

Masterwork Maps: The Green Gables Inn

25mm Floor Plans

I must admit that of all my travels in the Duchy of Welgredd, I least enjoyed the County of Husechad. In years past I found its citizens to be goodly folk who welcomed travelers along the trade-way. Given the County's location along the Duchy's northern border and the recent wars, however, the peoples' hospitality has been replaced by open suspicion and outright distrust. Though understandable, the tension was distasteful and I resigned to make my stay as brief as possible.

The town of Husechad was my principle place of interest. As the County's seat, it houses the ancestral estate of the Count of Husechad (the war having warranted the appointment from his former station as Baron to this higher noble ranking). Given the opulent trappings of his fortified mansion, the Count obviously relishes his new status - and levies taxes upon his people to pay for his lavish lifestyle.

Though my opinion of Husechad was increasingly tainted by cynicism, I wandered the town streets until I came to Husechad's central plaza. Thankfully the bustling merchants' bazaar was refreshing and enjoyable. Caravans from many cities and states travel the trade-way, and Husechad continues to prosper from this thriving trade.

While wandering the plaza, I could not help but notice a short, round, middle-aged woman surrounded by domesticated cats. Nearly a dozen felines swarmed about her as she purchased large quantities of vegetables, roots, and meats. Despite her small stature, she pushed her food-laden cart through the market and haggled skillfully with the farmers. My curiosity got the better of me, and I learned from the farmers that she was Vindi, owner of the Green Gables Inn. Their directions were easy enough to follow, and after a short walk through several rather obscure side streets, I arrived at the Green Gables Inn.

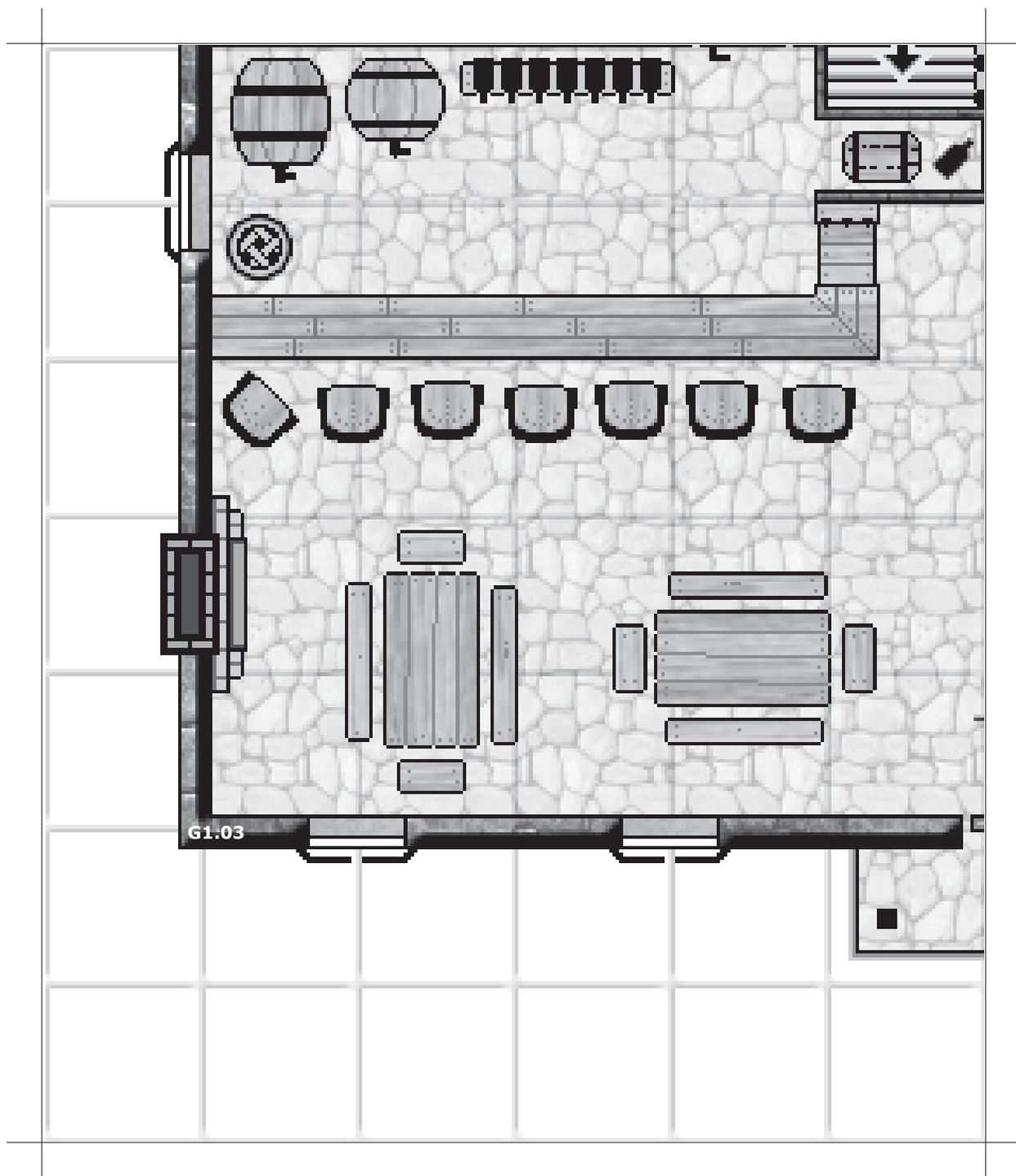
The Green Gables Inn is an imposing, two-story hostel in relatively good repair despite its age and the ivy creeping across the outer walls. True to its name, the structure's shutters and gables are painted a dark hunter's green in strong contrast to the flaking whitewash on the limestone walls. The hostel and adjoining shed are roofed with wooden shingles regularly tarred with pitch to minimize leaks from the heavy annual rainfall, and four hearths heat the inn during the winter.

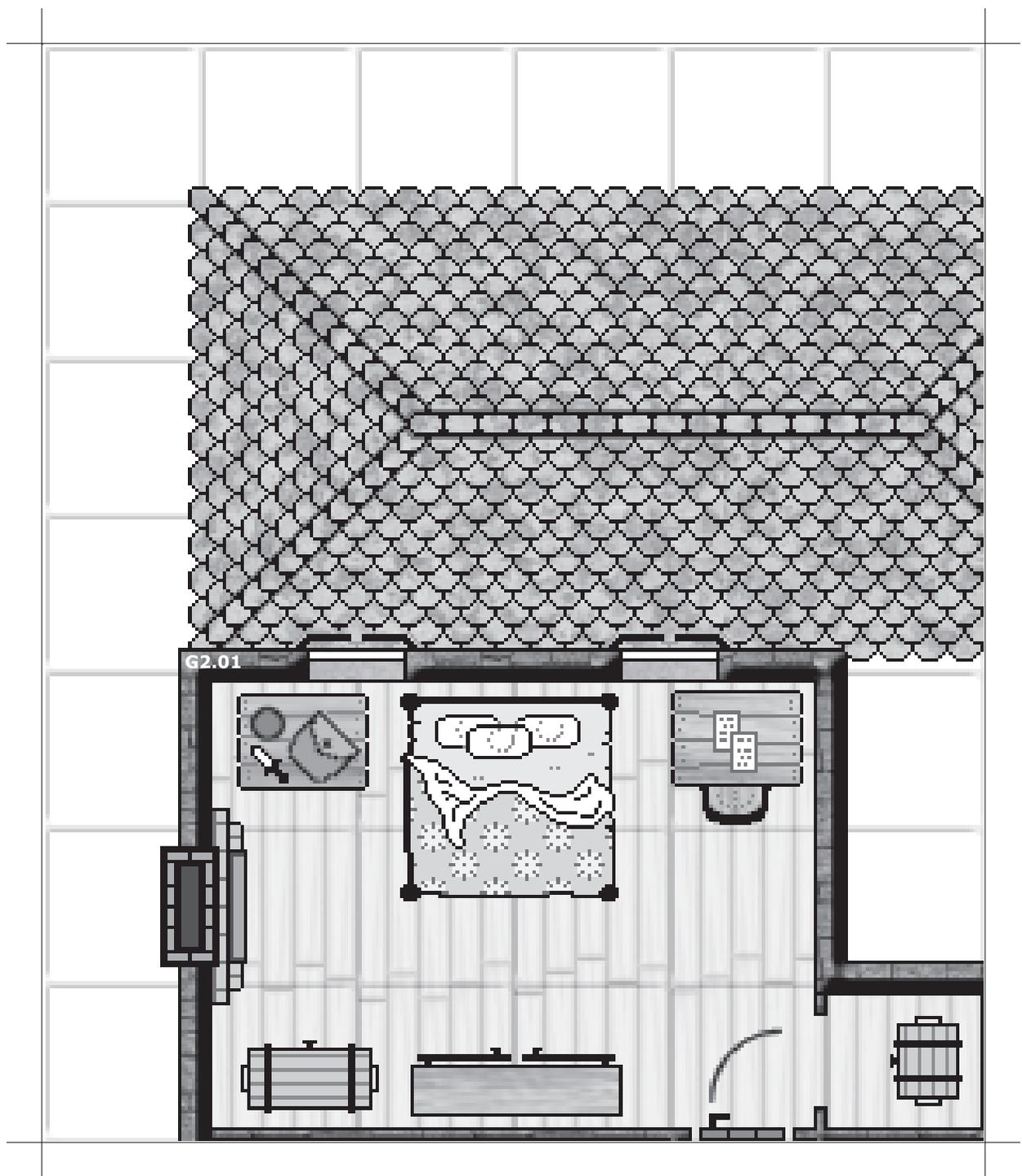
The first floor of the Green Gables is paved with smooth flagstone, and the interior walls are paneled with richly oiled cedar planks that lend a pleasant aroma to the place. The tables and chairs are of ordinary workmanship, and include seating obviously scaled for small-sized patrons. The bar is similarly clean but unremarkable, and the Inn apparently caters to middle-class merchants and travelers. I later learned that the Inn has a modest number of rooms available, with accommodations for small-sized guests as well.

All of this being well and good, I was completely surprised by the Green Gables' unexpected occupants and furnishings. Vindi, apparently, is quite the eccentric whose love of cats may well be unhealthy. No less than a score of housecats brazenly roam the first floor, paying little attention to the comings and goings of the Inn's patrons. More disturbing, however, was the large number of small shelves adorning the walls - each displaying a cat that, upon casual examination, had been preserved by a local taxidermist. At this point, only my curiosity kept me from leaving the establishment.

I later learned that Vindi has had over a hundred cats throughout her life. Upon their passing, each of her cats receives a place of honor on the walls, and prudent guests do not mock Vindi's love for her pets. Overall, I found the cats surprisingly well-mannered and they are not permitted upon the tables. I suspect the polishing oil aroma does help mask the pets' odor.

I was a guest of the Green Gables for several days and, when all was said and done, I was satisfied with my stay. Vindi runs the Green Gables with the help of her son and his wife. The three maintain a solid establishment, Vindi's eerie obsession notwithstanding. Persons looking for hard liquors will find little to satisfy their thirst, for drinks at the Green Gables include only milk (a solid favorite amongst the felines), ale, mulled wine, and water. Though not exceptional, the food is wholesome and agreeable to the palate. Breakfasts include sausage or ham served with eggs and biscuits, and beef or venison is generally served with dinner. Leftovers are incorporated into the next day's luncheon soup. Fish is not served, though Vindi does prepare an interesting eel stew.





Second Floor • map G2-01

Green Gables Inn (preview)

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