We at Privateer Press are very excited that Iron Kingdoms Full Metal Fantasy Roleplaying Game: Kings, Nations, and Gods releases later this year. To celebrate, we’re counting down to launch day with free new RPG content every Friday! From now until launch, you’ll be able to download new careers, equipment, monsters, and more on Full Metal Fridays. Each month will showcase a different theme and will culminate in an event Game Masters can drop right into games. For the third month of Full Metal Fridays we’re taking a look at the intrepid scholars and other adventurers delving into the remains of history.

Check back every Friday for new Iron Kingdoms RPG content!

INSTALLMENT 3, WEEK 1:

EQUIPPING YOURSELF FOR AN EXPEDITION

BY WILLIAM "OZ" SCHOONOVER

Over the 800 years of their occupation of western Immoren, the Orgoth built many structures, from massive fortress cities to extensive catacombs. Few of these survived the Scourge, but isolated Orgoth tombs and vaults can still be found scattered across the Iron Kingdoms. In addition, even older places of interest exist. Sites from the Thousands Cities era and those originating from Morrdh or other ancient civilizations attract explorers looking for knowledge, wealth, and power.

These vaults contain secrets that have lain undisturbed for hundreds of years. Some of these secrets are very valuable, but all of them are dangerous. Expeditions to search out these sites are launched by a variety of groups, including universities, arcane organizations, and somewhat shadier elements of society.

Expeditions into ancient ruins require a mix of scholarly knowledge and combat skills and should never be undertaken lightly. Besides the possibility of conflict, explorers might also face myriad other challenges unique to the environment.

GEAR

The first step to preparing to investigate an ancient location is making sure the group is properly equipped. Most often, a company investigating these sites includes scholars, their assistants, and bodyguards. While the group’s guards carry conventional gear, scholars typically employ more specialized equipment.
The Durkin bar can also be used as an entrenching spade. A character using a Durkin bar to attempt to pry open a door or lever a heavy weight gains a +2 bonus to his STR roll. A character must have at least STR 5 to use this weapon and can only use this weapon two-handed. The most common length of Durkin bar sold in the Iron Kingdoms is thirty-six inches, but they are available in multiple lengths, including the massive seven-foot heavy Durkin bar has found its way into the equipment of many explorers and thieves. Cast as a single piece of steel incorporating elements of a pick, adze, and pry bar, this versatile tool can be used as a lever, digging tool, or improvised weapon.

**ALL-WEATHER NOTEBOOK**

Cost: 20 gc
Description: This is a leather-bound journal in a leather slipcase. Both the leather and the paper have been alchemically treated to resist the destructive effects of inclement weather. The pages cannot be written on with regular ink, and the notebook is sold with a supply of all-weather ink. Replacement bottles of this special ink can be bought separately for 5 gc each.

**BOTTLED LIGHT**

Cost: 15 gc
Description: Bottled light (Core Rules, p. 294) can be very useful when exploring any underground structure, as it does not ignite pockets of dangerous gases like a torch or lantern would.

**DURKIN BAR**

Cost: 15 gc
Skill: Great Weapon
Attack Modifier: –2
POW: 5
Description: Designed centuries ago by the prominent Rhulic mining clan from whom it takes its name, the Durkin bar has found its way into the equipment of many explorers and thieves. Cast as a single piece of steel incorporating elements of a pick, adze, and pry bar, this versatile tool can be used as a lever, digging tool, or improvised weapon.

The most common length of Durkin bar sold in the Iron Kingdoms is thirty-six inches, but they are available in multiple lengths, including the massive seven-foot heavy Durkin bar designed for use by ogrun.

**Special Rules:** A character must have at least STR 5 to use this weapon and can only use this weapon two-handed.

A character using a Durkin bar to attempt to pry open a door or lever a heavy weight gains a +2 bonus to his STR roll. The Game Master sets the target number for the STR roll based on the physical qualities of the object. Opening a rusted metal door or lifting an overturned wagon might require a successful STR roll against a target number of 12, while opening a heavy hinged stone door or lifting a large stone might have a target number of 18 or more.

The Durkin bar can also be used as an entrenching spade.

**HAND PICK**

Cost: 5 gc
Skill: Hand Weapon
Attack Modifier: –1
POW: 2
Description: Nearly all expedition companies bring excavation tools such as pickaxes and shovels in case of buried ruins. In addition to these large tools, many scholars like to have a hand pick on their belts. These tools are basically hammers with an elongated spike on one side of the head. Many a scholar has found himself fighting for his life with a hand pick after using it to break into a chamber filled with aggressive creatures.

**Special Rules:** A character can spend 1 feat point to gain an additional damage die against knocked down and prone targets.

**PRESERVATION OF CORBEN PENDANT**

Cost: 21 gc
Description: The Preservation of Corben pendant was originally created for mining but quickly found its way into the standard tools of many other organizations that do extensive underground exploration. The main body of the pendant is made from a solidified alchemical compound that is normally black. When this compound comes into contact with methane, carbon monoxide, or an airborne poison, an immediate reaction causes it to turn white and begin glowing faintly. The brightness of the glow indicates the level of poison in the air.

The outer layer of the pendant slowly dissolves while it is exposed to harmful gas, but once the pendant is removed from contact with the poison it stops glowing.

**Special Rules:** The pendant glows very faintly when exposed to trace amounts of poisonous gas. As the level of poison grows, so does the glow of the pendant. If the glow becomes candle bright, the poison has reached dangerous levels and the character is in immediate danger of death. A pendant can glow at candle brightness for a total of eight hours before being completely consumed.

**Brewing Requirements:** Alchemy

**Ingredients:** 2 units of alchemist’s stone, 1 unit of arcane extract

**Total Material Cost:** 7 gc

**Alchemical Formula:** Brewing the Preservation of Corben compound and casting it into a pendant requires an alchemy lab and six hours. After three hours spent combining, cooking, and stabilizing the ingredients, the alchemist makes an INT + Alchemy roll against a target number of 14. If the roll succeeds, the character has successfully created a dose of Preservation of Corben and can pour the compound into a mold. After three additional hours the material solidifies. If the roll fails, the character creates one unit of alchemical waste (liquid).

Distribution: 3, 2, 1