command
2 - Confusion
3 - ESP
4 - Fear
5 - Foresight
6 - Hypnotism
7 - Invisibility
8 - Luck
9 - Shadow Control
10 - Sight

Command: With this power, the character may double his or her Presence at will. When choosing to do so, all actions that can be normally attempted under Presence (see Encounter Reactions) will be figured as if the character had twice his or her normal Presence. However, the use of the power is more draining than normal Presence use, and so 30 points are temporarily lost from Willpower every time this power is used.

Confusion: A character possessing this power may attempt to confuse those within sight. To do so requires that the character have a focus and that he or she be within 10 yards of those being confused. The chance of success is equal to the character's Presence. If this number or less is rolled on percentile dice, the victim is confused. Confused persons may not take any actions against the character and will react as follows (roll d20):

1-10 = Does nothing, takes no actions
11-15 = Retreats if possible
16-17 = Attacks another person (determine randomly)
18-20 = Acts in an irrational manner

The confusion power requires 2 seconds to activate and will cause a temporary loss from Willpower of 20 points. Any number of people may be confused so long as they meet the previously given conditions. Those people who are familiar with the power of the character (i.e., those who know the character well) will be unaffected by the power.

ESP: Under certain conditions, a character with this power may attempt to discern the thoughts of others and sense hazy images of the immediate surroundings of the person so scanned. The power is sensitive to great activity or emotional distress and

so the character must first be able to relax and concentrate for 15 seconds, before indicating what person he or she would like to scan. Percentile dice are rolled and compared against the Willpower of the person scanned, plus or minus the difference of the scanning character's Willpower. If the dice roll is under the adjusted number, the attempt has been successful. If the percentile roll is 10 or less, the contacted mind could be any person within 1 mile due to uncontrollable error. (Such an error could be a good method to lead characters into new adventures.) Thoughts obtained will seldom indicate the age, sex, name, etc. of the person, and his or her true motives may often be carefully hidden or buried. ESP may at times only give a suggestion of what is sought to be learned.

Fear: Through the use of a focus, the character may cause unreasoning panic in those who observe him or her. The chance of success is a percentage equal to the average of the character's Presence and current Willpower. This power requires that the character stand motionless for 3 seconds in full view of his or her intended victims, concentrating on his or her focus. When this time has passed (provided the character has not been shot or otherwise had his or her concentration broken), all people in sight of the focus who either do not know the character or have some reason to fear him or her must roll percentile dice. If the number rolled is equal to or less than the character's success number as figured above, the victim will first attempt to flee, or failing that, do one of the following two things (GM's choice):

Cower or hide, attempting to avoid the gaze of the character.

Attack with either a ranging weapon or hand-to-hand (-50% on the chance to hit).

Using the fear ability is a strain on the character, both mentally and physically. Each time the use of the power is attempted, the character will lose one hit point until restored, as if it were a hit point lost due to hand-to-hand combat.

Foresight: Due to his or her mental training, this character is often aware of things others might not notice. A bonus of +1 is

given on first-round initiative rolls. The character may also ask 3 yes-or-no questions of the GM per adventure. These questions must deal with some action that the character plans to take, or be based upon information that character might realistically know or suspect. Hence, a question such as, "Is he the ring-leader of the smuggling ring?" would only be permissible if the character had some cause to suspect that person. The questions have a 10% chance of being answered incorrectly; this is secretly determined by the GM.

Hypnotism: This power may only be used in non-combat situations and requires the use of a focus. By use of the focus, the victim is placed in a light, sleep-like trance. While the victim is in this state, the character may attempt to implant suggestions or extract information, To determine the chance of success, subtract the victim's Willpower from that of the character to obtain a plus or minus-number. This number is then added to or subtracted from the victim's Willpower. If the adjusted Willpower or less is rolled on percentile dice, the attempt succeeds. Certain suggestions, particularly those that would result in the death of the victim or someone close to that person, are more difficult to plant successfully. For these, there is only a 10% chance that the suggestion will be acted on after it has been made.

Invisibility: Use of this power automatically renders the character invisible to most persons around him or her. No die roll is required, as the success of the power is usually automatic. However, those with a Willpower of 96 or higher will be able to see the invisible character and will be able to direct others to that character. The act of confounding the senses of others is a physical and mental strain, so much so that one hit point is lost for every minute or part of a minute that character remains invisible. Hit points lost may be regained through rest, as if they were normal hand-to-hand combat wounds.

Luck: A character with the power of luck has certain automatic advantages, provided that character's luck is determined to be "good" for that adventure. At the start of an adventure, the

GM secretly determines what the character's luck is, with a 50% chance of it being good, 40% normal, and 10% bad. Good luck gives the character a +10 to all chances to hit, whether in gun or hand-to-hand combat. Furthermore, the character is allowed a die roll to see if he or she succeeds in doing anything that would be feasible or remotely possible, even in situations where such success would normally be considered nearly impossible. It is up to the GM to set the difficulty of the die roll. The less chance there is that something could actually happen, the harder the die roll will be to make. Hence, if a character with good luck were to fall from a plane at 5,000 feet, there might be a 2% chance that he or she could survive the fall relatively unhurt by landing in tree branches or a deep lake. All die rolls of this nature should be made secretly by the GM. The GM must also be careful to see that characters with luck do not tyrannize the game, demanding die rolls for entirely inappropriate situations. It is the responsibility of the player to suggest how such a lucky event might come to pass, and he or she cannot think of a method, the GM is not required to give any die roll.

Bad luck affects the character by reducing his or her gun and hand-to-hand chances to hit by 10. Bad or normal luck will also decrease the percentage chance of near-impossible success, perhaps (but not necessarily) all the way to zero.

Shadow Control: When using this power, the character will appear to be within a mass of inky shadows in which no clear features are discernable. These shadows will move with the character as flitting shapes. All attacks against a character using this form of the power will be treated as if he or she were a concealed target. The character may also use the power to create shadows of specific objects, even though the particular object may not actually be present at the time, or to alter the shadow cast by an object which is present. Both forms of the power require a source of light and shadow, hence the power will not be of use in a totally dark or shadowless area. Creating the shadows or shadow images causes a temporary loss of 5 points of Willpower. Such losses may be regained through rest, as explained in the section dealing with combat.

Sight: Those characters with the power of sight have developed and trained their senses to an extent that augments their vision. Such a character can see details of objects at twice the distance for a normal character, thus doubling the encounter distance (unless circumstances dictate otherwise). The character is also able to sense his or her way through areas of total darkness, smoke, or fog. Even if blindfolded, the character will be able to find the general location of all objects or people within 10 feet of him or her. Attacks made under such conditions will only suffer a -10 penalty on the chance to hit. Furthermore, characters with sight will be able to notice smaller details and will be +10 when searching for any stated thing.
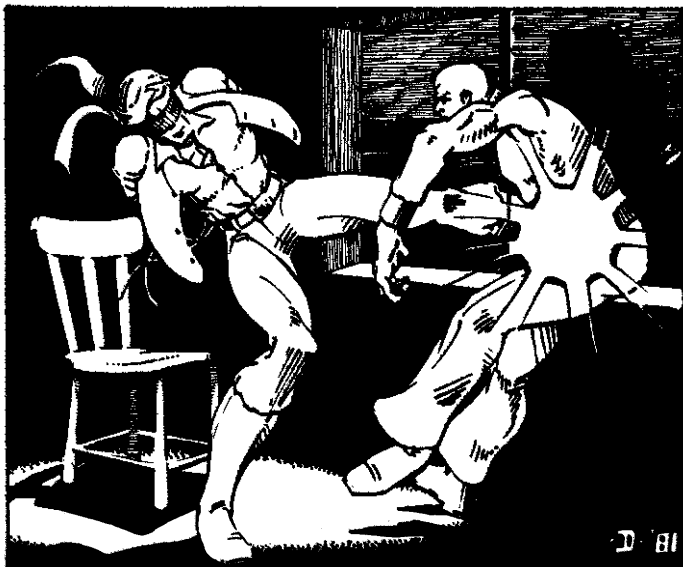
HIT POINTS

All player characters, non-player characters, and other people or creatures encountered in the course of the game will have a number of hit points. These points give a numerical value for the amount of damage or punishment a person can withstand. The effects of combat are expressed normally in terms of hit points lost. When hit points are reduced to zero, the person is unconscious; when the number is less than zero, the person is dead.

To determine the number of hit points a character has, add the character's Physical Power and Willpower together and divide the total by 10 (rounding any fractions down). To this number add the roll of d8 for the final total. for example, a character with a 57 Physical Power and a 72 Willpower would have, 1d8+12 hit points (57 plus 72 divided by 10 = 12.9).

Hit points may be increased during the course of the game by using experience to improve the abilities of the character. How experience is applied is explained in the following section.

EXPERIENCE

One of the prime goals of characters in a campaign is the acquisition of experience points. These points can be used to improve the abilities and resources of the character. They are awarded for deeds accomplished, intelligent actions, and criminals thwarted.

Experience points have 3 different uses in the game. The first is the improvement of abilities. Points may be applied to ability scores on a 5-for-1 basis; every 5 points of experience earned may be converted into a 1-point increase in an ability of the player's choice. Those abilities with related skills (Mental Aptitude and Agility) or those abilities which determine hit points (Physical Power and Willpower) may be improved so that new skills or more hit points may be obtained.

Experience points may also be used to attempt to gain new mysterious powers. For every 10 points applied for this purpose, there is a 1% chance for the character to obtain such a power after study. It is necessary for the character to travel to a remote, mysterious land (such as India or the Orient) and there spend several months or years (in game time) studying for a power. At the end of the time (set by the GM), the player tolls percentile dice. If the chance of success or less is rolled, a power has been gained. This power may be randomly chosen or, if the GM wishes, selected by the player. During the time of study, the character may not adventure or gain experience in any way.

The third way of using experience points is for investment. By placing experience points in investments, a character may create a monthly stipend for him or her to *receive*. At the end of every game month, the character may collect 50% to 80% (1d4+4) of the experience points applied to investments in dollars For example, a character with 150 experience points applied to investments has a 70% return at the end of the month. He *or* she would therefore earn $105 that month. Experience points applied to investments never decrease, although more experience may be added to increase the monthly stipend. Dollars earned from investments may not be re-invested, although they may be saved. Investment is the primary method of insuring adequate funds to meet expenditures.

Once experience points are applied to a specific category, they may not be changed. However, experience points do not need to be applied to any particular area as soon as they are earned, and may be "saved up" as long as the player wishes.

Experience Types:
To reflect the different styles of various pulp-novel characters, each player must select one of the following experience types, to be used as the model for his or her character. Once an experience type has been chosen it should not be changed. If such a change does occur, that character will lose all experience points gained but not yet applied to a certain purpose. If a skill, hit point, or mysterious power has already been gained

through the application of experience points, it will not be lost.

Defender: This type of character attempts to uphold and protect the society he or she belongs to. Confident that the system works, he or she will never try to intentionally kill someone. Neither will he or she torture a person, although scare tactics or drugs might be used. Defender-type characters generally have good relations with the law. A defender gets no experience for criminals he or she might kill, but is given double the amount of points for those whom he or she captures without assistance. The defender also receives one extra contact in the police department.

Avenger: This type of character only believes in the system when it works to his or her best interests. As much, this character will usually resort to his or her own means to administer justice. An avenger usually does not work well with others and is often wanted by the law. Avengers receive no experience for criminals captured unless that person confesses (to witnesses) his or her guilt of a serious crime. Likewise, an avenger will receive no experience if he or she has notable assistance in bringing villains to justice (contacts, stoolies, back-ups, drivers, etc. provide only essential assistance and do not count against the avenger). An avenger may have only one police contact at most.

Pragmatist: This type of character will normally attempt to abide by the laws of society and operate within this framework. However, if needed, the character will take whatever action is necessary to protect himself or herself or others, or to ultimately bring a villain to justice. A pragmatic character receives normal experience for criminals captured and half normal experience for criminals who meet their demise. A pragmatic character has one extra underworld contact.

In addition to the 3 main experience types, the GM may decide to include the following optional modifiers. Players should ask the GM if these options are to be used.

Technological: This type of character improves or extends his or her abilities through the use of devices. Whenever a technological character uses a device to create a significant result, he or she will receive an extra experience point for using the device. Cars, guns, radios and other common items of the period are not considered this type of technological devices.

Anti-technological: Such a character believes in the abilities of the self and considers natural or trained skills to be superior to any device. The character will disdain to use unusual technology (again, as above, a gun or an airplane is not unusual), preferring to rely on his or her own abilities. The character will receive no experience for a result if such items are used to aid his or her efforts. If the character manages to destroy an opponent's technological device, he or she will receive experience points as if a criminal of similar power had been overcome.
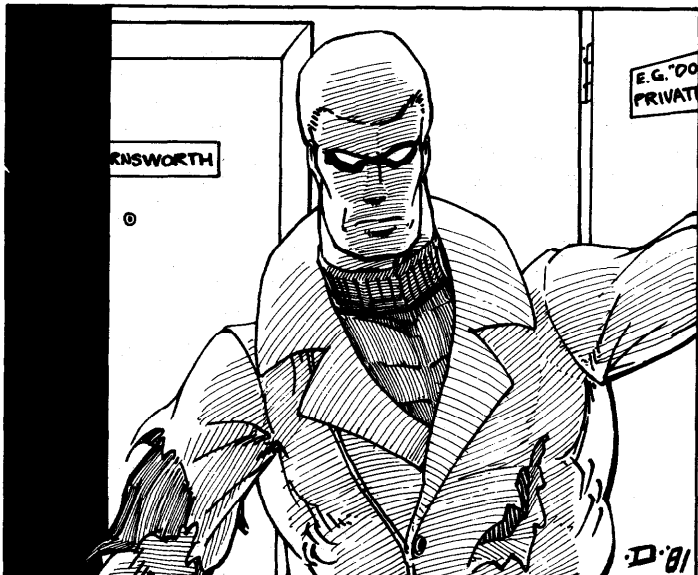
CONTACTS

Prior to the start of the game, all player characters are assigned contacts by the GM. These contacts represent acquaintances or businessmen the player character had dealings with before embarking on a career of adventure. Contacts may be able to provide information, tips, equipment or introductions to other persons in their field. A clerk in the Building Commission, for instance, may be able to provide floor plans, while a small-time hood might connect the character with his boss or tip the character off to a "job." Contacts are not always instantly cooperative or obliging. Inducements such as bribes, periodic payments, favors or assistance may be required. The exact nature of the relationship with the contact will depend greatly on the contact character created by the GM.

All characters start with three contacts, not including any adjustments for experience type. To determine the business the contact is engaged in, roll on the Career Table. Each title is explained briefly as to its uses and limitations. After determining the profession of the contact, the GM should secretly roll an Effectiveness Rating from 10-40% (d4). This rating represents the contact's ability or willingness to fulfill a character's request. Whenever the player attempts to use that contact, the GM should roll percentile dice. If the roll is equal to or less than the Effectiveness Rating of the contact, he or she is able and willing to aid the character. The Effectiveness Rating of a contact may be improved if extra attention and favors are shown to that contact. The GM must determine how much the rating will improve, but the percentage can never be more than 75%.

Career Table

Die Roll	Career
1	Assistant Clerk of Courts
2	Assistant to the Chief of Police
3	Bookie
4	Illegal casino operator
5	Clerk, City Hall of Records
6	Clerk, police files
7	Clerk, State Division of Motor Vehicles
8-9	Criminology lab technician
10	FBI field agent
11	Fence
12-13	Nightclub owner
14-16	Police detective
17	Reporter for a major daily newspaper
18	Small-time thug
19	Stockbroker
20	Taxi driver

The above listing of possible contacts is not intended to represent the only choices available to the GM. Contacts in other fields may be created and assigned as the GM desires.

To help the GM use the listed contacts above, the following short listing of areas in which each would be useful is given below. Again, the areas listed here are not complete but may be used as an indication of the abilities and limitations of the contact.

Assistant Clerk of courts: Obtain transcripts of trials or other legal proceedings; evaluate current trials and judges on the bench.

Assistant to the Chief of Police: Tips regarding raids and major police actions; access to criminal records and personnel files; pass information to the Chief of Police.

Bookie: Reveal who is into whom for a lot of money; who bets heavily and on what; introduce to other bookies, bettors and gamblers; general underground information.

Illegal casino operator: As with bookie; also, what contracts are out; what people are in town; whom people are working for and where they get their money.

Clerk, City Hall of Records: Provide records concerning land deals, court cases, business deals, health and fire safety violations, marriages, divorces, city licenses.

Clerk, police files: Provide criminal records, previous aliases,

addresses and methods; fingerprints and pictures; possibly evidence and case notes.

Clerk, State Division of Motor Vehicles: Identify license plates, driver's licenses; possibly provide driver's license.

Criminology lab technician: Take fingerprints, blood tests, and run ballistics tests; examine possible evidence for clues.

FBI field agent: Provide FBI files; pass information to higher persons; provide names and addresses of suspected criminals.

Fence: Inform of who was involved after a crime; obtain stolen or untraceable goods; identify who might be working for others; possibly tips on upcoming jobs.

Nightclub owner: Tell who has been seen with whom, who has been spending money, who is and is not in town; introduce to illegal casino operators and "respectable" underworld figures.

Police detective: Provide records, as police records clerk; also, tip off raids; provide assistance; pass information to higher sources.

Reporter: Provide information from newspaper morgue; tips on graft and corruption in city government; place articles or notices in paper as desired by character; introduce to "newsworthy" people.

Small-time thug: Provide tips on upcoming jobs; inform who is working for whom and where they might be found; describe or detail different types of jobs or rackets; what contracts are out and on whom; who is in town and what money or items might be in town.

Stockbroker: Who owns what; how a company is doing; who is making money and who is losing money; unusual expenditures or trends; possible mergers or forceouts; introduce to important financial figures.

Taxi driver: Ready access to vehicle; where places are, locations of illegal casinos, crap games, etc.; description of type of activity or quality of an area; possible identification of fares.

Example of a contact: Dark Night Dan and private detective Bob Rikers have been working on the case of a missing researcher's wife. Based on clues and some rumors, they suspect that she may have been involved in some way with Billy Ree, a known blackmailer and thug. Bob Rikers knows the operator of a slightly illegal nightclub (gambling in the back room), so the two characters decide to check with the owner to see what he might know. Dark Night Dan stays out front, watching the floor show, while Bob goes back to the office for a private talk. When the contact is questioned by Bob, the GM rolls to see what the owner might know. An 11 is rolled, so the owner is determined to know something about the researcher's wife — namely, that she had been in the club several times and had been with Jackie "Kingfisher" Ramone, a particularly hot-tempered tough, no friend at all of Billy Ree.

But because he is afraid of Jackie, the owner decides to lie, saying that the woman had been in a couple of times but never with anyone else. In this case, the GM modified the Effectiveness Rating of the contact downward because of outside pressure or fears that contact had, unbeknownst to the player characters.

It is important to note that no matter what the Effectiveness Rating of the contact, the player character must still meet and deal with the contact through the GM as if it were a normal encounter.

EQUIPMENT

Because the period covered by these rules can be varied (from the 1930s to the 1940s) and many different locations can be used, it is difficult to fix prices in the rules for goods or services. Also, since a wide variety of items could be purchased, an exact equipment list is impossible to compile. The following list gives ranges for many common goods or services a player might want or need.

Depending on the cost of equipment and services the GM chooses, each player should start with $50 to $150.

Clothes (Hats, suits, coats, shoes, etc.): $1 to $100.
Doctor visit: $5 to $50.
Hospital stay: $20 to $50 per day.
Hotel room: $1 to $50 per day.
Meals: $1 to $10 each.
Pistol: $20 to $50.
Rifle: $30 to $150.
Submachine gun: $100 to $500*.
Taxi: 10¢ per mile.
TNT: $100 per case (25 to 50 sticks).
Vehicles**

*Such weapons can only be bought on the black market and the costs (and quality) may vary widely.

**Given under the appropriate section.

The GM may add any items he or she desires. Costs should be set according to what the characters can afford and the complexity or rarity of the item.

SIGHT

Although people can see a great distance, there is a practical range beyond which it is too difficult to make out pertinent details. The effective range for sight under normal daylight conditions (the range at which people, actions, and hand signals can be distinguished) is 50 yards. Dim light or moonlit nights reduce this range to 10 yards. Near-total darkness reduces vision to 5 feet. Total darkness renders the normal character effectively blind (special powers may alter this). Flashlights are good for 10 yards more visibility than the normal distance in nighttime conditions.

MOVEMENT

There are 3 different movement categories in *Crimefighters:* walking, leaping, and springing.

Walking: Walking includes all forms of running, jogging, trotting, etc. The following table shows the fastest possible speed a character may move, baaed on his or her Physical Power. Players should keep track of their Physical Power to note any adjustments to their characters' movement rates. The speeds are listed by movement per second (for short bursts) followed by movement per minute (for extended periods of time). Characters starting from a dead standstill will not be able to reach top speed immediately; three seconds are required to do so. Each second will increase speed by one-third (i.e. a character with a Physical Power of 66 would move 8 feet in the first second of movement, 16 feet in the following second, and 24 feet in the third second — the maximum speed for that character).

Physical Power	Move/sec.	Move/min.
1-30	5 yd. (15 ft.)	200 yd. (600 ft.)
31-45	6 yd. (18 ft.)	240 yd. (720 ft.)
46-60	7 yd. (21 ft.)	280 yd. (840 ft.)
61-75	8 yd. (24 ft.)	320 yd. (960 ft.)
76-85	9 yd. (27 ft.)	360 yd. (1080 ft.)
86-95	10 yd. (30 ft.)	400 yd. (1200 ft.)
95+	11 yd. (33 ft.)	440 yd. (1320 ft.)

Note that the movement rates listed above only apply to situations where the character is attempting to move at the fastest speed possible for him or her, such as during combat or a chase. In more mundane circumstances, assume a basic walking movement rate of 6 feet per second for all characters (120 yards per minute), and a basic rate of 8 feet per second for a character (160 yards per minute) who is slowly trotting or jogging.

The "Move/sec." rate given above should only be used for a period of 15 to 30 seconds, determined by the GM, after which a character should be required to move at a slower rate for a minute or two before again being able to achieve maximum speed. The "Move/min." rate should be able to be sustained for a period of at least 3 to 5 minutes before the character would have to slow to a trot or walking pace to conserve strength.

Leaping: Leaping movement is a measure of how high a character may jump. When a leap is used to grasp something above the character, his or her height and reach must be taken into account. The maximum height allowed is obtained by adding the character's Physical Power and Agility and then consulting the table below.

Combined score	Maximum height
2-52	2 ft.
53-75	3 ft.
76-95	4 ft.
96-115	5 ft.
116-135	6 ft.
136-155	7 ft.
156-175	8 ft.
176-195	9 ft.
195+	10 ft.

Springing: Springing is used when a character must cross a large open area in a single bound. As with the leaping table, combined Physical Power and Agility scores are used. The distances given are assumed to be from a standing start. In the case of a running start, the character may cover 3 times the stated distance.

Combined score	Maximum distance
2-52	4 ft.
53-85	5 ft.
86-115	6 ft.
116-145	7 ft.
146-175	8 ft.
176-195	9 ft.
195+	10 ft.

Wounds: A wound to one leg will reduce all movement rates by half. If both legs are wounded, the movement rate is reduced by three-fourths.

Weight: A character may carry up to twice his Physical Power in pounds, plus 50. Hence, a character with a Physical Power of 47 could carry 144 pounds (2 x 47 + 50 = 144). For every 2 pounds of material being carried, the Physical Power or the combined score (depending on the movement type being used) should be reduced by one point. The resulting score may never be less than 2. For example, **a** character with a combined score of 155 who is carrying 115 pounds would reduce the combined score by 57, giving a score of 98 for purposes of determining Leaping and Springing movement rates.

SEARCHING

Characters will occasionally find it necessary to look for concealed or hidden items. In such cases, it will be necessary for the GM to assign a value to the hidden item, indicating its chance of being found (using percentile dice). This applies especially to concealed panels, secret passages, hidden safes, or secret drawers. For instance, a hidden passage behind a fireplace might be found 10% of the time, while a hidden safe might be found 20% of the time. To find the object, the character must spend one minute actively searching the proper area.

LOCKS AND SAFES

All locks and safes are rated in abstract classes from I to X (Roman numerals), indicating the difficulty factor of the lock or safe. These classes are used when determining the success of a lock-picking or safecracking attempt.

As noted in the sections describing lockpicking and safe-cracking, certain locks or safes will be impossible to open without the use of aids. There are many different aids available to a character, including stethoscopes, acid, extremely fine lock-picks, drills, and explosives. Using an aid will add from 10% to 50% to the character's chance of success when an attempt to open a lock or safe is made. Several items may be used together and the bonuses for all of them applied. Hence, to open a class X safe (base -100% on the chance of success) would require either explosives (+50%), drilling (+30%), stethoscope (+20%), acid (+30%) or some other special device or a combination thereof. It is important for the GM to note that there is no such thing as an unopenable safe or lock, as long as some sort of aid is used.

Characters may be forced to shoot the lock out on a door. This may only be attempted at point-blank range. If a hit against the lock is scored, 1d6 is rolled and the number subtracted from the class of the lock. When the class of the lock is reduced to zero or below, the attempt will have been successful. The effect of more than one such attempt is cumulative.

EXPLOSIVES

Explosives are normally available only to licensed demolitions experts, and as such are used responsibly (of course). On occasion, explosives may be available through black-market connections. Explosives purchased in this manner will be of questionable quality or force, or both.

Explosives are extremely dangerous for untrained individuals to handle. TNT has a 50% chance of exploding from a bad shook such as a bullet hit, long drop or fall, etc. unless a trained person has packed it, in which case the chance is only 5%. Nitroglycerine has an 85% chance of exploding under the same circumstances if packaged by an untrained person. A trained demolitions man may reduce this chance to 40% if he supervises the packing.

For information regarding the use of explosives in combat, see the Combat section.

SPECIAL DEVICES

As characters build up more resources and skills, they may wish to develop an inventory of special devices.. Such devices might include anything from miniaturized anesthetic grenades to wireless phone taps. Before considering the creation of any device, the GM should decide whether such an item has a place jn his or her campaign. If the GM wishes the game to be oriented towards private detectives and mysteries, he or she may not wish to have unusual items in the campaign. In such a case, simply being realistic about the cost and feasibility of the item may be enough to stop further inquiries.

However, if the GM prefers to have a somewhat more fantastic campaign, there is no reason why certain, somewhat scientific items might not be allowed. To do so, the GM should first compare the desired device to the technological capabilities typical of the period. Laser pistols and rocket belts, for instance, are completely out. Secondly, the GM should bear in mind how such an item might change the balance of the game. It may have effects that are too far-reaching or all-powerful; if so, the item should not be allowed. If the GM thinks the device might still be possible, he or she should assign a percentage chance for successfully creating the item. This number is entirely subjective and should be based on the complexity of the item and on how much the GM wants to see the item in the game. Likewise, an amount of time for development of the item and a sum of money for materials should also be assessed. It is then the player's responsibility to find a skilled character to create the item. The player character must also be able to meet the cost and time required for the item. After all this is done, the assigned chance of success may be rolled for on percentile dice. If that number or less is rolled, the device has been made successfully. It should be noted that the system given above applies to unus-

ual items only — armor-plating a car or fitting a gun with a silencer can always be done with success, for example.

VEHICLES

Vehicles in their various forms play an important role in many situations that occur in *Crimefighters.* After all, there are car chases, shadowing, snatches, getaways, and stakeouts to be done, and in all cases it helps to have fast transportation available.

The following table lists several different types of vehicles along with information needed to use them in the game. The table is divided into several park:

Make: This names the general type of vehicle and an average cost for it.

Max. Sp.: The fastest possible or maximum speed for the vehicle.

Accl.: Acceleration is given in the number of seconds required for the vehicle to go from a standstill to 60 mph.

Cornering: The listed number is the highest possible speed at which a sharp corner (such is a right-angle street corner) may be safely negotiated under normal conditions.

Dam. Mod.: The damage modifier is the amount of plus or minus the vehicle gains on the Vehicle Damage Table. This is due to the soundness (or lack thereof) of the vehicle's construction.

Seats: The number of people that may normally be carried by the vehicle.

Make	Max. Sp.	Accl.	Cornering	Dam. Mod.	Seats
Limousine ($9,000)	100	20	25	-10	8
Speedster ($4,000-$25,000)	140	10	35	+5	2
Motorcycle ($200, sidecar plus $100)	80	12	30	+20	2(3)
Panel truck ($900-$1,100)	70	20	25	-5	2
Pickup truck ($800-$1,200)	70	20	25	+5	2
Sedan ($900-$1,800)	90	16	25	0	4-6

Automobile movement: There are two, methods of using automobile movement in *Crimefighters.* When travelling for long distances or when no unusual circumstances are likely to occur, normal MPH may be used to measure how far and how long a journey is. When involved in combat or dealing in some way with people on foot, the following table converting miles per hour to feet per second is used.
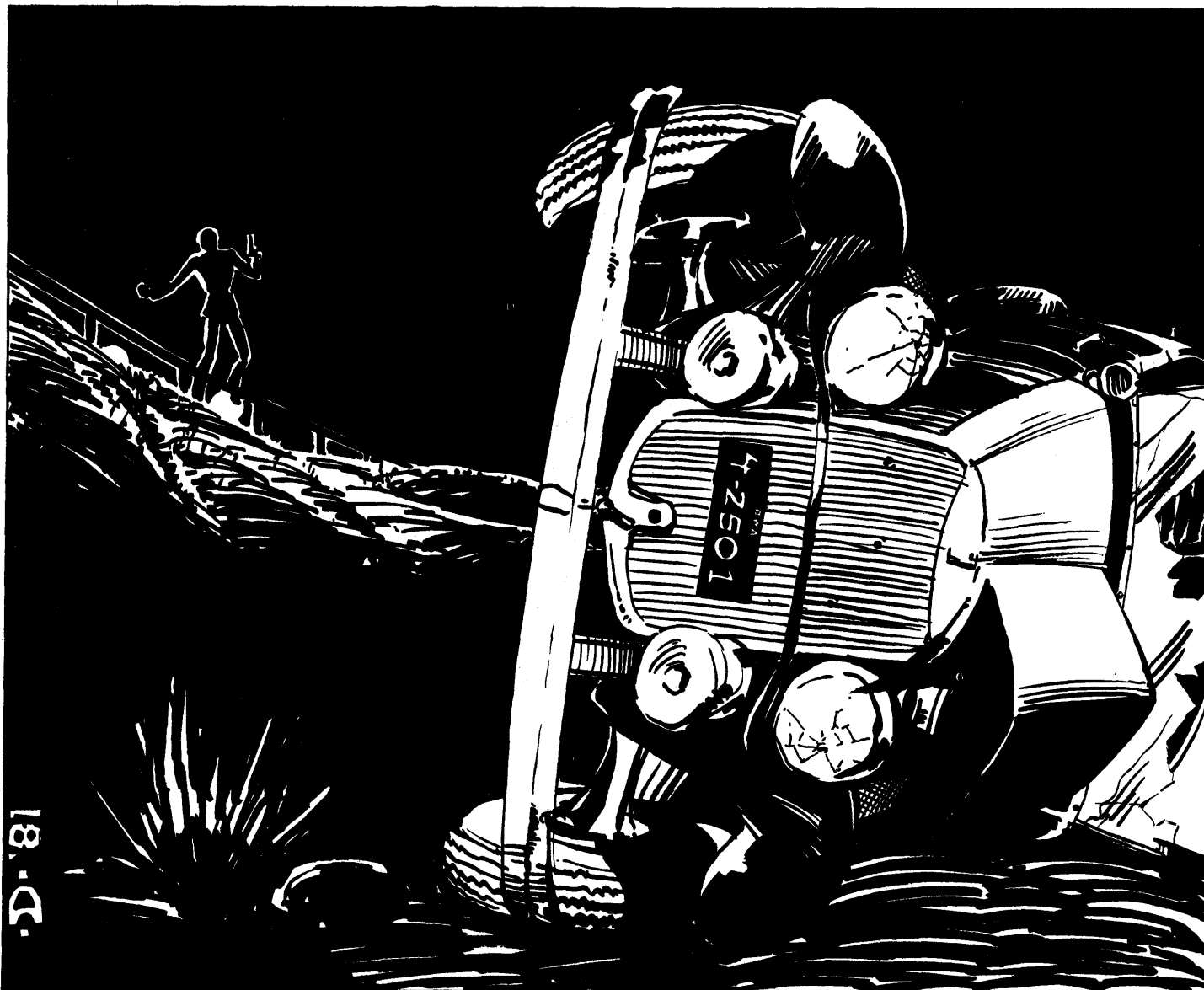
MPH	Feet/Sec.	MPH	Feet/Sec.
10	15	80	118
20	29	90	132
30	44	100	145
40	59	110	161
50	76	120	179
60	88	130	191
70	103	140	205

When starting from a dead stop, an automobile does not immediately leap to the desired speed. It must accelerate to that speed, at a rate based on the vehicle's acceleration rating. An auto may never accelerate faster than its listed acceleration.

Braking: For the purposes of simplicity, the time required to brake a vehicle to a full stop can be considered the same as that needed for acceleration.

Cornering and traffic: All vehicles are given a safe cornering speed. This speed may be exceeded at the risk of accident, a chance equal to the vehicle's speed given as a percentage. Thus, any vehicle taking a corner at 60 mph would have a 60% chance of some type of accident. If an accident occurs, the Vehicle Damage Table must be consulted.

Driving through traffic can also be somewhat risky. Depend-

ing on the density of traffic, the safe travelling speed will vary from 20 to 50 mph. The chance of accident for each block travelled in traffic is equal to double the MPH speed of the vehicle, if it exceeds the safe driving limit for the traffic. However, the chance of accident may never be more than 90%.

Road conditions and driving skill: The weather can affect the speeds and safety of driving. The following adjustments to the vehicle table can be used:

	Rain	Fog	Snow
Max. Sp.	-20	-	-30
Accl.	+2	-	+5
Cornering	-10	-5	-15
Braking	+4	+2	+7

Note that fog will also reduce visibility.

Driving skill can also alter driving speed and safety. Characters with driving skill are assumed to be of race-car driver quality. In addition, the GM may decide that certain non-player characters have good driving skill, making them useful as getaway drivers. The modifications are given below.

	Race-car quality	Good driving (NPC)
Accl.	-3	-1
Cornering	+15	+5

Vehicle Damage: Whenever an automobile is involved in an accident, it is necessary to roll on the Vehicle Damage Table for each vehicle involved. The die roll is modified by adjustments for speed and vehicle type.

Speed	Modifier
Up to 25 MPH	-20
26-40 MPH	-5
41-60 MPH	0
61-80 MPH	+10
81+ MPH	+20

Vehicle Damage Table

Dice Roll	Result
10 or less	Scratched and dented, no other damage
11-20	Bodywork crumpled ($10-$40 repair)
21-45	Serious body damage ($20-$120 repair)
46-60	Minor frame damage; all speeds (maximum, acceleration, cornering) reduced by 10%; occupants suffer 0-2 points of damage each. ($100 repair)
61-70	Frame damage; all speeds reduced by 50%; occupants suffer 1-3 points of damage each ($110-$160 repair)
71-80	Serious collision; auto inoperative, occupants suffer 1-6 points of damage each.
81-90	Serious collision; auto inoperative; occupants suffer 2-8 points of damage each.
91 or more	Auto totalled; occupants suffer 2-20 points of damage each.

POLICE AND THE COURTS

Crimefighters is a game that relies heavily on the player character's interaction with the police. For those characters acting on the side of the law, it will generally not be difficult to maintain good relations with the police. For those characters who regularly commit criminal acts, are forced to do so by circumstances, or who generally do not care, the law should be considered as a potential (perhaps actual) adversary. When a criminal act occurs (no matter for what reason), the GM must weigh the factors surrounding the act. Were there any witnesses? Would they report the crime? Was a good description obtained? What clues were left behind? After all these factors (and any others) have been judged, the GM must determine a realistic percentage chance for the character's identification or arrest by the police.

When an arrest occurs, either by police accidentally spotting the character or tracking him or her down, the police will not behave like fools. They will take reasonable precautions and will not be inclined to give the character special treatment. Bail may or may not be set (depending on the crime and the whim of the judge) and unless bail is set and can be raised, the character can expect to languish in jail for 1-3 weeks before going to court. Once in court, the guilt of the character should be given a reasonable doubt. If the GM feels the evidence could allow for other interpretations, the character should be given the benefit of the doubt. The GM may wish the player of the accused character to suggest these alternative options. If the character is convicted, a sentence could range from six months to life imprisonment, depending on the severity and cruelty of the crime.

COMBAT

Combat occurs in any situation where the parties involved can only resolve an issue, or choose to do so, through the use of force. In *Crimefighters* there are two types of combat — missile and hand-to-hand. In general, combat is short and quick, with the side acting most decisively and quickly getting the victory.

Sequence of combat events

Although combat is freeform, as in most role-playing games, there is a series of steps that is normally followed.
1. Determine encounter distance
2. State actions (as needed)
3. Determine initiative (first second only)
4. Conduct actions in order of occurence

This sequence is repeated as often as necessary.

Encounter distance: In most situations the surrounding conditions will determine the distance at which opponents are first sighted. These conditions include light, amount of space, terrain, and disguises of the people encountered. If there are no obvious limitations, the following random encounter distances may be used:

City: 10-40 feet.
Open country: 10-100 yards.
Woods: 10-100 feet.

People scanning with binoculars will increase the sighting distance by the power of the glasses (i.e., 5x binoculars would be able to sight encounters at 5 times normal distance).

Surprise: The greatest modifier to encounter distance is surprise. When an encounter occurs, there is a basic 1 in 6 chance that either party will be surprised. This chance may be altered by concealment or other preparations by one party or the other. Surprise will reduce the encounter distance to 11 to 20 ft. or less unless the location proves to make this impossible or ridiculous. Surprise will also give a bonus of +1 on surpriser's the first-round initiative roll.

Time: Once an encounter is determined and the distance calculated, play normally shifts to time used in combat. This time is calculated in seconds. A player will state his or her character's actions, and the GM will calculate the time required for such actions. The following are times required for typical actions:

Drawing a gun: 4 seconds.
Firing: 1 second.
Swing, stab, lunge: 1-2 seconds.

Other actions such as leaping over tables, opening doors, throwing TNT, tying people up, etc. are left up to the GM to determine the amount of time required.

Stating actions: The actions taken by each individual in a group must be declared before initiative is rolled. These actions may be as long or as short as desired: but once an action is stated, the only change that may be made is to cancel it. Therefore, a character might declare, "I draw my gun and fire," while a different character may say, "I overturn the table, reload my revolver, and pop up to squeeze off two shots at the lantern behind them." The first action would take 5 seconds while the second would take 15 seconds. If a character should decide to withdraw or cancel an action, he or she will suffer a delay as explained below.

Whenever a character starts a new action (either after completion or cancellation of a previous action), there is a delay of 1 second before the new action can be started. Hence, players may find it advantageous to state a series of actions, rather than a single one at a time, to avoid this penalty.

Initiative: Once actions have been declared and their times determined, both groups should roll d4 for initiative. The side with the higher number is assumed to have gained a small advantage of time, equal in seconds to the difference of the two die rolls. If both groups were to state, for example, that they were drawing their guns and firing (5 seconds) and the initiative rolls were 3 and 1, the sequence of combat would be as follows:

First second: Group 1 starts to draw guns.
Second second: Group 1 drawing.
Third second: Group 1 drawing, Group 2 starts to draw guns.
Fourth second: Group 1 has weapons drawn, Group 2 drawing.
Fifth second: Group 1 fires, Group 2 drawing.
Sixth second: Group 1 delay (new action), Group 2 has weapons out.
Seventh second: Group 1 starts new action, Group 2 fires.

If the first round initiative is equal, then all events are assumed to occur simultaneously. If one group is in a position where it has knowledge of its opponents, that group's initiative roll is not taken, but is automatically assumed to be 5.

Missile combat: There are 3 steps in missile combat — 1) determining if the target has been hit, 2) finding the locations of any hits, and 3) rolling for damage.

The chance to hit a target is equal to the accuracy of the firing hand (or the best Accuracy, in the case of two-handed weapons) adjusted by the modifiers given below. If the adjusted accuracy or less is rolled on percentile dice, the target has been hit. No matter what the modifiers, if a 99 or 00 is rolled, the firer's gun has jammed. A jam may only be cleared by rolling a one or a two on d6. One such roll is allowed each second.

Missile fire modifiers to accuracy:
Range:
  Pistols - Minus 5% per 10 yards of distance.
  Rifles - Minus 1% per 10 yards of distance.
Cover:
  25% cover - Minus 10%.
  50% cover - Minus 25%.
  75% cover - Minus 35%.
Movement:
  Firer moving - Minus 30%.
  Target moving - Minus 10%.
Concealment:
  Brush, fog - Minus 10%.
  Smoke, darkness - Minus 40%.
Firer prone, steadied - Plus 10%.
Using scope - Plus 5% per power of scope.

Successive shots — Minus 10% per shot.
Wounded in gun arm — Minus 30%.

If a hit is scored, the next step is to determine the location of the hit. Percentile dice are rolled and the following table consulted. This table lists the location of the hit, any extra damage done by bullets, and any extra damage done by edged weapons.

Hit Location Table

Die roll	Location	Bullet Dam. Mod.	Edged Weapon Dam. Mod.
1-20	Left Leg*	0	0
21-40	Right Leg*	0	0
41-75	Abdomen/Chest	+2	0
76-85	Right Arm/Shoulder	0	+1
86-95	Left Arm/Shoulder	0	+1
96-00	Neck/Head	+ 4	+2

*See movement section for effects.

To determine the damage done from a missile weapon, roll the die or dice indicated on the Weapon Table, adding any modifiers from the table above. This total with equal the hit points lost by the target from that attack.

Incapacitation: If a character loses half or more of his or her original total of hit points in a single attack, there is a 70% chance that the character will be incapacitated. If this does occur, the character may not move or take any action until he or she receives medical attention.

Hand-to-hand combat: Hand-to-hand combat obviously can only occur when characters are adjacent to each other. The percentage chance of successfully hitting an opponent is the average of the character's Physical Power and Agility (rounded down), adjusted by any of the modifiers given below:

Attacker held:	-40%
Blackjack:	+5%
Brass knuckles:	+5%
Darkness, fog, smoke:	-20%
Defender held:	+50%
Fencing skill (when using sword):	+10%
Judo skill:	+10%
Knife:	+5%
Sword:	+15%
Wounded (half hit points or greater):	-10%

When an attack is made without an edged weapon, the damage done is rolled on the die nearest the character's Physical Power (rounded down). Thus, a character with a Physical Power of 95 would roll 1d8 for damage. There is no chance for incapacitation, nor is there any hit location.

Edged weapons: When a hit is scored with an edged weapon, the procedure reverts to that used for missile combat. First the hit location is found and then the damage is rolled, modified as required. Attacks from edged weapons can cause incapacitation.

Wounds and recovery: In *Crimefighters,* there are two types of wounds; both may disable a character in combat. The two types of wounds are those received from missile combat and edged weapons, and those otherwise received in hand-to-hand combat. Each should be recorded separately. Putting characters out of action from wounds occurs in 3 different ways:

1) If the wounds received from missile or edged weapons equals the character's current hit points, that character is dead.

2) If the wounds received from hand-to-hand combat equal the character's current hit points, that character is unconscious for 5-30 minutes.

3) If the combined total for both categories of wounds equals the character's hit points, the character is unconscious for a number of hours equal to the extent of the missile/edged weapon wounds.

Wand-to-hand combat wounds or losses to attributes may be recovered at the rate of 1 hit point per hour of rest. Missile/edged

weapon wounds are recovered at the rate of 1 hit point for every two days of rest.

Finally, unlike most role-playing games, missile/edged weapon wounds in *Crimefighters* can become more serious if they are not tended to. One hit point per hour will be lost until such wounds are treated by a trained medical person. Furthermore, characters who engage in strenuous activity before being totally healed from missile/edged weapon wounds will also lose one hit point per hour of activity.

Weapons Table

Weapon	Reload Rate	No. of Rounds	Shots/ sec.	Damage
BAR	1	variable	2	2-12
Beretta	1	7	1	1-8
Blackjack	—	—	—	6+ normal strike
Brass knuckles	—	—	—	2+ normal strike
Colt .45	1	7	1	2-8
Lee-Enfield rifle	½	5	1	2-12
Mauser 1912*	½	10	3	2-8
Smith & Wesson .38	1	6	1	1-8
Springfield rifle	½	5	1	2-12
Switchblade	—	—	—	2-5
Sword cane	—	—	—	2-7
Thompson SMG	½	50	3	2-9
Webley & Scott Mk. VI	1	6	1	2-8
Webley .38	1	6	1	1-6
Webley .32	1	6	1	2-5

*This weapon jams an a roll of 95-00.

Thrown weapons: Certain weapons, either purchased or improvised, may be thrown by characters in combat. These include knives, rocks and other weapons or opportunity. The chance for determining a hit is the same as with other missile weapons, except that the following accuracy modifiers are used instead of those similar ones listed in that section,

Range:
    Rocks, knives, etc.: Minus 10% per yard of distance.
Movement: —
   Thrower moving: Minus 40%.
    Target moving: Minus 15%.

Further determination of hit location, damage and incapacitation will depend on the type of weapon used. Edged weapons always use all systems given above, while blunt weapons (rocks or thrown clubs) use only the determination for damage.

Grenades: Unlike many other weapons which need to hit on target, grenades need only land in the general area of the victim to have effect. Therefore, all range modifiers to Accuracy are ignored when grenades are used (although all others apply). The maximum distance a character may throw a grenade is equal to his or her Physical Power minus 10, expressed in yards. A character with a Physical Power of 86 would be able to throw a grenade 76 yards. A "to hit" roll is still made based on the Accuracy of the throwing arm (without range modifiers), and a successful hit indicates that the grenade has fallen 1-10 feet from the desired target. A miss will mean that the target was missed by 4-9 yards in a random direction. In situations where a character is virtually certain to be able to place the grenade in the desired location, no "'to hit" roll is required; the attempt is assumed to be successful unless prevented for some reason.

Grenades are assumed to have a 5-10 second delay after activating and before exploding, the exact amount of time to be decided by the GM. A fragmentation grenade will do 3-24 points of damage to all people within a five-foot radius of the blast, and 3-18 points to those who are from 5 to 15 feet away from the blast.

Other explosives: Throwing TNT is treated in the same manner as a grenade, except that the character must select a fuse length (given in seconds of burning time) for the stick or bundle. Characters without demolitions skill will be off on the timing of the fuse by plus or minus 1-5 seconds. If an unskilled
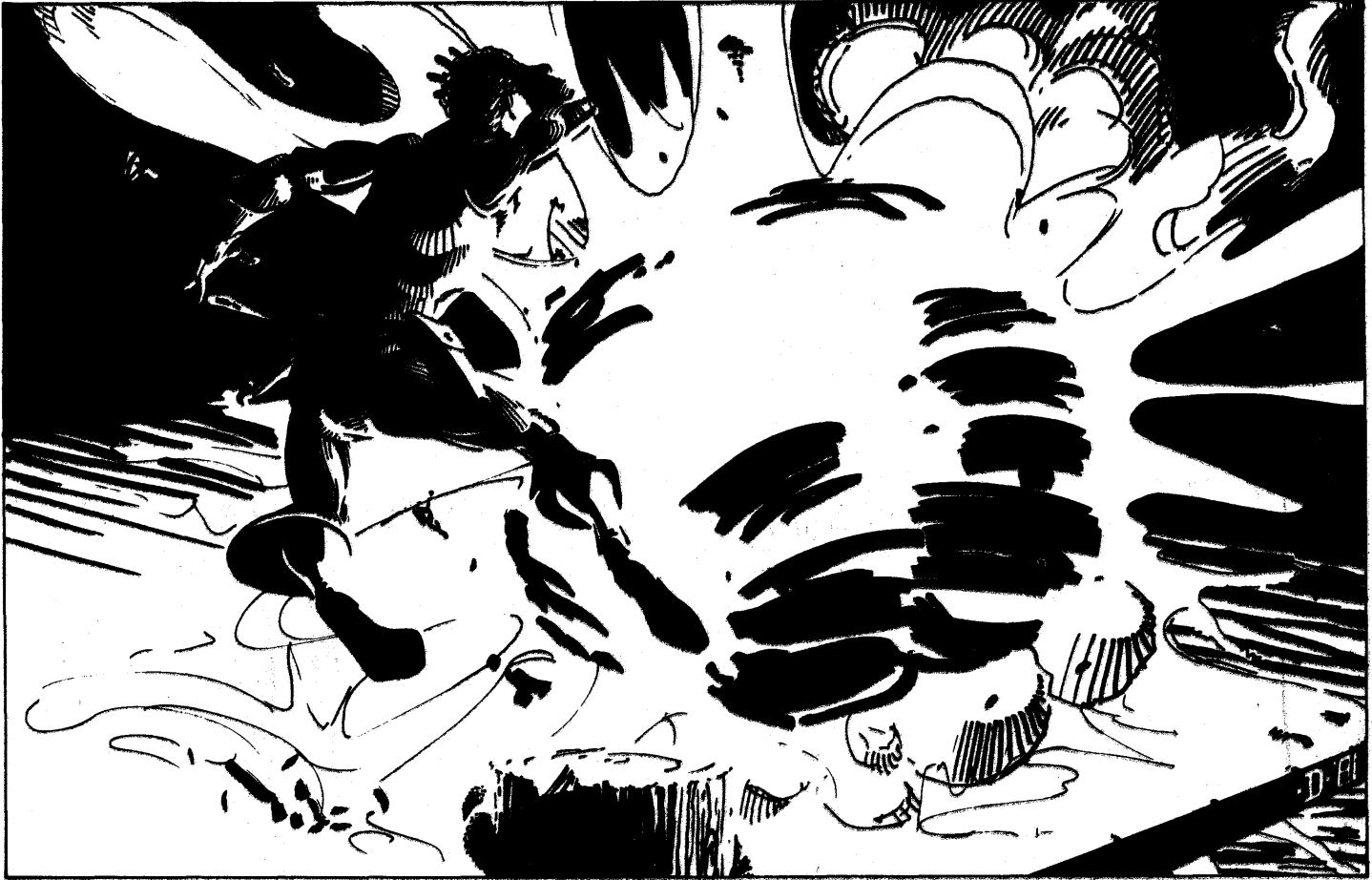
player selects a six-second fuse, he or she may have it explode one second after lighting it, or as long as 11 seconds later. A skilled demolitions expert will have an inaccuracy of only 1 second maximum (perhaps zero). A single stick of TNT will do 1-10 points of damage to all within a five-foot radius, and 1-6 points to those from 5 to 15 feet away,

Nitroglycerine explodes on contact when thrown and is treated as a thrown weapon for determining a hit. Nitro will do 1-10 points of concussion damage per ounce to all within five feet of the point of contact. Using larger quantities of TNT or nitroglycerine will increase the radius within which the blast will cause damage, and perhaps might also add to the damage caused. Such matters should be determined by the GM as the situations arise.

DRUGS, POISONS AND ACIDS

Drugs may be administered by any character with medical skill, or in some cases, by any character with opportunity. There are many types of drugs available, so instead of listing specific drugs and their effects, the following general types and results are given. From these, the GM may devise any reasonable single type or combination of types to be a specific drug.

Unconsciousness: Drugs which produce this effect may be used by any character. if the victim fails to roll less than or equal to the average of his or her Physical Power and Willpower, he or she will be unconscious for 2-8 hours.

Euphoria: This type of drug will bring on a condition similar to extreme drunkenness. The victim must roll as explained under unconsciousness. Failure to make this roll will result in the character's Mental Aptitude, Willpower, Accuracy Right, Accuracy Left, and Agility being reduced by 50%. This condition will last for 1-4 hours.

Stimulant: When this type of drug is administered by a character with medical skill, unconscious charactsrs may be revived. Otherwise, the drug will negate the one-second delay normally caused in combat when a new action is declared, reduce Willpower by 10 points, and cause the loss of one hit point (treat as a hand-to-hand combat wound for recovery). A stimulant will last for 10-60 minutes.

Hallucinogen: This drug will cause characters to see things that are not really there, or mistake normal things for wild and fantastic visions. As such, the GM should feel free to describe any number of improbable sights, giving no indication of what might be real or false. A victim must roll less than equal to his or her Willpower to avoid the effects of this drug. Otherwise, the drug will last for 1-6 hours.

As mentioned before, drug types may be combined so as to do several different things. Euphoric stimulants or hallucinogens leading to unconsciousness are two possibilities. When drugs are combined, die rolls (if any) for the success of each particular effect must be made and the results of that type applied if the roll is failed.

Poison: The result of poisoning a character is simple; unless the victim resists the poison or finds an antidote, he or she will die. A character's chance to resist a poison is 30% plus another percentage point for every hit point the character has; e.g., a character with 15 hit points has a 45% chance of not dying from a poison. Should the character successfully roll to resist the poison, he or she will still lose half of his or her current hit points when the poison takes effect. The major difference in types of poison is the amount of time required to take effect. Extremely fast poisons will work in 15 seconds, while others might take hours. The GM should note the amount of time required for the poison to take effect. If the character is able to receive an antidote before that time is reached, the poison in his or her system will be rendered harmless.

Acid: Although seldom used, acid may sometimes come into play in combat situations, primarily from fiendish traps or mad acid throwers. An acid attack will do damage to a character of a pre-set amount according to the strength of the chemical used.

A weak acid would only do 1-3 points of damage, a moderate one 1-8 points, and a strong acid 1-12 or more. Attacks using acid should also, be checked for hit location, as. hits to the head/neck area will reduce the character's Presence by the number of points of damage caused by the attack. (As an optional rule, the GM may wish to allow a 1 in 20 chance of an acid attack actually increasing the character's Presence.)

AWARDING EXPERIENCE POINTS

Upon the completion of a mission or part of one, the GM may see fit to assign experience points to the player characters. There are three different categories for assigning experience points:

1) Mission success: As a subjective judgment by the GM, 1-10 points may be awarded on the basis of success and difficulty of the mission. Thus, all missions or cases would be worth at least one point; a highly dangerous but unsuccessful mission would be worth 5 points; and a moderately dangerous but highly successful case would be worth 6 or 7 points.

2) Criminals overcome and goods recovered: Experience points equal to half the hit points of all criminals captured or killed should be given to the players, but *only if those criminals constituted a threat to some person or thing.* Experience should also be given for cash items recovered, equal to 10% of the dollar value of the item. The GM should limit the amount of this award if the item recovered is of great value,

3) Bonus points: The GM may assign bonus points to those characters who used their skills in an exceptional manner or demonstrated great insight. Such bonus awards should never total more than 10 points per adventure.

Negative experience points

It is also possible to lose experience in *Crimefighters,* by accumulating negative experience points. Such points are automatically subtracted from any positive experience points a character has, in the following order:

1) Experience points not yet applied to a purpose.
2) Experience points applied to investments.
3) Experience points applied to new mysterious powers.

If none of the above situations apply, the negative points are saved until positive points are earned.

If a player wishes, he or she may choose to accumulate negative Experience points. To do so, he or she must clearly announce to the GM his or her intention. Thereafter, the player may not change his or her mind. Once the decision is made, the character may use negative points in the same manner as positive experience points. The acquisition of positive points will cause the character to suffer the losses already explained above, just as if they were negative points being applied against a positive point total.

Negative points are awarded in the same manner as previously given, except the motives of the character earning negative points are generally evil or selfish. The following categories are used for awarding negative points:

1. Missions
2. Innocents or crimefighters harmed or overcome
3. Items stolen
4. Bonus points

DESIGNING AN ADVENTURE

Unlike many other role-playing games, *Crimefighters* does not generally center itself around a single place of adventure that may be used several times. instead, action in the game relies on the creation of a "case," or scenario, and the characters' efforts to solve the case or perform the assigned task. Therefore, it is useful for the GM to prepare ahead of time what the sequence of events will be, what the plot of the case is, who will be involved, and what locations are likely to be used. These can be broken into a series of steps that, if followed, will reduce the difficulty of setting up.

1) What will the case be?: Depending on the roles players in

the campaign wish to pursue, there are many options open to the GM. If characters are hard-boiled private eyes, racketeers, adventurers seeking to destroy evil, or master villains after power and wealth, the GM should be prepared to accommodate the players' desires. The following list offers suggestions for interesting cases:

Stop a blackmailer;
Clear a person of a frame-up (possibly a character);
Break up a racket;
Uncover a corrupt city official;
Prevent a kidnapping or rescue a kidnap victim;
Expose a massive stock swindle;
Guard important documents or an invention;
Prevent the death of a crusading editor;
Stop a ring of smugglers;
Recover some stolen gems;
Investigate a murder;
Protect a foreign diplomat;
Keep spies from sabotaging an important defense plant;
Find a missing person;
Infiltrate a criminal's organization.

Initially, it is suggested that only one particular case be used at a time, to allow both the GM and the players to become accustomed to the unfamiliar systems in the game and to allow the characters to get a little power and ability. As players and characters become more experienced, several cases can be intertwined to create a more challenging and exciting adventure —such as finding a missing person, who ends up dead, and then investigating the murder to clear your client who has been framed for the crime. Villainous characters may often use the reverse of many of the suggestions given above.

2) Who is involved?: After deciding on a case, the GM should make a short list of the important characters that will be uninvolved. Not all of the people the players will have contact with need be listed here, but those important to the case should be. Along with the name of the character should be a short description of what the person is like and what he or she has to do with the case. Statistics on the character may also be given if they are needed.

For instance:

Maggie Armbrewster: Hires players to find missing boyfriend, actually wants him because he made off with stolen stocks. Pretty redhead, appears upset and weepy, but will murder if necessary. Carries a Webley .32 in purse. Accuracy Right — 45.

3) What will happen?: A sequence of events is the next step in preparing the case. This is much like the plot of a story and will help the GM keep track of what is supposed to happen. This listing may be as brief or as detailed as the GM is comfortable with. The following two examples give both simple and detailed versions of a sequence of events:

1. Strange man arrives at character's door, bleeding from several wounds. Dies before saying anything. Carries scrap of rare Asian palm.

2. Man watching apartment, will follow any who leave; makes phone call from lobby.

3. Apartment broken into and body stolen. Rooms ransacked. (If character does not leave, body turns yellow-green and several thugs attempt to break in and steal body.)

The same sequence in a more detailed manner might go as follows:

1. Harold Weingould arrives at the door of character's apartment and rings the bell several times (or knocks on door). Ringing stops, and when character opens door, Harold's body falls inside. He has been shot several times, through the chest and shoulder. He is wearing a topcoat over what appear to be ragged pajamas. He attempts to speak and stand, but dies before doing so. As he dies, he thrusts out his hand, in which is clutched a scrap of a green plant leaf.

2. Within five minutes of the death of Harold Weingould, Tommy Snip-Nose will arrive at the apartment. He will not

reveal himself, but will try to listen at the door. If the character calls the police, Tommy will use a small canister of gas to fill the room with an unconsciousness drug. He will then pick the lock and, using a gas mask to protect himself, remove the body. If Tommy hears no sound in the apartment, he will pick the lock and attempt to remove the body. If the character leaves while Tommy is around, he will tail the character, stopping only long enough to call for some thugs to get the body out of the apartment.

As can be seen, the shorter version is faster to write and design, but requires that the GM improvise more. It is suggested that until the GM is confident of his or her ability to handle the many different things characters might do, a detailed sequence of events should be designed.

Random Encounters: To add interest when characters are moving around or not actively engaged in an important event, random encounters may be created by the GM. Unlike wandering monsters in other role-playing games, random encounters are not normally dangerous. Typical encounters on a street might be with drunks, policemen, pickpockets, con artists, toughs or common citizens. In some situations random encounters can be dangerous, especially when a character is in a place where he or she should not be. No random encounter tables are provided, as the type of encounter will depend on the location and situation the characters find themselves in.

The chance for an encounter will also vary greatly from place to place. In heavily congested areas, the chance is 1 in 6. In a moderately crowded area, the chance is reduced to 1 in 10, and on an almost-empty street late at night, the chance becomes 1 in 20. Again, the GM must make the final determination.

How a randomly encountered person will react to a character depends on the encounter reaction, unless the GM has made some determination ahead of time. To determine the reaction, roll percentile dice and consult the table below:

Encounter Reaction Table
Dice roll	Attitude (possible actions)
1-5	Hostile (Attack, flee, or obviously avoid)
6-30	Unfriendly (Verbally harass, avoid, ignore)
31-70	Disinterested (Ignore, answer minor questions)
71-85	Helpful (Answers questions, gives directions)
86-95	Friendly (Answers questions, speaks to)
96-99	Actively friendly (Will do small favors, deliver messages, call the police)
00	Heroic (Will risk own safety to assist character)

Modifiers to dice roll:
Person is threatened: -50
Person is criminal: -15
Dangerous situation: -10
Player character's Presence is 71-85: +5

Presence is 86-95: +10
Presence is 96-00: +20

Using Presence in place of the Reaction Table: Any time the character has sufficient Willpower to use Presence, such an attempt may be made. The character announces the attempt and then rolls percentile dice. This is compared against the character's Presence modified by the plus or minus difference of the encounter's Willpower and the first 3 modifiers on the Encounter Reaction Table (Person threatened, criminal, dangerous situation), if they apply. If the percentile roll is equal to or under the modified score, the encounter has been affected by the character's Presence. Encountered persons so affected will automatically act on any command given by the character, provided it will not lead to their death or harm. Examples of the use of Presence are to extract information from captured criminals, quickly command innocents to get to a place of safety during a combat, or get the attention of an important official. The effect of Presence on the encounter is very short-lived and may only be used to give one command.

Animal encounters: Certain animals may be encountered during the course of play and some may become involved in combat. The format used for giving animal information is given below, for a sample guard dog:
Hit Points: 5
Hand-to-Hand Combat: 70
Damage: 1-4
Defense Minus: -15
Speed: 30 ft./sec.
Other animals may be created by the GM as needed.

AFTERWORD
These rules are not complete, nor are they intended to be. Many sections were dropped from the original outline, including rules for airplanes, swimming, more weapons, security devices, special gadgets, exotic adventures, and more detailed contacts. As such, these (like so many other things) are left to the GM to design. The GM is encouraged to put his or her creativity into the game and mold it into the form he or she wants.

Some persons may complain that the rules are not realistic, or are not detailed enough. The intention of this game was to not create a great deal of burdensome detail. The game should be fun and not too difficult to play. The most important fact is that the GM and the players enjoy what they are doing.

The author would be interested in hearing any responses or suggestions that readers might have for *Crimefighters.* Please be aware, however, that totally negative criticism usually accomplishes little. Those who write should offer constructive suggestions for how things might be improved.

THE CASE OF THE EDITOR'S ENVELOPE

This is a sample adventure designed for use with the *Crimefighters* rules. The adventure will demonstrate several different ways to handle various aspects of an adventure as well as how to design an entire adventure for the game.

This adventure is best suited for 2-3 players of beginning characters, composed primarily of pragmatist and defender experience types. If more characters are involved, the GM may wish to increase the numbers and firepower of the opponents they will face. If the GM feels that the characters are weak or the players inexperienced, an off-duty policeman or private investigator may be added to the numbers as an NPC. This character should be controlled primarily by the players, the GM only taking control in crucial situations.

The adventure is divided info three sections: a description of the main NPC's, a listing of the sequence of events, and a section of maps and keys for the main events. The GM is advised to read all the sections, altering what he or she feels is necessary, before commencing with play. Furthermore, the GM may wish to place the adventure in some real location instead of the fictitious city where it is set. New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, or San Francisco are all suitable. To place the adventure in a city, the GM should obtain a street map of the city and locate the encounters on it. A ruler may be used to measure distance travelled (compared against the scale of the map), if the map is not clearly gridded. If the GM does not wish to use a real city, he or she may design an imaginary city that may be used for further adventures.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Louis Portmander: This man is the city editor of the *Morning Paper* and is concerned about his leading investigative reporter, Thomas Ripton. Portmander will be brusque and efficient and will want to get a story out of whatever occurs. He is bulky and strong, easily argumentative and violent if provoked.

Thomas "Tommy the Ripper" Ripton: Top reporter of the Morning Paper, he has purposely dropped out of sight because of the knowledge he has about Jack Tsein's activities. He will wish to remain undercover at all costs, but will want to have a go-between so that he may file stories with the paper. Ripton is lean and wiry, not very strong, but quick and capable. He carries a .38 Webley in his coat pocket. Accuracy Left — 39.

Jack Tsien: This Chinatown gang leader (commonly known as China Jack) is the head of a drug racket in the city. He has a great deal of influence on the underworld, particularly in Chinatown. He also has connections within the Golden Phoenix Tong and uses them for shadowing and assassinations. Currently, he and Albert Magnus are working together to obtain the formula for Professor Welburton's experimental drug. Tsien is tough and heartless and will kill any person who might cross him or get in his way. He also has plans to rub out Magnus once his usefulness is finished. He carries a .45 pistol in a shoulder holster and a razor in his boot. Accuracy Right — 74; Hand-to-hand — 68; Damage — 1-6.

Professor Welburton: This chemist, while trying to improve anesthetics for surgery, accidentally discovered a drug that will induce a zombie-like state in the user. Fearing the effects of this drug, Welburton intends to sell it to the government after he has developed a process to refine it further. He is a harsh and somewhat greedy man, little concerned for those around him. Recognizing and fearing that he could lose his fortune if he were robbed, he now carries a .32 pistol in the pocket of his lab coat. Accuracy Right — 24.

Albert Magnus: Magnus formerly worked as an assistant to Professor Welburton and was with him when the accidental discovery of the zombie drug was made. Seeing his opportunity to get ahead, Magnus stole the small quantity of processed drug that, existed, but failed to get the formula. He took the drug to China Jack and proposed a business deal. He has had some misgivings about the arrangement and may be persuaded to double-cross Jack, if he can gain something in the process. Magnus is somewhat athletic and handsome, but likes to lead a dissolute and spendthrift life. Tsien recently paid him and with the money, Magnus has been doing the town. He carries a Mauser under the seat of his car. Accuracy — 54.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Event #1

The characters will be approached at their homes or apartments or at their offices by Louis Portmander. He has an envelope to deliver to them and also wishes them to accompany him. The note in the envelope reads:

"Mr. Portmander will be in need of assistance, possibly in the near future. I understand from friends that you can be trusted. Please accompany him to the statue of General Lee in Washbark Square. Be there at 11:00 tonight. Signed: R."

If questioned, Portmander will describe receiving a letter in the afternoon mail. The letter contained a note asking him to be at the square at 11 p.m., but to first deliver the second envelope to the characters. If questioned concerning "R", he will not be very precise. He knows several persons whose names begin with R, but none of them would be likely to send such a note. If pressed to name any of these people, the GM should make up several names and occupations, slipping in Ripton's name at some point. Ripton has not been around the office for several days, but Portmander will not consider this unusual enough to mention, unless questioned specifically about it.

If the characters agree to go with Portmander, they will be shadowed by a member of the Golden Phoenix Tong. There is a 20% chance that the characters (as a group) will notice the shadow (+10 for characters with the special ability of sight). The tong member will follow on foot unless the characters take a car (Portmander will offer the use of his), in which case the shadow will be picked up by a dark blue sedan. Should the characters attempt to lose the sedan, use the Street Map provided. Statistics of those in the car are:

	Acc.	R.	H-t-H	Dam	HP	Weapon
Shadow:	77	45	1-4	10	S&W .38
Driver:	45	74	1-6	8	Colt .45, Good driver
Thug#1:	66	73	1-6	12	Thompson SMG
Thug#2:	64	92	1-8	11	Mauser 1912

Event #2

When the characters arrive at the square, there will be no one in sight. Surrounding the square are several businesses, most of which are closed for the night. The only ones open are two restaurants, catering to the late shift trade. The entire area is gloomy and dark.

If the characters have not lost or noticed the tail by now, the car will park about a block away, out of sight. The shadow will get out of the car and move to the corner to watch the characters.

After a short period of waiting, Ripton will step out of one of the diners (from where he has been watching) and start to move across the square toward the characters. As soon as this happens, the shadow will signal the tailing car. It will start up and drive around the corner with its lights out. The distance from the corner to the square is 300 feet. On a roll of 1 or 2, Ripton will not be concerned about the approaching car, either because he does not notice it or does not care. In this case, the

driver of the car will attempt to run Ripton down, doing 3-30 hit points of damage. If the car is noticed, the occupants will begin firing, primarily at Ripton and then at those who fire back at them. The car will screech to a stop across the square and the thugs will engage in a shootout until either Ripton is killed or incapacitated or two or more of their party is killed or incapacitated. In either case, the remaining thugs will then attempt to leave the scene of the crime. If they are not followed, nothing more will happen. If pursued, they will try to lose the characters. The GM should use the Street Map for the running gun battle/car chase.

All the thugs are oriental in appearance. If searched, each will have from 1-20 dollars, ammunition, and weapons. None will have any identification. The shadow will also have a sales receipt from a tea shop (China Jack's headquarters) in Chinatown. Ripton will have notes on him revealing that some gang (unknown) is after a formula belonging to Professor Welburton, The professor's address will be on the sheet. If Ripton is alive, he will file this story with Portmander and then leave. If the characters ask him, Ripton will accompany them to the professor's home. However, Ripton will be going to get a story, not to help.

Event #3

(Note: If characters decide to go directly to the tea shop, skip this event. In such a case, the robbery may be assumed to be successful.) If the characters go directly from Event #2 to the professor's home, they will arrive just in time to hear the sound of shots being fired from the laboratory. The GM should consult the map of the professor's home for further details concerning the layout of the grounds. The characters will be assumed to have arrived near the front gate unless they specifically state that they are going to find some other entrance,

Parked near the back gate is an empty speedster, while further down the block is a panel truck. The speedster belongs to one of the neighbors and is there to provide a distraction for the characters. In the panel truck is the getaway driver for two thieves, who are currently robbing the professor's home. (Driver: Acc. L — 47; H-t-H — 58; HP — 7; Beretta and switchblade, race car quality driver)

On the grounds are the two other thieves (#1: Acc. R. — 57; H-t-H — 48; HP — 4; #2: Acc. R. — 48; H-t-H — 58; Dam — 1-6; HP — 5; Webley .38; wounded in right shoulder). When the characters arrive, the thieves will just be leaving by the laboratory door. The will move at top speed toward the panel truck and then will leave the area unless detained by the characters.

In the laboratory, unconscious on the floor, is Professor Welburton. He will be able to describe (once revived) how, upon entering his lab, he discovered two men going through his safe. He fired at one and thinks he may have hit him. He was then knocked unconscious by the other thief.

If the characters should ask who is responsible for the crime, the professor will suspect Alfred Magnus, his former lab assistant. Magnus was dismissed after a suspicious theft occurred. The professor will be able to provide an address if requested, for Magnus.

A search of the grounds will yield the discovery of bloodstains (from the wounded man) and a curious-looking oriental pendant, If this pendant is examined by someone with archeological skill, he or she will be able to identify it as an ancient secret seal of the Golden Phoenix Tong, Characters may use contacts to attempt to learn the location of this tong's headquarters.

If the thieves are captured, each will have 1-10 dollars on his person and a pendant as described above. They will refuse to talk under normal circumstances or torture, They do know the location of the tong headquarters (the tea shop), If set free, they will attempt to lose any person following them into Chinatown.

If the thieves escape, the formula will have been stolen. The professor will reluctantly describe its effects to the players.

If the characters should decide not to go to the professor's house immediately after their encounter at event #2, they will read of a robbery at the professor's house in the newspaper the

following morning, No Glues will be available unless the characters are given permission to search the grounds, something the professor will be reluctant to grant.

Event #4

If the characters decide to go to the apartment of Albert Magnus, they will find that he lives in a dingy brownstone flat, overlooking an alley. The apartment will have been ransacked and no indication of the formula or its location will be found, Magnus will not be present. Near the telephone will be a blank scratch pad. If any character thinks to take a rubbing of the top sheet of the pad, a telephone number will be obtained. This will be the number of the tea house in Chinatown. A bank book will also be found, if the room is searched. It will indicate that Magnus deposited a large amount of money in the last few weeks, only to withdraw it gradually over a period of several days. Stuffed in a desk drawer will be many racing sheets and betting stubs for the local horse track. Checking these will show that Magnus seemed to consistently choose losers at the track.

If the phone number is called or a character inquires of a contact such as a bookie, they will discover that Magnus had been betting heavily at both the track and the booking parlor in the back of the tea shop. Further inquiries may reveal that he was in debt to Jack Tsien, a local underworld racketeer and loan shark.

Event #5

By now, characters should have acquired enough clues that clearly indicate the tea house as the source of all major actions. If they decide to investigate it, use the Tea Shop map. If the formula has been stolen, make no changes in the tea shop description. If the robbery was thwarted, no tong members will have the professor's experimental drug. If, for some reason, the characters call the police to raid the tea shop, the raid will prove only that the shop is a front for a bookmaking operation, and will not yield any other information.

STREET MAP

Not all detail has been placed on the street map, so that the GM may add further streets and areas as desired. Likewise, the type of district(s) the streets pass through (industrial, residential, warehouses, etc.) has not been detailed to allow the map to be used for several different encounter situations. The following list of encounters is a typical one for characters travelling through the areas given on the map. The GM may wish to create further encounters according to how he or she wishes the campaign to develop. All encounters, with the exceptions of B and E, are keyed to occur when the characters use one of the streets around the encounter area. The GM may wish to have several of the listed encounters occur no more than once per adventure.

A. Washbark Square: See event #2.

B. Train Tracks: Every time the characters approach the train tracks, there is a 20% chance that a train will also be approaching them. The train moves at 40 miles per hour (58 feet per second) and will be 100 to 300 feet from the intersection. Characters will sight the train at 50-300 feet. Compare the speeds of the two vehicles (train and automobile) in the characters' try to get past the train, A train will do 10-60 points of damage to each occupant inside a vehicle it hits and will take 1-2 minutes to pass if a vehicle stops for it at a Grossing,

C. Truck: A truck pulls out (visible from more than 500 feet away), blocking the intersection ahead. The characters must either stop and turn around or immediately take a side street. If they choose the latter, they must turn onto one of the nearby streets at their present speed.

D. Cop on Beat: A policeman (not visible until encountered) is standing on the corner. If passed at a speed greater than 30 mph, there is a 40% chance that he will call in, and 1-3 police cars will pursue the offending vehicle. They will arrive and take up the chase in 1-2 minutes.

STREET MAP
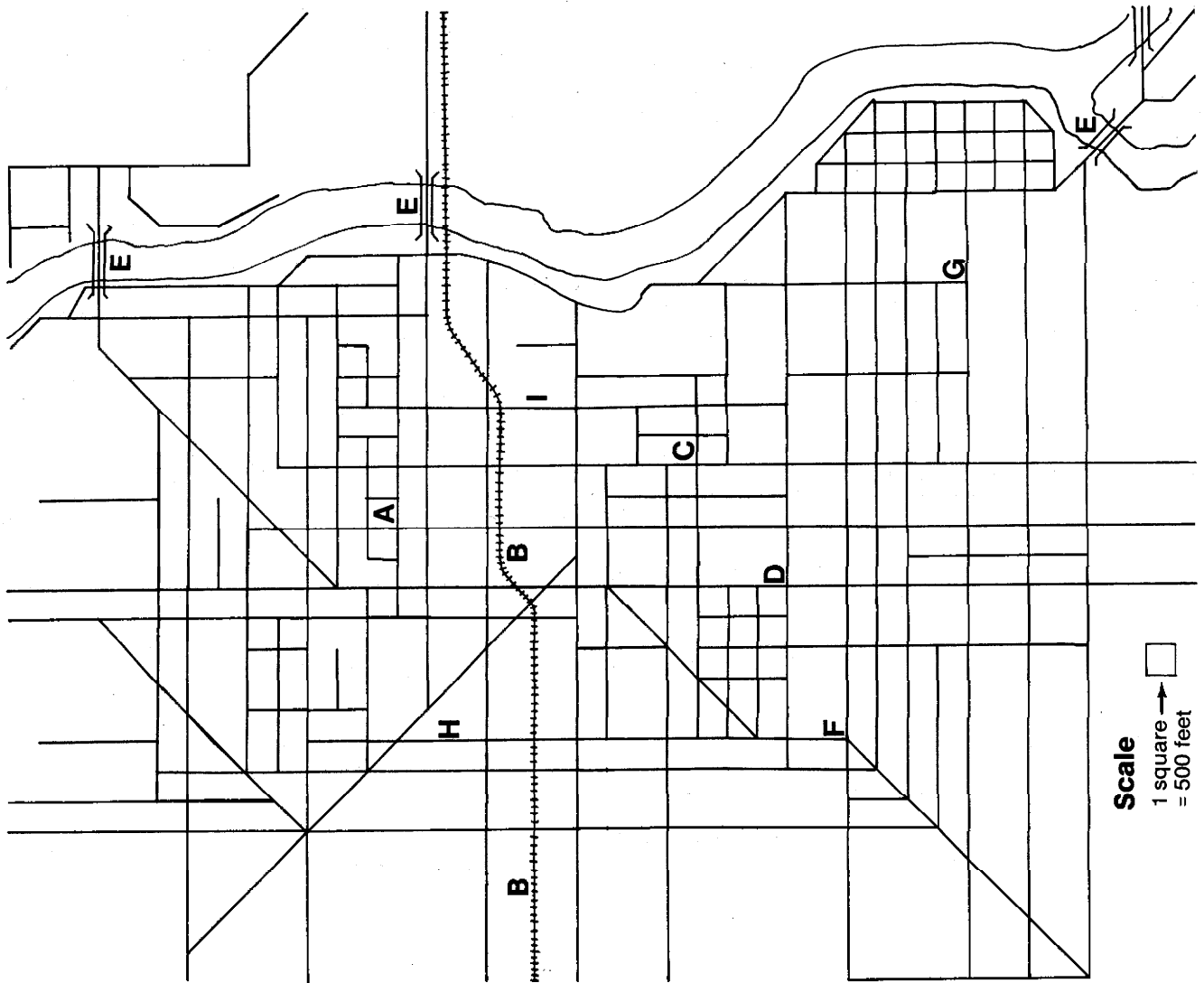
E. Drawbridges: There is a 30% chance that any bridge will be positioned up, to allow a ship to pass under, when a vehicle approaches it.

F. Road Work: A street crew is at work and has narrowed traffic down to a single lane. There is a 50% chance that characters will have to wait for 1-20 seconds before being allowed to pass on. Vehicles may go through the barriers around the closed lane without waiting, but must roll on the vehicle damage table (-10 on the die roll).

G. Wet Street: The street at this location is extremely wet, due either to recent rain or an open hydrant. Vehicles moving faster than 45 mph must roll their speed or higher on percentile dice to see if they remain in control. Failure to do so will result in a roll on the vehicle damage table. The chance of accident while turning a corner at this intersection is doubled.

H. Drunk: As characters come down this street, a drunk will step out of the shadows and start to cross the street. Characters must swerve to avoid him. If the vehicle is going faster than 25 mph, there is a percentage chance of rolling the car over, equal to the speed of the vehicle (in mph) minus 25. A "rollover" roll results in an automatic +20 on the vehicle damage table. If the drunk is hit, he will be killed.

I. Hitchhiker: A young woman is attempting to hitch a ride. If picked up, she will explain how her date got drunk and couldn't drive, so she had to walk home. If picked up but not taken to her destination (GM's choice) immediately, she will begin to scream for help as loud as she can. The GM should decide whether this will attract any attention.

PROFESSOR'S HOME
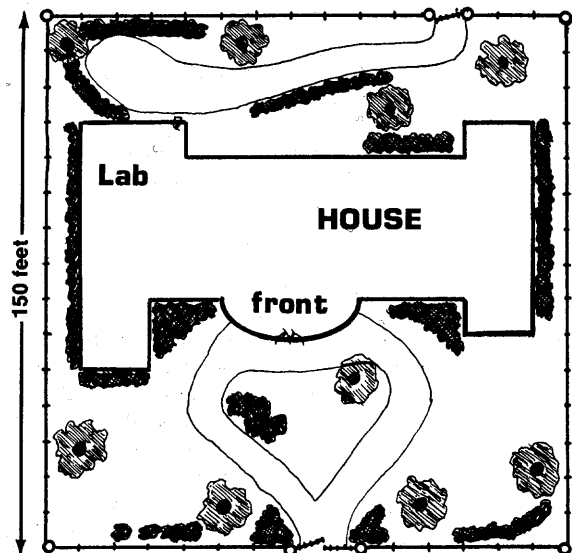
This map has been left very simple. None of the interior detail is given, since it is not necessary for the adventure. If the GM wishes, he or she may design floor plans to match the building. The house is two stories tall, plus an attic and basement.

TEA SHOP MAP

This shop is located in the center of a block in Chinatown. The street outside is quiet and deserted. In general, the area appears to be run down. Over the storefront is a weathered sign, written in both English and Chinese, announcing that this is Fat Loo's Tea House and Importer. To either side of the door are two large curtained windows.

1. Main Room: This room is dingy and smoky and is decorated with many gaudy-looking oriental furnishings. Along the right wall (viewed from the entrance) are two small tables with four chairs around each table. Along the back and left walls are shelves, counters and barrels, apparently filled with different types of tea. Near the left corner of the back wall is a curtained opening, apparently leading to an office. A similarly curtained opening leads to a passage going to the back of the building.

Standing behind the counter near the office is a burly oriental wearing a T-shirt, pants, and apron. He works for the tea shop and will attempt to answer questions from characters regarding the merchandise. He will inform those who ask that the two passages merely lead to a storeroom and an office, and that customers are not allowed in either place. Should the characters attempt to force their way past him, he will draw a knife and bang on the office wall with his fist, while calling loudly in Chinese.

One man is sitting at each table. Closest to the door is an old oriental, quietly sipping a cup of tea. If any commotion occurs, he will attempt to slip out the front door unnoticed. The other is a tong member, stationed there to guard the operations in the back room. Should there be any trouble, he will use his knives with great accuracy. Statistics for the two guards are as follows:

	Acc.	R. H-t-H	Dam	HP	Weapon
Employee	75	96	1-8	13	knife
Guard	79	65	1-6	10	throwing knife (4)

2. Office: This is the office of the tea shop. In the room is a small wall desk and a stool. The desk is strewn with papers and small samples of teas. Altogether, it looks much like a normal small business's office. If the papers are searched, they will reveal nothing but sales and import records of teas. There is a .32 pistol in the desk drawer.

3. Storeroom: This room is filled with bales and bricks of tea, along with a few simple cleaning tools (broom, mop, etc.). Searching the bales will reveal nothing.

4. Bookmaker: The door to this room is a heavy, paneled, reinforced door with a small peephole in it. It is locked with a Class IV lock. Sitting on a stool near the door inside the room is another tong guard. He will only open the door if a secret knock is given.

Sitting at large desks in the opposite far corners are bookies. Each desk has a phone and a large number of papers on which bets have been written down. The center desk (unoccupied) is equipped with a silent buzzer that will alert the tong members in their secret rooms upstairs. If the buzzer is pushed, the tong members will arrive through the secret panel within 15 to 30 seconds. The panel is 20% detectable. Neither of the bookies are armed and they will not fight.

	Acc.	L H-t-H	Dam	HP	Weapon
Guard	47	86	1-8	9	Colt .45

5. China Jack's office: This lushly paneled office is the headquarters of China Jack. It is furnished in western style with a desk chair, side chair, etc. Sitting in a corner behind the desk is a Class VIII safe. China Jack is in the room (at or near the desk) and will not be surprised if shots have been fired or the buzzer alarm has been sounded. He will attempt to use the desk for cover if he is involved in a gun battle. For further information concerning China Jack, see the Cast of Characters.

In the safe are the following objects: A paper describing the professor's formula, other papers which are reports on bookmaking profits, $500 in cash, and a single paper listing addresses of stashes of drugs.

6. Tong quarters: This room is where the tong holds its large gatherings. Most other business is conducted in restaurants
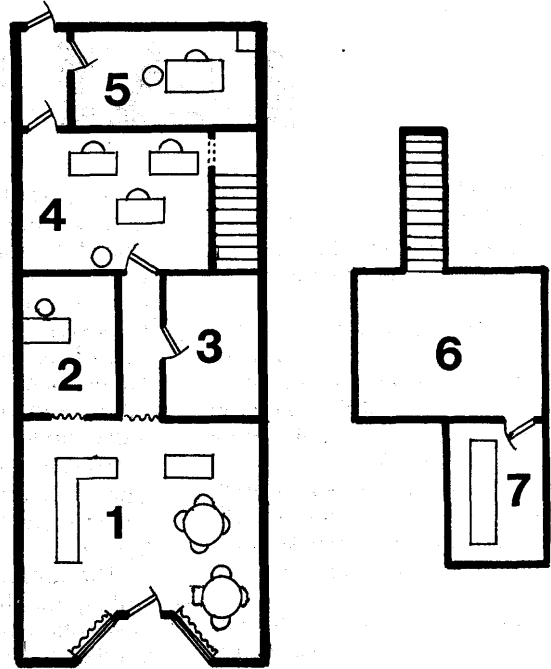
around Chinatown by the tong leaders. The room is simply furnished and poorly lit. A heavy odor of incense fills the air, enamating from a smoldering burner. Mixed with the incense is the scent of opium smoke.

In the room are three tong members. One of these is currently out of action, since he is under the effects of opium. The other two will respond to any alarms or gunshots that are sounded. Their statistics are as follows:

	Acc.	R. H-t-H	Dam	HP	Weapon
Tong#1	74	43	1-4	7	knife*
Tong#2	26	47	1-6	6	knife*

*Both of the knives have been dipped in the professor's drug. If the drug is not resisted successfully, the victim will fall into a zombie-like state. Any other person may then attempt to direct the affected person. In the case of conflicting orders, the victim will follow the instructions of the person with the greatest Willpower. The effect of the drug lasts for 2-12 hours.

7. Laboratory: Using the talents of chemists who normally process his opium for him, China Jack has been attempting to produce a large quantity of the experimental drug. The room has one long table filled with many different types of laboratory equipment. At present, the only person in the room is Albert Magnus. He was the first person China Jack tested the drug on, and he is now under orders to attack anyone, other than Jack or the chemist (presently absent) who might enter the room. This he will do, fighting at a -10 in H-t-H combat because of his semi-drugged state. He will not use guns or knives.

If the characters search, there is an 80% chance that they will find a small quantity of the experimental drug, enough to spread on two knives.

COMPENSATION

Depending on the actions of the characters and their degree of success, the GM may wish to have the characters rewarded, by either Louis Portmander or Professor Welburton. Such a reward should be about $100 to $200. The characters may also ask that any expenses be paid for, but the chance of getting these will depend on the mood of the payer. Likewise, the characters may choose to keep anything they find during the course of the adventure, as all or part of their reward, instead of an additional gift.

THE PULPS:
PAPER HEROES

by Bryce Knorr

"The Case of the Editor's Envelope"? Secret formulas? Cardboard-hero good guys battling villains straight out of Saturday morning cartoons?

If *CRIMEFIGHTERS* sounds too corny to be true, remember this: The pulp heroes weren't life-sized characters when they were created in the 1930s, and the decades have done little to make them appear any more realistic.

Dave Cook's rules and his wonderfully two-dimensional scenario capture both the style and the spirit of these wonderfully two-dimensional protagonists and their genre.

The pulp heroes were the last hurrah of those mass-produced, formula-fiction factories known as the pulp magazines. Born about the turn of the century, the pulps — they took their name from the inexpensive paper on which they originally were printed — were usually of suspect literary quality, But besides inflaming the imaginations of millions of readers, the magazines provided a financial foothold for numerous writers who went on to create stories and books that are the great works that the pulps were (for the most part) not.

Ray Bradbury, Max Brand, Jack London, Sinclair Lewis, Stephen Crane, H.P. Lovecraft — the list of authors whose works appeared in the pulps is long. Long also is the list of styles that flourished between those covers that promised fantastic fantasy and thrilling thrillers: From the whodunit to the horror story, from the Wild West to the the moons of Mars, the pulps helped establish science fiction and fantasy in the literary experience of the 20th Century,

The pulp publishers were in it, of course, for the money (some things never change). Fortunes flowed from the promises of the sensational and the sleazy. With literally hundreds of competitors on the newsstands, the publishers constantly searched for the type of story that would sell. And, in the 1930s, they struck gold with tales of modern knights battling evil —the tales that provided the fodder for "Crimefighters."

The publishers could hardly help but notice that their largest-selling issues were ones featuring heroes — or villains — familiar to their audience, main characters developed in earlier editions. From that formula, it was a short alley-vault to continuing series based upon the daring exploits of a modern hero.

The first of these pulp heroes was The Shadow, the nemesis of the night born from the runaway typewriter of Walter Gibson in the early 1930s. The pulp business was no more imaginative then than television or Hollywood is today; soon, a host of heroes was spawned to capitalize on the success of The Shadow, from The Spider and The Octopus to Doc Savage and countless others,

"They'd do anything to sell," says Fred Cook (no relation to Dave), an Ohio-based collector and authority on pulp fiction.

"The authors realized they were not writing deathless prose (some things never change). I spoke to one who told me, 'I write for the people who move their lips when they read.'"

"The writers would be told, 'We need 80 pages on such and such,' and then they'd lock themselves in their rooms and knock out that number of pages on their typewriters."

Perhaps the pulp heroes were too successful. Within a few years comic books appeared, copying their hero-based formula, and the competition, coupled with World War II paper shortages, sent the periodical fiction business plummeting. A few of the pulps survived, mostly in name only, or in a different medium, like radio. But the pulps' skyrocket was locked in a tailspin from which it never really recovered.

Yet here we are, March 1981, stuffed with 20-pages plus of *Crimefighters.* The day of the pulp heroes was short-lived, but their impact remains.

"Doc Savage" is soon to be a movie; reprints of that series and The Shadow are still selling, and a first issue of The Shadow Magazine can fetch $600, $700 or more. That's not as much as an original Superman, but it's enough to make the pulps in Fred Cook's basement more an investment than a fire hazard.

The relative cost of pulps compared to other collectibles has sparked interest in the genre, says Cook, who runs FAX Collectors Editions as a sidelight. Although still a specialty, 150 to 200 pulp aficionados gather at their own convention each year, and the number is growing,

"I like to read them," Cook says, "I'm not that old — I was born in the early 30s — so I never got a chance to read the magazines when they first came out."

Cook believes the public —whether it knows it or not — has a strong appetite for the type of hero mold cast by the pulp heroes of the 1930s.

"Look at the James Bond Movies," he says, "He's a fantasy hero, with flying cars and evil villains. People love that stuff — it's nothing but a pulp magazine brought onto the screen."

Looking deeper, into the American character, Cook sees similarities between the social climate of today and that of the 1930s, parallels that may account for some of the renewed interest in pulps, as well as illustrate some good — and not so good — points about our society,

Besides a distressed economy, the U.S. spirit in the 1930s felt isolated in a world of fascism and foreign ideologies. There were villains aplenty, both abroad and at home.

"We're back to the same place," says Cook. "No one trusts THE GOVERNMENT, in capital letters, and everybody is looking for Ronnie Reagan to put on his robe and kiss his ring and to fly into the air and solve all the problems."

"In the early 1930s, everything was going to Hell," says Cook. "There were gangsters in Chicago and New York, and the police couldn't handle it. People were looking for the "hero" and then The Shadow came along. He took the law into his own hands and did what a lot of citizens wished they could do."

The country wanted heroes, he says, and heroes it got, not unlike the adulation that greeted the hostages upon their return to the U.S.

The Iranian tragedy has brought cries of "filthy Arabs" and "Nuke Iran," and the pulps here, too, may say something about our collective mentality — something not quite so nice as the good guys winning. Those pulp magazines and novels were filled with demeaning racial stereotypes, and not a little sadistic violence.

"The Spider," says Cook, "when he caught up with a villain on the top of a skyscraper, instead of knocking him out and coming down the 47 stories and giving him to the cops, he pushed him off the edge — after sticking him with a ring that left an impression to show that 'The Spider' did it."

The pulps didn't make it past World War II - because of paper shortages and comic books, sure. And maybe the fact that the war turned a lot of real, everyday people into heroes — heroes who were more than two-dimensional creations from a typewriter.