

## Battlements & Crenellations

Posted by jackattack - 2008/04/20 13:29

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I am not a stacker, but sometimes it is useful to define an elevated area. The most obvious raised (finished) surface useful to fantasy gamers is probably the battlement of a castle or fortress.

We get by just setting out 2"x2" floor tiles to simulate a castle's battlements, but (someday) I'd like to see tiles built with 1/3- or 1/4-height crenellated walls. This set would largely mimic the standard Fantasy line, but would have different walls and might have a different floor surface. It might also include L-shaped "inside corner" pieces, as well as 2"x2" and 4"x4" curves (both inside and outside). Finally, some accessories such as "flat stairs" (similar to the stairs-going-down" floor tile) would allow non-stackers to show where stairs to different levels (or into the interior/courtyard areas) are located.

Another way to go would be a set of low crenellated walls designed to fit alongside (against the edges of) standard 2"x2" tiles. That allows us to use the floor tiles we already own (of any style, Fantasy or DoE or MBS or even Cavern), gives us the option of using the new set by itself as plain old walls, and reduces the final cost because there would be less actual material.

My questions are:

Would such a set be useful?

Is stacking (height) -- or lack thereof -- a deal-breaker?

What kinds of tiles/accessories would you include in a B&C (expansion) set?

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Posted by L - 2008/04/20 14:14

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Well, I'm all for ANYTHING DF wants to put out, because it's usually so well done.

However, I have to admit I'm not crazy about a battlements set. There are several problems with that, I think.

1. There are already good "castles" on the market, so it's not like we need DF for that kinda game. Both WK and GW made fortresses, and the WK one (which I thought was a fantastic, both in terms of its modular design and its general "look") was a huge failure, indicating that there may not be a market for that kinda thing.

2. This sorta thing is primarily useful for tabletop wargaming on an open field, while DF tends to be used for RPG or skirmish playing indoors. It seems like this is a step in the direction of using DF to make a fortress on an open plain for a siege, and while I think that could be cool, it feels like it "breaks the mold" a bit too much of the market niche DF occupies. Not that it would necessarily be a bad thing to broaden out a bit, but given the failure of WK's siege attempts... well...

3. Hirst Arts is still out there -- sure, the typical DF fan may not want to mess with it, but it still counts as something on the market to satisfy this and that means a potentially smaller market share for DF.

I also have to admit, on a personal level, I already have more than I can use of this sorta thing. I have the GW fortress (in fact I sold it, since it took up so much room and I have so many of these things) I

have the WK castle stuff. I have the GW Helm's Deep, which is just stunning. I don't have the GW Minis Tirth, but you get the idea. Plus I have HA. There really isn't a hole in my collection here...

Of course, if someone posts some really neat ideas about how to execute this idea, I'd probably come around.

L

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Posted by jackattack - 2008/04/20 16:21

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I was primarily thinking of skirmishes ON the battlements, rather than the open-field siege; instead of doing large-scale combat (unit vs unit), do melees atop the castle wall. Where ladders hit the wall, you would have a spawn point -- fight off the foes who climb the ladder, and perform a strength feat to get rid of the ladder itself. If you can get an opponent against the wall/edge, you have a chance of pushing him off and eliminating him from the combat. Random events like catapult shots or artillery spells might make the combat more difficult. But the focus is on the little fights and not on the larger battle, although different objectives might be set to determine a successful battle -- if more than half of the friendly archers on the wall are killed in melee, the greater battle will be lost; if more than X opponents get to the stairs leading down to the courtyard, the refugees sheltered there will be slaughtered.

You could also use the set to create balconies and overlooks to supplement indoor sets. If the set-up is a castle interior, then balconies would be a point of egress, alternate routes between rooms (Climb or Swing roll to get from one balcony to another, then Pick Locks to get back inside), or a hazard (back your opponent against the rail, then toss him off the balcony). If the set-up is a dungeon in a cliffside, then there might be places where ledges have been worked to form battlements ranging up the side of the cliff. One might even put a crenellated wall against the edge of an underground canal or lake or chasm.

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I do not consider HA in my ideas for DF. I think it's a great product, but I consider the do-it-yourself component to be a big enough difference from DF that I don't regard them as direct competitors. That may be short-sighted of me.

The main difference in what I'm suggesting and the existing products (that I know of) is that this would have little to no height/volume. I think the products you mention are very well done, but the reason I didn't buy them was a combination of cost, awkwardness of use on a medium-to-large table, and unwillingness to store the sheer bulk involved. (I also think that packaging on some of them is not conducive to storage -- blister packs do not protect very much once they are opened.) The B&C concept I'm promoting (just the floor and the short wall) would have a lower profile than standard DF products, which means it stores like DF, doesn't hide figures or tokens from any angle, and may cost less than most other castle products.

Additionally, DF's modular-ness is at 2"x2", as opposed to most castle pieces (which are often 6" or larger) -- this allows us to build interesting layouts in much less space than most available castle products.

Your point about the failure of other castle products is a very good one, and probably the one that should

be the absolute make-or-break consideration. However, I will point out that Mage Knight's attempt at a modular dungeon was also a failure. I don't know if Ainsty folded because their modular products didn't sell, or if it was something else (overextension, one or more parties pulling out to do other things, etc.)

If a DF Crenellations set was restricted to JUST the low crenellated wall and some floor tiles (and a few specialty tiles and accessory pieces), I think it would be sufficiently different from the other castles on the market to find its own niche.

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## **Battlements & Crenellations**

Posted by blairgb - 2008/04/20 18:55

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I don't know if Ainsty folded because their modular products didn't sell, or if it was something else (overextension, one or more parties pulling out to do other things, etc.) .

The owner passed away.

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