FORGOTTEN REALMS®
Fan Written Adventures

NORTHERN JOURNEY™

The Great Dale

Part 6
For Character Levels 11-16

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An unofficial Adventure in the Forgotten Realms®

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Fan Written Adventures

NORTHERN JOURNEY™

Part 6, The Great Dale

Version 2.0

For Adventuring Groups of Levels 11-16

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Version 2.0

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Part 6 of Northern Journey
is dedicated to
Eric L. Boyd,
Ed Greenwood,
Steven E. Schend
and above all
George Krashos.

The ideas realized here aren't theirs at all.

But other ideas they had and shared with us
sowed the seeds from which this tale grew

- The Vintyri Project

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Supporting materials

To successfully play this adventure, players need the *D&D 3E Player's Handbook* or the *AD&D 2nd Edition Players Handbook*. Game Masters need the *D&D Dungeon Master's Guide* or the *AD&D 2nd Edition Dungeon Master's Guide* and the basic 2nd Edition *Forgotten Realms Campaign Set,* which is included among the ESD downloads available in Internet from RPG Now at http://www.rpgnow.com.

Of certain additional value are such products as the TSR accessories FR9 *The Bloodstone Lands*, FR6 *Dreams of the Red Wizards*, FR11 *Dwarves Deep*, the boxed set *Spellbound* and the *"gods books" - Faiths and Avatars, Powers and Pantheons* and *Demihuman Deities*, all also available as ESD downloads from RPG Now.

The *Northern Journey* version of the Great Dale and the version in the 3rd Edition of the *Forgotten Realms* are not completely compatible. This accessory was produced before the release of the *FR 3E* accessory *The Unapproachable East* (WotC - May 2003) and is not compatible with it. For all of the details on the incompatibilities, please see the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide.*

The population of Lethyr Forest uses creatures from the *D&D Monster Manual* corebook and the d20® publications *Minions Rebirth* by Greg Dent from *Bastion Press* (2002) and *Alchemy & Herbalists* by Steven E. Schend (2001), also from Bastion Press. For more information on the Bastion Press publications, please see the Internet site http://www.bastionpress.com .

The first four segments of *Northern Journey* expand upon TSR's and WotC's definitions of the Realms but only seldom step out of line with them. Starting with the previous segment – *Impiltur* - the situation is entirely different. At the time these segments were written, TSR and WotC had done little for a decade to provide new information on Impiltur, the Great Dale, Damara and Vaasa.

The last regional release for this area was the accessory FR9 *The Bloodstone Lands* from the year 1989. Former WotC game designer Steven Schend and freelancers Eric L. Boyd and George Krashos later worked on a regional update to have been called *The Demon Lands*, but WotC has shelved this work, and Schend, Boyd and Krashos are not producing new FR material for WotC at present. The May 2003 release *The Unapproachable East* updates the Great Dale and Thesk but does not deal with Damara and Vaasa.

Our work is current only through the pre-3E products and does not take the newer descriptions in the *FR 3E* products into account. We do not plan an update.

Northern Journey describes these areas in great, unofficial detail, including events since the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), when the chronology of FR9 ended. This segment begins with unofficial but highly detailed campaign setting expansion material for the Great Dale and Ashanath. The WotC and *Northern Journey* definitions of these lands no doubt will be light years apart from each other.

Many Game Masters do not let their own campaign decisions be swayed by the question of official WotC descriptions. Such Game Masters also will have no problem with the campaign setting expansion in this module. Other Game Masters wish very much to run their adventures within the scope of so-called *canon*. If you fall within the second group, please consider carefully what impact this unofficial expansion may have upon your Realms.

A note about Waukeen: The *Merchants' Friend* disappeared during the *Time of Troubles* and was not heard from again for several years. The goddess Lliira, Waukeen's friend stepped in as a caretaker for the interests of the goddess of trade, but in the years after her disappearance, her church dwindled and many of her temples were closed, sold, etc. During this time, Waukeen was held prisoner in the lower planes by the Abyssal Demon Lord Graz'zt. According to the 3E FRCS, she was rescued officially late in the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR).

PC groups that play through the seventh segment of *Northern Journey,* named *Bloodstone,* will be adventurers of epic level character who are unsuited for most modules or the normal adventures most Game Masters create. Nonetheless, some Game Masters and players no doubt will want to continue adventuring with the *NJ* adventure group.

After the *Northern Adventure* journey is completed, Game Masters can run the sequel called *In the Land of the Lich Lords.* It gives the Game Master an opportunity to use *For Duty and Deity* in 1372 DR and also to continue on to the dungeons of the lich lords in the Savage Frontier of the North.

Those who intend to use *In the Land of the Lich Lords* will need to leave Waukeen unrescued though *NJ*, because the heroes of the *NJ* adventure will be the ones to rescue her in the first part of the epic adventure *In the Land of the Lich Lords.*

Questions & Answers ...for Players and Game Masters

How Can a Non-NJ-Game Master Use This Work?

The *Northern Journey* campaign plot plays a secondary role in this segment. The sigylls that *NJ* PCs bear will draw them to the eastern Great Dale to a confrontation with the lich Harbet Gall, but other PC groups are likely to want to hunt down the lich as well, once they've learned of his existence, which shouldn't take long after they reach the Dale.

However, if you're seeking some plot ideas for use in the Great Dale, here are some that non-*NJ*-Game Masters who playtested this accessory used successfully:

- The Elven leaders in Evermeet send a group of Moon Elves out to learn what happened to the Mal T'unan tribe, of which there has been no trace since their migration from the Dale centuries ago.
- The PCs learn of a great treasure lost somewhere in Rawlinswood or Lethyr Forest. This could be a genuine treasure or a hoax.
- The PCs want to investigate the mysterious Nentyarch.
- The party has been captured and enslaved by Thayans. They are sold to agents of Skith Tsornagar in Bezentil and are scheduled to be prey in the next Great Hunt.
- The PCs start out to investigate the Iron Throne in New Sarshel.

Reading the history of the Great Dale that follows and the detailed geographical suggestions in Book 2 should give you ideas too for many additional adventure hooks. The accessory is written to give you the Great Dale in a manner that lets you do what you wish with it, rather than leading you through the *NJ* adventure.

What's This Segment About?

This module is intended as a continuation of Part 5 of the *Northern Journey, Impiltur*. All Game Masters, regardless of whether they're running the *NJ* campaign, will have their PCs arrive somewhere in the Great Dale, probably in Uthmere. From there, the land is open to adventure. The PCs find a land torn for centuries by a religious civil war, something of an extended version of Europe's 30 Years War.

The basic ideas for our concept of the Great Dale came from Australian freelancer George Krashos and our own Webmaster, Mark Oliva, in Germany:

- George Krashos suggested in mailing list exchanges in 1996 the development of an area of the Realms that was experiencing something akin to the European 30 Years War. The idea generated substantial interest among FR Game Masters at the time but never resulted in a project to achieve that end.

- Mark Oliva was interested in an element of the *Threepenny Opera* text written by the Bavarian-Swabian playwright and poet Bertolt Brecht in the 1930s. In it, Brecht suggests that men of power can convince the common folk to accept the moral standards of the powerful only after they see to it that the commoners are fed.

In *The Great Dale,* we've attempted to merge these ideas and make of it an exciting setting for adventure. We've populated the Dale with a single folk divided by two druidic faiths, similar to the Christian schism that divided Europe into warring Catholic and Lutheran camps and we've used the threat of famine and starvation as the underground motivation for our Dalesmen to have divided themselves.

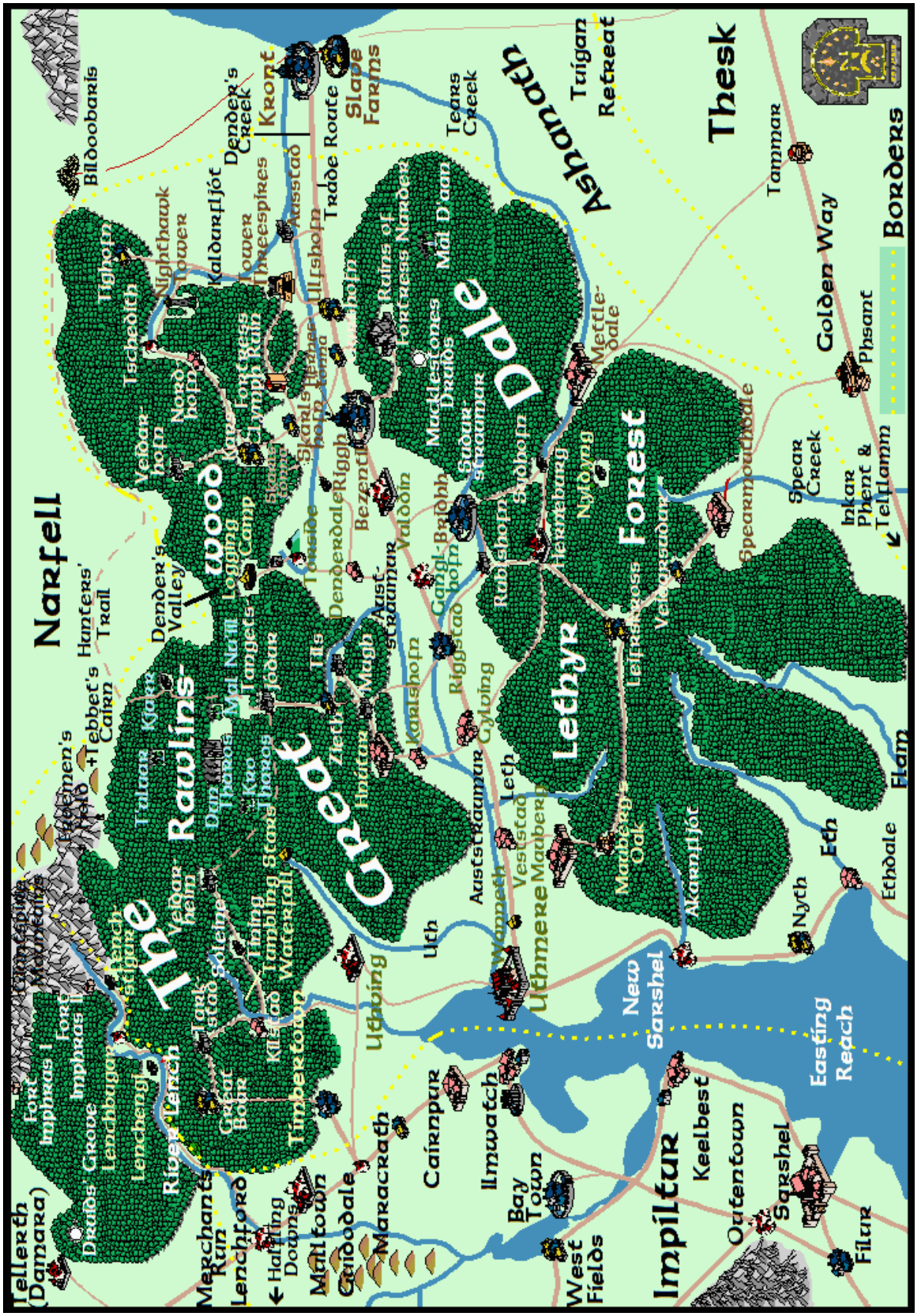
The parties are the *Freemen* of the Dale, religiously allied with the *"good"*-aligned druids and rangers of the West, and the *Hunters of Herne,* followers of the *"evil"*-aligned druids and rangers of the East and Ashanath, who are led by the lich Harbet Gall, an undead specialty priest who worships both Malar the Beastlord and, more recently, the dragon queen Tiamat. Gall claims, incorrectly, to be an avatar of Malar named *Herne the Hunter.* His followers believe this claim, however. We've placed the words *good* and *evil* in quotation marks, because these things can become quite relative in a Brechtian framework.

The PCs will discover soon after their arrival that the Great Dale well may be a large geographical nation, but it is by no means a political country. Neither central nor regional governments exist, although Gall's hand is dominant in the East. Instead, the populated areas of the Dale are thorps, hamlets, villages and a few small cities which are or once were freemen's enclaves, baronies and the like.

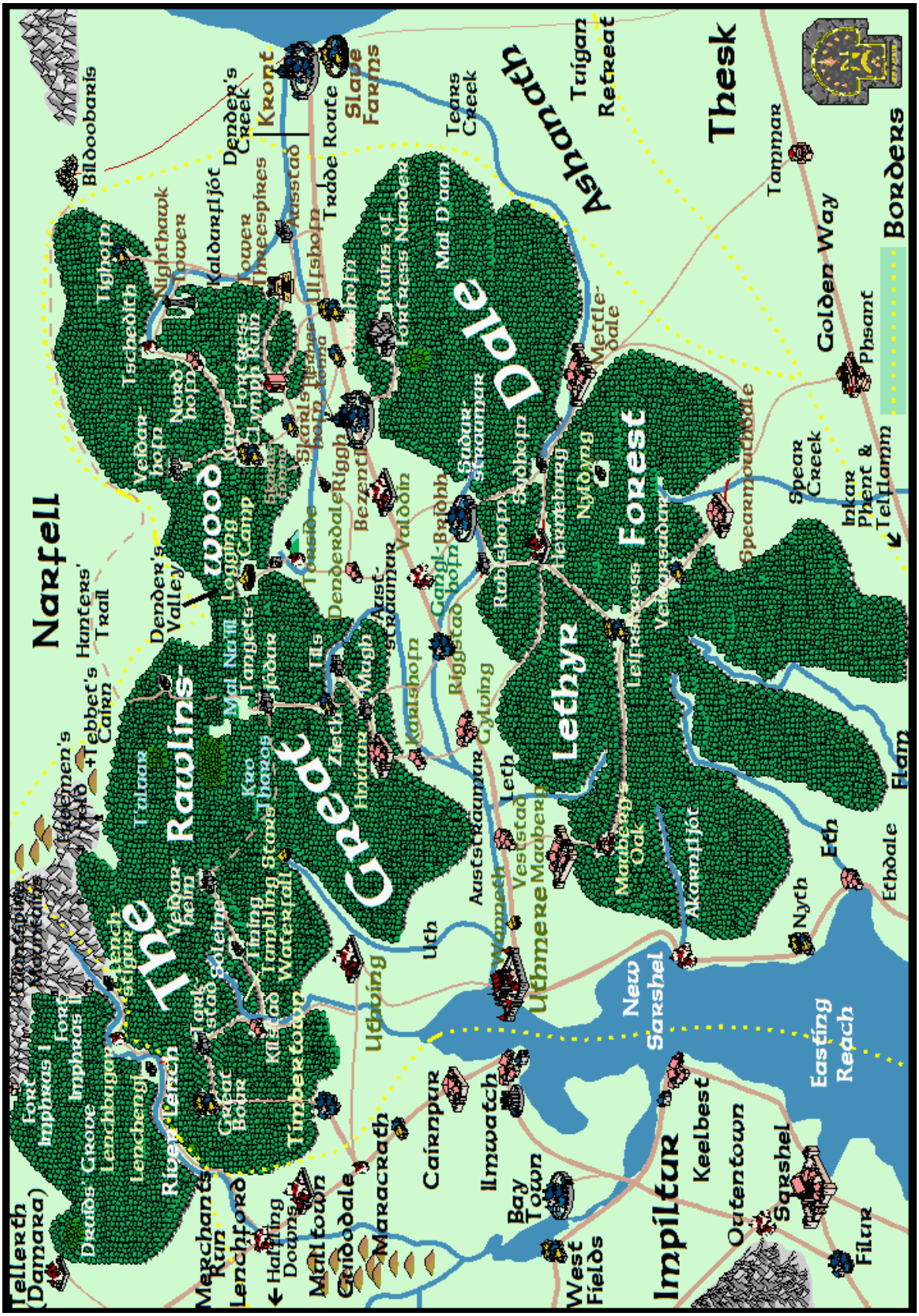
The only true unifying factor in the West is the guerilla military organization known as the *Freemen,* a loosely organized volunteer army of druids, rangers and foresters whose members come from all parts of the Dale, and their enemy, the *Hunters of Herne,* the paramilitary host of evil druids, rangers and hunters who follow the teachings of Harbet Gall.

The two key cities in the politics of the Great Dale are at its extreme ends, Uthmere, the center of the Freemen on the northeast shore of Easting Reach, and Kront in Ashanath, the stronghold of the *Hunters of Herne* on the western shore of the Lake of Tears. A third, once significant city, Bezentil, on the Trade Route two-thirds of the way from Uthmere to Kront, has been shrunken by war into a large and instable town devoted to the rabid worship of the Beastlord Malar.

The still partially walled city lies mostly in ruins. It has changed hands repeatedly in the centuries of war, with each battle destroying a bit more of the city than can be rebuilt before the next battle begins. At present, it is in the hands of the Malarite High Huntmaster Skith Tsornagar, leader of the Divine Den temple, the largest Malarite temple in the Realms, as described in *Faiths & Avatars* by Julia Martin with Eric L. Boyd (TSR - 1996), ESD-Download from RPG Now.



Game Master's map


Narfell
Bildoobaris
Hunters' Trail
Tebbet's Cairn
Freemen's Keep
Dender's Valley
Dender's Creek
Kront
Slape Farms
Trade Route
Ashandach
Tuigan Retreat
Thesk
Tammar
Golden Way
Borders
Phsant
Flam
Tellerth (Damara)
Merchants Run
Lenchford
Halfling Downs
Midtown
Guidodale
Maracrath
Cairnpur
Ilmwatch
Bay Town
West Fields
Impiltur
Keelbest
Oatentown
Sarshel
Filtur
Easting Reach
New Sarshel
Nyth
Eth
Ethdale
Uth
Uthoing
Uthmere
Wemeth
Leth
Lethyr
Forest
Great Rawlins-wood
Dale
Tigborn
Nightshawk Tower
Kaldarfjöt
Tower Threespines
Ullsborn
Tsecbolch
Nordhorn
Velbar-horn
Talbar
Tanglings
Stone Thrones
Tumbling Waterfall
Kao Solemne
Tark-stad
Kilfoos
Timberfoot
Greater Boar
Lenchburgh
Lenchengl
Rivers Perch
Fort Imphras I
Fort Imphras II
Dudos Grove
Mal Nr'ill
Logging Camp
Tilts
Zeth
Magh
Indaar
Kaalshorn
Riggstad
Aust-stadmar
Cyloing
Dendersdale
Bezendi
Riggh
Valdoin
Gangl-Brighh
Rib Shorn
Sudar-stadmar
Mal D'aan
Ruins of Fortress Nerder
Teans Creek
Mettle-dale
Nytoyag
Hennebang
Leinrankross
Velbarsdar
Maybery Oak
Alarnfjöt
Spearmouthdale
Spear Creek
Inkar Phent & Tellamm

Players' Map

Using the Map

The overland map of the Great Dale differentiates itself from other *Northern Journey* maps in its color coding. All cities, towns, villages, hamlets and thorps within the political Great Dale and Ashanath are coded to show which faction in the civil war currently controls or last held them. The following is the color key for name colors:

- White or Black - neutral title or outside the political Great Dale
- Olive Green or Yellow Green - in the hands of the Freemen (examples Uthmere, Timbertown)
- Brown or light brown - in the hands of the Hunters of Herne (examples Bezentil, Gurshofn)
- Light blue - controlled by the Nentyarch (Dun Tharos, Kjarr, T'uluar. Kro Tharos, Mal Nu'ill)

NORTHERN JOURNEY Game Masters Only

When the PCs arrive in the Great Dale, they will have encountered four of the six figures represented by the symbols in their red sigylls and these four symbols have vanished from their arms. Only two symbols remain.

The PCs have contaminated Ssessibil Istahvar of the Lonely Tower between the northern parts of the Moonwood and the Cold Wood north of Silverymoon, they have destroyed the liches Gwath of Daggerdale and Xarth Kistar of Zhentil Keep and have met Azimer of Myth Drannor, whom they could not harm, but who made his own symbol vanish from the PCs' arms, leading the perpetrators behind the symbols into believing that Azimer too was destroyed.

The first of the two symbols that still remain, the PCs have been told, belongs to Harbet Gall, allegedly a Keeper of the Secret Hoard in the Cult of the Dragon. The sixth and last symbol, which shows a gloomy castle by night, remains a mystery to the PCs. It represents Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain over Vaasa and Damara, where Sammaster and Kargmelchina do their plotting.

Game Master's Notes from the Vintyri Project...

As mentioned in the notes at the beginning of previous segments, it never occurred to Marv Olson or Greg Waters seven years ago when they wrote their small module called *Out of the Frying Pan,* (the original version of today's module *Silverymoon*) that their adventure one day would be taken up and further developed by gamers in several lands and enlarged into a sweeping set of eight segments.

The broad base of ideas that have flown into *Northern Journey* is, of course extremely gratifying to them. For more than two years, Marv and Greg have been unable to contribute to the project. On the other hand, Marv has remarked, the most recent modules, *Backlands, Tale of 2 Liches, Impiltur* and now *The Great Dale,* are all the evidence one could want that he and Greg really weren't needed for anything else in these phases of the project.

Before you begin familiarizing yourself with *The Great Dale,* we'd like to share some thoughts with you on what this accessory is and what it is not, and even more, what *The Great Dale* specifically and *Northern Journey* in general will do to *your* Realms, if you run the adventure by the book, and also how you can avoid letting *Northern Journey* do things to your Realms that you'd rather not have done.

One large goal set by the *Northern Journey* project group is to create an optional expansion of the official Realms developed by TSR and WotC. In this segment we offer many maps that substantially detail certain areas of the Great Dale that are unofficial, and we add many places that are not officially defined at all. When and if WotC releases its planned, detailed accessory for this area, you will seek these locations in vain.

Those of you who read the various Forgotten Realms mailing lists in Internet no doubt are well aware of the lively and sometimes heated debate among list members over the question of whether one should change what TSR and WotC officially have designed. Some gamers think this is what Game Mastering in the Realms is all about. Others write such work off as *mangling the Realms.*

Such differences of opinion also have existed to a certain extent within our project group. However, we all are strongly against taking a position as a group on this question, and we have attempted to make *Northern Journey* useful to both factions. We certainly do many things in this accessory, *The Great Dale,* that alter the Realms in manners that WotC probably never will consider and the contradict decisions already made by WotC. At the same time, we have laced this accessory with Game Master's notes that offer alternatives for those game nasters who don't like to have such sweeping impacts upon *their* Realms.

The potential for incompatibility with WotC's Realms definitions is nowhere so great within *Northern Journey* as in its last three segments – *Impiltur,* this installment, *The Great Dale,* and the seventh, *Bloodstone.*

Dr. Jeffrey David Bray, Simon Gibbs and Phillip Wallace (a.k.a. the notorious Thayan bounty hunter Sleyvas) already have done much to develop the history of the Great Dale, Impiltur and the Bloodstone Lands, going back to the days of the ancient Turami refugees and continuing on through the rise and fall of ancient Raumathar and Narfell. With their permission, we have incorporated much of their work into the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* and the *NJ* segments.

Eric L. Boyd and George Krashos also have done considerable work in this area and have shared some of their ideas with us, and Realms inventor Ed Greenwood has described elements of this area from his original Realms design for us and given us permission to incorporate these things in our work. The hobgoblins of the Giantspires and the gnome delves they have taken over beneath Rawlinswood are among Ed's contributions.

Dr. Bray and Erskine Fincher also have developed much of the lore of the Great Dale and the history of the church of Ilmater. This work too has been incorporated to a great extent into the campaign guide and the *NJ* modules, with the authors' permission, of course.

TSR and WotC have done little in the past to officially define Impiltur, and until May 2003, they left the Great Dale mostly empty through the 3E *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*. Products preceding *The Unapproachable East* of 2003 made clear that Druids are to be found in the Great Dale, and have posed the riddle of the mysterious Nentyarch at Dun Tharos. The Dale is described as a land of hamlets with a druidic hierarchy and common worship of Chauntea, Eldath, Mielikki and Silvanus, mostly consistent with *NJ*.

But the consistency ends there. Our Great Dale has been caught up in a religious civil war for many centuries, leading to substantial differences between our concept and that of WotC. Please be aware then that these last elements of *Northern Journey* will lead you and your PCs into considerably different Great Dale from that which WotC has defined. If you choose to run *Northern Journey* with our version, please do so as the result of a conscious and thought-out decision to go a different route than that defined in the so-called Realms *canon*.

The Great Dale of *Northern Journey* does not remove or cancel many of the elements that previously have been defined, but it certainly does negate the definition of a Dale that is mostly empty. Our version of the Great Dale describes a sparsely populated land that has been torn by a religious civil war between the followers of Silvanus and Chauntea on the one side and the huntsmen of Harbet Gall, who is simultaneously a priest lich of Malar the Beastlord and a Keeper of the Hoard of the Dragon Cult. This war has been raging for some 600 years in our Great Dale when the PCs arrive there.

This module also presents answers to the riddle of the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos based upon the work of Dr. Jeffrey David Bray. Internet contributors have offered us a number of interesting and well thought out suggestions for defining the Nentyarch, ranging from a kindly but powerful druid trying to defend his forests to a mighty renegade drow mage attempting to establish his own surface empire. We have chosen to incorporate Cynric Evenhand, based upon the druid-mage Nentyarch that Dr. Bray has developed over several years.

Nonetheless, if you're familiar with the first five segments of *Northern Journey,* you will see quickly that this installment, like *Impiltur,* is a substantial departure from the earlier texts. In the first four modules, our project group built upon a wealth of information TSR and WotC already had published. In this module you will find for a sizeable but unofficial definition of the vast land known as the Great Dale and neighboring Ashanath. In this respect, Module No. 6 *The Great Dale* is as much an unofficial campaign setting expansion as it is an adventure.

Nonetheless, as we have warned you already, the *NJ* version of the Great Dale is substantially different from that in WotC's 3E *FRCS* and *The Unapproachable East*. Before you start using this accessory, please take a close look at the effect *Northern Journey* as a whole and our expanded definitions of Impiltur and the Great Dale will have upon *your* Forgotten Realms, if you run our adventure *"by the book."*

If you don't like elements of our outline, please consider well in advance how you wish to change things, to ensure that your adventure runs smoothly and still portrays the Realms as you wish to see them. But by all means change them, if that's what your campaign needs! The last thing we want to exist is a *Northern Journey canon!*

Beyond the expanded definitions of the Great Dale and its inhabitants, *Northern Journey* also has sweeping impacts upon such major organizations in the Realms as the Zhentarim, the Iron Throne and the Cult of the Dragon. This information is presented in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide.* It is important that you read this outline in the *Campaign Guide* in advance.

Here are some of things you may want to keep an eye on:

- In *Northern Journey,* Damaran paladin Sir Gareth Dragonsbane has become king of his land - as in *FRCS* - but he's not too happy about it. Most of his enemies have fallen, but to get Gareth crowned, some of his enemies were assassinated, at the behest of the Iron Throne. The Throne views King Gareth as exactly the kind of politically weak leader it needs to do what it wants to in the merchants' circles of Heliogabalus.

- *FRCS* blissfully ignores Suncatcher Mountain, but FR9 *The Bloodstone Lands* contends that cloud giants are atop Suncatcher, and they probably mean no harm. We've put something narstier into this woodshed. We have Sammaster and Kargmelchina there, and they mean to do a great deal of harm.

- WotC has real dragons in the ruins of Castle Perilous in Vaasa. *Northern Journey* has vampire dragons there instead.

- *Northern Journey* is an adventure that has a lot to do with the activities of priests who are seeking to serve many different gods. We've added a number of temples to places in the Realms that are not mentioned in any official source, and more often than not, we've populated them with quite active priests.

- We have ushered a large and industrious element of Sembia's Iron Throne into the Bloodstone Lands, and it is busy manipulating things there.

- We also define a number of trade routes differently in *Northern Journey* than they are portrayed in some WotC materials. We believe trade routes come into being when the destinations along the route have goods to sell to one another and the wherewithal to pay for them, and we believe they carry substantially less trade and even fall out of use when this is not the case.

- Our definition of northeastern Rawlinswood incorporates the unpublished plans of Ed Greenwood, from his original Realms, before he sold the Realms to TSR Inc. Ed envisions abandoned gnome delves running in several directions from the Giantspire Mountains beneath northwestern Rawlinswood. In Ed's campaign, these delves later were taken over by the hobgoblins of the Giantspires and used by them during their unsuccessful march into Impiltur in the Year of the Dawndance (1095 DR). Ed provided us with his material, and we have incorporated these ideas with his permission.

Some Game Masters who hate to have their campaigns go the least bit out of synch with anything defined in official WotC products have complained to us in the past that we at times deal too lightly with TSR's and WotC's official descriptions. We have understanding for and sympathy with that complaint, but we would ask you to consider how difficult to impossible that is when dealing with WotC's own work and the contradictions that are so-called *canon*.

This is the seventh time our projects group is sending adventure texts, maps and dungeon plans out to you via Internet (a campaign guide and six segments). We've had a great time putting it together. We hope you have just as much fun using the parts that are interesting to you in your *Forgotten Realms* campaign!

January 2003
Mark Oliva,
Editor
Altershausen, Bavaria, Germany

1. Regional and Civil War History

Based in part upon the work of Dr. Jeffrey David Bray, Simon Gibbs, Phillip (*Sleyvas*) Wallace, David (*Khamsin*) Olson and A. Jason Anatokas.

The Age of the Mal T'unan - ca. -9000 DR

NOTE: *Auldgloam Forest* was the name used by Ed Greenwood in his original, unpublished design of the area including the Great Dale.

The ancient history of the Great Dale already has been explained thoroughly in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. Because most residents of the Great Dale and Ashanath are illiterate, history is by and large a matter of so-called *oral history* - tales and songs passed down verbally from generation to generation. The reliability of such a history cannot really be tested.

Unlike modern times in the real world, where DNA and carbon tests can make relatively accurate dating of archaeological finds possible, the sages and scholars of Faerûn must rely upon the little information that magic can produce as well as the songs and poems of bards and minstrels and the common people's oral narratives.

Such information is unreliable and more often than not colored if not downright distorted. The best that wise men of Faerûn may hope to achieve is to sort out the most logical elements of that which they perceive to be reliable and to piece these things together in hopes of creating a tale that approximates how things really were in a lost time within the realm of the forgotten.

There is virtually indisputable evidence that migrating elves from Aryvandaar in the North reached Auldgloam Forest somewhere around -9,000 DR, before the stranded Netherese who found Narfell cut the swath of the Trade Route between the two forests. It is unclear whether these migrants were green elves, whether they evolved into green elves or whether they were succeeded in time by green elves. Whatever the answer may be, the elves who retreated from Lethyr Forest and Rawlinswood in the in the -560s DR clearly were green elves who called themselves the *Mal T'unan*.

The old tales of the Dalesmen also speak only of green elves, although this is no guarantee that early stories of moon or gold elves, if indeed such ever lived in the Dale, might not have been changed in the telling to describe the green elves with which the Turami descendants had become familiar. However, most sages will argue that the elves of the Dale, until their retreats, *always* were green elves, because all things elven that they left behind bore their clear mark and not that of moon or gold elves.

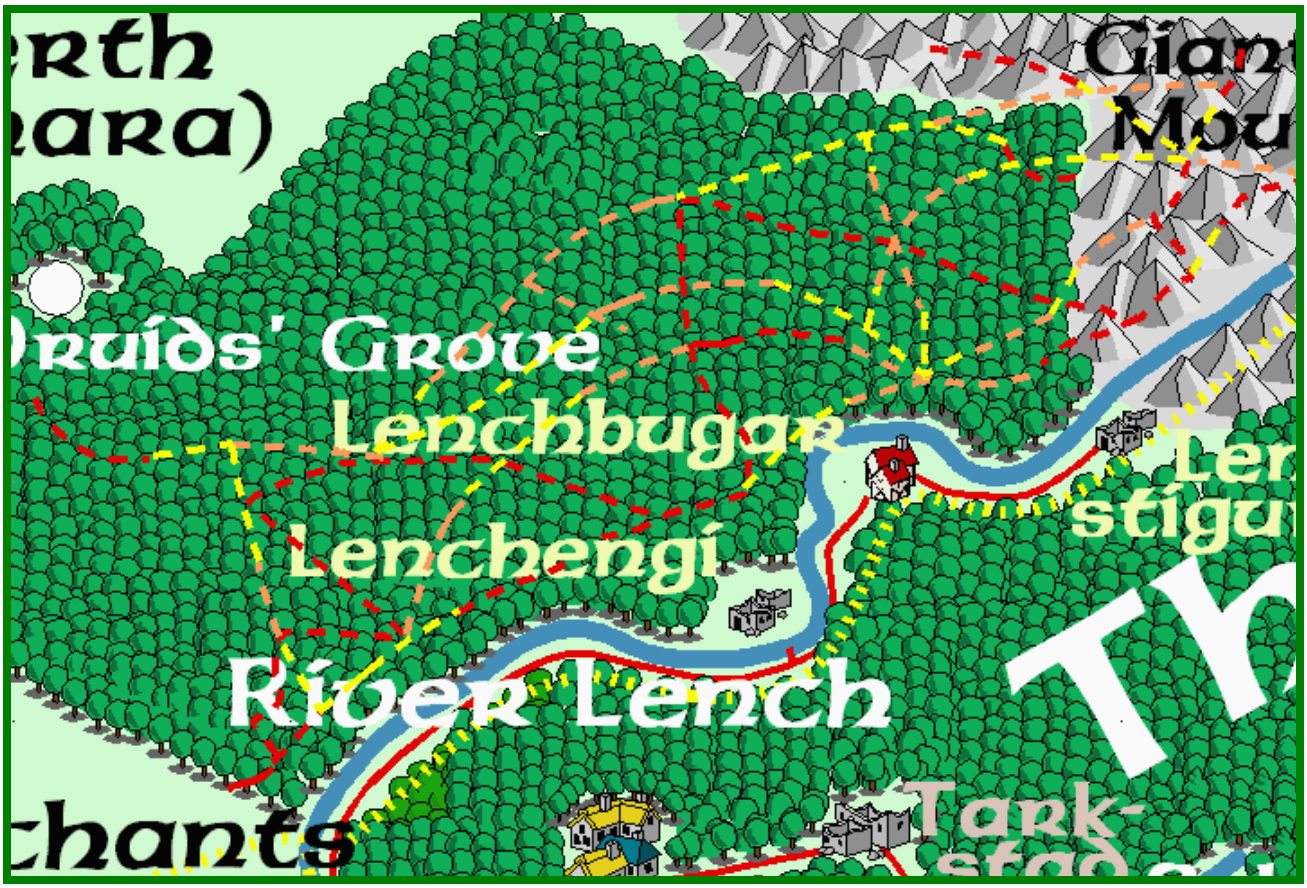
The Kadestarmestílpus Gnomes - ca. -3000 DR

Based Upon the Unpublished Plans of Ed Greenwood

Few former residents of the Great Dale have left so little trace of their past for future generations as the Kadestarmestilpus gnomes, if indeed that was their name at all. Academic researchers found this name in the Year of the Struck Gong (1236 DR) in vague, ancient Narfelli parchments kept in the royal Impilturian library in Lyrabar.

Unfortunately, young Imphras I was unaware of these documents when he fought the hobgoblins of the Giantspires Mountains in the Year of the Dawndance (1095 DR), when his hobgoblin foe used the ruins of the Kadestarmestilpus mines beneath Auldgloam Forest, now divided between Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest, to slip into Impiltur.

The Narfelli parchments claim that the Kadestarmestilpus burrows came into the depths beneath Auldgloam in the area between its northwestern fringe, where it met the Great Glacier, and the River Lench somewhere around -3000 DR, apparently expanding delves that the gnomes had begun at some unknown time earlier in the southern Giantspires Mountains.



Game Master's note: The red segments still are possibly safe and appear to be useable. The orange segments are open enough to pass through but are in danger of caving in. The yellow segments have caved in at several locations and must be reopened before they can be passed. An additional segment not shown crosses underneath the Lench 1 mile/1km east of Lenchbugar and extends on into Lethyr Forest. We are leaving this extension open for Game Masters to develop.

According to Ed Greenwood, these delves *"underlay the forest, rarely deeper than 30 feet (9m) below the surface and usually much shallower."* Ed says, *"These were old, worked-out copper and iron digs, preserved for centuries because these gnomes lazily smelted the ores in the tunnels when they were done, and then moved on, baking the tunnel walls with their fires and thus hardening them. The tunnels were a spider web of often-collapsed ways, crisscrossed with roots."*

In any case, if the Narfelli parchments have any true root in fact, the gnomes apparently worked these delves out and abandoned them after about a millennium, then migrated onto to new diggings on the south end of the Earthfasts northeast of modern day Lyrabar in Impiltur. The mines worked today in the Pick 'N' Axe area of modern Impiltur outside of the Earthfast dwarven kingdom were built from ancient shafts that had been discovered there.

Earthfast dwarves who have inspected these shafts insist that they are gnome works, and the Narfelli parchments in Lyrabar clearly claim that the mines in this area were the work of gnomes. Interestingly, many of these shafts were not at all worked clean, raising the question of why they were abandoned.

Several historical points leave room for educated conjecture. In the Year of the Bloody Crown (649 DR), the orcs of the Vast at last brought about the fall of the dwarven Realm of the Glittering Swords. However, before the orcs could even get a good start toward rebuilding their own fallen kingdom of Vastar, humans moved in to claim the fallen dwarven lands. They pushed the orcs ever deeper back into the Earthfasts.

Runestones in the Battle Cavern of Unquenched Valor, the great temple to Clangeddin Silverbeard in Earthfast City, record that the first heavy attacks against the dwarven holdings began only a few decades later, in the Year of the Angry Caverns (672 DR).

The royal Impilturian archives in Lyrabar contain records which claim that some three decades later, in the Year of the Emerald Citadel (704 DR), a royal expeditionary force discovered the evil, green Citadel of the Conjurers that had arisen on the flank of the Earthfasts northeast of Lyrabar and east of the Grey Forest.

Subsequent documents in the archives mention the Vault of Seven Mysteries, a temple to the gnome god of illusion Baravar Cloakshadow that had come into being about the same time. Indeed, it was only through these entries that modern Impilturian rulers came to learn that they share the royal Hill of Tombs with a secretive society of gnome priests and illusionists who worship Baravar.

Remarks scattered throughout the old Impilturian archives suggest that the Citadel of Conjurers had allied itself with the orcs or more likely had come to dominate them, and the citadel orchestrated the war the orcs made in those days upon the dwarves and gnomes of the mines, and it often threatened Lyrabar as well.

In the Year of the Moaning Gorge (768 DR), after the conjurers of the citadel threatened Lyrabar with an attack from a wave of demons, the archives report that gnome priests and illusionists from the Vault joined with a huge royal expeditionary force led by the paladin Princes Essys, Araln and Nord against the citadel.

In this great battle, known as the Battle of Moaning Gorge, the three legendary Demonsbane Shields were used for the last time together by the paladin princes to form the Abyss Portal that claimed the demon army and forced it back into the lower planes. (More details on this historical battle can be found in the accessory *Sea of Fallen Stars* by Steven E. Schend - TSR 1999, which is available as an ESD product from RPG Now.)

After banning the demon army, the paladins' host together with Impilturian archmagi from Lyrabar and the gnome priests and illusionists destroyed the emerald citadel and slew the conjurers who had attempted to use it as a base for their failed reign of terror.

Interestingly, the Impilturian archives speak of the valor and selflessness of the gnomes from the Vault of the Seven Mysteries on that fateful day, remarking that the temple members were the last of their folk to remain in the south, the other burrow of the folk already having migrated to the West.

The next chapter in this history is found perhaps in the tale of the Gond-worshipping gnomes who migrated with the mixed *Society of the Golden Wheel* to Guidodale on Merchants Run in the Year of the Banner (1368 DR). These gnomes claim through word passed down through the generations that they were descendants of a burrow that ages earlier had inhabited the area near Guidodale.

However, the Guidodale gnomes know little about their ancestors east of the Dragon Reach, other than that they mined ore until the veins were worked out and then slowly migrated westward over what now is known as Impiltur and the Vast. Most of the burrows' gnomes died in the Vast in battles against the orcs, they say, but a few escaped by crossing the River Lis somewhere north of Ylraphon and then wandering on into the West.

When one pieces these tiny historical fragments together - which indeed may be a mistake - one can form a picture of the Kadestarmestilpus gnomes having spread their shallow mines southwestward from the Giantspires to the fringes of Auldgloam or Rawlinswood, as it now is called. When their mines petered out - more than seven centuries before the migrant human Turami arrived - they may have abandoned their delves and migrated westward, to the southern Earthfasts.

From there, they were driven by orcs into the Vast, where they met still more orcs, with most of the tribe falling to them. Some few may have slipped across the River Lis and formed tiny enclaves in the West, one of which produced the gnomes of modern day Guidodale. The only other known fragment of the tribe - and it is little known indeed - could be the priests and illusionists of Baravar in the Vault of Seven Mysteries is southern Impiltur near Lyrabar.

The picture one can piece together is doubtless interesting, perhaps even credible. Whether its is a true picture of the gnomes the Narfelli named the Kadestarmestilpus tribe or merely an illusion assembled by a puzzle artist is impossible to answer.

Whatever the case may be, the history of the gnomes plays little role in the tale of the modern day Great Dale. The web of delves they left just below the surface of Rawlinswood in the West are, of course, an entirely different matter.

The Arrival of the Turami - ca. -1250 DR

It is a bit easier to pin down the arrival of the Turami in Thesk and the Great Dale because the literate Mulan in Mulhorand and Unther who drove them northward recorded their deeds. In addition, the magi of Narfell, whose magical prowess is believed to have been considerably greater than that of modern day wizards and sorcerers, also attempted to use magic to fathom the history of the Turami. The fruits of their labor were recorded in documents that survive in part in the queen's library in Impilturian Lyrabar.

From these combined sources, one can conclude that the Turami began reaching Thesk and the southern Dale in around -1250 DR, completing their migration into Ashanath and partially northward up the coast of the Easting Reach by -1150 DR. This migration took place more than 2,000 years before the melting of the southern corner of the Great Glacier.

In those times, the north shores of Easting Reach were treacherous, icy swampland and even tundra, as far south as Trader's Bay in modern day Impiltur and on the east shore nearly as far south as the site of Uthmere. Beyond there, however, the coast was cold and inhospitable, as far as the site where Narfell would build the port of Borkurstad, now known as New Sarshel.

The relatively few Turami who remained in the Great Dale appear not to have ventured farther north into the swamps, but rather to have halted their migration at the River Eth where modern Ethdale stands. They also established an outpost where Nyth now stands to the North, but this seems to have served mainly as a summer hunting and fishing village that was little used or occupied in the remaining months.

In the East, the Turami spread as far northward as Kront in Ashanath, reaching it and settling it as a hunting, fishing and farming center in -1150 DR. For the most part, however, the Turami halted before the eaves of the still undivided Auldgloam Forest, settling the western shore of the Lake of Tears in Ashanath south of Kront with fishing and farming villages and settling the Tears Creek Valley and the land between Tears Creek and Lake Ashane with hunting and farming villages. Between Kront and Auldgloam Forest and in the narrow Dender Creek Valley, they also settled the hunting villages of Auststad, Ulfshofn and Gurshofn

As far as oral history and the few records kept elsewhere relate, the illiterate Turami - who now called themselves Dalesmen and Freemen of the Dale - apparently knew more than 300 centuries of peace and peasants' prosperity before the swords of civil war struck. Before that, there came to them an envoy of peace and enlightenment from Netheril, a declining nation whose folk all too soon would trod upon the Dalesmen, relegating many of them to serfdom.

In –1097 DR, seven Netherese sky ships appeared over the Easting Reach. Six returned to Netheril, but the ship of Kiriagoth the Occularum remained behind. The great arcanist wizard, who later became the greatest of Narfell's archmagi, built a tower in the frozen swamplands where Impilturian Ilmwatch now stands. Kiriagoth also took up contact with the Dalesmen, teaching some of them to read and write, and a few of them even learned from him the use of rudimentary spells.

Some three decades later, in -1076 DR, a magical gate to a world-populated by orcs opened in the south of what now is Thay, and the Dalesmen who had settled in the east on the shores of Lake Ashane again were forced to flee.

Mulhorandi agents had traveled north through the Turami lands to enlist northern barbarians in their fight against the millions of orcs who had poured through the Priador gate. The northern tribes accepted and rode southward over Ashanath, raiding and pillaging the beautiful lake country of the Dalesmen. Dwellers in the lake country were forced to flee back into the southern reaches of the Great Dale.

The civil war within the Dale started somewhat after this time. During this sorrowful era came the first conflicts between druids of Silvanus and their followers. They wanted the human enclave the Mal T'unan had given the Dalesmen within Auldgloam Forest to be protected against further destruction from the loose confederation of hunters, who had settled in Kront on the Lake of Tears and in the more established villages and clearings in the valleys on the edges of the forest. Many of those who stood against the druids were poverty-stricken and hungry refugees from Ashanath.

The Empire of Narfell - from -923 DR

The situation raged completely out of control after the rise of the powerful empire of Narfell. In the year -923 DR, a small enclave of spelljamming Netherese became stranded near Easting Reach after crash landing along the edge of Auldgloam. This crash landing cut a swath of destruction at the western edge of the wood that would grow into the path of the Trade Route in the Great Dale in time.

The survivors quickly settled near where they had landed, founding Uthmere. With powers that none in the area could match, the still primitive Turami Dalesmen looked upon them as gods. The Netherese enjoyed the life of god-kings and decided to stay and erect their empire. The arcanists soon encountered Kiriagoth and set up a council to oversee their new empire, which came to be known as Narfell.

The result, however, was something quite different from the benevolent empire Kiriagoth had envisioned. The Netherese turned Narfelli considered themselves superior to all other beings who lived east of the Earthfast Mountains and in general treated the native folk of these areas accordingly.

Fortunately or unfortunately, depending upon point of view, they underestimated the battle sorcerers of Raumathar, who reputedly could use their inherent talents to call on some of the ancient magic of the Imaskari. In the end, after Narfell's brief 800-year chapter in Faerûn's history, the Narfelli and Raumathari succeeded in annihilating one another.

The heart of the Narfelli Empire was on the modern day Narfelli Plain north of the Great Dale and beyond to the Northeast, but much of the modern day Dale also was incorporated within the Narfelli boundaries. By –900 DR, the Narfelli arcanists had expanded their power to such an extent that even the 1,000-year peace of what we now know as Impiltur was broken, and the coastal cities of Impiltur became a Narfelli march.

For the Freemen of the Dale, what sages elsewhere term a *mere eight centuries* added up to nearly 800 years of trial and tribulation. It was during this time that clerics and monks of Ilmater first began appearing in the Dale, albeit in small numbers, to help the Freemen persevere in the face of the over powerful Narfelli.

Like the Turami descendents who had settled the Narfelli march in Impiltur, the Freemen were reduced to a state of vassalage, being viewed by many Narfelli as nothing more than servants of a lower life form. During these times, the Freemen did indeed know little of freedom.

The Narfelli settled and resettled them and forced them, often against their will, to serve as the front guard in battles to clear the two forests of monsters. Particularly large numbers of Dalesmen as well as the Narfelli who drove them fell to the hordes of hobgoblins who dominated northwestern Rawlinswood, northwest of the Lench.

The Narfelli had not yet discovered the gnome delves beneath the forest that the hobgoblins had used to mount hit-and-run guerilla attacks upon them. In the end, this part of though was not deemed valuable enough to justify the steadily mounting losses, and the Narfelli abandoned it to the hobgoblins.

The Narfelli continued forcing the Dalesmen to hunt and fell timber in Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forests, which the two parts of the severed Auldgloam Forest now were called. This, of course, brought many Dalesmen into deep conflict not only with their own beliefs but also the druids of Silvanus and the Mal T'unan tribe of green elves.

But there was no stopping the might of Narfell. Narfelli minds and the Freemen's sweat and muscles forged the Trade Route through the artificial swath between the forests, building over the years the settlements of Bezentil, Briddh, Denderdale, Ganglhofn, Gylving, Hnútar, Karlshofn, Mauberg, Borkurstad (now New Sarshel), Riggh, Riggstad, Rublshofn, Skarlshofn, Torside, Uthving, Veststad, Vulddin and Wanneth.

As the war with Raumathar heated, Narfelli brain and the Dalesmen's brawn also constructed Fortress Clymph and the fell wizards' lair of Věžpeklo (now the site of Nighthawk Tower), and in the late stages of the war, Fortress Narder and mighty Dun Tharos.

The green elves of the Mal T'unan tribe, who had successfully resisted Narfelli attempts to control the more remote parts of the forests, abandoned all hope when the Narfelli-Raumathari war generated into an apocalyptic cataclysm of mighty magic gone out of control. In these times, the green elves made their retreat, although their destination and fate remain unknown.

The last of the retreating elven clans left the Great Dale in the Year of Unknown Fates (-561 DR). They did not reach Evermeet, if that was their goal, and it may be that they were destroyed in the great conflagration before their retreat could succeed.

Only individual elven rangers and one clan of the Mal T'unan tribe stayed behind, the Mal K'ustan clan in Lethyr Forest, a crusty band of druid warriors whose ranks were more or less equally divided between green elves and half elves of mixed green elf and Turami human blood. Both the clan and the location of its druid groves were named Mal K'ustan, which the Narfelli mispronounced as *"Mucklestones,"* the name that continues to be used today.

Until the fall of Narfell, frequent skirmishes occurred between the Mucklestones Druids, Narfelli wizards and the Dalesmen hunters who served the Narfelli, but the hostilities fell short of being a genuine war. However, some 600 years ago, as drought and famine hit the Great Dale - particularly the Eastern Dale - the conflicts between druids and hunters reached their first peak, and so began the civil war that continues to plague the Dale today.

The flames of war first were fanned in eastern Lethyr Forest, south of the Trade Route, where the Mucklestones Druids drew the line and refused to tolerate any more hunting within their domain. The famine-threatened hunters of the Eastern Dale fought back, and soon the two camps were regularly slaying one another.

Within relatively little time, the war spread through the forests and up the Trade Route to the West. After two years of little rain, most fields along the Trade Route as far west as Vulddin brought only total crop failures. Desperate to feed their families, hunters and even farmers began to turn to meat as their main source of nourishment, and that meant venison and boar from Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest.

All too soon, the druids of Silvanus in both forests began to balk at the idea of such overhunting of the two woods, which began threatening to annihilate the populations of both deer and boar. With the lack of prey, wolves of the two woods began taking an ever greater toll upon the rabbit population, which in turn threatened the foxes with starvation. Lack of foraging plus the drought soon began to threaten many varieties of trees and bushes. Without water, some varieties simply died of thirst. Without foraging, other hardier plants and trees began choking out weaker varieties.

The druids found the balance of the entire ecological system within the two forests tipped in a topsy-turvy manner, and they fought with all their might to defend the woods against encroachment by Dalesmen on the hunt. The Dalesmen on the other hand fought for their own survival and the lives of their families. There was no basis for a compromise upon which peace could be built.

The drought had begun in the late summer of -782 DR, and ended in autumn of -780 DR. Two years of crops were lost, but the forests survived. Reasonable men might have expected the flames of civil war to recede then and die out after the return of normal weather and growing conditions.

But neither the druids nor the hunters were open to reconciliation. The druids had firmly classified the huntsmen of the Dale as the enemy, a band of men that could be trusted to ravage the forests again, as soon as their own fortunes once more might take a turn for the poorer.

The Narfelli insisted that their Dalesmen vassals hunt more intensely than ever, to keep their tables filled. The huntsmen, who had not only their Narfelli masters but also their own families to feed, no longer trusted the druids to protect what they perceived to be the true balance in nature.

Like most Dalesmen, the hunters were basically conservationists who loved the forests as well as the druids did, but they had only a vague understanding of the difficult balance that must be maintained between various forms of plant and animal life if the woodlands are to remain in good health.

On the other hand, the hunters had a deep-seated belief that humans were an important part of nature and that the survival of humans was just as important to maintain the balance as the survival of deer, boar, rabbits, foxes and trees. The druids, in their mind, refused to acknowledge the role of men in the scheme of things and therefore were not true defenders of nature's balance. Instead, the druids too were the enemy, the men who wanted to starve the Dalesmen and their wives and children.

Because of all these events, crops grew once again in the Great Dale. Flora and fauna and flourished once more and found their balance in the Dale's great forests, but druids and huntsmen, particularly in the Eastern Dale, driven by their mutual hatred, continued to slay one another and occasionally to burn sacred forest groves where the druids worshipped Silvanus and settlements where the hunters sheltered their wives and children.

The Narfelli fanned the flames of the conflict, giving even those huntsmen who pondered reconciliation with the druids no choice in the matter. The Dalesmen were the vassals of Narfell, and when their masters ordered them to hunt or go logging, they had no choice but to do so.

In the Year of the Clipped Wings (-623 DR), the Dalesmen of Ashanath were forced to flee into the forests, as Narfelli ships from the empire's heartland sailed from their fortress *Magmarnum Nar* south of the Falls of Erech down the Lake of Tears to make war. Each naval attack, led by skilled mariners and aided by powerful magic, sailed down the path now described by the modern names *River Mulsantir, Lake Mulsantir, River Thay, Lake Thaylambar* and the *River Thazarim* to the *Alamber Sea*.

The wave of devastation in the Year of the Clipped Wings came as a surprise to the folk on Lake Ashane, and it cost many lives. For years war ships of Narfell and Raumathar had been sailing Ashane peacefully, conquering northern reaches of Mulhorand and Unther that the two southern states no longer were able to control after their heavy losses in the Orcgate Wars. The fleet of Narfell was far greater in size in the Year of the Clipped Wings than any that had sailed the Lake of Tears up to this time, and the fleet was badly in need of supplies and provisions as it sailed southward.

Kront and the small fishing harbors of northern Ashanath were unable to provide the provisions needed by the Narfelli sailors, who laid waste to every harbor on the western coast of Ashane before they passed into the South and turned their attention to the coast of Raumathari Rashemen. But the navies of Mulhorand and Unther destroyed the fleet of Narfell. It never returned northward, although many years went by before the coastal towns of Ashanath were rebuilt.

By the early -600s DR, the Narfelli also had become more interested in the druids of Silvanus and the rangers of Mielikki who plagued the huntsmen of the Dale. The woes of the hunters were of little interest to the arrogant Narfelli, but they viewed the druids' and rangers' harrying of their vassals as a personal affront and challenge.

With magic, the Narfelli began organizing magical flying hunts over Lethyr Forest and Rawlinswood, with the druids and rangers as their prey. The badly outnumbered and underpowered followers of Silvanus and Mielikki were forced to withdraw into the Mal T'unan havens of northern Rawlinswood, giving the hunters and loggers in the parts of the forest north of the Trade Route a free hand.

The Narfelli organized a few hunting expeditions deeper into Rawlinswood, into Mal T'unan territory, but the combined magic of the green elves and the refugee human druids took a high toll among the Narfelli, and they soon abandoned these forays.

The Narfelli were not afraid of the Mal T'unan and druids as such, but in view of the growing animosity between Narfell and Raumathar, they also were unwilling to commit themselves to the war it would take to conquer the northern forest lands and the druids' and rangers' retreats there. And these no longer posed a threat to the Dalesman vassals of the Narfelli.

The Mucklestones Druids of eastern Lethyr Forest were an entirely different matter. They were hunted by Narfell, and they hunted the Narfelli in return. For more than four centuries, both sides battled with one another, with each taking losses. Most Narfelli hunting expeditions into Mucklestones territory returned with only small successes, having failed to find most of the aggressive druids and their rangers, but when contact was made, both sides fought furiously and the Narfelli too had to tally their losses.

In the Year of the Eight Lightnings (-288 DR), the Raumathari had begun one of their most devastating attacks against Narfell. There are tales among the Mulhorandi and Thayans of an ancient Imaskari artifact known as the *Staff of Enduring Lightning*. Many sages believe that this staff was in the hands of a group of Raumathari battle sorcerers in a long-vanished city known as Tathbar that is said to have stood on the site of the Firepeak Mountains, east of the Lake of Mists and south of the Golden Way beyond Rashemen and the still surviving Raumathari city of Almorel.

According to some Impilturian sages, the Raumathari sent eight devastating blasts of the staff from Tathbar into the Narfelli Empire between the Year of the Eight Lightnings (-288 DR) and the Year of the Gems Aflame (-279 DR). In these times, Mystryl already had fallen and Mystra had arisen to place her firm hand upon the mightiest of magicks. It is believed that the Imaskari staff contained magic far more powerful than that endorsed by the new goddess of magic, and the battle sorcerers therefore had great difficulty in summoning the artifact's powers and in steering them.

Whatever the case may be, in the 10 years of its use, the staff blasted the Narfelli Empire eight times. Five of the Raumathari strikes hit in the heart of Narfelli Empire, in the lands north of Rashemen between the Falls of Erech and the Icerim Mountains, in what now is known as the North Country.

Two struck in the Great Dale, the first hitting the northeastern corner of Rawlinswood and destroying a large part of the wood in magical fire. The second blast hit Bezentil in the Year of the Shattered Portals (-283 DR), causing a tremendous flash of light, after which the city simply vanished, according to old tales.

The last of the eight blasts, in the Year of the Gems Aflame (-279 DR), struck in the middle of Easting Reach, doing no immediate damage but causing a month of serious seastorms that caused damaged to ports and harbors on both sides of Easting Reach.

Impilturian sages believe that the warrior magi attempted a ninth strike as well, in the same year. In this case, they lost all control of the staff, causing a huge explosion that destroyed their own city of Tathbar and blasted a great crevasse on the site that opened into the depths of molten rock deep beneath where the city had stood, causing the volcanic eruptions that evolved into the still erupting Firepeak Mountains.

This tale seems to be collaborated in part by Raumathari archeological finds made by the Siremun dwarves, who came to the Firepeaks in the Year of the Eyes Afire (-96 DR) and established their halls there. Beyond those things found by the dwarves, however, no traces of Tathbar remain to be found.

The Narfelli retaliated against the Raumathari. In the first 50 years of this long distance battle of magic, both sides expended many of the powerful treasures they had maintained from times before Mystryl's fall. They used not only ancient items of their own making but also the works of Netherese arcanists, in the case of Narfell, and of Imaskari warrior-wizards, in the case of Raumathar.

In the Year of the Wizards' Dooms (-234 DR), the magical battles slacked off substantially on both sides. There is no information documented to explain this unusual occurrence, but sages speculate that both the Narfelli and Raumathari may have begun exhausting the supply of magical items that had been produced before the new goddess Mystra limited human access to the Weave.

However, some documents in the royal library in Lyrabar suggest that a cloud of anti-magic spread out into Narfell from Raumathar until its path at last was reversed, returning whence it came, killing hundreds of magi and archmagi on both sides of the front before coming to whatever end it met.

The reduction of heavy magical firepower was anything but tantamount to a reduction of war between the two nations. In the hearts of their empires, northeast of the Great Dale and east of Rashemen, the two armies marched on several fronts against one another, accompanied by Narfelli archmagi and Raumathari battle sorcerers, each destroying what the other had built over centuries.

In the Narfelli capital of Heligonius in the Year of the High Thrones (-212 DR), the most powerful of Narfell's transmuters, one K'Ahlob, whispered into the emperor's ear of a plan he had, which he believed at last would result in the ultimate destruction of the Raumathari, or, perhaps better put in K'Ahlob's own words, their *definitive transmutation.*

Neither K'Ahlob nor the emperor betrayed the details of the plan, but the emperor ordered the construction of an isolated fortress to serve the archmage in the northern fringes of Rawlinswood south of the border with the Narfelli heartlands

In the Year of the Shattered Havens (-208 DR), a contingent of Narfelli soldiers and war magi along with civilian construction engineers and workers and 50 enslaved dwarves marched southeastward from Heligonius into the heart of Rawlinswood about 25 miles/40 km south of the current location of Tebbet's Cairn.

En route from Heligonius, the Narfelli soldiers secured the abandoned elven ruins of T'uluar, with a part of the contingent remaining there, to rebuild some of the ruins into a military outpost to guard K'Ahlob's secret goal in the south.

At the same time, Narfelli soldiers mustered an involuntary group of 200 Dalesmen and sent them on a forced march to the same destination, about 40 miles/65 km north of present day Hnútar. This group secured the ruins of Kro Tharos in like manner, and those who remained made of them a second defensive outpost.

The main contingents of both troops marched onward to a high, rocky level of pine forest at a point between T'uluar and Kro Tharos that K'Ahlob had selected. Both his wizards and his military leaders liked his choice; it stood well above the rest of the wood and was a good location for towers with a wide view.

K'Ahlob had learned the language of the Mal T'unan. He knew that Kro Tharos meant *Refuge of the Sacred.* The settlement once had housed a temple to Rillifane Rallathil, elven lord of forests. He liked the name and decided to use the Mal T'unan tongue to name his own camp, calling it *Dun Tharos* or *Refuge of Change.*

From there, K'Ahlob sent another detail eastward, to find the ruins of the Mal T'unan village of Mal Nu'ill, with instructions to establish a third outpost there. It was his intention to maintain a forward defense in the three directions from which he thought a Raumathari sapper attack could come. However, his plans went awry.

The Mal T'unan long had departed the three ruins, but before their retreat, they protected them well with powerful druidic magic of Rillifane. Were the Narfelli less arrogant and more curious, they might have found the key to overcome the wards that rusted their blades, caused trees to attack them, strangled them with vines and, above all, constantly filled them with a deep and inexplicable fear.

To counter such magic, one must know something of it, and the Narfelli knew nothing. To speak of a Narfelli druid would be a contradiction. The Narfelli ridiculed nature as a value and druidism as primitive superstition. In other times, the Narfelli might perhaps have sent priests into the elven ruins who would with time have succeeded in banning the elven druidic wards, but the empire was at war with Raumathar, and such resources were unavailable to K'Ahlob.

He too was not eager to spend his time fighting druidic magic, so, he stoically accepted the flight of his defenders back into Dun Tharos, after losing nearly half their number, and the abandonment of his outer defenses in T'uluar, Mal Nu'ill and Kro Tharos.

With the talents of his dwarven slaves and the muscles of his Dalesmen vassals, K'Ahlob ordered the construction of a strange fortress of twisting rock walls surrounding several internal buildings and a large tower, raising a strong but bizarre fortress of magic in the lost depths of Rawlinswood.

The work was completed late in the Year of Toiling (-207 DR). The dwarven slaves were taken back into the Narfelli heartlands to the northwest, but the soldiers and Narfelli vassals remained, to guard the fortress of the reclusive K'Ahlob, who seldom left his tower during the next two years. Only late in the Year of Good Hunting (-205 DR) did he emerge again, with a strange device he created that he called his *transmogrifier*.

In secret experiments, he turned the transmogrifier upon individual Dalesmen vassals. The first attempts were erratic, either killing the Dalesmen victims or turning them into random creatures, including dangerous monsters, all of whom were slain by his warriors.

Some warriors who had viewed these experiments also reported later that K'Ahlob had placed valuable jewels into the device, all of which were destroyed when it worked its magic. With each use, K'Ahlob noted that he had felt weakened through its use, although he said nothing of this, for he had many magical tools in his treasure that he could use to reverse such effects.

As the Year of Good Hunting waxed, K'Ahlob's device became more successful, and his victims began being transformed into the creatures he wished them to become. And then, as the year waned, K'Ahlob ordered his soldiers to bring the 125 still surviving vassal Dalesmen in groups of 25 into his courtyard, one group at a time. K'Ahlob stood in the courtyard with the transmogrifier and several other magical items and then turned his device upon the vassals, transmogrifying them into hobgoblins.

As soon as he had altered a group, he used his *Rod of Rulership* (see the D&D 3E or AD&D 2E *Dungeon Master's Guide*) to place them immediately under his rule. He ordered the hobgoblins to take to the forests surrounding Dun Tharos, to choose a leader from among their ranks, and then to defend the lands against all who entered it who did not bear both the device of Narfell and K'Ahlob's own symbol.

After transmogrifying the last of the Dalesmen, K'Ahlob suddenly and unexpectedly turned it upon the soldiers who had witnessed what he had done, transmogrifying them as well into hobgoblins and giving them the same commands, sending them off into the forest.

It should be mentioned that these acts were not at all a reflection of the will of the emperor in distant Heligonius, nor did they have much in common with the intentions of K'Ahlob at the time he had entered Rawlinswood.

The K'Ahlob who built Dun Tharos was an evil man of great power and ambition. The K'Ahlob who possessed the transmogrifier was by no means a good man, but his bent for evil had slackened in Dun Tharos, and his purposes no longer were as clear to him as they once had been.

K'Ahlob suspected that the transmogrifier had something to do with the shift of direction in which the winds of his own thoughts blew, but somehow, this did not trouble him. He thought perhaps his perception of things had become more clear than they had been. The transmogrifier was his great masterpiece, a work of magic in which he took great pride.

He yearned to use it on the front against the Raumathari foe, together with the Rod of Rulership. He knew the rod would expend itself, but he also knew there were others in the emperor's treasure in Heligonius and they would be his for the asking, when he needed them to control the Raumathari he would transmogrify and send back to slay their heretofore comrades in arms.

But K'Ahlob also saw more than the defeat of the Raumathari beyond the horizon of his present. Only in building and using the transmogrifier did he believe that he had gained a true understanding of his magic, its glory and what things still remained for him to accomplish in his art.

He well could envision a day after Raumathar's defeat when he would seek again the reclusion he had enjoyed in Dun Tharos, a day when he would wish not only to be free of the Raumathari foe but also to be hidden to emperor and empire and to be free of all bindings to them.

With this in mind, then, K'Ahlob removed all of those who bore witness to the deeds his transmogrifier had performed in Dun Tharos, and he also was determined to eliminate those who would travel back to Heligonius with him, leaving only his transmogrified hobgoblins to guard his enclave in his absence, fully loyal to him as their sovereign king.

K'Ahlob brought his transmogrifier secretly to the emperor's palace in Heligonius, ordering that his accompanying soldiers being quarantined due to exposure to illnesses, until the emperor ordered otherwise. He then spoke in secret to the emperor of his invention and his success.

He also argued to the emperor that as tragic as the deed would be, it would be necessary to slay the quarantined soldiers to the last man, to prevent whispers of the transmogrifier from reaching the Raumathari before K'Ahlob could use it successfully against them.

Surprise would bring the transmogrifier to its ultimate success, K'Ahlob argued, and he pointed out as well that the battlemagi of the Raumathari, mighty sorcerers rather than wizards, had proven time and again that they were magicians of mettle and power, who often had countered the best magical designs of Narfell. The emperor agreed, and he reluctantly ordered that all of the quarantined soldiers be slain with magic, explaining that they had been exposed to a deadly plague in Rawlinswood, a plague which must be eradicated before it could spread through the empire.

After the slayings, no man but K'Ahlob knew of all that had transpired in Dun Tharos, and only one man in Faerûn is aware of these things today, namely the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos, who has read the journal of K'Ahlob in which the record of these deeds is written. For this reason, sages and others of great knowledge in the Realms are unable to tell adventuring parties the tale of K'Ahlob. To learn its secrets, one first must obtain K'Ahlob's journal from the Nentyarch.

K'Ahlob did not know what had caused the dramatic change in his personality, nor did he seem to be preoccupied with this question. Therefore, it remains unmentioned in his journal and also is unknown to the Nentyarch, a fact that could lead to long term change within the Nentyarch himself within your own campaign, although this is not particularly relevant within the *Northern Journey* campaign. For more information on *K'Ahlob's Transmogrifier,* please see the artifacts section of your *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

Although K'Ahlob was the mightiest of all Narfelli transmuters, he used magic far beyond his own level and ken. Before his device was completed, it had absorbed the magic of many items, some of extremely high power, and of magic both arcane and divine. Indeed, the descriptions in K'Ahlob's journal of the crafting of the great artifact have led the Nentyarch to question whether the personal magic of Lady Mystra's first incarnation may not be a part of the tissue of which the transmogrifier was made.

The artifact does indeed have properties beyond the understanding of either K'Ahlob or the Nentyarch, and these cause secondary effects, which substantially changed K'Ahlob's life and may be working in the same manner upon the Nentyarch. With time, the transmogrifier drains all feelings of good or evil and most interest in the affairs of men from the user's soul.

In its first stages, it draws the user into enlightened neutrality, first leading him or her to an appreciation of the balance in nature and then of the balance within the Weave. In the latter stages, it draws the user into the Weave itself, making him or her into an ultimate servant of magic.

This, basically, is what occurred with K'Ahlob. The longer he used the transmogrifier, the more he came to regret that use as a violation of the neutrality he was learning to appreciate, and the less his interest became in the war or the affairs of the Narfelli and their empire. When he at last retreated from the front, he did so with no intention whatsoever of ever serving the emperor again, with or without the transmogrifier.

His only desire was to return to Dun Tharos and continue with his work, warding his enclave from intruders and using the transmogrifier, when necessary, to help defend Dun Tharos against those who would interfere with his seemingly holy mission.

However, the emperor in Heligonius was not one simply to accept K'Ahlob's desertion. He sent spies forth into the land to seek traces of the great transmuter, and among the destinations, which he named for these spies, was the allegedly abandoned Dun Tharos in Rawlinswood. In the Year of Returning Heroes (-202 DR), one of the spies sent into Rawlinswood at last came back to the emperor's court with the news that K'Ahlob was indeed cloistered within Dun Tharos, protected only by a small host of hobgoblins.

The emperor was not one to underestimate the challenge of facing down K'Ahlob with his transmogrifier. He ordered his court magi to magically seek out the greatest of all Narfelli arcanists, Kiriagoth the Occularum, and command him to come to the imperial court, intending to order Kiriagoth to lead an expedition into Rawlinswood to capture K'Ahlob and reclaim the transmogrifier.

In these waning days of Narfell, Kiriagoth had become fully disenchanted with the decadency he had served. In fact, few decades would pass before Kiriagoth would deprive the emperor of the Crown of Narfell, an act which many historians believed sealed the doom of Narfell in its war with Raumathar.

In this time, however, Kiriagoth remained in his tower in what we now know to be Ilmwatch and magically replied that the emperor had more important matters with which to deal and that he had a sickened empire to heal. So long as he refused to restore right and justice to Narfell, Kiriagoth would have nothing to do with his affairs.

The message angered the emperor, of course, but like most of his archmagi, he also feared Kiriagoth, so great were the might and scope of his magic. The emperor did without his mightiest arcanist and instead ordered his court magi to organize an expedition of experienced warriors, rangers and high magi who were capable of forming plans and strategies that were certain to defeat K'Ahlob, despite his possession of the transmogrifier.

This took some time, which the emperor was willing to allow, because he wished success more than haste. The Raumathari sorcerers, battlemagi and warriors again were proving themselves to be the more successful of the two opposing hosts, and the emperor believed that Narfell would be victorious only if it could use both of its great artifacts, *K'Ahlob's Transmogrifier* as well as the *Crown of Narfell*. Thus, it was not until Narfell's most desperate hour, in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR) that the emperor's invaders came at last to Dun Tharos, to claim the transmogrifier. They never returned from Dun Tharos, and it may be that their arrival coincided with the empire's fall.

During K'Ahlob's years in reclusion, Narfell degenerated to its lowest point. Until about the Year of the Running Unicorns (-500 DR), the Narfelli had treated the Dalesmen for the most part as lowly vassals. After that time, however, as the empire became ever harder pressed by the war with Raumathar, the natives east of Impiltur began to be viewed as cattle and often were subjected like guinea pigs to magical experimentation, producing foul beastmen and new mutations of undead.

After viewing the power of Raumathari demonologists to the East, the Narfelli also began large scale sacrifices of natives in the Great Dale and the barbarians in the heartlands to the East and Northeast to powers of the lower planes in return for dark power from the Abyss. In the last half century before the empire's fall, the magical blood toll reached its peak.

It was in the turn of the century leading to these times that the greater number of Narfelli at last managed to take its toll upon the druids of Lethyr Forest. Mal K'ustan, or Mucklestones, as the Narfelli called it, was laid to ruin in the Year of the Fiendish Gambols (-201 DR). It is believed that the Mucklestones Druids and their rangers had dwindled to only a handful by the Year of Leaping Flames (-200 DR).

For many centuries, nothing had been seen of Kiriagoth the Occularum in the Great Dale, and he seldom had been encountered elsewhere within the Narfelli Empire. For several centuries, the great arcanist remained secluded in his tower where Ilmwatch now stands, but in the Year of Tragedies (-180 DR), he traveled again through Narfell and was sickened at what had become of his empire.

Kiriagoth at last received word of the civil warfare that had been festering in the Great Dale as well as human sacrifices, the Narfelli druid hunts and the other damage and atrocities that were being committed in the name of the empire. The war with Raumathar was entering its most horrendous phases. Much of the empire northeast of the Great Dale already lay in ruin and ashes and nearly half of Heligonius had been destroyed.

The following spring, in the Year of the Huntress (-179 DR), a disgusted Kiriagoth, using his high magic, raided the stronghold of the emperor in Heligonius and the towers of many other Narfelli wizards. He took both the Crown of Narfell and many more of the empire's greatest magical treasures, secreting them away and sending word to the emperor in Heligonius that he had gone too far. Kiriagoth said that he no longer would condone or be a part of what Narfell had become.

Kiriagoth said that when the time was right, the Crown of Narfell and the other items of mighty magic would return, but into the hands of just men. For most of the items that Kiriagoth had hidden, this time would come only with the birth of Impiltur's second kingdom.

Kiriagoth also pondered the attacks that Raumathar had mounted against the Dale's forests and he thought it was imperative that steps be taken to restore the wounded land after the inevitable wave of destruction would roll across the woodlands.

He found his way to Lady L'un tul D'arit, the Mal K'ustan green elven druidess who at that time led the few surviving members of the Mucklestones. He gave her a magical Narfelli object of great might and power that he had taken from the emperor's court conjurer in Heligonius, the *Amulet of the Astral Vault* (see *New Magic Items* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*).

With this object, Kiriagoth created for the Mucklestones a sanctuary on the astral plane where they could seek refuge. The gate to this safe haven was created on the site of the Mal K'ustan enclave that the Narfelli had destroyed 22 years earlier. With the *Amulet of the Astral Vault,* Lady L'un tul D'arit could place an invisible mark upon her followers that allowed them to pass through the magical gate to the astral enclave.

The amulet remains in the possession of the Mucklestones today and still is used by them to escape the Hunters of Herne. The current bearer is Haspar Eriksbrodir, the half-elven great druid who leads the Mucklestones Druids.

The site of ancient *Mal K'ustan* or *Mucklestones* in Lethyr Forest not only is the hidden gate to the astral refuge of the druidic organization, even today, but it also is a strange and eerie quarter of Lethyr Forest for those who enter the glade where the druid groves once were. Time has stood still there, ever since the years after the groves' destruction, beginning at the time of Kiriagoth's arrival.

Already in the first years after Kiriagoth had given the amulet to the Mucklestones Druids, they were able to substantially strengthen their defense of eastern Lethyr Forest. In this time, there was little distant magical bombardment of the Dale's woodlands by the Raumathari. Instead, their moves against Narfell in the Great Dale were largely attacks by sapper units consisting of seasoned veteran fighters and battle sorcerers specialized in fire magic.

It was not the goal of these units to directly engage and kill the Narfelli enemy, but rather to set the woodlands afire. In the eastern heartlands of Raumathar, comparable Narfelli bands were conducting similar attacks against the Raumathari, but with the goal of permanently contaminating Raumathari water supplies with magic.

The Narfelli had established two great centers of magic west of the Lake of Tears. Tower Ithfell was in distant Impiltur, and in the Great Dale, fell Věžpeklo (site of Nighthawk Tower) stood on the northeastern edge of Rawlinswood, an enclave of evil conjurers assigned to conjure devils or baatezu to send against Raumathar.

The Raumathari sappers learned quickly that they were underpowered in any attempts to enter Rawlinswood within range of the Narfelli wizards. Instead, after slipping across or south of Lake Ashane, they concentrated their work upon eastern Lethyr Forest.

But the Mucklestones Druids proved to be a more formidable foe than the Raumathari had expected to find there, ands the druids also were inexplicably elusive, due to the powers of Kiriagoth's amulet. Nonetheless, the invaders did manage to start several serious fires in dry seasons. However, after a dozen years or so, they focused their efforts with considerably more success upon burning isolated farms east of the wood and south of Kront, nearly to the Golden Way.

In the latter years of the war, both empires unleashed the last of their horrendously powerful, ancient magicks upon one another. In the Year of the Death Dolor (-158 DR), after a long period of dryness that approached drought - perhaps with arcane causes - the Raumathari battlemagi called down a three-day rain of fire upon the eastern forests of the Great Dale. They summoned a host of several hundred demons who rose from the burning forest floors and began marching toward Narfelli outposts along the Trade Route.

At the same time, a large Raumathari fleet of troop boats began crossing the Lake of Tears intent to march across Ashanath and into the Dale. The Raumathari already had pushed Narfell back westwards out of the Endless Wastes, and the emperor and other Narfelli leaders on today's barbarian plains of Narfell were afraid

the entire empire would fall. The magi of the West in Impiltur were ordered to return quickly to the Narfelli heartlands, vacating the city-states of Impiltur and the border center of wizardry in Tower Ithfell and the great fortress Vordric-Dun.

The double blows of the loss of the Crown of Narfell and other objects of high magic along with the succession of Raumathari victories caused uproar throughout Narfell. Raumathar decided to capitalize upon this unrest and to destroy its rivals.

In the Year of Recompense (–150 DR), less than 500 years after the loss of Narfell's fleet, the wizards and warriors of Narfell and Raumathar clashed in a series of titanic engagements that wrought devastation unparalleled since the fall of the Imaskari Empire. Demons were summoned and dragons annihilated each other, leaving the proud cities, reputedly impregnable fortresses and mighty towers of the two mighty empires in ruins.

In Ashanath, Kront and the villages and farming hamlets south of the city and along the Lake of Tears were reduced to rubble and ashes. Both Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest burned, as far east as Denderdale and Mettledale, where druid-conjured rainstorms managed to quench the flames, but only after a downpour that lasted nearly a month.

The wizards' enclave of Věžpeklo (Nighthawk Tower) and Fortress Clymph in Rawlinswood were reduced to charred, hollow walls of stone. The same was true of Fortress Narder in Lethyr Forest. There, the ruins of Mal D'aan and Mal K'ustan had simply vanished, as did all but the foundations of Auststad, Gurshofn, Ulfshofn, Bezentil, Skarlshofn and Riggh on the Trade Route. Most of Mettledale burned as well.

In those fearful times, it is said, Dender's Creek and Tears Creek were floods of liquid ash, and the shores of the waterways were black beyond Thazalhar to the Thazarim's mouth on the Alamber Sea.

With Narfell's Fall ...
From the Year of the Death Dolor (-158 DR)

The Turmrar, an educated folk of mixed Turami and Narfelli blood that came into being during the Narfelli domination of what now is Impiltur, were quick to assert their independence from Narfell. After their Narfelli masters had departed in the Year of the Death Dolor (-158 DR), the Turmrar banded together and formed the first kingdom of Impiltur in the bountiful Year of Many Harvests (-157 DR). Impiltur had been beyond the reach of Raumathar and survived the great war unscathed.

During the Narfelli era, Uthmere, Uthving, Wanneth, Veststad, Mauberg, Borkurstad (now New Sarshel), Nyth and Ethdale all were parts of the Impilturian march of Narfell known as *Imperium Ilian Nar*. They were not parts of *Imperium Dalur Nar,* the Narfelli province the Great Dale had constituted. Therefore, one might have expected that the new kingdom of Impiltur would claim these areas after Narfell had fallen, and that, of course, is what happened.

In the last years of the war, most of the Narfelli who had been in the Western Dale moved toward the front, in a desperate attempt at a last defense. The Narfelli already had evacuated Uthmere by the Year of the Revealed Chants (-155 DR), and the new Impilturian kingdom had claimed it by the Year of the Adamantite Ore (-149 DR), when it was clear that Narfell would not return.

It should be noted that the population supported its inclusion in the Impilturian kingdom, although the Dalesmen soon learned that their Impilturian Turmrar rulers not only would view them as second class citizens but also would displace them from important positions.

Impiltur continued annexing the Western Dale until the Year of Cresting Floods (-146 DR), claiming Wanneth, Veststad and Mauberg in the Year of the Black Marble (-148 DR), Uthving and Borkurstad (New Sarshel) in the Year of the Candlemaker (-147 DR) and Nyth and Ethdale in the Year of Cresting Floods.

The Turmrar rulers across Easting Reach had little interest in the then icy reaches of the Dale north of Uthving, the contested lands south of Ethdale or the impoverished farming belt west of the Leth's confluence with the Auststraumur. Impiltur left the Dalesmen in these areas to their own devices, as freemen.

The Impilturians lay nominal claim to Rawlinswood but seldom did anything to assert that claim. To them, Rawlinswood was a dark no man's land, filled with hobgoblins, giant spiders, hostile druids and perhaps unfriendly green elves as well. Impilturians included only the westernmost parts of Lethyr Forest within the boundaries of the maps they drew. The southern forest appeared to be too remote to interest them.

It is perhaps morbid to talk of the good that may have come from the massive devastation caused by the war between Narfell and Raumathar. If, indeed, any good did result, it was in the way that surviving druids, farmers, hunters and woodsmen in the Central Dale set aside their hatreds and for more than a dozen generations rolled up sleeves and worked to rebuild the terribly fallen lands of the Great Dale.

The Impilturian Western Dale played little role in the reconstruction at this time, although there were those Dalesmen from Uthmere and Uthving who preferred freedom to the security of the Impilturian kingdom and went eastward to lend their hands and stake their claims.

For much of the Great Dale east of Veststad in the Year of the Black Marble (-148 DR), desolation was an understatement. Not a single tree stood either in Rawlinswood northeast of Torside or in Lethyr Forest southeast of Briddh. Although relatively few from the Eastern Dale fled in time to survive, the villages along the Trade Route and the forests' edges were filled with refugees.

The smoke and ash that had settled on the Dale west of the ruins of Bezentil had choked the pastures and fields. Livestock were ill and harvests were small. Water supplies were polluted with ash and soot. Illness was frequent, although the Dale did have good luck enough to escape the plague.

The druids, clerics and monks of Chauntea began striving to purify the fields and heal the livestock. The druids of Silvanus and rangers of Mielikki went into the ash desert that had been eastern Rawlinswood, to use their magic to heal slowly. Those among the Mucklestones Druids who had escaped their own domain were rebuilding leveled Mettledale on the black and grey flowing Tears Creek, to use the site of the razed village as a starting point for restoration.

From the Vast and across the Sea of Fallen Stars came a small group of priests, druids and rangers serving Eldath, who followed the druids of Silvanus and Chauntea. They cleansed the Akarnfljót, Eth, Flam, Spear Creek and Tears Creek in Lethyr Forest and afterward the Kaldurfljót, Dender's Creek, the Auststraumur, the Uth, the Soleine and the Lench or Sidewinder as it also is called, in Rawlinswood.

After more than two decades and countless works of magic, grain waved again in the fields along the Trade Route, young trees bowed their soft crowns in the wind in the eastern forests, and the streams that flowed from the woodlands once more ran clean and clear.

In the Year of the Lessons Learned (-124 DR), on the site where Bezentil was rebuilt, druids, rangers, hunters, woodsmen, farmers and merchants gathered on the Midsummer Feast to celebrate for a tenday the *Feast of the Verdant Dale*.

The feast became an annual event celebrated throughout the Dale. It still takes place today in most areas that are under the control of the Freemen. The modern feast is something of a tenday fair, where traveling merchants ride from village to village to peddle their wares, and farmers, foresters and laborers gather each evening after laying down their work for the day to eat and drink together on the village square or its equivalent.

In the first centuries after the cataclysmic war, there was little trouble between the druids and those Dalesmen who hunted or logged in the western forests. Animals that had fled the burning eastern forests had overpopulated central and western Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest, and they resettled only gradually into the replanted areas.

The poisonous smoke that had blanketed the Dale during and after the fall of Narfell and Raumathar also had serious effects upon trees in the western woods, and many of these were diseased and needed cutting. As a result, the druids and the rangers who worked with them had no objection to the hunt or the removing of dead and diseased wood from the forests. And there were less than half as many Dalesmen to feed than had been the case earlier. The war had taken a horrendous toll.

For some eight centuries, most of the Dale east of the Impilturian enclaves lived in relative harmony, although the old animosities never were forgotten. The belief of hunters and loggers that their doings were an integral part of nature's balance had become something of a godless religion in the Dale. It was passed on from generation to generation, and these families seldom sincerely honored Silvanus or Mielikki. The peace that reigned in the Dale was an ecumenical truce of sorts, but never a brotherly bond.

Although there seldom were conflicts, the rangers and druids too kept a wary and often suspicious eye on the doings of the huntsmen and woodsmen. They and their ancestors had violated the balance time and again in harder days, from the druids' viewpoint, and they had little doubt that they would do so again, should the horn of plenty once more be emptied.

While the druids, clerics, rangers and their followers were busy healing the fields, forests and streams, the Freemen were hard at work rebuilding the Eastern Dale. Those who were uprooted by the war and survived returned to reclaim their old homes, but many second sons of families from the Western Dale went eastward too, to found their own homesteads rather than having to search for inheriting daughters to marry.

The reconstruction of the villages and hamlets of Auststad, Gurshofn, Ulfshofn, Skarlshofn and Riggh on the Trade Route was completed between the Year of Cresting Floods (-146 DR) and the Year of Hallowed Hills (-128 DR).

Auststad, which might have been one of the first villages to be restored, ended up being the last. Already in the Year of the Candlemaker (-147 DR), enterprising immigrants came to the site of old Auststad with a fair supply of gold and plans to build a large regional mill there, although the area still was little more than a desert of ash at the time.

They thought they could profit from the Dalesmen's reluctance at the time to rebuild Kront or to return to Ashanath at all. Not only had the Dalesmen and their Turami descendants been run over in and run out of Ashanath repeatedly, but it also was through Ashanath that the destructive horrors of Raumathar had come, and superstition at last had won the day. For several generations, few Dalesmen would go there. They believed Ashanath to be an accursed land.

Kront had been the milling center for the Eastern Dale before the cataclysm, and the merchants from the West thought in view of the Dalesmen's refusal to rebuild there, that ruined Auststad on Dender's Creek could with a modest investment be restored as a milling village. They thought it would turn a handsome profit, despite the fact that the creek ran black with soot and ash when they arrived.

They financed a crash construction program with sizeable crews of Dalesmen to do the building, and construction of both the mill and a new hamlet to replace the ruins of the old went forward at a smart and snappy pace. Before the Year of the Candlemaker (-147 DR) ended, Auststad already was a small frontier town, primitive but livable. By the time that snow and the cold of winter had forced workers indoors, the stone walls and thatch roof of the mill buildings had been completed.

The following spring, worked resume. However, the men who had financed the project had paid too little heed to the sorry state of the former woodlands, and they also ignored the warnings of the rangers of Mielikki, who told them that if rains were to come, there was nothing where the forests once stood to hold the water. Dender's Creek did indeed flood madly in the new Year of Cresting Floods (-146 DR), which also brought high water to many other parts of the Realms.

The mill was nearly complete and the hamlet already had grown to a village of some stature, when the rains began in mid-Tarsakh. Dender's Creek flooded with a rage unrecalled in the Dale's history, washing much of the ash and soot out of its valley and on into Lake Ashanath, but also washing away most of the mill and the rest of the village that had been raised in less than two years time.

Although the merchants' hopes for a great profit vanished with the floods, a group of Impilturian businessmen from Uthmere took a more conservative look at the situation again in the Year of Old Beginnings (-135 DR) and concluded that the merchants had the right idea; the east Dale still was without a central mill and Kront still lay in ruin. They concluded that the merchants simply had not waited long enough, until the forests had grown sufficiently to protect the site adequately.

In the Year of Favor (-131 DR), when young trees once more graced the Trade Route to the north and south, they began construction of a second mill, and Auststad once again grew on the western edge of the coastal swamp that lower Dender's Creek had become. The mill was completed in the Year of Hallowed Hills (-128 DR), and it earned the men from Uthmere the profits they had sought.

In the years before the completion of the Auststad mill, the other villages of the Eastern Dale also were rebuilt. When the mill began grinding grain, it had a ready market in the Dale's last city to the east, restored Bezentil, which had no stream that was steady enough to turn a waterwheel, and it had grain enough to grind from the farms in the restored villages of Riggh, Skarlshofn, Gurshofn, and Ulfshofn.

Spearmouthdale south of Lethyr Forest had survived the conflagration undamaged, except of course for ash and soot, and Mettledale, which had been razed, arose again, at first as an enclave for the Mucklestones Druids. However, after the trees of eastern Lethyr Forest had taken root and gained size, the druids and their rangers returned to it in the Year of the Hallowed Hills (-128 DR), leaving the village to the few farmers who had resettled in it. Within a few years, it again had become a small farming and hunting village.

In the Western Dale conditions also improved slowly. The Impilturian rulers on the east coast of Easting Reach and in Uthving, Wanneth, Veststad and Mauberg had little love for life in the Dale. It was the province, the backlands, the limbo to which one would be exiled, and many who had come to the Western Dale after its annexation to seek their political or commercial fortunes had returned to the *"civilized"* west within decades.

As a result, the Impilturians began to view the Dalesmen less as primitive vassals and a bit more as backwards neighbors who, with patience, might be taught to run businesses and earn profits for Impiltur. Through this practice, the Western Dalesmen, while still under Impilturian rule, gained a certain degree of autonomy, and when the first Impilturian kingdom crumbled some 1,000 years later, they were prepared for independence.

Ashanath was another matter. Few Dalesmen were willing to defy the curse they believed was upon the shore of the Lake of Tears. In these times, many tribes of barbarian horse riders from the distant northeast had ridden across the barren and fruitless plain that once had been the heart of Narfell. They came briefly into Ashanath as well, telling the few Dalesmen they encountered that they were the survivors of the Narfelli Empire. They claimed the Narfelli plain, Ashanath and even the Great Dale as their own.

Most sages think that a small number of Narfelli survivors teamed up with and gained the leadership of some tribes of eastern horse nomads, but that these tribes themselves had little to do with Narfell. There is some speculation that the tribes may have been renegade Tuigan who were lured by Narfelli promises of an empire in the West waiting to be taken.

Whatever the case, although these Nar tribesmen continue to maintain their claim to this day that Narfell, Ashanath and the Great Dale are theirs, it never has led to conflict, because the claim has not been asserted beyond the barren prairie lands now known as Narfell.

In fact, the tribes retreated from the part of Ashanath south of the Trade Route in the Year of the Thundering Herd (52 DR) and never returned there, nor did they attempt to enter the Great Dale. The barren Narfelli plain appeared to be the terrain they preferred. They seldom were seen south of the site of Bildoobaris, the annual trade fair they began in the Year of the Thundering Herd, northeast of the ruins of Věžpeklo (Nighthawk Tower).

In the Year of the Caustic Blood (55 DR), drought and hot winds plagued what now is Thesk, to the south of Lethyr Forest. That continued in the Year of the Laughing Nightmare (56 DR), when the laughing plague set in as well, reaching as far eastward as Tammar. This horrible variety of plague took its name from one of its more gruesome effects, which stretched the facial skin of victims in the terminal stages, making them appear to be laughing.

More than a century earlier, Impiltur had begun opening trade with the East, crossing Easting Reach by boat from Sarshel to Ethdale and then traveling onward to the East on the Golden Way. The Impilturians were unwilling to travel through the plague infested areas, so they switched to the longer northern route, traveling from Ethdale over Nyth and Borkurstad (New Sarshel) to Uthmere and then following the Trade Route through the Great Dale to the ruins of Kront on Lake Ashane before returning southward to the Golden Way.

Impilturian businessmen viewed the ruins of Kront as a source of potential new income. They began rebuilding the city, seeing it as an important way station for traders making the northern detour and for the increasing number of Impilturians going to Bildoobaris to buy the prime horse stock being traded by the Nars. They began the restoration of Kront as a provisional trading hamlet, and it already was in full boom by the end of the Year of the Laughing Nightmare.

With the rebuilding of Kront, the Mucklestones Druids again became combative for the first time in two centuries. Mercenaries and laborers from Impiltur felled young trees from the western eave of Lethyr Forest to construct the wooden lakeside buildings, and the Mucklestones druids and rangers were quick to react, but the fighters and wizards in Impilturian pay defended themselves. In most senses, the situation was something of a standoff, with both sides taking losses.

In the end, however, the Impilturians did gain enough lumber to finish their construction. But they fell far short of making the profits they sought. In the Year of the Lamplit Nights (57 DR), the laughing plague had exhausted itself on the Golden Way, and the weather produced bountiful crops in the Year of the Dazzling Dolphins (58 DR). The Impilturian inn, stables, general store and bordello in Kront were bankrupt by year's end. Their owners pulled up stakes and went home.

The Dalesmen who worked for the Impilturians in Kront in the brief two-year period had lost their fear of the alleged curse of Ashanath. During their stay, fishing had been excellent on the Lake of Tears, the land south of Kront was fertile and Lake Ashane had kept the climate east of Lethyr Forest milder than on the plain north of Kront or in the Eastern Dale.

The Dalesmen in Kront stayed and reopened the once luxurious Impilturian facilities on a much more modest level, earning a decent living from travelers to the Bildoobaris trade fair and the small but growing number of merchants interested in the ungoverned land of the Rashemi across the lake.

The opposite shore of Lake Ashane, which had been claimed by Raumathar, had been through even bloodier times than the devastated Kront area. During the latter years of the war, the land now known as Rashemen had been little more than a huge Narfelli-Raumathari battleground. The Rashemi themselves developed into a warrior culture during this time.

After the fall of the two empires, the Rashemi slowly attempted to rebuild from the ashes. Although there was little to sustain life in much of the burnt land, the Rashemi and their mysterious witches agreed to form a new nation in the Year of Clinging Death (75 DR), with the witches being given the right to determine who the kings and war leaders of Rashemen would be.

The young nation was desperate for grain. The Rashemi already had successfully defended themselves 120 years earlier in the Year of the Raging Brook (-45 DR) against an invading army from Mulhorand, which then still included the modern land of Thay. The witches and their king knew better than to seek help from that direction, and there were no farmlands north or east of Rashemen.

The only option then was to cross Lake Ashane to see what was there. The Rashemi knew from war tales that the western shore had been a part of Narfell, and occasional merchants from the West confirmed that it still was settled. A small expedition accompanied by a witch was sent in Mirtul of the Year of Windsong (76 DR), after the Lake of Tears was free of ice, equipped to defend itself and retreat if attacked but prepared to negotiate on friendly terms.

When the Rashemi reached the docks of Kront, their reception by the Dalesmen was neither friendly nor hostile but rather guarded and curious. That changed rather quickly, however, after each side discovered it had what the other needed. The Dalesmen had been experiencing bountiful crop harvests and could supply the Rashemi with grain.

The men of Kront wanted to expand their settlement, but they were unwilling to battle the druids and rangers of Silvanus and Mielikki in Rawlinswood or the Mucklestones druids in Lethyr Forest to fell the young timber that stood there.

The Dalesmen also wished to barter for more meat. Game had been abundant in the western and Central Dale in recent years, but deer, boar, foxes, hare and the like still were reestablishing themselves in the East. The druids and rangers allowed neither hunting nor logging in the eastern forests. The men of Kront were fish eaters who now and then could enjoy preserved meat from the Central and Western Dale, packed in brine in barrels, but less often than they wished to.

The Rashemi, who were close to nature, could see the wisdom of the druids' position. Their two great forests, Ashenwood and Urlingwood, had survived the destruction of Raumathar. They provided not only ample game but also timber that could be harvested. Before the Rashemi sailed back home, they had struck an agreement with the men of Kront to exchange lumber and packed meat in barter for grain, preserved fruits and vegetables, beer and schnapps.

Regular trade between Ashanath and Rashemen developed quickly and flourished for well over two centuries, subsiding only after Rashemi agriculture became self-sufficient and the forest and wildlife stands of the Eastern Dale had reached a point where the druids could allow a reasonable amount of hunting and timbering. After that time, trade continued but became less frequent, focused largely on bartering wares from the West in return for Rashemi furs.

As Kront grew, an increasing number of Dalesmen seeking their fortunes migrated eastward, settling Ashanath anew and building a number of small fishing villages on the Lake of Tears to about 20 miles/32 km south of Kront, and also building farming settlements along both sides of Tears Creek to the eaves of Lethyr Forest. By the Year of the Late Sun (300 DR), Kront had grown into a small town of some 2,000, and that number again was estimated to live in thorps, hamlets and villages in the remainder of southern Ashanath.

For nearly five centuries afterward, the Great Dale and Ashanath knew a period of peace rare in their history. Bane, Myrkul, Tempus, Talos and even orcish Gruumsh focused their attention elsewhere in Faerûn, while Chauntea, Eldath, Mielikki and Silvanus endowed the two lands with their blessings. War, trials and tribulations were the order of the day across the waters, in the West beyond the Dragon Reach and in the south in the Vilhon Reach. Even in the Vast beyond Easting Reach, orcs, dwarves and humans warred with one another, but not in the Dale or in Ashanath.

When war did return, there are those who think it was more likely the doing of Beshaba or perhaps even Garagos, who slowly was returning to Faerûn after his defeat at Tempus' hands, rather than the mischief of Tempus.

Ironically, events that happened some 1,500 years earlier during the Narfelli reign repeated themselves again at this time. Drought began in the late summer months of the Year of the Rotten Orchards (787 DR), and it ended in Eleint of the Year of the Flourishing Forests (789 DR), too late to save those years' crops but early enough to save the trees from extinction.

In the Year of Bend Sinister (790 DR), the fields of the Trade Route again were yielding crops, and by the end of the Year of the Sister's Battles (791 DR), most of the Great Dale's ecological system had recuperated extensively, although animal populations in the forest still remained too thin. By the Year of the Firehawk (795 DR), even this imbalance had all but vanished, but by that time, irreconcilable warring fronts were established that still exist today.

In autumn of the Year of the Rotten Orchards (787 DR), famine had spread through much of the Dale, particularly east of Vulddin and in Ashanath, where few crops could be grown, even in a good season, except in the farming areas south of Kront and along Tears Creek. All of these areas had become highly dependent upon grain from the Western Dale.

To compound matters, Umberlee and Talos joined in the conspiracy during the Harvestide feast at the end of Eleint, bringing cold storms in from the Icerim Mountains beyond the North Country that kept the Lake of Tears in turmoil and made fishing all but impossible. The storms went on unabated for more than a year, dying back suddenly in Ches of the Year of the Flourishing Forests (789 DR).

History from 1,500 years earlier repeated itself. The Dalesmen grew hungry and turned to the forests to hunt, and as the toll they took became excessive, the druids attempted to stop them. In short order, armed combat broke out in the Eastern Dale between the hunters in one camp and the druids and rangers in the other.

The flames of war first were fanned in eastern Lethyr Forest, where the Mucklestones Druids drew the line and refused to tolerate any more hunting within their domain. The famine-threatened hunters of the Eastern Dale fought back, and soon the two camps were regularly slaying one another.

Within relatively little time, the war spread through the forests and up the Trade Route to the West. After two years of little rain, most fields along the Trade Route as far west as Vulddin brought only total crop failures. Desperate to feed their families, even farmers began to turn to meat from the forest as their main source of nourishment.

For a second time in the Dale's history, the druids found the balance of the entire ecological system within the two forests collapsing, and they and their rangers fought with all their might to defend the woods against encroachment by Dalesmen on the hunt. The Dalesmen on the other hand fought for their own survival and the lives of their families. There was no basis for a compromise upon which peace could be built.

The Arrival of Harbet Gall ...
From the Year of the Watching Raven (913 DR)

More than a century of slaying had passed, with no end in sight, when a missionary cleric of Malar the Beastlord came to the Great Dale in the Year of the Watching Raven (913 DR). Harbet Gall had been an important high priest of Malar in Turmish, but upon hearing the call of his deity, he crossed the Inner Sea to establish the church of Malar in the Great Dale.

The ship that brought Gall to the Dale docked in Uthmere, in the West, which had been a free city for some quarter of a century when Gall departed the ship and first set foot on its docks. Unwisely, Gall tried to preach the gospel of Malar in the port city, which already was striving for the same degree of civilization and literacy that the cities of Impiltur across Easting Reach had attained.

By the Year of the Burning Tree (890 DR), the crumbling Impilturian kingdom had pulled out of Uthmere, Timbertown, Uthving, Wanneth, Borkurstad (now New Sarshel), Nyth and Ethdale, and these cities, villages and settlements generally were considered to have become independent communities of the Freemen in the Great Dale.

Uthmere was a flourishing agricultural city, deep in the worship of Chauntea and without the incest, decadency and general degeneration that was leading the first Impilturian kingdom to its fall. The soil on and above Easting Reach was rich and fertile, and those who farmed there reaped bountiful harvests in the short growing season, limited by the cold of the Great Glacier to the north.

Both the merchants' profession and the worship of Waukeen were growing in newly independent Uthmere and environs. Many in Uthmere entertained visions of a day when peace would be attained in the East, when other parts of the Dale might produce goods sought in distant markets, when the Trade Route might turn into a new and important overland caravan trail connecting the northern Vast, Impiltur and the Great Dale with the majestic cities of the mysterious East.

The bloody hunt-and-kill gospel of Malar was understood quickly in Uthmere as a serious threat to those visions, one that would fan the flames of the druidic civil war rather than quelling them. Gall had been in Uthmere for less than two full days when he was forced to flee eastward, to save his life.

Ironically, had the folk of 10th century Uthmere acted more decisively and slain Gall, their visions of a prosperous future might have become reality. Instead, Gall escaped eastward, where his message at last fell upon eager ears, keeping the flames of civil war raging on into the present.

Gall made his escape down the Trade Route. He had learned his lesson in Uthmere. Instead of preaching, he listened and attempted to learn what avenues would best lead him to success in convincing the Dalesmen to follow the teachings of the Beastlord.

In the larger settlements along the Trade Route from Uthmere most of the way to Vulddin, Gall found farming Dalesmen deeply rooted in the worship of Chauntea, who offered little fertile ground for the gospel of Malar. During this leg of his journey, Gall also made side trips into villages and hamlets beneath the eaves of Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest.

The farther eastward he went, the more Gall discovered in the forests' shadows what he had been seeking: The hostility of many Dalesmen toward the druids of the forests and their yearning to still their consciences. The could do that within the confines of a conservationist religion that - unlike that of the druids - paid due respect in their own minds to the needs of men as well as those of flora and fauna.

Gall understood that the message of Malar in its purest form was more than most of the anti-druidic Dalesmen were prepared to digest. He also was convinced that he could bring the huntsmen of the Dale to fulfill the goals of Malar without intentionally worshipping him.

Before reaching Vulddin, Gall already had begun telling the new tale he had shaped. He no longer claimed to be a priest of Malar but rather a cleric of a heretofore unknown god in the Great Dale, *Herne the Hunter*. To some extent, Gall was caught up in his own lie, for he had made the mistake of identifying himself as a priest of Malar in Uthmere. Rangers had passed that information on to forest druids of Silvanus, and the clerics and druids of Chauntea had sent warnings about Gall and his worship of Malar eastward.

He found little welcome in Gylving, Riggstad and Ganglhofn, although the ears of some huntsmen were open to his words in Vulddin. In the Trade Route villages beyond, however, there were many more Dalesmen who relied upon the hunt for their sustenance and who had learned to hate the forest druids.

Gall built upon these feelings. He espoused the faith of Herne the Hunter, whose clerical druids he said were the true druids of the forest. Gall eased the pangs of conscience some hunters had over their battles against the druids of Silvanus by claiming that the druidic faith of Silvanus had become corrupted and that his druids hungered only for the right to control all earnings reaped from the forests.

Gall sensed the love of the forests and the deep conservationist leanings that were the mark of the Dale's huntsmen, and he had the wisdom to know that he must use these things to achieve Malar's goals rather than to work against them. The farther eastward Gall traveled, the more ears that opened to him.

He told his listeners that he had been sent by Herne to redeem the Dale's forests from the curse of the fallen druids of Silvanus and to reinstate the true druidic order to life within Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest. He preached that it is not the druid's role to protect the forests from humankind but rather to integrate humankind and all other forms of forest life together within the order of nature itself. When a druid achieves this integration within his forest, Gall said, the balance is the natural result.

At the top of the natural order, Gall claimed, is man. It is not merely man's right to hunt, Gall proclaimed, but it also his duty, his fulfillment of the natural order. Beneath man in this natural order, he preached, come the animals of the forest - the wolves, bears, deer, boar, rabbits and such - and they too have the natural duty to hunt one another. Both the animals and men also have the duty to forage in and feed upon the plant life in the forests, he argued. Only so is the flame of life kept in its natural, perpetual cycle of renewal, Gall argued.

At the time Gall arrived in the Dale, the original causes of the civil war - drought and famine some 200 years earlier - had faded from the memories of the illiterate Dalesmen, who kept no written histories. This too, Gall had sensed, and this understanding gave him the knowledge he needed to restore a false memory of the war's beginnings in his followers' minds.

The fighting began in earlier times, Gall said, because the fallen druids of Silvanus had lost control over their domain. In their hunger for power, he said, they had neglected to take proper care to preserve the natural balance within the Dale's forests. It was not the hunters, Gall said, but rather the druids who had caused the stand of boar and deer in the forests to dwindle.

Gall even made the false claim that Herne's church had reason to believe that the druids themselves had overhunted the forests, to trade pelts, furs and smoked venison and boar to the barbarians of the Nar and the Rashemi tribes in exchange for powerful objects of fell magic that the tribesmen had found in ruins of fallen Narfell and Raumathar.

The new gospel of Herne quickly won a substantial following for Gall. He built Nighthawk Tower on the site of the ancient Narfelli Věžpeklo and took up residence there, calling it the Temple of the Horned God. Four years after Gall's arrival in the Great Dale, in the Year of the Winding Road (917 DR), the church of Herne the Hunter had become the dominant religion in the Eastern Dale, with strong bastions of faith in Kront, Bezentil, Auststad, Ulfshofn, Skarlshofn, Riggh and Gurshofn.

In the same year, Gall sent trusted messengers back to Turmish, with instructions to tell the high priests of Malar there of his ruse with Herne the Hunter. Gall asked the church to send a delegation of Malarite clerics and evil ranger followers of Malar to his temple in Nighthawk Tower, to help build the disguised church of the Beastlord in the Great Dale, in Herne's name.

The high priests in Alaghôn granted Gall's request. A group of 18 Malarite clerics and 12 rangers were trained in Gall's fictitious dogma of Herne. In Kythorn of the Year of the Palace (918 DR), they disembarked quietly and inconspicuously from a ship on the docks of Telflamm, making their way then along the Golden Way to Two Stars. There they turned northward on the trail known today as the Tuigan Retreat, eventually reaching Gall in Nighthawk Tower.

Because druidism has been bred deeply into the blood of the Dalesmen, Gall never has identified Malar as the god he serves, although the druids of Silvanus and Chauntea openly preach that the Beastlord is Gall's deity. The Malarite clerics who serve under Gall today also believe they venerate *Herne,* and they wear robes somewhat different from other priests of Malar, usually limiting themselves to cloaks made of deer pelts and headwear fashioned from the heads of bucks with large antlers.

After the famine had let up, Gall's church paid more than just lip service to conservation measures within the forest, to assure that prey for future hunts would remain bountiful. By the Year of the Unhanged Man (938 DR), when the church of Herne had celebrated its 25th anniversary in the Dale, most of Gall's followers had become almost fanatic worshippers of Herne and the hunt, and they were fully convinced that the hunt was their religious duty.

Spurred on by Gall, the hunters began making the druids of the forest their prey. This, of course, led to a heightened level of civil war, not only with the druids but also with the many Dalesmen who had remained faithful to the druidic teachings of Silvanus and Chauntea. This was not at first inimical to the interests of the church of *Herne/Malar,* because the huntsmen considered such a forest war to be the greatest of hunts.

But combat quickly took an even greater toll than Gall had anticipated. Late in the Year of the Turning Wheel (937 DR), Gall's troops overran Bezentil, although 75% of the city had been reduced to soot and ashes before it fell, and Vulddin found itself in a relatively painless, almost comical state of siege.

The Gallists reached Vulddin weeks after the harvest, when the granaries within the walled city were full. They were strong enough in number to seal off the city, but the siege mattered little. Vulddin had all that it needed to survive. Gall's army had to flee back into the forests or die of starvation by late Nightal.

By the time winter had ended early in the Year of the Unhanged Man (938 DR), the war had taken a substantial toll in the Eastern Dale. All the druids' groves of Silvanus in Rawlinswood east of Dender's Valley had been reduced to ashes. Auststad, Ulfshofn, Gurshofn, Skarlshofn, Riggh and Bridhh were completely under Gall's thumb.

In madcap sapper attacks and with few losses of their own, the Mucklestones Druids leveled not only Gurshofn, easy prey to attack from within Lethyr Forest, but also Ulfshofn on the Trade way and Bridhh, despite its wooden palisade wall. However, with time, the madly raging warfare was forced to abate as the religious factions slowly fortified the settlements of the Dale, giving attacking armies without magic little chance of winning more than their own annihilation.

An important element of Gall's planned strategy had been the burning of the enemy's fields, but he had little success in convincing his Dalesmen to destroy the crops of the other side. The burning of food simply went too strongly against a Dalesman's personal code.

The druidic forces made no attempt to burn the fields of Gallist villages, although they were less hesitant to raze the villages. Famine had become all too well known in the Great Dale, and neither side was about to begin a mutual ravaging of croplands that could only lead to more famine and starvation.

The fervor for Herne's faith grew weaker after the devastation, as the Dalesmen began to think again about their own survival and the sustenance of their families. Harbet Gall recognized that he needed to turn this trend around in order to keep his church strong and to maintain his own strength within the church.

Therefore, he, began working new magicks in the Year of the Vengeful Halfling (939 DR) to draw bands of starving hobgoblins from the Giantspires into northern Rawlinswood, to force his followers to hunt down the invaders. Ironically, even his enemies, the druids of Silvanus and Chauntea, often were forced to take up arms against the orcs, to maintain the severely threatened balance within the wood.

This move had longer reaching effects than even Gall could imagine. There already had been hobgoblins in Rawlinswood, the offspring of the Dalesmen vassals and Narfelli soldiers that K'Ahlob has transmogrified centuries earlier. While these creatures truly were hobgoblins, the seed of human intelligence had remained within them. Over the generations, it germinated and grew, producing a line of woodland hobgoblins who were much higher in intelligence than the average tribal hobgoblin.

Within some of this breed, the natural talents of a sorcerer rekindled their flame. The hobgoblins had a deep inherent fear of the magicks protecting Dun Tharos and the ancient green elven settlements of T'uluar, Mal Nu'ill and Kro Tharos, and most would not come near these places. But a relative few of their number overcame this fear, and even fewer managed to overcome the magic traps protecting these sites.

One of these was Dirghin Rednose, the grandfather of Tark Rednose, who a century and a half later would lead 80,000 hobgoblins in an attack upon Impiltur. Dirghin Rednose was too frightened to stay long in Dun Tharos. He by no means searched the fey fortress long enough to find K'Ahlob's transmogrifier. But he did succeed in finding several spell books, which he took with him.

Gall had summoned nearly 15,000 hobgoblins from the Giantspires into Rawlinswood. They were mountain hobgoblins, ill prepared for the combat conditions that awaited them in the thick Dalelands forest, and even less prepared for the battle tactics of the ranger-trained Dalesmen who hunted them down. When the power of the Gall's magic at last subsided, only 2,000 of the summoned hobgoblins survived and succeeded in their retreat back into the Giantspires.

Rednose and others of the transmogrified hobgoblins joined forces and fought with them during the retreat, and Rednose took with him the spell book from Dun Tharos and the knowledge of the ancient Kadestarmestilpus gnome delves he had discovered in his wanderings northwest of the Lench. Many of the forest hobgoblins who had retreated with Rednose into the Giantspires used their high intelligence to rise quickly to power there.

Rednose, on the other hand, spent many years living reclusively in a mountain cave, where he poured over and slowly learned how to apply the secrets encrypted in the books he had found. Before his death, he had taught the wizard's lore to his son Zukan Rednose and a dozen other sons of forest hobgoblins who had followed the retreat northward. Zukan and the others who had learned wizardry in turn saw to it that 10 times as many wizards of the next generation were trained, including his son, Tark.

While almost all of his priests and huntsmen of the Great Dale still were busy trying to drive the hobgoblins from Rawlinswood – in a battle many Dalesmen erroneously call the *Alliance of the Druids* – Harbet Gall took a decisive step.

At age 66, in the perhaps appropriately named Year of the Cold Claws (940 DR), Gall, whose health had been slowly failing, conducted the dark rites to ascend from life into the undeath of lichdom, thereby giving the *Claws of Malar* the deathly coldness of a lich's touch.

Before his followers had returned from the hobgoblin wars, Gall also transformed his external appearance into that of a huge, standing stag, and in this form, he revealed himself to the returning hunters, claiming to now be the embodiment of *Herne's* avatar, a move that considerably strengthened his influence among his illiterate, impressionable and often superstitious followers.

In the years that followed, every village and settlement from Gylving westward had been attacked more than once by Gall's followers. At the peak of his power, Gall controlled the entire Trade Route as far west as Riggstad and Karlshofn. But the valiant Freemen of the Western Dale fought back and slew his troops, and he was forced to withdraw eastward, to Bezentil, and then out of Bezentil and into the eastern reaches beyond.

These losses were one element that began costing Gall some of the influence he had won among the Dalesmen. In the summer of the Year of the Turning Wheel (937 DR), the first records were made reporting melting on the southwestern Great Glacier. A quarter century later, in the Year of the Shandon Veil (962 DR), the glacial melt already had shown substantial impact in the Great Dale. Annual temperatures had gone up by about 5 degrees, annual rainfall had increased by about 10 inches/25 cm, and the flora and fauna were flourishing in Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest.

The druids of Silvanus were forced to allow hunters of any faith to stalk prey in the forests, simply to keep the animal populations in check. However, this was a secondary worry. The unnatural shift in climate was a matter of great concern to the druids, because it was causing widespread changes in the Great Dale's woodlands, and the druids were unable to assess the impact these changes would have upon the ecological balance.

True to human nature, Gall's hunters were less interested than they had been in risking their lives in hunting druids at a time when the forests were open to them again to bag the deer and boar they needed to feed their families. The milder weather made life in the Dale a bit easier and a bit more relaxed.

Several hundred years later, in the 14th century, the warming due to the glacier's melt would become so strong that immigrants from Tethyr would be able to plant quality wine on the sunny north shore of Easting Reach, northwest of Uthmere, where there had been only cold, often frozen swamp.

As the weather shifted, those Dalesmen who desired to wage war for its own sake became relatively few in number. Genuine worship of Malar in the guise of Herne was on the decline in the Great Dale, and the lich Harbet Gall knew he must act to placate his god.

The Dawn of the Dragon Hunt
From the Year of the Marching Forest (979 DR)

To keep the hunt alive and inspiring in the centuries to come, Gall turned his interest in the Year of the Marching Forest (979 DR) toward the still young *Cult of the Dragon.* Disguised in human form and dealing with a new and small cult cell in Hlondeth, he forged an alliance, in which one of the cult's first three dracoliches agreed to herd unwilling younger dragons to eastern Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest, to hunt the Dale's huntsmen and to be hunted by them.

Once again, the druids of the forests were at times drawn back into battle, to prevent the massive imbalances in nature that the dragons were causing within the forests. With this success, Gall did not settle long for the fruits of his alliance with Hlondeth but instead established his own cell of the cult, headquartered in Kront, by this time a rough and rowdy village inhabited by *Herne*-worshipping hunters and sometimes visited by riders of the Nar tribes, where the blood of both was spilled frequently.

In these years, Gall rose to the rank of a Keeper of the Secret Hoard within the cult. In the Year of the Meddling Avatar (988 DR), he rebuilt the Narfelli Fortress Clymph as the stronghold of his branch of the Hlondeth cult cell.

By the Year of the Wailing Winds (1000 DR) a substantial part of the southern Great Glacier had melted, explaining years of high water on the Inner Sea. This time marked also the beginning of what Gall called *The Great Hunt*.

Through his work with the Dragon Cult, Gall convinced two adult green dragons and later a lesser green dracolich to make their lairs in the dark depths of Rawlinswood, forest lands where hobgoblins tread more often than men, where rumor placed the lost fortress of fallen Narfell called Dun Tharos.

The Great Hunt, as the Gallists called it, or *the Dragon Terror*, as the Freemen of the Dale called it, began late in the Year of the Wailing Winds, when the two green dragons - Raspatalos and Krimstendolo - swept down out of the forests over Dender's Valley. Ironically, they poisoned Gall's own followers with chlorine gas in Skarlshofn before reaching Bezentil, their prime target, which at that time was a stronghold of the Freemen. The two dragons were arrogant. They already had foolishly used their breath weapons repeatedly upon Skarlshofn, leaving few survivors in the strategically unimportant village.

When they reached Bezentil, they managed to poison nearly a third of the 8,000 people who then lived there. But they were growing exhausted, and the archers of the city militia, a few armed with magic druids' arrows, had badly wounded the two wyrms. They were forced to flee in errant flight back to their lairs, merely to save their lives.

The pair winged over Riggh and Torside. The route proved to be not only a fatal choice for Krimstendolo, who was seriously wounded by a ranger atop the Tor, but also an ill omen for Harbet Gall. Raspatalos managed to fly on and eventually reach its lair. However, the ranger's magic arrow crippled Krimstendolo, forcing it to land.

At that time, an expedition from the Noble Hand temple of Helm in Vastan Tsurlagol was researching the situation in the Great Dale, after being sent out by the temple's high priest at that time, High Centurion Kartes Darrn. The high priest had received a vision from the Vigilant One warning of a great and portentous threat of undeath from the Great Dale.

The clerical Vigilance Mester Kurney and the paladin Sir Tebbet Ringgh led the expedition. When the badly wounded green dragon Krimstendolo landed upon a farming field outside of Torside, Sir Tebbet challenged it to mortal combat. The paladin was badly injured himself in the battle, which is said to have endured for nearly three hours.

In the end, the wyrm was wounded beyond magical mending, and Sir Tebbet knew it would perish within the hour. He began walking from the field of battle to seek badly needed healing, when Krimstendolo, a dragon of weak character, begged the paladin to deal him the merciful blow of death.

The dragon was unable to heal himself, and he knew all too well that nothing else would come to save his fading life. But the horrible pain caused by Sir Tebbet's magical two-hander tortured the dying wyrm, who was not of a cut to bear pain bravely.

Sir Tebbet agreed to end Krimstendolo's misery - if the dragon would betray the location of the lairs of Raspatalos and the elusive green dracolich Nestamanur. This demand irked the little pride that Krimstendolo had, but he also knew that the paladin might detect his lie, were he to give false information. On the other hand, Raspatalos and Nestamanur meant nothing to Krimstendolo.

He gave the paladin the information he sought, but after Sir Tebbet had dealt the mortal blow, Krimstendolo committed the last dastardly act of his cowardly life and in his last gasp released what chlorine gas still was in him upon the sorely wounded paladin, bringing Sir Tebbet to death's door.

It was a close matter, but Mester Kurney did in the end manage to restore the paladin to his state of good health. After these events, Mester Kurney, Sir Tebbet and the other members of their party returned to Tsurlagol, to report what had occurred in the Great Dale.

With the fall of Krimstendolo, Gall was better able to control Raspatalos, who helped serve his goal in establishing the Great Hunt. The erratic destruction of Gall's own followers in Skarlshofn convinced the Hunters of Herne that they indeed did, have a deadly foe to contend with. As Gall had intended, they began hunting down the green dragon, who obliged by chasing Hunters of Herne and Freemen of the Dale alike up and down the Trade Route and over the forest trails.

The church of Herne again grew devout and strong. Indeed, it even drew some converts from the Freemen, who felt that druids were contributing too little to ease them of their dragon plight. The dracolich Nestamanur was less help. He had made his lair in the ruins of the green elven settlement known as T'uluar, deep in northern Rawlinswood, where both Freemen and the Hunters of Herne seldom ventured, near the borders of the barren grass plains of Narfell.

Nestamanur found little sport in hunting the simple Dalesmen, and he was less than inspired by the idea of hunting druids and rangers in Rawlinswood. They had the advantage of the thick cover of the forest's canopy, and the druids attacked him with magic. His tastes soon shifted toward hunting the Rashemi, but potent witch magic quickly changed his mind, and he turned instead to the barbarian Nar tribes northeast of Rashemen who gave him a sporting fight but could do little to threaten him.

In the Year of the Labyrinth (1003 DR), a band of Freemen druids and rangers found the lair of the surviving green dragon, Raspatalos, in the elven ruin of Mal Nu'ill, east of Dun Tharos. While one band of daring rangers led the green dragon on a merry but fruitless goose chase to the ruins of Dun Tharos and back, other rangers and a group of druids prepared a trap designed to lure Raspatalos to the entrance of his lair's tunnel and enrage him there, to make him careless. The plan worked perfectly.

While Raspatalos still was tracking down the taunting band of rangers, another ranger entered the dragon's tunnel beneath Mal Nu'ill and stole two handfuls of jewels and coins from Raspatalos' lair. He intentionally left a trail of valuables leading from the tunnel entrance through the elven ruins.

Once Raspatalos understood that the rangers he was tracking had backtracked, it occurred quickly to him that their taunting may have been a ruse to divert him, to rob his lair. Enraged, he flew post haste back to Mal Nu'ill, hoping to catch the burglars he was sure had gone through his door.

Still aloft, he saw the glitter of coins and jewels on the threshold of his tunnel, and in his rage, he was too careless to search for a trap. Before he could do more, druidic magic boasted him and a band of veteran rangers attacked him. His chlorine breath felled two of the rangers before he perished, but Raspatalos had met his end.

With the fall of Raspatalos, the Great Hunt had lost its last hunter. The moody and capricious Nestamanur seldom vented his wrath upon the Great Dale, and the continued warming of the melting glacier to the north made harvests and game in the Dale ever more bountiful. Gall's goals were eluding him.

Sir Tebbet and the Dracolich Nestamanur
Year of the Oracle's Carcass (1004 DR)

In Kythorn of the Year of the Oracle's Carcass (1004 DR), Gall received word from spies of the tactics the druids and rangers had used to bait Raspatalos into entering their deadly trap, and he decided to turn these methods back upon the druids, to revive the Great Hunt with the dracolich Nestamanur as the hunter.

Gall sent a small band of his most talented rangers, Hunters of Herne, along with a mage of the Dragon Cult, under the leadership of one of his true druids of Herne into Rawlinswood, to secretly observe Nestamanur's lair in the ruins of T'uluar.

Less than an hour after the dracolich had departed on one of his extended raids into the barbarian lands northeast of Rashemen, the expedition was attacked by a band of some 50 hobgoblins, and it took several losses before winning the day. Nonetheless, the Hunters of Herne did succeed in looting the dracolich's lair, setting off magic traps that killed still more party members. But in the end, using spells, the party transported all of Nestamanur's treasure back to Gall's Temple of the Horned God in Nighthawk Tower and secreted it away deep in the dungeons below.

As often is the case in such matters, unknown to either Gall or Nestamanur, other factors also were in motion at that time, and they would shape the future of things in a manner other than either had expected. After slaying the green dragon Krimstendolo, the paladin Sir Tebbet Ringgh had returned to the Noble Hand temple in Tsurlagol, reaching the Vastan city early in the Year of the Awakening (1001 DR).

High Centurion Kartes Darrn already had heard reports from across the Dragon Reach in Sembia, of mighty, undead dragons tied to the Dragon Cult. They were said to be nearly indestructible, devastating the land. Darrn believed it was the duty of Helm's church to be vigilant and guard the lands of the Vast and eastward against the incursion of these undead dragons.

For centuries, the Noble Hand temple had stored two ancient magic items that it had gained - in truth religious artifacts - both of which were fashioned in ancient Netheril. One was a large, two-handed sword with a blade that cast a moonsilver glow. Darrn knew little about the sword, other than that it was named *Deadslayer* and that it was purported to be among the mightier weapons that could be used against the undead.

The second item was a small, mithral statuette of a dragon with fear in its eyes. Darrn's temple possessed a fragment of an ancient parchment naming the statuette the *Icon of Dragon Fear* and claiming that it could instill fear in all types of dragons. The parchment claimed that the icon was the work of the church of the no longer existent goddess Tyche.

Because the magic items blessed by Tyche were reputed to bear portions of both good and bad luck within them, Helm's church never had used the icon. It had been hidden away for centuries in the dungeons deep beneath the Noble Hand temple, nearly forgotten, although scribes of the temple had speculated from time to time that dragons ravaging parts of the Vast always veered away from Tsurlagol, perhaps as a result of the magic of the icon hidden in their dungeon.

Be that as it may, Darrn was not one to underestimate a foe of a dracolich's stature. After long preparations, the study of reports on dracoliches in Sembia and the Vilhon Reach and much prayer, Darrn sent Sir Tebbet and a party of other paladins and clerics of Helm back on a mission to the Great Dale late in the Year of the Labyrinth (1003 DR), with the goal of destroying Nestamanur. And Sir Tebbet heeded Darrn's plea that he take both *Deadslayer* and the *Icon of Dragon Fear* with him.

Game Master's note: Both of these artifacts are described in full in the section on artifacts in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide.*

As fate would have it - or destiny, as Sir Tebbet called it - in spring of the Year of the Oracle's Carcass, Nestamanur was on his rampage of revenge southward just as the paladin and his party were riding eastward, back into the Great Dale. Their point of convergence would have been near Gylving, were there no magic in the Realms.

Furious, Nestamanur had flown from his looted lair in T'uluar over the ruins of Mal Nu'ill, unleashing a lethal wave of chlorine upon the Freemen's hamlets of Hnútar and Karlshofn. Nestamanur viewed these attacks as a mere warm-up. The cities of the Dale were his prime goal. He intended to destroy them first, then hunt down, and slay all humans in the Dale.

After depopulating Karlshofn, his first prime target, the small city of Gylving, was in sight. But Sir Tebbet came in sight of the wall and roofs of Gylving at the same time. Nestamanur probably took no notice of the small group of riders approaching Gylving on the Trade Route from the west, but Sir Tebbet and his men had no trouble spotting the flying, rotting dragon hulk a dozen miles/20km or so north of the city wall. The paladin saw Nestamanur and recognized the dracolich as his destiny.

Nestamanur suddenly experienced something new and unpleasant, an emotion that was remarkably close to what humans describe as fear. The dracolich could not imagine what might threaten him in Gylving, but he suddenly was filled with an overwhelming vision of his own demise, his destruction and the eternal banning of his spirit to the lower planes. Even more so, Nestamanur felt an irresistible compulsion to flee such a fate. As fast as his shredded wings could maneuver, the dracolich made a 180-degree turn and fled, to hide in his lair in T'uluar.

Astonished, Sir Tebbet, nearing Gylving's west gate, observed Nestamanur's sudden and unexpected retreat. His astonishment only increased, as the *Deadslayer* sword began to communicate telepathically with the him, telling the paladin that he and the sword could work together, that Sir Tebbet need only concentrate his thoughts, and the sword would find any dragon he sought, alive, dead or undead.

Deadslayer also told Sir Tebbet that it could drive a hunted dragon into a berserker frenzy, which would make the wyrm fight wildly and without deliberation or good judgment. The sword did not mention that it also would try to drive Sir Tebbet into a berserker rage.

A bit overwhelmed, the paladin led his party into Gylving, to restock supplies and to gain a much-needed night's sleep. At dawn of the following day, Sir Tebbet followed *Deadslayer's* advice and concentrated his thoughts in union with the sword. *Deadslayer* then telepathically showed the paladin the way to T'uluar and into the tunnel beneath the ancient elven ruins, where Nestamanur was hiding in his lair.

Shortly thereafter, Sir Tebbet and his party left Gylving, riding northward through the corpse-laden Freemen's villages that Nestamanur had devastated in his rage a day earlier. After the trail ended at Hnútar, the paladin and his men had to lead their mounts along narrow deer tracks through the dense forest, reaching the ruins of Mal Nu'ill after sunset and making camp there for the evening.

Just as the paladin and his followers were preparing their camp, the wave of fear began to wash over Nestamanur again, and he could not resist the urge to flee once more. As fast as his tattered wings allowed, he flew into the Narfelli plain north of Rawlinswood, once again finding refuge from the unknown terror that drove him.

When Sir Tebbet broke camp the following day *Deadslayer* showed the paladin that the dracolich had fled to the Narfelli plain. Then, the *Icon of Dragon Fear* communicated for the first time with Sir Tebbet, telling him that it could severely wound the wyrm thrice; the paladin need only will it to be. And the icon said if it came to combat, it could drive the foe into a confused frenzy.

Like the *Deadslayer Sword*, the icon did not tell the paladin all. It neglected to mention that it was driving the dragon northward in fear. And it made no mention of lost Tyche's allotment of luck, which now could bring Sir Tebbet either the luck of Tymora or that of Beshaba.

With the new day, the hunting party followed the traces of an old elven trail northward, bypassing T'uluar and reaching by day's end what in the future would be the site of the ill-fated village of Kjarr. As the sun set, the dracolich Nestamanur at last relaxed. There was no new sign of the terror that had driven him northward. He settled into a deep ravine in the low foothills of the Giantspires, just northwest of Rawlinswood and above the Narfelli plain.

Nestamanur knew that the area was uninhabited. The move of his lair mattered little to him; his lair in T'uluar had been plundered. Even the last copper piece was gone - a deed he still would avenge, again and again. T'uluar itself was a ruin that mattered little to him in its own right. The winds and the cold of the Narfelli plain posed no discomfort for an undead dracolich.

Nestamanur thought he could lair securely in the ravine he had found, where he would take time to ponder knowledge hidden in the more distant recesses of his memory, in hopes that he would find the recollections that would define the source of his fear for him, as well as showing him the way to counter it.

However, after the new dawn, when Sir Tebbet's party already had been under way for a few hours, the wave of terror again flowed over and through the undead dragon. As on the two previous occasions, Nestamanur tried with the full strength of his will to resist the fear that wanted to compel him to flee, and this time, he succeeded.

He prepared to stand his ground, although the terror remained within him. Several hours passed before Sir Tebbet and his party reached the edge of the ravine where Nestamanur was hidden. When they arrived and saw the dracolich lurking in the shadows below, Sir Tebbet saw once again not only Nestamanur but also destiny there. He challenged the dracolich to single combat on the field of honor.

Nestamanur accepted the challenge quickly. The dracolich knew no honor, but he still had not determined what the source of his fear was, and he always believed that a divided enemy was the easiest to defeat. With the wyrm's acceptance of his challenge, Sir Tebbet ordered his men back.

The dracolich naturally tried to take immediate advantage of his foe, flying out the opposite end of the ravine, turning back and diving in low over the paladin, hoping to envelope him in a cloud of deadly chlorine gas that would send the paladin into a choking fit of death. However, nothing worked out as easily or as quickly as Nestamanur had expected.

Sir Tebbet was a proud paladin, but he was even more a true servant of Helm, and he knew his overriding duty was to destroy the dracolich, defending Faerûn against its threat. His pride dictated that he should battle Nestamanur with his sword alone; his sense of duty told him that the dragon's destruction was more important than his pride.

He also doubted that his sword arm alone would be a match for his magical foe. Thus, he chose in Helm's name to counter magic with magic, invoking the power of the *Icon of Dragon Fear* while Nestamanur still was in his flight of attack.

The icon concentrated upon Nestamanur's left wing, ripping at it with such wounding violence that the wing bones were torn from their sockets and strewn across the foothills. Still, the dracolich maintained balance enough to glide in over Sir Tebbet and loose its blast of chlorine upon the paladin. Although Sir Tebbet was taken by a fit of choking, he managed to maintain his hold upon *Deadslayer,* delivering a decisive blow to the dracolich's remaining right wing bones.

Nestamanur crashed unceremoniously to the ground, a few hundred yards/meters past the choking paladin, breaking several bones of its rib cage in the process. With both wings gone, the dracolich no longer could fly.

Nestamanur's nervous system long had been dead; and only rotted fibers hung from his bones. Years had gone by since he had known pain, which is an experience of life, not of undeath. And yet, the paladin's sword had sent incredible pain, worse than any he ever had known in life, through his entire being. The sword, Nestamanur decided erroneously, must be the magical source of fear that had driven him from Gylving and then from his lair into the Narfelli wasteland.

Sir Tebbet was a paladin of great fortitude. He succeeded in shaking off the effects of the deadly gas breath, although he had been weakened by it. Gathering himself, he marched toward the carcass of the dracolich, whom he rightly assumed was not yet vanquished.

With considerable difficult, Nestamanur managed to shift his weakened bonework around, to face the approaching paladin. Few of his bones remained without fractures, and his movements were difficult to steer. His magic and his poison breath were the only weapons Nestamanur still could employ.

Sir Tebbet spoke an arcane word and activated an amulet that High Centurion Kartes Darrn had given him which surrounded the paladin temporarily within an anti-magic shell. From the distance Nestamanur attempted to blast Sir Tebbet with spells, but they had no effect upon the paladin. The dracolich then waited, until Sir Tebbet had drawn so near that he could not help but be fully enveloped by his chlorine breath.

It was at this time that Tyche's allotment of luck played its role from within the *Icon of Dragon Fear.* Beshaba, not Tymora, came to the fore, and she passed ill luck on to both of the combatants. Nestamanur issued his last great breath of chlorine, hitting the paladin fully with it. Sir Tebbet choked and retched, knowing he was near death's door, but with his great fortitude, he still pushed onward, dealing the decisive blow with *Deadslayer* to the frame of Nestamanur, who at the same moment worked his last magic, stilling all air movement from the area surrounding himself and the paladin.

Tebbet's party, which had watched the historical battle from the distance, saw the bones of the dracolich collapse motionless into a heap. Sir Tebbet reeled within the unmoving chlorine cloud and then also fell still to the ground. His followers rushed to the scene, but all were forced to retreat, unable to withstand the chlorine cloud that enveloped what remained of the paladin and the dracolich.

When the chlorine cloud at last lifted, Sir Tebbet lay dead before the bones of the dracolich Nestamanur, who had ceased to exist. Although high clerics of Helm were in the paladin's party, their efforts to raise Sir Tebbet failed. In the end, they buried his body and all of his possessions - *Deadslayer* and the *Icon of Dragon Fear* included - in a cairn in what had been Nestamanur's lair of two days.

The site, referred to as *Tebbet's Cairn,* lies within the lands claimed by the Nar tribes, but to this very day, they refuse to come within 5 km/8 miles of it, claiming it is haunted.

Settlement of the Forests
From the Year of the Pillaged Crypt (1005 DR)

In the Year of the Pillaged Crypt (1005 DR), with his single dracolich destroyed and both of his green dragons killed, the Malarite lich Harbet Gall looked back upon the five-year reign of dragon terror he had imposed upon the Great Dale and was only mildly satisfied with what he had achieved.

Gall's main goal was to use the dragon terror to strengthen the faith of the Dale's huntsmen in Herne and to satisfy Malar's demands for the holy hunt. In these things, Gall had found unqualified success. The hunt again was the focus of life for Herne's followers, and most other Dalesmen as well, including the druids and rangers who worshipped Silvanus, Chauntea and Mielikki. They too had been driven by the dragon terror to honor Malar with the hunt. Indeed, even paladins and priests of Helm from the distant Vast had come to the Dale to pay the Beastlord his due tribute.

But the solidified worship of Malar in the guise of Herne had been only the first of Gall's two key goals. His long range purpose was to conquer and control all of the Dale, making it into the center of the Malarite hunt and worship in all of Faerûn. In this, the five years of dragon terror had failed miserably. He had reduced the population of the Great Dale by nearly 5% - the losses divided almost evenly between his followers and the enemy Freemen - without gaining an inch of ground anywhere. The war was at a stalemate, and the Dale was less than it had been. Gall had gained nothing.

At this time then the Malarite lich re-examined his strategy. The Dragon Cult never had been an end in its own right for Gall. He believed in Malar, not in the rule of dead dragons. Gall's only purpose in convincing a living dragon to walk the paths of the undead, to become a dracolich, was to have the dracolich as an additional powerful weapon in his arsenal.

His experiences with Nestamanur made Gall question whether dracoliches could be controlled sufficiently to serve as reliable weapons. If so, he concluded, he had not yet learned how. Thus, Nestamanur, was the first and last dracolich that Gall sought to accommodate in the Great Dale in those times.

Dragons, he thought, were another matter. The presence of a few dragons in the Dale always would keep its folk threatened and insecure, the two emotional pillars that would offer strong and consistent support for Malar's faith as represented by the church of Herne.

Gall also looked closely at the strengths and weaknesses of his foe, the Freemen of the Dale. As the 11th century marched forward, civilization, economic prosperity and literacy were rapidly gaining ground in the Dale's western cities and enclaves. Gylving and all settlements west of it were protected by strong walls and armed with disciplined units of the Freemen.

Most of the Freemen's druids and rangers had settled into the border areas of Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest north and south of the Trade Route, leaving the hearts of both forests, where neither side had been particularly active, only poorly protected. Only the northeastern part of Lethyr Forest, northeast of Bridhh and Tears Creek, where the Mucklestones Druids waged their relentless hit-and-vanish war against the Gallists, remained hotly contested.

Gall developed a new strategy, with which he hoped to slowly seal the other druidic and ranger bands out of the two forests, cutting off the farmlands along the Trade Route from their source of firewood, the only heating material available during the Dale's cold winters. Gall calculated correctly that his forces, at home in the forest and high in its count of evil rangers, would have a substantial advantage over the farmers of the Trade Route settlements in any battles within the woods.

However, Gall's manpower was only half that of the Freemen. To implement his strategy, Gall needed to conquer the forests more or less unnoticed and unchallenged. To help gain this end, Gall *"stole"* a family of dragons from a Thayan enchanter.

The red-robed archmagi of Thay still had not consolidated their power in the earlier years of the 11th century. The land of magic remained in great turmoil, with unbridled contests of power among competing magi being the rule of the day. Another two dozen years would pass before the zulkirs would be established as the Thayan ruling body in the Year of the Warlords (1030 DR). And nearly half a century would pass before the zulkirs had quelled the last significant strongholds of rebellion in their land, in the Year of the Tightening Fist (1074 DR).

In the Year of the Second Son (1006 DR), the red-robed Arch-Enchanter Rusz Hnartth, who died in his later attempts to overthrow the first Thayan zulkir of enchantment, had designs of a no longer known nature upon Rashemen, like many unsuccessful Red Wizards who followed in his wake and continue to do so.

By magical means, Hnartth compelled a clan of five green dragons that had been lairing in Methwood between Chessenta and Unther in the south to migrate to Ashenwood and Urlingwood in Rashemen, to plague the Rashemi. To achieve this end, Hnartth had fashioned a powerful orb of dragon enchantment, which bound the dragons to his will.

Before returning to Thay, Hnartth hid the orb in the Running Rocks Mountains above Immil Vale and between the two forests, where it would enforce the binding of the dragons and prevent their leaving Rashemen. One of Hnartth's henchmen was a Red Wizard named Tuluth Duhnin, in truth an agent of the Dragon Cult who was outraged at Hnartth's binding of the dragons in this manner. Duhnin was not powerful enough to challenge Hnartth, but he did succeed in fleeing Hnartth's party.

Duhnin was aware that there was a cell of the cult across the Lake of Tears, which was headed by a Wearer of the Purple and Keeper of the Secret Hoard named Gall. He paid a group of Rashemi boatsmen a handsome sum to ferry him from Immilmar to Kront, and from there he made his way to Nighthawk Tower and betrayed Hnartth's secret to Gall.

The Malarite lich, acted as though he was equally appalled by the binding of the dragon clan, but he argued to Duhnin that rather than lifting the binding, one should use it to the dragons' own benefit. He said he wished to bring them to Rawlinswood to lair, where they would live beneficially in lands under his control.

By binding the dragons to Rawlinswood, Gall argued, the cult would have time to enlighten them and to eventually convince them to walk the path of the undead, becoming dracoliches. Gall's intentions were, of course, otherwise. After his experiences with Nestamanur, he had no intention of introducing new, difficult-to-control dracoliches into the Great Dale. He intended to keep the clan of greens bound to him and to hunting the Trade Route, to keep his foes' attentions focused away from his true goals.

Gall sent Duhnin with a party of his own men into the Running Rocks to retrieve Hnartth's orb. He gave his men orders to slay Duhnin, whom he did not trust, as soon as they had won the orb, and this they did, leaving the Red Wizard's remains to rot in the mountains. An archmage from Gall’s own cult cell, Nestor Hurth, took possession of the orb and used it to order the dragon clan to migrate to Nighthawk Tower in northeastern Rawlinswood.

Hnartth had overestimated the might of dragons somewhat and perhaps underestimated their needs in his plans to devastate Rashemen. The clan had consisted of a very old green, two mature adults and two juvenile wyrms. In binding them to Rashemen, Hnartth had confined them to a small area of land that under normal conditions just barely would have sustained them, had it not been for the magic of the witches.

The two juvenile members of the clan had been quickly destroyed, and the two adults - Zaranthestelo and Drinstuilantula - had been hiding out, badly wounded, in their miserable lairs. The very old patriarch of the clan, Narandastar, had been pondering a suicidal destructive attack upon one of his foes' cities, to go out in a spark of glory rather than starving, miserable in his cramped lair with not a single copper piece of treasure to comfort him. Nor, he knew, was he likely to find any substantial treasure in Rashemen.

The call of the Gallist archmage through the orb not only was a new compulsion and binding of the three remaining dragons but also their salvation. Hurth had ordered the very old Narandastar to fly him to Nighthawk Tower upon his back, and he ordered Zaranthestelo and Drinstuilantula to follow.

When the party reached Gall's Temple of the Horned God, the Malarite lich decided not merely to bind the three dragons but also to negotiate with them, for he had grown wary of relying upon magical objects, which had a way of often producing results somewhat different from those the user had anticipated.

Gall intended to impress the three dragons into his service, but he also was determined that the dragons be enticed to serve him regardless of the binding. The three wyrms were well aware of the double power Gall could wield over them, both through the orb and through the *Ring of the Dragon* he had won as a Keeper of the Secret Hoard, although Gall mentioned neither of these things in his negotiations.

Instead, Gall said, he wanted Narandastar, Zaranthestelo and Drinstuilantula to think of themselves as his leading lieutenants who had a mission to be performed and who would be well rewarded for fulfilling their duties. If the dragons served him well, Gall said, he would reward them with a share of the treasure that had been taken from the lair of the fallen dracolich Nestamanur. Few things can spark the greed - and temporary loyalty - of a dragon so well as the promise of treasure, at least as long as there continues to be more treasure to be gained.

Gall taught the three dragons to differentiate between the cities and settlements occupied by his own Hunters of Herne and those in the hands of the enemy Freemen. He said he had no objection to minor attacks being made occasionally upon his own settlements, to keep his followers loyal to the hunt, but the dragons were to concentrate more upon the enemy's enclaves.

He said he did not want the dragons to become so engaged with the Freemen that the wyrms' own lives might be endangered, nor did he want the Freemen so outraged that they would begin leaving their homes to hunt the dragons in the forest. Rather, he said, he wanted the Freemen to think they could best protect their holdings by remaining within them.

Gall established a lair fit for a king north of Nighthawk Tower and placed Narandastar in it, constructing a hunters' hamlet nearby to guard the lair. The hamlet eventually became known as Tighofn. He placed Zaranthestelo in a princely lair northwest of his Temple of the Horned God, also guarded by a hunters' hamlet which came to be called Tschedith, and Drinstuilantula was given an equally regal lair west of Gall's tower, supported by a hamlet called Nordhofn.

In their time, Narandastar, Zaranthestelo and Drinstuilantula kept the Freemen of the Trade Route and to some extent the Gallists too on their heels. The dragons regularly harassed the settlements between the two forces but never resorted to creating massive damage. The worst losses often were the farmer's wife or daughter who was taken for lunch.

The Freemen debated often and heatedly over sending a large contingent into Rawlinswood to hunt down the three wyrms, but they never came to do so. Instead they remained in their cities, villages and hamlets and fortified them as well as they could against the dragons.

Likewise, most of the druids and rangers remained in the outer areas of Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest above the Trade Route, perceiving these areas to be the most threatened and most in need of their watchful eye and defending hands. The Dalesmen, for all practical purposes, had abandoned the heartwoods of the two forests.

That was what Gall had expected; it was the foundation of his strategy. He intended to use this situation to quietly move his supporters through Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest westward, with hopes of forming a strategic pincer that one day might squeeze the druidism of Silvanus completely out of the Great Dale, turning the land into a huge temple of the hunt to the greater honor and glory of Malar the Beastlord.

Some tactical problems needed to be resolved, however, because success required secrecy. The Freemen outnumbered the Hunters of Herne. If the men of the free Dale became aware of his attempts to infiltrate the woods, Gall knew the result would be an endless series of forest battles that at best would end in a stalemate.

The lich also knew he had to avoid stirring such high-pitched warfare that the already sparsely settled Dale would depopulate itself. A strategy that would present Malar in the end with huge forests in which no men hunted would hardly please Malar.

Two difficult points for the Malarites were the thin neck of Rawlinswood below Dender's Valley, which joined the western and eastern portions of the wood, and the eastern leg of Lethyr Forest, northeast of Briddh and Tear's Creek. The former was a well-armed stronghold of the Freemen; the elusive Mucklestones Druids controlled the latter no more than Gall.

To understand Gall's situation in the neck of Rawlinswood south of Dender's Valley, one must know what an ecological fluke this area is and what the effects of this fluke are. The neck's status had been changed dramatically by the ongoing melting of the Great Glacier. It was one of the lowest parts of Rawlinswood, with the forest floor much closer to the water table than in other parts of the Dale's woodlands.

In the many centuries when the Great Glacier covered what now is Damara, the Giantspires, north of the western part of Rawlinswood remained year round under a blanket of snow that often was several yards/meters deep, but as the ice receded from the northern and western flanks of the Giantspires, their snowcap too began gradually to melt.

Most of the melt flowed southwestward down the tiny creek that gradually evolved into the rushing River Lench, or Sidewinder, as the rangers and forest druids call it. However, the melt from the last ridges to the southeast flowed instead onto the Narfelli Plain north of Rawlinswood, forming many tiny rivulets that spread across the first few miles/kilometers of the plain, before percolating into the gravelly soil. The water continued to flow underground to the southeast, where it reemerged in a number of warm springs in southern Dender's Valley and in the neck of Rawlinswood to the south.

From there, the water again crossed the surface into tiny, often seasonal brooks which eventually coalesced into Dender's Creek north of Torside. Journals kept by the Merchants Council in Uthmere record that the flow of Dender's Creek had grown so strong by the Year of the Tempest (1027 DR), when heavy rains caused flooding in some parts of the Dale, that the lowlands between the creek and the higher roadway of the Trade Route had become permanent swampland.

This concentration of rapidly shifting ecological factors played havoc in the neck of Rawlinswood and continues to do so today. Because of the frost that had covered the forest floor nine to 10 months of the year until the mid-10th century, the fungi and moulds that ordinarily turn fallen leaves and needles into humus had worked very slowly in the neck for centuries. Likewise, the short warm season had led to little washing away of the humus that had accumulated.

The emergence of warm springs in the neck suddenly accelerated these processes. In addition, the thin steam that rose from the springs together with an almost daily inversion over the neck caused it to have a warmer microclimate than in most other parts of the Dale, a situation that continues to this day. Similar occurrences have been noted only in the West, between the Lench and the Soleine.

On most days, the inversion seals the air of the Neck in the hour before sunset. By the time the sun vanishes in the West, the trees are surrounded by a thick, warm ground fog that rises in the evening hours above their crowns, holding the warmth and moisture in the neck until at least the late morning hours of the next day. When a strong, warm sun is in the sky, it breaks the inversion in the late morning hours, freeing the fog until the late afternoon, when it rises anew.

The result of this unnatural situation, caused by the melt of the southern glacier, is that plant life grows at almost double its normal rate in the neck. The forest there never is tortured by the dry spell that usually hits the Dale in late Eleint or the strong, dry autumn winds that blow across it in late Marpenoth and early Uktar, stretching the ability of the evergreen conifers, above all, to store adequate water.

The druids of Silvanus claim that the effects of nature gone awry in the neck and in the West along the Lench and Soleine are worse than most magical attacks against the forest could achieve. Three times as many trees grow as the forest can support, and the ready availability of forage in turn causes an overpopulation of animal life. To help the forest survive until the climate stabilizes again in some future century, the druids allow intensive logging and hunting both in the neck and the low woods between the Lench and the Soleine.

Because of its nearness to the Eastern Dale and the Gallist strongholds, the lumber camp in the middle of the neck was and continues to be heavily armed. It is guarded by one of the greater concentrations of Freemen rangers in the Dale. Although the neck and its lumber camp have come under heavy Gallist attack at times, they never have been taken by the Hunters of Herne.

In an attempt to kill two birds with a single stone, Gall sent a delegation to the chieftain of the savage Qu'encesta Nar tribe in summer of the Year of the Bold Barbarian (1007 DR). Gall wanted above all to move his own followers across the Narfelli Plain, north of Dender's Valley and beyond the sight of the loggers in the neck, before sending them southward into Rawlinswood. But he also wanted very much to avoid a war between his own forces and the barbarian Nar horsemen.

The war in the Dale was leading events in that direction. The one annual event that united the otherwise divided Nar tribes was the Trade Fair - Bildoobaris, as the Nars called it - that ran through the month of Marpenoth each year in Narfelli Ashanath northeast of Nighthawk Tower.

Bildoobaris was the Nars' main source of wares from the outer world. They had been declaring the way to the Trade Fair sacred and safe for many long years, to guarantee not so much the trade of the Dalesmen who went there, but rather the merchants of Impiltur and the Vast and even those sly traders who came to Bildoobaris from the Golden Way in Thesk.

After many years of bloody warfare in the Eastern Dale, traffic to Bildoobaris had dwindled to a trickle, and the Nar chieftains were not prepared to accept another autumn without trade. Galls spies had made it quite clear that autumn and winter would bring frequent attacks from the Nar tribes, which were estimated to have a strength of 25,000, if the Trade Fair again drew no customers.

Gall was not necessarily afraid of the Nars; he felt rather certain that his Hunters of Herne could with time destroy the Nar tribes, if necessary. But it was the Malarite lich's opinion that such a war was not at all necessary, that it would lead instead to substantial losses among his own followers to no gain whatsoever.

Therefore, his delegates proposed to the Qu'encesta that the Hunters of Herne would guarantee the safety of all merchants traveling to and from Bildoobaris - even merchants from the hostile Western Dale. In return, the Nars would agree to allow Gall's followers to travel the eastern and northern fringes of Rawlinswood as far as Tebbet's Cairn, where they then would turn southward, into the forest.

The Qu'encesta chieftain agreed readily to this proposal and sent out riders to pass the word of Gall's proposal to the other Nar chieftains. In early Eleint of the Year of the Bold Barbarian (1007 DR), a contingent of Nar warriors rode to Nighthawk Tower and informed Gall that his offer had been accepted, that the Hunters of Herne could travel westward along the forest edge, if Gall did indeed open the Trade Route to visitors to Bildoobaris.

Since that time, Marpenoth has been a time of guarded truce on the Trade Route in the Eastern Dale. The Hunters of Herne keep a close watch upon those who travel in the lands they control, and they do not hesitate to defend themselves, but those who remain on the Trade Route as far as Kront and who stay on the trail to the Trade Fair are not harmed, regardless of their point of origin. However, they also are not allowed to enter Kront or even Bezentil, when it's under Gall's control, but rather must camp for the night in designated areas.

Most of the travelers who pass through the Eastern Dale en route to Bildoobaris in Marpenoth are traders from the Vast and Impiltur. They come with wagons filled with brightly colored clothes, sparkling trinkets and inexpensive jewelry. The Nars gladly accept these in trade for their tough and much prized horses, which not only are the pride of adventurers who ride them but also the stock of many ranking officers of the Sword of Impiltur.

In return for reopening the Trade Route in Marpenoth, the relatively civilized Dag Nost tribe and the more brutal Qu'encesta tribe have given the men whose black heraldry shows an eagle's head and claw the right to travel through their land. The route runs over the Trade Fair site along the northern edge of Rawlinswood and north of Dender's Valley to the foothills of the Giantspires beneath Tebbet's Cairn, well beyond the sight of the druids and rangers of Silvanus.

At that point, the hunters' trail turns southwards to what today are the ruins of Kjarr, which was the first forest settlement built by Gall's followers. The hamlet, which once housed a few hundred Hunters of Herne, was built in the Year of the Treacherous Path (1008 DR).

With his covert entry into Rawlinswood secured, Gall turned his attention to Lethyr Forest, which was a more difficult nut to crack. From the time of Gall's arrival in the Dale, his followers had been largely unsuccessful in holding their own in eastern Lethyr Forest, where all they attempted to do or build was subjected to the hit-and-run guerilla tactics of the elusive Mucklestones Druids. To gain a permanent foothold in the southern wood, Gall knew he would have to establish a defensible barrier between the Mucklestones' territory and southwestern Lethyr Forest, which no side controlled.

To achieve this end, Gall turned the Mucklestones' own tactics against them. The druids always had avoided conflicts with massive concentrations of the Gallists. Anytime the Malarites mustered large numbers of their rangers and hunters in a single area, the Mucklestones Druids would sink back into the woods, leaving only a small band of rangers behind, hidden in the forest, to keep an eye on the enemy. The druids knew that Gall could not afford to concentrate his men in any one place for long, and that it was easier to deal with them once they began to spread out in smaller numbers.

In Ches of the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR), Gall took advantage of the mild weather and an unusually early spring. In a single, moonless night, he withdrew from Bezentil, which his hunters had recaptured five years earlier, abandoning the oft-contested city to the Freemen. Some 2,000 of Gall's followers had garrisoned in Bezentil. He sent half of these troops to bolster the strength of his stronghold in Bridhh and withdrew the other 1,000 to Kront in Ashanath, but they did not remain there long.

The troops from Bezentil mustered with those withdrawn from other areas and then, 3,000 in number, they marched openly albeit out of range of the Mucklestones Druids' weapons southwestward across the plains below the forest, following the north shore of Tears Creek to the then neutral farming village of Mettledale.

The Mucklestones rangers did manage to warn the villagers of the host that was advancing upon them. More than half fled to Phsant on the Golden Way in Thesk. The Hunters of Herne took Mettledale without shooting a single arrow, without drawing a sword.

Had the Mucklestones Druids given more thought to Gall's actions, they might have concluded that he intended to secure the 30-mile/50km stretch between Bridhh and Mettledale, but instead, they were misled, as intended, by his next move. The Hunters of Herne built a 2,000-man military camp on the plain outside of Mettledale and then, less than a tenday after taking the village, sent the other 1,000 men to take Spearmouthdale.

Rangers from the Freemen's forest settlement of Nyldyng managed to warn the farmers in the neutral village only a day ahead of the Gallist troops' arrival, but nearly half of the villagers did manage to flee to Phsant and Inkar in Thesk. Those who remained behind in Mettledale and Spearmouthdale were enslaved by the Gallists and forced to do hard labor on what had been their own farms. Mettledale and Spearmouthdale began being turned into large agricultural areas to serve as the grain basket for the Gallist regions.

The Mucklestones Druids concluded incorrectly that the Gallists were planning a massive troop movement against them, into northeastern Lethyr Forest. The 3,000 men that Gall had moved into Mettledale and Spearmouthdale were far more than were necessary to take the two poorly armed farming villages and tiny Nyldyng, which they leveled, ergo, they reasoned, Gall must have more planned. The most likely reason for the troop movement, they believed, would be an attempt to hunt down the druids.

About 5 miles/8km inside the forest, southeast of Bezentil and south of Gurshofn, Gall earlier had taken over and partially rebuilt the old Narfelli Fortress Narder. Over the years, the Hunters of Herne had fallen the trees within half a mile/500m of the fortress' walls, making it difficult for the druids to come near enough to attack effectively.

Anytime one of the Mucklestones would venture into the cleared area, a band of rangers would ride out, often accompanied by a spellslinging mage or cleric, and the Mucklestones druid or ranger would be forced to retreat to save his or her life.

Fortress Narder had been turned into a fortified forest village where many of the evil rangers and other Hunters of Herne lived, protected, with their families. Usually, there were as many as 1,500 combat capable hunters stationed there.

However, the Mucklestones rangers who kept a constant eye upon Fortress Narder had reported that the defensive contingency that remained behind in the fortress after Gall's march on Mettledale and Spearmouthdale had been reduced to an estimated 300 or so. The majority of the Gall loyalists remaining behind in the fortress were women, children, the infirm and the elderly.

Fortress Narder long had been a thorn in the side of the Mucklestones Druids, and they viewed the temporary emptying of the barracks there as an invitation to resolve a long-standing threat to themselves. While Gall was concentrating his forces on taking and occupying Mettledale and Spearmouthdale, the Mucklestones Druids surrounded Fortress Narder in full force and began besieging it.

Once the siege was in full effect, the druids began pounding the fortress with spells. *Call Lightning, Earthquake, Insect Plague* and *Elemental Swarm* were their main weapons. The lightning and earthquake spells were the most effective, with localized earthquakes causing several breaches in the stone walls and lightning spells sending most of the wooden buildings within up in flames. The Gallists held out for two days before fleeing northward in an armed retreat to Gurshofn and the Trade Route.

The Mucklestones Druids allowed the fortress' occupants to flee and then moved in and reduced what was left to piles of fallen stone, rubble and smoking ashes. The fires have long since expired, but the ruins remain today as they were then, except that they have become overgrown with brush, vines, moss and trees.

Gall not only had taken into account that the Mucklestones Druids might ravage Fortress Narder; he had planned on it. The fortress had become a liability for Gall. He had intended it to be a strong base of operations against the Mucklestones Druids, but the huge military encampment had been an expensive failure in that sense.

Hopes that his followers once had entertained of raising their own crops in the cleared areas outside of the fortress' walls had been dashed by the druids' destructive magic. Food had to be brought in by heavily armed caravans traveling over Gurshofn from Kront, an expensive undertaking in terms of money, time and manpower, and one which invariably cost a few lives, because they caravans never reached the fortress without losses from sapper attacks by the druids and their rangers in the forest.

By allowing the druids to totally destroy the fortress, Gall had rid himself of an expensive and unsuccessful liability while at the same time gaining additional loyalty from his followers, whose hatred for the Mucklestones Druids had been fanned by the druids attacks' upon their wives, children and families.

Gall had maintained an elite troop of 12 high level ranger-assassins in Nighthawk Tower whom he called *Herne's Spear*. The band usually served as Gall's personal guard, although there was little need for them in this capacity. With his expansion into the hearts of the two forests, Gall sent *Herne's Spear* to war too.

The assassins marched with his troops to Mettledale, but once they arrived there, they melted into Lethyr Forest northeast of Tears Creek, the Mucklestones domain, with the mission of hunting down the Mucklestones rangers who doubtless would remain behind to hold the watch there.

The Malarite lich was certain from past experiences that the main force of the Mucklestones Druids would remain in the northeastern corner of Lethyr Forest, to elude his hunters, as long as the Gallist troops were concentrated in Mettledale and Spearmouthdale. But he knew too that a half dozen or so elite Mucklestones rangers would remain behind in the forest north of Mettledale, to observe what his men were doing and to call the other druids and rangers back, if Gall's movements warranted that. Gall knew that his foe could move quickly, therefore, it was his goal to keep them from being warned.

The six rangers watching the Gallist movements from the eaves of Lethyr Forest knew nothing of the highly-talented ranger-assassins of *Herne's Spear*. The band never had been active south of the Trade Route. Therefore, the Mucklestones scouts were ill prepared for the threat they were facing. In fact, they were convinced that there were no Gallist rangers in that part of the wood at that time.

Within a tenday, *Herne's Spear* had eliminated all six of the Mucklestones scouts, four with ease and two after bitter battles in which the Mucklestones rangers were outnumbered. Before their deaths, however, they did manage to send the souls of two of the assassin-rangers to Myrkul, who in those times still was god of the dead.

Despite these losses, however, *Herne's Spear* was successful. The main element of the Mucklestones Druids received no word of what Gall was doing between Mettledale and Bridhh until a new band of rangers was sent out to investigate in Eleint of the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR), and at that point, it was too late.

The spring and summer weather that year had been friendly not only to the farmers of the Western Dale along the Trade Route but also to the work of Gall's followers and slaves in Mettledale. They forged their way quickly up the path of Tear's Creek to its source in Lethyr Forest, felling all trees within half a mile/500m of both banks and establishing a road along the southwest bank.

The trunks of the fallen trees were floated downstream to Mettledale, where the Gallists had begun building a huge sawmill on Tears Creek. From there, the cut timber would be transported later by wagon down the trail through neutral territory to Tammar on the Golden Way in Thesk, to be marketed.

Once the Gallists reached the source of Tears Creek, they established the armed thorp of Sudhofn there. From that point on, they made a strong, double headed effort to cut through the rest of the road, with crews working toward the northwest from Sudhofn and towards the southeast from Bridhh. Here they cut a half mile/500m swath through the forest, completing the connection in early Marpenoth of the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR).

The second Mucklestones scouting party had discovered what the Gallists were up to, but by the time the main body of the Mucklestones Druids had moved back within reach of the new road, it was too late and the Gallists were too many in number for the druids and their rangers to react effectively. However, they did manage to burn the newly built Gallist thorp of Sudhofn less than a year later, in Flamerule of the Year of the Three Signs (1010 DR), the first of several times that Sudhofn was razed.

Gall's high-powered operations in central Lethyr Forest not only lured the Mucklestones Druids to Fortress Narder but also kept the rangers and druids of Rawlinswood on the southern fringes of their forest, keeping a wary eye on the doings to the south and battling off occasional attacks from Gall's dragons.

Central and northern Rawlinswood had gone largely unwatched, except for the Dender's Valley area, with most Freemen convinced Gall was concentrating on Lethyr Forest rather than Rawlinswood. They were, of course, dead wrong in this assumption, and they would pay for this misjudgment with many lives in the years to come.

In the eastern isle of Rawlinswood, Gall already had surrounded Nighthawk Tower with the hamlets of Tighofn, Tschedith and Nordhofn. Along Dender's Creek, the swampy hunters' villages and hamlets of Riggh, Skarlshofn, Ulfshofn and Auststad were firmly in his hands, and he saw to it that an adequate number of fighters, rangers and spell users remained in these settlements to deter regular attacks by the Freemen.

The same was true of the hamlet of Gurshofn on higher ground at the edge of Lethyr Forest south of the Trade Route. In addition, Gall kept his higher-powered Dragon Cult followers *"on the front,"* battle ready in the ancient Narfelli Fortress Clymph north of the Trade Route. In the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR), when his enemy's eyes were looking elsewhere, the Malarite lich decided to seal his hold on northern Rawlinswood east of Dender's Valley.

His woodsmen in Skarlshofn began cutting a road northwestward through the forest, while his men in Nordhofn cut toward the southwest. The two crews met at a point where the fortified forest village of Kars was built, and then they forged on to the northwest, building the trail to the new outpost hamlet of Veidarhofn, a trail that could be used to maintain regular patrols against the Freemen.

Farther to the West, Gall was less satisfied with the progress his men were making. After settling Kjarr, he had ordered them to head onward, to rebuild the elven settlements of T'uluar, Mal Nu'ill and Kro Tharos, as well as to claim the ancient Narfelli fortress Dun Tharos. His men entered and left the three elven ruins quickly, claiming they were haunted. The situation at Dun Tharos was worse. Even his druids refused to enter the old Narfelli fortress, claiming they sensed deadly, fell magic there.

Gall knew he had nothing to gain by continuing to insist that these areas be occupied. Instead, he ordered his followers to move on to the southwest, claiming all of Rawlinswood between the Sidewinder and the Uth, and they nearly succeeded.

In the Year of the Three Signs (1010 DR), they established the fortified thorp of Tangetsjódur south of the Mal Nu'ill ruins. Two years later, in the Year of the Flamboyant Coif (1012 DR), they forged southward to the sylvan source of the Auststraumur, establishing the hamlet of Zieth, then followed the creek downstream, founding the thorp of Tils and rolled southwestward toward Hnútar, establishing the thorp of Mugh.

By this time, the Freemen had been alerted to the Gallist activities in Rawlinswood, and they sent reinforcements to Hnútar, to stop the Hunters of Herne. Unfortunately, they badly underestimated the size of Gall's force – about 800 men – and were sorely defeated at Hnútar. The most the 200 Freemen who attempted to defend the forest town could do was to hold Gall's men long enough to make a defended retreat to Karlshofn, where the decisive battle occurred.

By this time, reinforcements from Gylving and Riggstad had reached Karlshofn, which burned to the ground before the battle's end. The Freemen were some 600, fresh and ready for battle. Among the burning wooden farms of Karlshofn, they gave the weary Hunters of Herne a thorough thrashing, forcing them into the forest east of the road to Hnútar, while the main flank of Freemen marched upon Hnútar, slaying the small contingent of Gallists who had remained behind.

The Hunters of Herne who had been driven from Karlshofn reached Mugh and Tils, where they no doubt would have been soundly defeated under normal conditions, but it was early Nightal, and either fate or the magicks of Gallist true druids brought down a sudden blizzard upon the Western Dale, which made further pursuit impossible.

By the time weather conditions made it possible for the Freemen to take up their hunt of the Hunters, Gall's followers were well entrenched in Mugh, Tils and Zieth. Instead of fighting to take the three Gallist settlements, the Freemen opted to mount a strong defense in Hnútar and to rebuild Karlshofn. A standoff began in the area.

With the stretch of the forest from Tangetsjódur to Mugh in the hands of his hunters, Gall planned his next move, westward toward the source of the Soleine. In the Year of the Stone Rose (1017 DR), Gall had made firm plans to send another 500 Hunters of Herne along the northern fringe of Rawlinswood, this time with the goal of claiming all of the forest northwest of the Uth.

His plans were for naught, however, because Drakewings of the Dragon Cult freed Gargauth in that year. In return, Algashon Nathaire mustered the Rage of Dragons in Faerûn and the Heartland. Both Drakewings and Algashon died in this year, aptly named the Year of the Dracorage (1018 DR). But before they fell, the dragons Algashon summoned ravaged much of Faerûn, including the Freemen's border stronghold of Bezentil and in Gall's lands, Kront in Ashanath and Tschedith and Veidarhofn in northeastern Rawlinswood.

During the Dragon Rage, Gall also lost his own three green dragons, whom he sent to defend the Eastern Dale against the attacking wyrms. All three fell in battles against more powerful dragons. Without the green dragons, the Hunters of Herne no longer really needed thorps where Tschedith and Veidarhofn stood.

In the following year, the Year of the Sure Quarrel (1019 DR), one building was repaired in each of the two settlements, to serve as a watchpost and way station, but nothing more is to be found at these two sites other than the moss- and brush-covered foundations of the simple structures that once stood there.

Kront, however, was an entirely different matter. The town on the Lake of Tears had been the center of operations for the Hunters of Herne. Although most of Gall's followers had managed to flee Kront before an ancient red dragon set the entire town aflame, there was little left afterward but a few charred timbers and bricks and a small mountain of ash.

The same was true of Bezentil to the west, the border stronghold of the Freemen, where more than 100 warriors and rangers died in the flames, but only after succeeding in downing the wyrm that had turned westward after leveling Veidarhofn, Tschedith and Kront. Both Gall and the Freemen had to shift their priority to the reconstruction of Bezentil and Kront, each of which was completed in the Year of Smoldering Spells (1020 DR).

Thus, it was not until the Year of the Howling Axe (1021 DR) that Gall could at last implement his plans to move into western Rawlinswood. His expeditionary force of 500 left Kront in spring of that year and moved over the site of the trade fair along northern Rawlinswood and then southward, reaching Kjarr and Tangetsjódur in Flamerule.

A large camp was established in Tangetsjódur, and until winter came, Gall's men worked hard at cutting a trail through the wood, westward from Tangetsjódur. Before stopping for the cold season, they had reached a point south of Kro Tharos.

Rangers from the druidic thorp of Silvanus and Mielikki at Tumbling Stars Waterfall discovered the road during the winter months, and they laid traps to stop the Gallists when they resumed work the following Spring, however, the rangers badly underestimated the size of Gall's force. Early in the Year of the Wandering Wyvern (1022 DR), the two forces met and clashed at the point where the Gallists' trail ended south of Kro Tharos.

The Battle of Kro Tharos, as it was called, took its toll from both sides, but the Gallists, who outnumbered the Freemen druids and rangers by about 20 to 1, won the day. Of the two dozen Freemen who headed out of Tumbling Stars to engage the enemy, only two returned alive but wounded. The Hunters of Herne forged onward, turning to the northwest and gaining distance from the territory of the Freemen druids and rangers.

The trail they cut was neither the shortest nor the most efficient route imaginable, but a more direct route would have crossed the old elven lands where the ruins of Kro Tharos stood and where the magically frightening ruins of Narfelli Dun Tharos were. Gall's followers refused to cross or even come near these areas, so great was their fear of them.

In early Eleint of the Year of the Wandering Wyvern (1022 DR), Herne's hunters reached a point midway between Kro Tharos and the source of the Soleine. Still nearly 500 strong, they cut a large clearing there, built a winter camp and begin building an outpost thorp with the timber they had fallen, naming it Veidarheim.

Before Veidarheim was completed. the Hunters of Herne were surprised by a band of about 50 hobgoblins that seemed to appear out of nowhere. The hobgoblins were badly outnumbered but unusual in their strength and in the power of their magic. Before the last of the hobgoblins had laid down its life, they had claimed four Hunters of Herne for each of their own who had fallen.

In the following year, the Hunters of Herne continued to be harassed by the hobgoblins. They learned the tribe called itself the Lightning Fists, and it lived in the Giantspires. Captured hobgoblins claimed that the Lightning Fists numbered more 200,000 men, wives and young, and there were five other tribes of similar size and strength in the Giantspires as well.

There were other facts that the hobgoblin prisoners did not betray, above all because the members of the expeditionary force were untrained and inexperienced in interrogation, and they asked too few of the right questions. Thus they did not learn of the web of gnome delves beneath the northeastern wood that the hobgoblins traveled in, nor did they learn that the other five tribes were weaker in magic than the Lightning Fists.

The true druids of Herne accompanying the force grew alarmed at the hobgoblins' claimed numbers and the powerful magic they wielded, and they sent news back to Nighthawk Tower of these things, but Harbet Gall apparently failed to perceive the true degree of danger lurking in the West. Instead, it is reported that he angrily dismissed the druids' reports as exaggerations intended to cover up incompetence, and then promptly forgot the matter.

In the years that followed, the Hunters of Herne paid dearly, both for Gall's failure to correctly assess the hobgoblin problem and for own their fear of the old Narfelli and green elven sites. For more than a year, the hobgoblins ambushed and harassed the Hunters of Herne, until they rather suddenly and inexplicably withdrew northwest of the Lench again. Some speculated that the hobgoblins broke off contact only because most encounters were indecisive, and their losses were all the had gained from the skirmishes.

To make matters worse, druids and rangers from Tumbling Stars constantly harassed Gallists who attempted to journey between Tangetsjódur and Veidarheim. Smaller groups of Gallists traveling the route inevitably disappeared without a trace. Larger groups usually left a few dead bodies behind and transported wounded farther, both victims of the ever more refined guerrilla tactics the druids and their rangers used against them. Angry or not, Gall was forced to send reinforcements.

But the Hunters of Herne pressed on with their expansion in the Year of the Pirates' Trove (1023 DR), after another 150 rangers and warriors as well as a handful of true druids of Herne joined them in Veidarheim, but only after losing 20 more men along the way.

They cut their trail to a point halfway between Veidarheim and the Soleine, establishing a new camp and thorp there named Tining. In the following Year of Lathander's Light (1024 DR), with the druids and rangers at last behind them, the Gallists crossed the Soleine and founded the woodland hamlet of Kilstad on the river's banks.

The hunters' scouts brought word that the melting of the Great Glacier to the North was drawing an ever increasing number of adventurers and explorers through the icy valley west of the forest where the Merchants Run now cuts its path, and many of these were from the Kingdom of Impiltur. Harbet Gall had no interest at this time in challenging Impilturians or even making the men of the fallen kingdom aware of his presence.

He ordered his followers to avoid the open lands to the west and to remain in the forest instead, forging their way northward. With the next spring thaw, they did just that, cutting a trail beyond Kilstad and founding an outpost hamlet they named Tarkstad, then moving westward again and founding a winter camp they called Great Boar which quickly grew into a village.

As the Year of the Screaming Princesses (1025 DR) drew to a close, the main expeditionary force, some 400 strong, settled in its camps, forging plans to move on the following spring, hoping eventually to reach the unsettled plain north of the wood and west of the Giantspires where the Great Glacier had receded. Little did they guess that their expansion had reached its end. Gall had intended to cross the Lench and move onward, but his men faced opponents of whom they had been unaware.

For reasons not explained to others – many sages speculate it was divine guidance - the Emerald Enclave of Silvanus on the island of Ilighôn in the Vilhon Reach had sent a band of younger druids who were accompanied by rangers of Mielikki into the icy northwestern corner of Rawlinswood several years earlier. It was their task to research the impacts of the melting glacier and, where necessary, to deal with them.

The druids and rangers from the South docked in Impilturian Sarshel in the Year of the Breaking Ice (991 DR) and traveled slowly over the melting swamplands where Ilmwatch and the Merchants Run are to be found today, following the old Lench from the point where it emptied into the tundra northeastward into the forest. They established their main groves in Lenchengi in the Year of the Gaping Sky (999 DR) and Lenchstígur in the Year of the Heavenly Rock (1002 DR).

These newcomers had serious difficulties in the first years in Rawlinswood. The area northwest of the Lench was infested with goblins of the Lightning Fist tribe, who retreated into their gnome delves beneath the forest only after many bitter tastes of druidic magic. For nearly a century, the druids numbered the expulsion of the hobgoblins as one of the great achievements, although a day would come when they would learn to think better of their foe.

Had the truth been revealed to them, the druids would have known that the ruler, King Tark Rednose, had ordered the hobgoblins to retreat beneath the forests. He was a high-level wizard warrior in his own right and a descendant of a Narfelli soldier who had been transmogrified into a hobgoblin by the Narfelli arcanist transmuter K'Ahlob some 11 centuries earlier.

King Rednose was forging plans of his own at the time, and he deemed it wise to keep the web of passages beneath Rawlinswood a secret, one particularly to be hidden from Impilturian eyes. The king had warriors and sorcerers enough to liquidate the band of druids in only moments time, had he chosen to do so, but he saw little profit in such a deed, and it would betray more than he wished to be known. There also was little profit to be gained by having his warriors march upon the surface, through the wood, therefore he ordered them back underground. And for awhile, the druids knew a degree of peace.

Neither Damara nor the town of Tellerth existed at that time, but the druids today are known as the *Tellerth Druids*. Although they cooperate and work closely with the Tumbling Stars Druids to the southeast, they are a separate organization that still maintains ties with the distant Emerald Enclave, where the Tumbling Stars druids have become more closely affiliated with the Lyon's Oak druids in Impiltur.

After the threat of the hobgoblins had faded, the Tellerth Druids viewed the Lench as the border of their territory, but this did not hinder them from sending their rangers southeast of the river to keep an eye open for threats from the main body of Rawlinswood. The Hunters of Herne in Great Boar were totally unaware of the Tellerth druids to the north. They were convinced that the remainder of Rawlinswood to the northwest and beyond into today's Damaran plain were unsettled, or at worst, occupied by hobgoblins.

They had planned to cross the Lench in the Year of the Tempest (1027 DR), but they postponed this move due to the nearly torrential rains and tree-toppling winds that swept across the forests and through the Great Dale in that year. In the Year of the Wistful Nymph (1028 DR) which followed, the Hunters of Herne in western Rawlinswood were forced to concentrate on repairing storm damages and making raids in the territory of the Freemen in the south to gain grain for the winter.

It was not until spring in the Year of Bold Strides (1029 DR) that the Gallists marched 250 strong out of Great Boar northward. The Tellerth druids and their rangers were waiting for the Hunters of Herne, and they slaughtered them mercilessly.

At first, the rangers caught the invaders in a rainfall of arrows. Then – despite the fact that they were heavily outnumbered – they misled the Gallists into thinking that they were weak and withdrawing, luring the Hunters of Herne into crossing the ford of the Lench at the meadows of Lenchengi, where the river ran shallow but nearly 100 yards/meters wide. As the Hunters of Herne reached midstream, druidic magic caused a huge flood which washed most of the invaders to their death. Only a handful of Gall's men returned to Great Boar alive.

So ended Harbet Gall's expansion in western Rawlinswood. The plans he had laid which had come partly to fruition had not taken the melting of the southern Great Glacier into account, but it had become clear by the Year of the Warlords (1030 DR) that matters would develop much differently than he had anticipated in the Western Dale and beyond, due to the great melt.

Gall saw that many people from many places with varying goals would begin to take interest in the newly opening lands west and north of the Great Dale, and he saw too that his followers still were too few in number and strength to challenge those who would come openly. The Malarite lich thought it was time to consolidate the power that he had in the Eastern Dale, so that his rule there would remain unthreatened.

He thought he could maintain control of central Lethyr Forest, where his followers had succeeded in keeping out the Mucklestones druids. There was little druidic opposition to the southwest. He felt confident he could maintain his holdings east of Dender's Valley in Rawlinswood, but the changing times would allow him to give only token support to his new settlements in western Rawlinswood. Gall hoped his followers there were strong enough in their faith in Herne to stand on their own, despite the mere token support he would offer them in the future. Somewhat to his surprise, they were in most cases.

Ironically, the melting of the Great Glacier led nature to run amok in Rawlinswood. Because of this, the druids needed men to hunt and log in western Rawlinswood, to help keep things in balance. The druids still did not like the Hunters of Herne or their Gallist religious beliefs, but they needed the axes and bows of their heretofore enemy.

The evil druids and rangers of Herne and their followers had found no new love for the druids of Silvanus or the rangers of Mielikki, but they were far from home and willing to avoid a fight. In short, both sides needed to get along, a situation that continues today in western Rawlinswood.

After the Melt
- the Year of the Spreading Spring (1038 DR)

The melting of the Great Glacier, the political revival of Impiltur, the founding of Thesk and the annexations of Telflamm, the rise of Rashemen and the settling of the lands northwest of Rawlinswood with the founding of the Damaran kingdom all played a substantial role in shaping the course of events in the Great Dale during the 11th century DR.

As word had spread through the Inner Sea region that the Great Glacier had receded and that new land, perhaps fertile land, would be available, the march northward from Easting Reach began in earnest. The Central and Eastern Dale also were effected.

Most families were bound to the homes they had built and the land that they had farmed, but many of their younger sons, upon reaching adulthood, sought new frontiers that were free of the civil war that had torn the Dale for centuries.

A wealthy seeker-of-fortune and widower from Impilturian Sarshel named Sendrin Bloodfeathers and his son Feldrin had followed the Great Imphras River in Impiltur northwestward to a long body of water now known as Lake Mogador. Bloodfeathers had started out seeking fertile farming land, but prime croplands have proven to be relatively rare in Damara.

The Great Imphras flowed out of Lake Mogador in the south, and two other rivers, now known as the Goliad and the Icelace, flowed into it in the North. Others who had rushed northward a few years earlier already had established several small shack settlements on the lake where they learned quickly to settle for the life of simple fishermen, having found little trace of the riches they had sought.

However, in the Year of the Lion's Heart (1040 DR), a group of men who had traveled much farther northward to unexplored mountains that had been buried within the Great Glacier came back down the Goliad on a makeshift raft with samples of a green stone flecked with red.

The prospectors did not know what they had found, and they sought information on whether it might be valuable. Sendrin Bloodfeathers recognized it as an unusual type of chalcedony. Bloodfeathers was a wealthy man, and he believed the new chalcedony was a rare enough commodity to be of considerable value. Indeed, his foresight told him that the prospectors' find well might take the place of gold and silver in many state treasuries, and so it indeed came to be.

Sendrin Bloodfeathers bought all rights to the prospectors' claims in the north. He then returned to Sarshel, to establish a market and trade channels for the new *Bloodstone* commodity - as he named it - which he planned to introduce. His son, Feldrin, remained behind on Lake Mogador and, using his father's resources, began establishing a settlement at the Goliad's mouth on the lake.

In the Year of the Reaching Beacon (1042 DR), he formally named it *Heliogabalus,* which, according to old tales, had been the name of a Narfelli city where rich veins of gold ore had been found, where now only the wastelands known as the North Country are to be found.

In the same year, Sendrin Bloodfeathers sent the first of several great caravans northwestward along the trail which over the years changed its name from the *Imphras Run* to the *Damara Trail* to the *Merchants Run* or the *Heralds Road,* as some Impilturians still call it.

Within a few decades, leading settlers of Lake Mogador would urge Feldrin Bloodfeathers to proclaim the bloodstone Kingdom of Damara and to take the throne as its first king, which he did in the Year of the Seer Born (1068 DR)*.

* This event is official, but its date is somewhat vaguer than that in the *Northern Journey* timeline. The accessory FR9 *The Bloodstone Lands* by R.A. Salvatore (TSR -1989, ESD download from RPG Now), is current through the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR). It states that *"almost three centuries"* have passed since Bloodfeathers' coronation.

Bloodfeathers was followed by a long line of benevolent Damaran kings, a line that ended in the Year of the Prince (1357 DR), when King Virdin was killed by the hosts of Zhengyi the Witch King at the Battle of the Ford of Goliad.

The development of Heliogabalus and the subsequent rise of the Damaran kingdom also caused considerable growth in the northwestern corner of the Great Dale. There is mention of an inn named Cairnburr's Lodge already existing in the Year of the Haunted Haven (1039 DR) where Cairnpur stands today.

Maracrath followed in the Year of the Reaching Beacon (1042 DR) and then Guidodale in the Year of the Dark Rider (1043 DR), Timbertown in the Year of the Singing Shards (1044 DR) and Lenchford in the Year of the Twilight Campaign (1046 DR). Settlement of the fifth town on Merchants Run, Mulltown, began considerably later, however, in the Year of the Midday Mists (1195 DR), a year before the only conflict with the Hunters of Herne ever recorded in this part of the Dale.

For all intents and purposes the settlements of Herne the Hunter within western Rawlinswood had been left to their own devices by Harbet Gall. The Malarite lich had expanded into Rawlinswood and Lethyr forest with the hope of one day using his forest troops as a giant pincer with which he would squeeze the Freemen's cities and settlements into his own grasp.

Damara had developed and the interest of the independent Impiltur city-states and other potential powers in the Easting Reach and Merchants Run regions had grown. Gall had given up all hope by the Year of the Keening Gale (1050 DR) of conquering any parts of the Dale west of Rawlinswood and the Uth or north of Borkurstad (New Sarshel).

His attention was focused briefly on winning the Freemen's strongholds between Bezentil and the Uth, although he soon was forced to modify those goals as well. The earlier attacks from the Hunters of Herne on Hnútar and Karlshofn had given the Freemen of the Central Dale a score to settle. In the Year of the Dogged Search (1051 DR), two large contingents of Freemen totaling some 500 warriors and rangers as well as druids marched northward out of Gylving and Riggstad and burned Mugh and Tils to the ground, taking the lives of most of the two Gallist settlements' inhabitants.

As the attackers approached Zieth, they were surprised. The leaders of the village surrendered and agreed to be ruled by an occupational council of the Freemen, turning over their single true druid of Herne and two rangers who reported to the Gallist command in Tangetsjódur to the victors, who summarily executed their prisoners by hanging. Without further bloodshed, Zieth was spared but occupied. An occupation council and guard was established in Zieth, and the remaining Freemen attackers returned home for the winter.

The Freemen had intended to continue their march northward to Tangetsjódur the following Spring, but their plans were foiled by weather. Frosts continued into mid-Kythorn in the Year of the Frozen Kingdoms (1052 DR), and they came again in Eleasias. The Freemen were too occupied keeping their lands intact and their families fed to wage war upon Tangetsjódur.

However, the Hunters of Herne knew such an attack would be imminent as soon as the weather permitted it. They sent a desperate call for help to Nighthawk Tower before the Year of the Dogged Search (1051 DR) had ended. In the frozen spring of the following year, the reply came that the Eastern Dale was too hard pressed by the frigid weather. The contingents in Tangetsjódur and Kjarr were ordered to hold out, if possible, or to return to the Eastern Dale, if not.

In Spring of the Year of Lashing and Torment (1053 DR), the Freemen marched northward again, destroying Tangetsjódur in Kythorn in a bloody battle costly to both sides. The Gallists who survived the battle fled to Kjarr, where the two forces met again in late Flamerule. Before flames leveled the town and part of the nearby forests, nearly all of the Gallists had forfeited their lives, and less than two dozen of the Freemen survived. A serious forest fire was prevented only by the ability of a dying druid to call down rain. So ended the tale of Harbet Gall's presence in central Rawlinswood.

As the first day of Hammer in the Year of the Tolling Terrors (1054 DR) dawned, the Malarite lich looked out again upon his dream empire and saw it in shambles. His followers in Great Boar, Tarkstad, Kilstad, Tining and Veidarheim remained true to the Church of Herne and doubtless earned Gall the blessings of Malar the Beastlord, but they were totally cut off from his area of influence and were militarily useless to him. Worse still, hobgoblin raids had harassed the settlements for the past five years and the attacks would go until the Year of the Dawndance (1095 DR).

Eastern Lethyr Forest, surrounded by Gall's domain, nonetheless remained under the control of the Mucklestones Druids, who emerged victorious in most of the frequent clashes that occurred there between with the Hunters of Herne. Only in central Lethyr Forest had things gone as Gall had planned.

After establishing Sudhofn in the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR), the Hunters of Herne had gone on to capture the Freemen's village of Leifrskross in the Year of the Three Signs (1010 DR). They then established the small, walled forest town of Herneburg in the Year of the Defiant Mountain (1011 DR) and the hamlet Veidarsudur in the Year of the Flamboyant Coif (1012 DR), but that was as far as they went. A stalemate followed. Their attempts to march westward on the ancient elven forest road from Leifrskross to Mauberg ended in a sound defeat at the hands of the Freemen.

Telflamm in the south had annexed the Dale towns of Nyth and Ethdale some 40 years earlier, in the Year of the Bent Coin (975 DR). The Hierarch of Telflamm had been well aware of the Gallist expansion and had kept a close eye upon the conquest of Leifrskross and the establishment of Veidarsudur and Herneburg.

Unknown to the Gallists, two units of more than 200 crack Telflamm warriors each had been sent upstream to camp at the sources of the Eth and the Flam to await the attack the Hierarch knew would come. Lady Tartha dor Qador, a cousin of the Hierarch as well as his finest general, had the command.

The Hunters of Herne mounted their catastrophic attack in Mirtul of the Year of the Maid Enraged (1015 DR). Highly skilled assassin scouts trained in the House of the Master's Shadow, the huge temple of Mask in Telflamm, easily and silently eliminated the ranger scouts the Gallists had sent forth. The Hunters of Herne took this as a sign that Freemen rangers were afoot in the wood, and they advanced carefully toward their goals, but they were no match for the elite troops from Telflamm or the wily, ambush strategies of Lady Qador.

Not a single member of the Gallist attack forces returned to the barracks in Herneburg, and no further attempt ever was made to expand into Telflamm's area of influence. To the contrary, the garrison in Spearmouthdale was strengthened to defend against a possible attack from Telflamm or Thesk which never came.

Thus it was that Harbet Gall again saw all of his plans and strategies checkmated and stalemated in the mid 11th century. And to add salt to his wounds, the morale could not have been lower in Fortress Clymph in the Eastern Dale, the headquarters for his cell of the Dragon Cult.

More than 30 years had passed since the last dragon had been slain in the Great Dale, and in those years, the Malarite lich had lifted no finger to remedy this situation. The members of the Clymph cell were without purpose, and many had indeed deserted the Dale to seek out other cult cells. Others died in futile attempts to destroy their lich master and make Nighthawk Tower their own.

Gall reacted effectively, in a manner common among tyrants. He went into a rage and lashed out viciously at the members of his cult cell who had not attempted to destroy him. He accused them of spending three decades in laziness and gluttony, doing nothing while he had worked hard to make the Dale a hospitable home for the dragons they should have been seeking and the dracoliches they might have become, had even one of his followers made the effort to seek but a single dragon.

The power of the Malarite lich in the eyes of these underlings was not to be underestimated. The Hunters of Herne held him for an avatar of a god, and the wearers of the purple and other members of his cult cell who had not joined in the abortive coup attempts had with time come to share this belief. Their awe and fear of Gall was great.

In the Year of the Grueling Story (1055 DR), Gall banned the lot of them from their stronghold in Fortress Clymph, ordering them to go out into Faerûn and to recruit new dragon blood to come and share in their battles in the Great Dale and Ashanath. Both frightened and humiliated, the cult members carried out his orders, although a number of years would go by before any of them began returning with willing dragons in tow.

With the cult members banished from it, Fortress Clymph slowly fell into decline and partial ruin. The Hunters of Herne, who feared and avoided the cult members, also made a wide circle around it. Ironically, members of the Mucklestones Druids began to use it as a safe house during the infrequent raids upon the Gallist settlements north of the Trade Route.

A Time of Peace and Growth
From the Year of the Pious Dance (1061 DR)

For the first time in some 400 years, the Great Dale again began experiencing a time of relative peace and prosperity in the last four decades of the 11th century. The frozen swamps north of Easting Reach had warmed and opened fertile soil to those who would farm it. Only the frequent raids of elusive hobgoblins in northwestern Rawlinswood were a continually distressing exception.

Even that came to an end for a long time in the Year of the Dawndance (1095 DR), when the young Impilturian paladin Imphras of Filur defeated a tide of 80,000 hobgoblins. Afterwards he claimed the tower of Kiriagoth and Soargar in what now is Ilmwatch, and two years later, in the Year of the Gleaming Crown (1097 DR), he proclaimed Impiltur's second kingdom.

The greatest devastation occurred in the Year of the Crested Thrush (1094 DR), when a strong hobgoblin host several thousand strong emerged suddenly from beneath the eaves of northwestern Rawlinswood, northwest of the Lench. The horde crossed the river at Lenchford and continued down Merchants Run.

Before the last of the hobgoblins retreated, Lenchford, Timbertown, Guidodale, Maracrath and Cairnpur had been reduced to smoking piles of rock and ash. Absolutely nothing remained of the settlements that had been there. And every man, woman and child who failed to flee in time was slain.

A year later, the mighty warrior-wizard king of the hobgoblins, Tark Rednose, decided to try for all of Impiltur, sending a force of 80,000 hobgoblin warriors and sorcerers down the Giantspires and on the heels of Imphras, who eventually defeated them outside of Sarshel, ending the threat to the settlements of Merchants Run for many years to come.

Lenchford, Timbertown and Cairnpur all were rebuilt by the Year of the Gleaming Crown, when Imphras I took the throne as first monarch of Impiltur's second kingdom, and Guidodale and Maracrath completed their reconstruction in the following Year of the Rose (1098 DR).

Many in the Great Dale watched the Impilturian developments with concern, afraid that the new king would again claim Uthmere, the eastern shore of Easting Reach and other parts of the Dale that once had belonged to Impiltur. There was no reason for worry, however. The young king knew it would be difficult enough to rebuild Impiltur west of Easting Reach, and he immediately relinquished all claims to the old lands.

In the Year of the Rose (1098 DR) the Tellerth druids had made clear that they would welcome settlement and a certain amount of logging, hunting and fishing in the warmed valley of the Lench, which flowed down from the Giantspires through Rawlinswood. The druids abandoned their grove hamlets in Lenchengi and Lenchstigur, and young, non-inheriting Dalesmen as well as other immigrants were quick to claim them.

In mid-Kythorn, the main immigration into the Lench Valley occurred, when a group of Ilmatari priests from the Vilhon Reach led a group of some 200 persecuted refugees from their homeland up the valley to a point about halfway between Lenchengi and Lenchstigur. They stopped in a river valley where the Lench makes a large bend through natural meadows beneath the forest and built a farming village there which gradually came to be known as *Lenchbugar - Lench Bend* in the old Turami tongue which still is the primary language of the Dale.

Unlike the smaller river hamlets of Lenchengi and Lenchstigur, the new village was walled. There was peace in western Rawlinswood, but it always was tenuous, and the settlers who built Lenchbugar thought it would be wise to be protected against the hobgoblins to the north and the forest enclaves to the south, where evil men worshipped Herne the Hunter.

In those times as today, relationships within western Rawlinswood were difficult. Great Boar, Tarkstad, Kilstad, Tining and Veidarheim all were hunting and logging villages deeply entrenched in the worship of Herne the Hunter.

The Dalesmen of these settlements were and are a dour folk who quietly hate the Tellerth and Tumbling Stars druids of Silvanus and the rangers of Mielikki who work with them. The folk of these five interior settlements viewed the western druids and rangers as oppressors, and they followed the contrary beliefs of their own true druids of Herne and rangers of Herne, which remains the case in the surviving settlements today.

The strength of arms that was capable of defending their faith was far removed, in the Eastern Dale and Ashanath. The Herne-worshipping Dalesmen of the West had no doubt that if they were to clash with the Tumbling Stars or Tellerth druids or exchange sword blows with the Freemen, they would be destroyed. Even if the reaction of their foe were milder, they could easily be cut off from the needs of life, for the Gallist settlements were by no means self-sufficient.

For these reasons alone, the Hunters of Herne in the west bent to the dictates of the Tellerth and Tumbling Stars druids, hunting and fishing within the limits allowed them and felling only those trees allotted to them. The limits and allotments fortunately were and are no great source of conflict. The aftereffects of the melting of the Great Glacier to this day still cause an overgrowth within the western wood and an overpopulation of game. There is enough for the Hunters of Herne as well as everyone else.

The ritual hunts in the western enclaves are another matter. Although the druids of Herne attempt to keep such things secret, there were and continue to be whispers that a Great Hunt takes place each year in the hunters' enclaves. The rumors are indeed true.

Every year, the true rangers of Herne gather in one of the enclaves, where one or more armed humans who are their prey are turned loose and hunted down. In most cases, the prey comes from the hunters' own ranks, one or more who have been found guilty of a transgression and are sentenced to the hunt as punishment.

The Tellerth and Tumbling Stars druids are aware of these hunts, but to the chagrin of their followers, they will not interfere in such matters. Both druidic groups are truly neutral. They see their own task as striving to restore natural balances in the too-warm forest, not as arbitrators or champions of one cause or another in the conflicts between groups of mortals.

Both druidic enclaves are well aware of the hate the true druids of Herne have for them. However, they know that Herne's druids would order their destruction, if they thought they could survive it. At the same time, they will lift no hand against the Gallist faith as long as the druids, rangers and other worshippers of Herne do nothing to violate the balance of nature in their forests.

On the other hand, the Tellerth and Tumbling Stars druids will act decisively against Freemen who attempt to enter the areas of the forest occupied by Herne's hunters with intentions of doing them harm. They know such actions can lead only to a conflagration that would do incalculable damage and undo much of what the druids have achieved to bring western Rawlinswood back toward a natural state of balance.

Contact between the Hunters of Herne and the Freemen in the West always has been very limited. Wood and meat from Great Boar traditionally have been brought by wagon or sleigh to Timbertown, where they are exchanged for materials needed in Great Boar.

Wares from Veidarheim, Tining and Tarkstad always were taken by land to Kilstad, where they were floated downstream in summer on rafts going to the river landing on the Uthving Road, with transportation in the winter by sleigh. The goods have been taken then by land to Uthving to be traded in barter for wares needed by the Hunters of Herne.

Only small, trusted crews of teamsters and raftsmen have brought wares from the hunters' settlements to Timbertown and Uthving. These men always have tended to be close mouthed, remaining among themselves and rooming together when in town. The Freemen, in turn, usually have avoided them, and there seldom has been conflict.

Timbertown and Uthving both have local ordinances prohibiting aggressive behavior. People who have ignored these ordinances and attempted to cause problems with travelers from the hunters' enclaves have found themselves quickly committed to 30 days of hard labor for their efforts. Keeping peace long has been the first commandment in the Freemen's areas of the Western Dale.

The settlements of the hunters are not open to visitors, and it always has been dangerous for Freemen and outsiders to travel there. The Hunters of Herne have been forced to give the druids of Silvanus and the rangers of Mielikki free passage through their areas, and they do so. Members of the Freemen's militia have been required to be accompanied by a Tellerth or Tumbling Stars druid or ranger when they enter the Gallist areas.

Anyone else who enters these areas unauthorized can be considered free game, although it has come only seldom to such incidents. The true druids of Herne have viewed the task of their settlements over the years as being one of waiting for the day when Herne's avatar at last claims Rawlinswood as his own and triumphantly lifts them from the ranks of the oppressed to the masters of the Freemen. To do unwise things and be driven from the western wood would make it only more difficult to realize the inevitable conquest and therefore would be a failure, in the eyes of Herne's hunters.

None of the five original enclaves ever has had a genuine stone wall, but all have been traditionally enclosed in wooden palisade walls, as much to keep the residents in as to keep intruders out. The Gallist settlements always have had the problem that their younger generations have had little interest in the teachings and goals of Herne, wanting instead to be free of the grim settlements and to lead lives of their own.

From the start, it has been forbidden for any resident to leave one of the enclaves without the permission of the ruling true druid. To do so usually has meant be sentenced to being prey in the next Great Hunt. And few who have received such a sentence have succeeded in reaching the territory of the Freemen before being tracked down, although several refugees from Herne's settlements have successfully escaped to freedom over the years.

On those occasions when residents of the hunters' settlements have successfully escaped to the West, including those who are sentenced to the hunt, the true druids of Herne forbid all further attempts to apprehend or even make contact with these individuals. They become non-persons in the Gallists' eyes who are stricken from their villages' rolls. If they leave families in the village, those who stay behind are ordered by the true druids to strike the escapees from their memories.

Only the true druids and rangers of Herne remember who the escapees are, and they remember them well, because they are bent upon punishing them horribly before they die, on that fateful day when the followers of Herne at last conquer the West.

As the 11th century drew to an end, the flames of civil war merely simmered, flaring up now and then in small scraps between the Hunters of Herne and the Freemen or the Mucklestones Druids, almost exclusively in the Eastern Dale.

For the lands of most Freemen in the Central and Western Dale, it was a time of relative peace and slowly growing prosperity. For the domains of Herne's hunters, it was a time for re-entrenching and for regaining strength. Little was seen of Harbet Gall in the East in these years. He secluded himself almost completely in Nighthawk Tower, pondering what other means he might use to reach his goals and fending off attempts by rebellious Dragon Cult members to destroy him.

He found no easy answers. The barren plains of the Nar tribes were to the northeast. The booming bloodstone trade had given him a potential new enemy in Damara to the northwest. The Freemen in the west had grown stronger and more prosperous, and directly behind them was the second Kingdom of Impiltur, risen surprisingly and with strength from its own ashes.

Gall already had gone through his first skirmishes with Telflamm and lost. And he could not afford to offend Thesk, the land through which supplies vitally needed in Kront and the Eastern Dale traveled over the Golden Way. Beyond Thesk too was the threat of the Red Wizards of Thay, whose zulkirs now had their land in firm grip. His back was to the waters of Lake Ashane, and beyond that was mysterious Rashemen, a land which interested him little. His only choices were to bring the Great Dale within his grasp at last, as he had long desired, or to fail utterly.

The Time of Dragons and Hobgoblins From the Year of the Last Enclave (1114 DR)

The 12th century still was young when one of the Wearers of the Purple from Gall's Dragon Cult cell that had been in Fortress Clymph at last returned to Nighthawk Tower with news. The Arch Necromancer Tything Wildbrin, an aged wizard originally from Chondath who already had walked the paths of Faerûn longer than some young liches, informed Gall that he had located an ancient blue dragon named Drayshtrohmistipoles in the distant North who found the invitation from the Dale *"interesting."*

Wildbrin said that the mighty dragon found the prospect of undeath *"enticing,"* but before he would migrate and begin *"consulting"* with the cultists, the proper accommodations would have to be found. Translated into more simple language, Drayshtrohmistipoles wanted a mountain lair that could accommodate him and his already substantial treasure, one that would be made more comfortable upon his arrival by having a *"proper bed,"* which was the dragon's way of insisting that additional treasure be in the new lair by the time he reached it.

Gall would have preferred to send the dragon into the Earthfast Mountains of Impiltur, to plague the second kingdom that was rising there. But he needed dragons above all to weaken his foes in the Great Dale. Wildbrin suggested finding a lair for Drayshtrohmistipoles in the Firward Mountains northeast of Bildoobaris, but Gall, pondering the degree to which dragons past had been unreliable, thought his own holdings too often would be the target of the ancient blue, rather than the settlements of the Freemen.

In the end, he opted to house Drayshtrohmistipoles in a large cave complex that his rangers had discovered a few centuries earlier near the source of the Lench in the Giantspire Mountains north of western Rawlinswood. He thought the dragon would amuse itself properly by feeding on local hobgoblins and preying upon the traffic that was earning considerable profit for the Freemen on Merchants Run.

In the Year of the Last Enclave (1114 DR), Drayshtrohmistipoles thundered out of the South and over western Rawlinswood to the new lair that had been offered to him, arriving in such a manner that his intended enemies immediately were fully aware that they had a new dragon with whom they must contend. Before the year was out, Drayshtrohmistipoles had made his first exploratory hunting expedition, following a route quite different from that Gall had wished.

The Tellerth and Tumbling Stars rangers knew approximately where Drayshtrohmistipoles had laired, and they kept those parts of the mountains under close watch. The druids and rangers of the West recognized that dragons too have their place in the natural order of things, but they viewed lightning-spewing Drayshtrohmistipoles more as a serious fire threat to the great wood than an element in the natural scheme. And there was indeed something to this viewpoint, for there was nothing to suggest that blue dragons ever had played a natural role in the ecology of the Giantspires.

The Year of the Last Enclave (1114 DR) had been relatively dry. There had been sufficient rainfall during the warm months to provide adequate harvests, but in early Eleint the skies already became cloudless and stayed that way until snow came in Nightal. By the end of Eleint, the leaves had fallen prematurely from most deciduous trees in the forest, and in areas where the soil was sandy, some of the conifers were losing more needles than was normal.

Conditions were ripe for fire, and the druids and rangers were keeping a concerned eye upon the Giantspires, because there had been no sign of Drayshtrohmistipoles since his grand flying entrance in late Tarsakh. It was in early Marpenoth when the great blue rose from the mountains to at long last pay his respects to the Dalesmen in Rawlinswood below. The rangers had adequate time to send warnings downstream, and most residents of Lenchstigur, Lenchbugar and Lenchengi fled into the thick woodlands to the north before Drayshtrohmistipoles came to them.

With a single blast of lightning, the dragon managed to send the wooden cabins of the tiny thorp of Lenchstigur up in flames, erasing it forever from the Dale's maps. It never has been rebuilt. But a bit farther downstream, Drayshtrohmistipoles received his first reminder that arrogance has its limits, although this was a matter of purest coincidence.

A group of three archmagi from Impilturian Lyrabar had been seeking the ruins of a Narfelli tower that a map in the royal library showed to be just east of the river bend at Lenchbugar. When Drayshtrohmistipoles thundered out of the northeast in their direction, they assumed themselves to be his target and leveled a trio of devastating spells at the great blue. One of the spells tore a troublesome rent in the dragon's right wing, and Drayshtrohmistipoles knew he must circle gradually back to his lair to heal, before the hole grew bigger, depriving him of his ability to fly.

He sent a gratuitous and badly aimed lightning bolt into Lenchbugar as he started his turn to the southwest. It sent the wooden docks and three wooden warehouses on the riverfront up in flames but did little other damage. Still turning, he came over the wooden buildings of evacuated Lenchengi and sent that river hamlet up in flames as well.

Those who had lived there moved later into Lenchbugar, and the site of the hamlet was turned into fields and pasture maintained by farmers in Lenchbugar. All that remains of Lenchengi are the fieldstone foundations of a few of the sturdier buildings.

The Tellerth rangers had kept a close eye upon the dragon's lair and had been able to alert the Freemen of its coming, but the rangers of Herne deeper within the western wood did not have this advantage and were taken by surprise.

About half of Tarkstad's population saved itself by fleeing into the forest, and many of the younger villagers who fled continued on southwestward to Timbertown, where they found the freedom they long had desired. Lightning from the injured dragon razed wooden Tarkstad.

Making his homeward arc, Drayshtrohmistipoles winged next over Tining and Veidarheim, destroying the timber structures of those villages as well. The true druids of Herne and the Tumbling Stars druids of Silvanus were forced reluctantly to work together after Drayshtrohmistipoles' attack, using conjured rainstorms to quell the forest fires that had spread outward from the burning villages.

The first flight of Drayshtrohmistipoles proved in the end to be more of a catastrophe for the followers of Herne than for the Freemen. Several hundred Gallists died in the flames that the dragon's breath had ignited. Nearly 50 younger members of the three villages escaped to their freedom in Uthving and Timbertown, many of them electing to serve in the Freemen militia and becoming mortal enemies of the Hunters of Herne.

Drayshtrohmistipoles was an ancient dragon, one with little hunger. After his less than successful maiden flight over western Rawlinswood, he tended to guard his lair, where new valuables given him by the Dragon Cult followers of Harbet Gall had augmented the treasure he had accumulated over the years. On those infrequent occasions when he did venture forth, it was to seek more baubles to add to his collection.

Drayshtrohmistipoles' next flight took place in the Year of the Twelverule (1117 DR). Again, the ancient blue flew down the Lench Valley, this time making a detour south of the Lenchbugar bend. The dragon had no idea whether the magi who had sorely wounded him in Lenchbugar three years earlier were permanent residents or visitors, but he deemed the town too small to contain valuables worth risking such an encounter a second time. He noticed with satisfaction that neither Lenchstigur nor Lenchengi had been rebuilt.

Eventually, Drayshtrohmistipoles reached Lenchford on Merchants Run, and there he smelled treasure, a large Impilturian caravan just south of the village, which then had a population of some 400 Freemen of the Dale. Drayshtrohmistipoles attacked the caravan, killing more than half of its members, and began flying back to his lair with a heavy cart filled with bloodstone in his claws.

Archers in the defense tower of Lenchford saw how heavily encumbered the ancient blue dragon was and thought he would make an easy target. They sent several volleys of arrows flying toward the wyrm, doing no significant damage, but their arrogance angered Drayshtrohmistipoles. He retaliated with a lightning blast that blew the tower apart. The stones of the tower flew in every direction, damaging several other buildings. All of the archers were killed by the strike, and several villagers were hit by stones flying from the tower and killed or severely injured.

No flames rose from the lightning strike, but Drayshtrohmistipoles was satisfied with his retaliation and flew back up the Lench, to bring his interesting new treasure back to his lair. The dragon had been unfamiliar with bloodstone until then, but he could smell that it was a prized commodity and was eager to seek his lair again to learn more of its nature.

In the Year of the Rose Pearls (1122 DR), Damara had grown to the point that King Vartal believed it would be wise to establish regional centers of government. He and his councilors divided the kingdom into eight duchies and baronies, and the king raised eight of the oldest and most loyal Damaran families to nobility, appointing them as dukes and barons.

In most cases, the king and his advisors had little trouble drawing clear boundary lines for the new baronies and duchies. Only in the south were matters unclear. The new dukes of Arcata and Carmathian and the new barons of Ostel and Polten traveled with King Vartal's advisors to Impilturian Filur to negotiate with King Imbrar. From these dealings were the borders between Impiltur and Damara defined.

However, the question of Polten's southeastern border remained open. King Imbrar was uninterested in laying claim to the villages of the Great Dale on Merchants Run. He had suggested that Polten draw its border northeastward from Zarach across the Great Imphras River and the Merchants Run to Tellerth and then have it follow the northern line of Rawlinswood to the Giantspires.

Imbrar said such a border would be wise, because it would leave all of the Great Dale outside of Damara and Impiltur, giving the Dalesmen the option he believed they one day would chose of forming their own nation.

King Vartal left this decision in the hands of Donlewis, the first baron of Polten. Donlewis saw the wisdom in Imbrar's suggestion, but he also saw wisdom in balancing the mercantile region of his new barony on Lake Mogador with an agricultural region in the south. Donlewis hoped to include a part of Rawlinswood and the agricultural lands on both sides of Merchants Run, if the sparse population of that area was not opposed.

In the winter shared by the Year of the Rose Pearls and the Year of the Shattered Chains (1123 DR), the hobgoblins of the Giantspires made themselves known again, although in smaller numbers than those who attempted to overrun Impiltur 28 years earlier. In scattered units, an estimated 1,500 members of the Lightning Fists used the ancient gnome delves beneath Rawlinswood to pour out once more from underneath the forests' eaves.

The goals of these raids, one learned later from captives, again were Lenchford, Guidodale, Maracrath and Cairnpur, but the Lench had run high and fast that year, and the hobgoblins needed to take Lenchford to cross the river and continue southward. Rebuilt Lenchford had grown from a small trail village into a town, and the Tellerth rangers of the hobgoblins' advance had warned its folk in advance. The townsmen were resolved to stand fast.

The Lightning Fists had come expecting easy takings, as their ancestors had done several years earlier, and they were not at all prepared for the strong defense Lenchford had mounted. Their numbers dwindled daily and a 300-man patrol of Polten's baronial militiamen cut off their retreat route.

Several hundred hobgoblins did manage to slip around the north end of Lenchford and begin an advance upon the small folks' settlement of Halfling Downs, but they too had been warned, and Baron Donlewis had sent a contingent of 50 militiamen down from Zarach to help. In a day's time, most of the invaders had fallen. A few dozen hobgoblins did flee into the hills between the Lench and the Great Imphras, where they were greeted by an Impilturian patrol.

Before the last snow had melted, Baron Donlewis traveled to Halfling Downs and to Lenchford, to seek support in both areas for annexation into his barony. In both cases, he used the recent hobgoblin and dragon attacks as examples, saying the two independent settlements would have a better defense if the Damaran army and the militia of Polten stood at their sides. Councils were conducted both in Lenchford and in Halfling Downs, and both settlements voted by a narrow margin to become a part of Polten. In the case of Halfling Downs, it was a matter of a mere two votes.

The third village within Polten's proposed southern border, Lenchbugar, was isolated. Neither Baron Donlewis in his manor castle in Trailsend nor the folk of Lenchford knew much of Lenchbugar beyond the news that raftsmen brought when floating logs downstream. The baron simply included Lenchbugar and all of Rawlinswood northwest of the Lench without consulting the folk of the village.

Baron Donlewis traveled to the royal castle in Heliogabalus and presented King Vartal with a proposed map of Polten that followed the Impilturian border in the southwest, which ran down the middle of the Great Imphras. At the confluence of the Great Imphras with the Lench, the baron's border turned to the northeast, following the center of the Lench to its source in the Giantspires, the north-south ridge of the mountains to Giantspire Pass and then following the southern flank of the Giantspires to Icelace Lake.

In much later years, the size of Polten was reduced substantially, when the conquering Zhengyi the Witch King annexed the part of Polten east of Tellerth, including Rawlinswood northwest of the Lench, into the Duchy of Soravia.

Baron Donlewis had drawn his map with no ill or aggressive intentions toward the Tellerth druids or the people of Lenchbugar. However, because of the map, the Damaran kings for years viewed all of Rawlinswood northwest of the Lench, including Lenchbugar, as being a part of Polten, and the royal maps of King Gareth today show them as being under the rule of the duke of Soravia.

Be that as it may, the Tellerth druids never have viewed or acknowledged themselves as being subjects of a Damaran king, duke or baron, and the folk of Lenchbugar - who see themselves only as Freemen of the Dale - doubtless are unaware that such claims have been made upon them. Nor have these claims ever been asserted or contested in any manner.

No Damaran soldier or tax collector and no militiaman of Polten or Soravia ever has entered Rawlinswood or set foot in Lenchbugar, and this situation is unlikely to change in the near future. Even in Zhengyi's time, no moves were made to assert rule in northwestern Rawlinswood or in Lenchbugar.

While the hobgoblin raid upon Lenchford in the Year of the Rose Peals had been a dismal failure for the invaders, it did not deter the Lightning Fists from returning. Similar attacks occurred against Lenchford in the Years of the Lupine Torque (1125 DR), the Azure Blood (1126 DR) and the Luminar Procession (1127 DR).

In the latter year, Impilturian Princess Ilmara used the Scrying Stones of Myth Drannor to observe the hobgoblins massing again in large numbers. One assumed they were massing for another attack of the size they had mounted in the Year of the Dawndance (1095 DR). Young Impilturian King Imbrar petitioned Damaran King Vartal for permission to cross Damaran land, to march upon the Giantspires, and he received it.

As a larger than usual hobgoblin forced advanced from the edges of Rawlinswood in late summer of the Year of the Luminar Procession, they were met and quickly defeated by a host of the Impilturian army of more than twice their number, before ever reaching Lenchford.

Young Imbrar led his army along the northwestern edge of the Giantspires to meet the hobgoblins on their own ground. Nothing was seen or heard of Imbrar or his men again, nor were there any new hobgoblin attacks in the years that followed. In the Impilturian capital of Filur, Princess Ilmara ruled in regency, until her son, Imphras II, was old enough to claim the throne.

For the most part, outside of the hobgoblin encounter, the 12th century continued to be a time of uneasy peace in much of the Dale and an era of growth in the West. There continued to be skirmishes between Freemen or the Mucklestones Druids and the Hunters of Herne in the Eastern Dale, but there was no full scale warfare.

The Freemen received little news of Harbet Gall. Impilturian sages claimed that Gall often was absent from Nighthawk Tower, busy in the Vilhon Reach and elsewhere, re-establishing his strength within the Dragon Cult, after several abortive attempts by Wearers of the Purple to destroy him and take his place. Such reports were a matter of concern to the Freemen, but there was little they could do about such news at that time.

The main source of worry in mid-century was the blue dragon Drayshtrohmistipoles. Every four or five years, the wyrm would hunger for more bloodstone and fly onto the Merchants Run or into Damara to raid a caravan. In most cases, the victims were Impilturian.

In the Year of the Long Shadows (1164 DR), the Impilturian Queen Regent Ilmara decided to put an end to Drayshtrohmistipoles. She sent one of her leading War Captains, Sir Benulmbrar, a paladin of the Ilmatari Order of the Lambent Rose, along with seven other paladins and two clerics of the order into the Giantspires to destroy the ancient blue. In return for their service, the queen agreed to build a monastery for the order.

A bitter battle took place in the mountains outside of the dragon's lair, and three of the paladins had fallen before Drayshtrohmistipoles perished, but at last the holy blade of Sir Benulmbrar fulfilled the paladin's mission, and the great dragon was no more. The survivors of his party followed the Lench back downstream with wagons containing the dragon's treasure in tow.

The bloodstone that Drayshtrohmistipoles had taken was returned to its rightful owners, but it no longer was known from whom the rest of the treasure had been stolen, and this was distributed by Sir Benulmbrar within the Ilmatari church to build and maintain monasteries and do other great and needful works.

The queen kept her word as well, beginning construction of the Monastery of the Red Petals outside of Maracrath in the Year of the Countless Scribes (1166 DR), shortly before stepping down from the throne. It was completed by her son, King Imphras II, in the Year of the Majesty (1177 DR).

Before the 12th century ended, two more events of note took place in the Great Dale. In the Year of the Midday Mists (1195 DR), Lucius Mulden discovered clay pits east of Merchants Run between Guidodale and the Lench and started a kiln there which grew into Impiltur's and Damara's main source of red brick and roof tiles. The settlement of Mulltown quickly grew around the kiln.

A year later, in the Year of the Shrike (1196 DR), the only true conflict between the Hunters of Herne in western Rawlinswood and the Freemen of the Western Dale broke out, in something of a Romeo-and-Juliet tale. In Gallist Kilstad, Väina Lemminsdóttir was the high true druidess and ruler of the town. She had her own gardens just south of the Kilstad on the Soleine. Among the true druids of Herne in western Rawlinswood, she was second only to Turpi Rugurdsson of Great Boar, who had the title Stag of the Enclaves.

Väina had two beautiful daughters who were less impressed with the teachings of Herne than their mother, and the great druidess suspected that both could be tempted to flee into the lands of the Freemen.

It was the practice in Kilstad in those days to bathe publicly in the warm months of the year in the Soleine within the city, but Väina did not want her daughters to bathe exposed before the town's men. For this reason, she sent them daily to her private baths in her gardens, where they were to bathe under the watchful eyes of an old and trusted but armed and fit ranger of Herne named Vuperon. The girls were more than happy to comply with their mother's wishes, for they too did not wish to bathe exposed before the town's men, nor did they wish to expose themselves to Vuperon.

Unknown to Väina but known to her daughters, Vuperon had become overly fond of the herbal spirits distilled in Kilstad, most of which were exported into the lands of the Freemen and beyond. When the girls arrived in the gardens to bathe, they supplied the old guard with strong spirits and undressed to bathe only after he had fallen asleep.

As it happened, two Freemen rangers of Mielikki who were assigned to observe the Gallist settlements came upon a point in the forest above the Soleine where they could look down upon the bathing maidens, and they were entranced by their beauty.

This experience repeated itself on several occasions. The rangers, noting that the guard always slept soundly, decided one day to approach the girls. The embarrassed maidens rapidly dressed themselves. But they were fascinated with such forbidden contact, and they made conversation with the men.

With time, the Year of the Midday Mists (1195 DR) came to its cold season. The maidens no longer went to the gardens to bathe, and they and the rangers saw no more of each other, although their four hearts yearned for one another. In the summer of the Year of the Shrike (1196 DR), Vuperon and his wards again returned to Väina's gardens, for the maidens to bathe. Again, Vuperon drank and slept, and again, the rangers and maidens dallied with one another.

Too soon, the cold season approached, but in this year, Väina's daughters begged the rangers to take them away to their homes, to free them from the prison of their Gallist enclave. Together then, the four fled to Cairnpur, where the rangers gave Väina's daughters their protection.

When Väina discovered what had happened, she was livid. She did not discuss this matter with the Stag of the Enclaves in Great Boar, as was required of her, but rather assembled a war party of her finest rangers, leading them downstream to Cairnpur. By night, they climbed the town's wall and then entered Cairnpur and began pounding on doors, demanding information and then senselessly slaying townsmen who knew nothing.

A dozen or so townsmen had died before the Freemen's militia cornered Väina's party, slaying most of its members. Väina and two of her rangers of Herne survived, were captured and were to be placed on trial, when a group of Tumbling Stars druids came to Cairnpur and intervened.

The druids demanded that the prisoners be turned over to them, to be brought before the *"justice of the forest."* Only in this manner, the druids said, could an unending series of skirmishes between the Freemen and the enclaves be prevented. Reluctantly, the townsmen gave in to the druids' demands.

Väina and her two surviving rangers were taken by the druids of Silvanus to the Stag of the Enclaves, the great true druid of Herne, Turpi Rugurdsson, in Great Boar, and they demanded that justice be done, reminding Rugurdsson that the pact of peace had been violated by the druidess and her followers.

The three were tried in the presence of the druids of Silvanus and found guilty. They were sentenced to be prey in the next Great Hunt and to be cast out from the church of Herne. Little is known about this ceremony of outcasting, which can take place in the Gallist church and may indeed be a Malarite ritual. After it is completed, the priests, druids and rangers who are subjected to it lose all of their special powers including access to divine magic spells.

The outcast were hunted down and slain on the Midsummer Feast in the Year of the Sundered Shields (1197 DR). Rangers of Herne brought the three severed heads to the druids of Tumbling Stars, and these in turn brought the heads to the townsmen of Cairnpur. The heads were hung above the town's north gate, where they dangled for years, until the skulls crumbled in shards. From these events, came the name Three Skulls Gate, although the skulls now are long gone.

Without new calls to war, the true druids of Herne and their rangers in the East used the relative peace of the 12th century to secure what more or less was theirs. The last druids of Silvanus and rangers of Mielikki were driven from the part of Rawlinswood east of Dender's Valley or were slain before they could flee.

Veidarhofn and Tschedith, which had lain mostly in ruins, were rebuilt as modest logging and hunting thorps. Lower Dender's Creek and the Kaldurfljót were dredged to reduce flooding and to add to the amount of somewhat fertile farming soil available in the east along the Trade Route.

The restored areas were by no means prime farmland. Late cold winds in spring as well as the early freezing winds of autumn limited the growing season, but a single crop of wheat or oats could be harvested there annually, and such commodities were in short supply in the East.

In these years too, the true druids of Herne shuttled the Dalesmen whom they ruled once more southward along the Lake of Tears and Tears Creek, where several tiny and poor but useful farming thorps arose to help feed the Hunters of Herne more than a diet of meat.

Harbet Gall had been absent from the Dale during much of the 12th century, seeking new allies and greater power, and the fruits of his labor soon would begin waxing in the Eastern Dale. However, the partners in Gall's negotiations had mighty enemies of their own, and they had been kept under close observation.

That the lich Harbet Gall of the Great Dale was reaching beyond the two great forests did not go unnoticed, and the enemies of Gall's friends intended to stop his expansion in the early stages. Those who had been lulled by a century of relative peace in the Dale soon would be wrenched from their reveries by a new century of bloodletting.

Gall had sought and found new friends on several fronts, but his focal point beyond the church of Malar long had been and still remained the Cult of the Dragon. In the previous century and a half, the cult had been torn by losses and internal strife. The cultists were without their three guiding lights, Sammaster, Algashon Nathaire and Tuelhalva Drakewings, all of whom had been destroyed.

After Sammaster's destruction by Lathander's avatar in the Year of the Sinhala (916 DR), the cult's leadership fell into the hands of Algashon, the priest-mage in Bane's service, whose leadership was challenged after less than a century by Drakewings. The dual but mutually hostile leadership of the cult collapsed, when Drakewings freed Gargauth and Algashon mustered the Rage of Dragons in response in the Year of the Dracorage (1018 DR), leading to the destruction of both Drakewings and Algashon.

For nearly two centuries after their fall, the Cult of the Dragon, embroiled in internal strife, wrote few significant entries in Faerûn's history. At the peak of his leadership, Algashon had overseen more than 100 cult cells reaching from the Savage Frontier in the distant northwest of Faerûn to the borders of Mulhorand and Unther, where the cult's expansion had been halted rather violently by the church of Tiamat.

Lesser cult leaders throughout the Realms clawed at one another in attempts to take the reins, with no clear power ever emerging. The cult was ripe for powerful intruders to enter and take control. Many were stimulated by the prospect. Most were less interested in the gospel of Sammaster than in the powerful tool they thought they could shape the cult into, once it was within their own hands.

From a cult viewpoint, Harbet Gall had been little more than the leader of a relatively inactive cell within the remote Great Dale. Those who opposed Gall within the cult underestimated the great power of the Malarite lich. The greatest surviving power within the cult in those times appears to have been the cell centered in the Daggerdale area and Sembia. It had been taken over by the witch Gwath, who was known as *Gwann* within the Dragon Cult (for more details please see *Backlands,* part 3 of *Northern Journey*, and the Daggerdale Project website at *http://mapmaker.freeservers.com*).

In truth, the cult was in a shambles. The southern cells that were centered around Hlondeth had become headless and were disintegrating. Through flattery and promises of power in some cases, but through intimidation, magical manipulation and assassination in many more, Harbet Gall brought the southern cells together and forced them to begin coalescing once more, although only minor success could be seen by the turn of the century.

In these times too, Gall personally had been marked for destruction by competing cult leaders, but their assassination attempts all had failed … understandably, perhaps, for few in the cult knew that Gall was a lich, and their attempts had been upon his life rather than his unlife.

For her part, Gwann used similar tools to take control of and steer the once powerful Sembian cells of the cult. Hers was the harder task. After the dragon rage, the surviving Sembian cultists were sharply divided between the reform Banite faction that had been headed by Algashon and the pragmatist anti-Banite faction that Drakewings had steered.

Gwann was willing to use the church of Bane, just as she was willing to use the cult, but she had no interest in worshipping Bane or supporting his church, and the religious tainting of the reformationalists' thinking was much less to her taste than that of the pragmatists, whose philosophy was:

> *Anything we can do to further our worldly power base by exploiting our knowledge of dragons and the creation of dracoliches serves us well both now and in the future when dead dragons rule.**

*** *Cult of the Dragon* by Dale Donovan (TSR - 1998), available as an ESD-download from RPG Now.**

In addition, the Banite priest Xarth Kistar in Zhentil Keep already had taken behind the scenes control of cult cells in the Moonsea area, and it had become clear that Kistar, given the time and opportunity he needed, would make an all-out attempt to bring the sundered Sembian cells under his wing as well, within the reform philosophy.

For this reason, above all, Gwann acted quickly and decisively, binding the surviving pragmatist leaders to her own puppet strings and then ordering them to liquidate the reform Banite elements expeditiously. In this they succeeded, and Xarth Kistar's thoughts of moving southward were made pointless. He quickly set his sights elsewhere.

Despite the power of Gwath/Gwann, the Sembian cells took long to become cohesive again, and they did not provide her with the services she had expected to gain from them, but rather were at first a failure in most of their undertakings. It is said that she became tired of the cult and her followers within it and simply abandoned them many years later, but these matters have nothing to do with the tale of the Great Dale.

It is believed, however, that an understanding was reached between Gwath and Gall, one in which Kistar later joined as well, in which they divided the cult into three spheres of influence, with each of the liches controlling his own sphere. Above all to strengthen their own individual elements, the three agreed to keep their division of the cult's pie secret, urging the leaders of their own factions to deal with underlings as though the cult indeed was again becoming a somewhat cohesive unit throughout Faerûn.

The main element of their pact, however, was an apparent agreement that none of the three spheres would interfere with the doings of the other, nor would their members trespass without permission in the domain of another sphere. This agreement served all three liches well, and they therefore maintained it so faithfully that the cult did not fully recover from its sundering until the early 14th century in which we now live.

It should be mentioned that the rank and file of the cult knew little of Gwann, Gall and Kistar. The three pulled the strings that steered the various elements of the cult from unseen heights. Those who served the cult saw only the puppet leaders who had come under the triad's control.

While Gwath/Gwann and Xarth Kistar appeared to be satisfied for the time being with their grip on parts of the Dragon Cult, Harbet Gall sought to harness still more power to channel into his future strategies to gain the Great Dale for himself. After he was certain he had the cult cells firmly in grip, Gall traveled in the Year of the Sundered Shields (1197 DR) back to the starting point of his career, the Grove of the Beast, as the secret Temple to Malar in Alaghôn had been called.

Gall traveled in the form of a human trader from Impilturian Hlammach to avoid stirring suspicion. Discreet inquiries quickly turned up the surprising information that the temple of Malar and its followers had been hunted out of Turmish after it was discovered that a son of a member of the Assembly of Stars had been killed as prey in a Great Hunt mounted by the temple during the Feast of the Moon.

Informed sources said that the main part of the temple's following, including most members of the Company of the Hunt, had rejected Huntmaster Therun Adkar because he had led the congregation to ruin. Instead they had followed his deputy, the new, self-appointed Huntmaster Nadbul Khoun to Sespech, where he had established a hidden temple known as the Lord's Den in Winterwood.

Even more discreet entries turned up the information that Adkar had founded a new and smaller hidden temple together with those who remained loyal to him near Cedarspoke in Guthmere Forest, south of the Sea of Fallen Stars and northeast of the Shining Plains. It was an ill choice, for Guthmere is holy to Malar's archenemy among the deities, Nobanion, and Cedarspoke is a central enclave of the druids of Eldath.

Nonetheless, Gall traveled discreetly to Guthmere, tracked down Adkar and his followers and then, invisible, waited for the opportunity he was seeking. It came on the first day, when Adkar began the ritual to open a forest hunt in Malar's honor. The prey Adkar named was a druid of Nobanion's faith.

At that point, Gall suddenly became visible in the antlered stag form of Herne's avatar that he had used in the Dale. Adkar and the other faithful reached for their weapons, but Gall slew the huntmaster instantly and irrevocably with a token of disintegration. He ordered the remaining faithful to stay their hands and listen, if they wished to live.

He told Adkar's followers that he was the avatar of the demipower Herne, a servant of Malar sent by the Beastlord, who he said was angered by the suicidal actions of Adkar and those who had taken his side. The hunt, Gall said, scarcely is honored when Malar's faithful fall to the claws of Nobanion's great cats and the scimitars of Eldath's druids. The time for Guthmere was not yet at hand; Malar demanded more true service of his faithful before they were welcome in his domain, Gall argued

Gall told the gathered Malarites of Herne's congregation in the Eastern Dale. He said the church of Herne soon would conquer the entire Dale, and it was Herne's wish that this conquest be done in the name of Malar and in the honor of the Beastlord. He said the day was dawning that Herne long had prepared, when Malar at last would be honored with his own name in the Dale. He predicted that the Dale soon would be known throughout Faerûn as the land of the hunter.

Gall then ordered the entire Malarite enclave in Guthmere Forest to depart quietly, secretly and disguised, betraying to no man its worship of Malar. He said he expected to see each member of the enclave in Kront on Lake Ashane before the end of the Year of the Embers (1201 DR), suggesting that they cross the Western Dale in Marpenoth, along with merchants visiting Bildoobaris. Gall also said he expected each man to bring one more new recruit with him, one prepared to hunt and fight in Malar's honor. And he said that those who failed to appear could expect to be hunted by him, personally.

From Guthmere Forest, he traveled to the northwest, to an isolated and forbidden tower above the Lake of the Snake, where one of his own kind dwelled, another lich whose power came from the arcane domains rather than the divine. Throughout his journey, the Malarite lich had carried with him a small sack that opened into an area of infinite size within the astral plane.

In the dark tower, Gall opened the sack and drew from it several objects of Narfelli origin that his followers had found within the forests of the Dale, presenting them to the second lich. Gall's host received these items graciously and then removed a wand, a ring and several other tokens from ancient chests that lined the walls of his chamber. Both liches nodded in mutual acknowledgement, and Harbet Gall continued his journey.

With this deed done, Gall could prepare to begin his return journey. Only one task remained. On the way homeward, the disguised lich docked in Calaunt and sought a miserable den in the cellars near a large tannery. He entered in his disguised human form, surprising a dozen scurvy and drunken men with bloodthirsty eyes who reached for knives and swords and would have slain him instantly, had they been able to.

But Gall spoke a word of magic and held all but one man among them unmoving, where they stood. The man who was unaffected by Gall's magic did as though he too was under the influence of the lich's dweomer, although Gall was unaware of this. The unaffected man prepared to defend himself with magic, if need be, but hoped to be able to listen instead, fully curious over that which was unfolding. Gall then changed into the full horror of his true lich form.

"Brothers of the Blood," he said, *" this is no fitting place for you. There are wars to be fought, battles to be won and blood to be shed, and above all, there are young men badly in need of training, young men who must learn to do these things in your way, in your manner, and not in the style of Tempus.*

"It is time that the Reaver is given his due in my homeland. It is time that a temple is raised to Garagos in the Great Dale. I expect you to meet me in Kront on the Lake of Tears before the end of the Year of Embers. To fail me is to fail the Reaver, and neither of us will deal charitably with such failure."

With these words said, Harbet Gall magically vanished. He thought he had achieved what he had set out to do. He believed that his works for the 12th century had been accomplished. The great Malarite lich at last made his way back to Nighthawk Tower. It had been a very good year, he thought. But he had other matters than the wines of Uthmere in his undead mind.

In Calaunt, Reaver Tandus Luveigh, the sorcerer and secret high priest of the rising church of fallen Garagos in Calaunt, smiled. Luveigh was, among many other things, a member of a secret organization across the Dragon Reach in Sembia that called itself the Black Diamond. In later years, it would grow and rename itself the Iron Throne.

The fabric of Faerûn's religions is woven of strangely intertwined threads, Luveigh thought, and the church of Garagos Rearising long had woven its fibers into those of the Black Diamond and other organizations that would help it reach its ends. The Diamond had been seeking paths with which it could enter into the inner workings of the developing lands and nations east of the Earthfasts. Harbet Gall now had opened a new path to the Diamond into the Great Dale. Tandus Luveigh was eager to walk it.

Using a voice much less refined than the thoughts behind it, Luveigh told his comrades: *"You hoid the man, brudders! We's got a trip to make! There's blood to be spilled and bones what's got's to be broken. The Reaver's callin' us. What'er we waitin' fer?"*

Thunder in the East
From the Year of the Embers (1201 DR)

In the 12th century, Harbet Gall had been something of an enigma to his followers in the Eastern Dale. The Malarite lich seldom was seen and rarely issued orders to the ruling true druids, who consolidated and rebuilt parts of the Eastern Dale largely on their own initiative.

In the 13th century, Gall quickly reasserted himself as the avatar of Herne who ruled the Eastern Dale. He assured his followers that the new century would mark the era when the Hunters of Herne would rule all of the Great Dale. And as if to underscore that, strange new men began migrating into the Dale.

The first band of travelers drew the attention of many, long before it reached Gall's lands. In Kythorn of the Year of the Embers, a scurvy crew of a dozen heavily armed riders passed into Impiltur on the Tsurlagol Trail, being stopped by a patrol from the Sword of Impiltur near Grey Creek. Reaver Tandus Luveigh had all he could do to keep his men under control, as he tried to convince the Impilturian soldiers that he and his men were warriors en route to Bezentil in the Great Dale, intending to fight with the Freemen there against the evil in the East.

The Impilturian sergeant was skeptical, but he allowed the band to pass, after all swords had been bound with peace knots. Luveigh attempted to keep his men out of trouble by avoiding the cities, spending most nights under the stars und using rural inns only when the weather was inclement. Despite his efforts, however, it came to a scrap between one of his drunken Blood Brothers and an Impilturian patrol west of Ilmwatch.

Luveigh did manage to hold the rest of his party back, but the belligerent Blood Brother drew steel and was quickly cut down by the Impilturian soldiers, who insisted upon bringing Luveigh and the rest of his party before a holy justice of Tyr in Ilmwatch. The justice was unable to find any wrongdoing on the rest of the band's part, and he ordered the men freed.

However, he found Luveigh and his men unappetizing, to say the least. He ordered an Impilturian patrol to help them find their way to the Great Dale as quickly as possible, which meant that Luveigh and his men were taken by an armed escort to the ferry dock in Ilmwatch and were held there until they were safely off on the next ferry to Uthmere in the Great Dale.

Luveigh was even more careful crossing the Western Dale, but help was on hand in Uthmere. Shortly after the ferry had docked, a thin man who showed him the sign of the Hunters of Herne, a sign that Gall had shown the Blood Brothers in Calaunt greeted Luveigh.

The man, Tavis Gored, was a middle level enchanter in Gall's cell of the Dragon Cult in Kront. He passed out Talismans of Opposite Alignment to Luveigh and each of his followers and secretly worked enchantment magic with a ring of leadership upon them, to bring them under his control. The ring was effective with all but Luveigh, however, Gored remained unaware of the exception. The wizard then led the group into Uthmere, seeing to it that they were better washed, shaven and clothed, before leading them on into the East, all the while claiming that his followers were warriors intent on joining the Freemen in Bezentil.

The group made it as far as Ganglhofn without incident. At that time, Gored took no more chances with his enchantment magic, leading the party to Gallist Briddh and then farther through Herne's lands, to Spearmouthdale, Mettledale and along Tears Creek, arriving in Kront in Eleasias. Gall received the men, introduced Luveigh to seven other followers and a lower level cleric of Garagos and had them taken to the vine-covered ruins of Fortress Clymph, ordering them to refurbish it, giving them a detail of 50 slaves to help with the work.

Gall told Luveigh that the fortress was to be restored as a temple to Garagos and a training center for warriors who would serve and honor the Blood Reaver in battle. The restoration project began in Eleint and was completed early in the Year of the Private Tears (1204 DR). Luveigh's temple was and still is an austere, nearly frightening structure that speaks immediately of war and slaying as soon as it comes within view.

With the restoration of Fortress Clymph, conscription began in the enclaves of the Eastern Dale. Young, strong men of potential warrior stock were forced to go to the Reavers of Garagos for indoctrination and training as Blood Brothers, warriors who would ruthlessly mow down the Freemen of the West on that fateful day when Harbet Gall would blow the horn of war.

It should be noted that the Reavers' conscription was not completely limited to the sons of Herne's hunters. Several young Western Dalesmen also were abducted, indoctrinated and forced to serve Garagos as well. Such victims often were subjected to magical brainwashing in later years, which transformed them into true followers and believers of the Reaver.

The church of Garagos was the first of Gall's new organizations to be established in the Eastern Dale. The second was the Kront Cell of the Dragon Cult, formally acknowledged within the cult in the Year of the Dragon Altar (1202 DR). In this year, Gall's hunters and their slaves completed construction of an eerie fortress of stone with three tall pointed spires.

It had been expensive to build, financed in part with the treasure of the dragons who had fallen in the Dale. To make its construction possible, Gall had purchased several heavy transportation wagons in Phsant in Thesk. These were turned over to leaders of the Qu'encesta Nar tribe, along with several hundred slaves from the farms south of Kront.

The Nars took wagons and slaves to the Firward Mountains, where the large stones were quarried and cut, and then transported southward to the southeastern edge of Rawlinswood, where they were used to build the fortress of the cult magi, appropriately named Tower Threespires.

The tower no longer was the center in the Great Dale for only those cultists who had been following Gall since earlier days, but also for those from Hlondeth and other points of the Vilhon Reach who had heeded Gall's summons. In the years that followed, members of other cult cells found their way eastward, to join the new Kront cell.

In the course of the century, the cult drew several new dragons into the Dale and surrounding area, including:

- An adult black dragon into the swamplands north of the Trade Route between Rawlinswood and the Lake of Tears, who soon fell to the ancient blue Tarnestdopolis near Bezentil.

- The now plague-ridden ancient black Xargostoepistipeles to the swamps of Buzzard Bay Harbor in Impiltur.

- The blue Wyrm Nargustrandir to the Giantspires, where he would ascend to dracolichdom.

- An ancient blue named Tarnestdopolis to the Firward Mountains.
- A young adult red named Furchtbarhitzentendolo to the hills between the Lench and the Great Imphras, where he later would be slain by the Sword of Impiltur.
- A mature adult green named Sýrathesthandilo, an adult green named Græneddurhráki and two young adult greens named Eidurkjáftur and Daudhartunga to the forests of the Dale.

However, the harbingers of conflict seldom come alone. In these years, the Harpers, an organization that had paid little attention to the Great Dale or the lands emerging from the ice in the North, were trying to re-establish their own identities and purposes. The organization had been torn for some four decades by the Harpstar Wars, which at last ended in the Year of the Horn, when the lich Harper King Thavverdasz was destroyed in battles with the Dragon Cult.

As Harbet Gall's cultists began drawing ever more dragons into the Dale, more and more Harper eyes focused on the lands between the two forests, and Harper fingers twitched, eager to entwine themselves in the strings that the cult in the East wished to pull, hoping to make a different music sound from them than Harbet Gall was composing.

Gwath in her disguise as Gwann long had been a subject of scrutiny by master Harpers who had remained true to the organization's goals and principles, even in the darkest moments of the Harpstar War. Contacts between Gwann and Harbet Gall first sounded the alarm to the Harpers concerning Gall's activities.

The faithful Harpers already were ill at ease over developments east of the Dragon Reach, where Damara and Impiltur were rising as powerful kingdoms. The movement of dragons within the range of manipulation by the Kront cult cell focused this unease upon yet another burning point.

That both Impiltur and Damara were upheld by paladins and strongly influenced by the church of Ilmater was something of a consolation to the Harpers, but good, powerful monarchies, even holy monarchies, can be corrupted. The Harpers would have been more comforted had Impiltur consolidated itself as a league of independent but allied city states and also would have chosen to make Damara an alliance of independent baronies and duchies rather than one subject to a king.

Harbet Gall's new attempts to reach for power outside of the primitive Great Dale in order to forcefully consolidate the Dale and Ashanath at the foot of his own throne with the Dragon Cult as a major factor in his court only increased Harper concerns over the concentrations of power developing in the Bloodstone Lands of the East.

If Gall were to succeed, the Harpers believed a large and bloody conflagration between Impiltur and Damara on one side and Gall's Dale and Ashanath on the other would be the likely first result. That the ruins of the three kingdoms and perhaps afterward the Vast as well would be quickly overtaken by the Red Wizards of Thay to the south was not an unlikely secondary result, in the master harpers' minds.

In these times, too, the church of Ilmater had risen to an estimable strength east of the Dragon Reach. With forewarning gained through means known only to the faith's high painbearers - divine guidance, perhaps - clerics, monks and paladins of the Broken God begin preparing to encounter an unknown evil of great magnitude. They believed this evil was taking form in the Cold Lands. Many priests, paladins and monks migrated in the 12th century from enclaves in southwestern Faerûn, into Impiltur, Damara and the Great Dale.

In the Year of the Struck Gong (1236 DR), before he had fallen victim to the human plague, the ancient black dragon Xargo rose from the unpopulated cold swamps west of Impiltur's Buzzard Beak Bay and made an exploratory expedition eastwards, discovering Uthmere within minutes.

The watch had little trouble spotting the great dragon flying across Easting Reach and sounded the alarm, but there was little that the city's defenders could do. No mighty magi lived in Uthmere then, and none were visiting at the time. The city watch sent volleys of arrows upon against Xargo, and he was wounded slightly but mostly only irritated.

Xargo turned his wrath upon the docks, killing more than 100 workers and boatsmen in clouds of deadly gas, then bit and slammed boats' holds and crates open, claiming the little treasure he still found there. Still enraged and bitter too about the little treasure had reaped, he turned his attention next to the small, unnamed fishing settlements on Easting Reach just south of Uthmere, where nearly another 100 died, mostly woman and children left behind by fishermen out on the reach.

Remembering the East as a direction for poor pickings, Xargo headed southward and found Telflamm, which he pestered and looted a bit before being driven off by powerful magic. This expedition was Xargo's only foray into the Great Dale. His future hunts took him to more lucrative destinations in Impiltur, Damara and even occasionally the Moonsea region.

Xargo's attack took a toll of nearly 200 lives but did little long-term damage to Uthmere. It did, however, spur a small migration out of the Dale with interesting side effects. Many of the poor and illiterate families that had lived in the fishing settlements south of Uthmere were refugees who had escaped the Eastern Dale or the Gallist enclaves in western Rawlinswood, believing themselves to at last be safe on the shores of Easting Reach.

The toll of death Xargo took among their own was the last straw for many of them. Theyresolved to leave the Dale forever, loaded what possessions they had upon their fishing boats and sailed across the reach, finding the ruins of what once had been an outpost and arable, unclaimed soil not far from a fey and perhaps fell tower that stone alone in the landscape.

The refugees selected the lands along the reach that would become modern day Ilmwatch, just below the abandoned but magically protected tower that the Narfelli arcanist Kiriagoth the Occularum had built some 2,000 years earlier, to be occupied by Soargar, the great court mage of the first Impilturian kingdom, and then Princess Ilmara in later days.

Imphras I, who recovered the Crown of Narfell there, and later served as the wizard’s tower of his daughter Ilmara, had entered the tower. For her protection, a small, 20-man guard garrison with support facilities had been established there. However, Ilmara was forced to leave the tower in the Year of the Luminar Procession (1127 DR), when her brother, King Imbrar, disappeared on his expedition into the Giantspires, and she went to Filur to take up the rule as regent.

For more than a century then, the great tower stood abandoned, protected by the many magicks that warded off and in most cases liquidated all would-be intruders. There was little of interest in the surroundings of the tower, and only fools interested themselves for the ancient structure and its deadly magical traps. The soil surrounding the tower was swamp with many quicksand pits and a growing number of swamp monsters, including scrags.

In those days, the Heralds Road ran over somewhat higher albeit still dangerous ground that led directly to Cairnpur, the next settlement northeast of Trader's Bay. Few traveled in those times down to the shoreline where Ilmwatch one day would stand, and fewer still returned.

Thus, nature’s slow draining of the Ilmwatch peninsula and the migration of its swamp-based monster population went largely unnoticed until the Year of the Struck Gong (1236 DR). In that year a scientific research expedition from Filur, accompanied by a heavy armed guard, traveled through parts of the swamplands to further study the continuing effects of the Great Glacier's melts.

Quite by coincidence, the expedition saw smoke east of the road toward the reach and investigated, discovering not only the small settlement of Dalesmen beneath Soargar's tower that soon would grow into Ilmwatch, but also learning for the first time that the swamp waters had drained and the peninsula's land had become arable and useable.

Three years later, a band of about 20 Ilmatari paladins and monks from southwestern Faerûn and from Impiltur who were devout followers of St. Dionysus traveled to a site high in the Earthspurs on the fringe of the Great Glacier, where St. Dionysus and his followers once had battled followers of the ice goddess Auril.

On that site, they commissioned the fulfillment of their patron saint's long unrealized goal, construction of a monastery. St. Dionysus had been a firm believer in the rule of benevolent nobility, be they emperors and kings or lesser nobles such as dukes, counts or even land barons. However, he also felt much of the strife, evil and resulting misery in Faerûn had grown out of disputes over succession within the noble houses.

St. Dionysus strove to establish a rank of cloistered monks within the Ilmatari faith who would be hidden from the eyes of assassins, protected, to conduct genealogical research and ferret out false pretenders to Faerûnian thrones and false claimants to noble titles.

The monastery constructed in the Earthspurs was dedicated to this vision, with its members divided between paladins and combative monks to defend it, priests to tend to its spiritual needs and the cloistered genealogist monks. The complex was completed in the Year of the Yellow Rose (1242 DR) and, in honor of St. Sollars the Twice Martyred, named the *Monastery of the Yellow Rose*. It would not wait long for its first challenge to its existence.

As the century reached its deceptively quiet midpoint, more and more of the cult's invited and summoned dragons began crossing the skies east of the Dragon Reach and the Great Dale. After their crossings, however, nothing more was seen of the wyrms for a time, a fact in which only fools took comfort.

In addition, a time of trial and tribulation began west of the Dragon Reach, with the plague spreading its black hand and deadly boils first over Cormyr, then Sembia and at last crossing the reach and stopping in the Vast before the Year of the Beckoning Death (1253 DR) had ended. Not satisfied with merely suffering of plague, or perhaps in part because of it, Sembians added a civil war to their woes in the following Year of the Silent Steel (1254 DR).

Plague and war sent refugees fleeing in many directions, among them into the East, into Impiltur, up the Merchants Run into Damara and, in some cases, down the Trade Route into the Great Dale. As the immigrants began coming, so did the dragons, but the cult's attention was diverted from them.

The great blue wyrm Nargustrandir had come to the Dale at the cult's invitation and nested in the Giantspires where it could feed with little effort upon hobgoblins. But Nargustrandir's real reason for flying into the Northeast was to ascend to the rank of a dracolich.

The Keepers of the Secret Hoard in Tower Threespires were ecstatic over the possibility that their newly expanded Kront cell soon would be able to claim its first dracolich, diverting them from being of any other help to Harbet Gall for the time being.

The Malarite lich was less enthusiastic. Still remembering the troubles his first and last dracolich, green Nestamanur, had caused for him some 250 years earlier, Gall had planned to do without more undead dragons in his realm. But he also recognized that Nargustrandir's ascendancy no longer could be stopped; one only could hope it would fail.

The adult blue wyrm Tarnestdopolis, who had made his home in the Firward Mountains northeast of the Great Dale, decided early in the Year of the Raging Flame (1255 DR) to begin surveying his domain. He discovered little that he liked. The Dale was poor and not likely to provide the treasure he wished to accumulate, although it did have adequate cuisine.

However, Tarnestdopolis also discovered something he disliked completely - the young adult black dragon Hrastodantolus, who had made his home in the swamps north of the Trade Route in the Eastern Dale. Tarnestdopolis did not know, of course, where Hrastodantolus resided. Nor would that knowledge have pleased him. He was irked enough to find this arrogant young *lower* dragon flying over Auststad in *his* domain.

Hrastodantolus was even less pleased to see Tarnestdopolis, for he recognized the intruder as an older and mightier wyrm than he was. Nonetheless, his dragon pride saw to it that the idea of fleeing never entered his mind, and it came to a skirmish that quickly turned into epic dragon battle in the skies above the Trade Route, although one that was anything but entertaining to the spectators below.

As Tarnestdopolis and Hrastodantolus engaged one another, the young adult red dragon Furchtbarhitzentendolo arose for the first time from his new lair to begin exploring his surroundings, and as fate would have it, he decided to look first toward the East.

Hrastodantolus attempted several times to catch the older blue dragon with his acid breath, but to no avail. However, Hrastodantolus was fast and agile, and the lightning bolts Tarnestdopolis aimed at him also fell short of their mark. While the dragons battled, the second acid blast from Hrastodantolus bypassed Tarnestdopolis and went on to kill nearly 100 of Ulfshofn's 750 residents.

Tarnestdopolis' first lightning blast hit a wooden granary in Auststad, sending it up in flames. Most of the other two dozen wooden buildings in the wayside thorp soon followed on the path to ashes. The second lightning blast tore the southeastern spire off Tower Threespires, at the same time tearing four members of the Dragon Cult who were in the tower out of Faerûnian life - forever.

Attempting to gain more maneuvering room, Hrastodantolus slipped out from beneath Tarnestdopolis and flew farther westward over the Trade Route, with the blue wyrm remaining in hot pursuit. As the two winged over Bezentil, however, both found themselves in considerable difficulty. Bezentil was a fortified trade town of the Freemen, their gateway to Harbet Gall's no man's land and not a mere farming or hunting village.

Some of the city's guards were armed with magic arrows. There were a few wizards and sorcerers within the walls who were capable of standing up to dragons as well as to powerful Gallists. There also was a small band of three Harpers who had set out for the Dale from Sembia seeking evil to battle and intending to redeem their newly reconstituted organization's reputation through heroic deeds. Because none of the three groups had coordinated with the other, they sent up simultaneous volleys of magical arrows and spells, damaging and angering both wyrms.

Hrastodantolus was the most severely hurt of the two dragons. In his anger, he attempted to retaliate against the nearest attackers, the small band of Harpers. His left wing had been seriously damaged, however, and his acid blast missed the would-be heroes, instead killing several merchants, peddlers and their customers on Bezentil's market square.

While Hrastodantolus was diverting himself with the population below, Tarnestdopolis, who had several serious wounds but could fly unimpaired, took advantage of the younger dragon's failure to pay attention to the true business at hand, namely Tarnestdopolis. The older wyrm too intended to deal with the puny humans who had dared to interfere in his battle, but he understood priorities.

The humans could and would wait. Hrastodantolus remained his main goal. As the younger black dragon flew westward to deal with the guards in the gate tower who had sent magic arrows against him, Tarnestdopolis came at him unseen from above. He dealt the black dragon a lightning bolt that tore through the center of his already badly wounded body and continued on to strike the House of Holy Tears, the temple to Ilmater in the city below, taking the lives of a priest and six worshippers.

Hrastodantolus felt the strange sensation of life fleeing him, as his huge frame hurtled on westward in a gradually descending flight, quickly turning from his body into his carcass. The transformation already was complete when the great mass of black scales, dragon flesh and acid that had been Hrastodantolus crashed into the east gate of Vulddin, taking with it the lives of the eight city watchmen who had pointlessly fired arrows into the descending corpse rather than fleeing, perhaps just as pointlessly.

The attackers of Bezentil had severely wounded Tarnestdopolis. He knew he no longer was up to as much of a fight as he had been when he left his lair. Nevertheless, before returning there to lick his wounds, sleep and heal, the old blue had every intention of dealing with the arrogant men of Bezentil below.

Tarnestdopolis had been too busy with the battle at hand to notice the young adult red dragon Furchtbarhitzentendolo, who had been watching the battle in lazy circles of flight from high above. Furchtbarhitzentendolo was a wary dragon. He has sized up Tarnestdopolis as being a full wyrm against whom he would have little chance to stand under normal conditions.

But Furchtbarhitzentendolo saw too that the older blue was both wounded and tired, and he believed his moment of glory called. In a dive-bombing action, he came in swiftly from above, bathing Tarnestdopolis in flames. In an involuntary reaction, Tarnestdopolis unleashed a lightning bolt that blew the central part of the tower of Bezentil's high conjurer Adam Barkinssonur to smithereens.

Interestingly, Barkinssonur was in the tower's upper deck at the time. As the tower deck began tumbling to the ground, he crashed through a window and began his own descent. Fortunately, he had prepared a *feather fall* spell and was able to land towerless but uninjured. Less fortunate was General Helburd Bryndyngssonur, whose carriage passed beneath the top of the falling tower as it crashed to the ground, smashing it, the general, his wife, their teamsters and their horses into tiny pieces and mush.

A part of Furchtbarhitzentendolo's flame touched the wall of the Freemen's militia stables, setting the sizeable wooden building off like a tinderbox. Unfortunately for the daring red dragon, the involuntarily jerk of pain that the flames caused in Tarnestdopolis wound the blue wyrm's head at an angle that continued farther upward, pointing it directly at the red foe, who was maneuvering into position for a new attack. Tarnestdopolis unleashed a new bolt of lightning at Furchtbarhitzentendolo, striking him squarely in the right wing and tearing a large rent in it.

In attempting to regain his balance, Furchtbarhitzentendolo's tail slapped the upper levels off of both watchtowers of *Vesthlidh*, the city's western gate, killing several guards and passersby in the process. In his scream of pain, Furchtbarhitzentendolo unleashed another wave of fire on the half-timbered *Border Watch Inn*, which soon was nothing more than ashes and cinders.

When his tail hit the towers, Furchtbarhitzentendolo was thrown further off balance and crashed, badly injured, into the city wall, south of the gate, reducing it and several adjacent buildings to piles of worthless brick. By this time, the city itself was in a state of chaotic panic and only ill able to defend itself against the two wyrms, but the sorely wounded Tarnestdopolis was taking no more chances. He intended to deal his foe the death blow and flee with his life, while it still was his to claim.

Sweeping in low over the western city, he caught the grounded Furchtbarhitzentendolo square with the full fury of another lightning bolt. He then began winging upward as his tail was bathed in the painful flames of a mage's fireball, but the great blue wyrm managed to maintain his course and, with considerable difficulty, gained attitude. He winged, suffering, homeward to the Giantspires, where he settled for a humble diet of hobgoblins as he healed.

According to an old saying among Dalesmen, *Those who are pronounced dead live longer*. And so it was with Furchtbarhitzentendolo. The carcass of the presumably dead red dragon began to shift in the rubble, where it lay perched across the remnants of Bezentil's southwest wall, mustering what life was left within it.

As Furchtbarhitzentendolo's senses slowly returned, he crept out of the ruins, out of the city which was certain to slay him if he remained. He walked over the small farms beyond the wall, where no man remained to be crushed. Slowly, he spread his tattered wings. Stumbling over farms and fields, bashing the buildings into oblivion and crushing crops, he gradually took to the air. He began a slow and painful flight back to his lair in the West, just ahead of the warriors and magi of Bezentil who were in pursuit, hoping vainly to put him to an end.

The *Battle of the Dragons,* as Dalesmen would call it, took a tremendous toll upon the Freemen, Herne's hunters and the dragon cultists. In the East, Ulfshofn was severely damaged with nearly 100 dead. Auststad had vanished and with it the lives of 70 or so followers of Herne. The top of the illusionists' tower in the still new Tower Threespires lay in ruin, and a Wearer of the Purple as well as a few other cultists lay dead.

But these losses were small compared to those of the Freemen in Bezentil. After Tarnestdopolis had flown away and as Furchtbarhitzentendolo continued winging slowly toward the western horizon, several areas of the city were ablaze and flames were racing across the entire southwestern quarter, where little more than cinders and ash would remain at day's end.

The huge compound of the Freemen's militia and their stables numbered among the total losses of the day. And more than 500 of the Freemen and their families were counted dead after the smoke had cleared. Bezentil never was completely rebuilt after that time, although parts of the city were restored by the Year of the Broken Blade (1260 DR), but much of what the dragons lay in ruin during their battle has remained rubble since that time.

Harbet Gall at first was outraged at the reports he had heard, thinking only of dragons - his own dragons - once more gone amok. But the longer he considered the news he was receiving, the more he came to the conclusion that the day's balance had been positive for a change, although only through dangerous coincidence.

Bezentil long had been a large thorn stuck into the side of what Gall viewed as his own firmly held territory. When ancient Dalesmen had rebuilt the city in the Year of the Bright Lamplight (-143 DR), after it had been destroyed by fallen Raumathar, they quarried stone for its wall from the forest heights above the source of the Sudurstraumur in northeastern Lethyr Forest, and from it, they built a double wall of formidable strength.

Through sheer numbers and with heavy losses, Gall's troops had managed to cross over the walls of the city and take it in the Year of the Turning Wheel (937 DR), but they succeeded in holding the city for only 35 years. In the Year of the Cairngorm Crown (972 DR), the Freemen besieged the city and reconquered it bloodlessly in Eleint, when the starved Hunters of Herne agreed to surrender it if they were allowed free passage eastward, into their own domain.

After that time, Gall and his hunters had made no serious attempts to retake Bezentil, even though the city was their heart's desire. The Freemen had kept the city well manned with tough warriors and rangers and magi of middle competence who could take a bitter toll in battle.

Dragons too offered no solution; they were too destructive when left to their own devices, and most of Gall's men of power were evil true druids and evil rangers. He had relatively few wizards or sorcerers upon whom he could call, and most of those who did do his bidding did so first and foremost in the name of the Cult of the Dragon.

But with the fateful situation after the Battle of the Dragons, Gall cast his eyes again upon the gateway city between east and west. A huge breach had been torn in the double southwestern wall of Bezentil, and his agents reported that the stone of the broken wall had been for the most part shattered and no longer could be used to reconstruct it.

Nor, Gall thought, would the Freemen be able to rebuild the wall of stone. Northeastern Lethyr Forest was by no means under Gall's firm control; as always, his Hunters and the Mucklestones Druids constantly contested nearly every square inch of it. In all cases, however, the forest had become far too dangerous for the large scale quarrying that would be necessary to rebuild the wall.

Bringing the huge stone bricks needed in from other areas might have been possible in theory, but in practice, the cost of transporting them would be far too high for the Dalesmen's modest budgets. Wooden palisades would have to replace the wall, Gall concluded, and these were easy to burn.

However, before dealing with Bezentil, the Malarite lich wished to draw the reins upon the cult dragons who had been brought into the region. Wild attacks like the battle over Bezentil could backfire all too easy and destroy his own plans. More than two and a half centuries had passed since Year of the Second Son (1006 DR) when Gall last had used the Orb of Dragon Enchantment fashioned by the now-dead Thayan Red Wizard Arch-Enchanter Rusz Hnartth. The lich turned to this object anew in the Year of the Dusty Throne (1256 DR), bending most of the dragons drawn by the cult to the Dale to his will.

Gall left the blue Wyrm Nargustrandir in the Giantspires out of his binding, because the wyrm was undergoing the transformation into a dracolich with ministrations from his own high cult members, and Gall knew better than to risk renewed dissidence within his own cult cell by interfering with their sacred rite. He wanted some semblance of harmony within his realm and wished to do nothing to provoke new attempts by rebellious cult members to destroy him. With the cultists' attention focused upon Nargustrandir, Gall had no qualms about magically binding Tarnestdopolis, Furchtbarhitzentendolo, Græneddurhráki, Eidurkjáftur and Daudhartunga to his own will.

Beginning in the Year of the Killing Wave (1257 DR), it was Harbet Gall's will that they begin attending to the strongholds of the Freemen in the Western Dale. During that year, the main attacks were along the Trade Route, with the three greens, Græneddurhráki, Eidurkjáftur and Daudhartunga, making several raids along the Trade Route, and before the Year had ended, they began meeting resistance.

Dragons, too, seldom come alone. Tales of them draw men of good and evil: Paladins who wish to test their own mettle and slay the wyrms upon the field of honor, religious devotees who see it as their duty to protect the frontiers, magi who wish to test their spells in duel or find spell components in the remains of fallen dragons and adventurers good and bad who seek their fortunes in the lairs of these great beasts.

The tale of the battle of blue, red and black over Bezentil quickly spread into Impiltur and the Vast and then spread across the Inner Sea to ears in Sembia, Cormyr, the Western Dalelands across the Dragon Reach and the Vilhon Reach.

The Noble Hand temple of Helm in Vastan Tsurlagol, which had sent Sir Tebbet Ringgh centuries earlier to fight dragons, was the first to reach the Dale. In early Spring of the Year of the Vigilant Fist (1259 DR), High Centurion Nember Lerch, the high priest of Helm in Tsurlagol, formed a permanent expedition to found a fortified monastery on the borderlands of the Freemen's territories in the Great Dale.

The command was given to his clerical Vigilance Dasper Tharnot, the second highest ranking priest in the Tsurlagol temple, and Sir Nandwulf Leebins, an experienced paladin of Helm's order. With them traveled four junior priests of the order, four subordinate paladins and a king's ransom in wealth. High Centurion Lerch gave the expedition several tasks to perform:

- To maintain the watch on the borders of the Western Dale.
- To destroy dragons and other evil threats from the East.
- To spread the faith of Helm in the Great Dale.
- To build the fortified monastery to Helm and win new priests and paladins from the Dale's population.

In the Year of the Black Wind (1262 DR), the *Abbey of the Vigilant One*, on the edge of Torside was completed and opened its doors. In the beginning, however, the abbey drew the curious rather than new faithful, but the presence of the five paladins and their assurances that they were there to hold the watch for the Freemen and to protect them left the Dalesmen with a positive inclination toward the god Helm, of whom they'd known little or nothing.

By this time, Harpers already were well distributed throughout the Dale, with agents in Uthmere, Uthving, Gylving, Vulddin, Torside and Bezentil, along with covert agents in Ulfshofn and Kront. Several Red Wizards from Thay were wandering the Dale, trying to determine what things were there that might draw dragons, for such things also were likely to interest them.

A few agents of the Zhentarim also were quietly wandering the Dale, trying to determine what was interesting everyone else there. And a good half dozen bands of adventurers and mercenaries were under way, trying to get the sniff of dragon blood, with hopes of slaying wyrms and looting their lairs.

Harbet Gall remained unaware of these things and was truly uncertain why he had the strong conviction that he seldom had stood so high in Malar's favor before. He assumed the Beastlord was pleased with the strategies he had laid. That was only indirectly so. Malar's tastes are a bit too basic and primitive to sustain interest in strategy. He leaves that to the Red Knight.

Malar has a taste for the battle that results from strategy, and Gall's strategies had set up several different groups of humans in the Great Dale who to some extent soon would hunt each other, all of them would be hunting dragons, and dragons already were hunting humans and other mortals everywhere in the Dale.

Sensing Malar's pleasure with the hunt and the unusually cold weather that hit the Dale in Nightal of the Year of the Black Wave (1262 DR), Gall felt sympathy for the freezing Freemen and decided to warm their winter up for them. Using his magical orb, he called out his dragons again.

The ancient black Xargo made only a brief appearance. He had been planning to make his next raid in Impiltur, where the greater riches were waiting to be added to the treasure in his swampy lair, but the call of Gall's orb drew him instead toward the Great Dale. His order was to bathe Uthmere in acid, so thoroughly that it would take years to rebuild the city.

However, Xargo made it no farther than the growing Impilturian settlement of Ilmwatch. He intended to merely fly south of Ilmwatch, but the Kingdom of Imphras was not a disorganized land of peasants, like the Great Dale, but rather a kingdom growing in power and magic. The king and his generals knew that dragons had settled in the swamp beyond Buzzard Beak Harbor and in the hills farther to the north.

Ilmwatch had been prepared as a first line of defense against the dragon attacks the kingdom knew would come one day. Several magi with the tools necessary to deal with powerful wyrms had been sent there, and the Impilturian detachment had been equipped with magical weapons that were capable of laying a dragon low.

They made relatively easy work of Xargo, simply because he had expected nothing at all from Ilmwatch. It was, after all, still a small outpost, and Xargo assumed that the few people there would hide in fear beneath his magnificently fearful shadow and afterward say prayers of thanks that he had chosen to ignore them.

Instead, as he winged by the southern edge of Ilmwatch, he was hit by three arrows of penetration prepared by the high magi of the king especially for black dragons. These powerful weapons carried a triple dweomer: They had fivefold the range of a normal arrow, they could penetrate dragon scales and hide and they exploded when hit by acid.

All three arrows struck Xargo and exploded, causing such internal damage to the dragon that he was not far from death. He barely managed to fly falteringly back to his lair in the swamps of Buzzard Beak Harbor, where he spent another two years regaining his health. Xargo's role in the wave of dragons that Harbet Gall sent across the Great Dale ended before it had begun.

Gall's call also brought Furchtbarhitzentendolo back to the Dale for the first time since his battle over Bezentil. The red dragon's orders were to set Timbertown and Uthving aflame. He arose from his lair and flew over Guidodale, giving the settlement on Merchants Run a roasting that destroyed its northern quarter before the flames at last could be put out.

Furchtbarhitzentendolo reached Timbertown with little trouble. The logging camps and wooden buildings waited like a full tinderbox for the dragon, who managed with two strikes of his breath to kindle a blaze that was beyond extinguishing. Before the day had ended, Timbertown was nothing more than a large pile of ashes and glowing coals. Not a single building or stack of cut wood survived the flames.

The red wyrm continued on to Uthving, where he at last encountered stiff resistance from a covert Harper sorcerer named Tandas Garby. The red dragon lashed Garby and Uthving several times with his fiery breath, but Garby wore a magical ring that shielded him from the flames. Each time Furchtbarhitzentendolo made another diving attack, he blasted the dragon with a series of icy spikes that severely injured the wyrm.

In desperation, Furchtbarhitzentendolo dived directly upon the sorcerer and succeeded in snapping him up with his jaws. Before Garby could issue another icy blast of magic, the dragon bit him in two and swallowed the upper half of his body. But the great red knew there was little fight remaining within him and that he would be hard pressed to defend himself against another such opponent. He took to the skies and winged slowly back to his Impilturian lair between the Lench and the Great Imphras.

It had been a glorious day for Furchtbarhitzentendolo, but it was not his lucky day. A high-powered Impilturian party had been searching the hills between the two rivers, and they spotted the dragon rising to his eastward flight earlier in the day, rushing then to the point from which he had ascended. When the badly wounded red dragon reached his lair again, the Impilturian party was waiting for him. The battle was relatively brief. Furchtbarhitzentendolo was slain.

Gall's call also brought the ancient blue dragon Tarnestdopolis down from the Firward Mountains, and the wyrm thundered over eastern Rawlinswood and then Bezentil, where some of the residents went into panic and others took a defensive position on the ramparts, convinced the dragon intended to complete his unfinished business of seven years earlier. Both the panicked and the battle weary breathed a sigh of relief when he flew on westwards down the Trade Route.

On this day, Gall had ordered Tarnestdopolis to attack Vulddin, which had suffered little in the civil war outside of the damage leveled in the Year of the Raging Flame. Unfortunately for the city, the Harper sorcerer, the high level Thayan Red Wizard and the High Priest of Bane who were staying in the city all were elsewhere on that day, searching for dragons who still had been hidden in their lairs a day earlier or seeking secrets of other natures.

The Freemen of Vulddin defended their city bravely but hopelessly. Tarnestdopolis sent one part of the city after another into splinters with his bolts of lightning, and out of the broken beams and braces came the inevitable flames. His first and key targets had been the barracks, facilities and horse barns of the Freemen's militia, which he left in total ruin. After that, Tarnestdopolis struck as many parts of the city as possible, hoping it would raze all of Vulddin.

The watchful priests and paladins of Helm had seen Tarnestdopolis flying in from the northeast, and they guessed correctly that his goal was Vulddin, riding posthaste to aid the threatened town. As the men of the *Abbey of the Vigilant One* at least reached the walls of the burning community, Tarnestdopolis was preparing to begin destroying the outer ramparts.

However, Helm's followers came with magic that could injure the dragon. Indeed, they began doing so without delay, with one of the priests calling an immense magical ice storm down upon the wyrm that threatened to break some of his wing bones and by all means jeopardized his ability to fight. Tarnestdopolis was not afraid of the priests and paladins, but he had fulfilled his mission, he had little desire to suffer more of the damage they had begun doing to him and he had an idea how he could cruelly pay them back for their interference. He rose into the sky and left Vulddin 75% destroyed behind him.

The dragon quickly was out of the reach of Helm's followers and began flying to the northeast rather than homeward. He had observed that his persecutors in Vulddin wore the heraldry of Helm's church, and he had learned from the Gallists that there was a monastery to Helm in Torside. Tarnestdopolis was hungry. He planned to go to Torside to eat. He thought he might be hungry enough to consume every last resident of Helm's hamlet.

However, even a dragon can be surprised. As Tarnestdopolis' flight approached Torside, the ancient blue at first sensed evil and then a compulsion he could not resist that simply drove him away from the village. It was a new experience for Tarnestdopolis, and one he did not understand at all. He also was too hungry to be interested in further research.

Instead, Tarnestdopolis simply winged to Riggh, where Gall's Hunters of Herne were at home. He sent three blots of lightning into the wooden and half-timbered structures of the village, mainly to drive the people out in flight, and then he snapped up fleeing townsmen and ate until his appetite was sated.

There were those rangers and evil druids who fought him with arrows or minor magic, but these did the dragon little harm. Those who were easy to snap up, he devoured. The others he ignored. And when he felt properly stuffed, he winged back to his lair in the Firwards, to settle into his lair for a long, well-earned nap.

While Xargo was being humiliated, Furchtbarhitzentendolo destroying and being destroyed and Tarnestdopolis destroying and stuffing himself, the three green dragons under Gall's control also were busy. The adult green Sýrathesthandilo had been dispatched to northwestern Lethyr Forest with the mission of secretly ferreting out the Tellerth druids and them ambushing them in clouds of chlorine breath. The poor dragon was unaware that a band of Harpers were conferring with Tellerth circle on the day that Gall sent him out, making the enemy doubly dangerous.

Sýrathesthandilo was proud with the success at which he approached the druids and their visitors, without hearing anything to indicate they were aware of his presence. Thus was he surprised when a number of small trees on the forest floor suddenly shot up to their full height, their trunks tipped with pointed wood as hard as a diamond.

Still, Sýrathesthandilo was an adult dragon, and as such, he was tough. The trees tore through his wings but caused no damage to his muscles. The pain was minimal. Nonetheless, the wyrm was pinned to the spot. With a bit of momentum, he simply would have been able to slap the trees to the ground. But it took more strength to bring his wings into movement than to merely slap trees down, and that was just a bit more strength than he could muster at the moment.

Sýrathesthandilo was less surprised to see a human coming toward him through the forest. The shape belonged to a Harper archmage known as Delfing of the Toothless Tower, although this was more than the pinned dragon could confirm. What Sýrathesthandilo did know was that this human was approaching him under the shield of an invisibility spell, which the wyrm could penetrate with no difficulty, and that several more humans were following at a distance.

The green dragon decided to hold his breath, in a manner of speaking. When humans come in entourages, he believed, it was best and most efficient to eliminate as many as possible at once. A premature attack on his part might convince some of the cowardly creatures to flee and seek help, then return to plague him on another day. And it was quite clear that the dragon might remain where he was for a few days. He still had no precise plan for freeing himself from his unfortunate situation.

Despite his plans, however, Delfing of the Toothless Tower continued marching haughtily toward the pinned wyrm, well ahead of the party that was following him, and he was beginning to wave a long, wooden staff he was holding. Sýrathesthandilo sighed inwardly and took this as a clear sign that it was time to react, even if the other humans still were beyond his range.

The dragon opened his maw with every intention of bathing Delfing in a cloud of deadly chlorine gas, but to the wyrm's genuine surprise, the mage was a trifle quicker. Before Sýrathesthandilo could release his poisonous breath, streams of broken, red light sparked from Delfing's staff and into the dragon's open maw, setting off a chain of mighty explosions within his body that dimmed Sýrathesthandilo's thoughts and memories forever.

The explosions were so powerful that they blew the dragons eyes from their sockets and sprayed its teeth into the forest in a rain of ivory spears. The blast also tore Delfing of the Toothless Tower to shreds that were beyond resurrection and reduced his powerful staff to ashes. The druids who had maintained their distance from Delfing conjured a small rainstorm to quench the flames that were springing up from the battle site, where Sýrathesthandilo and Delfing were no more.

With the years, the forest grew again through the dragon's rib cage. Today, birds fly through the skeletal holes where the eyes of Sýrathesthandilo were and nest in the recesses of his brain cavity. Most Dalesmen have forgotten that the bones of the dragon still crumble in Rawlinswood, but those who stumble upon them are reminded that there once were beings of power in the great forest who were well prepared to defend it, and they well may be there yet today.

Gall had sent the adult green dragon Græneddurhráki and the two young adult greens Eidurkjáftur and Daudhartunga on less dangerous missions. The three laired in Rawlinswood and were the easiest for the Freemen to hunt down. Gall knew his foe doubtless would attempt to do just that one day, but he hoped to postpone that time for as long as possible by making the three green dragons an irritation to the Dalesmen rather than a threat which required immediate attention.

For that reason, the three green dragons were ordered only to feed in the Dale, rather than attempting to wreak massive destruction, which their chlorine breath was ill-equipped to do in any case. When one of the three took flight, it was to hunt down and devour young farm maids alone in the fields or to harry and eat the Dalesmen's cows and cattle.

Before Hammer of the new Year of the Tressym (1263 DR) had struck its last blows, the dragon terror in the Great Dale had ended, diminishing into the dragon irritations of the three greens. The Freemen had suffered devastating losses, and the population of Harbet Gall's draconic aviary had diminished too.

The blue Wyrm Nargustrandir remained in the Giantspires, distant from the battle horns, working with members of Gall's dragon cult cell to prepare for the ascent to dracolichdom. The ancient blue dragon Tarnestdopolis in the Firward Mountains pestered the distant Moonsea area and traders on the Golden Way south of Rashemen from time to time but avoided the mostly empty coffers of the Great Dale. Ancient black Xargostoepistipeles continued to lair in the swamps of Buzzard Bay Harbor in Impiltur, entertaining himself at times with careful forays into the southern Moonsea area.

Despite his losses, Gall was relatively satisfied with the results of his dragon terror. Many more of the Freemen had died than his own followers. Several of the Freemen's strongholds were in shambles. For some time, Gall believed, his enemy would be concentrating itself upon reconstruction, defending itself only when the Malarite lich made war necessary.

The events of the dragon terror confirmed for Gall his long-term strategy. He continued to view dragons as being unreliable allies or weapons. They were excellent machines of massive but short term destruction, in his mind, and they were excellent diversions, but he placed his faith in his human druids and magi as well as the growing army of soldiers that the priests and warriors of Garagos were training in Fortress Clymph.

His warriors' day was coming, Gall thought. Until it dawned, another quarter of a century later, the Great Dale knew another period of relative peace, broken only by occasional skirmishes in border areas between the Freemen and the Hunters of Herne as well as occasional dinner flights by Gall's three green dragons in search of tender maidens.

Within Gall's territories, only Riggh had been destroyed or badly damaged. For the most part, the Hunters of Herne had the village rebuilt by the Year of the Shattered Altar (1264 DR). Reconstruction was on a much larger scale in the Freemen's lands, but restoration eventually was completed there too: Guidodale in the Year of the Tressym (1263 DR), Timbertown and Vulddin in the Year of the Flowers (1265 DR) and Uthving in the Year of the Leaping Frog (1266 DR).

In the years afterward, the only important public event was the fall of the young adult green dragon Daudhartunga to the holy sword of Sir Nandwulf Leebins, the leading paladin of Helm from the abbey in Torside. Sir Nandwulf attacked Daudhartunga in farm fields outside of Denderdale in the Year of the Blade (1275 DR), as the wyrm was attempting to chase down a maiden.

A greater but hidden event occurred in the Year of the Snarling Dragon (1279 DR), when the blue Wyrm Nargustrandir in the Giantspires succeeded in becoming a dracolich. As a boon to the members of Gall's cult who had helped him, Nargustrandir agreed not to enter the Great Dale until he was called. Thus, the Freemen learned nothing at that time of the ascent of the great Wyrm to the immortality of undeath.

The Second Battle of Bezentil In the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR)

The peace ended in early Ches of the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), when Gall once more called his dragons into service. Only the ancient black dragon Xargostoepistipeles in the swamps of Buzzard Bay Harbor in Impiltur failed to head his call. Xargo has stumbled upon a hole in the Weave within the swamp, one where he was immune from magic and Gall's call. He intended to serve the Malarite lich no more and thereby departed permanently from the tale of the Great Dale, settling into the historical chapters of Impiltur.

The adult green dragon Græneddurhráki and the young adult green Eidurkjáftur winged together low over northern Rawlinswood, flying westward, and then winging south, to make their return appearances. In the middle of the night, Græneddurhráki flew in low over newly reconstructed Uthving, treating the town to three random blasts of his chlorine breath before winging northward again, leaving nearly 200 dead Freemen in his wake. Eidurkjáftur zeroed in on Gylving, which never had been subject to a major attack in the civil war before. The younger dragon left 100 corpses behind.

Members of the Kront Dragon Cult cell had searched in advance for potential local lairs for the two wyrms. Græneddurhráki moved into a cavern in the southwestern corner of the Giantspires just above the forest. Eidurkjáftur sought out refuge in caved in gnome delves just north of the ruins of Lenchstigur and the river, at the foot of the Giantspires.

In the weeks that followed, the two greens made several other fast hit-and-run attacks by night, killing 20 in Veststad, 200 in Uthmere, a druid and a ranger in the groves near Tumbling Stars Waterfall and 18 people in the thorp of Wanneth, which came to half of the population there. Both dragons made their attacks under the cover of darkness, which lent an element of surprise and made it difficult for druids, rangers, militiamen or adventurers to determine where they were lairing.

After a few peaceful weeks, the attacks reached a high point in mid-Mirtul. Græneddurhráki and Eidurkjáftur came again by night and left a trail of poisonous clouds of gas and death in Uthmere and Riggstad. Both wyrms had vanished again before dawn, but the sunrise brought with it the huge shadow of the ancient blue dragon Tarnestdopolis flying into the Western Dale from the Firward Mountains.

The wyrm struck recently restored Vulddin first, sending three blasts of lightning into wooden buildings, before magi in the city had battered and injured him sufficiently to send him on to Ganglhofn, where two bolts were adequate to kindle fires that destroyed 90% of the small, walled town. Fortunately, many of the Freemen there were able to flee before the flames spread, and there were fewer casualties than might have been the case.

Riggstad, where the chlorine breath of Græneddurhráki had taken 75 lives in the darkness of early morning, also was hit by three bolts from Tarnestdopolis, which left 60% of the town in rubble and ashes and another 20 dead. Gylving, still mourning the 150 who died in a green dragon attack a few weeks earlier, was blasted anew by the blue wyrm.

With the attacks upon Vulddin, Ganglhofn and Riggstad, the people of Gylving had received plenty of advance warning, and most managed to flee the town, but a stubborn Impilturian sorcerer named Ginnenbrar not only remained behind but also ascended a watchtower in the town center, from where he could attack the flying dragon better.

Before Tarnestdopolis had sent his first lightning bolt into Gylving, several pellets of dissolution sent against him by Ginnenbrar’s magic hit him. The dragon was sorely wounded. The pellets punched large holes in both of Tarnestdopolis' wings, seriously hampering the ancient blue's ability to fly. He had no choice but to retreat. He had become vulnerable.

However, Tarnestdopolis had seen the source of the magic that had wounded him so sorely, and before he began his limping escape flight homewards, he shot a bolt of his lightning breath precisely where Ginnenbrar stood in the wooden watchtower, preparing his next attack. The lightning blew the sorcerer apart and set the tower aflame.

Normally, the flames from the burning tower would have been relatively easy to contain, but few people had remained in Gylving. There was no one there to fight the fire. Before enough people had returned to stop the spreading flames, 30% of the large town lay in ruin and ashes.

As often is said, a dragon seldom comes alone. Within a month's time, the holds of the Freemen in the Western Dale, which had managed for centuries to escape most of the ravages of war, had been devastated by the wave of Gallist dragon terror.

News of the attacks spread quickly, not only drawing priests, rangers, warriors and the few Freemen magi of the Central Dale but also curious agents of evil organizations, adventurers and Impilturian wizards into the Western Dale, to either combat the serpentine terror or to profit from it.

Tarnestdopolis remained in his lair in the Firwards, where Gall's dragon orb ordered him to remain, to allow his lacerated wings to heal. The Malarite lich wished to send the ancient blue back into action again, and he wanted the dragon to be able to fight with its full strength and ability.

Gall ordered the green dragons Græneddurhráki and Eidurkjáftur to continue harrying the western and Central Dale. The two wyrms had orders not to mount any attacks serious enough to draw the foes that were congregating onto their trails, but to kill a few Freemen now and then and make their presence regularly known.

The dragons understood this to mean that hunting season had been opened on edible maidens and that they were free to fly back and forth regularly to their lairs to make sure none had tampered with their treasures. Their thundering flights in the night over Rawlinswood were sufficient to keep most Freemen on their toes and worried about whether they were the night's target.

This continued through Kythorn and into Flamerule. Ever more of the powerful folk who could deal with dragons began concentrating themselves in the area between Uthmere and Gylving as well as in Uthving, hoping to bring down one of the wyrms that were harassing the Western Dale. By mid-Flamerule, the majority of the spell users east of Gylving had moved into the Western Dale, prepared to take part in the showdown that they believed was inevitable.

The only spell users who remained in Riggstad, Ganglhofn, Vulddin and Bezentil were the priests of Ilmater, who stood their ground, convinced that their flocks would need their help soon enough. The paladins and priests of Helm in the Abbey of the Vigilant One in Torside also stayed behind, convinced that their duty was in the East, as did the Mucklestones Druids of Lethyr Forest.

The showdown began in late Flamerule, but not where Gall's enemies expected. Instead, the ancient blue Tarnestdopolis and the two greens, Græneddurhráki and two Eidurkjáftur, thundered into together over Bezentil. The greens began systematically liquidating the guards along the makeshift palisade walls that had been constructed to replace the walls that were breached two years earlier, while the ancient blues began blasting their barracks with lightning bolts and setting them aflame.

However, neither the priests of Ilmater nor the followers of Helm in Torside were surprised. Both had been expecting the small city on the no man's land bordering Gall's territory to be the true targets of the dragon terror. The four Ilmatari priests in the remnants of the small city remained behind. Three other Ilmatari priests had come to Bezentil from Vulddin and Ganglhofn.

The seven priests of Ilmater collectively joined hands and began a sorrowful chant that caused first Græneddurhráki and then Eidurkjáftur to blow apart in implosions. Their destructions blasted several parts of the small dying city with flying dragon fragments and released two clouds of chlorine gas that killed several soldiers before dispersing. The two lesser dragons had fallen rather quickly, but their defeat also had expended considerable spell power of the Ilmatari.

The quick defeat of the two green dragons had not escaped the attention of the ancient blue Tarnestdopolis. He chose to confront this threat himself, before the enemy could attack him on its own terms. A blast of his lightning breath left two of the Ilmatari dead and smoldering, but those who remained stood firm and blasted the wyrm with their magic, combining their strength to call successfully upon the Broken God to perform miracles for them.

Their first spell blast petrified parts of the dragon's wings at random, making it difficult for him to fly, but he took to the air nonetheless, winging slowly toward the five priests. His lightning strike went wild, blasting instead the half-timbered granary behind them and sending it up into quickly roaring flames. As the dragon flew over them, the priests unleashed another spell blast, attempting to blind Tarnestdopolis but succeeding only with his left eye.

The dragon turned in flight and tried again to zero in on the five Ilmatari. This time his aim was true. Only the high priestess of Bezentil, Painbearer Folda Byrkyngsdóttir, and the temple priest of Vulddin, Guntur Hrebardssonur, remained alive but badly injured. Together, they loosed their last powerful spell blast upon the wyrm.

All the petrified areas of Tarnestdopolis' body turned to muddy slush. Ichor and blood began flowing from the wounds. Only holes remained where mud fell from his wings, leaving the dragon unable to fly. With his wounded legs, Tarnestdopolis shifted his body around and faced the priests again.

He was hit immediately by the last weak spells still at their command, but they did the dragon little harm. Tarnestdopolis twisted his pain-wracked neck and attempted to smite the two priests with his lightning breath. The blast went slightly wild. It caught Guntur Hrebardssonur, whose charred body fell dead to the ground, but Folda Byrkyngsdóttir remained alive. Unfortunately, the priestess already had expended the last of her spells. The dragon stared at her, hate filling his eyes, as she began to pray.

Clerical Vigilance Dasper Tharnot and the paladin leader Sir Nandwulf Leebins from the abbey of Helm in Torside, along with the other three priests and four paladins who followed them, had been anticipating such an attack for some time, but they had no intuitive feeling for where the attack would come. A tenday before the attack had come, they had left Torside and gone through enemy territory, riding from Denderdale through the Gallist village of Riggh and then into the hamlet of Skarlshofn.

The folk of both villages stared at the arrogant intruders with hatred in their eyes but with silent tongues and sheathed swords, for none of Gall's followers in the two settlements had the strength or magic necessary to challenge the band of priests and paladins. The band from the Torside abbey counted more well-armed men in both settlements than it normally would expect to find in such small communities. Both Dasper Tharnot and Sir Nandwulf understood the presence of these enemy warriors as a sign that an attack was being prepared.

After reaching Bezentil, the band had passed word on to the Freemen's command there of what was brewing in the countryside. After that, the priests and paladins continued their bold and arrogant watch, constantly riding back and forth between Bezentil and Denderdale, crossing the hostile terrain in Skarlshofn and Riggh.

Two days before the dragons' attack, as the followers of Helm passed again through enemy lines in Skarlshofn, they noticed a large number of warriors had amassed in the partial clearings of the forest hills near distant Fortress Clymph, deep within Gallist terrain. This too confirmed to them that an attack against the Freemen in the east Central Dale was imminent.

But the first attack came not from soldiers but rather from dragons. The band of Helm's followers had just finished riding down again from Skarlshofn and was nearing the Trade Route between Bezentil and Ulfshofn, where it crossed southward to Gurshofn, when the two green wyrms and the ancient blue Tarnestdopolis flew in and began their attack upon Bezentil.

By the time Dasper Tharnot, Sir Nandwulf and their party reached and entered the ruins of the burning city, the two green dragons had been slain and blue Tarnestdopolis, badly injured, was about to deal his death blow to the seemingly helpless but praying priestess Folda Byrkyngsdóttir. Sir Nandwulf surprised the injured dragon from behind, calling him cowardly and challenging him to battle.

Tarnestdopolis, knowing how severely he was injured, had been worried that such a thing would happen if he dallied too long in Bezentil. The problem he had feared stood before him now in shining armor bearing the heraldry of Helm. The ancient blue prepared to smite the paladin with a lightning bolt, but his injuries had slowed him considerably. Sir Nandwulf was faster. His holy sword delivered a horrible blow to the dragon's left claw, laming it.

The great blue retaliated with his breath weapon, but the paladin was magically shielded and remained beyond harm. Once more the horrible holy sword struck, severing Tarnestdopolis' jaw muscles. The injury would make it difficult for the dragon to aim its breath weapon properly, but that mattered little to him at that moment. The paladin was shielded and it was useless against him.

With tremendous effort, he raised a wing and successfully slapped Sir Nandwulf with such force that the paladin flew 150 feet/45m through the air, landing with the sickening thud of crunching armor and breaking bones against a low stone wall.

The priests of Helm rushed to Sir Nandwulf's aid, along with the other paladins. The knight had challenged Tarnestdopolis to single combat. As long as he lived and remained conscious, it was a matter of honor for the other paladins that they not interfere as long as Sir Nandwulf did not yield his challenge to them.

The priests were forced to use divine magic upon the paladin to free him from his crumpled armor. To preserve their remaining spell powers, Sir Nandwulf and his comrades used their own divine abilities to mend his broken bones and heal his other injuries.

Sir Nandwulf's magical armor was in a catastrophic condition and would not be worn again until a master smith had spent many days repairing it, if indeed it was not beyond repair. The armor bore the enchantment that had protected the paladin from the dragon's breath weapon.

Although he was without armor, Sir Nandwulf arose and began marching toward the retreating wyrm. The other paladins begged him to use at least the armor of one of them, but as a matter of honor, he refused and continued his march back into battle.

Tarnestdopolis was just crossing a breach in the wall when the voice of the paladin rang from his side, reminding the dragon that their battle of honor had not yet ended. The dragon turned back and cast his gaze upon Sir Nandwulf, noticing immediately that the paladin wore no armor. He thought there was at least slight hope that the man had lost his magical protection and prepared to strike one more time with his lightning breath.

At that instant, however, Sir Nandwulf's holy sword penetrated deeply into the flesh of the wyrm's underbody, sending fire through the nerves for a few moments, before mighty Tarnestdopolis dropped dead to the ground. A great cheer arose then from the survivors in Bezentil, but it faded quickly before the grim faces of the priests and paladins of Helm, who warned the others that a host was gathering in Fortress Clymph, no doubt with every intention of overrunning the burning city.

Many parts of Bezentil that were destroyed in the Year of the Raging Flame (1255 DR) still were in ruins when Tarnestdopolis attacked the city on that fateful day in late Flamerule. Nearly 40% of what had been rebuilt after the attack already had been consumed anew by flames by the time the ancient blue fell to Sir Nandwulf's sword. The situation seemed hopeless, because there were too few men left in the small city to put out the fires.

But Dasper Tharnot, rekindled the first hopes within the Freemen's hearts when he withdrew a scroll and read it, causing an immediate downpour over the city. The magical rain was not enough to fully extinguish the fires, but it kept them from spreading further and gave the surviving Freemen time to move as much rubble as possible to seal breaches in the city wall.

Harbet Gall had remained secluded within Nighthawk Tower, using magical tools of scrying to observe all that had taken place during the battle in Bezentil. Things had not gone quite as he had anticipated, but he was less upset with events than his Wearers of the Purple in the Kront Dragon Cult Cell might have believed, and he certainly was far less upset than he soon would convince them he was.

If all of Gall's wishes could have come true at that time, he would have sent his bloodthirsty warriors, led by the rabid Reavers of Garagos from Fortress Clymph, into a furious attack upon Bezentil and then on westward. But the time was not ripe for such a move. His forces still were gathering at Fortress Clymph, and he needed a bit more time before an armed attack would be certain to succeed,

Gall had assumed that the ancient blue Tarnestdopolis would find the remnants of Bezentil easy prey and would at the least succeed in pounding Vulddin into near submission before someone, somewhere would manage to destroy the wyrm. He again had overestimated the potential of his dragons. Their loss alone did not particularly bother the lich. He considered dragons to be treacherous allies, and he was convinced that the potential for treachery only grew with each day they remained in his service.

His thought was that his cultists should bring him dragons whom he could implement as machines of destruction until their timely and inevitable destruction, at which time he expected his cultists to find new dragons for him. The cult cell in Kront knew nothing of the way in which Gall bound the dragons to serve his own ends. The tale of the orb the lich possessed had faded with time and no longer was whispered anywhere within Faerûn. Only Gall himself still knew of it.

As he watched the exhausted Freemen push and haul rubble into the breaches of Bezentil's wall, Gall pondered what to do next. Dragons no longer were an answer. The next wyrms he would implement had yet to be found and be drawn to the Dale by his cult magi.

The Malarite lich could, of course, wait until all of his warriors had gathered at Fortress Clymph, but it really was his goal to make sweeping conquests in this new campaign. With luck, Gall thought, his army could bring all of the Trade Route as far west as Gylving into his grip. To succeed to that extent, however, he believed his army must still be moving with full momentum when it crossed the Sudurstraumur at Riggstad.

There would be no momentum left at all at that point, Gall knew, if his raging warriors became bogged down, even briefly, in Bezentil, or if Vulddin had not been humbled to the brink of surrender by the time his army reached the walled town. To succeed in his full thrust, he needed all of Bezentil vanquished before his Reavers reached the city, and he needed much of Vulddin in ruins with breaches in its stone wall.

Achieving that had been Tarnestdopolis' mission, but he had failed. Now Gall had little time. His scrying had brought him rumors days earlier that Impiltur was pondering an intervention, but some magic, no doubt from wizards serving the sons of Imphras, had placed an arcane veil over Gylving and all points westward of the town. Gall assumed that some Impilturian force was under way, and he knew that he and his Hunters of Herne were not strong enough to take on Impiltur.

In Lyrabar, King Lashilmbrar, the son of Imphras II, had been following reports of the heavy dragon activity in the Great Dale with considerable concern. Weeks earlier, unknown to Gall, he already had ordered a troop of 500 crack Impilturian soldiers accompanied by battle magi and war priests into the Dale, to hunt down and liquidate the wyrms before they became a threat to his own kingdom.

Lashilmbrar knew the Dalesmen had no interest in an Impilturian occupation, and he gave his commanders orders to make clear to the Freemen that his troops were in the Dale for the sole purpose of killing dragons. Once they had succeeded, the commanders were to assure the Freemen, they would return home without further ado.

The war wizards accompanying the Impilturian host were maintaining the magical veil that blocked Gall's scrying attempts. At the time Tarnestdopolis was attacking Bezentil, Sir Punumbrar, a paladin of Ilmater who served as a brigadier in the Impilturian army, and his host were disembarking from Impilturian ferries at the port of Uthmere.

After passing on his king's assurances to concerned locals, Punumbrar learned that the dragon activity had been concentrated near Bezentil, and his battle magi quickly confirmed this, watching the battle for the city with their scrying devices, in much the same manner as Gall had watched the battle from Nighthawk Tower.

Gall, still in the fortress in the hours after the battle, was uncertain what Impiltur would bring against him. But he knew that the second Impilturian kingdom, founded by Imphras I less than two centuries earlier, continued to cope with internal instabilities. The Malarite lich was convinced that King Lashilmbrar would not risk a large scale invasion of the Great Dale.

Gall thought his own Reavers would be seriously challenged if opponents on the Trade Route between towns and villages caught them. The key to success, he believed, was the conquest of Vulddin before the enemy could reach the town. There, his warriors and druids could defend their position from within the walls.

The lich reckoned not only with a threat from Impiltur but also with the return of druids, magi and warriors who had been baited into the Western Dale by the earlier dragon attacks, as well as the independent magi and adventurers who had come to the Dale to slay dragons and/or seek their fortunes.

In the face of these foes, Gall believed his own army had two weaknesses. His host was short on magic, having to rely largely upon the spells of his true druids of Herne, his Herne-worshipping rangers, the priests of Garagos and a handful of lesser Dragon Cult magi who did not dare to defy Gall. The higher cult magi in Kront were uninterested in the lich's military operations, and, as Gall suspected, trying to put together new plots to destroy and succeed the lich.

Gall's warriors, who followed the Reaver priests of Garagos, were brutal, overwhelming slaying machines. They were ready to hack and slash any enemy in sight. But they were chaotic in battle. They lacked the discipline and the strategic ability of the Freemen. Against highly trained Impilturian troops, they would be little more than wild animals. The sons of Imphras would outmaneuver them from every angle.

To triumph, Gall calculated that his warriors had three or four days time left to entrench themselves in Vulddin. After that, he acknowledged to himself, the entire campaign he had mounted well might fail. The gathering army in Fortress Clymph would not be able to meet that deadline. With the greatest of reluctance, Gall decided it was time to use his secret weapon.

The lich vanished then from his inner sanctum in Nighthawk Tower and materialized in a roaring rage in the high chamber of his Wearers of the Purple, blasting them with a tirade for daring to sit on their haunches doing nothing, after so many of *his* and *their* dragons had been slaughtered in the battlefields in the West. The magi believed that the great lich was so angered that he might slaughter one of them on the spot.

In truth, Gall's appearance was so coolly calculated that he was ready to kill a mage on the spot, if that was a tool necessary to gain the end that he sought, but the Dragon Cult wizards cowered before the Malarite lich's stag form. Like Gall's druids and rangers, they too accepted that Gall was the avatar of a god named Herne, and they did not wish to tangle openly with him.

Gall ordered them to teleport immediately to the lair of Nargustrandir in the Firward Mountains and to order the dragon into battle against the Freemen in the ruins of Bezentil. Gall wished the blue Wyrm dracolich to destroy every last mortal in Bezentil and then to proceed on and do the same in Vulddin, so that his Reavers and their followers could march into the walled town and defend it, fresh for battle, once the enemy arrived at the gates. None of the cult magi were interested in defying Gall. They did as he had ordered.

With the dracolich Nargustrandir, matters were quite different. Gall's orb did not have magic with which to control or even draw the notice of an undead dracolich. The cult magi had spent considerable time with the blue Wyrm, unveiling the teachings of Sammaster to him. Nargustrandir was not convinced of all that Sammaster had preached, but he did think that the cult offered him useful tools.

Nargustrandir long had been convinced that dragons would one day rule the world again. He was not particularly convinced that these dragons needed to be dead, as Sammaster had preached. In his own case, he certainly intended to have a part of the ruling action, once that day came. He thought his chances of realizing that intention would improve substantially if he were to follow the advice of the cult magi and ascend to dracolichdom.

After taking that step, Nargustrandir was determined that dragons - be they alive, dead or undead - rule the world, and not mortal men or their undead liches. To snap to the orders of Harbet Gall would not do at all, the dracolich thought. Rather, the Malarite lich would be very much in need of destruction at some future time. However, Nargustrandir was a wise dragon. He had not formulated a plan for assuming local rule, nor had he even thought much upon it yet. In addition, he was certain that the lich Gall and the foolish men of the Dragon Cult could be trained properly, to be useful tools with which he could work toward his own ends.

For that reason, Nargustrandir decided, it was neither time to liquidate them nor time to earn their ill will. But it was time to teach them who is the master. He decided he would make the attacks that they wished, but first he would let them wait, so that they would understand that he had acted because it served his own goals rather than theirs.

On the first day, the dracolich listened patiently to the cult magi and then flatly refused them, refusing even to discuss the matter further on that day. He made clear to them that he intended to rule the Bloodstone Lands, as was his destiny, and if they wished to discuss the matter further, he would hear them on the following day, but they should be prepared to explain clearly what he would gain by destroying a part of his own future kingdom. Then he dismissed him.

The desperate cult magi communicated telepathically that evening with Gall, who once again was in his inner sanctum in Nighthawk Tower. Gall was angered but not surprised by Nargustrandir's response. He hated dracoliches. They were arrogant and much more unreliable than even living dragons. Later that evening, he prayed to Malar that his enemies, as they stood on their own last legs, might succeed in destroying the dracolich to spare him the trouble. He doubted, however, that the Beastlord would be much interested in his plea. A battlefield was not a hunt.

Before doing that, Gall telepathically ordered the cult magi to impress upon Nargustrandir that every further encroachment westward by Gall's enemies also was an encroachment against the dracolich's own future kingdom. The magi also were to argue that they and Gall and the Malarite lich's army were there after all to support Nargustrandir, and the undead blue had nothing to gain and at least a bit to lose by leaving his allies in the lurch.

Nargustrandir was little impressed by this argument. He felt he was due more. Although the terms in which the argument was phrased were not nearly fine enough to do Nargustrandir proper honor, they were factually correct in his view, and he would need to act soon. But not so soon that he could not afford to say in negative tones that he *might* ponder their words over night.

Again, the cult magi communicated the dracolich's words to Nighthawk Tower. Nargustrandir's renewed refusal worried Gall. The magical veil that blocked his scrying attempts had continued to move westward, and a few hours earlier, it had begun to block Vulddin from his sight. If Nargustrandir delayed too much longer, he would have to abort his campaign.

The dracolich knew, however, from the words of the cult magi how long he could delay. On the third day, therefore, he told Gall's magi simply, *"I will do this thing."* With no further remark, Nargustrandir flew from his lair in the Firwards toward Bezentil, intending to visit Vulddin too.

As Nargustrandir reached Bezentil, Sir Punumbrar and his Impilturian host were nearing the city from the west. The dracolich zeroed in on the creatures who awaited him atop the remainder of the city wall. Others stood upon the piles of rubble that had been used to fill breaches. The nearer he came, the more defenders fled their posts in uncanny fear.

But the Ilmatari high priestess of Bezentil, Painbearer Folda Byrkyngsdóttir, stood her ground, as did Helm's Clerical Vigilance Dasper Tharnot, the paladin leader Sir Nandwulf Leebins and the other priests and paladins of the Watcher. Nor did they escape Nargustrandir's attention. The dracolich assumed them to be the heart of the defense. He thought it would be best to destroy them first, even though it doubtless would cause damage to him.

As Nargustrandir zeroed in on them, Folda Byrkyngsdóttir beseeched Ilmater to grant another miracle, and her spell went true, breaking several bones of Nargustrandir's wings. The priests of Helm too prepared spells, and the paladins drew their swords. The other divine spells had no visible effect upon the undead wyrm, but Folda's magic had done its work. Nargustrandir lost control of his flight. His first lightning bolt went wild, hitting a rock building and blasting it apart but causing little other damage. The bones and rotting carcass of the dracolich then crashed into nearby rubble.

Nargustrandir had taken more damage from Folda's spell than he had expected in the first round, but he was unimpressed by his opponents. The other priests had barely scratched him with their magic, as it should be, and he doubted that the Ilmatari in her tattered robes had a second spell to match the might of her first.

He would liked to have made his first order of business healing his wing bones, but the remainder of his opponents appeared to be paladins, so the dragon gathered his frame up and prepared to turn about to face and deal with the tiny swords that doubtless would try to prick his lifeless flesh and bones.

By the time he had completed the maneuver, Sir Nandwulf was standing before him, challenging the dragon to single combat. Nandwulf had found an unclaimed suit of plate male in the ruins of Bezentil, but it lacked the dweomer that had enchanted his own armor against dragon breath, the armor that had been reduced to crumpled metal in his battle with Tarnestdopolis. The dracolich noted that the paladin's armor bore no enchantment.

Nargustrandir accepted Nandwulf's challenge, of course, without hesitation. He had no fear of five paladins bearing swords, but if they were willing to be slain singly, he was willing to oblige them. Alone, their swords would do him even less damage than if all five attempted to strike in different places at the same time.

Sir Nandwulf drew his sword, and Nargustrandir attempted to cuff the paladin halfway across the courtyard with his large, bony claw. The paladin's Holy Sword struck dragon bone. Magical sparks flew, and the dracolich's claw bones shattered into a thousand fragments, leaving only a stump. Nargustrandir remembered a lesson he once learned that had taught him not to underestimate a foe.

The dracolich wasted no time. Before the paladin could strike again, Nargustrandir zeroed in on his shiny plate mail with a full, well-aimed blast of his deadly lightning breath and simply fried Sir Nandwulf to a crisp. His dead flesh continued to sizzle inside the charred armor, as it fell clanking to the ground, the paladin's Holy Sword landing next to it.

The four paladins who had accompanied Sir Nandwulf marched toward the dracolich, too spread out to be hit more than singly by his breath weapon. Farther behind them, the Ilmatari priestess was beseeching her god in prayer, while the four priests of Helm directed a spell assault at his rotting shell. Nargustrandir could feel their magic hitting him, but it did little more than irritate him.

The priestess was his main source of concern. She already had battered him with devastating magic. He did not think she could muster such an attack again, but he reminded himself never to underestimate a foe. Still, he knew the four paladins needed to be his first target. Doubtless none of them had a tool that matched the magical power of the paladin he had slain, but their threat was more imminent than that of the priestess' prayer, and he reminded himself again, he should never underestimate a foe.

He saw that his breath could at best take out one of the paladins. He thought a good slap of his tail could finish the two coming at him from his right, and a well-aimed lightning bolt would destroy the paladin trying to flank him on the left. He was right on all three points. His tail slap sent the two, fully armed paladins flying into the stone wall of a destroyed building. Their armor hit the wall with a fearful crash, causing it to cave in and bury both men in a pile of bricks. The third paladin was fried alive, just as Sir Nandwulf had been. All three died on the spot.

The last paladin approached the dracolich, sword ready to strike, but Nargustrandir's intuition warned him to take out the praying priestess first, that she was brewing a terrible fate for him. His lightning bolt lashed out toward Folda, but it was drawn into the sword of young Sir Talhambrar, the last of the four paladins, saving the priestess for the moment but electrocuting the paladin.

Harbet Gall was growing furious. The magical veil that had blocked Vulddin from his scrying attempts now had spread across Bezentil. He could see nothing, the vision of the city vanishing just as battle was joined, and then, the veil lifted just as suddenly again. Unknown to Gall, the approaching Impilturian host had seen the dracolich land in Bezentil, and the Impilturian magi needed to lift the veil there to scry for themselves a picture of what was happening.

Seeing that Nargustrandir had arrived, Gall set the second phase of his plan into operation; he ordered 200 of his best warriors, led by Reavers of Garagos and accompanied by a few lesser magi of his Dragon Cult cell, to secure whatever was left of Bezentil after the dracolich had tired of it and moved on to Vulddin.

Gall then looked more carefully upon the battle scene. He was relieved at first to see the scattered bodies of the paladins and the futilely praying priests and priestess. He noted the bony stump where Nargustrandir's claw had been, and he saw the broken wing bones, but these alarmed him less. The dracolich would be able to heal such injuries. Once his business was finished in Bezentil, he doubtless would do just that and attend to his next target.

Then, however, that the Malarite lich took in a sight that alarmed him more. Thundering over his own sky above Nighthawk Tower and marching rapidly toward Bezentil was a huge, golden dragon bearing a knight on its back, and marching just as rapidly through the sky behind them was a band of 80 or so peasants, all armed with scythes.

The knight and his gold dragon approaching from the Northeast also drew the attention of the broken dracolich Nargustrandir, who lost interest in the priestess and priests chanting and praying across the courtyard. Instead, the blue Wyrm dracolich focused his thoughts and energies upon healing magic. Only moments before the knight, the gold dragon and their ragtag host of serfs reached Bezentil was Nargustrandir at last able to raise his wings and take to the air.

Harbet Gall, Folda Byrkyngsdóttir and others in Bezentil who knew the old legends associated with Ilmater's faith understood what had happened. Ilmater had answered the prayers of his priestess and sent St. Selimbrar and the freed serfs of Milthius into battle.

The flames of Selimbrar's gold dragon's breath burned the rotting flesh from Nargustrandir's skeleton and then made the bones brittle. The dracolich sent his lightning breath against his foes, but it did not harm them. He attempted to swat the enemy with his claws and wings, but he succeeded only in hitting Selimbrar's mighty sword, which caused his bones to break. At last the knight drove his blade deep into the skull of Nargustrandir, and its magic lamed the undead wyrm. For a moment, neither the knight nor the dracolich moved.

Just as St. Selimbrar and Nargustrandir had joined in battle, the Reavers, berserkers and warriors of the Eastern Dale began pouring through the breaches in Bezentil's wall, bent on slashing anything to death that still lived in the devastated city. But before Gall's warriors could strike a single blow, the 80 serfs from Milthius descended upon them from the sky, swinging their scythes as though it were spring, and they were harvesting their winter barley.

The weapons of the Reavers and their followers simply passed through the serfs. Their scythes sliced the legs from the Gallists on the first sweep and lopped off their heads on the second. The continued to mow, unemotionally, methodically, legs, head, legs, head …

Only St. Selimbrar and Nargustrandir could perceive what was happening as the knight let their duel come to a standstill. With the magic of his sword, St. Selimbrar began probing the dracolich's thoughts, seeking the secret of the location of Nargustrandir's phylactery, and he found the thoughts he had sought.

With his sword still in the dracolich's skull, Selimbrar looked to the northeast where the Firwards stood in the distance, concentrating and reaching out with his free hand. A huge jewel appeared in it, which the knight placed upon the dragon's skull, near the point where the sword's blade still penetrated it.

With his free hand, Selimbrar reached for the warhammer on his back. A single blow smashed the phylactery to smithereens that fell like crystals of ice to the barren agricultural fields outside of Bezentil below. He withdrew his sword from the skull, and the dracolich's bones crumbled into a dusty snow. Nargustrandir had ceased to exist.

Neither the knight nor the serfs had uttered a single syllable, but as the bits of dragon bone floated onto the dead fields, the serfs also had mown the last of Gall's 200 men down. St. Selimbrar looked down in sadness upon the carnage and ruin that had been Bezentil. It had become a no man's land that reeked of smoke, smoldering embers and blood. He drew a silver horn to his lips, blew upon it and then he and his dragon flew southward, and the serfs simply marched upward into the southern sky, disappearing over the horizon behind them.

Harbet Gall still was pondering the situation when the Impilturian veil again began to block his scrying view of Bezentil. The Malarite lich tallied his losses and gains, and he analyzed the threats he was facing. He had lost only 200 men, good men to be sure, but still only 200. He had lost his dracolich, but he wanted to be rid of him anyway. He wished only that Nargustrandir had succeeded in Bezentil and Vulddin before his fall.

On the positive side of his ledger, the five paladins of Torside were dead, many more Freemen had fallen to date than the 200 he had lost and, to his knowledge, there were few at present between Bezentil and Vulddin who could use powerful magic against him.

Gall knew the tale of St. Selimbrar and recognized his foe over Bezentil, but he didn't count the Ilmatari knight or his 80 serfs as a threat. Their appearance in Bezentil was their first anywhere in 1,500 years, as far as the lich knew. He doubted they would return again in the near future.

The immediate threats, Gall thought, were the men of arcane, divine and military power who already were returning eastward and whatever hidden challenge the king of Impiltur was sending in his direction. Time, Gall thought, was the greatest threat of all.

Until this day, Gall had interpreted the advance of the magical veil of secrecy to be a sign that the Impilturians were entering whatever area that was newly slipping beneath the veil, but he weighed that assessment anew. Bezentil had been under the veil, and the Impilturians were not yet there.

The Malarite lich doubted very much that its creators had lifted the veil of secrecy temporarily in Bezentil. He did not know what allowed him to see the battle there, but he surmised that the manifestation of St. Selimbrar and the 80 serfs of Milthius might have caused such temporary chaos in the local Weave as to set the scrying shield of his foe temporarily out of effect.

He assumed the Impilturians were shielding areas well in advance of their arrival, to confuse Gall and his allies over the question of their true position. The lich had thought that the Impilturian expedition had been moving with unusual speed, but it now occurred to him that the sons of Imphras might still be well behind the front edge of their scrying veil. If it were moving any number of troops, the Impilturian force probably had just reached Gylving, Gall calculated.

If that actually was the case, he thought, his own troops, now fully mustered in Fortress Clymph, could reach and hopefully overrun Vulddin and perhaps even Ganglhofn before the sons of Imphras arrived there. If he had miscalculated and the Impilturians had advanced further than he believed, his men still would march, Gall thought. Things had come too far to not attack. He simply would lose more men. Without further hesitation, Gall ordered his Reavers in Fortress Clymph to march immediately and to take both Bezentil and Vulddin as quickly as possible.

Gall had, in fact miscalculated. Sir Punumbrar had only well-trained Impilturian riders in his expedition, and he had moved them along much more briskly than the tempo of an ordinary marching host. His magi had indeed lifted the anti-scrying veil from Bezentil, so that they too could look upon it magically.

As Gall's forward expedition began running through the breaches in Bezentil's eastern wall and as Sir Selimbrar and Nargustrandir had begun their aerial battle, Punumbrar halted his force half a mile/some 500m west of the ravaged city. The paladin wanted to know from his magi what precisely was happening and he wanted to confer briefly with his commanders on strategy, rather than simply making an uninformed and perhaps suicidal march through one of the holes in the wall.

Because of this delay, the fighting already had ended, the dracolich had been destroyed, Gall's warriors were dead and Sir Punumbrar's wizards had drawn their scrying veil over Bezentil again before the Impilturians marched in. Awaiting them was a city in almost total ruin populated by the five priests and another 150 Freemen defenders, most of whom had been wounded at least lightly.

Sir Punumbrar conferred with the clerics and the remaining leaders of the Freemen militia. Helm's priests told of the large host Gall was mounting in Fortress Clymph, and all were agreed that Bezentil doubtless would be its first target. Both the Impilturian commander and the priests of Helm agreed that the only wise move to be made was to quietly evacuate Bezentil, allow the Gallist invaders to enter it and then make it difficult for them to leave again.

Sir Punumbrar was uncertain what his troops should do next. King Lashilmbrar had not sent him to the Great Dale to join in the civil war but rather to track down and destroy dragons. However, no one in Bezentil had any idea whether all of the dragons that had been plaguing the Bloodstone Lands had been destroyed, or whether some still remained.

The knight conferred with his battle magi. They communicated telepathically with their colleagues in Lyrabar, who returned word from the king: Sir Punumbrar and his troops were to remain for at least a year in the Dale, tracking down any dragons that might have survived or determining as well as possible at that time that all of the wyrms had been liquidated.

From what Sir Punumbrar had heard to date, most of the dragons had come from the East, therefore, he wanted to station his expedition in the eastern part of the Dale. His 500 men also would need food and access to supplies; therefore, it would be necessary to protect the Trade Route and the farms in the area where they built their camp.

The Impilturian paladin told the Freemen that it was his hope that his troops could cut off the Gallist army that would occupy Bezentil from its northern route of supply. The farms of Riggh, Skarlshofn, Ulfshofn and Gurshofn were the main source of supply for Fortress Clymph and no doubt were intended to feed the Hunters of Herne who would occupy Bezentil as well.

Sir Punumbrar assumed that Gall also intended to conquer Torside, Denderdale and the Dender's Valley logging camp, which would give him the rich agricultural valley east of Ganglhofn, which probably was his last target for conquest, after Vulddin and Dender's Valley.

The paladin proposed that his troops conquer Riggh and cross Dender's Creek, destroying Skarlshofn and the bridges connecting Skarlshofn with Riggh and the trade route. He said this also would force any new troops pouring out of Fortress Clymph to detour down to the Trade Route in Ulfshofn, far eastward of Bezentil, where they would make an easy target.

After destroying Skarlshofn and the two bridges, Sir Punumbrar said his troops then would make their camp north of the Trade Route and south of Dender's Creek between Riggh and the cutoff road that had connected Skarlshofn with the Trade Route.

The paladin told the Freemen that his soldiers were in the Dale to hunt dragons, not to fight a civil war, but his troops would engage Gall's in any attempt they might make to move westward from Skarlshofn and Bezentil, simply as a matter of protecting their own sources of supply.

The Freemen were satisfied with the Impilturian plan. Before nightfall, runners from Bezentil had reached Vulddin, where they encountered a host of 400 Freemen who had given up guarding Gylving against dragons who no longer appeared. Word already had been sent westward of Bezentil's plight.

The newly-arrived Freemen, after hearing the runners' news, decided to encamp on the Trade Route west of Bezentil, to block any attempt by the Gallists to take Vulddin. Additional troops from the West, they said, would arrive within days to protect the walled town from within.

While these plans were being made in Vulddin, 1,300 warriors in the service of Harbet Gall had begun crossing the Dender's Creek Bridge south of Skarlshofn, with Bezentil as their first night's goal. They also saw the village of Ulfshofn and the hamlet of Gurshofn vanishing in flames, a contribution made by the Mucklestones Druids, who took advantage of the fact that Gall had removed most of his fighting men from both settlements.

The destruction of Ulfshofn was an expensive victory for the Mucklestones Druids. A true druid of Herne managed to call lightning down three times upon the foe before being slain himself. His bolts killed five members of the Mucklestones expedition - two druids and three rangers.

The Reavers of Garagos and the warriors they had trained already were drunk with blood lust and thought little of the burning settlements, but the flames demoralized the more sober warriors in the Gallist host, because the two villages were to have played a key role in their supply chain.

The Impilturian troop began spreading out on field trails north of Bezentil and the trade route. Sir Punumbrar sent a detail of 50 men to capture Riggh, but the group had not yet reached its goal when the village went up in flames. The Impilturians soon determined that Gall's own men had destroyed the settlement, rather than letting it fall into enemy hands, and in their flight, they also had burned the bridge to Skarlshofn behind them.

The Impilturian force rode across the fields and began following the south bank of Dender's Creek, hoping to reach it as quickly as possible. At the same time, the 400 Freemen that had left Vulddin had finished preparing camp on the Trade Route about a mile/2km west of Bezentil. The main host of Harbet Gall poured through the breaches in Bezentil's eastern wall expecting a battle and finding instead an empty, mostly burned city where several magical traps had been set that would cost nearly 100 lives before the night was out.

Many of the Reavers of Garagos and their trained fighters had worked themselves into a berserker fury or a battle rage. With no enemy to fight, some vented their fury by turning upon their own while others began wreaking even more destruction on the already devastated city.

The more sober members of the host took to parts of the city wall in the west and looked out on the lands before them and saw they that were filled with the fires of war camps. To the northwest, Riggh was in flames; to the east, Ulfshofn and Gurshofn continued to burn. The true druids of Herne who accompanied the host ordered the Reavers to make camp until the magi of the Dragon Cult could make contact with Gall to seek further orders.

While the invaders still were ravaging Bezentil, the 50 Impilturians Sir Punumbrar had sent out to destroy Riggh and Skarlshofn had begun crossing the bridge north of Bezentil. When they reached Skarlshofn, they found the hamlet empty of warriors and occupied only by the elderly, the infirm, women and children.

The paladins' code kept the host from attacking such people, but the soldiers ordered the folk to flee to Fortress Clymph. Afterward, they set the hamlet afire and trampled the fields with their horses. When they returned southward, they burned the second bridge over Dender's Creek.

Shortly before sunset on that day, the Impilturian magi at last lifted their scrying veil, and Harbet Gall once more could look upon the results of the day's battle. He had gained considerably less ground than he had hoped to, but Bezentil was his and his host outnumbered that of the enemy, with the 1,200 who survived the traps of Bezentil against 900, including the 400 Freemen camped between Vulddin and Bezentil and the 500 Impilturian soldiers north of the Trade Route.

Gall could see that less than 100 trained Freemen remained within Vulddin. He also doubted that either side would be able to send reinforcements before a new battle was decided. Many warriors of both the Freemen and the Hunters of Herne had fallen in recent battles and skirmishes. Neither side's army would regain its strength or numbers before a generation or two had passed.

The lich believed whatever was decided on the battlefield that day would determine the stand of things for a few decades at least. No new troops would reach the battlefield on that day, he believed, and another 500 of his own men still were en route to Fortress Clymph. The Malarite lich decided to gamble. He passed on to his true druids in Bezentil an order that his troops should storm Vulddin with the break of dawn.

With blood fury and in many cases a berserker rage, Gall's 1,200 warriors poured out of Bezentil the next morning, hoping to overrun and butcher the 400 Freemen blocking their way into Bezentil. The Reavers of Garagos led the attack. The magi of the Dragon Cult and the true druids of Herne brought up the rear.

The seemingly unstoppable Gallist host charged toward its foe in a chaotic, mad and screaming bull rush. The Freemen knew many of their own, perhaps all, would fall that day, but they stood their ground. Sir Punumbrar, camped to the north, had hoped to stay out of such battles, but it was immediately clear that Vulddin, a key point in his own supply chain, would fall quickly if he remained on the sidelines.

The sons of Imphras were mounted and reached the north flank of the Gallist host at the same time that the Reavers of Garagos and berserkers in the spearhead of the attack met the Freemen's host. Swords clashed and blood flowed until noon, when one of the true druids of Herne came into possession of a battle horn that had belonged to a fallen Reaver of Garagos.

He blew the call to retreat, and most survivors of the Gallist host made their way back into Bezentil. Some refused the call and were quickly cut down, but neither the Freemen nor the Impilturian troops pursued the fleeing enemy.

As the sun reached its high point in the sky over the battlefield, some 250 of the 400 Freemen, 1,000 of Gall's 1,300 warriors and half of the 500 Impilturian soldiers lay dead on the battlefield. Many of the survivors were wounded. The sons of Imphras also had lost more than 200 horses. Sir Punumbrar and his remaining men remained in the Dale until Tarsakh of the Year of the Sighing Serpent (1289 DR), when they gave up their futile search for more dragons and returned to Impiltur.

The Time of Respite
The Year of the Sighing Serpent (from 1289 DR)

After generations of skirmishes, decades of dragon attacks and the Second Battle of Bezentil, the Great Dale went into the 14th century in a rare but hollow state of peace, created only by the fact that neither side had the resources it needed to continue to pursue the civil war.

All of the factions in the war had suffered substantial losses. In many households the father or at least one son had fallen. The Tellerth Druids, the Tumbling Stars druids, the Mucklestones Druids and Harbet Gall's True Druids of Herne all had lost at least half of their member druids and rangers in the years of fighting.

Only one of the Reavers of Garagos had returned to Fortress Clymph in the Eastern Dale, and all of the lesser magi of the Kront Cell of the Dragon Cult had fallen in the Second Battle of Bezentil. There were no schools in either part of the still primitive Dale to train replacements. The number of young men available who had the interest and talent to fill the shoes of the fallen was extremely limited.

To breed new warriors, druids, rangers and magi, both the Freemen and the Hunters of Herne needed time as they entered the new century to concentrate their efforts upon rebuilding what had been destroyed and in seeing that sufficient food was available to feed the survivors of the battles. Construction went slowly in most cases.

In the central and western enclaves of the Freemen, Gylving, which had been 30% destroyed, was the first to complete reconstruction, as early as the Year of the Trumpet (1301 DR). The logging settlement of Timbertown had been totally destroyed, but the relatively simple structures there could be replaced more easily than those of a city. The town stood again before winter of the Year of the Sunset Winds (1309 DR), although logging operations already had been resumed as early as the Year of the Whelm (1290 DR) with provisional structures and shelters.

Riggstad, which had been 60% destroyed, had been completely rebuilt by the Year of the Fist (1311 DR), and reconstruction of Vulddin, 40% destroyed, was at last completed in the Year of the Shattered Oak (1313 DR). Military operations were concentrated largely on patrolling the ever more clearly defined border between the lands of the Freemen and those of Gall's Hunters of Herne.

In the Year of the Trumpet (1301 DR), a new group of paladins from Tsurlagol had arrived at the Abbey of the Vigilant One in Torside. The commander of the Freemen's militia in Vulddin reached an agreement with the Abbey that placed the Freemen's border patrols under the command of the tactically trained paladins.

The lands of Herne's Hunters had only begun recuperating when they faced a new military challenge, but one that Gall succeeded in turning into a gain. In the Year of the Wandering Waves (1292 DR), a large band of Tekumthari barbarians from the Northeast retreated fighting from the Qu'encesta Nar tribe into the cold and barren plains along the Lake of Tears east of eastern Rawlinswood, near Gall's Nighthawk Tower.

The Tekumthari, Raumvira ancestors of Raumathari survivors, were nomadic tribes who roamed the Endless Waste south of the old Raumathari sites of Winterkeep and the Many-Windowed Tower on Yal Tengri, the Great Ice Sea. The Tekumthari made their camps from the sea southward, not quite to the Lake of Mists, but they often raided small caravans traveling back and forth on the Golden Way.

Although the Tekumthari in some respects are similar to the Tuigan barbarians who years later briefly raided in the Dale, they are poor bandits indeed in comparison. There is no leader of the Tekumthari as such. The tribe consists of many independent bands. The Tekumthari have a much less personal relationship to their horses than the Tuigan, most have low quality weapons, and they tend to be chaotic rather than disciplined in battle. These all are contributing factors to their abject poverty.

Dagvan Boldbaatar, a charismatic leader of one Tekumthari band, led his warriors to other bands from the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR) until the Year of the Hooded Falcon (1291 DR), attempting to find adventuresome tribesmen who wanted to improve their lot.

Boldbaatar argued that the only wealth the Tekumthari knew or indeed ever would know was that taken in raids from caravans traveling between the East and the West. Wealth, prosperity and power were to be found in the morning and evening lands, he argued, and not in the Endless Waste.

Boldbaatar had learned from members of raided caravans that Shou-Lung in the East was far away, and it was well protected. The first lands of the West were distant too, but not so far as Shou-Lung, and the easternmost of the evening lands, as the Tekumthari called the West, were poorly protected.

In Tarsakh of the Year of the Wandering Waves (1292 DR), Boldbaatar led some 1,500 Tekumthari horsemen westward across the northern waste into modern day Narfell. He crossed the lands of the peaceful and domesticated Myir Nar tribe south of the Icerim Mountains and Nathoud, fording the Teardrops below the Falls of Erech. He then headed on westward north of Erech Forest and the Firward Mountains into the lands of the savage Qu'encesta Nar tribe north of the site of Bildoobaris.

Boldbaatar had known nothing of the Nars other than the farming settlement of the tamed Myir tribesmen at Nathoud. After crossing the Nar trail north of the Trade Fair site, Boldbaatar's 1,500 Tekumthari riders were attacked by a band of 250 Qu'encesta warriors. Although far outnumbered, the Nar could ride and fight circles around the Tekumthari.

With constant, vicious attacks to the Tekumthari flanks, the Nar riders violently drove the invaders southward out of their domain, taking a heavy toll as they rode and losing few of their own. Once the Tekumthari had been driven south of the northern eave of Rawlinswood and south of the Firward Mountains, the Qu'encesta simply reined in and left the invaders for Harbet Gall to toy with in Ashanath.

The Tekumthari had been too cowardly to sustain the Nar warriors' interest. In two days of running battle, the Nars had seen little of the Tekumthari other than their backs. The Qu'encesta had lost about 20 men. Two thirds of the 1,500 Tekumthari lay dead on the Narfelli plain.

The rangers of Herne had brought advance word to Harbet Gall in Nighthawk Tower of the advancing barbarians. Reluctantly, Gall ordered 500 of his own men from Fortress Clymph to muster and challenge the invaders. However, Gall's orders were to merely stop the Tekumthari tide at first. He wanted a few selected rangers of Herne to attempt to parley with the invaders and, if possible, to recruit them into his service.

When Boldbaatar and his men saw the waiting Gallist host of 500, they abandoned the last of their hopes. They were convinced they would find only death that day, rather than the riches they had been seeking in the treacherous west. When Gall's rangers offered to parley rather than attacking, Boldbaatar was relieved to accept, and when he and his warriors heard Gall's offer, they were quick to accept. Rather than having to fight, the Tekumthari were led to their new home in Fortress Clymph, where they might one day claim a bit of the riches of the evening lands after all.

The flight of the Tekumthari lightened Gall's load considerably. New Reavers of Garagos had been recruited in the years after the Second Battle of Bezentil, and training could resume in full force at Fortress Clymph. The arrival of the Tekumthari also made it possible for Gall to shift 500 of his warriors from the fortress to Bezentil, where they could assure his hold on the ruined city and also slowly rebuild it.

In the first years after the great battle, Gall's main focus was upon Bezentil and reconstruction of the farming villages of Ulfshofn and Skarlshofn. In Bezentil, Gall wanted above all to establish a clear border that would define where his lands began and those of the Freemen ended, and he wanted it to be absolutely clear to both sides that Bezentil was on his side of the border. He also intended to bring a halt to all quick raids the Freemen might want to make within his territory.

Old Bezentil once had been a city made of brickstone quarried in the higher elevations of Lethyr Forest, but the merciless sapper attacks of the Mucklestones Druids had made it impossible to win new stone for construction or to transport it to Bezentil or any other destination on the Trade Route. The brick buildings that once had stood in Bezentil and its wall had been pulverized in the battles that had waged over the years.

Gall reconciled himself to the fact that he had to do without stone in his new Bezentil, that the settlement would have to be built of wood instead. Gaining timber was a lesser problem. The road Gall had cut years earlier from Mettledale to Bridhh made it very risky for the Mucklestones Druids to operate in southwestern Lethyr Forest, and they seldom attempted to go there, nor were there other strong druidic influences in this area.

As a result, Gall's followers could cut timber with relative impunity in the square marked off by Bridhh, Rublshofn, Herneburg and Sudhofn. The rangers and true druids who served the Hunters of Herne were not forest ravagers as such. Where they cut, they also planted new trees, but unlike the other druids and rangers of the Dale, they made no attempt to maintain a true, natural balance in the reforested areas. Instead, where they cut ancient hardwoods, they planted pines and spruces, which grew quickly but caused a substantial imbalance.

In summer of the Year of the Wandering Waves (1292 DR), Gall's men began clear cutting on the south bank of the Sudurstraumur. They pushed the forest border slowly southwards, taking considerable timber, which was used to build housing in Bezentil and a double palisade wall around the town. In this case, the Gallists had no intention of reforesting the area but rather wanted to convert it into farmland.

After the new double wall had been completed around Bezentil, the Gallists began at the wall's northwestern corner and extended a single palisade wall northward toward Dender's Creek in the direction of the ruins of Skarlshofn. After this was completed, the Gallists hauled all of the broken stones from the ruins of Bezentil out onto the farm plain beneath the palisade wall's western face and began strewing them across the fields, making it difficult for horses or enemy foot soldiers to approach the wall easily and without stumbling.

The extended wall and strewing of the stones were completed in the Year of the Trumpet (1301 DR). The renewal of Bezentil was finished in a summer of seemingly unending thunder and lightning in the appropriately named Year of the Storms (1310 DR).

Gall's new Bezentil was considerably smaller than the old city, which once was home to more than 6,000 Dalesmen. In the more than 60 years since its restoration, Bezentil has never reached a population of more than 2,500. The reconstruction assured that the Dalesmen of the west would not be able to enter the Gallist territories east of Bezentil without engaging in a significant battle. In the south, the city wall reached right to the eaves of the Lethyr Forest. The outlands wall, known as the *Hernestönna*, stretched all the way to roaring Dender's Creek some 2 miles/3 km west of the newly reconstructed bridge linking the Trade Route and Skarlshofn.

A large festival was conducted beneath thunderclouds in Bezentil in Eleint of the Year of the Storms to celebrate the restoration. On this stormy night, the Mucklestones Druids set out to avenge the clear-cutting between Bridhh and Rublshofn. That village and the thorp in mid-forest both were undermanned on that night due to the celebration, and a band of more than 30 druids and rangers managed to slip past Sudhofn unnoticed and make its way through the forest to Rublshofn.

The rangers sent a barrage of flaming arrows into the village of wooden cabins, while the druids called down several blasts of lightning. Within half an hour after the attack had begun, the village was totally afire. Because the attack came unexpectedly and under the cover of darkness, more than 300 of the 500 villagers fell victim to the flames.

The Mucklestones Druids slipped back into the forest and quietly made their way back toward Sudhofn, where they intended to do the same. However, riders from Rublshofn reached Bridhh long before the Mucklestones attackers could make their way to the roadside forest thorp. A detachment of 100 elite Gallist border warriors thundered southward through the forest toward Sudhofn, intending to cut off Rublshofn's attackers before they could cross back into the no man's land of eastern Lethyr Forest.

If the Mucklestones Druids had simply bypassed Sudhofn, they would have eluded their pursuers from Bridhh, and the losses all would have been on Gall's side. Instead, however, they attacked the small forest thorp from the northwest forest corner between the roads to Bridhh and Herneburg, pounding the small settlement of woodsmen, rangers and warriors with more flaming arrows and lightning strikes.

Sudhofn went up like a tinderbox. However, in the noise and fury of the attack, the Mucklestones expedition did not hear the approach of the warriors from Bridhh, who tied their horses to trees north of the burning thorp and then slipped into the wood. The Gallists slaughtered most of the surprised Mucklestones druids and rangers as they crossed the half mile/800 m wide clearing through which the road ran.

Before dawn had broken, the Gallists had the highest death toll, with 300 dead in Rublshofn and 34 of 40 occupants in Sudhofn killed. But the Mucklestones Druids nonetheless suffered heavy losses. Of the six druids and 26 rangers in their attack party, only two druids and four rangers survived. The total surviving number of Mucklestones Druids in eastern Lethyr Forest had dropped below two dozen, severely limiting what the Mucklestones Druids could undertake for several decades to come.

After the Gallists had begun the restoration of Bezentil, the Tekumthari warriors of Fortress Clymph were sent out in the Year of the Talking Skull (1293 DR) to secure the north bank of Dender's Creek west of the ruins of Skarlshofn. They too built a palisade wall, running from the north bank of the creek a quarter of a mile/nearly 500 m deep into Rawlinswood. This wall became known as *Skarlstönna*.

Neither of the two defensive walls offered a strong defense against a marching army. Both were of wood and could be burned easily. But they did make it for difficult for the rangers of the Freemen to use guerilla tactics against the Gallists. Freemen who wanted to launch sapper attacks against Gallist settlements still could slip around the walls and into Lethyr Forest or Rawlinswood to conduct hit-and-run warfare. However, their peers, the ranger Hunters of Herne, also patrolled the woods and knew the terrain there better.

Sapper attacks that required movement through the thick forests of the Dale forced the attackers to move more slowly than they could by night over open farmland. Gall's rangers were good at picking up and tracking signs of enemy movement through the forests. The Freemen's ability to make a quick raid in the East and return home safely was diminished substantially.

Another less obvious but important advantage of the walls to Harbet Gall was that they made it much more difficult for Dalesmen in the settlements dominated by the Hunters of Herne, who were disenchanted with life in the East, to escape to freedom in the West.

Folk of questionable loyalty usually were impressed into agricultural service in their closely watched settlements and were not allowed into the forests, except for guarded timbering parties who always cut near the forests' edges. As a result, most escapees knew nothing of the confusing ranger and animal trails they needed to use to make their escape through the forests. They usually were easy prey for rangers sent to track them down. Those who were caught were invariably sentenced to be prey in the annual Great Hunt.

Once the two walls were completed, the only practical way to travel into the Gallist part of the Dale was through a well guarded gate in Hernestönna and then along the bypass road around Bezentil's wall. The only other possibilities were through the forests or by swimming Dender's Creek with its fast and treacherous current, which began in the rapids north of the ruins of Riggh.

After finishing the construction of Skarlstönna, the Tekumthari warriors were sent in the Year of the Deep Moon (1294 DR) to help local Dalesmen rebuild Skarlshofn. That project was completed in the Year of the Claw (1299 DR), giving local farms in the area, now protected from Freemen's raids by Skarlstönna, a much needed base of support. The restored hamlet, rebuilt completely of wood, once again housed 300 Dalesmen families by the turn of the century.

In the final year of the century, the Year of the Starfall (1300 DR), the Gallist crews began rebuilding the farming village of Ulfshofn east of Bezentil, which the Mucklestones Druids had razed a dozen years earlier. The settlement on the Trade Route was reconstructed of wood, being completed in the Year of the Stag (1304 DR).

The restoration crews then went on to Gurshofn, which also had been destroyed by the Mucklestones Druids, completing its reconstruction out of wood in the Year of the Mace (1307 DR). Slave labor from Mettledale and work crews from Bridhh traveled to the ruins of Sudhofn in the Year of the Spilled Blood (1315 DR). Bridhh brought construction stones taken from the ruins of Rublshofn, and the slaves used the stones to build a small, fortified way station on the ruins of Sudhofn. The thorp itself never was rebuilt.

Bridhh had set out in the Year of the Spilled Blood (1315 DR) to begin restoration of Rublshofn, but the project was abandoned within a few days time, after several members of the construction team died in confrontations with ghosts haunting the ruins.

There were similar occurrences in the ruins of Riggh in the Year of the Deep Moon (1294 DR). After it became apparent that the Gallists had abandoned the burned village, a number of farming families in Dender's Valley decided to reclaim Riggh for the West. Riggh too was a part of relatively fertile Dender's Valley, but it had been in the hands of the Hunters of Herne since the Year of the Winding Road (917 DR).

Attempts to reclaim Riggh were quickly abandoned after the farmers also determined that the ruins were haunted by night, and not even the priests of Helm from Torside could succeed in driving out or turning the undead.

The ruins of both Riggh and Rublshofn continue to be haunted to this date. The farm fields surrounding the ruins of both settlements are in use, however. The hauntings occur only in the hours of darkness. Bridhh has annexed the fields of Rublshofn onto its own, and Freemen farmers from Denderdale and Torside work the fields that once belonged to Gallist Riggh.

Tschedith was the site of the last main project by the Gallists in the early 14th century. The Gallist hamlet of Tschedith had been destroyed in the dragon rage of the Year of the Dracorage (1018 DR) and was restored on a more modest level as a rangers' thorp in the Year of the Shieldtree (1181 DR).

In the hard years after the Second Battle of Bezentil, Gall's planners in Kront thought it would be desirable to increase grain production in the forest hamlets of Tighofn and Nordhofn, but there was no adequate source of water in either to turn a mill. Tschedith, however, was on the voluminous source of the Kaldurfljót, which was ideally suited for turning the water- and grinding wheels. As a result, the Tschedith mill was built, going into operation in the Year of the Shadowtop (1314 DR). With the construction of the mill, the population of Tschedith increased, and it grew back into hamlet proportions.

Although there continued to be forest skirmishes between the druids and rangers of the West on one side and the true druids and rangers of Herne the Hunter on the other, the peace in the Great Dale held for several years. The two Gallist walls, Hernestönna and Skarlstönna, established a clear barrier between the two fronts, much like the Roman Limes wall did in Western Europe. The Freemen learned to accept that *their* part of the Dale lay west of the walls and their thoughts focused less upon their Gallist kinsmen to the East.

Rebuilding their populations was the key goal of both factions, a goal boosted by the six-year Great Plague that hit the Inner Sea in the Year of the Wandering Wyrm (1317 DR). The cities of the Vast other than Tsurlagol and the southern coastal cities of Impiltur were only mildly afflicted, and the priests there managed to keep the disease in bounds. The only more seriously affected Impilturian city was Hlammach, but priestly intervention was effective there as well.

Nonetheless, a certain number of younger Impilturians was concerned with the spread of the plague to the rest of the states on the Sea of Fallen Stars, and they were convinced that the sons of Imphras soon would fall victim to it as well. Many of these fled into the Western Dale, where land still could be claimed, hoping to start a new future.

Refugees from the Vilhon Reach fled into Thesk, attempting to put as much distance between themselves and the Inner Sea as possible, aware of how the plague was spreading rapidly along its shores. No small number of refugees came down with the plague during their flight, but the disease they brought with them was carried largely to the Telflamm area, where the House of the Master's Shadow and other temples had all they could do to keep the plague in bounds.

Most of the refugees who had reached Telflamm and Thesk continued eastward on the Golden Way, to escape the area of contagion. During their flight, mercenaries heard tales of the pay they could earn serving Harbet Gall in Ashanath and the Eastern Dale, and they made their way up the trail now known as the Tuigan Retreat to Kront, to offer their services.

These secondary effects of the plague helped both the Freemen's militia and the Hunters of Herne to rebuild their hosts more than they had expected too. The Freemen began concentrating troops in the Central Dale, in Vulddin, Ganglhofn, Riggstad and Gylving. Gall kept 500 men in Bezentil, 700 in Fortress Clymph, 400 in Kront, 200 in Bridhh and smaller contingents in outlying settlements.

The next major event in Dale history was the series of the historic raids of Dulwar Terresten. House Terresten was one of the more important merchant families in Uthmere in the West, but it was dying out due to a low birth rate. The only two surviving sons were the family elder Dulwar and Dalistan, his younger brother.

Dalistan had been missing since the Second Battle of Bezentil. He had been one of the members of the Freemen's militia fighting on the Trade Route between Bezentil and Vulddin in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), but he did not return from the battle, nor was his body found.

In the Year of the Chains (1321 DR), a band of Harpers was plotting to free the slaves on Harbet Gall's farms south of Kront. The Harpers came to Dulwar Terresten with news that his brother, now in his 50s, had survived the battle but now was in chains and in poor heath, working the fields of Gall's farm under the whip.

The Harpers told Dulwar how Dalistan could be freed, and the merchant jumped at the chance. He sold all of his holdings to other merchants and used a part of the money to finance a guerilla mission to free his brother. He, the Harpers and a hired mercenary crew slipped into Surthay with the help of powerful magical items he had purchased. In a daring nighttime action, the band seized a Thayan patrol ship docked in the city's harbor on Lake Mulsantir.

Under normal circumstances, pirates would have had virtually no chance to escape with the ship and elude the magic of the Red Wizards. However, Dulwar had used his fortune to buy ancient items of fell magic, and one of these showed scrying Red Wizards that the stolen ship had hit a reef and sunk in the northwestern corner of Lake Mulsantir. This led the wizards to stop the scrying. There had been nothing of value on board the ship. Therefore, the Red Wizards had little interest in the shipwreck.

In truth, the vessel sailed northward onto the Lake of Tears, to Immilmar in Rashemen, where Dulwar hired Rashemi craftsmen to outfit it with all the gear necessary to stage a raid on the small shipping dock of the slave farms south of Kront.

On one of the foggiest nights in Marpenoth, Dulwar's ship used magic to navigate its way to its goal. The sailors managed to dock quietly and unseen, going on to conduct a highly successful raid on the slave farm. About 80% of the slaves had been freed, when the arrival of some 200 Gallist warriors from Kront at last forced Dulwar and his crew, along with the freed slaves to set sail and flee back to Rashemen.

The raid was an overwhelming success in all but one respect. Dalistan Terresten was not among the freed slaves. Discussions with those who were freed confirmed, however, that Dalistan still was alive in the slave camp, albeit in ill health. Had the Gallists known that Dalistan's brother was behind the raid, he doubtless would have suffered for it, but Nighthawk Tower knew nothing of the raiders' identities.

Dulwar Terresten and his Harper allies spent the winter in Immilmar, planning their strategy for a second raid. Meanwhile, the Gallists were forced to take better care of their slaves on the farms. Too few slaves were left to work the farms. Maintaining the good health and strength of as many as possible became of paramount importance to the Gallists.

As spring neared, it was clear to Harbet Gall that he needed to do something about the situation on the slave farms. Planting time was coming, and there simply were too few slaves left to work the farms. Reluctantly, Gall sent 200 warriors from Fortress Clymph onto the farms to help with the sowing.

This move was forced by necessity, but there also were elements of strategy in it. The warriors sent to the slave farms also continued with a certain amount of daily military drill, to remain fit. Gall believed that the raiders would return to the farms again, in view of the ease with which they succeeded in their first attack, and would attempt to take the remaining slaves. This time, Gall intended to be ready for the raiders. He also sent druids and Dragon Cult magi to the farms, to counter magic with magic.

In early Tarsakh of the Year of the Lurking Death (1322 DR), Dulwar Terresten, his Harper allies and his crew again set sail from Immilmar to the slave farms. Many of Dulwar's magical defenses had been depleted, but he still had a number of items and powerful scrolls available, and two Harper magi were onboard.

Again, his ship slipped quietly into the dock of the slave farms. However, his crew had barely tied the vessel fast when the raid already had met its doom. A high druid of Herne hidden in the fog used his magic to warp the prow of the ship, and it began to sink. Dulwar had no magic available to counter the druid's spell.

Once the raiders' ship began to sink, the waiting magi, warriors and druids of the Gallists unleashed their attack. The Gallists had the clear advantage on the battlefield, with trained troops outnumbering those from the raiders' ship by nearly a 3-to-1 margin. Spells and magical attacks extended the battle for nearly half an hour, when Dulwar and the 50 or so survivors of his party surrendered.

Contrary to their expectations, they were not summarily executed by the Gallists but rather thrown into chains and condemned to work as slaves on the farms. No new parties came to rescue them. Like many of the other slaves in Kront, they joined the ranks of the virtually forgotten. Dulwar and Dalistan Terresten did manage to spend the rest of their lives together, but both until their death days under the whips of the slaves farms' overseers.

Afterwards, Gall also had to deal with growing unrest within the dwindling ranks of his cell of the Dragon Cult. More than 30 years had gone by since the last of the cult cell's wyrms, the great blue dracolich Nargustrandir had fallen in Bezentil. The remaining cult magi were bitter that they were being used as battle wizards for the Hunters of Herne, rather than seeking new dragons to win as dracolich candidates, and new conspiracies geared toward Gall's destruction were in the making.

The Malarite lich reacted again just as he had when earlier cult magi had made similar protests, and he did so just as successfully, lashing out at them with his full fury and reminding them that it was their job, not his, to win new dragons for the cult's goals. They, not he, had been wasting their time for nearly four decades, sitting idly in Tower Threespires, he claimed.

Roaring his displeasure, Gall sent the lot of them out of their shelter and out of the Dale, commanding them to recruit more dragons and not to return until they had succeeded. For several decades then, Tower Threespires stood nearly unoccupied.

The dragons the cultists had found were less than enthused with the environment the Great Dale offered. As a habitat, it was suited only for green dragons, except in the swamps of Dender's Creek in the East, where blacks also could lair. Beyond habitat, it offered a dragon little. There was no large population to feed upon, and there were no plains where cattle could graze. Above all, there were no mighty castles or rich caravans from which they could win treasure.

Failure was one factor that kept the cultists from returning quickly. Danger was another. In these years, the Harpers were avidly hunting cultists. The Harpers had reorganized as recently as the Year of Chains (1321 DR), and the cultists were their prime foes at that time. Factionalism also had begun to be a factor within the cult. Rivalries between cells sometimes came to bloody endings.

Harbet Gall was not displeased at the extended absence of his cultists from the Dale. On the contrary, he had prayed to Malar that they might stay away long, because he was certain when they returned, it would be with one or two new wyrms in toe. His experiences with dragons had been negative, and his attitude toward them had grown more negative with each experience.

As the 14th Century continued into its fourth decade, the situation in most parts of the Dale had stabilized and fighting had grown minimal. Several settlements loyal to Gall remained somewhat detached from his eastern region, however. Bridhh was on the edge of what one might view as the Freemen's territory, but the town's back was to central Lethyr Forest, which was in the hands of Herne's Hunters.

Nonetheless, the Lethyr reaches of Gall's settlements were remote from the heart of his operations in Nighthawk Tower and Kront. If Bridhh, Herneburg, Leifrskross, Veidarsudur, Spearmouthdale or Mettledale were to come under attack, Gall knew he would be hard pressed to aid them well.

Of still greater concern were the lonely settlements of Great Boar and Kilstad in western Rawlinswood, both of which continued to exist by the good graces of the Freemen and druids of the West and the fact that neither settlement dared do anything to rile the foe. They were tolerated. The worship of Herne the Hunter continued quietly in Zieth in central Rawlinswood as well, although the hamlet had been occupied and controlled by the Freemen's militia for nearly 300 years.

Gall thought that the Freemen's attentions had been diverted from Rawlinswood for many decades, and that he could begin to move there again and claim much territory, perhaps all the way to Kilstad and Great Boar, if he did so quietly and unobtrusively.

In the Year of the Sword and Stars (1332 DR), he sent a contingent of 200 to the Northwest out of Fortress Clymph, over Kars and the ruins of Veidarhofn to build a new trail there that connected to the Hunter's Trail in Nar territory north of the wood, which Gall still had the right to use.

The armed contingent quietly made its way westward to the ruins of Kjarr, where it built a new forest outpost in the Year of the Striking Falcon (1333 DR). Gall anticipated little resistance from the Freemen in north central Rawlinswood. High level rangers of Herne whom he had sent into the area had reported that the there was no sign of the Tellerth druids or the rangers of the Freemen having been in the area around the ruins of Narfelli Dun Tharos for several years.

After reestablishing an outpost in Kjarr, Gall hoped to unobtrusively move his men southward, to rebuild Tangetsjódur as well. From there, he hoped to move gradually westward, rebuilding Veidarheim in the West. If he could succeed in reestablishing all three outposts and stationing sufficient warriors within them, Gall believed he could at last realize his dream of controlling most of Rawlinswood.

Veidarheim was the long-range key to his plan. If he succeeded there, then he thought that rebuilding Tining and Tarkstad would be little trouble. Before Veidarheim, however, Tangetsjódur needed to be reestablished, and that proved to be ever more difficult. In autumn of the Year of the Snow Winds (1335 DR), the troops from Kjarr completed their first log outpost building in the ruins of Tangetsjódur and surrounded it with a wooden palisade wall.

Had that autumn not been followed by an extreme winter, the Gallists well might have succeeded in their plans. However, because the high druid of the Tellerth enclave was concerned about the state of the wood after an extended period of deeply freezing temperatures and heavy snows, he sent several parties of druids and rangers deeper into the woods than they had been for a number of years. One such party spotted smoke from the ruins of Tangetsjódur and went to investigate.

As it neared the site, the party discovered footprints of Gallist hunters in the snow. To avoid drawing attention to their own presence, the Freemen sent a single expert ranger out in the early morning hours to reconnoiter the situation. The ranger was a master at stepping in already existing footprints, and the Gallists never were aware they had been spied upon.

The Freemen's expedition sent word back to the militia that the Hunters of Herne had reestablished a small outpost in the ruins of Tangetsjódur. The following spring, parties were sent out to destroy it, but the matter never worked out quite as the two sides had planned. The Freemen and the Gallists encountered each other in their first battle 5 miles/8 km south of Tangetsjódur.

There were no winners in the forest battle. Each side retreated with heavy casualties, and nothing was resolved. The incident repeated itself on several other occasions as well, each time without a victor. The news of these skirmishes at first troubled Harbet Gall, but his viewpoint then shifted a bit, as it occurred to him that these encounters also could serve as a distraction, and he could use them to cover his real moves.

Gall sent not only more warriors but also woodsmen to Kjarr. In spring of the Year of the Highmantle (1336 DR), they began clearing an expansion of the Hunter's Trail farther westward along the northern edge Rawlinswood. By the time winter had set in, they had reached a small, unclaimed valley that cut into the wood south of the eastern leg of the Giantspires, well west of Tebbet's Cairn. In the following Year of the Wandering Maiden (1337 DR), they began cutting a trail southward through the forest toward Veidarheim.

The Coming of the Nentyarch
The Year of the Wanderer (1338 DR)

How these things might have come out is a matter of pure conjecture. A single man, a still relatively young but powerful and strange druid who had dabbled in wizards' magic and become fascinated by it, interrupted all of these events in time.

Cynric Evenhand had been a member of the druids of Silvanus in the Tellerth Circle, but in the Year of the Wanderer (1338 DR), both he and the high druid of the circle, Righan Eikensson, had come to the mutual conclusion that there no longer was room for him in the grove. Cynric's dabbling in magic was alien to the other druids of the Tellerth circle, and their conservative and dogmatic brand of druidism had become alien to him.

With his druidic powers still intact and his arcane powers growing, Cynric ignored the warnings of the other druids. He set off alone, across the Lench and into the northern part of central Rawlinswood, searching for ancient ruins of the Narfelli, the green elves that had been a matter of legend and the truth behind the tales of hidden arcane treasures.

During his travels, Cynric often moved in animal form, to avoid alerting his enemies. In this manner, he came across the Gallist woodsmen secretly cutting the trail to the ruins of Veidarheim. In the ruins of elven T'uluar, he came upon another secret. Humans of all persuasions had avoided the few remains of the ancient elven settlement for centuries, convinced that they were haunted.

To the contrary, T'uluar, Kro Tharos and Mal Nu'ill bore no resemblance at all to the almost vanished but haunted ruins of ancient villages that intruders believed them to be. Instead, they were small settlements of tree dwellings of the Mal T'unan green elves who had settled the forest when men still called it Auldgloam.

The three elven settlements had been disguised by powerful illusory elven magic that had been worked nearly 2,000 years earlier as the main part of the Mal T'unan made its retreat from Auldgloam and vanished forever from the tales of other elves and men. Cynric Evenhand's strange combination of druidic and arcane powers made it possible for him to see through these illusions and perceive the tree house dwellings for what they were.

In the two millennia in which the small group of Mal T'unan who remained behind hid themselves and tended their forest, their numbers continued to dwindle. During these many centuries, the elves seldom interfered with the doings of men, dealing with them only infrequently and from the shadows with their magic, when the humans attempted to damage the wood. Nevertheless, the green elves were by no means an evil or murderous folk.

Therefore, when it became clear to the 30 or so green elves who still survived that Cynric had not been mastered by their magic, they observed him closely and listened to him carefully and allowed him to while among them for a time, so that they could do both of these things better.

The elves were somewhat desperate for a powerful ally. The Hunters of Herne and the Freemen of the Dale again were marching through the holy central woodlands of Auldgloam, and the elves had grown too few in number and too weak in magic to be able to deal with them effectively. In earlier days, the elven guardians had held many objects of ancient power that had been created in the time when Auldgloam still was the heart of their empire. Most of these had been expended, and only four wizards remained among their ranks.

The Mal T'unan oft had debated among themselves over their relationship to Cynric, whom they saw as a man as devoted as they were to the weal of the forest, but also one whose obsession with the Weave and its magic one day could lead to madness. The Mal T'unan were not a folk to make hasty decisions or judgments in the manner of humans, and yet the actions of the human Hunters of Herne and the Freemen were forcing them to react quickly, whether they wished to or not.

Shortly before the first snows covered Rawlinswood in the Year of the Wanderer (1338 DR), the elves reached their decision. They decided they must place their hope in Cynric Evenhand, simply because there was no other hope for central Rawlinswood. The elves alone could not defend it against the new wave of human incursion. If Cynric Evenhand could not defend the woodland, they concluded, it would fall, regardless of what they did.

The important question to them then was not whether Cynric could be trusted, but whether he could muster the power necessary to stand against the intruders. For this reason, they at last showed him the way to the moss- and vine-covered ruins of ancient and magical Dun Tharos, a fortress of magic that few mortals had succeeded in entering since the passing of K'Ahlob, the Narfelli archwizard who had founded it.

When K'Ahlob's spirit passed into his transmogrifier, he had left Dun Tharos protected with wards and traps of the most powerful magic. These traps could be triggered only by K'Ahlob's own mental commands. After K'Ahlob's spirit was assimilated into the magic spirit of the transmogrifier, the spirit of the artifact gained the ability to control the traps. Beyond Dun Tharos' own hobgoblin guards, the only mortal who ever entered Dun Tharos after the passing of K'Ahlob and succeeded in leaving the fortress alive was the legendary hobgoblin leader Dirghin Rednose.

The hobgoblin succeeded because he confused the magical spirit of K'Ahlob's transmogrifier, which could not immediately understand the strange combination of hobgoblin and sorcerer. It wished to assimilate more of the new information it was receiving before destroying the intruder.

Rednose, however, was frightened before entering Dun Tharos and even more frightened once he was inside, but he also was too proud to leave without snatching something to prove - above all to himself - that he really had been there. That something ended up being a few of K'Ahlob's spell books. Once he had them, Rednose ran for his life, before the transmogrifier had quite figured out who he was and before it had unleashed the deadly protective magic of Dun Tharos upon him.

The Mal T'unan survivors knew nothing of the transmogrifier, nor did they dare to enter Dun Tharos, but they had a strong if somewhat misplaced trust in the spirit that occupied the fortress. Over the centuries, the spirit of Dun Tharos had dealt harshly with intruders into its sphere of influence, driving them off and ultimately achieving the same ends as the Mal T'unan sought.

With this thought in mind, they decided to bring Cynric Evenhand to Dun Tharos, believing that its spirit would destroy the newcomer if he was less than the man they hoped him to be, and would grant him entry if he measured up to the spirit's standards. They were willing to accept its judgment.

The spirit within the transmogrifier sensed the presence of Cynric Evenhand as he entered Dun Tharos, and within him, it found what it had been seeking for nearly 2,000 years, an unending hunger for magic combined with a strong will to preserve its surroundings as well as a sense of absolute neutrality and even disinterest in mundane matters. Precisely such a person was what the transmogrifier's spirit needed to assimilate in order to grow.

Nothing blocked Cynric Evenhand from entering Dun Tharos. Quite to the contrary, he felt welcome in the ancient fortress, even at home there. The spirit within the transmogrifier began measuring the druid-wizard's abilities, to fathom how deep his capacity for learning was, and then it began slowly filling him with knowledge.

Within days, Cynric Evenhand gained absolute control of all the magic protection surrounding Dun Tharos. The spirit within the transmogrifier guided him to K'Ahlob's spell books and magical items, and it helped him understand how to learn the spells and use the items. It was the natural thing for the spirit to do. It already had assimilated all of K'Ahlob together with his knowledge. It intended to develop Cynric to his fullest and then assimilate him too.

In the Year of the Weeping Moon (1339 DR), Cynric proclaimed himself the Nentyarch of Dun Tharos. In that year, he had mastered the transmogrifier to such an extent that he was able to turn the descendants of K'Ahlob's hobgoblin guards - who had been human - into green elves, doubling the size of the Mal T'unan enclave that had supported him.

In the same year, the Nentyarch unleashed his new and powerful magic upon the intruders into his domain. He and his green elves, although greatly outnumbered, attacked Kjarr, and the Nentyarch used the transmogrifier to turn Gall's warriors into hobgoblins. He also wielded K'Ahlob's rod of rulership and used it to order the transmogrified hobgoblins to tear the hamlet apart, laying it in total ruin.

After that, the Nentyarch ordered them to attack both the Gallists in Tangetsjódur and the Freemen who were in battle with them. Not a single Hunter of Herne survived the battle of Tangetsjódur. The Freemen too suffered many losses, but many escaped back into the Dale. The ranks of the hobgoblins were severely diminished, but the Nentyarch ordered them on, to attack the Gallist construction crew building a road through the forest to the ruins of Veidarheim.

In truth, there were too few hobgoblins left to win that battle. But Gall's construction crew was well aware of the historical battle of Imphras I of Impiltur against the tens of thousands of hobgoblins from the Giantspires. When the band from Dun Tharos struck with unabated ferocity, the construction crews turned tail and fled to the northeast and then back across the northern edge of Rawlinswood into the Eastern Dale.

In those days, the name *Nentyarch* had not yet been heard outside of the domain of Dun Tharos. The surviving Freemen brought word only of a hobgoblin attack to the Great Dale, and the settlements and militia assumed that a new host of hobgoblins was wreaking havoc in Rawlinswood. These reports eventually filtered down the Trade Route to the Eastern Dale as well and into the undead ears of Harbet Gall.

Several months later, these reports were confirmed in Nighthawk Tower, when the survivors of Gall's construction crew returned and reported of a massive invasion of hobgoblins that had driven them from the forest. Gall's men exaggerated greatly, to avoid earning Gall's wrath for cowardice. Gall too assumed there had been exaggeration, but he underestimated its degree, believing that the account was in essence substantiated by the reports that had been heard from the Freemen.

The reports from the West claimed that Tangetsjódur had been completely destroyed, and Gall had received no word from Kjarr since the battle, so he assumed that it had fallen too, and his second westward expansion had been ended by a hobgoblin invasion.

Throughout the Year of the Lion (1340 DR), the settlements of the western and Central Dale maintained a heavy guard along the edges of Rawlinswood, expecting a large-scale hobgoblin attack at any time, one which never came.

Most Dalesmen were relieved that the hobgoblins stayed away, but some were puzzled as well. It made no sense to them that the hobgoblins would gather, attack Tangetsjódur and both of the hosts fighting there and then merely vanish again. Among the puzzled was the Malarite lich Harbet Gall, but he had no better answer to the riddle than his counterparts in the West.

Before the Year of the Lion had ended, three necromancers of Gall's Dragon Cult cell returned to the Eastern Dale with a flight of four young adult green dragons from the south. The wyrms at first established their lairs in the eastern part of Rawlinswood, where Gall’s huntsmen had driven out all non-Gallist druids. Several cult magi from the Vilhon Reach, some no doubt with an eye open for a means to usurp Gall's power, also came to serve the lich in Nighthawk Tower.

For nearly a year, the settlements along the Trade Route that had aligned themselves against Gall and his church were plagued by dragon attacks and by undead armies of the fallen from the Battle of Bezentil, who had been reanimated as skeletons and zombies by cult necromancers.

This had the immediate effect of killing many Dalesmen, but unlike the attacks launched in earlier centuries by red dragons, there was little property damage, and villages that were attacked at a heavy human toll nonetheless could be repopulated relatively soon. In addition, the Dalesmen had some success in bringing down the dragons.

Before the end of the Year of the Behir (1342 DR), Gall launched an all-out attack, not only with the two surviving green dragons and his armies of undead, but also with his human forces. At the end of the great battle, Vulddin again was in flames, but the town did not fall.

Most of Gall's huntsmen who had fought in the battle were dead and all of his undead were reduced to scattered, inanimate bones and rotting, motionless, dead flesh. Priests of different churches had worked together, to smite the undead host, along with the Gallist warriors who were outnumbered and fell quickly once the undead were vanquished.

Gall ordered his two remaining dragons, both controlled by his orb, into hiding, telling them to lair in the elven ruins of Kro Tharos and Mal Nu'ill. Neither of the wyrms ever was heard from again. Curious, Gall ordered an expedition of the cultists into Rawlinswood, to find out what had happened to the dragons. The party too vanished, and Gall began to suspect that powerful magi were working together in the forest and had brought about the fall of both his wyrms and the expedition.

Beasts then came through eastern Rawlinswood. They were mainly lions and sabre-toothed tigers, both of which were totally out of place in the Great Dale. They attacked and killed a small group of minor cult magi in Tower Threespires. After the attacks, choke creepers began growing overnight around the tower, strangling a few of the cult magi who lived there.

Those necromancers who survived abandoned the tower and raised more zombies and skeletons from the buried of battles long past, but new packs of lions came roaring out of Rawlinswood and tore the undead host into shreds. The necromancers fled in panic.

Gall and his cultists then succeeded in summoning two black dragons to Nighthawk Tower. The last attack of Gall's dragons occurred early in Uktar of the Year of the Boot (1343 DR). Both wyrms simply vanished over Rawlinswood, never to appear again. Concerned, Gall sent several groups of huntsmen into the eastern reaches of Rawlinswood.

None of these groups found traces of the missing dragons, but one group disappeared itself without a trace. Gall sent a second search group into Rawlinswood, this time led by a powerful cult wizardess who also was concerned over the fate of the dragons she had hoped to one day help in their ascension to dracolichdom.

This group too vanished without trace, and two tendays later, a vicious pack of sabre-toothed tigers attacked Tower Threespires, killing many huntsmen and a cult wizard, before the tigers themselves fell. To the surprise of all, one of the fallen tigers transformed back into a human before dying.

It was the cult wizardess whom Gall had sent on the mission. Before she died, in her original form again, she reported that the party had reached the ruins of the old Narfelli fortress Dun Tharos, where it had encountered a man in druidic robes bearing a strange device of power that he had used upon them. She said this man looked directly into her eye and told her to deliver a message to Harbet Gall: *"I am the Nentyarch! I rule here. Leave, or I will destroy you!"*

Gall reacted by sending forth another mission consisting of all of the undead that the cult necromancers could animate, along with the best warriors of Fortress Clymph, several cult magi of Tower Threespires, and many of his own priests. None ever returned, but a horde of unusually powerful beasts attacked Fortress Clymph less than a tenday later, killing some of its occupants and sending the survivors fleeing in panic.

The Freemen also were warned out of central Rawlinswood, although often in a more peaceful manner. When intruders came into the Nentyarch's domain prepared to fight, they met their doom. When they came prepared to hunt or log or merely to satisfy their curiosity, green elves appeared and warned them off. Those who heeded the warning and left peacefully also were left in peace. Those who chose to fight the elves died, as did those who pretended to heed their warning and then double back.

The power of the Nentyarch always stood behind the elves, and the name Nentyarch soon became known in both parts of the Dale, after the green elves repeatedly invoked it in warning intruders off, explaining that the lands they were in were the domain of the Nentyarch.

No precise borders had been defined by the Nentyarch to mark off the domain he had claimed, but most Dalesmen who were active in Rawlinswood soon had a pretty good picture of the areas where the mysterious wizard posed danger for them.

His territory was considered to begin in the northwest along the road that began south of the Giantspires and was to continue to the ruins of Veidarheim, which the Gallists abandoned after the Nentyarch's attacks in the Year of the Weeping Moon (1339 DR). From there it ran eastward along the northern edge of Rawlinswood to the forest's dip southward at Dender's Valley.

The unofficial borderline swept around to the southwest, turning westward and running halfway between the ruins of Tangetsjódur and Zieth, turning northward again somewhat east of the Tumbling Stars Waterfalls and continuing on northward to the point where it began.

While these invisible lines appeared to generally define what the Nentyarch claimed as his domain, neither he nor his opponents honored these lines completely. The men of the Dender's Valley logging camp and the Nentyarch left one another in complete peace. The Gallists, however, made a few heavily armed expeditions over the Nars' plain north of Dender's Valley and back down into the area near Kjarr, only to vanish.

In the Year of the Moonfall (1344 DR), Gall ordered his hunters to reestablish a base for such expeditions in the ruins of Veidarhofn. The rebuilt thorp survived only briefly, however. After two attacks had been launched against the Nentyarch from Veidarhofn, his green elves, in the Year of the Saddle (1345 DR), led a band of transmogrified beasts and hobgoblins across Dender's Valley, within sight of the frightened logging camp, and simply eliminated Veidarhofn. No hunter of Veidarhofn ever was seen in the Eastern Dale again.

According to witnesses in the logging camp, the army of green elves, hobgoblins and beasts returned into the Nentyarch's domain with nearly 100 human captives in tow. Although few know what became of them, they were, in fact, taken to Dun Tharos, where the Nentyarch transmogrified them into more beasts and hobgoblins in his service.

The Rise of the Witch King
The Year of the Bright Blade (1347 DR)

Throughout the Year of the Bloodbird (1346 DR) and into the Year of the Bright Blade (1347 DR), there continued to be occasional, small skirmishes between Dalesmen and the followers of the Nentyarch. However, before the year had ended, most eyes in the Bloodstone Lands had shifted away from the Nentyarch and had begun to scrutinize instead a much more imminent threat that had arisen in the region, Zhengyi the Witch King in his Castle Perilous in Vaasa.

Shortly before the appearance of Castle Perilous, the Freemen of the Western Dale, Queen Sambryl of Impiltur and King Virdin in Damara all had become aware of the Nentyarch and had taken a concerned interest in his doings, but none were certain to what extent he posed a genuine threat to them. The Nentyarch had, in fact, shown no interest in their lands at all and had lifted no finger against any of them as long as they stayed out of his domain.

What concerned them was the seemingly tremendous amount of power concentrated around the Nentyarch and the potential for its eventual misuse. With one exception, Cynric Evenhand was unwilling to receive visitors or discuss his plans or intentions with anyone. The Tellerth druids and rangers and the druids and rangers of Tumbling Stars waterfalls were the exception.

Both groups were given free access to the Nentyarch's domain, and the green elves told them that they were welcome to continue doing their work in the wood, as long as they undertook no hostile actions against the Nentyarch or his followers. Some rangers had difficulty not attacking when they were watched closely by tigers or hobgoblins, but they maintained the truce the Nentyarch had offered them.

Shortly before word of Zhengyi had reached the Great Dale in the Year of the Bright Blade (1347 DR), Righan Eikensson, the Great Druid of the Tellerth Circle, traveled to Dun Tharos to meet with Cynric Evenhand, the Nentyarch who had once served Silvanus under him in the Tellerth Circle.

To this day, Eikensson has said little about what he learned during his visit to Dun Tharos, but he did assure Damara, Impiltur and the leaders of the Freemen that the Nentyarch posed no imminent threat to anyone and that concerns about the Nentyarch should not divert their attention from the greater threat of Zhengyi.

Within the Tellerth Circle itself, where Cynric Evenhand is known, Eikensson did explain that Cynric is the Nentyarch and that Silvanus still entrusts the druid with spells. The great druid pledged his subordinate druids and rangers to secrecy in this matter, but word eventually did filter out to a few important persons in Impiltur and then, through them, to even fewer important persons in the farther Realms.

Eikensson did not leave Dun Tharos pleased. He found no evil and no violation of the principles of Silvanus in what Cynric Evenhand was doing at the time of his visit, but he left Dun Tharos convinced that the Nentyarch was being consumed by magic and perhaps some greater power behind it. He had hoped this power was Lady Mystra herself. If it was another power, Eikensson believed that a day well might come when Cynric Evenhand could become as great a threat as Zhengyi then was, and the world would have to deal harshly with his former follower.

After hearing from the great druid, Queen Sambryl, King Virdin and many of the leading Freemen did indeed turn their thoughts from the Nentyarch to Zhengyi. In the Eastern Dale, the Malarite lich Harbet Gall did not have the advantage of such counsel, but for practical reasons, he was forced to deal with the Nentyarch in the same manner as his foes.

Gall had lost many men to the Nentyarch's magic, and he intended to avenge those losses one day. But Gall also acknowledged to himself that the Nentyarch had shown no aggressive interests in the lands of Herne's Hunters and had not acted against the Gallists, as long as they stayed out of the lands the Nentyarch claimed for his own.

In Vaasa to the North, Zhengyi was an entirely different matter. The lich lord well might cast his eye as far as the Great Dale, Gall knew. He decided it would be wise to ignore the Nentyarch for the time being, as long as the Nentyarch continued to avoid him, and to concentrate instead upon rebuilding his strength, in case the day came when he would have to defend the Eastern Dale and Ashanath against the witch king.

As a result, the Great Dale again entered a period of calm and relative peace during Zhengyi's reign. With no intruders against whom he was forced to defend his domain, the Nentyarch remained in Dun Tharos, probing ever more deeply into the secrets of K'Ahlob's magic, and coming ever more under the influence of the spirit within the transmogrifier.

In the western reaches of the Dale, the only important events occurred in the coastal port town of Borkurstad on Easting Reach beyond the eyes of most Freemen. Disgruntled merchants from Impilturian Sarshel bought most of the valuable real estate in Borkurstad in the Year of the Prince (1357 DR) and renamed it New Sarshel. A year later, in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR), the Impilturians were pushed aside by Sembian merchants involved with the Iron Throne, who took complete control of the town, removing it for all practical purposes from the Dale.

The first major event in the Eastern Dale after Zhengyi's rise occurred in the Year of the Harp (1355 DR), when the Reavers of Garagos in Chondath at last answered Gall's call of six years earlier. Nearly 500 blood warriors who had been threatened with extermination in their homeland followed their Reavers up the eastern shore of the Lake of Tears to Kront and then westward to the ruins of Fortress Clymph, which they restored to its previous austere state.

The Coming of Malar
The Year of Shadows (1358 DR)

In the Eastern Dale as elsewhere throughout the Realms, an event of the most critical importance occurred near the end of Zhengyi's reign, when the gods were thrown from the planes onto Faerûn in the Time of Troubles in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR). Despite the turmoil of that year, Zhengyi had risen to the peak of his power in Vaasa and Damara, as a servant of the later destroyed demon god Orcus.

There are many sages and some high priests of Malar in the Realms who believe that the Beastlord, when thrown from the planes, took the form of a high Vaasan Goat's Head priest as his avatar. This contention not only makes little sense, because the priests of Orcus and their reverence for undeath had really little in common with the hot-blooded hunting passion of Malar, but it also is incorrect.

The spirit of Malar ascended upon the eastern Great Dale. Had Harbet Gall been a living Malarite priest, the Beastlord doubtless well might have taken Gall's form for his avatar. But the undead body of a lich was apparently not to Malar's taste. He seems to have wanted a living, human body that pulsed with the flow of hot, red blood. He chose instead as his host Gall's high true druid of Herne, Hardhkjarkur Arnulfssonur.

During the time of the avatars, Gall in Nighthawk Tower quickly was relegated to the role of high servant, and Malar in the form of Arnulfssonur ruled from Bezentil. During this brief era, much change took place in the Eastern Dale, and the status of Harbet Gall began to shift, perhaps a sign that the Beastlord new what Gall had upon his mind.

The avatar of the Beastlord ordered Gall to send 200 warrior followers of Garagos from Fortress Clymph to Bezentil, to serve him there. The faithful of the Reaver quickly underwent a deific brainwashing, converting them into members of the Malarite hunt. The avatar also sent out a call to his own Talons, ordering his priests from many corners of Faerûn into the Dale, to establish Bezentil as the Beastlord's religious center in the Realms. Old Hunter Skith Tsornagar, a High Huntmaster from Sossal, became second in command in Bezentil.

Before Malar and the other gods returned to the planes, the Arnulfssonur avatar had summoned elementals to construct a stone hunting lodge in the town center, which he called the *Divine Den* and consecrated as the first of all Faerûnian Malarite temples.

Before his departure, Malar had drawn some 70 clerics to Bezentil - 50 of them Talons and the rest clerics of the hunt. Another 150 ardent human worshippers of the Beastlord who were dedicated members of the Hunt, including 12 master blacksmiths who forge *True Talons of Malar*, the approved *Claws of Malar,* also had come to the town, along with the converted warriors of Garagos

During his months in Bezentil, Malar curiously did nothing to strengthen his ties with Harbet Gall or his Church of Herne the Hunter, nor did he do anything to alienate himself from them. Malar appeared satisfied that the two churches co-exist, both in his service. But it also was clear that the true church of Malar would from that time on have a presence in its own right in the Dale, again, a sign that Gall's designs may have been clear to the Beastlord.

Before the Year of Shadows ended, the planes were reopened to the Faerûnian deities and Malar returned to his home, Colothys, the Land of the Hunt on the plane of Carceri. The host to his avatar, Hardhkjarkur Arnulfssonur, did not survive Malar's departure. Old Hunter Skith Tsornagar ascended to the rank of High Huntmaster in Bezentil.

The Magnificent Hunt and the Ultimate Hunt From the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR)

Worship in the settlements of the Eastern Dale has been somewhat divided since the Time of Troubles. Those who honor the hunt but basically remain true to general druidic principles of conservation tend to continue worshipping Herne. The more brutal idolaters of the bloody hunt in the Eastern Dale have thrown in their lot instead with the Talon priest or Huntlord cleric in their settlement.

Despite this division among worshippers, there is no open strife between the two churches. Harbet Gall and High Huntmaster Tsornagar cooperate. They have little choice; they draw their power from the same deity. But Tsornagar's support of Gall extends only to matters pertaining to the hunt. The High Huntmaster is unwilling to participate in the lich's empire building, considering such activities to be a deviation from the true path of the hunt.

Harbet Gall and Skith Tsornagar also have no personal love for one another. Gall would happily see Tsornagar and all of his Talons dead, and Tsornagar would not hesitate to destroy both Gall and his phylactery, if he were able to.

The virtual schism of the Malarite church in the Eastern Dale has brought about a number of changes. Gall maintains political control over all areas outside of Bezentil, but the border town remains firmly under the control of the true Malarites. Politics are outside Tsornagar's scope of interest, however. They concern him only at the point where they attempt to interfere with the work of his church or to persecute members of the Hunt. Gall was too wise to risk Malar's wrath by initiating purges of the Beastlord's own church.

The new Bezentil, although nominally allied with the Gallists, is a town quite different from the other settlements of the Eastern Dale. It is open; anyone can travel into it and most manage to travel out of it again. It is a cold, hard town populated to a great extent with people who had a cruel glint in their eyes. Many more men live in Bezentil than women, and children are few.

When Tsornagar sends his troops outside of the city walls, it is not to gain new territories and people to bring under his rulership but rather to gain things he cannot otherwise obtain. Two things Tsornagar sought most in the beginning were stone with which to build and metallic ore with which to forge the tools of the hunt.

In the days before the Dale had gone to war with itself, the stone with which old Bezentil had been built had been quarried southeast of the ruins of Fortress Narder. There also were small iron ore deposits known to be in the high forest areas in this vicinity. The veins of ore were not of a magnitude that would make a dwarf's heartbeat hasten, but they were adequate for the Talons and the members of the Hunt in Bezentil.

The only problem for Tsornagar was that these necessities were in an area that always was open to sapper attacks from the Mucklestones Druids, a painful fact that at last had forced Harbet Gall to give up hopes of quarrying. High Huntmaster Tsornagar succeeded in this case where Gall had failed.

Tsornagar, a charismatic priest, had won the once Gallist rangers of Herne who had remained in Bezentil after the Time of Troubles over to the Hunt. In the Year of the Wyvern (1363 DR), he gave them and evil druids of his own following who long had worshipped Malar the task of tracking down the Mucklestones Druids and determining how they so often had escaped the clutches of the Hunters of Herne.

His rangers succeeded in tracking members of the Mucklestones Druids to their astral gate in the ruins of Mal K'ustan, where they watched the pursued druids and rangers vanish. They reported what they had seen to Tsornagar, who immediately and correctly concluded that a gate was in play.

The High Huntmaster then sent a contingent of 50 warriors and a few ranking clerics to Mal K'ustan to form a permanent outpost there, one which surrounded the ancient ruins. This was a tactically devastating move for the Mucklestones Druids.

Those members of their ranks who had fled to the astral plane were trapped there. They could not risk leaving, because doing so would mean falling immediately into the hands of the more powerful outpost of Talons. Those who had not fled had lost their refuge. The Malarite outpost had sealed their entrance to the astral plane.

Once Mal K'ustan had been sealed, Tsornagar and his Talons blew the horns of the *Magnificent Hunt*. They sent their rangers forward first, to find the trail of various members of the Mucklestones Druids and begin tracking them down. The priests, clerics and warriors followed, hunting the fleeing rangers and slaying those whom they found.

Soon word spread through the Mucklestones ranks, and they began fleeing eastern Lethyr Forest, fording Tears Creek, making their way to Phsant and tracking back up the Flam into western Lethyr Forest. When the last horns of the *Magnificent Hunt* blew the call of return to Bezentil, the Hunt had slain four druids and nine rangers. Three druids and seven rangers were trapped on the astral plane. Eight druids and 17 rangers had taken refuge in western Lethyr Forest.

After that, no member of the Mucklestones Druids remained in eastern Lethyr Forest. High Huntmaster Tsornagar could begin quarrying and mining with impunity. Ore began traveling from the high forest to Bezentil. The fires of the forges began roaring night and day. The smiths began forging the True Talons of Malar and other weapons intended for the *Ultimate Hunt.*

During the years of preparation, another 100 Talons and followers of Malar slipped slowly into Bezentil, to join in what was planned as the greatest hunt ever launched by the Beastlord's church. Tsornagar intended to march into Rawlinswood and hunt down the Nentyarch and his followers.

As the Year of the Sword (1365 DR) began, Bezentil had a population of 58 Talons or Priests of Malar, 23 Huntlords or Clerics of Malar, 55 evil rangers of Malar who were members of the Hunt and 500 fighters and warriors who also were members of the Hunt as well as 1,000 other residents who were not full members of the Hunt, although many worshipped the Beastlord. Of the 55 evil rangers, 20 were converted rangers of Herne.

In late Tarsakh of the Year of the Sword (1365 DR), the Ultimate Hunt began. High Huntmaster Tsornagar led 30 Talons, 13 Huntlords, 35 rangers and 200 warriors and fighters eastward out of Bezentil on the Trade Route and then northwestward over Skarlshofn, Kars and the ruins of Veidarhofn into the part of Dender's Valley north of Rawlinswood, which already belonged to the lands claimed by the Nars.

A dozen riders of the Dag Nost tribe watched somewhat chagrined as the troop of nearly 300 rode northward to the Gallist Hunter's Trail and then followed it westward. The bargain that had been sealed to allow passage was with the Gallists, whose heraldry showed the head and the claws of a falcon. The troop that was crossing their land bore a coat of arms showing a furry, brown beat's claw dripping fresh blood, the symbol of Malar.

The riders did not recognize this symbol. The Dag Nost was tolerant and relatively peaceful tribe who sometimes even entered civilized Uthmere to sell horses there. They were slow to begin hostilities with intruders upon their lands, but they were gravely concerned about the number of men bearing this symbol and riding westward over their plain. However with odds of more than 20 to 1 against them, they were not about to attack.

After riding eight days, on the last day of Tarsakh, the Ultimate Hunt camped on the plain north of Rawlinswood at the point where the Hunter's Trail turned southward into the forest. The Hunt made no attempt to conceal itself, but stayed there through the entire Greengrass festival day. Small hunting parties entered the outer forest areas and hunted down boar and deer.

Campfires burned through both nights. In the early evening hours, there was raucous laughter, the smell of boar and deer roasting over open fires and drinking. Many of the hunters drank themselves into a stupor on the first night, but drinking was more moderate on the evening of the festival day, as the Malarites prepared for their entry into the forest and the hunt that would begin with the new dawn.

Rangers of the green elves who served the Nentyarch watched these doings from the forest's eaves but took no actions, instead reporting what they had seen to Cynric Evenhand in Dun Tharos. The elves also avoided the hunting parties, concerned that if they attacked then, they might cause the battle that was brewing to break out early and on the terms of the enemy, rather than giving the Nentyarch the initiative.

The sun rose on the first day of Mirtul, and High Huntmaster Tsornagar gave his orders. Twenty of the 35 rangers were to lead the hunt into the forest. The rangers were assigned to stalk quietly through the wood, parallel to the trail, to the ruins of Kjarr. About a mile/1.5 km behind the rangers, riding on the trail, came High Huntmaster Tsornagar, along with the 30 Talons, 13 Huntlords and 15 rangers. The rear rank consisted of the 200 fighters and warriors.

It was a careful hunt, and it moved slowly southward. It also was a loud and conspicuous hunt. The rangers in the vanguard slipped quietly through the forest, attempting to remain silent und undetected but also prepared to blow an alarm on their hunting horns, if necessary. The forward wave, led by Tsornagar, and the fighters and warriors in the rear made no attempt to conceal itself. To the contrary, horn signals were exchanged throughout the day between the two ranks.

During the first day, the hunt found many signs of green elves, hobgoblins, beasts and animals but no sign that either elves or hobgoblins still were within the part of the wood through which they had passed. Nor were wild animals encountered, although their footprints were easy to see. Before nightfall, the hunt reached the ruins of Kjarr and camped there. Twenty of the 35 advance rangers kept the quiet watch within the wood, while the main hunt lit campfires, roasted deer and boar, drank and made merry.

The Nentyarch had decided not to defend Kjarr, only to make it an irritation. Rawlinswood was his turf, and his green elves knew every leaf and needle of every tree. Cynric Evenhand knew the heraldry that was challenging him belonged to Malar. He warned his green elf ranger scouts that the rangers of Malar were talented trackers and hunters who would not easily be fooled or misled.

Malar's rangers were indeed men of talent, but none of them ever had been in Rawlinswood before, nor had they ever encountered green elves. The latter factor put them to a particular disadvantage, because their focus in seeking tracks, following the dictates of previous experience, was upon the forest floor and not above in the trees.

The green elves of the Nentyarch, in the crowns of the trees, could move just as noiselessly and with as little trace as Malar's rangers were doing on the forest floor below. Unlike the human Malarite rangers, the green elves also had the advantage of night vision.

The hunt camped through the first part of the night in Kjarr without incident. In the wood, many of the Malarite rangers remained awake and alert, as did the green elves above them. Tsornagar planned to leave a rear guard behind in Kjarr the following day, and the rangers who kept the nighttime watch in the wood were to sleep in Kjarr on the day that followed.

As the midnight hour passed, events began to run a course quite different from that planned by the High Huntmaster. At first, the green elves began slipping down the trees with silent knives in their hands, to ambush the rangers scattered below them. Their butchery was largely successful.

Not all of Malar's rangers were surprised. Some successfully defended themselves, and green elves fell too. But the elves in the trees far outnumbered the rangers. When one of Malar's men successfully defended himself against his first attacker, a volley of arrows from other elves above in the trees brought him down. All 20 Malarite rangers in the wood had forfeited their lives in less than an hour, and not one had succeeded in blowing the alarm upon his horn. Four green elves also had died.

The guards who held the watch in Kjarr heard the occasional shouts or cries of individual fights within the wood. It was clear that the Malarite rangers were occupied with foes. Tsornagar was awakened, but he declined to take any action as long as his rangers made no horn signals for help. He assumed wrongly that his men had the advantage.

Another hour passed. The elves slipped through the trees to the perimeter of Kjarr's ruins and then sent a rain of arrows down onto the camp. The hunters awakened and reacted chaotically at first. Several of the Talons begin wildly flinging spells into the forest. The green elves sent down a second rain of arrows from above and then made a quick retreat through the crowns of the trees back to Mal Nu'ill to prepare for the battle's second round.

The first night's tally was much in the Nentyarch's favor. Seven green elves had died and 10 were wounded. Tsornagar lost 40 warriors and fighters, three of the rangers who had stayed in camp, four Talons and three Huntlords. The chaos of battle in the middle of the night also disrupted the entire camp, making it impossible for any of the Malarite spell users to gain enough uninterrupted sleep to learn new spells the following day, a result the Nentyarch had been seeking.

Nonetheless, with the new dawn, Tsornagar was determined to press on with his Ultimate Hunt. His hunters had learned much through the costly experience of the night. They knew now that their foes were green elves and that they left no tracks because they moved through the tree crowns. The High Huntmaster was prepared to burn down the forest to deal with this problem, if need be. He left two Talons, two Huntlords, two rangers and 50 warriors and fighters behind to maintain the base in the ruins of Kjarr and led the rest of the Hunt on to the ruins of Mal Nu'ill.

The second day's march brought the hunt to a point just outside the ancient green elven ruins, where the hunters felt fear and Tsornagar felt irritation. Both he and his men could sense the presence of the illusory ghosts who haunted the ancient, overgrown, barely visible ruins they saw. Tsornagar wanted to make camp within the ruins, but his wisdom warned him that his men would be demoralized to a certain degree if they were forced to spend the night among the ghosts against their will, therefore Tsornagar agreed to camp outside Mal Nu'ill.

What the hunters and their High Huntmaster saw had little, of course, to do with what really was there. The Huntleaders, Talons and some of the rangers in the Hunt well may have been able to dispel the elves' illusions to a certain extent, but it occurred to none of them that illusions were the problem with which they were dealing. They believed Mal Nu'ill to be haunted, and they did not think they had the power to exorcise the ruins of the ghosts.

Thus it was that the Nentyarch succeeded is surprising Tsornagar's Hunt for a second night. On this evening, rangers prowled the nearby woods for signs of green elves who never came, and the warriors of the camp kept their range weapons at hand, prepared to send volleys of death into the tree crowns if the enemy chose to attack again.

Cynric Evenhand intended to attack again, but not with the help of his green elves, who had melted into the forest behind Dun Tharos to act as a defensive reserve on the following day. Beneath the tree houses of Mal Nu'ill disguised by illusion, the Nentyarch had 200 transmogrified hobgoblins, ready to wage war upon the invader.

As the venison and boar came down from the spits, fully done, and the camp began eating and drinking its fill, the 200 hobgoblins, who had been watching the hunters from illusory Mal Nu'ill, caught the enemy unaware, seeming to appear out of nowhere. They made a bloody storm attack against the camp. On this evening, the Nentyarch tallied the greater losses, but he had been prepared to accept them.

Tsornagar's hunters were the stronger force, but it took several rounds of combat before they had overcome their surprise. In the end, more than 150 of the Nentyarch's hobgoblins lay dead on the forest floor, with the remainder fleeing toward Dun Tharos. But before the hobgoblins were defeated, Tsornagar had lost another six Talons, five Huntlords, seven rangers and 30 warriors.

A more judicious man than Tsornagar might have considered with his losses whether he had become outnumbered and was delivering his hunt into a trap. But Tsornagar considered only the hunt. The smell of his prey was in the air, and he intended to close in upon it.

The six surviving rangers of the hunt were sent out the next morning to scout the way to Dun Tharos, a matter of a mere two hours distance from Mal Nu'ill. They did not see green elves or hobgoblins, nor was there any trace of forest wildlife or the sound of a single bird chirping. The men slipped onward until they were in view of Dun Tharos, reaching the point without incident. Stillness surrounded the ancient fortress, covered in moss and vines. The gate was closed. No guards were visible.

None of the rangers were fooled for a minute. As they came within half a mile/less than a kilometer of Dun Tharos, they could smell elf in the forest air. They detected their steps being observed by many invisible eyes. They understood. A trap was set, but it was waiting for Tsornagar's full hunt. It was not about to let itself be sprung by only six rangers.

The rangers returned to Tsornagar's camp shortly before the noon hour, telling the High Huntmaster of their observations and of their conviction that the Nentyarch's trap was waiting to be sprung, but Tsornagar was not to be deterred from his prey. He told the rangers that he, they, and the rest of their men were hunters. Now that they knew of the trap, it was up to them not to spring it. Without further words, he put the horn to his lips and blew the call to the hunt.

The march of the hunters came just as easily within sight of Dun Tharos as the rangers had. The hunt also heard the strange silence of the forest and felt eyes upon them. Occasionally, nervous hunters would fire arrows wildly up into the trees, hoping to provoke the green elves whom they believed lurked there, but nothing shot back.

At mid-afternoon, Tsornagar blew the horn signal to halt. The vanguard of the hunt was about 300 yards/meters away from the greened over walls of Dun Tharos. The High Huntmaster and the other hunters studied the scene, pondering what the best strategy would be and trying to fathom where the springs were that would unleash the waiting trap upon them.

While the hunt still was taking in and scrutinizing Dun Tharos and its environs, two hobgoblins began opening the massive oak gates of the fortress. Throughout the hunt, muscles tightened, poised for battle. Instead, confusion came over Tsornagar and his hunters.

As the gate opened wider, they could see no army of green elves or hobgoblins waiting to defend Dun Tharos against them. One foe stood in the open gate, a thin man, unchallenging in appearance, who held a rod in his left hand. His right hand rested upon a strange device that looked a bit like a lantern mounted atop a tripod, altogether no more than four feet/120 cm tall. Across the open path that separated the vanguard of the hunt from Dun Tharos, the man shouted out, *Welcome to Dun Tharos! Men call me the Nentyarch. Welcome to my service!*

An invisible arrow of fear struck a few of the hunters, and an intuitive warning alarm sounded within some of the rangers. These bolted into the wood and were slain to the man by green elven archers in the tree crowns. A similar warning sounded within the High Huntmaster, and he used his teleportation ring to spring to the rear of the hunt.

Just as he did so, a golden wave of light began emanating across the first rows of hunters, who began writhing and rapidly changing into hobgoblins. Tsornagar had been given no medicine by Malar against such magic. He used his ring once more and teleported back to the rear camp he had left behind in the ruins of Kjarr.

Of the 106 men he had led to Dun Tharos, only four managed to escape both the transmogrifier and the green elves in the forest crown and make their way back to Bezentil. Among them were a Talon, a Huntlord and two rangers.

In Dun Tharos, the Nentyarch had a new band of 100 some hobgoblins whom he quickly brought under his control with his rod of rulership. He ordered the hobgoblins to switch directions and march back through the wood to Kjarr, where Tsornagar was mustering the more than 50 men he had left behind to muster a new attack upon Dun Tharos.

In his new and final assault, Tsornagar planned to send the two Talons, two Huntlords and 50 fighters and warriors in Kjarr in a frontal attack against the fortress of the Nentyarch. He and the two remaining rangers would use potions of invisibility to slip around to the rear of the fortress in advance, climb the walls and ambush the Nentyarch with his transmogrifier from behind.

Had the High Huntmaster not been of so chaotic a nature, it might have occurred to him that his plan was on the simple side. He had noted before the brief battle at Dun Tharos that the Nentyarch's green elves were in the woods, and through the open gates, Dun Tharos appeared to be deserted. Therefore, he reasoned, it should be relatively easy to ambush the prey from behind.

It had not occurred to Tsornagar that Dun Tharos might be protected by magical wards that would destroy him and his followers as soon as they touched the wall of the fortress. His miscalculation in this case was irrelevant, however, because another greater miscalculation on the High Huntmaster's part decided the day.

In Tsornagar's mind, he was *the* hunter. It never occurred to him in his evilest dreams that the tables could be turned upon him, making him the prey of what had been his own hunt. That is precisely what the Nentyarch did. The 100 some members of Tsornagar's own host who had been transmogrified into hobgoblins had been ordered to track down and slay those who fled and those who had remained behind in Kjarr.

On the following day, the two small armies met in the illusory ruins of Mal Nu'ill and within a few hours vanquished one another. The only survivor was Tsornagar, who teleported to Bezentil. No other member of his party remained after the battle at Mal Nu'ill, and none of the hobgoblins who once had been the High Huntmaster's own men lived to the day's end.

Nonetheless, in Mal Nu'ill Tsornagar won his single victory of the hunt, although he was unaware of it. A spell used by one of his men started a burn that ran briefly out of control. The fire did not have the power to destroy the old elven illusion that shielded Mal Nu'ill, but the flames were immune to the illusion. They destroyed most of the illusion-shrouded trees in which the green elves had lived.

In Bezentil, Tsornagar told a careful story. He new that the Nentyarch still lived, and he knew that a few of his men had survived the battle of Dun Tharos and that they might return to tell the truth. Therefore, he invented the tale of the great glory of the Ultimate Hunt. He told the truth about the battle of Dun Tharos but then invented a tale of a second battle of Dun Tharos, in which hunter and hunted destroyed each other.

At the battle's end, he claimed, he and the Nentyarch were the only survivors. He told how he at last stood over his prey, prepared to deal the deathblow with the true Talons of Malar, when the Nentyarch, in an act of abhorrent cowardice, used an item of magic to gate himself to safety on another plane. Tsornagar told his followers in Bezentil that the Nentyarch one day would return, and he swore to hunt down his prey again, to at last deal the fatal blow.

Word since has reached Bezentil that the Nentyarch has returned to Dun Tharos. In truth, he never left there, but this is not known in Bezentil. The High Huntmaster still swears that he one day will hunt down and slay the Nentyarch, but he appears to be in no hurry to do so. He claims that he has other work he must do for the Beastlord before he can resume the unfinished Ultimate Hunt.

During the time of Tsornagar's fiasco, other events were taking place during his absence in Bezentil. Representatives of the House of Steel temple to Garagos in Westgate met secretly with Reaver Lord Drómi Bloodred of the Garagos temple in Bezentil, and they forged plans to bring the Bezentil temple under the priestess Chalass the Cruel of Westgate. With these discussions, the Bezentil garrison of Reavers and warriors became apart of Chalass' plans to expand the church of Garagos into Damara and Thay.

Tsornagar has come to believe that Drómi and the 400 men under his command are loyal to him. The truth is, they are biding their time in Bezentil, training new Reavers and warriors of Garagos there, but when the time is right, Drómi and his 400 men plan to ride out of Bezentil and go on to Damara.

The Return of the Mucklestones Druids In the Year of the Sword (1365 DR)

For the last seven years, Tsornagar and his Talons and Huntlords in Bezentil have been operating quietly and secretly, building the Malarite church and using their secluded stronghold in the Great Dale to organize hunts throughout Faerûn and particularly in the Vilhon Reach and the distant North, northeast of Waterdeep. The High Huntmaster also organizes regular hunts in the Great Dale, most with human prey. These are concentrated in Rawlinswood east of the logging camp, beyond the long arm of the Nentyarch, and in parts of Lethyr Forest.

While Tsornagar and many of his followers were gone from Bezentil in the Year of the Sword (1365 DR), the Mucklestones Druids made their return to Lethyr Forest. Two years earlier, the group had been divided by the Malarite hunt, with part of its members being trapped on the Astral Plane and the rest driven into Thesk. Those druids and rangers who had fled the forest found help in the Year of the Wave (1364 DR) in a half elven sorcerer-ranger named Parthanus who was a Harper agent.

The Harpers had become increasingly concerned over events in the Great Dale, because they saw a danger that the Nentyarch, Harbet Gall or the Malarite church of Skith Tsornagar one day might defeat the other two factions and begin to dominate the entire region. The Nentyarch was the Harpers' main focal point. The organization had seen signs that he commanded immense magical power, but it had little direct knowledge of him.

The Harpers also did not underestimate High Huntmaster Tsornagar, whose ambitions were great and far reaching. Harbet Gall had become something of an enigma to the Harpers, because he and his followers had been largely inactive since the Time of Troubles and the rise of Tsornagar in Bezentil.

On the other side of the ledger, the Harpers long had treasured the Mucklestones Druids as an important factor in the Great Dale, an element that had succeeded for centuries in keeping the power hungry evildoers in check. When Parthanus encountered fleeing members of the Mucklestones Druids in Thesk and learned of their plight, he knew how to end their involuntary exile from Lethyr Forest.

Thousands of years earlier, one of Parthanus' ancestors had been an elven king, the ruler of a tiny woodland monarchy in the distant North across Easting Reach, the Dragon Reach and many a mile of Heartland. The ancestor king possessed a family artifact that shielded the kingdom from the eyes of monsters and encroaching humans.

Known then as the *Stone of the Elf King*, the artifact had the ability to delude the minds of outsiders who attempted to enter the kingdom. The borders of the elven lands were easy to see. The enhanced growth within the tiny monarchy of the fair folk fostered a forest of taller and healthier trees than grew elsewhere in the surrounding countryside.

Nonetheless, although all could see the forest, none could quite find it. As one approached the borders of the woodland kingdom, they seemed to shift and be ever just a bit more distant than they had seemed to be a moment earlier. No one from the mightiest mage to the lowest goblin had succeeded in defeating the stone's magic.

What other properties and effects the artifact had no longer are known. For ages, the magical stone protected the tiny kingdom from intruders, but in the end, the kingdom fell nonetheless, not because the stone failed its king, but rather because the king came to the aid of other elves in ancient wars north of his kingdom.

Both the last elf king and most of his subjects had died before the wars had ended, and internally, the kingdom crumbled, but the few survivors of royal lineage had saved the magical stone and handed it down through the ages, always using the stone's own magic to hide and protect it.

Parthanus' father had been the last full-blooded elf of the ancient king's line. When his father died, the half elf took possession of the stone and, like his ancestors before him, he used the stone's own power to keep it hidden in the woodland in the Tortured Lands where his family's kingdom had been in days of yore.

After learning of the Mucklestones Druids' woes, Parthanus decided to again use the stone, this time to protect the ruins of ancient Mal K'ustan, the magical gate of the druids and rangers, but to do so, it was necessary for him to return to his ancient home to retrieve the artifact. Thus, he was unable to help the druids end their woes until late in the Year of the Sword (1365 DR), when he returned to Thesk from the North.

The timing was opportune for Parthanus and the Mucklestones Druids and inopportune for Tsornagar in Bezentil. The High Huntmaster had returned from his defeat at Dun Tharos a little more than a month before Parthanus came back to Thesk. His following had been reduced by more than a half, and he was in no position to risk a new hunt in which he might again become the prey.

For two years, seven of the Mucklestones rangers and three druids had been trapped on the astral plane. Eight druids and 17 rangers had fled into Thesk. The latter group had won the staunch support of a dozen Harper followers - two magi, a sorcerer, a priest of Tymora, three rangers, four fighters and a rogue. Two Talons, a Huntlord and 50 fighters and warriors, guarded the Mal K’ustan gate.

In numbers, the odds were 3:2 against the Mucklestones Druids and the Harpers. In terms of individual abilities and powers, however, they were substantially stronger than the hunters who guarded Mal K'ustan. In addition, the Malarites had been in position around the astral gate for two years without being challenged once. They not only had grown lax but also had taken to drinking too much.

The Mucklestones Druids and their followers traveled quietly and mostly unseen from Thesk through Lethyr Forest. There were no rangers in the depths of the woods who followed Tsornagar, although there were Gallist Hunters of Herne who found the tracks of the Mucklestones party, followed them and observed the party without being seen themselves. They reported what they had seen to Harbet Gall in Nighthawk Tower, but Gall decided to observe events rather than to interfere with them.

Since the Time of Troubles, Gall had sensed that his relationship to Malar had become more remote and that the Beastlord's attention in the Great Dale had become focused upon High Huntmaster Tsornagar. The High Huntmaster had laid claim to eastern Lethyr Forest, which troubled Gall little, because he no longer had important holdings there. The return of the Mucklestones Druids to Lethyr Forest, Gall decided, was Tsornagar's problem, not his own. And he saw no reason to help his rival in anyway.

Thus it was that the Mucklestones Druids reached the perimeter of Tsornagar's Mal K'ustan camp, neither seen nor heard, by night in the darkness of the new moon. Only half of the Malarites still were sober, and few of these were awake. The Mucklestones’ stealthy attacks managed to slay nearly half of the Malarites before the rest came to their feet, and within less than an hour, only two Malarites who had managed to flee still lived.

The two escapees brought word to Bezentil, and the High Huntmaster sent a patrol consisting of a Talon, two rangers and two dozen fighters and warriors into the forest to recapture the Mal K'ustan astral gate. Before they arrived, however, the druids and rangers who had been trapped on the astral plane had returned to Faerûn, and Parthanus had activated the *Stone of the Elf King*.

The attempt of the Malarite patrol to attack the astral gate was futile. Regardless of what the patrol attempted, the mysterious glade always remained a few hundred yards from the hunters, seemingly moving its own bounds away from them. Tsornagar's men were less lucky in eluding the arrows fired occasionally by Mucklestones rangers hidden in the trees. Before the hunters at last fled back to Bezentil, frustrated and confused, a Talon and four warriors and fighters had lost their lives in the wood.

Tsornagar was infuriated at the loss of Mal K'ustan and the return of the Mucklestones Druids. It was his second humiliating defeat within less than two months' time. However, there was little he could do other than swear to hunt the Mucklestones Druids down again, in the future, at a more opportune time, just as he had done with the Nentyarch.

The Uneasy Peace
From the Year of the Sword (1365 DR)

With the return of the Mucklestones Druids, Tsornagar also was forced to stop quarrying in Lethyr Forest. The renewed sapper attacks from the druids, rangers and their Harper allies drove the surviving men at the quarry back to Bezentil. New construction projects in the Trade Route town had to settle again for building materials of wood.

During the years following the Time of Troubles, Harbet Gall and his followers lived somewhat reclusively, sealed within their enclaves in the Eastern Dale, northeastern Rawlinswood and Ashanath. Gall now seriously pondered what future course he should follow.

Unlike most liches in the Realms with backgrounds in arcane knowledge, Gall was a servant rather than a power in his own right. His powers came from his deity, Malar the Beastlord. For centuries, Gall had been working to build his own base of power in the Dale, giving lesser priority to the church's singular goal, the hunt, than to his own desires.

The Hunters of Herne had given Malar only modestly successful hunts, and as a result, Gall could feel the Beastlord's support for him waning. His ability to learn new spells had been quenched and he needed to pray longer each day to forge the bonds with Malar that brought old spells back to him.

Gall no longer had it within him to return to the role of a chaotically mindless hunter, as he perceived Skith Tsornagar to be. The lich thought he had attempted to honor the Beastlord with hunts of the highest order, the hunt of estimable foes that required complex and intelligent strategies, but he knew now that such lofty ideals were of little interest to his deity. Malar wanted hunts that were inspired by the smell of blood and the spirit of the beast, not hunts that were filled with strategy and cunning.

Secluded for days, weeks and then months at a time in Nighthawk Tower, Gall slowly came to the conclusion that Malar would continue to accept his service, but Gall doubted he would advance farther within the ranks of the church or that Malar would offer him the necessary aid to one day ascend from lichdom to demi-lichdom.

In the Year of the Wave (1364 DR), Gall called a Wearer of the Purple from his Dragon Cult cell in Tower Threespires to him, saying he wished to begin instruction in the arcane arts. The cult wizard reluctantly accepted his master as student, having no other choice, but the lich ended the lessons after only a few months. He acknowledged that his aptitude for the arcane was limited and that he never would rise above the middle levels of wizardry.

It is said that madness is the lot of many a lich and it appears that in these times, such madness began to take grip of Gall too. After abandoning his short pursuit of magic, Gall found a new alternative: He could become a deity, as other mortals had in the Time of Troubles. He could become the Herne the Hunter that he had claimed in his preaching really existed.

To do that, Gall thought, he needed time to build a greater following who believed his claim that he indeed was Herne the Hunter in avatar form. To gain that time, he also needed more than he believed Malar still was willing to give him. Madness leads one down strange paths, and Gall's madness led him to conclude that he needed to serve more than one master.

That meant abandoning the focus of the priesthood to assume the role of a cleric who served more than one deity. The solution was simple, but determining which other deities he could worship along with Malar was a considerably more difficult task, and it took time.

From the Year of the Sword (1365 DR) until the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), Harbet Gall often was gone from the Great Dale, traveling in disguised forms to distant lands to seek other religions he might serve along with the church of Malar. When he was in the Dale, he usually remained secluded in Nighthawk Tower, and his followers seldom saw him.

Without new campaigns from Gall, the Hunters of Herne had time to rebuild ruins from past conflicts, to till what fertile soil there was in the East and, in some cases, to take advantage of the growing laxity in the Gallist settlements to escape to the West.

To the southwest of Nighthawk Tower, the headquarters of Gall's Kront Cell of the Dragon Cult had few occupants. Most of its members too were abroad in the world, hoping to lure new dragons to the Dale. The task was not easy. Dragons seek areas where they can win new treasure and devour delicious maiden morsels. The Great Dale had few riches to offer and a small population. Its terrain was suited only for green and black dragons. And tales had spread about the fate all previous dragons had met whom the cult had lured to the Dale.

A bit farther to the West in Fortress Clymph, the warrior followers of Garagos and the Reavers who led them trained and grew increasingly restless without battles to fight, to the point where they often slew one another in training exercises.

Farther still to the Southwest in Bezentil, High Huntmaster Skith Tsornagar provided the only true local action from the evil side of the Great Dale's ledger. Several times a year, his followers staged a Great Hunt, with either a captive from the West or an offender from their own ranks as prey. Tsornagar often was gone from the Dale, arranging and leading hunts in many other parts of Faerûn.

Other than the hunts launched from the East, the awareness that the Dale still was in a civil war was sparked only by occasional flare-ups, small skirmishes between the Freemen of the Dale on one side and the Hunters of Herne or the Hunt from Bezentil on the other.

The New Alliance - the Dragon Era
Since the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR)

After five years, Harbet Gall still had not succeeded in finding a new religion he could serve simultaneously and contentedly with the creed of the Beastlord. Only in the middle of the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR) did the answer come to him. The messenger who delivered it was the arch-necromancer Urgrath Hurddh, the most powerful mage of the Kront Dragon Cult cell.

Hurddh and many of the other cult magi who had left Tower Threespires in search of new dragons had traveled to a number of lands. They stopped at last in Chessenta, where they found cult cells that no longer were agnostic but had adopted the faith of the Untheric goddess Tiamat, who then was attempting to become a power within the Faerûnian pantheon. Many of the Tiamatist cultists in Chessenta also had adopted the latter day teachings of Sammaster, teachings that ironically had led Gall and other conspirators to bring about the destruction of Sammaster's lich some 90 years earlier.

According to the Chessentan priests, Tiamat herself had adopted the cause of undead dragons and indeed manifested personally as one of them in her avatar form as the Undying Queen. These priests claimed that Tiamat preached almost the same revised gospel that Sammaster had introduced upon his reappearance as a lich in the Desertsmouth Mountains in the Year of the Many Mists (1282 DR).

With Kargmelchina's help, Sammaster had concluded that lichdom, was not the way to immortality for the dead dragons who would rule the world. The transition to lichdom was a difficult process. A lich could not reproduce its own kind; each dracolich had to be made separately.

Above all, his dracoliches had been a failure. Mighty as they had been, many of the dracoliches that had been made up to that point had been destroyed - by mere humans. With the clarity only a madman can know, Sammaster came to see the error in his earlier thinking. He still did not doubt that dead dragons would rule the world. The flaw in his earlier thinking, Sammaster had announced, was in the type of undeath he believed these dragons must achieve.

He had elected the mighty but destructible in his earlier theory. That had been wrong. A ruling dragon need not be mightier than it had been in its life, but the ruling dragons must become stronger than the fallen dracoliches had been, and that strength would be in numbers.

To achieve this goal, according to Sammaster's second draconic theory, the undead dragons must have the ability to multiply themselves, and that they could do best as vampires. He would create a new breed of undead dragons. He would hypnotize living wyrms into submission and then initiate them into the new ruling class of draconic undead. He also theorized that the dragons needed humans to lead them, and these would come from the ranks of his cult.

The founder of the cult had little opportunity to spread his new theory. He first espoused it in the Year of the Many Mists (1282 DR), and his lich already had been destroyed through the plotting of Gall and others three years later, in the Year of the Blacksnake (1285 DR).

In the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR), Tiamat-worshipping cultists in Chessenta again came upon the theory that had been stifled some 90 years earlier and found that it made more sense than the earlier dogma of the cult. The lady lich Kargmelchina not only had been a strong supporter of this theory; she had guided Sammaster to it a century earlier. The avatar of Tiamat who now occupied Kargmelchina's undead body very strongly supported this theory.

Tiamat wanted the cult's priests and dragons to serve her. Human priests were easier to command, influence and steer than dragons. For that reason, Tiamat also strongly favored a hierarchy in which her high priests stood over the cult's dragons. To reach her goals, Tiamat wished to spread vampirism as quickly as possible through the ranks of Faerûn's dragons, so that all would be under her control and serve her willingly or unwillingly.

Hurddh returned to the Great Dale a true believer in the new cult faction and the church of Tiamat. He brought with him not only other cultists who had left Tower Threespires in search of dragons but also additional Tiamatist cult followers and priests of the dragon queen whom he had met along the way. The arising of the Tiamatist faction had caused a great schism in the cult, and many of those who came to Tower Threespires with him had been persecuted or even hunted by the anti-Tiamatists.

After his return, Hurddh traveled to Nighthawk Tower, to inform Gall of the schism in the cult and the growth of the Tiamatist faction. Gall listened to the arch necromancer skeptically, above all, because he had become quite wary of dragons. The idea of undead dragons whom he could control did interest Gall somewhat, but he asked Hurddh from where the vampire dragons were to come who would infect living dragons with vampirism.

Hurddh said the answer to this question was a dark secret of the church to which only the highest priests were privy, but it was known within the church that some 50 vampire dragons already existed and soon would be available to help cult leaders elsewhere. He strongly urged Gall to align his Kront cult cell with the Tiamatist faction and to become a cleric of Tiamat, so that he would be able to benefit from the wave of vampire dragons who would be unleashed in the future.

Gall agreed to align the Kront faction of the cult with the Tiamatists. He really had no choice; Hurddh and the other cult members in Tower Threespires already had made that decision for themselves. After pondering the situation for a time, Gall also came to the conclusion that the Dragon Queen was a goddess whom he could serve as a cleric without offending Malar. He thought her designs might also give him the time and opportunity he needed to spread the gospel of Herne the Hunter, to win the believers he thought would win godhood for him.

Gall then sent for the priests of Tiamat who had come to Tower Threespires to give him information on the church. For several months, Gall prayed to Tiamat for acceptance as one of her clerics, but he received no answer.

Gall's prayers did indeed interest Tiamat. From what she understood of the Great Dale, it would offer a perfect haven for vampire dragons, and it had many isolated areas that would be ideal for the breeding of draconians. However, Gall himself posed a problem for the goddess. He was Sammaster's mortal enemy. She and Sammaster already had bound adventurers to destroy their mortal enemies, and Gall was among those targeted for destruction. Sammaster was too valuable to Tiamat, to risk his loyalty.

Therefore, Kargmelchina needed to convince Sammaster that Gall could be of great value to their plans in the time to come, and that his destruction should be postponed until he no longer was needed. Kargmelchina's attempts were successful, but only after some time had passed.

For that reason, Gall was forced to wait for Tiamat to acknowledge his prayers. When she finally did so, she came to Nighthawk Tower in person, in the form of the Kargmelchina avatar from Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain. There they forged an alliance that both thought would serve their purposes well.

In Kythorn of the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), a large band of draconians led by three vampire dragons in hybrid form began descending the mountains to cross Damara by night and reach Rawlinswood, with the intention of traveling through it to Tower Threespires. The group went unnoticed until it was spotted by rangers in southern Damara, but these draconians have not emerged from the forest to date.

A tenday later, a band of four vampire dragons flew from the ruins of Castle Perilous in Vaasa, heading toward Tower Threespires. Many heard their thunderous passing in the night, and several Damarans spotted them in their early morning flight as they began to cross Rawlinswood, but they too disappeared over the forest. Harbet Gall and Kargmelchina suspect the truth. They believe that the vampire dragons and draconians ran afoul of and fell victim to the mysterious Nentyarch.

Since then, rather than taking on the Nentyarch at this time, Kargmelchina has chosen to use a detour, sending her vampire dragons and draconians by land across Damara and through the foothills of the Giantspires into eastern Rawlinswood, with their first stop in a secret reception station in the ruins of Veidarheim.

The reception station is run by the most powerful of her vampire dragons, Knellict, former archmage of the Citadel of Assassins in Damara, who also is her representative in the Gallist domain of the Great Dale. Knellict's presence in the Dale is a well kept secret, a fact known only to Kargmelchina, Gall, Urgath Hurddh and the vampire dragons Knellict commands.

Gall's and Kargmelchina's conspiracies are generally beyond the knowledge of most Freemen in the western and Central Dale, but some rangers of the West have picked up bits and pieces of what is happening. They claim that Gall now is forging pacts with strange cells of the Dragon Cult from the North. One ranger, who successfully spied upon a conversation between one of Gall's cult magi and strangers in Bezentil, has reported that the discussion dealt with the possibility of bringing in *"waves of undead dragons from the North"* and destroying the *"heretics of the Western Dale in a single blow."*

Captured hobgoblins from the Giantspires have told rangers of battles with *dragon lizards* and *black men with wings* who were crossing the foothills of the Giantspires north of Rawlinswood. The hobgoblins allegedly were defeated soundly in such encounters by powerful magic, with only a few survivors succeeding in fleeing.

In addition, druids and rangers who have spoken with Nar tribesmen relates stories of groups of hybrid dragon-lizardmen, some with magical powers, who have marched across the Narfelli plain to eastern Rawlinswood and entered it, heading toward the ruins of Veidarhofn.

These groups are said to be led by strange, shadowy black creatures in human form with dragon wings. The Nars claim to have encountered such groups and to have challenged their presence on the Narfelli plain, but in each encounter, the tribesmen allegedly have been driven off by powerful magic, suffering severe losses.

Whether these tales are true or the threats are empty is beyond the ken of the Western Dalesmen. They sleep uneasily these days and with a measure of fear. Several of the small farming hamlets of the Western Dale are welcoming adventurers into their midst who meet with the approval of the clerics and druids of Chauntea and Ilmater.

Even magi, who always have been looked upon with great distrust by the folk of the Great Dale, are finding acceptance, for no one deludes himself into thinking that the simple farmer-warriors of the Western Dale would be a match for a wave of undead dragons, should Gall succeed in calling them to the Dale.

Although adventurers are being welcomed, few have arrived. Many adventurers would gladly come to the Great Dale to explore the depths of Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest, to search for the fabled ruins of the elven empire that departed from Auldgloam Forest millennia earlier, when the two woods were one and reached to the western shore of the Lake of Tears. But the druids of the western forests are on guard and welcome no strangers among their trees these days. Adventurers who have attempted to seek their fortune in the two forests often leave hastily, if at all.

The settlements and hamlets can offer adventurers only a solid roof over their heads, a full stomach and the companionship of stalwart frontiersmen determined to defend their Dale against all threats. That would indeed be a welcome invitation to thousands upon thousands of persons in Faerûn who must be satisfied with far less, but it is of little interest to most adventurers.

Waiting for them in the Eastern Dale is the mad lich Harbet Gall, who ponders nothing so much these days as what steps he must take to win the large number of believers he thinks will raise him to godhood in the form of Herne the Hunter.

As often is the case with madmen, Gall's undead eyes shift constantly and restlessly, sometimes looking too little upon the eastern enclave of the Great Dale that still is under his rule, instead gazing out upon the lands around them where he might find those who love the hunt and would worship a deity who espouses it. His gaze these days often is upon Rashemen, Damara and even the lands of the Nar tribesmen.

2. The Great Dale

NOTE: Also see the Section entitled *Once Upon a Time* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* for a more detailed history of Impiltur and the Great Dale, and also see the entries for Harbet Gall and the Nentyarch, Cynric Evenhand, in Section II.1 – New Unofficial NPCs, of the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

You fine lords, who would teach us how to lead upstanding lives
and how to avoid all sin and deeds of evil,
first of all you must give us something to eat,
and then you can preach; there it begins.
Those of you who love your own fat bellies and our virtue,
this single truth you should learn now and forever:
no matter how you twist and turn the matter
first comes the feeding, after that come the morals

Bertolt Brecht - Die Dreigroschenoper (*Threepenny Opera*)

The great Bavarian-Swabian playwright and poet of the 1930s and 40s, Bertolt Brecht, virtually summarizes the foundation of the Great Dale's history in those few lines from the *Threepenny Opera*, which we've translated from the original German text.

Several centuries ago, druids of different beliefs divided the Great Dale into two camps, hunters on the one side and farmers and foresters on the other. The hunters had only their prey to feed their families; the farmers and foresters had substantially more food. Many of the druids, in the name of the balance, tried to curb hunting. Their high morals, however, did not take into account the question of how the hunters should provide food for the families' tables.

So it began. The morals came before the feeding. With time, the church of Malar, the Beastlord, capitalized upon this violation of Brechtian law, and the Great Dale has been involved in a civil war ever since.

Any discussion of the Great Dale must take into account that the name encompasses above all a loosely defined geographical area. There is no country called the Great Dale, and most of the land known as the Great Dale is in no country. Government in most areas is limited to a local level, with each duke, count or baron and each Freemen's village council making his or its own laws and no one ruling above that level.

Only a few areas of the Dale fall under other jurisdictions: The settlements on the Heralds Road and Merchants Run and the northwestern corner of Rawlinswood are within the borders of Impiltur and Damara. And New Sarshel is an independent city controlled by the Iron Throne. The port town does nothing to support other parts of the Dale. Shipping, smuggling and other activities are New Sarshel's daily lot. Neighbors are incidental to these things.

One can indeed debate what areas belong to the Dale. The settlements of Cairnpur, Maracrath, Guidodale and Mulltown asked to be annexed into the Kingdom of Impiltur and Queen Sambryl consented. The village of Lenchford, north of Mulltown on the Merchants Run, is geographically in the Great Dale, but politically, Lenchford is a part of the Damaran province of Polten. Tellerth, on the northwestern edge of Rawlinswood, is in the province of Soravia. Few would consider it a part of the Dale, although it does have close ties with the druids in the Damaran corner of Rawlinswood, who very much consider themselves to be Dalesmen.

The cities of Uthmere, New Sarshel, Nyth and Ethdale on the eastern coast of the Easting Reach are independent. Telflamm long ruled Nyth and Ethdale, now independent free settlements, but their natives will tell you they are Dalesmen from the Great Dale. The people of Borkurstad once would have named themselves Dalesmen too, but since the Iron Throne has taken over the port, drawing scum elements to it, the natives have headed to other destinations, and the harbor town now has relatively little to do with the rest of the Dale.

Each of these towns either rules itself or belongs to a greater political entity outside of the Great Dale. And the settlements of the Merchants Run do in fact have much more to do with Impiltur and Damara these days than with their fellow Dalesmen who live under more modest and dangerous conditions on and along the Trade Route between Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest.

The two hunting and farming communities on the southeast side of Lethyr Forest, Mettledale and Spearmouthdale, have had little contact with the Central Dale. Instead, they long had been objects being eyed by the small nation of Thesk, before the Tuigan Horde ravaged that country.

Nonetheless, almost any long-time resident of the Great Dale, be it a merchant in Lenchford, a fisherman in Ethdale, a druid in Rawlinswood, a peasant farmer near Bezentil, an evil huntsmen in Harbet Gall's service in Skarlshofn or a hunter-rancher in southern Mettledale, will tell you the residents of Mettledale are Dalesmen, and their home is the Great Dale. All Dalesmen view their fatherland as something of a nation without an established country to cement its boundaries. With the Dale still in a state of civil war, there also are no plans being seriously discussed at present to found a country.

The tendency to think as a Dalesman is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that volunteers from the settlements on the Merchants Run between Lenchford and Cairnpur – which are in Damara and Impiltur - as well as from the coastal villages between Uthmere and Ethdale have joined peasant farmers, druids and clerics of various faiths in the long battle against the lich Harbet Gall and his minions in the Eastern Dale and Ashanath. This solidarity continues without question, for despite the fact that the Great Dale has no central government or other central authority, its folk views itself as one, as Dalesmen.

There are, however, also differences among the Dalesmen in various parts of this sweeping land. The original Turami immigrants who settled the Dale were strongly shaped by druidic teachings, and principles of nature conservation remain an important part of most Dalesmen's thinking, even if their families have lived for centuries far from the forests in such enclaves as the southern fishing port of Ethdale or as worshippers of Harbet Gall in the Eastern Dale or Ashanath.

While the druidic principles remain deeply-rooted within most Dalesmen, even to some extent within the Malarite huntsmen of Harbet Gall, who believe they worship a god named *Herne the Hunter,* dominant religions are quite variable, depending upon location:

- Dalesmen between Lenchford and Cairnpur along the Merchants Run were above all worshippers of Waukeen before her disappearance in the Time of Troubles. Tymora has inherited many of Waukeen's worshippers in this area, although a small temple to Gond has been established in the craftsmen's settlement in Guidodale, and Mask has gained followers. If Waukeen has returned in your campaign, her worship again will be waxing here.

- The majority of the residents of Timbertown, Uthving, Wanneth and the farmlands between Rawlinswood and the Merchants Run, Easting Reach and the Trade Route are worshippers of Chauntea, with Silvanus, Mielikki and Ilmater also having respectable followings.

- The majority of the people living in New Sarshel are not Dalesmen but rather relatively recent immigrants from Sembia. Merchants from Impilturian Sarshel bought most of Borkurstad in the Year of the Prince (1357 DR), and renamed it New Sarshel to protest the government's stand on Zhengyi in Vaasa and the financial depression it brought to Sarshel. Within a year, Sembian merchants had taken over New Sarshel and built it into a free-for-all port town of 1,500. The population today is at about 2,500, with very diverse religious inclinations.

- Residents of the coastal settlements of Uthmere, Nyth and Ethdale worship Umberlee, Tymora and Chauntea. If she has returned, Waukeen will have a following again, and there also is small but growing interest in the church of Valkur.

- Dalesmen along the Trade Route between Veststad and Bezentil tend to follow the clerics of Chauntea and Ilmater or the teachings of the druids of Silvanus.

- The rangers and hunters within western Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest are almost exclusively followers of the druids of Silvanus and Eldath or they are ranger followers of Mielikki. Many are half elven descendents of Dalesmen and the green elves who once inhabited these forests.

- Residents of the Eastern Dale, Mettledale and Spearmouthdale as well as Kront in Ashanath have historically been exclusive worshippers of *Herne the Hunter* (Malar), led by the lich Harbet Gall, however the worship of Garagos and Tiamat also have been gaining in this region. Malar is directly worshipped in Bezentil.

Although the Great Dale has no central government, it can be roughly divided into three different bases of power:

- The Eastern Dale, the southeastern edge of Lethyr Forest including Mettledale and Spearmouthdale and Ashanath remain under the control of the lich Harbet Gall and his followers. Gall himself is holed up in the Nighthawk Tower (he calls it the Temple of the Horned God) on the eastern edge of Rawlinswood overlooking the Nars' part of Ashanath. Gall's leading dragon cultists live today in Tower Threespires and the followers of Garagos in the ruins of Fortress Clymph. The main Gallist settlement is the city of Kront on Lake Ashane (the Lake of Tears) in Ashanath. Gall's power is encountering increasing resistance from the Nentyarch in central Rawlinswood and from the highly militant Mucklestones Druids in eastern Lethyr Forest.

- The Nentyarch's area of power within Rawlinswood is difficult to define, but the druids of the western wood say his presence is clearly noticeable in all of the wood east of the Soleine River and west of Dender's Valley, beginning five to 10 miles north of the forest's southern edge. His Dun Tharos, a few elven ruins, including the collapsing tree town of Kjarr and the Gallist ruin Tangetsjódur, all are within his domain. Nothing remains in this part of the forest that the Nentyarch does not wish to have there, according to the druids of Silvanus. His presence also has been found at times between the Soleine and the Sidewinder (River Lench). Some say the Veidarheim ruin is in his hands. And there also is no doubt that the Nentyarch frequently makes raids on the minions of Harbet Gall in Rawlinswood to the east of Dender's Valley.

- The rest of the Great Dale simply is termed by its residents to be the Free Dale (not to be confused with the village of Freedale between Shadowdale and Ashabenford in Cormanthor west of the Dragon Reach). Druidic principles still shape the thinking of these Dalesmen, but they have followed many divergent religions and gods without falling into conflict with one another. Most areas are ruled by a village council or are ruled by a land baron or other country noble.

The Life of the Average Freeman of the Dale

Many western and Central Dalesman simply don't lead average lives. This is particularly true for those who live in Uthmere, New Sarshel and the Merchants Run settlements. The way these folk live is explained separately below in the descriptions of the various regions.

However, most of the other people in the free parts of the Dale and the way they lead their lives have much in common. Almost all Freemen are uneducated and relatively poor descendants of the old Turami race. Most at least can get by in the spoken common language, but old Turami is their mother tongue, and it is the language they use to speak with each other. Outside of Uthmere, where private tutors are available, there are no schools for the Dalesmen or their children to attend.

Free Dalesmen tend by and large to be a land-loving, land-bound folk devoted to the Dale itself and to their families. They often worship Silvanus, Chauntea and Ilmater. Eking out an existence is the priority of almost every free Dalesman. Outside of Uthmere, one finds few who aren't, at least to a degree, farmers. Agriculture as a source of income is limited for the most part to growing grain - barley, wheat, rye, oats and some spelt - as well as turnips and other root crops such as potatoes, carrots, horseradish and flax.

On the edges of Lethyr Forest and Rawlinswood north and south of the Trade Route and in the Mauberg area one also finds large fruit orchards, with apples, pears and prune plums being the main staples. Much of the harvest is sold to the brothers of Mauberg's Oak or to the Uth's End Distillery in Uthmere for the production of schnapps and a certain amount of alcoholic cider. Many Dalesmen and their wives also earn a bit of money harvesting wild raspberries, blackberries, blueberries and currants for sale to the distilleries.

Climate and soil in most parts of the free Dale are unsuited for the commercial production of vegetable crops, although almost every free Dalesmen has a vegetable garden of his own and builds primitive hot frames in late Midwinter to make it possible to grow more tender vegetables for personal use.

Animal husbandry also is a limited affair in the Great Dale. The open swath along the Trade Route from Uthmere to Vulddin provides many stretches of good grazing land. These are used largely for milk cows. Few beef cattle are found anywhere in the Dale. When cows get older and begin to produce little milk, they are slaughtered, but their meat is tough and used only to produce homemade sausage for private consumption.

When a Dalesmen speaks of meat, he usually is referring to what's bagged on a hunt. The main prey is deer, boar, rabbit, hare and pheasant. The keeping of chickens, turkey and other poultry is unknown in the Dale, and farm pigs are a rarity, although there are some raised for slaughter in the Uthmere area, for sale of the pork in expensive inns. Various saltwater fish are a main staple of the diet in the coastal regions, while the many streams in the inland Dale are a good source of freshwater trout.

Most free Dalesmen need to provide a large part of their own food supplies. Little food is available for sale outside of Uthmere. Although a free Dalesmen may have respectable capital in his land, buildings, crops and perhaps stock, he normally has few coins. Most of the free Dale runs on a barter-based economy, and coins are little used and little sought.

Few free Dalesmen live on farming alone. In most families, the housewife also is the main farmer. Her husband farms too, but he must devote a large part of his time to other activities, to sustain his family.

Some free Dalesmen run businesses. The most important man in any area usually is the miller. The farmers bring their grain to the mill where it is ground into flour. As his fee, the miller usually keeps 5 to 10% of the flour he has milled, returning the rest in sacks to the farmer who provided the grain. A similar system is used with seeds that come under the mill's wooden hammer to stomp oil from them.

The miller is more dependent than most free Dalesmen upon other villagers. His is a fulltime job, therefore, he needs to barter or buy his daily staples as well as firewood from other villagers. The miller also is the person most likely to have coins; some of his flour and vegetable oil usually are sold to buyers passing through the village who resell these commodities in the Easting Reach area.

Another common businessman is the village smith. There also may be a wainwright who builds wagons and sledges. And there usually is a village tavernkeeper who perhaps is brewmaster as well, although home brewing remains widespread in the free Dale. But even in those areas where many brew their own beer and ale, the tavernkeeper usually is the source of the barley malt.

Beer and ale brewing are not matters of luxury in the Dale. As was the case with European monks in the Middle Ages, beer and ale are brewed above all as a matter of preserving barley for later consumption. Beer and ale are viewed as major food staples throughout the Dale west of Easting Reach. Because hops grows wild on the edges of the forests, it usually is used to keep beer and ale from souring, and other herbal gruits are unnecessary.

Few free Dalesmen are entrepreneurs. In the warmer half of the year, the men of the free Dale often are away hunting deer, boar and pheasant in those parts of Rawlinswood opened to them by the druids. Most men hunt in well-armed parties so that they can protect themselves in possible encounters with Gallist Hunters of Herne. Such meetings usually end in violence.

The hunting season and the druids' permission to hunt end in mid-Eleint, when the free Dalesmen return home, most of them to spend the next two tendays hard at work, finishing the last harvests and plowing their fields before winter sets in.

After the Harvestide Festival, logging season begins, again in areas approved by the druids and only in larger armed parties. Logging too is of crucial importance to the free Dalesmen, because they need a sufficient staple of firewood to bring their families through the winter cold.

The logging season ends with the Feast of the Moon, when most free Dalesmen remain at home until the beginning of hunting season in Kythorn. House and farm buildings in the Great Dale are rather simple half-timbered affairs, built on wood frames that are filled with mixtures of manure, loam, clay and sandstone. By the time the cold season sets in, most homesteads are in dire need of repairs that claim most of a free Dalesman's time until early Tarsakh.

From mid-Hammer to mid-Ches the druids also allow a winter hunt. Each free Dalesmen may hunt the fringes of Rawlinswood twice during this time, with each hunt lasting a tenday. As in summer, the winter hunts usually are conducted in large, well-armed groups.

During the winter months when the men are busy repairing houses, barns, sheds, root cellars, fencing and farm implements, the housewives spend what time they can at the spinning wheel and loom, making textiles from flax grown in the Dale and then sewing the family's clothing. If there is cloth left over, it usually is sold to buyers from Easting Reach Textiles in Uthmere, who come down the Trade Route in late Mirtul to make their purchases.

From mid-Tarsakh until the end of Mirtul, all able-bodied members of the free Dalesmen's families are hard at work preparing the fields for the coming year's crops, sowing etc., until Kythorn, when the druids reopen the hunting season and the men often are away from home again.

Life in the free Dale is hard, and those who survive there are a hardy folk with a pioneering spirit. Those who lack that spirit usually pack their belongings sooner or later into a wagon and flee westward, above all into Impiltur or the Vast, to seek what they believe will be a life of less trial. But most Dalesmen not only remain but would not think of leaving their beloved homeland, in which they take great pride.

This pride has its price. Life in the Great Dale tends to be shorter than in many other parts of Faerûn. The unending clashes between the two religious factions that divide the Dale between East and West take an ongoing toll, but disease is the scythe the Grim Reaper uses most often in the Dale.

The number of clerics and priests with extensive healing powers in the free Dale is small. Those who take ill or are wounded often die for lack of proper treatment, although a growing knowledge of herbal medicine in the Dale is turning this tide slowly. Childhood diseases and deaths still are much more common in the Dale than elsewhere, and the average life span in the free Dale is about 50, lower than in many other areas of Faerûn.

Guests in the Free Dale will find varied accommodations. The larger towns and villages have simple inns where rooms are simple but comfortable and one can eat one's fill at the maturbordh traditional in the Dale east of the coast. The maturbordh is a large, long table with an assortment of foods - meats, fish if available, and potatoes, turnips and other offerings, dependant upon season and the contents of the inn's root cellar. A guest pays a fee to eat and then can take all he or she wants from the maturbordh, which is similar to a Scandinavian smorgasbord.

In smaller settlements, an adventurer may have to barter with farmers for food and a room, or in some cases, the right to sleep in a hayloft.

The Life of the Average Eastern Dalesman

In basic matters, the life of the average Eastern Dalesmen has much in common with that of the average free Dalesmen. When one looks closer at matters, however, one quickly finds substantial differences.

Life in the Eastern Dale is noticeably harder than in the West. The life span is shorter, averaging some 40 to 45 years. This is in part due to deadly conflicts with the Freemen, but even more so to the lack of healers, only a minimal knowledge of herbal medicine and unbalanced nutrition. Crop farming is extremely difficult in the Eastern Dale, where the soils are poorer and the weather colder, windier and in general harsher than in the west.

The vegetable gardens that are a standard part of most Freemen's homesteads are noticeably absent in the East. In most settlements, nothing more than grains and root crops can be grown. Not even carrots grow well there.

The strong winds that blow across the Lake of Tears and down the Trade Route from the Narfelli Plain also make it difficult to grow fruit trees in the East. As a result, most Eastern Dalesmen have a diet that consists almost solely of meat, grain and starch. This diet is seriously overbalanced in favor of venison, boar and pheasant.

The slave farms in Kront on Lake Ashanath where climate and soils are friendlier do raise a substantial number of vegetable crops, but the harvest usually goes no farther than Kront and the elite addresses in the Eastern Dale. The common folk seldom if ever see vegetables other than turnips and potatoes. The imbalanced diet leads to more frequent disease and disability than is the case in the West.

The key difference, however, is that the folk of the Eastern Dale simply are not free. There is, for example, no freedom of movement in the Eastern Dale. A Freeman can theoretically move to any point in the world that he chooses, if he has the means to make the move. A Dalesman in, for example, the eastern hamlet of Skarlshofn cannot move up into the eastern forest village of Kars without the permission of the druid barons in both Kars and Skarlshofn. By no means may an Eastern Dalesman move out of the Eastern Dale.

This does not mean that travel is prohibited within the East. An Eastern Dalesmen may easily obtain a permit to travel anywhere he wants to within the Eastern Dale or Ashanath, but he may not resettle elsewhere within these areas without an authorization. The only exceptions are in the border areas to the Central Dale, Narfell and Thesk. Eastern Dalesmen may not enter these areas unauthorized.

The ranger Hunters of Herne patrol the border lands, and if anyone is found unauthorized in a border area, he or she must reckon with being jailed and turned free as prey in the next Great Hunt. Escaping into the Central or Western Dale, Narfell or Thesk is tantamount to treason in the lands under Harbet Gall's rule.

While Eastern Dalesmen are restricted in their movement, even within the East, they can be moved against their will. If, for an example, there are too many flax farmers in Skarlshofn and too few in Ulfshofn, the druid nobility simply may order the non-inheriting sons of a Skarlshofn family to take over vacant farms in Ulfshofn.

There also is virtual conscription in the Eastern Dale. When the ranger Hunters of Herne or the warriors of Garagos in the ruins of Fortress Clymph need more fighting men, the druid nobility can arbitrarily choose and order young men within their domains to report for war service. Needless to say, this practice often is used to deal with those who show signs of being a bit rebellious.

By and large, life in the Eastern Dale is dreary and work intensive, with noticeably lower standards of living and health than in the Freemen's territories. Farming is more difficult, and the weather is both unfriendly and colder in most areas.

Another issue that sharply divides the Eastern Dalesmen from the Freemen is religion. Eastern Dalesmen are oppressed by their druidic nobility, but they nonetheless tend to be staunch worshippers of Malar the Beastlord in his form as Herne the Hunter. Many view the oppression of the druid nobility in the East as a corruption of the church, but few question the tenets of Herne's faith.

Despite the differences mentioned here and the greater hardships, day-to-day life in the East is similar to that of the free Dalesmen. Unlike in the free Dale, Eastern Dalesmen may hunt or log anywhere they wish and at any time they wish. In practical terms, this means within Rawlinswood east of Kars and the ruins of Veidarhofn, where the druids of Silvanus have been driven out.

There is relatively little hunting or logging in eastern Lethyr Forest due to the continuing dangers posed by the militant Mucklestones Druids there. In the no man's land of central Lethyr Forest, the ranger Hunters of Herne do, indeed, hunt for food. But above all, the Freemen rangers and the Hunters of Herne hunt each other there.

Women in the East spend much of their time in winter spinning and sewing. Unlike the women of the free Dale, however, the wives of the East are not able to sell surplus textiles beyond those that fill their own needs. Women in the Eastern Dale have no buyers, nor do they have time to make saleable textile goods. In addition to providing clothing for their own families, they are required to make clothing for the warriors in the ruins of Fortress Clymph and the slaves in the farms south of Kront. They receive no pay for this work.

Outside of Kront and, to a limited extent, the ruins of Bezentil, a visitor in the Eastern Dale needs to provide for his or her own accommodations and barter with locals for food. It's unwise to travel through the Eastern Dale without a tent and the means to make campfires. The True Druids forbid farmers from putting outsiders up in their houses and barns. The facilities in Kront and Bezentil are similar to those in the Free Dale, including maturbordh.

A Reunified Dale?

General Friedhleif Skjöldurssonur and other leading figures of the free Dale have a dream of a distant day when peace returns to the Dale and the folk is reunited in a new nation of some sort, but few delude themselves with the idea that this vision could be realized in their own lifetimes. After centuries of division, the problems seem insurmountable.

Before any steps could be taken in this direction, Harbet Gall would have to be destroyed, along with the magi of the Dragon Cult in Tower Threespires. The priests of Garagos and their warriors in the ruins of Fortress Clymph would have to be vanquished. The evil rangers and druids who serve Herne the Hunter also would need to be defeated or driven from the land.

The Freemen have neither the military nor the magical strength necessary to achieve these ends. In addition, General Skjöldurssonur has mused that the defeat of Herne's rangers and true druids well might be the greatest hurdle of all on the road to reunification, and even if they were eliminated, new rangers of Herne would rise in their place, to wage guerilla warfare against the Freemen.

The heart of the problem in bringing the Dalesmen back together after centuries of civil war is that the cause of the original animosities never has been dealt with. Nearly 600 years have passed since the men of the Eastern Dale began battling the Mucklestones Druids of Lethyr Forest in the Year of the Flourishing Forests (789 DR). That was more than a century before Harbet Gall arrived in the Dale in the Year of the Sudden Journey (912 DR).

Starving families and the need for firewood to survive the harsh winters of the Eastern Dale were the reasons they took up arms against the druids. Were the Mucklestones Druids of today or the Freemen's druids of Silvanus to have their way, Eastern Dalesmen controlled by the Freemen would face the same prohibitions against hunting and logging that their forefathers did, and they would fight in the same way their ancestors did. Even without Gall, the Dragon cultists, the warriors of Garagos and Herne's true druids, there would be no peace in the Eastern Dale.

General Skjöldurssonur and several of the more enlightened heads of the West believe the key to ending this 600-year-old crisis lies on the shores of Lake Ashane south of Kront. The shore lands and the open meadows of little-populated Ashanath along both sides of Tears Creek to the eaves of Lethyr Forest have the potential of being a genuine breadbasket for the Eastern Dale. They have been fruitful at many times in the past but always have fallen to the ravages of warfare and passing armies.

Skjöldurssonur believes that if Gall and his followers can one day be defeated, the Freemen and the men of the East could forge a peace treaty that would make the Ashanath solution possible. Despite their worship of Herne, the Eastern Dalesmen remain in their hearts lovers of their forests and defenders of nature, and they continue to rationalize that they are serving these ideals through the teachings of Herne, not comprehending that such druidism is totally perverted by the Malarite dedication to the wild hunt.

Skjöldurssonur and those who share his views believe that the druids of Silvanus must allow the Eastern Dalesmen to live as they have been the last 583 years, until alternate sources of food can be developed in Ashanath. During this time, they argue, the druids of Rawlinswood and the Mucklestones Druids of Lethyr Forest should not fight the Eastern Dalesmen but rather slowly reeducate them to again understand the balance of nature and what is necessary to achieve it.

Unfortunately, the druids continue to be closed to such ideas. They wish to end any and every imbalance as quickly and decisively as possible. Skjöldurssonur contends that this adamant position is self-defeating. In sticking with this position, he says, the druids serve only to maintain the status quo, which adds up to endless bloodshed and, in the East, the continued ravaging of nature. It is better, he argues, to allow the imbalance in the East to continue temporarily until alternative food sources in Ashanath become available. The long-term effect upon Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest, he contends, would be far less negative than that of another 600 years of civil war.

However, as long as Harbet Gall, the magi of the Dragon Cult, the warriors of Garagos, the druidic nobility of Herne's church and the ranger Hunters of Herne remain in power in the East, such issues are moot. These things can, of course, begin to undergo rapid change.

Your campaign's PCs are entering the Dale. D&D wouldn't be D&D if your heroes didn't have the opportunity to eliminate Harbet Gall and any or all of the other non-philosophical barriers to reunification. Should they succeed in that, General Skjöldurssonur, the druids of Rawlinswood, the Mucklestones Druids and the Herne-worshipping folk of the Eastern Dale all may be forced to take a hard and decisive new look at how they wish deal with the Dale in which they all live.

Neither General Skjöldurssonur nor anyone else in the Dale is aware of the Sembian naval treaty with Telflamm or of the movement of the Iron Throne to urge the Sembian government to invade and conquer the Dale if Harbet Gall should fall. What plans they would forge in that case, and the question of what Sembia really would do are beyond the scope of *Northern Journey* and are, in any case, matters best left up to the individual Game Master, to decide based upon his own campaign's goals and needs.

A. Adventuring in the Great Dale

Regardless of whether you're running the *Northern Journey* adventure, things are brewing in the Great Dale. The fulcrum of the conflict in the Great Dale is the Malarite lich Harbet Gall who lairs in Nighthawk Tower on the eastern edge of Rawlinswood. For hundreds of years, he has been trying to make the entire Dale his own, but he controls only the East.

If you intend to make full use of the Dale as we describe it, your PCs will be looking to destroy Gall, who is a threat to the Dale's future. If you intend to use the campaign setting definitions of Damara and/or Vaasa offered in Part 7 of *NJ*, you may well want to incorporate some of the *NJ* plot elements outlined below.

This, of course, applies if you want your PCs to get involved in the *big* scenario we're offering. But we hasten to add that this isn't necessary at all. Our Great Dale is a place that we've described in detail. The fact that we think that the Kargmelchina avatar of Tiamat is sitting in Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain manipulating events in the Dale needs to play no role whatsoever in *your* campaign. You should have no trouble using our *Great Dale* release to suit your own purposes, ignoring whatever elements don't fit well or for that matter don't fit at all into *your* campaign.

Even if your PCs become aware of *big things* happening in the background, it shouldn't be necessary for them to become involved in them. Theoretically, it should be possible to send a party of 1st level PCs into our Great Dale and bring them back out alive again, if the party is smart enough to ask questions and you're Game Master enough to have your NPCs give them the information they need to avoid dangerous encounters with which they can't cope.

There are plenty of *lesser* evils in our Great Dale for a party to deal with, without ever having to be drawn into a confrontation with the major league doings we describe here that revolve around the Kargmelchina avatar of Tiamat and the Malarite lich Harbet Gall. Of course, if you want to incorporate some of the big league elements of *NJ* into the Great Dale segment of your campaign, you can jump right in! Just read the section that follows.

An interesting aside: Some Game Masters tell us they are running an exciting non-*NJ* campaign by having their PCs occasionally encounter the sigyll-adorned NPC party around which the *NJ* adventure centers. This gives your PCs the chance to experience the *NJ* tale to whatever extent you choose, if they happen to wander into it, and to go their own way anytime they wander out of it, without being the sigyll-bearers themselves.

NORTHERN JOURNEY Game Masters Only

The Sigylls Turn

As explained in Part 1, Kargmelchina-Tiamat has been dealing with the Malarite lich Harbet Gall in the eastern Great Dale to bring Gall and his cell of the Cult of the Dragon into the Tiamatist fold. Sometime after the PCs reached the Vast, this agreement was closed. At that time, Sammaster and Kargmelchina began attempting to turn the PCs away from destroying Gall and try to steer them instead toward Chessenta, with the hope that they could be forced to destroy anti-Tiamatist members of the Dragon Cult there, but the spirit of Grafvitnir began drawing them back onto Harbet Gall's path.

Merciless Draconians and Vampire Dragons

Once the PCs left Impiltur and entered the Great Dale, it became clear to Kargmelchina-Tiamat that another finger is steering them. As far as she is concerned, it is of paramount importance that the PCs be destroyed. As many draconians as she can spare will be appearing in the Dale and attacking the PCs regularly. To whatever extent possible, vampire dragons will attack them by night. And before the PCs cross into Harbet Gall's territory in the East, the Gallists will be forewarned that a party with strange red symbols on its arms is approaching to destroy Gall, and these intruders must be liquidated.

Help Unhoped For

Urgrath Hurddh, the high Wearer of the Purple who serves Harbet Gall as the leader of the Kront Dragon Cult cell in Tower Threespires, wants nothing more than to see his lich master destroyed. From Hurddh's point of view, Gall's history is a tale of hundreds of years of incompetence in the Great Dale, a land he believes any two-bit power should have been able to conquer. He has every intention of achieving this goal, to honor Tiamat, to honor dragonhood and to honor himself. All that stands in his way is the mighty lich Harbet Gall. Hurddh believes Kargmelchina is making a grave error in protecting Harbet Gall from the PCs, and he will do what he can to quietly correct this mistake and keep the PCs on the path to Nighthawk Tower.

For those running the *NJ* campaign, the PCs should have figured out by the time they reach the Eastern Dale that the Tiamatist faction of the cult is behind the draconians, who one protected them and now are trying to destroy them. It should confuse the PCs thoroughly, when Tiamatist cult members appear and help the PCs fight Tiamat's draconians.

Resisting the Sigylls in the Great Dale and Ashanath

Your PCs have been bearing the Sigylls of Contagion for a long time and have reached another point where their ability to resist the pull of the sigylls has increased with their new levels and abilities. A PC may make one saving throw daily to attempt to resist the sigylls, which bear the will of Kargmelchina and Sammaster and are pulling the PCs southwards,.

D&D 3rd Edition Campaigns: Save for will, DC 20.

AD&D 2nd Edition Campaigns: Save for breath weapon, penalty of 1.

The PCs must contend not only with the sigylls but also with Grafvitnir's will, to which the Coins of Binding bound them. Anytime the sigylls begin pulling the PCs toward Chessenta, Grafvitnir will attempt within a day's time at the most to steer the PCs back toward the Great Dale.

D&D 3rd Edition Campaigns: Save for will, DC 25.

AD&D 2nd Edition Campaigns: Save for breath weapon, penalty of 2.

B. The Coastal Settlements

Uthving is a wealthy community. The small, walled town is a base for many rich leisure time hunters from the Vast and Impiltur, and it draws hunters from points as far as Sembia and even Cormyr. There are few areas on either side of the Dragon Reach with the abundance of game found in the forests straddling the Soleine Valley, or the thick underbrush and forest growth that makes the hunt such a sport.

Uthving's economy is highly dependent upon the commercial hunt. Former rangers have come to wealth acting as guides for tourist hunters from the West, and a large part of the economy is based upon income from the many expensive hunting lodges and the accompanying gastronomical trade. The hunting trade also has something of a dark cloud hanging over its head at the moment. Guides, who have led parties far upstream, beyond the bend in the Soleine to the northeast, have not returned. They too have violated the Nentyarch's invisible borders and have been transmogrified into hobgoblins.

Another main staple of Uthving's economy is the wine which grows southwest of the town along the Easting Reach. The majority of the vineyards are in the hands of the hereditary count of Uthving. Today, the rolling hills on both sides of the Soleine's estuary on the Easting Reach are planted in wine. The grapes are harvested in fall and transported to the central winery in Uthving.

There is relatively little trade along the Telflamm Coastal Trail following the coast of the Easting Reach southwards from Uthmere, New Sarshel, Nyth and Ethdale.

The main reason is that the trail leads to no new markets beyond the harbor of New Sarshel and the Free City of Telflamm. Since the Tuigan Invasion, there is little to be earned shipping normal merchandise East on the Golden Way, and the southeastern nations of Aglarond and Thay are not yet on the maps of most provincial Great Dale merchants. Indeed, most Dalesmen probably never have heard the names of these lands.

A second problem is the fact that southward bound perishables from Damara that might use the Telflamm Coastal Trail would have to travel over a small corner of Impiltur, passing Ilmwatch, where customs tolls are levied before merchants transport their wares by ferry back into the Great Dale at Uthmere. Customs fees are a relatively new thing in Impiltur, a reaction to the construction of New Sarshel as a competitive, price-cutting alternative harbor to economically depressed Sarshel in Impiltur.

One should not understand the levying of customs fees upon ferry freight in Ilmwatch as a sign of hostile feelings between Impiltur and the Great Dale; such feelings do not exist. Impiltur and the Western Dalesmen are on quite friendly terms. The relationship is cooler with the Sembians who built New Sarshel. Even if Impiltur were disposed toward hostility against the Dale, it would have no political target to focus upon, because the Dale lacks any type of national or regional government.

Some smaller merchants who think an extra day's travel time is a lower price to pay than the customs fees in Ilmwatch will travel instead over the secondary road from Guidodale – where there are no Impilturian customs stations – to Uthving and Uthmere, but the extra day is too expensive a price for larger merchants, a day of spoilage for those shipping perishables and a dangerous detour over a poor road for those who wish to ship fragile merchandise.

Uthmere is the gateway to the Trade Route and another center for wine production. Refugee vintners from Tethyr discovered in the Year of the Spur (1348 DR) that the soils along the Easting Reach, along with the mild marine climate and above average number of sunny days were ideal for growing quality wine. They established wine in the Uthmere area, and their success led the count of Uthving to plant his vineyards.

Today, the rolling hills north and south of Uthmere all are planted in wine. The grapes are harvested in fall and transported to small, private wineries in Uthmere which are second in quantity and quality only to the vineyards of the count of Uthving to the north.

New Sarshel is an exception among the cities, settlements and villages of the Great Dale. As already mentioned, the majority of the people living in New Sarshel are not Dalesmen but rather relatively recent immigrants from Sembia.

Protesting merchants from Sarshel bought most of the old fishing village of Borkurstad in the Year of the Prince (1357 DR) but lost it to the Iron Throne a little more than later a year. The Throne turned it into the bustling but corrupt port town it is today.

New Sarshel also serves as the base the Iron Throne has been using since the 1360s to infiltrate the bloodstone market of Damara. The city continues to be a regional operational center for the Throne on the Easting Reach and in Impiltur, now operating in the Throne-dominated city of Heliogabalus in Damara (also see the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* and Segment No. 7 *Bloodstone*).

Quality wine also is grown on the southern faces of the low coastal hills halfway between Uthmere and New Sarshel and just south of Nyth. These wines, not quite as high in quality as those of Uthving and Uthmere, are cellared in New Sarshel and Nyth. The wines of the Easting Reach are considered to be second in quality only to those grown in the Ithmong area of Tethyr, and the export of such wine makes an important contribution to harbor trade in New Sarshel, although the contribution is trivial in comparison to the heavily guarded transportation of bloodstone from Damara, the key reason New Sarshel was built.

Beyond the wine and bloodstone transportation, the coastal cities of the Great Dale live largely from fishing and farming, earning more modest incomes than the merchants of New Sarshel and the Merchants Run, but also leading simpler, happier and more comfortable lives. Fishing is good along most of the eastern shore of the Easting Reach, and fertile soil stretches from the shore eastward, almost to the eaves of Lethyr Forest.

The coastal grasslands are ideal for grazing dairy cattle that produce premium milk high in fat. The land of the eastern coast, stretching inland up the fertile forest valley of the Eth and Flam, produces an abundance of food crops. The only shadow upon this part of the Dale is along the young Flam, near its source, where *Herne*-worshipping hunters from Spearmouthdale have come from the forest to burn and kill. Most of the farms in this area are nothing more than charred ruins. The farmers of the Flam Valley are isolated and ill-equipped to mount retaliatory raids against the huntsmen of Spearmouthdale.

There was a light boom for three or four years, beginning in the Year of the Wave (1364 DR), when prospectors found rich veins of gold in the Upper Eth Valley within Lethyr Forest. By the Year of the Banner (1368 DR), these veins had been totally worked out. The number of prospectors willing to work the veins, mostly from Impiltur and Damara, dwindled rather quickly anyway, because Hunters of Herne from Spearmouthdale took to using the poorly armed prospectors as prey for their hunts.

Harbet Gall's various westward military campaigns have met their end east of most of the coastal settlements, and these parts of the Great Dale have had little direct contact with the civil war. The remnants of a Gallist campaign in the early part of this century did reach the outskirts of Borkurstad but fell before entering the lazy port town, which later became New Sarshel. Military operations in the coastal area have been limited largely to guerilla raids upon remote inland farms near Lethyr Forest and the Eth and Flam valleys.

Rulership in the Coastal Settlements is diverse and in many cases minimal. As in most of the rest of the Dale, local rulers have titles of nobility, harking back to the days when the Dale was a part of Narfell.

Uthmere, the Great Dale's largest city is the seat of a duchy. A duke governs it, but its true government is an oligarchy, a cabinet of merchants and churchmen, who elect the duke for life. In Narfelli and Impilturian times, an Impilturian duke of noble blood ruled the duchy, but the hereditary line fell together with the first kingdom of Impiltur.

Wanneth and the vineyards north of Uthmere to the Uth as well as those south of the city all belong to the duchy. The small thorp of Wanneth has its own local, one-man community government headed by an alderman who is elected in a public meeting every four years.

One of the few hereditary nobles still maintaining his seat in the Great Dale is the Count of Uthving. His lineage is Impilturian and perhaps even Narfelli. The count of Uthving owns the vineyards on Easting Reach and much of the important property in the town has belonged to the ancestral counts. For several centuries, however, the count has shared his authority with a village council.

New Sarshel was a barony when it was the Freeman's harbor town of Borkurstad. Today it is run by a Burgomaster who allegedly is served by a secret council. The council does not in fact exist. The town is run according to the will of the Iron Throne. The villages of Nyth and Ethdale were baronies until Telflamm annexed them. Since regaining their independence, each has been governed by an alderman who is chosen by a village board.

Uthmere

Small city, Conventional, AL: NG, 15,000 gp limit. Assets: 9,000,000 gp. Population 12,000 (including 2,100 militiamen); 94% human, 2% dwarven, 2% half-elven, 1% halfling, 1% other. Authority figures: Duke Bródur, human male, AL:N, nominal ruler, Ftr 8, Aris 8, and his Secret Council (see below); General Friedhleif Skjöldurssonur, human male, AL: NG, commander of the Freemen's militia, Ranger 24; Tilnyraun, human male, AL:LE(N), Exp 5, Portmaster of Uthmere. Others: Garth Tenest, human male, AL:NE (detected as N), moneychanger and Malarite agent, Exp 2, War 14; Nunumbryl, human female, AL:NE, owner of the Sea Wave Inn & Bordello and leading agent of Mask's church in the Great Dale, Cleric (Mask) 4, Rogue 6, Wizard - Illusionist 3, Exp 4. City Watch: 70 human male and female, AL: All, War lvls 1-5, 30 human male and female, AL: All, Ftr lvls 1-7. Taxation: Benevolent.

Game Master's note: At the time this segment of *Northern Journey* was being written, there were only sketchy official definitions of the Great Dale. In early 2005 *Forgotten Realms* inventor Ed Greenwood began writing an extensive, multi-part piece on Uthmere that can be downloaded free from the WotC website at:

http://www.wizards.com/default.asp?x=dnd/rl/20050831a

Mr. Greenwood's version of Uthmere is totally different from that offered here.

The Great Dale's largest city - albeit small - carries a strange hybrid name. *Uth* was the Narfelli spelling of *Út*, which comes from the old Turami language and means *outer,* but it also can refer to meanings such as *from the outlands. Mere* on the other hand comes from common and means, of course, *sea*. If the entire name had been in old Turami, it would have been *Útsjór*

We mention this relatively dry point only because the name is so representative of Uthmere's history and character. The River Uth had gained its name in old Turami from the Turami settlers who first inhabited the Great Dale (preceded of course by green elves). When the Narfelli Empire moved into the Great Dale, it continued to use the name the river already had been given.

Uthmere, however, was in pre-Narfelli times an icy area that drew few Turami to its shoreline. The Narfelli, who named it Uthmere, referring to both the river and the sea it flows into, Easting Reach, established the first settlement in -992 DR. In the nearly two and a half millennia since the long-vanquished Narfelli settled the city, it has had a colorful and mixed history that always has kept it apart in spirit from much of the rest of the Great Dale.

Most of the other towns, villages, hamlets and thorps of the Great Dale in post-Narfelli times have been populated mainly by Turami descendants who can speak their old language, although most are illiterate. Uthmere, however, never was a Turami settlement. After more than 1,150 years as a Narfelli outpost, it fell into the hands of the non-Narfelli who remained in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR). They were a mix of Turmrar from Impiltur, of mixed Narfelli and Turami descent, who were literate, educated and had learned magic, and the lower class left from the Narfelli era, the simple and illiterate Dalesmen of Turami origin.

This period lasted a mere three years, until the first Impilturian kingdom claimed Uthmere in the Year of the Candlemaker (-147 DR). Historians say that Uthmere did not come into the hands of the Freemen of the Great Dale until the Year of the Burning Tree (890 DR), during the collapse of the first Impilturian kingdom. This is formally correct but practically a bit meaningless.

When the Impilturian monarchy fell, there no longer was a kingdom of which Uthmere could be a part, but the city's population remained predominantly Impilturian, although with time, it opened ever more to the Dalesmen. These twists of history continue to shape the character of modern Uthmere. Its population in the Year of Wild Magic (1372 DR) breaks down roughly as follows:

- 60%: Descendants of old Impilturian families with Turmrar blood and names that end in -nyr, and -lyr and -raun and -brar and the like.
- 20%: Dalesmen, true Turami descendants.
- 10%: Damaran refugees from Zhengyi's time.
- 10%: Other

The shifting history of Uthmere also defined the city's somewhat corrupt form of government and an interesting balance of powers that has kept corruption in check and severely limited the power of the dukes and their secret councilors.

When Impilturian King Nethelraun claimed and occupied Uthmere in the Year of the Candlemaker (-147 DR), he viewed the Uthmere area as a march or border state of the Impilturian kingdom and established it as a duchy. However, Nethelraun's kingdom was a monarchy only at the highest level of government; all other levels were oligarchic in nature.

Regional and local governments subordinate to the king were chartered as duchies, counties and baronies, but the offices of rule were filled by appointed nobility rather than blooded nobility. When a duke, count or baron died, his successor more often than not was his eldest son, but the king decided who the successor would be. The king who proclaimed each new noble; there were no inherited rights.

Each duke, count and baron was supported and sometimes restrained in his governmental dealings by a secret council of 10 members who also were appointed by the king. The secret councilors had the absolute protection of the monarch's hand and had, among other things, the power to recommend a noble's removal. It also recommended a successor, upon the noble's death.

When the first Impilturian kingdom crumbled and Uthmere became independent in the Year of the Burning Tree (890 DR), the royally detached duchy continued to rule in Uthmere. The duke and his councilors continued to be Impilturians of Turmrar descent. The only substantial change in the governmental system was that the secret councilors would elect their own successors in the case of a member's death, and the councilors began to elect the duke. That system still is in effect today.

Opposition to the rule of the councilors and their dukes began to rise in the Year of the Struck Gong (1236 DR), when the city was damaged by dragon attacks upon the harbor and fishing settlements. The military arm of the duke had been established largely to keep him and his councilors in power, but it was not fit to deal with dragons.

During the decades that followed, the city began to decline, as many Dalesman commoners began to leave the city and migrate into other parts of the Dale, to flee the oppression of the duke and his secret council, who believed in Turmrar supremacy. The rest of the Dale already had organized a militia to fight Harbet Gall and his dragons, and the Turami descendants were their own masters there.

The status of the duke and the secret council became untenable in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), when two green dragons attacked the city, leaving 250 dead. The rising threat of the Gallists brought fear to the secret councilors, and they forced Duke Tarselnyr to negotiate with the Freemen's militia that had banded together to defend the rest of the Western Dale. The duke was given the mandate to bring Uthmere under the Freemen's defensive umbrella.

Because of the rampant corruption in Uthmere, the leaders of the Freemen not only had viewed the ducal city government as unworthy of support, but they had been contemplating a long-term plan to overthrow Duke Tarselnyr and his councilors and establish a new government there. They took advantage of the government's precarious situation to force an agreement that in effect gave the militia the right to overrule the government. That remains the status today.

The ducal city government is allowed to maintain a city watch with a maximum of 100 members. The watch performs police duties and enforces the laws of the ducal government, but the militia commander can rescind orders that he considers unjust, which has severely curbed the once rampant corruption in Uthmere, without eliminating it.

General Skjöldurssonur has relegated this authority to Judge Advocate General Tambryl, who scrupulously reviews all legal actions of the duke and his councilors. In addition, agents who work for General Diviner Rumblara also try to keep a hidden eye on the covert activities of the duke and to a much lesser extent other organizations in Uthmere. The militia is not privy to the names of the secret councilors.

Under Skjöldurssonur's insistence, Duke Bródur also was forced a year ago to appoint Holy Justice Anselskyr, human male, AL:LG, Cleric (Tyr) 8, as the new High Justice of Uthmere. Anselskyr, a former military justice under Tambryl, operates by the law books when passing judgment, but to date, his caseload has been light, because the watch has been less than diligent in pursuing criminals with ties to the secret council.

This situation pinpoints a severe weakness in the city of Uthmere that Game Master's may wish to use for their PCs to exploit: The Freemen's militia keeps a close eye on the governmental actions of the duke and his council. However, the militia pays relatively little attention to civilian doings in the city, believing such affairs to be the responsibility of the city government. The city watch, on the other hand, closes its eyes to some of what it sees.

The ducal government, being corrupt, pays close attention only to those matters in which it has an interest as well as those that get so out of hand that action is necessary. Many other quiet but crooked activities go on in Uthmere without interference, because no one in the ducal government looks for such things.

In addition, several of the councilors, above all the duke's secret deputy, Mendelumbrar, exert sufficient influence and pressure to keep the duke and his government from doing more than gazing quickly at activities supported by such organizations as the Iron Throne.

The first impression one has of Uthmere is not a picture of corruption but rather of a *laissez faire,* loosely ruled small city, one where almost anything goes as long as it does not visibly damage someone else. Only with time does one begin to see that there are many strange channels through which money flows. There also are many strange barriers to certain actions that go counter to the pursuits of the duke, his councilors or other important people.

The city's economy itself revolves around the harbor, the ferry to Impilturian Ilmwatch, the small but prosperous merchants' houses, warehousing, the garrison, wineries and agricultural production and processing. New Sarshel, farther down the coast to the south, is the Iron Throne's stronghold in the Great Dale, but the Throne has made covert ties with or completely infiltrated some of Uthmere's houses of trade, and its presence in Uthmere seems to be growing quietly but steadily.

The harbor and the mouth of the Uth are protected from an invasion by sea through a manmade reef of huge, rough rocks and a massive chain across the single opening, which can be raised to severely damage any ship that tries to enter the docks against the city's will. The Freemen's militia now operates these facilities.

The area along the mouth of the Uth and the docks is known as the *Waterfront District*. Locals consider it to be the *"tough"* district of Uthmere by night, because drunken sailors and dockworkers tend to be on the streets there, but it is mild compared to *"tough"* areas of many other cities in the Realms.

Uthmere's Duke and the Secret Council

In most campaigns, the PCs probably will have no meaningful encounters with Duke Bródur and the 10 secret council members, but there is no guarantee that this will be the case. The Game Master should keep a few points about the secrecy element in mind:

- Duke Bródur is the only member of the government whose identity is public.
- Officially, only the 10 other council members and a few high placed officials know who the secret members are. Some of the cognizant officials may know only who some of the councilors are.
- Because the Iron Throne has infiltrated the council, key throne members know the identities of the secret councilors.
- One councilor is an agent and spy for Harbet Gall. The Malarite lich therefore also is aware of the councilors' identities.

- Some shadier folk in Uthmere can be bribed to tell the names of the secret councilors, but their information is largely useless, because they don't know who the councilors are. That means that any list of names the PCs might buy probably will be a mix of hits and misses. Their sources probably will have guessed a few names correctly, but the remainder will be false.

Uthmere's council is a genuine closed oligarchy. The 10 councilors elect the duke, and the duke and the remaining nine councilors elect a council successor when a member must be replaced. This is done internally and confidentially. The public not only is kept uninformed of the councilors' identities but also is not told when new councilors are elected. The only information given to the public is that in the council's edicts, signed by Duke Bródur in the council's name.

On those rare occasions when someone is asked or allowed to appear before the council, the councilors wear identical clothing and masks. Duke Bródur uses a crown of telepathy (see *New Magical Items* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*) to receive the questions and remarks of the secret councilors, and he passes them on to the person appearing before the council. The secret councilors do not speak with such guests, preventing vocal identification.

Those who appear before the council are not allowed to use magic and may not bring magical items into the council chamber with them. The chamber itself is protected with ancient but highly powerful Narfelli magic that protects against scrying of almost all types. It also permanently detects magic of all types and issues a warning of its presence. (Where there are holes in these magical protections, if indeed any, is a decision we shall leave up to the individual Game Masters.)

The council chamber, which always is closely guarded, can be entered quite normally through a door. However, to avoid being identified through observation, the secret councilors do not use this means to enter the chamber for their deliberations.

The public (but not the Iron Throne) is unaware of the means the councilors' use to enter the chamber. The Impilturian Tumbrar dukes who ruled Uthmere after the fall of Narfell, with the blessing of their kings in Filur, were given an ancient Narfelli scepter of summoning (see *New Magical Items* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*), with which they could magically summon the 10 councilors and gate them into and later out of the council chamber. It is in Duke Bródur's possession today.

Uthmere is ruled by the duke's edicts, which are carried out and administered by a city administration that he appoints and that serves his will. The council, with a minimum of 7 out of 10 votes, can overturn his edicts. With a simple majority (6 out of 10), the council can order the duke to issue an edict that corresponds to the council's will, requiring a seventh vote if the duke vetoes the action. In practice, the duke usually confers with the council before issuing edicts of importance, so that he and a majority of the councilors are in basic agreement from the start.

For the full NPC details on Duke Bródur and the councilors, see *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* under *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. A brief summary follows:

- **Duke Bródur, human male, AL:N, nominal ruler, Ftr 8, Aris 8.** Bródur is the only member of the council of true native Dalesman blood. He opposes activities of the church of Mask and would fight against the Iron Throne's infiltration of Uthmere, were he aware of it.

- **Mendelumbrar, human male, AL:NE, council deputy, Rogue 5, Aris 10.** He also is the Iron Throne's key agent in the Freemen's part of the Great Dale, subordinate only to the Throne leadership in New Sarshel. Mendelumbrar heads the Easting Reach Trading Co., which buys, sells and ships merchandise and commodities and has become a front for the Iron Throne.

- **Barthelraun, human male, AL:LN, Exp 12, Aris 8.** Barthelraun owns, operates and lives in the Sea House Inn in the Duke's Quarter. He owns considerable acreage in the Easting Reach vineyards north of Uthmere.

- **Wanda Tierney, human female, AL:N, Exp 6.** Wanda Tierney, a native of Damaran Heliogabalus and heads the Uthmere branch of the Heliogabalus Cooperative of the Damaran Merchants League.

- **Kevin Finnegan, human male, AL:LG, Exp 9.** Finnegan heads Uthmere's branch office of the Royal Damaran Bloodstone Trust, the company that represents the Damaran government in the sale of bloodstone.

- **Xandalskyr, human male, AL:LG, Exp 4.** Xandalskyr, a native of Impilturian Hlammach, is the head of the Hlammach-Uthmere Coster in Uthmere.

- **Garth Tenest, human male, AL:NE (Detected as N), Exp 2, War 14.** Tenest is the owner of Great Dale Coinage, a money changing, pawnshop and loan sharking operation in the Waterfront District. He is an avid worshipper of Malar and he continues to serve the Beastlord in his new homeland. Tenest is a loyal follower and supporter of Harbet Gall and uses his council position to spy for the Malarite lich.

- **Nargrid Hindolfsdóttir, human female, AL:N, Exp 5.** Hindolfsdóttir owns Easting Reach Textiles, a company that collects cloth woven by Daleswomen in the cold season.

- **The three remaining councilors** are left for the Game Master to identify, based upon the needs and directions of the individual campaign.

Other Organizations in Uthmere

- **Iron Throne:** The Throne's activities in Uthmere are kept at something of a low key. The center of Throne operations is New Sarshel farther to the South on the East Coast. Uthmere is more a listening post for the Throne than a key strategic center. Although the city does move wares of the Throne, it is an ideal neutral ground for Throne agents to keep a close but unthreatened eye upon Impiltur, and it gives the Throne's agents a good view of their own organization's movements as well as any external attempts to interfere with them. The Throne has little desire to make waves in Uthmere, but if someone in the city should seriously threaten the Throne's operations, there's no doubt that it would act decisively (and as quietly as possible) to end the threat.

- **Church of Mask:** The House of the Master's Shadow in Telflamm hopes to eventually gain control of Uthmere's secret council and the machinery of the city itself. Nunumbryl, the leading cleric of Mask's church in Uthmere, works covertly from the Sea Wave Inn and Bordello. To date, the church has made little progress in gaining control of the city or its council. Nunumbryl is beginning to worry over whether she will be able to maintain her position in the church. Her plans to start a thieves guild in Uthmere have been squelched by Telflamm. The high priests there want her to gain control of the city before spending her time on organizing the thieves.

- **Hunters of Herne:** Garth Tenest of Great Dale Coinage is the only important agent of Harbet Gall in Uthmere. His main task is to spy for Gall, but he also is expected to thwart genuine dangers to the Gallist organization, should they pass through Uthmere and be within his ability for acting. If not, Tenest is expected to send word of the threat eastward, so that others may resolve the problem.

- **Zhentarim:** Some agents of the Xvimist assassins under Zhentarim Fzoul Chembryl's command always are in Uthmere at any given time, but their key areas of interest are Impiltur and Damara. At present, the Great Dale is of little interest to Chembryl. However, if properly approached, the Xvimists can be hired to eliminate one or more targets. They have accepted and carried out such contracts already for the Iron Throne. The assassins stay in the Uth Selkie Inn (Map No. 53) east of the city wall. There always are some Xvimist assassins staying at the Uth Selkie at any given time.

- **Harpers:** The Twilight Hall branch of the Harpers has a growing interest in what is happening in Impiltur, the Great Dale, Damara and Vaasa, but it has little in the line of resources in the Bloodstone Lands. The Great Dale is far away from Berdusk. The not-too-well defined goal of Twilight Hall in the Great Dale is to maintain the decentralized government of the western and Central Dale while overthrowing Harbet Gall in the east and introducing the structures of the Western Dale there. At present, the Harpers can do this largely only by influencing people or by occasional covert assignments. All Harpers of the Berdusk branch who are sent to the Dale report to Denny Narble who runs the Uthmere Guard Service (see below) in the Uthmere Waterfront District. She is the main Harper agent in the Dale.

If arriving Harpers are not needed immediately upon their arrival for their mission, they usually serve with the guard service until that changes. The Harpers should be viewed as sideline players rather than a major presence in Uthmere or the Dale.

Adventure Hooks in Uthmere

- Uthmere is a city filled with ears and mouths. What is said and heard can trigger any number of possible reactions. The PCs may say things that identify them as a threat to the Iron Throne, the church of Mask, the Zhentarim or the Hunters of Herne, leading a threatened agent of one or more of those organizations to let a contract for their liquidation. On the other hand, the PCs also may hear almost any kind of true or false information in Uthmere that leads them to their next fateful destination.

- Tilnyraun, the port master of Uthmere (see Map No. 5) takes bribes and in return gives preferential docking treatment. The PCs could discover this and bring their evidence to Holy Justice Anselskyr in Uthmere Castle. Were Tilnyraun to be convicted of accepting bribes, there would be a genuine shakeup in the corrupt side of Uthmere. The militia leaders would closely scrutinize the duke's appointment of a successor, doubtless vetoing the choice, if he or she wasn't free or corruption. A new port master not susceptible to bribery would be a nuisance to the Iron Throne and some crooked merchants.

- Mendelumbrar of the Iron Throne, Malarite spy Garth Tenest, Mask Priestess Nunumbryl, the guests of the Uth Selkie Inn and even Harper agent Denny Narble all are secrets waiting to be revealed. The PCs could come upon any of them. In uncovering some of these secrets, the PCs also could set Uthmere into a genuine state or turmoil.

- The membership of the duke's secret council and obtaining the Narfelli magical items used to maintain that secrecy are natural goals for any PC group. Game Masters should not be afraid to let the PCs bring the ducal government down, if they choose to do so and have ideas and talent enough to succeed. If the ducal government were to fall, the Freemen would see to it that a new governmental system more to their liking would replace it quickly.

- **Northern Journey campaigns:** The PCs are getting dangerously close to Harbet Gall, and Tiamat and her followers can be expected to do all in their power to stop or divert them. This could mean that Garth Tenest is ordered to act against the PCs, it could mean that he hires Zhentarim assassins, or any other good tactic that comes to the Game Master's mind. It's doubtful, however, that draconians would be sent into the city.

Uthmere

Map of Uthmere

Sites Beyond the Map:

Uthmere is a small but sprawling city that stretches along the Trade Route to the East and also, to a lesser extent, along the Telflamm Coastal trail to the South, however, most significant sites in Uthmere are within or just outside the old city wall, which dates back to the Narfelli Empire. There are some exceptions, however:

- **Milk of Chauntea Brewery:** Once a family operation, the brewery is now co-owned by the granary and the mill, giving the Iron Throne indirectly about 15% of the title. The brewery is located along and south of the Uth and north of the trade route about half a mile/1 km east of the eastern border of the city map. The brewmaster, Mathilnyr, human male, AL: NG, Exp 7, produces a top fermented ale and a top fermented wheat beer through the year, both of which bear only the name *Milk of Chauntea.* In the cold months, he brews a bottom fermented double bock called *Chauntea's Lactator*. The brewery employs 12 journeymen brewers, all human male, various alignments, Exp 1-4, and 18 apprentices, all human male, various alignments, Com 1.

- **Uth Valley Granary:** This large facility is on the Uth just east of the brewery. The Uthmere and Veststad Farmers Collective, an umbrella organization consisting of several small farmers' cooperatives in Uthmere, Wanneth and Veststad, own it. The manager of the granary is Tarnik Heberdssonur, human male, AL:LN, Exp 4. The granary employs two journeyman, all human male, various alignments, Exp 1-2, and four apprentices, all human male, various alignments, Com 1.

- **Easting Reach Mill:** One of the largest grain and oil mills in the Great Dale. In addition to milling flours and pressing vegetable oil, the mill's main export product is brewer's summer barley, sold in Impiltur as well as in Telflamm and Thesk, where imported barley is needed to supply brewers with barley for malting. The mill, a family operation generations earlier, has a divided ownership. The master miller, Tarnrubrar, AL: LN, Exp 8, in whose family the mill has been in, still has 60% ownership. Easting Reach Trading, headed by Mendelumbrar a front these days for the Iron Throne, has quietly purchased 30% of the mill, and various farm cooperatives, partly in the Wanneth and Veststad areas, own the rest. The mill and its pond and mill run are just east of the granary. The mill has a second master miller and six journeyman millers, all human male, various alignments, Exp 1-4, and eight apprentice millers, all human male, of various alignments, Com 1.

- **Ghanchak's Corrals:** Ghanchak, human male, AL: CN, Barbarian lvl 6, Exp lvl 9, is a former Tuigan warrior who roamed parts of the Dale after being released from captivity in Thesk, before taking over the financially shaky corrals from their previous owner. It is rumored that Ghanchak won the corrals in a gamble with strange dice known mainly only to the Tuigan. Whatever the truth maybe, he is one of the most respectable horse dealers east of Impiltur and south of Narfell. His steeds run at 125% to 200% of PHB prices.

Sites on the Map:

The central part of Uthmere is divided into five sections, sometimes called quarters by the locals, although literally taken, they are *"fifths"* rather than quarters. Each section or quarter has its own type of population and its own characteristics.

A. Waterfront District

This is a no frills business quarter by day and the roughest part of the city by night. It's the only quarter of Uthmere where sailors and other transients with few coins in their pockets are to be found by night.

1 - Chain Tower. This guarded tower lowers and raises the heavy chain that blocks the harbor and the mouth of the Uth.

2 - Ferry Dock. Impilturian ferries have exclusive use of this dock. They cross Easting Reach twice daily between Uthmere and Impilturian Ilmwatch when the weather permits.

3 - Ship Docks. These larger docks can berth up to two middle-sized ships at a time.

4 - Boat Docks. These smaller docks can berth up to six boats or small ships at a time.

5 - Uthmere Port Authority. A city government facility that owns and controls the harbor and docks. In charge is Portmaster Tilnyraun, human male, AL:LE(N), Exp 5, a city bureaucrat who, because of connections, can make it easy or difficult for certain boats to dock in Uthmere, or at least to dock quickly. Tilnyraun is corrupt and accepts bribes to give certain vessels priority at the docks. These vessels are, in fact, in service to the Iron Throne, although Tilnyraun does not know that. For more details on Tilnyraun, see *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* under *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

6 - Sea Wave Inn & Bordello. It should be noted that the real name of this facility is simply *Sea Wave Inn* and that's all that it was until it was purchased in the Year of the Maidens (1361 DR) by a returning former daughter of Uthmere named Nunumbryl, human female, AL:NE, Cleric (Mask) 4, Rogue 6, Wizard - Illusionist 3, Exp 4.. She spent her years away in the service of the House of the Master's Shadow in Telflamm, the great temple to Mask, and she returned to Uthmere and bought the Sea Wave as a part of her mission from the church. She is the temple's eyes and ears in Uthmere and its leading agent in the Great Dale. The *Sea Wave* traditionally has been a sailors' and transients' dump, just above flea trap quality. After taking over the *Sea Wave,* she rebuilt the dining and tavern areas on the ground floor and tore out the guest rooms on the floor above, turning the floor into a bordello. Once the tavern-restaurant and bordello gained a bit of a reputation, the *Sea Wave* began drawing customers from the business houses on the waterfront, and the flow of information Nunumbryl was seeking began to trickle in. Her biggest score to date is the port master, Tilnyraun, but her key goal is to learn who the duke's secret councilors are, and to date she hasn't learned the identity of even one of them. For more details on Nunumbryl, see *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* under *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. Inn rooms at the *Sea Wave* continue to be just above flea trap level, and usually only sailors and other transients with little money stay there. The two floors above the bordello each have 22 single rooms at 3 silver shiners a night. The upper floor, which is smaller, is a large open bay with 10 bunk beds providing sleeping room for 20. A bunk in the bay costs 5 copper bites a night. Food in the inn is decent but not gourmet cuisine. Cold plates run from 2 to 6 silver shiners each, hot dinners from 6 silver shiners to a gold taler. Rum from the Vilhon Reach costs 5 silver shiners a shot/0.1 liter. The house serves *Milk of Chauntea* ale at 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. Services in the bordello start at 3 gold talers and go upward from there.

7 - Warehouses.

8 - Royal Damaran Bloodstone Trust. This is the branch office of the royal bloodstone sales outlet of the Damaran throne. It is well guarded, as are any of the warehouses (No. 7) being used to store bloodstone. The head merchant of Royal Damaran is Kevin Finnegan, human male, AL:LG, Exp 9, who also is a member of the duke's secret council. For more details on Finnegan, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

9 - Hlammach-Uthmere Coster: This is a combined Impilturian mercantile agency that represents both Hlammach Trading and Hlammach Shipping in Impiltur. The office is well guarded, as are any of the warehouses (No. 7) being used to store bloodstone. Hlammach Shipping is a large coster that controls 14 merchant ships. Hlammach Trading is a joint venture of smaller and middle-sized merchants. The director of the coster is Xandalskyr, human male, AL:LG, Exp 4, who is a native of Hlammach. He also is a member of the duke's secret council. For more details on Xandalskyr see *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* under *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

10 - Great Dale Coinage. This can be a key address for travelers who come to the Great Dale with currency other than Impilturian coinage or Impilturian or Damaran bloodstone bars, because most people elsewhere in the Dale know nothing of other currencies and will not accept them. Tenest, human male, AL:NE (detected as N), Exp 2, War 14, charges a 5% commission for exchanges, which gives him a respectable income, but the business is nonetheless a cover for his real activity. He is a Malarite agent of the lich Harbet Gall in the Eastern Dale. He also is a member of the duke's secret council. For more details on Tenest, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

11 - Uthmere Guard Service. Denny Narble, human female, AL:NG, fighter lvl 9, heads this agency which hires experienced and qualified fighters, magi, priests and rogues to guard the waterfront warehouses and other locations where valuable merchandise is stored. The company's services are quite expensive, but those who work for it are paid well. At most times, Uthmere Guard Service employs about 30 fighters, 10 rogues, 6 magi and four priests with levels from four to 12. Adventurers taking a break in their journey often work for Narble for a tenday or two to refill their coffers before heading on. Pay runs at about 1 gold taler per character level per day. A 10th level fighter, for example, can expect to earn about two Impilturian platinum marks daily. Narble usually will not contract anyone for less than a tenday. Those about to enter her service must pass magical tests for alignment and truth. The only alignments she usually accepts are LG, NG, LN and N. Chaotic and evil alignments usually are taboo. Denny Narble too has her secret. She is the key agent of the Twilight Hall Harper branch in the Great Dale. Harpers who arrive in the Dale and are not needed immediately for their mission usually work in the guard service until they are needed elsewhere. For more details on Narble, see *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* under *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

12 - Inner Sea Trading. This relatively new Impilturian trading company, based in Hlammach, was formed by a group of eight graduates of the University of Hlammach, all sons of prominent families. The families of the young merchants running the coster have good contacts in Cormyr. Inner Sea Trading buys specialty works of craftsmen, premium wines and other unusual products of the Dale and exports them into Impiltur, Cormyr and the West. The director of the Uthmere branch office is a native of Uthmere, Nardyng Tilssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 2.

13 - Heathvyngs Marine Supplies. Heathvyng Dilurdssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 4, a native of Uthmere, runs this company, which sells almost anything needed to repair or outfit a boot or a ship. Anything needed for fishing on Easting Reach also is available here.

14 - Heliogabalus Cooperative. This is the branch office of the largest private Damaran trading coster, one tainted and influenced but not fully controlled by the Iron Throne. The Uthmere branch office is headed by Wanda Tierney, human female, AL:N, Exp 6, who also is a member of the duke's secret council. For more details on Tierney, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

15 - Easting Reach Trading Co. This old Uthmere company buys, sells and ships merchandise and commodities. It has become a front for the Iron Throne with its true control now in New Sarshel. Its director in Uthmere is Mendelumbrar, human male, AL:NE, Rogue 5, Aris 10, who also is the deputy on the duke's secret council. For more details on Mendelumbrar, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

B. Traders Corner

This is the industrial section of Uthmere. Many of the people who work in this quarter live in flats above business offices, others beyond the city wall.

16 - Damaran Bridge and Damaran Gate.

17 - Uth's End Distillery. Barley malt whisky and fruit schnapps are distilled here. The distillery is small, and most of what it produces is sold within the Dale rather than being exported. The owner is Fiflnyr, human male, AL:N, Exp 4.

18 - Trade Route Inn. The *Trade Route* is a favorite hostelry of traveling merchants of modest means and well-heeled adventurers. The food is good, as is the house ale, and accommodations are simple but comfortable. The *Trade Route* has 40 single rooms at 8 silver shiners a night and 22 doubles at 6 shiners per person per

night. Cold plates run from 4 to 7 shiners, warm food from 6 shiners to 1 gold taler and 2 shiners. Uth's End whisky costs 5 shiners a shot/0.1 liter, schnapps 4 shiners per shot/0.1 liter glass. Easting Reach wines of good but not premium grade run from 5 silver shiners upwards for quart/liter bottles. The house draft ale, made with spruce gruit, costs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. The innkeeper and brewmaster is Dendlnyr, human male, AL:NG, Exp 1, who stands a mere 4 feet/120 cm tall. Dendlnyr claims to be a human midget, but because of his features, many believe he has halfling blood in his veins instead.

19 - Nargung Wine Cellars. Duke Bródur Regardssonur is the current scion of the old Dales family Nargung, and these are his wine cellars. They store some of the finer vintages of Easting Reach. The cellars are well watched by high paid, high level members of the Uthmere Guard Service. For more details on Duke Bródur, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

20 - Hillsafar Iron Works. Two dwarven brothers who fled from Hillsafar Hall during the reign of Zhengyi the Witch King in Vaasa opened this combined foundry and smithy in the Year of the Spur (1348 DR). Six dwarven journeymen smiths fled with the brothers. They work too in the Uthmere operation. None of the dwarves uses his true name. One of the brothers, Nattertongue, dwarf male, AL:LG, Exp 18, Cleric (Moradin) 6, Fighter 4, is a master weapon smith, the other, Schnappsbeard, dwarf male, AL:LG, Exp 12, Fighter 9, is a master blacksmith. Their dwarven journeymen, all male, range in level from Exp 2 to Exp 5 and Fighter 1 to Fighter 5. The iron works also employs 4 human male journeyman smiths and 12 human male apprentice smiths. Nattertongue's branch of the iron works is the key purveyor of swords for the Freemen's militia. Schnappsbeard's part of the operation makes ironwares ranging from construction materials to plowshares and anchors. Schnappsbeard also runs the foundry, which works with iron ore from Damara, when available, but most of the iron worked in Uthmere is from remolten scrap metal.

21 - Gold Taler Tavern. This is a favorite hangout for local workers, passing merchants and transients of modest means and adventurers. It's also a good place to gather scuttlebutt, but the true secrets of Uthmere and the Dale seldom are heard here. Cold plates run from 3 to 5 shiners. There is no warm food. Uth's End whisky costs 4 shiners a shot/0.1 liter, schnapps 3 shiners per shot/0.1 liter glass. Easting Reach wines of modest grade run from 4 to 6 silver shiners for quart/liter bottles. Milk of Chauntea ale and wheat beer cost 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. *Chauntea's Lactator* double bock, available only in the cold season, costs 4 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. The tavernkeeper is Nilta Dearn, human female, AL:NG, Com 3, a native of Trailsend in Damara, who fled to the Dale during the reign of Zhengyi the Witch King.

22 - Mariners Inn. This small inn is the place where most officers and mates of boats stay when in Uthmere. It also is where adventurers tend to go who know their way around Uthmere and who are not seeking information. The house is quiet, pleasant and seldom draws prying eyes and ears. Most folk in Uthmere ignore it. The small public room is open only to houseguests; there is no public house here. The Mariners Inn has 12 single rooms, each at 1 gold taler a night with breakfast and evening meals and 7 shiners without the evening meal. Guests who book at 7 silver shiners can reserve a meal on nights when they wish to eat in the inn. Those who stay at the inn also may invite their own guests to eat there, if there is adequate room and a reservation is made. Separate meals, all warm, cost 5 shiners for guests and 7 shiners for those they invite. With each meal, a guest is entitled to one tankard (1 quart/liter) of *Milk of Chauntea* ale or wheat beer, or a credit of 3 copper bites toward another drink. In season, *Chauntea's Lactator* double bock costs 4 copper bites per quart/liter tankard and 3 bites per pint. Easting Reach wines sell for 6 shiners to 3 gold talers per bottle. Uth's End whisky and Uth's End schnapps each cost 5 shiners per shot/0.1 liter. The innkeeper is Sengurd Haraldssonur, human male, AL:NG, Fighter 8, Exp 1, a retired career sergeant in the Freemen's militia. On nights when the house isn't busy, Haraldssonur is willing to tell adventurers much about the Great Dale, including parts of the Gallist territories, because he has served almost anywhere where the Freemen have been stationed or have fought, but he is privy to no local secrets and has no interest in them.

23 - Naschelraun, Wainwright. Naschelraun, human male, AL: N, Exp 12, does big business supplying mot of the wagons used by the small caravans that travel up and down the Telflamm Coastal Trail. He also builds special wagons used by the vintners north and south of Uthmere and is the only purveyor of farm wagons on the Trade Route west of Gylving. In addition, he is the main manufacturer of winter sleds and sledges in the western and Central Dale. His prices are consistent with guidelines in the *Player's Handbook*. He employs a second master wainwright, Leifr Nundyngssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 7, eight journeyman wainwrights and 12 apprentices.

24 - Barthelraun's Wine Cellars. Barthelraun, human male, AL: LN, Exp 12, Aris 8, owns considerable acreage in the Easting Reach vineyards north of Uthmere and is a great master vintner. His wines are among the finest produced on Easting Reach. He also is a member of the duke's secret council. For more details on Barthelraun, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

25 - Bezentil Eye Tavern. This is a popular spot with a changing group of customers as the evening and night wind on. The *Bezentil Eye* opens at 4 p.m. (16:00) and usually closes after midnight, once the last customer has departed. In the first two hours the tavern is open, most customers are workers from the Traders Corner quarter of the city. As the night grows older, soldiers from the garrison and locals dominate the scene. Transients and adventurers are rather rare in the tavern. They welcome, but the customers here tend to be regulars to a certain degree and they gather in closed groups that tend to discuss their own affairs and interests. Outsiders usually feel rather isolated in the *Bezentil Eye* and they tend to head on after a first drink to another watering hole. The *Bezentil Eye* is owned by Zundelraun, human male, AL:NG, Fighter 9, Exp 1, a retired captain of the Freemen's militia. All of his employees also are retired militia members. Cold plates run from 2 to 5 shiners. There is no warm food. Uth's End whisky costs 4 shiners a shot/0.1 liter, schnapps 3 shiners per shot/0.1 liter glass. Easting Reach wines of modest grade run from 4 to 7 shiners per quart/liter bottles. The house brew, a bottom fermented lager is known only as a *Bezentiler*. This is an unofficial name. The beer costs 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard.

26 - Bezentil Gate.

C. Garrison District

This entire quarter is enclosed in a wall of one kind or another. Within it, one finds General Friedhleif Skjöldurssonur, human male, AL: NG, commander in chief of the Freemen's militia, Ranger 24, Epic 4, and General Gunnar Jónakssonur, human male, AL: NG, commander of the Uthmere garrison, Ranger 18. Skjöldurssonur is detailed under *Unofficial NPCs* and Jónakssonur under *Great Dale - Leaders of the Freemen's Militia,* in the *Unofficial NPC Encounters* of the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

Other important figures in the garrison are General Arcane Rögni Heimirssonur, the chief sorcerer und user of arcane magic serving the militia, and General Diviner Rumblara, a diviner wizard of Impilturian descent. She supervises all intelligence and spying operations of the militia.

Judge Advocate General Tambryl also is stationed in the garrison's headquarters building, where she is in charge of the high military court of the militia. Under agreements with the various rulers of the western and Central Dale, militiamen who commit crimes are tried under the militia's own legal system. There are few holy justices of Tyr in the Great Dale; therefore, local battalion commanders must serve as military judges. In cases of convictions, their verdicts are final only after a review of the case by the judge advocate general.

The garrison houses 2,100 members of the Freemen including the headquarters unit with 100 men; the 1st Combat Regiment with its 1st Battalion, 400 men and all four battalions of the 3rd Combat Regiment (Training) with 1,600 men.

27 – Training Barracks. The four training battalions of the 3rd Combat Regiment are stationed here.

28 – Stalls. The garrison's horse stalls.

29 – Headquarters and Barracks. This building houses the headquarters of the militia, the headquarters of the 1st Combat Regiment and the 400 militiamen of the regiment's 1st Battalion.

30 – Training Grounds.

D. Old Town

31 - Nodding Tinker Tavern. This is a sleepy little tavern where craftsmen and locals tend to gather. Strangers and particularly adventurers are rare here. It's been years since there's been a fight or a brawl here, but there usually is a tough smith or even two who could put such doings to an end. Ruell Pinkerton, human male, AL:N, Com 1, a tavernkeeper in Withermeet who fled Zhengyi's tide in Damara more than 30 years ago bought the *Nodding Tinker* and has run it ever since. His house specialty is *Chimney Sweep Beer,* a Maerzen beer that uses malt made from smoked barley, a Damaran curiosity. *Chimney Sweep* costs 4 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. Cold plates run from 2 to 5 shiners. There is no warm food. Uth's End whisky costs 4 shiners a shot/0.1 liter, schnapps 3 shiners per shot/0.1 liter glass. Easting Reach wines of modest grade run from 5 to 9 silver shiners for quart/liter bottles.

32 - Tennet Riordan Leathers. Riordan, human male, AL:NG, Exp 6, is a master tanner and leather worker native to Damaran Praka. He too fled to the Dale after the rise of Zhengyi in Vaasa. His is a large operation. It buys hides, tans the leather and makes a wide variety of goods from leather including top quality saddles at 25% above PHB prices. Riordan employs 3 journeymen tanners, Exp 1-2, 5 journeymen leather workers, Exp 1-2, 5 apprentice tanners, Com 1, and 8 apprentice leather workers, Com 1. All are human male of varying non-evil alignments.

33 - Easting Reach Textiles. Easting Reach buys cloth woven in the winter by women throughout the western and Central Dale, produces clothing and other textile wares from the cloth and markets it throughout the Inner Sea region. The owner is Nargrid Hindolfsdóttir, human female, AL:N, Exp 5, a master seamstress. Easting Reach employs a master tailor, Exp 3; a master seamstress, Exp 4; 16 journeyman tailors and seamstresses, Exp 1-2; 12 apprentice tailors and seamstresses, Com 1; and eight traveling buyers, Exp 1-3. Mercenaries are engaged to guard traveling buyers. Those employed are human male and female, of various alignments. Nargrid Hindolfsdóttir is a member of the duke's secret council. For more details on her, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

34 - Hundung Nunpyngssonur, Blacksmith. Nunpyngssonur, human male, AL:NG, Exp 6, a master blacksmith, runs a large operation that produces metal wares of all sorts, including weapons and armor. The general smithy employs 2 journeyman blacksmiths, human male, Exp 1-2, and four apprentices, human male, Com 1. Weapons and armor are left to the mac Mrigh brothers, natives of Earthfast City in the mountains above Impiltur who left their home after a family feud, about which they will say nothing. Both are in Nunpyngssonur's employ and seem to be content with this lot. Trig mac Mrigh, dwarf male, AL:LG, Exp 9, is a master weaponsmith. His weapons run 50% above PHB prices. His brother, Durg mac Mrigh, dwarf male, AL:LG, Exp 8, is a master armor maker. His armor runs 20% above PHB prices. Trig works alone. Durg recently took an apprentice, Tyryng Haradssonur, human male, AL:NG, Com 1. The journeymen and apprentices employed in the smithy are of various alignments.

35 - Dragon's Maw Inn. Innkeeper Tiny Leemy, human male, AL:CN, Com 2, a migrant from Sembia who stands more than 6 feet tall/about 2m tall, bought the old *Sleeping Giant Inn* a dozen years ago. He refurnished the place, which was slowly becoming dilapidated, and mounted the head of a young blue dragon that he had purchased from adventurers who had slain it in the North. The Dragon's Maw tends to draw an active crowd and once in a while is the site of brawls which usually leads to a lot of arrests and generous restitution payments. Leemy bribes the city guard well, to assure that brawlers make their damages good. Leemy brews a mediocre but drinkable light beer that he sells for 3 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. Breakfast is available to house guests only. At noon time and again in the evening the Dragon's Maw offers a traditional Dales maturbordh at 7 silver shiners per person. The house brew and Impilturian swamp whisky, at 5 silver shiners a shot/0.1 cl are the only drinks offered. The 30 single room costs 7 shiners a night. The 12 doubles run 6 shiners per person per night.

36 - The Last Copper Bite. The temple to Tymora is a favorite stop for most adventurers coming into Uthmere and a must for many. In addition to two secluded prayer rooms, the temple has a gaming room with various gaming devices and card games and a bar. Milk of Chauntea ale, the only drink served, runs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. The high priestess is Nirgrun Hardungsdóttir, human female, AL: CG, cleric 9. Lisya Marlúgsdóttir, human female, AL, assists her: CG, cleric 2.

37 - Wayfarers Inn. This house is a favorite hostelry for those of modest means traveling to, from and through the Great Dale on business, particularly merchants who wish to sell the work of craftsmen to the Dale or to buy works of craft in the Dale for sales elsewhere. As long as anyone can remember, the inn has been in the hands of the family of the current innkeeper, Dandelraun, human male, AL:N, Exp 2. It has its own house brewery, run by Dandelraun's younger brother, brewmaster Teselnyr, human male, AL:NG, Exp 5. The house brew is a rich, golden orange lager beer that achieves a delicate balance between barley malt and bitter hops. The *Wayfarer* has 10 double rooms at 7 silver shiners per person per night and 14 singles at 8 shiners per night. Meals are prepared by Dandelraun's sister, Melanbra, human female, AL:LG, Exp 5, master cook. The food is considered to be among the best in Uthmere, although prices are modest. Cold boards run from 4 to 7 silver shiners, with hot meals ranging from 6 shiners to 1 gold taler and 2 shiners. The house brew, called *Meistarbjórkrús* (Turami for *Master's Tankard*), costs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Uth's End whisky costs 4 shiners a shot/0.1 liter, schnapps 3 shiners per shot/0.1 liter glass. Easting Reach wines of modest grade run from 5 to 9 shiners for quart/liter bottles.

38 - House of the Turami Tears. Temple to Ilmater. The temple tends to have more patronage from those passing than from locals, although it is relatively well endowed. The sole priest is Painbearer Kushilraun, human male, AL:LG, cleric 7, a native of Impilturian Lyrabar.

39 - Telflamm Gate.

E. Duke's Quarter

This is the exclusive quarter of Uthmere, where the money and power are to be found. A wall, 20 feet/6m high and a foot/30 cm thick encloses the entire area. Private guards financed by the people who live within the area man the small watchtowers in the wall and the gate near Tymora's temple. They also patrol the streets and keep a close eye on any- and everyone who is not recognized as being a part of the quarter. Because the duke's castle with the entire city administration is in the quarter, the private guards are not allowed to bar anyone entrance to this section, but they will require anyone wishing to enter the quarter to state their name and purpose. The private guards have no right to enforce this demand, but if anyone trying to enter the quarter refuses to answer, the private guards will call the city watch to settle the dispute. The watch does have the right to demand such information. Climbing the wall is another matter. It is against city ordinances to climb over any of Uthmere's walls. Anyone caught doing so should reckon with 10 to 30 days in the dungeon beneath the castle. This section is dangerous for intruders. Well-paid, talented private guards watch most private buildings, and sophisticated magical traps protect many of the buildings.

40 - Gambrar the All-Knowing. This manor house with 50 foot/15 m high tower belongs to the mage Gambrar, human male, AL:N, wizard 14, who sells his services to those who can afford them. He will do some evil deeds but no major acts of evil. He specializes in the commissioned enchantment of items. Rumors have it that Gambrar was once a rising member of the Wand of Impiltur who resigned in a dispute with higher wizards of the organization. His life in Uthmere is rather reclusive. A plethora of deadly magical traps protect the house and tower against unwanted intruders.

41 - House of the Golden Maiden. The status of the temple to Waukeen is dependent upon your campaign. If the goddess still is missing in your campaign, the temple is locked and boarded up and carefully guarded by the men of Duke Bródur, who was an ardent worshipper of the Merchant's Friend. He has vowed to preserve the temple until the lady returns. If Waukeen already is back in your campaign, the temple again is open and accepting (and receiving) offerings, and the goddess already will have regained a strong following in Uthmere. The high priestess is Grand Trabbar Tamalra, human female, AL:N, cleric 10. She is served by two other clerics Tununraun, human male, AL:N, cleric 2, and Nendelskyr, human male, AL:N, cleric 1.

42 -Uthmere Castle. This is the residence of Duke Bródur, the seat of the secret council, the house of the city government and administration and the top to the underground city dungeon. It also is home to the duke's mage, Adnuraun, human male, AL:CN, wizard 17, who works for the duke and indirectly for the council. It's

Adnuraun's job to provide magical firepower, when the duke needs it. In return for this largely reserve service, he has a free hand to experiment, deal and barter as he wishes. The duke lives in the main palace. Adnuraun has the north tower. The newest resident of the castle may prove to be a fly in Uthmere's ointment. Under the insistence of General Friedhleif Skjöldurssonur, the commander of the Freemen's militia, and Judge Advocate General Tambryl, the military judge of the militia, Duke Bródur has been forced to appoint Holy Justice Anselskyr, human male, AL:LG, Cleric (Tyr) 8, a native of Impilturian Ilmwatch, as the new High Justice of Uthmere. Anselskyr operates by the law books when passing judgment, but to date, his caseload has been light, because the watch has been less than diligent in pursuing criminals with ties to the secret council.

43 - Mendelumbrar's House. This mansion is the head of the city's foremost secret councilor and Iron Throne agent Mendelumbrar. For more details, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. This house is protected by a wide variety of highly lethal physical and magical traps.

44 - Garth Tenest's Mansion. This well guarded complex is home to Garth Tenest, human male, AL:NE (detected as N), Exp 2, War 14, owner of Great Dale Coinage (No. 10 in the Waterfront District), secret agent and spy for the Malarite lich Harbet Gall and member of the city's secret council. For more details, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

45 - Sea House Inn. Few adventurers see this exclusive house from the inside. Adventurers aren't forbidden, but the prices and dress requirements ward off most of them. The inn is owned by secret councilor Barthelraun, human male, AL:LN, Aris 8. For more details, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. However, Barthelraun does not work in the inn. His main occupation is as a master vintner who owns some of the best vineyard acreage north of town. Two other secret councilors, Wanda Tierney, human female, AL:N, Exp 6, and Xandalskyr, human male, AL:LG, Exp, live in the inn. For more details, see the councilors' entries in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. Tierney, a Damaran subject, heads the Uthmere branch of the Heliogabalus Cooperative of the Damaran Merchants League. Xandalskyr, an Impilturian subject, represents the Hlammach-Uthmere Coster. An employee of Barthelraun, Innkeeper Randvér Jörmunrekkssonur: AL:NG, Com 2, Exp 1, human male, manages the inn. Guests pay 3 gold talers for the 28 single rooms, 2 gold talers, 5 silver shiners per person for the 16 double rooms and 8 quadruple rooms and 6 gold talers for the four suites. The price includes breakfast as well as noon and evening meals from the traditional Dale maturbordh and drinks other than wine. Guests who want to eat in the Sea House without staying there pay a gold taler and 8 shiners for the maturbordh. Jörmunrekkssonur brews excellent house beers, a light bock in the main season and a dark double bock in winter. The beer is served only on premises and has no name. The guest room is for diners, not drinkers; beer is available only as a part of the maturbordh. The same is true for the schnapps and whiskies. Barthelraun's fine wines are the only drinks that are sold separately, but again, only to diners. They run 2 gold talers to 3 bloodstone bars for quart/liter bottles.

46 - Royal Impilturian Embassy. The ambassador is Sir Narluskyr, human male, AL:LG, Aris 10, a native of Lyrabar. Among the embassy's staff are several secret agents of the Royal Impilturian Ministry of Finance who are assigned to covertly seek out information on the Iron Throne in New Sarshel. To avoid drawing suspicion, these agents specifically avoid interfering in anything the Throne is doing in Uthmere, considering such operations to be small potatoes. New Sarshel is the key to the Throne's operations in the Dale, as far as the Impilturians are concerned.

47 - Royal Damaran Embassy. The government delegation from Heliogabalus is resident here. The ambassador is Darran Driscoll, human male, AL:LG, Ftr 12, a retired Damaran general who now is a member of Spysong. He not only represents the royal Damaran government but also keeps an eye on the doings of the Iron Throne in Uthmere. One of the delegation's members, from the Royal Treasury, is Davitt O'Lugh, human male, AL:LE, Exp 4, an agent of the Iron Throne who has infiltrated the Damaran government. Driscoll is unaware of this. Kevin Finnegan, human male, AL:LG, Exp 9, head of the Uthmere branch office of Royal Damaran Bloodstone Trust and a member of the city's secret council, also lives in the embassy. For more details, see the councilors' entries under *Uthmere - the Key NPCs* of *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

48 - Sembian Embassy. Interestingly, this is the one Sembian facility in Uthmere that is relatively free of Iron Throne influence. That is intentional. Sembia does not want the embassy to be closely watched, because it serves as an important outpost for spying on activities of the Royal Impilturian Navy. For that reason, the Throne has intentionally remained distant from the embassy, and various spying agencies trying to keep tabs on Throne operations have learned that there's little to gain from watching the embassy. Outside interests, including Impiltur, have left their guard down as far as the embassy is concerned, giving the military spies a relatively free hand. The ambassador is Runedd Keathing, human male, AL:N, War 9, a retired Sembian naval commander.

E. Outside of the Wall

49 - Shrine to Valkur. Unmanned.

50 - Uthside Cemetery.

51 - Fishermen's' Huts.

52 - Wave Watch House - Temple to Umberlee. Wavemistress Nunda Tareg, human female, AL:CE, Cleric 12, is the chief priestess of the temple. She is served by three other clerics of levels 7, 5 and 2. The Wave Watch House plays no important role in Uthmere's politics, but it is heavily endowed, above all by Sembian seamen and mariners from Impiltur who make substantial offerings here, to ward off the Bitch Queen's wrath, rather than in their homeland, where they might draw suspicion for supporting an evilly-aligned church.

53 - Uth Selkie Inn. The *Selkie* is an interesting house where one can stay without feeling threatened, as long as one doesn't get too interested in minding other people's business. The inn is the place to go for smuggled goods, black market wares, the hire of assassins, the purchase of information, etc. Shady dealers of goods, thieves and assassins, mariners with small amounts of contraband and smuggled goods to sell, etc., tend to stay in the Selkie. The inn is run by Leagh Denegal, human female, AL:NE, Rogue 9, Exp 2, a former innkeeper in Damaran Heliogabalus who skipped town after the fall of Zhengyi, fearing persecution because she had been and informant for traded goods with the Witch King's minions. She paid a small fortune to a Thayan red wizard to magically change her appearance, and she adopted the old Turami name Lía Denursdóttir. To date, no one seems to have caught on to her true identity. The previous owner of the Selkie, Gárn Huburdssonur, went bankrupt. He now is employed as the Selkie's house brewmaster. The house brew is a golden orange lager beer that satisfies most customers whose tastes aren't fine enough to notice that lower quality hops and barley are used. The Selkie has 14 double rooms at 8 silver shiners per person per night and 16 singles at 7 shiners per night. Cold boards run from 2 to 5 silver shiners, with hot meals ranging from 4 shiners to 1 gold taler. The unnamed house brew costs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Uth's End whisky costs 4 shiners a shot/0.1 liter, schnapps 3 shiners per shot/0.1 liter glass. Easting Reach wines of modest grade run from 4 to 8 shiners for quart/liter bottles.

Uthving

Large town, Conventional, AL: NG, 3,000 gp limit. Assets: 375,000 gp. Population: 2,500; 95% human, 2% dwarven, 2% halfling, 1% other. Authority figures: Count Ruliraun, human male, AL:NG, Aris 6, Exp 12; Thûrad Gotissonur, human male, AL: NG, Fighter 5, commander town watch; Targud Leifrssonur, human male, AL:LG, Fighter 12, Commander, 2nd Militia Battalion; Important Characters: Mendelraun, human male, AL:CG, Wizard 11, court mage; Donur Hrágnssonur, human male, AL: NG, Druid of Silvanus 10; Sarth (Norman Tithwithl), Malaugrym male, AL: CE (NG), Malaugrym 12, Wizard 10. Watch: 50 Ftr and War, various levels; Militia: 400 Ftr and War, various levels. Taxation: Benevolent

Uthving is a Narfelli version of old Turami *Útvínung*, which combines *Út* (outer), the name of the river, with *vínung*, meaning *Home of Wine,* although a churl or two in the Dale insist that the root name really was *Útvinningur*, which would mean *Home of Profits on the Uth*. Regardless which interpretation one chooses, many of the Dale's best wines grow in Uthving, and the town prospers from the profits taken.

Interestingly, poisonous smoke or gases that covered the area after the Narfell-Raumathar conflagration more than 2,000 years ago destroyed the Narfelli vineyards that once surrounded Uthving. Even when the spoils became arable again, viniculture remained an abandoned art, and the Impilturian rulers and later the Dalesmen who followed the Turmrar line of counts in Uthving let the village evolve into a center for hunting, which it remains today.

However, modern Uthving also is enhanced by the return of premium wine production, started by Count Ruliraun in the Year of the Arch (1352 DR), after he saw that immigrants from Tethyr had succeeded in planting quality vineyards in the Uthmere area, which later were sold to Duke Bródur and others.

It often is said that areas where good wine grows tend to be easier going and happier than most, and that is beginning to become evident in Uthving, which not too long ago was nothing more than a rawhide and leather center of the hunt.

It also is fortunate for the town that the count planted wine. This led to the creation of many new jobs in Uthving. The hunt, which once was the main source of Uthving's income, has fallen off a bit in recent years, due to the number of experienced and capable hunters who have vanished in Rawlinswood. There are those who say that the mysterious Nentyarch in Dun Tharos is to blame, and others who claim that the disappearances are the doing of the Gallist communities of Kilstad and Great Boar in Rawlinswood.

Those who blame the Nentyarch are correct. The hunter guides of Uthving often have led foreign guests into the depths of Rawlinswood, beyond the game rich areas given free to the hunt by the forest druids, offering instead the challenge of the unknown in what now is the Nentyarch's domain. The sorcerer-druid of Dun Tharos does not at all take kindly to poachers in his domain and is inclined to transmogrify them.

Word of the disappearances has trickled out into the Vast, Sembia and Cormyr, and as a result, some of the rich customers who once came annually to Uthving to hunt have not returned in recent years. Fortunately, the growing wine business of Count Ruliraun has provided new work that serves to keep the town's families fed.

Normally, Uthving is not one of the more exciting places for adventurers in the Great Dale, unless they are foolish enough to be seeking the Nentyarch. There are hunting guides in Uthving who are willing to risk bringing hunters or adventurers as far as the ruins of Kro Tharos within the Nentyarch's domain. At that point, they tell their customers how to follow the trails the rest of the way to the old Narfelli stronghold, but they will refuse to go to Dun Tharos themselves.

Like Timbertown, Uthving also trades with the cloistered hunting villages of Kilstad and Great Boar, where Herne the Hunter is worshipped. The two villages are totally isolated from the other Gallist areas. They are tolerated by the druids of the forest because of the villages' adherence to rather strict conditions. Uthving and Timbertown both have opened their gates to trade with them.

Gallist traders from Kilstad usually bring their wares downstream by raft and then over the road to Uthving, while the merchants of Great Boar travel by road to Timbertown. Count Ruliraun has made clear that the traders from Kilstad are allowed in Uthving and are to be treated with courtesy as guests, a point that sometimes is missed by visitors from the Central Dale, where conflicts with rangers of Herne are frequent.

Uthving has a local ordinance prohibiting *"aggressive behavior,"* which is invoked among other things at any time someone tries to provoke the merchants from Kilstad. Anyone convicted of this offense can reckon with a 30-day vacation in the hoosegow beneath the count's castle.

A Gallist druid baron rules Kilstad. Villagers there have no freedom to travel elsewhere without his permission. The men who are allowed to do business in Uthving are highly trusted followers of the druid baron. When they are in Uthving, they stay at their own guesthouse and do not mix with locals or eagerly open their doors to visitors.

Things of secondary interest in Uthving are smuggled whisky, goods being carried overland to and from Damara by operatives of the Iron Throne to circumvent Damaran and Impilturian customs and refugees from Impilturian and Damaran justice who quietly hide out in the town.

The biggest businesses in Uthving remain hunting and wine. The town also is the site of the central winery, where all vineyard owners in the area make their wine.

Uthving is an important outpost of the Freemen's militia, with the 2nd Battalion of the 1st Combat Regiment, 400 Men, stationed in the town's garrison. The battalion also provides combat support to Timbertown. The commander is Targud Leifrssonur, human male, AL: LG, Fighter 12.

Count Ruliraun is the head of the local government, which also includes a town council with seven members appointed by the count. He and the council usually decide matters harmoniously. The count lives on the upper of three stories in Uthving Castle. The two bottom stories house the town administration and the 50-man town watch. The jail is in the dungeon below.

Uthving Castle's tower is home to Mendelraun, human male, AL: CG, Wizard 11. He serves as the count's court counsel and as town mage. Mendelraun keeps a magically trained eye on doings in and around Uthving and is prepared to help defend the town. He is the only mage of any standing in the Uthving area, although there are a few low-level wizards and sorcerers in town who offer their modest services to locals for a fee.

The wall surrounding Uthving is of stone, 20 inches/50 cm thick and 30 feet/9 m high. The Freemen's militia mans most of the towers but only in times of crisis. The three gates are manned and guarded by the town watch. All three gates are open from sunrise to sunset. The watch opens the gates in the hours of darkness to admit people who are willing to identify themselves.

Uthving has small temples to Silvanus, Chauntea and Ilmater and a manned shrine to Mielikki. A secret, unmanned shrine to Herne the Hunter is in the guesthouse of the merchants of Kilstad.

Adventure Hooks in Uthving

- **Off to Dun Tharos.** A PC party with its ears open will begin to hear of the Nentyarch and Dun Tharos in Uthving, if they haven't done so already. The PCs may hire a guide to take them as far as Kro Tharos and then attempt to find the Nentyarch. There's nothing in this accessory that requires the PCs to go into the Nentyarch's domain, but most adventure groups won't ignore that kind of bait.

- **Catching or Being Caught by a Shadowmaster.** The PCs could have a run-in with Sarth in *Tithwithl's Golden Chalice* (Map No. 18). Encounters with a Malaugrym are not everyday affairs. This is the first one offered in *Northern Journey*.

- **Iron Throne et al.** As in a number of other locations, the PCs may uncover doings of the Iron Throne in Uthving.

Uthvingb
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Uthmere/Vineyards
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Uthving

Map of Uthving

1 - Uthmere Castle. The town administration and watch are housed on the first and second stories. The Uthving jail is in the dungeon beneath the castle. Count Ruliraun lives in the third story. The court mage, Mendelraun, resides in the castle tower.

2 - Endurance House. Temple to Ilmater. The priests are Painbearers Ilmhyld Tándursdóttir, human female, AL: LG, Cleric 6, and Tarna Ligisdóttir, human female, AL: LG, Cleric 2.

3 - Garrison of the Freemen. Home of the 400 men of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment. The commander is Targud Leifrssonur, human male, AL:LG, Fighter 12.

4 - Hrafn's House. The residence of Hrafn Gilfssonur, human male, AL: NG, Ranger 10, a hunting guide who hires out.

5 - Gunnar's House. The residence of Gunnar Tilgissonur, human male, AL: N, Ranger 8, a hunting guide who hires out.

6 - Gotthorm's House. The residence of Gotthorm Hrákarssonur, human male, AL: N, Ranger 9, a hunting guide who hires out.

7 - Temple to Chauntea. The sole priestess is Guthrún Garthsdóttir, human female, AL: NG, Cleric 6.

8 - Central Winery. All wine growers in the Uthving area use the winery. Cardulraun, human male, AL: NG, Exp 8, a master vintner, manages it.

9 - Antler House Inn. Hunters from the West and well-to-do travelers use this expensive inn. The owner and innkeeper is Runimbrar, human male, AL: N, Aris 3, Exp 6. The inn has 24 double rooms at 3 gold talers per night, 14 singles for guests' menservants at 1 gold taler per night, and six suites at 2 platinum marks per night. The prices include breakfast and the maturbordh at noon and in the evening. Count Ruliraun's estate wines are the sole drinks served. They run from 1 gold taler to 2 platinum marks per little bottle.

10 - Temple to Silvanus. Officially, the house clergyman is Donur Hrágnssonur, human male, AL: NG, Druid 10, but he normally is in Rawlinswood rather than Uthving. The temple normally is in the care of local followers of Silvanus.

11 - Keene Tarscoll, Wainright. Tarscoll, human male, AL: NG, Exp 4, is a Damaran refugee. He makes quality wagons and sledges and repairs both. He employs a journeyman and an apprentice.

12 - Golden Drops Inn. The *Drops* - the name refers to golden drops of wine - is the main inn in Uthving. It serves all kinds of travelers other than the rich and the hunters who stay at the expensive *Antler House*. A Damaran halfling family from Halfling Downs runs the inn. The innkeeper is the family patriarch, Sneedby Tuddle, halfling male, AL: N; Exp 2. The cook is his wife, Nelda, halfling female, AL: NG, Exp 4. The family vintner is the eldest son, Colin, halfling male, AL: N, Exp 4. His brother and two sisters work as waiter and waitresses. Food is of good home cooking quality, all served at the maturbordh at 8 silver shiners per person. The family wines - the only beverages served - start at 1 shiner for the half pint/0.25 liter house chalice und run then from 5 shiners to 1 platinum mark for wine in quart/liter bottles. The comfortable rooms cost 8 shiners for the 16 singles and 7 shiners per person for the 10 doubles. The *Drops* can be a good location for scuttlebutt.

13 - Guthni's Supplies. Guthni Hárnssonur, human male, AL: N, Com 3, sells almost anything one might need for exploring or hunting in Rawlinswood. Prices run slightly above those in the *PHB*.

14 - Barleywine Tavern. Tandy Taran, halfling male, AL: N, Exp 3, a refugee from the Bloodstone Pass area of Damara, runs the only watering hole in Uthving that serves anything but wine. Taran brews his own Barleywine Lager, a golden orange bottom-fermented lager that sells for 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Taran also offers a selection of wines from local growers, at 4 silver shiners to 2 platinum marks per quart/liter bottle. A house chalice is available with a different wine offered daily at 1 shiner per half pint/0,25 liter. Adventurers passing through Uthving and some local hunters use the Barleywine as their favorite watering hole, making it the best place in Uthving to pick up news and scuttlebutt.

15 - Thjodholf Midhsilfur's Smithy. Midhsilfur, dwarf male, AL:LG, Exp 12, War 8, Runecutter 4, fled from Damara after Zhengyi's invasion and set up shop in Uthving. The business has flourished and grown. Today Midhsilfur employs 4 journeymen dwarven smiths who work with him in making and repairing weapons and armor and also employs Renneth Blackrumen, human male, AL:LG, Exp 8, a master blacksmith, who has two journeymen and three apprentices. They make and repair farm equipment, tools and other metal wares.

16 - Twin Wizards Inn. The name comes from the two small towers, once occupied by a pair of brothers from Ilmwatch in Impiltur who both were low-level wizards. They went off on an adventure seeking Narfelli ruins in Rawlinswood in the Year of the Helm (1362 DR). After their disappearance, the building reverted to Count Ruliraun, who sold it to the current owner, Hrolf Hrafvngssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 3. He serves good but not premium quality wines from his own small vineyards. Food is good, all served at the maturbordh at 7 silver shiners per person. The house wines - the only beverages served - start at 1 shiner for the half pint/0.25 liter house chalice und run then from 5 shiners to 1 platinum mark for wine in quart/liter bottles. The comfortable rooms cost 7 shiners for the 16 singles and 6 shiners per person for the 10 doubles. The *Twin Wizards* can be a good location for scuttlebutt.

17 - Fenton's Stables. Jarvis Fenton, human male, AL:NG, Exp 2, a native of Damaran Trailsend, buys and sells riding and draw horses. He buys at 10% under *PHB* prices and sells 20% above.

18 - Tithwithl's Golden Chalice. Norman Tithwithl, a retired sergeant in the Damaran army who fought under Sir Gareth Dragonsbane (now the Damaran king) is the purported owner of the finest wine house in the Great Dale. The real Tithwithl never intended to leave Damara. He was slain in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR) by a desperate Malaugrym named Sarth, Malaugrym male, AL: CE (NG), Malaugrym 12, Wiz 10, who was being hunted down by Elminster of Shadowdale. After the slaying, Sarth shapechanged into Tithwithl's form, took his belongings and fled. Among those belongings was a magical necklace with makes it impossible for Sarth to be tracked down magically or for his true alignment to be known, but it also prevents his returning to his own plane. Sarth does not know of this latter magical property. With Tithwithl's identity and money as well as the valuables of other victims, Sarth bought the wine cottage in Uthving and has built it into a legendary house. He makes a point of drawing information out of customers, seeking out those who are dangerous or who are traveling alone and wouldn't be missed, and he attacks them after they leave Uthving, slaying them and devouring them from the inside out. Those who take particular notice of the golden glow in his eyes are considered dangerous. Sarth is deathly afraid of being found by Elminster, who already has destroyed many Malaugrym more powerful than Sarth. His wine house, on the other hand, has earned its reputation. It is a small, comfortable wine cottage where one can sample not only the best Easting Reach vintages but also even finer wines imported from Tethyr, all served with the right breads, cheeses and cold meats to accompany the wine. He sells only by the bottle, with a liter running from 8 silver shiners to 200 bloodstone bars, depending upon which vintage is selected. The full statistics for Sarth as Tithwithl can be found in Section 1 *New Unofficial NPCs* of the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. His Damaran *Telzar's String of Jewels* is described in Section 5 *Magic Items*.

19 - Farms.

20 - Shrine to Mielikki. The shrine is manned, tended by a 66-year-old retired hunter names Althjóf Hardungssonur, human male, AL: NG, Ranger 11.

21 - Uthglen Milling. Various flours are ground and vegetable seeds hammered for oil by miller Lars Narndlssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 5.

22- Uthglen Milling Storehouses.

23 - Mill Pond.

24 - Garby Tennet's Boarding House. Tennet, human female, AL: NE, Com 3, is a worshipper of Herne the Hunter who purportedly fled to Uthving from Kilstad years ago. In truth, she works for the druid baron of Kilstad, maintaining the boarding house that is used exclusively by traders from Kilstad. She is one of those people who lives in life's shadow, seldom noticed or thought of by the local population and doing nothing to get herself into trouble or to draw attention. This makes her an interesting NPC, perhaps, from the viewpoint of the adventure, but she is an unimportant figure.

25 - Uthving Cemetery.

Wanneth

Thorp, Conventional, AL: NG, 40 gp limit. Assets: 140 gp. Population: 70; 99% human, 1% half-elven. Authority figures: Duke Bródur of Uthmere, human male, AL:N, nominal ruler, Ftr 8, Aris 8, and his Secret Council; Narhjólf Tandurssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 4, Alderman; Important Characters: Fjölnir Thudhssonur, human male, AL:NG, Druid of Chauntea, lvl 4; Brui Mari (Mari Freygasdóttir), half-elf female, AL: NG, Com 3, Exp 1, Tavernkeeper and brewmistress. Watch: 4 Com, levels 1-3, War levels 1-3. Taxation: Benevolent

Wanneth is a tiny thorp under the rule of Uthmere's Duke Bródur, with local affairs governed by part-time Alderman and fulltime farmer named Narhjólf Tandurssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 4. From a campaign point of view, the thorp would hardly be worth mentioning if it wasn't for Brui Mari's Drafthouse (Map No. 3) and Milja's Road Bread (Map No. 1).

Most PC groups probably never will hear of Brui Mari's, although it's often well worth stopping there, if one is planning to journey into the Dale east of Uthmere. When the rangers of Mielikki who serve the Freemen have to travel for supplies or other reasons to Uthmere, they usually lodge out-of-town at Brui Mari's.

Few rangers or druids have any love for the business-and-corruption atmosphere that permeates Uthmere. Some experienced adventurers and hunters in the Dale have a similar attitude toward Uthmere, and when they're in the area, they stay at Brui Mari's, making it a unique place for gathering news.

The small village mill, the *Austrmylla*, as it is called, also is a secret tip for some travelers. The mill has a small bakery, where the miller's wife, Milja, bakes a dark and durable bread she calls *Burtbraudh*, old Turami for *Road Bread*. The bread is neither delicious nor bad tasting. It is somewhat dry. Nevertheless, it's highly nutritious and will last about two months without becoming moldy or otherwise spoiling. Most adventures in the know in the Great Dale make a point of stopping at the Austrmylla to buy a few loaves of Burtbraudh for the journey.

That's about all that Wanneth has to interest a PC group. The thorp is spread out far beyond the bounds of the map, with isolated farms north of the Auststraumur and south of the Trade Route. Those with acreage closer to Uthmere tend to be wine growers. The rest are in mixed farming, raising crops and cattle. Those nearest the Trade Route tend to be crop and dairy farmers.

The center, as it were, straddles the Auststraumur and the Trade Route a few miles/kilometers east of Uthmere. The landscape is flat, with only low, gently rolling hills, mostly cleared and planted in wine near Uthmere. Crops are grown east of the Uthmere. Most of the buildings are of half-timber construction, some with tile roofs but more with roofs of thatch or wooden shingles.

There are three facilities in the center of the thorp to serve the farmers and wine growers. Chauntea's House is a combined meeting hall and shrine to Chauntea. At times, the local druid of Chauntea, Fjölnir Thudhssonur, can be found in the shrine, but he spends most of his time among the farmers and wine growers away from the Trade Route.

The Austrmylla grinds the farmers' grain and makes oil of thistle and sunflower seeds. The farmers pay no cash for these services. Instead, they get back 90% of the grain or seeds that they bring in, by weight, as flour or oil. The miller keeps the other 10% as his milling fee.

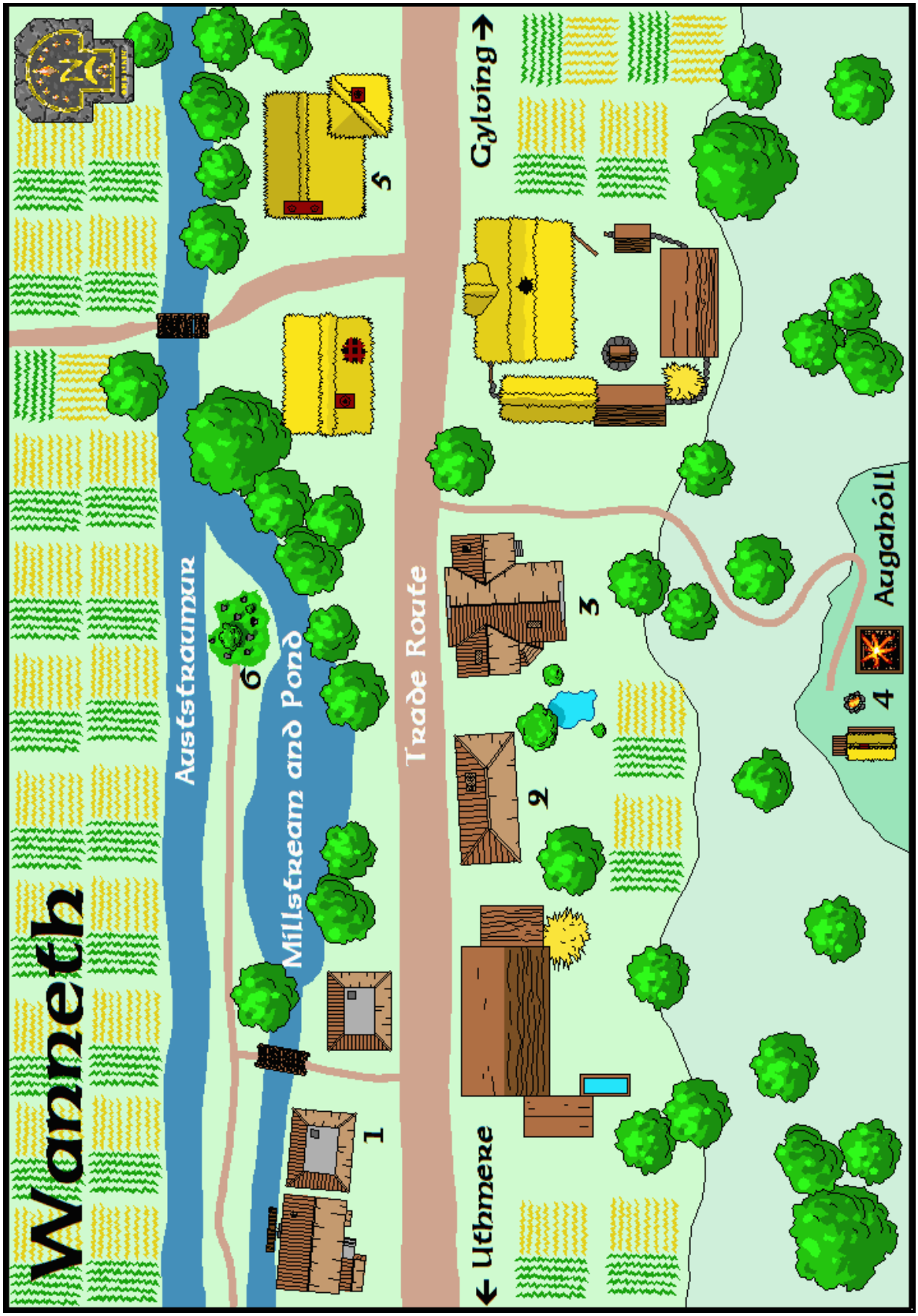
The Wanneth Granary stores grain for the mill and buys and sells other grain, both for markets outside of Wanneth and for resale as seed.

Wanneth is defended by a local watch consisting of farmers who take their turn on duty. However, most farmers in Wanneth were trained and have served as warriors in the Freemen's militia, so they are low-level members of the NPC Warrior class as well as being commoners.

The watch maintains a night camp atop a low hill just south of the Trade Route called the *Augahóll*, where one of the many towers in the Great Dale have been erected to make signal fires visible throughout the surrounding lands in times of trouble.

Adventure Hook in Wanneth

The only likely adventure angle in Wanneth is the obtaining of information in Brui Mari's Drafthouse. In an *NJ* campaign, a hostile draconian encounter also could take place.


Wanneth
Auststraumur
Millstream and Pond
Trade Route
Gyloing
Uthmere
Augahöll
1
2
3
4
5
6

Wanneth

Map of Wanneth

1 - Austrmylla Mill, Bakery and Storage Houses. The mill produces wheat, rye and spelt flour and thistle and sunflower oil. The miller is Gudhólf Tandurssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 2. His wife, Milja Solvyngsdóttir, human male, AL: NG, *Faiths & Avatars* non-combatant monk of Chauntea, 2, runs the bakery. She is not a combatant monk as described in the *D&D* 3E *Player's Handbook*. Her Burtbraudh road bread costs 2 copper bites a loaf, which weighs 2 pounds/1 kg.

2 - Chauntea's House. Shrine and farmer's meeting hall. The local druid of Chauntea, Fjölnir Thudhssonur, human male, AL:NG, 4, can be found here at times, but he is more likely to be among the farmers and wine growers beyond the Trade Route. He usually stays overnight and eats with individual farm families.

3 - Brui Mari's Drafthouse. This roadside tavern restaurant with lodging is run by a half-elf named Mari Freygasdóttir**,** half-elf female, AL: NG, Com 3, Exp 1. Her father, Nardhung Endyngssonur, was a ranger of Mielikki, her mother a half-elf of green elf blood who serves with the Mucklestones Druids. Mari was born at about the time her father was nearing retirement age from active service with the Freemen. Her mother, Freyga Luthlsdóttir, still is with the Mucklestones Druids, but her parents went their separate ways. Both agreed that Mari should go with her father, to remove her from the extreme danger in which the Mucklestones Druids constantly live. After retiring, Narfhung bought the decrepit and closed roadside tavern, restored it and reopened it, intending it above all to be a place where traveling rangers could gather. Daughter Mari maintains that tradition. She is called *Brui* Mari because *Brui* is the short form in local dialect for the old Turami word *Bruggmeistari*, which means brewmaster. Mari brews a heady, rich-tasting, golden orange lager beer that most rangers prefer over wine. The drafthouse also serves cold sausages and warm venison and boar from local farmers and hunters. All the food is on the maturbordh, which costs 8 silver shiners per person. The house lager costs 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. Easting Reach wines run from 8 silver shiners to 1 platinum mark per quart/liter bottle. There are no rooms as such but rather a large, open bay upstairs with 20 comfortable single beds at 2 shiners a night. Mari also accepts barter goods in lieu of Impilturian coins.

4 - Augahóll. The old Turami word means *Hill of the Eye*. The men of the watch spend their nights on the hill, with a thatched cabin for warmth in the winter. In the warm months, they usually stay outdoors around a campfire. The hill's wooden tower, 50 feet/15 m high, can be used for signal fires to warn other settlements of trouble.

5 - Wanneth Granary. This facility serves the local farmers cooperative. It is a branch operation of the Uth Valley Granary in Uthmere.

6 - Cemetery.

New Sarshel (Borkurstad)

Large Town, Nonstandard, AL: NE, 15,000* gp limit. Assets: 1,875,000 gp *. Population: 2,500; 95% human, 2% halfling, 2% dwarven, 1% other - continually varying. Real Authority: Iron Throne District Director Nordolf Gilding, human male, AL: NE (NG), Rogue 16, Wizard 6, Fighter 4, appears to be an independent wine shipper. Authority figures: Burgomaster Delbert Sneath, human male, AL:LE, Rogue 4, War 4, Aris 8; Danton Hardy, human male, AL: LE (LG), Ftr 14, Commander of the Port Guard; Important Characters: Keel Nesbitt, human male, AL: LE, Exp 10, Ftr 2, high Iron Throne officer and head of Easting Reach Bloodstone Trade; Talbot Melton, human male, AL: NE, Exp 12, town treasurer and double agent and commander of the Zhentarim in New Sarshel; Keel Nesbitt, human male, AL: LE, Exp 10, Ftr 2, Iron Throne agent and head of Easting Reach Bloodstone Trade; Tandus Dieling, human male, AL: N, Exp 6, Iron Throne member and manager of Easting Reach Spirits; Ruinlord Halset *The Durgh* Durgham, human male, AL: LE, Cleric (Xvim) lvl 14, double agent, top advisor to the Iron Throne, covert Zhentarim commander for the Bloodstone region. Port Guard: 24 Ftr lvls 1-6. Watch: 30 Ftr, levels 1-12, 70 War levels 1-10. Taxation: Normal.

*** These levels are higher than listed in the D&D 3E *Dungeon Master's Guide*, but they are commensurate with the wealth and business volume of New Sarshel.**

New Sarshel straddles the small but fast flowing Akarnfljót River that has its source in Lethyr Forest somewhat south of the Mauberg's Oak monastery. The river's mouth on Easting Reach makes a natural harbor that has served fishermen for more than two millennia.

Only one main road runs through the town, crossing the Akarnfljót's single bridge in town. The Telflamm Coastal Trail connects Uthmere in the North with the independent city of Telflamm in the South, outside of the Great Dale.

The port town once was a quiet fishing village on Easting Reach that was founded with the name Borkurstad in the year -894 DR. It managed to survive its original Narfelli rulers, Impilturian kings and anyone else who claimed it for 2,251 years without drawing any particular attention from any of them. In its final years as Borkurstad, it was the seat of a tiny fishermen's barony. In its best years, about 500 souls lived in Borkurstad.

That came to a rather abrupt end in the Year of the Prince (1357 DR), when a group of Impilturian merchants from the coastal city of Sarshel bought the village through secret agents. The Impilturians were disgruntled with taxation in their home kingdom and their paladins' inaction against Zhengyi the Witch King of Vaasa. In protest, they abruptly moved their entire business across Easting Reach to the small port, building it into a thriving but lawless town.

The action caught the Royal Impilturian government totally off guard. In truth, the merchants had begun moving toward acquisition of Borkurstad after meeting secretly in Alturiak of the Year of the Prince (1357 DR). They commissioned a group of purchasing agents to secretly buy every piece of property in Borkurstad as well as the title of former Baron Lief Hartlssonur. About 90% of the property owners accepted the offers made to them, packed their bags and moved elsewhere. Many of those who remained were simple fishermen.

Unknown to the Impilturian merchants, their purchasing agents really were operatives of the Iron Throne. They were eager to use the Impilturian businessmen's money to acquire the village, which they intended to take over as quickly as possible, to make it the base of operations for the Throne in the Easting Reach area.

The Impilturian merchants and their Sembian agents had commissioned several Sembian merchant vessels to dock in Sarshel in late Mirtul of the Year of the Prince (1357 DR), where the merchandise of the Impilturian businessmen was loaded on board, ostensibly for resale.

For the last time, the Impilturian merchants gritted their teeth, paid the Royal Export Customs Tax, to avoid drawing last minute suspicions, and then sailed eastward, leaving only the shells of their businesses and in some cases a trail of debts behind in Impilturian Sarshel.

The move drew the wrath of Impiltur, but there was no military response; a nation run by paladins does not launch military attacks against non-military people who take their belongings and move elsewhere, even if it is disadvantageous for their own trade and taxes.

The Impilturians renamed the seaside village New Sarshel, after the home city they had abandoned. It was their plan to open a free trade port, one with docking fees but no taxes on business, one without severe trade restrictions either. The new port was not willing to deal directly in evil; no slave markets were to be allowed in New Sarshel, for example. However, if a ship carrying slaves were to dock in New Sarshel to take on supplies, the merchant rulers were willing to look the other way.

The village government consisted of a council and burgomaster. Each of the 20 key Impilturian investors who bought property in Borkurstad was entitled to a seat on the New Sarshel village council, which in turn elected the burgomaster. A ship owner named Rathelraun, with a fleet of five merchant ships, was elected the first and only Impilturian burgomaster.

The council hired the same Sembian operatives who purchased the village for them to recruit, build and operate a watch. This proved to be a fatal error for many of the councilors. The Iron Throne did not intend to let the Impilturians have New Sarshel, but they were willing to let them control it until they had finished investing in and building the port town.

In less than a year's time, New Sarshel had become a huge success. Most of the limited Damaran trade of Zhengyi's years used to wend its way through Impiltur before reaching the docks of Sarshel. Trade from the Great Dale usually had been ferried from Uthmere to Impilturian Ilmwatch. Both began being diverted instead to New Sarshel, which quickly turned into something of a rip-roaring pioneer town.

In spring of the Year of Shadows (1358 DR), fate did the Sembians of the Iron Throne an immensely helpful turn. Bane and Myrkul stole the Tablets of Fate, and Ao threw all of the gods out of their planes and onto Faerûn in avatar form. The Time of Troubles had begun. In view of this tumultuous event the advances of Zhengyi in Damara, Impiltur had little or no interest in the Year of Shadows in the doings of the tiny upstart port town of New Sarshel in the Great Dale.

This gave the Iron Throne a free hand. The Throne began to move in early Flamerule of the Year of Shadows after the money of the Impilturian merchants had completed construction of the new harbor. Some of the Impilturian merchants had been singled out as valuable businessmen with useful contacts, and the Throne recruited these covertly. Many were willing to join forces with the Sembians, and they still do business in New Sarshel today.

However, those who turned the Throne down and those who were of no interest to the Throne were marked for quick elimination. Some were assassinated and their families simply vanished, sold into slavery in Thay. Others, noticing the string of deaths and disappearances, fled for their lives, leaving behind all they owned.

The last of the Impilturian councilors who had not allied with the Throne, Burgomaster Rathelraun, died together with his family in a mysterious fire that destroyed their home in Marpenoth of the Year of Shadows. Interestingly, a will was found leaving all he owned to another of the Impilturian merchants who had joined the Throne, his cousin, Rendelnyr. After his death, the Iron Throne owned New Sarshel lock, stock and barrel.

In less than two years time, the sleepy fisherman's village of Borkurstad, with 500 residents, had grown into the booming free trade port town of New Sarshel, with a population of 1,500. Today, it's grown into a port town of 2,500. The town serves as the headquarters for all Iron Throne operations in Impiltur, Damara, Vaasa, the Great Dale, Telflamm, Thesk and Rashemen.

New Sarshel can be something of an enigma for PCs traveling into it for the first time. Whatever the adventurers decide the town is, their first greeting from New Sarshel usually will be unpleasant if they ride in from the North.

The prevailing wind in New Sarshel comes across Easting Reach from the southwest. In the northeastern corner of the town, one finds Easting Reach Tanning, a plant that poisons the air upwind of it with tannic acid fumes. When the Iron Throne subsidiary went into operation, it bought the six farm and residential buildings across the street and upwind from the plant, to avoid having problems with the residents.

The tannic acid fumes proved to be more damaging than the Throne had guessed at first. Small vineyards of middle quality to the northeast became worthless the first year the tannery was in operation. The acid not only weakened the grape vines but also gave the grapes a putrid flavor. They were unsuited even for the making of wine vinegar.

Seeing that the vineyards too were in the possession of the Throne, no one else suffered a loss because of the fumes. The vineyards had produced only mediocre wines and modest profits, while Easting Reach Tanning earns huge profits for the Throne. Therefore, the Throne found it rather easy to swallow the loss of the vineyards and move on to other things.

Today, the only people who suffer from the tannic acid fumes are those who have to travel through them to enter into the town. On those rare days when the wind shifts, the tannery halts production. It's not in the best interests of the Iron Throne to poison the people of New Sarshel, most of whom work for the Throne either directly or indirectly.

The acid fumes are the only barrier a visitor will find when entering New Sarshel. There is no gate or town wall (except for the defensive wall on the waterfront) and there are no guards asking questions at the points where the Telflamm Coastal Trail enters and exits the town. This comes as a surprise to Impilturians who enter New Sarshel and think that they see how easy it would be for their kingdom to overrun the renegade port town.

The Iron Throne isn't worried about Impiltur overrunning New Sarshel, and no other neighbor would be likely to do so. Paladins rule Impiltur, and the Throne understands the strict rules of good by which all paladins, including the Lords of Imphras II, live.

The Throne takes no overt actions in New Sarshel that a paladin could use to justify causing a war. Impiltur's paladins understand that aggression against New Sarshel could lead to a state of war with Sembia. A war in turn would block much Impilturian trade in the West, causing a severe economic crisis for the land of Imphras. The Iron Throne knows that the paladins understand this.

Because it fears no attacks, only a 100-man mercenary watch guards New Sarshel, with about 30 men on duty at any given time. The watch is capable, well paid and loyal, and it's large enough to tackle any probable crisis below the level of an Impilturian invasion.

The only military type structures in New Sarshel beyond the watch garrison are the two sections of waterfront wall with towers at regular intervals. The waterfront walls were completed in the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR) but fell largely into disuse after a few years, once the Impilturian Navy had eliminated the last of the pirates operating on Easting Reach. Since that time, the Iron Throne perceives no threat from the sea. It mans only the two towers at the opening to the harbor.

With New Sarshel being a key outpost of the evil Iron Throne and offering refuge to several other evil organizations and religions, one might expect that a PC party entering the town would find itself in grave danger.

In truth, so many strangers enter and leave New Sarshel that most of them draw little or no attention. That will be the case with a PC party too, as long as the PCs mind their own business and do nothing else to negatively draw Throne interest in them. The Throne is interested first and foremost in amassing wealth, property and the power that come with both. It uses whatever tool best achieves its goals, and that includes evil means to its ends, when they do the job better than other tools.

The Iron Throne is an organization that has no interest in good and evil in their own right. It also understands that uncontrolled evil is highly destructive and needs to be bridled; therefore, most areas run by the Throne tend to be safe and civilized for all of those who do nothing to convince the Throne to use evil surgical tools to remove them.

The Throne also believes that some outlets must be available for those who have a need to do evil; therefore it ignores such things as the secret temple of Loviatar with its slaves and pay-as-you-go torture chamber beneath the *Smile of the Shadow* bordello. However, were the temple ever to start operating indiscreetly and come into the public eye, the Throne no doubt would eliminate it just as fervently as the paladins of Impiltur would, and it also would pretend to do so with the holiness of the paladins.

Being nosy, asking questions about things the Throne wishes to keep secret and already having negative contracts with the Throne are, of course, matters that could draw the Throne's undesired attention quickly to any group of PCs. Being an inconvenience or a danger to the Throne can quickly prove to be a fatal error.

If you're running the *Northern Journey* adventure, the revelation of the PCs magical sigylls could draw the Throne's attention too, but the nature of that attention would depend upon the circumstances and would not necessarily be dangerous for the PCs. The Throne is aware the sigyll bearers are crossing Faerûn eastwards and crossing its own spheres of influence. To date, the PCs probably have done nothing to make the Throne think that they are a threat, although that will vary from one campaign to another.

Usually, the Throne will follow the movement of the sigyll-bearers with mild interest, keeping a somewhat watchful eye open to determine whether the PCs are becoming either a danger to the Throne or useful to it. However, in most campaigns, the Throne will have had no reason to date to interfere in the PCs' progress.

The Iron Throne probably will let most PC groups pass through New Sarshel and simply ignore them. In most cases, PCs will be able to move around in town and deal openly and freely with locals, without drawing unwarranted and/or unwanted attention.

When the Throne decides that anyone should be liquidated, and that could include a PC group, the assassins have orders to do their work quietly, efficiently, if possible, outside of town,. The assassins are expected to eliminate the problem in such a manner that no one but the dead realized anything has happened. An assassin who leaves bodies on the streets of New Sarshel can expect to become another assassin's target, unless, of course, he or she was contracted to leave the bodies in sight, as an intended example.

This could pose some interesting situations in campaigns running the *Northern Journey* adventure. If an *NJ* PC party reaches New Sarshel, it probably already will have been the subject of assassination attempts by various factions. It's also possible that draconians, the Tiamat faction of the Dragon Cult, agents of Tiamat's church or Gallists make an attempt on the PCs' life in New Sarshel. That, in turn, could lead to the paradox of a Throne-hired town watch investigating and trying to track down the assassins. Under some circumstances, it could even lead to the Throne setting Xvimist assassin monks on the PCs' assassins' trail.

Traditionally, a burgomaster and a 20-man secret council have ruled New Sarshel and Borkurstad before it. Today, New Sarshel is openly governed by Burgomaster Delbert Sneath, human male, AL:LE, Rogue 4, War 4, Aris 8, who actually is a double agent for the Zhentarim. Sneath served both masters for several years already in Sembia, before being sent to New Sarshel in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR) to become burgomaster.

Most residents of New Sarshel are convinced that Sneath and a secret council rule the town today. In truth, there has been no council since the fall of New Sarshel's first Impilturian merchants' government in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR). However, because the old council was secret and the current council is said to still be secret, no one is aware that no council exists.

In truth, the day-to-rule of the city is in the hands of Sneath and his appointed bureaucrats. All are operatives of the Iron Throne, and some are double agents of the Zhentarim. The regional rule and head of the regional Throne base in New Sarshel is Nordolf Gilding, human male, AL: NE (NG), Rogue 16, Wizard 6, Fighter 4, who for all intents and purposes appears to be the neutrally good aligned owner of Acorn Wine Shipping.

Gilding's real name is Nórdhjólf Gyldyngssonur. He is a native of Uthmere. He makes no secret of this, but he has simplified his name, because he says many customers have difficulty with his true old Turami name. His true neutral evil alignment is shielded by a periapt of alignment. For more information on Gilding, see the NPCs section of the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

Gilding left Uthmere in his youth to study economics at the university in Sembian Ordulin. The Throne recruited him there. With time, he rose into the second highest of its secret echelons. He runs Throne business east of the Vast with a relatively free hand, although he is subject to orders from Shandaril in Heliogabalus, who in turn is on the highest level of the Throne, along with its leaders in Sembia.

In truth, Gilding occupies himself only marginally with affairs of New Sarshel. The port town is the Throne's base east of the Vast, but the Throne's main objectives, all of them Gilding's responsibilities, are:

- Ongoing negotiations with the House of the Master's Shadow in Telflamm. The Throne and the largest temple of Mask's church in the Realms are working together to gain control of affairs in Damara and Impiltur. However, the alliance with Telflamm requires Gilding's constant attention and watchfulness. Mask's church is so taken with intrigues that it is quite capable of having one element working together with the Throne on the Damaran and Impilturian intrigues and another separate element plotting just as diligently an intrigue against this group.

- Covert activities in Impiltur. The main Impilturian operatives in the kingdom of Imphras are in Hlammach. They report directly to Gilding's agents, although they are unaware of Gilding's name. Both legal investments and profit skimming are important sources of income for the Iron Throne. But the main effort of the Throne now, working in league with the church of Mask, is to discredit the paladin Lords of Imphras II who rule Impiltur. The paladins rule in regent service of the dowager Queen Sambryl. The Throne and Mask's church hope to bring about the fall of the paladin government when the heirless queen dies. According to their schemes, a new government to the Throne's liking would replace the paladin government.

- Consolidation of the Throne's activities in Damaran Heliogabalus. The Throne already has a tight grip on the Damaran Merchants Council in the capital city and it controls much of the private bloodstone trade beyond the mines. Shandaril's task is to see to it that all of the non-governmental mines eventually come under direct or indirect control of the Throne, and Gilding is her chief aide in this move within the South. The Throne's main competitor in Damara is the government's own Royal Damaran Bloodstone Trust.

- Trade route development in Vaasa. This is an area where Gilding could find himself in trouble in the future. On the surface, it appears that competing trails are being forged through Vaasa by front operations of both the Harpers and the Throne, but the Throne's trailblazers are in truth secret operatives of the Zhentarim. Neither Gilding nor Shandaril is not aware of this, but the Harpers are. The top echelon of the Throne in Sembia hasn't occupied itself directly with the Vaasan operation. It too is unaware of the Black Network's involvement. If other elements of the Throne learn of this before Shandaril or Gilding does, it could jeopardize his standing within the Throne, because she will give him the blame.

- Keeping the Throne in a state of preparedness to move swiftly into the rest of the Great Dale, should Harbet Gall fall in the Eastern Dale. The Iron Throne has a tight network of talented, covert agents throughout the Great Dale, from Uthmere to Kront in Ashanath. It has infiltrated the enclaves of the Dragon Cult in Tower Threespires, the warriors of Garagos in Fortress Clymph and the Malarite city of Bezentil. Throughout the Eastern Dale, the Throne's agents believe that Gall's empire is on the verge of crumbling. The Great Dale is rich in resources. The Iron Throne intends to capitalize upon them, if the civil war ends.

- Shed light on the secret of the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos. The Iron Throne knows little about the Nentyarch, but it fears that his magical power could seriously upset long-range Throne plans to take control of the Dale and its resources.

As suggested above, Gilding is weakest in those things of which he is unaware. The point we've already mentioned deals with the Zhentarim being the people actually blazing the trail for the Iron Throne in Vaasa. That's certainly a serious problem, but it's part of a much larger and more serious problem for the Throne; the Zhentarim is just about everywhere that the Throne is.

The Black Network has spent the years since Fzoul Chembryl's rise after the Time of Troubles trying to thoroughly infiltrate the Throne. The Zhentarim manipulates and in many ways controls the Throne, although the Throne's key leaders are unaware of this. Gilding's organization in New Sarshel and throughout the region is no exception. The situation in Vaasa is a critical matter but only one situation where the Throne operatives really are servants of the Black Network.

The Zhentarim has infiltrated first and foremost the financial centers of the Throne. Just about any Throne bookkeeper of consequence is either a Zhentarim double agent or is receiving bribes from the Black Network. Bookkeepers in the Zhentarim's service are expected to do an honest and scrupulous job, with one exception.

Anytime the Throne books a profit on an operation, between 1% and 2% of that profit is diverted to the Zhentarim without being booked. The bookkeeper is expected to be creative enough to cover the skimming with inflated postings in other parts of the book. The Zhentarim earns a fortune in this manner without doing any appreciable work or making any significant investment to warrant it. For the most part, the skimmed money is pure gravy for the Black Network.

The bookkeepers who skim this money not only are bribed to do so but are watched discreetly by Xvimist assassin monks. Should a bookkeeper foul up, he or she has a Zhentarim guarantee of rescue. The assassin monks are under orders to quickly slay anyone who tries to kidnap one of the bribed bookkeepers. They then safely spirit the intended victim and his family away to Zhentil Keep, where they are given sanctuary.

The Black Network keeps its promises too; that provides the motivation necessary for the bookkeepers - who already are well paid and living comfortably - to risk double-crossing the Iron Throne. The principal bookkeeper for the Throne in New Sarshel is Talbot Melton, human male, AL: NE, Exp 12, who has been a double agent for the Zhentarim for decades.

Before the Time of Troubles, when Fzoul Chembryl still worshipped Bane, Melton kept the books for the Sword of the South, the 7,000 man Zhent military unit scattered around and hidden in Sembia. All 7,000 men were slaughtered in their final battle in Mistledale, which took place at about the same time that the troops led by Bane went down to defeat in Shadowdale.

Melton is lower on the Throne's ladder than Burgomaster Sneath, but both Melon and Sneath really work for the Zhentarim, and Melton is the Black Network's commander in New Sarshel, therefore, he really is Sneath's superior.

Another key figure in New Sarshel is Danton Hardy, human male, AL: LE (LG), Ftr 14, commander of the Port Guard. Hardy has the authority to inspect any storage area for merchandise in New Sarshel at any time he wishes, and he does so on a regular basis. Hardy is a triple agent who really serves the Impilturian government. He uses two magical periapts, one to conceal his true alignment and the other to hide his thoughts.

A native of Impilturian Filur, Hardy served from an early age as a royal spy. After the Throne took over New Sarshel, Hardy was sent into the city to gather intelligence. He applied for and received the job as commander of the Port Guard. Shortly thereafter, he was recruited by the Zhentarim and agreed to work as a double agent. He is true, however, to Impiltur alone. He uses his position to keep the Impilturian government informed on what merchandise is passing through the port town.

Another important operation in New Sarshel is the *Bounty Hunters Lodge*. The place is just what the name suggests and more. It purports to be a Throne operation, but it now is run covertly by the Zhentarim Assassin Monks of Iyachtu Xvim. In the cellars below the lodge, one can find a well-outfitted small temple to Xvim called the *Hidden Hand.* Xvim's assassin monks use it exclusively.

To maintain appearances, the lodge brokers will seek contracts for any bounty hunters who come to town looking for work. Most of the contracts are for targets in Impiltur and Damara. However, the lodge's real purpose is to serve as a staging area for Xvimist assassin monks coming into the Bloodstone Lands.

An adventurer reporting to the lodge on his own, without Xvimist or Throne references, probably will get nothing more than minor contracts from the lodge. There also is a standing offer at the lodge of substantial rewards for information on the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos or for the capture or proven liquidation of the Nentyarch. The contract comes covertly from the Throne.

Some wandering adventurers have indeed read the reward notices in the lodge regarding the Nentyarch and have traveled into Rawlinswood with thoughts of earning the money, but to date, no such adventurers ever have returned to New Sarshel from Rawlinswood.

In the years after Zhengyi's fall and before the Xvimist takeover, the lodge was responsible for hiring most of the assassins from Amn and Calimshan who were sent into Damara to liquidate the opposition to the crowning of Sir Gareth Dragonsbane as Damaran king.

The long string of Damaran assassinations was an Iron Throne operation without Zhentarim involvement. The Throne was and still is a strong supporter of King Gareth. The Throne naturally does not shares the king's ideals as a paladin of Ilmater. Rather, it views him as being a warrior who is politically inept and unable to build a government and administration that is competent to prevent organizations like the Throne from taking control of the Damaran economy. To date, the Throne has been correct in that assumption.

When the Throne needs assassinations to be performed in Damara, the contracts still run through the lodge, but the lodge no longer searches as far as Amn and Calimshan for assassins. Instead, the contracts go to murderers from the Moonsea area who serve Fzoul Chembryl, although the Throne is unaware of the Xvimist and Zhentarim connection there.

Several years ago, while still under direct Throne control, the lodge let several contracts for the head of the Thayan bounty hunter Sleyvas*, who killed the evil Baroness Sylvia of Damaran Ostel. Sleyvas had been trying to capture the baroness to bring her back to Thay, where a price had been placed on her head. She died in the battle of magic and arms that followed.

The Throne too wanted the baroness to be eliminated and intended to send out its own assassins. It was strongly against the idea of letting Thay begin operating within what it considered its own sphere of influence. It is said that the lodge warned Sleyvas to stay out of Damara, and Sleyvas defied the lodge. In the years that followed, none of the bounty hunters who had gone after Sleyvas ever returned to New Sarshel, and it is believed that the lodge in effect has *"forgotten"* its complaint against Sleyvas, who also hasn't been seen for nearly two years in the Bloodstone region.

Nonetheless, this matter was whispered about in the streets of New Sarshel in the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR), when Sleyvas allegedly showed up in New Sarshel, registered with the guild and spent several days staying quite openly in the town before moving onward to the West. There were no known attempts made to collect the old price on his head during that daring visit.

* The character of Sleyvas is a creation of Phillip Wallace, Copyright © 2000-2003, Phillip Wallace, all rights reserved. The character is used in *Northern Journey* with permission. Sleyvas also is used in Part 7 of *Northern Journey, Bloodstone*.

New Sarshel has an unusual number of temples for a town its size, but most of them are small. Some believe that a number of faiths have established bases in the port town more for the purpose of making observations and gathering information for the church leadership than to serve actual worshippers.

There are public temples serving the following deities in New Sarshel: Waukeen, Mask, Iyachtu Xvim, Umberlee, Sune, Tempus and Cyric. The temple of Waukeen is in the caretaking of Burgomaster Sneath, if the Merchant's Friend has not yet returned in your campaign.

There are covert temples to Talona, Loviatar and Xvim, the latter being the Hidden Hand beneath the Bounty Hunters Lodge, which serves the church's secret assassin monks. The public temple, called the *Sea Hand*, is there to serve passing worshippers.

The temple to Cyric has been manned only briefly in its two-year history. The church has sent three different Strifeleaders to New Sarshel in that time, but all three were found dead after their arrival, doubtless the work of the Xvimists. The last assassination was the result of a magical explosion that also destroyed the temple and two neighboring residential buildings.

Officially, the town watch is investigating the matter. In truth, no one is doing anything. The Iron Throne considers Cyric's Strifeleaders to be an insane lot that causes trouble wherever it builds a temple. The Throne has no desire to have the church develop a religious base in New Sarshel. And it has even less desire to get involved in a war between churches, although it would try to dissuade the Cyricists' assassins from operating so overtly in New Sarshel, if it new who they were.

There is little agricultural business in New Sarshel. Most of the farmers who once were on the edge of the town now live a bit farther upstream in the Akarnfljót valley. The farmers, mostly native Dalesmen, have no love for the money changing urbanites who took over old Borkurstad. They seldom enter the town. Instead, merchants ride eastward to buy food and grain supplies from the farmers.

There is no farm village as such in the valley, but the farms tend to be clustered, and among them, one can find a cooperative granary, Hroald Gypingssonur's (human male, AL: NG, Exp 3) small grain mill, Rudlung Tarfissonur's (human male, AL: NG, Com 2) small tavern and a blacksmith named Gendholf Thargssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 1. Adventurers seldom travel up the Akarnfljót, but those who do usually can find a barn to bunk in during summer and, for a few coins, an extra bed in a farmer's house in the cold months.

Money in New Sarshel

Prices all are set in Sembian currency, but coins from Impiltur and Telflamm, old Theskan coins and regional bloodstone bars are accepted. Visitors with other currencies will have to negotiate and can expect that their money will be discounted by about 10%.

Adventure Hooks in New Sarshel

- **Secrets -** New Sarshel is a town filled with dangerous secrets. Most of them are described either above or in the map description below. The PCs could discover almost any of these secrets. If they do so, they will invariably set a motion and counter motion in effect. The people who are keeping the secrets will try to silence the PCs. The people who would like to know those secrets may try to help the PCs bring them to light. The disclosure of anyone's secrets in New Sarshel could be fatal for the PCs and quite a number of other people. In New Sarshel, one secret tends to lead to another. A revelation could set off a chain of events of considerable proportion and of unforeseeable consequence.

- **The Sigylls -** (*Northern Journey* adventure only). A number of groups in New Sarshel know of the PCs and their sigylls. As long as the PCs do not reveal the symbols, these groups probably will watch them quietly, but if the sigylls are seen in public, they no longer are secret and some of the curious may be prompted to ask questions.

- **Assassination -** Any of the opponents the PCs in your campaign might have could mount an assassination attempt in New Sarshel, perhaps with the repercussions detailed above in the text describing the town.

- **Bounty Hunters -** The PCs might go to the *Bounty Hunters Lodge* seeking work. If they do, they should get a contract. The possibilities are limited only by the Game Master's imagination.

- **Sabotage -** A group of militant rangers from Lethyr Forest who work with the Mucklestones Druids could be in town with hopes and plans for destroying the poisonously pollutant tannery. The PCs could learn of them and either join them or rat on them.

- **New Baddies -** In addition to the cast of bad characters already provided, the Hunters of Herne and/or the Dragon Cult (either faction or both) may have agents in town. The Game Master can design them to fit his/her campaign.

- **Another Strifeleader -** For the fourth time, the church of Cyric could be sending another priest to town, even though the burnt ruins of the temple have yet to be cleaned up. Almost everyone in New Sarshel will hope that the new priest vanishes before many even are aware that he or she is there.

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New Sarshel

Map of New Sarshel

1 - Port Guard and Harbor Administration. The guard has total jurisdiction over all ships and warehouses and can inspect them at any time. Danton Hardy, human male, AL: LE (LG), Ftr 14, is the commander.

2 - Eastern Wave Temple. Sailors and their ship officers pay tribute here to the Bitch Queen. Wavemistress Narda Piefing, human female, AL: CE, cleric (Umberlee) 3, is the only priestess.

3 - Ship Docks.

4 - Fishermen's Wharf.

5 - Boat Docks.

6 - Akarnfljót River. The name is old Turami for *Acorn Flow.*

7 - Purple Wave Temple ruins. Until recently, the temple to Cyric stood here. When it exploded, killing the sole priest, the blast also destroyed the two adjacent residential buildings, which were not affiliated with the temple.

8 - New Sarshel Town Warehouses. The town government (and therefore the Iron Throne) has a monopoly on warehousing in the port town. Mercenaries are hired by Burgomaster Sneath to guard the warehouses, some of which contain bloodstone bars.

9 - Ebenezer's Tower. This rather commercial complex belongs to the Transmuter Ebenezer Tarm, human male, AL: CN, Transmuter 12. Tarm has in his employ two journeymen wizards, Deman Rothel, human male, AL: CN, Evoker 6, and Henda Geeling, human female, AL: N, Abjurer 5. All three are natives of Sembian Ordulin who followed the Throne eastward, to their own great profit. Tarm and his associates specialize in working spells on commission and in making magical objects.

10 - Town Hall and Wizards' Towers. This building is the center of Burgomaster Sneath's port government and home to two wizards. The small tower on the north wall of the building is used by the town government's diviner, Kienith Plune, human male, AL: NE, diviner 7. Plume, a native of Sembian Urmlaspyr, generally is viewed as being just another town employee. His job is to gain magically any information requested of him by Sneath or the town's bureaucrats. His workload is heavy. However, no one cares whether he uses his own magic to gain the knowledge being sought. He can commission higher-level private wizards to work magic beyond his own level. The rear tower is home to the so-called Town Wizard, Giebish Tungen, human male, AL: NE, Wizard 14. Tungen, a native of Sembian Selgaunt and a long time member of the Throne's middle echelons, is seldom asked to do work. He spends most of his well-paid time isolated in his tower, doing his own research. His job is to provide power wizardry to the town when it's needed, which hasn't been often.

11 - Traders Temple. If Waukeen already has returned in your campaign, her temple is the busiest in New Sarshel. It will served by three priests, Grand Trabbar Henselnyr, human male, AL: N, cleric 10, a native of Uthmere; Lender Tuga Breeling, human female, AL: N, cleric 7, a native of Sembian Yhaunn, and Investor Githla Tebbing, human female, AL: N, cleric 5, a native of Damaran Heliogabalus. If Waukeen has not yet returned in your campaign, the temple is closed with Burgomaster Sneath as its caretaker. The town watch closely guards it.

12 - Easting Reach Tanning. The stinking plant in northeastern New Sarshel not only tans hides purchased by farmers from the surrounding area and the Akarnfljót Valley but also specializes in tanning coveted black adder swamp snake skins smuggled in by the Regdresk family from Impiltur's Traders Bay swamps. The manager, a low echelon member of the Iron Throne, is Tarth Gardell, human male, AL: NE, Com 4, a native of Sembian Selgaunt. The master tanner is Refred Hundorssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 5, a native of Bezentil.

13 - Easting Reach Spirits. This is one of the Iron Throne's biggest moneymaking operations in New Sarshel. The company buys what premium wines it can from Uthmere and Uthving, fine malt whisky, schnapps and other spirits from the brothers in the Mauberg's Oak monastery and smuggled Impilturian swamp whisky from the Regdresk family. It resells them to a market all along the Inner Sea and on the Dragonmere, with exports traveling as far as Waterdeep and Neverwinter in the northwest and Tethyr, Amn and Calimshan in the southwest. The company also imports a small amount of very expensive, premium Ithmong wines from Tethyr for local resale. The manager is one of the top figures of the Iron Throne in New Sarshel, Tandus Dieling, human male, AL: N, Exp 6, a native of Highmoon in Deepingdale. With the exception of purchasing smuggled swamp whisky, Easting Reach Spirits is one of the generally legal, above-the-board operations of the Iron Throne.

14 - Bone Swamp Cemetery. The graveyard gets its name from the fact that the Akarnfljót sometimes floods slightly in early spring, covering this plot with up to six inches/15 cm of standing water. This makes the land relatively useless. Because of the flooding, the soil is too sour to produce even decent hay. One should note that the residents of old Borkurstad already decided to place the graveyard here, not the Iron Throne.

15 - Salt Sail Tavern. This is more commonly referred to as the *House of the Drunken Sailor.* It's a good place to get in a brawl. There's one almost every night. The town watch takes no interest in the *Salt Sail* as long as no dead bodies are left behind. Sometimes it isn't interested if there are bodies, particularly if a few gold pentars are handed to those who investigate the matter. The tavernkeeper is Euneth Targg, human male, AL: CE, War 6, a retired thief from Selgaunt and former pirate. His house brew, a beer of a not necessarily identifiable type also referred to by customers as *swill*, costs 2 steel pennies for a quart/liter in a dirty tankard. Low quality Vilhon Reach rum costs 4 silver hawks for a shot/0.1 liter in a dirty glass. Low quality Regdresk swamp whisky also costs 4 silver hawks for a shot/0.1 liter in a dirty glass. Anyone consuming anything on the premises must make a Constitution check for DC 12 (*AD&D 2E:* Save for poison) or contract diarrhea for 1d4 days.

16 - Melvaunt Spirits. This company claims to do a wholesale-only business. Private customers aren't admitted. The company really doesn't deal in spirits at all but rather in high quality poisons made by the priestesses of Talona in the swamps of Impiltur's Trader's Bay. The poison is shipped in secret containers mounted within whisky barrels that envelope the interior containers with cheapest grade swamp whisky. Melvaunt Spirits breaks open the 16 gallon/60 liter false barrels, dumps the cheap whisky into Easting Reach and retrieves the smaller 4 gallon/15 liter barrels of poison hidden inside the larger barrels. Although no one admits anything, small amounts of poison that have leaked into the dumped whisky have eradicated the once profitable lobster population off Borkurstad's coast and residents are developing a disinclination to eat fish from the local catch, because people have an increasing tendency to get ill after eating fish. The Iron Throne believes it owns Melvaunt Spirits, but it really has been a Zhentarim operation from the start. All of the employees are Moonsea immigrants loyal to the Black Network. The manager is Randall Tirdy, human male, AL: LE, Ftr 6, Rogue 8, Cleric (Xvim) 2, who hails from Zhentil Keep.

17 - Tina's Darthouse. This sleazy tavern tends to draw sailors, just like the *Salt Sail*, but a more peaceful crowd that tends to play darts for awhile and then get depressed, getting stone drunk while salting one's own beer, rum or whisky with tears. The *Darthouse* isn't an inn, but there is a bay filled with open bunks on the second floor. A large number of the customers tend to be unconscious at closing time. The booze corpses, as they're called, are carried upstairs to a bunk, and the owner, Bettina *Tina* Narby, human female, AL: CN, Com 2, a native of Ordulin, collects a bunk fee of two steel pennies for the service. Narby is no brewmistress. She serves *Fleeing Admiral* lager beer from the New Sarshel brewery at 3 steel pennies for a quart/liter tankard. Low quality Vilhon Reach rum and low quality Regdresk swamp whisky both cost 4 silver hawks for a shot/0.1 liter.

18 - Free Merchants House. Located near both the Town Hall and the Town Watch garrison, the inn is the finest and safest in New Sarshel. Customers are required to wear fine dress. Adventurers with fine clothing may enter the inn in the back, go to their rooms, bathe and dress in their fineries, but during their stay, they're expected to constantly dress well. No weapons are prohibited in the public house. Many of the business deals made in New Sarshel are closed in the *Free Merchants*. There's a reason for that. Permanent magic surrounds each of the 32 booths in the common room. As long as the sound level of conversation remains low, the magic keeps the words used incomprehensible to anyone outside of the particular booth area. The magic also distorts the visual picture of lip movements, making lip reading impossible.

In addition, the entire common room is protected from all types of scrying and detection magic. The Iron Throne, which is the real owner of the Free Merchants House, hired a group of archmagi from distant Halruua to work this magic and reportedly paid 100,000 Cormyte Platinum Tricrowns for the work. It may have been a good investment. Nordolf Gilding spends many of his evenings here in animated discussion. Of course, no one but he and his partners in conversation know what is being discussed. Between fireplaces on its four walls, the common room is lined with 32 lantern-lit booths, each of which can seat six. There also are six tables in the center of the room which can seat eight apiece. The center tables are not magically protected. However, there are no notices in the inn that any areas are or aren't protected. The maturbordh offers a wide variety of excellent food and costs 1 gold pentar and 4 silver hawks per person. The house beers, a light bock in the main season and a dark double bock in the cold season, cost 5 steel pennies per quart/liter tankard. Fine Easting Reach wines run from 2 to 40 gold pentars per bottle, and premium Ithmong wines from Tethyr sell at prices ranging between 8 and 200 gold pentars. Mauberg's Oak malt whisky costs 1 gold pentar per shot/0.1 liter glass. The inn has 12 suites in sizes ranging from 14 to 100 gold pentars per night. All 12 suites have the same magical protection as the booths in the common room. The 24 single rooms cost 1 gold pentar and 2 silver hawks. The 14 doubles cost 1 gold pentar per person. The hotel manager, an employee, is Detlef Harbig, human male, AL: LN, Exp 10, a native of Sembian Ordulin.

19 - Acorn Wine Shipping. Nordolf Gilding, No. 2 in the Iron Throne in the Bloodstone Region, owns this company. It belongs to him and not to the Throne. Gilding buys many of the finest vintages from the Uthmere and Uthving areas and exports them into the West. He also imports the best vintages from Ithmong in Tethyr for resale regionally. Among his customers are the Gourmet Maturbordh, the Free Merchants Inn and the Eastern Chalice Inn in New Sarshel and several expensive inns in Damaran Heliogabalus.

20 - Easting Reach Bloodstone Trade. This house, an Iron Throne subsidiary, is the main brokerage for the Damaran bloodstone that comes from sources other than the royal mines. Easting Reach sells bloodstone throughout western Faerûn, mostly to governments who keep it in their treasuries. Keel Nesbitt, human male, AL: LE, Exp 10, Ftr 2, heads the company. He is the third most important Iron Throne operative in New Sarshel, after Nordolf Gilding and Burgomaster Sneath. Easting Reach Trading Co. in Uthmere is a secret subsidiary of Easting Reach Bloodstone, and secret councilor Mendelumbrar, human male, AL:NE, Rogue 5, Aris 10, who heads the Uthmere branch, is second only to Nesbitt within Easting Reach Bloodstone.

21 - Salt Wave Fish Packing. This is a fishermen's cooperative that has fallen on harder times since the rumors began spreading that people were becoming sick from eating local fish. However, sales have picked up again since the local fishermen have started taking their catch farther out at sea and a bit up and down the coast from New Sarshel. The head of the organization is Andvar Ottingssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 4, a retired fisherman native to New Sarshel.

22 - Sea Hand Temple. The local temple to Iyachtu Xvim. The resident priest is Hatemaster Nardos Korg, human male, AL: LE, cleric (Xvim) lvl 4.

23 - Shadow Harbor Temple. The temple to Mask, a subsidiary of the House of the Master's Shadow in Telflamm. The resident priestess is Proven Sister Nardula Shiref, human female, AL: NE, cleric (Mask) lvl 5, who is trying to consolidate a thieves guild with headquarters in the temple's cellar.

24 - Tedus Gamling's Wagons. Gamling, human male, AL:NE, Exp 5, is a master wainwright who fled Tsurlagol after killing a wagon dealer in a fight. He is sought as a murderer in Tsurlagol and is a fugitive. Gamling makes sledges and wagons of fine quality and also can do some ship repairs. His employs two journeymen and four apprentices.

25 - Forge mac Gurnit. Twin dwarven brothers run this rather sizeable smithy. They came from the Earthfast Clan, leaving their home and crossing Impiltur and the Easting Reach to set up shop in New Sarshel. Neither has ever explained why. Seannett mac Gurnit, dwarf male, AL: LN, Ftr 8, Exp 8, is a master weaponsmith and armor maker. His twin brother Darin, dwarf male, AL: LN, Ftr 10, Exp 6, is a master blacksmith. Together, they employ a journeyman weaponsmith, a journeyman armor maker, two journeyman blacksmiths and eight apprentices who serve both masters.

26 - Pegleg Sam's Nautical Supplies. This store sells almost anything a sailing ship or its crewmembers might need. There are signs around it warning magic users to avoid it. It's built in a magic dead zone. In fact *Pegleg* Sam Dendagar, human male, AL: NE, Ftr 8, Exp 2, paid a small fortune to acquire the magic dead site. Dendagar, a rich, retired pirate who was active on the Inner Sea, is deadly afraid of magic and magic users to the point of having a phobia. Were it not for that fear, he easily could afford to have his missing left leg, which was bitten off by a shark years ago, magically restored. Dendagar would rather keep hobbling around on the wooden stump attached to his left knee than come in contact with healing magic. There is only one bit of magic in his store, a Ring of Telepathy on the finger of his bodyguard, Seanus McFathel, human male, AL: CE, Ftr 6. The ring, of course, does not work within the store. The kingdom of Impiltur is seeking Pegleg Sam on piracy charges and knows where he is. Impilturian law prohibits Admiral Rilaunyr in Ilmwatch from sending his soldiers to capture Dendagar, but a reward of 100 platinum marks has been placed on his head, which leads some but not many bounty hunters to New Sarshel; most know better than to try taking a wealthy businessman out of the port town by force. Dendagar has a well-paid, running contract with the Bounty Hunters Lodge to liquidate any headhunters who trouble him. If bounty hunters threaten Dendagar, McFathel simply slips out of the store and telepathically alerts the lodge. Xvimist assassin monks usually make short work of the bounty hunters, and their still-warm bodies soon are drifting out to sea or awaiting delivery to a wizard who needs parts.

27 - Bounty Hunters Lodge. Any headhunters coming to New Sarshel are well advised to register at the lodge upon arrival. Someone or the other usually gives strangers in town that advice just in case they're bounty hunters. There are unwritten rules for bounty hunters in New Sarshel, and not obeying them can quickly be fatal. There are many people in New Sarshel with a price on their head, and they don't like the idea of a headhunter coming to collect that price. New Sarshel thinks that bounty hunters are useful and valuable people - to go after those who have prices set on their heads by residents of New Sarshel. On the other hand, any bounty hunter who plans to go after a New Sarshel resident probably is en route to a watery grave or worse. An unwritten law prohibits bounty hunting within New Sarshel. To minimize problems with that law, the lodge was established. Any new bounty hunter who comes to the lodge will be informed upon arrival that there are two safe havens for them in the Great Dale, one of them being New Sarshel and the other being Deacon Tumbrar's lumberjack Timbertown father to the North. In both, they will be warned, bounty hunting is absolutely forbidden, and fellow bounty hunters take an evil view of colleagues who endanger these two havens. Assassins who work for the lodge will liquidate a bounty hunter who violates this code in New Sarshel, and their bodies either will be dumped in Easting Reach or sold to a mage needing parts. Bounty hunters willing to play by the lodge's rules will have no problems. The lodge alone has the right to sanction fulfillment of a bounty-hunting contract within New Sarshel, which almost never occurs, but it will help bounty hunters find contracts they can fulfill in Impiltur, Damara and occasionally in neighboring parts of the Great Dale. The lodge is an Iron Throne operation, but its control has shifted in recent years to covertly operating assassin monks of Iyachtu Xvim who work for Fzoul Chembryl in Zhentil Keep. The Zhentarim uses the lodge mainly as a reception station for new assassin monks being sent to work in the Bloodstone region, where they can be channeled into work quietly and inauspiciously. The Xvimist church also awards contracts regularly through the lodge for the liquidation of priests and followers of Cyric and Tiamat. The lodge master is Ruinlord Kurdash Harnett, human male, AL: LE, Cleric (Xvim) 12, a lower level operative of the Iron Throne who has been a double agent for the Zhentarim for many years, having served Bane earlier and then briefly Cyric before the arrival of Xvim. His last position with the Throne was as head of the small assassins guild in the Sembian port town of Yhaunn. In the cellars below the lodge, Harnett maintains a well-outfitted small temple to Xvim called the *Hidden Hand.* He and his assassin monks use it exclusively. An adventurer reporting to the lodge on his own, without Xvimist or Throne references, can get minor contracts from the lodge. There also is a standing covert offer at the lodge from the Iron Throne of substantial rewards for information on the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos or for the capture or proven liquidation of the Nentyarch. Many bounty hunters have traveled into Rawlinswood to earn the reward money, but to date, none ever have returned to New Sarshel to collect it. In the lodge also are the secret quarters of the main Zhentarim in New Sarshel, Ruinlord Halset Durgham, human male, AL: LE, Cleric (Xvim) 14, a former Banite priest known only as *"The Durgh,"* to the few who know of him at all. He now serves the Black Network as a highly clandestine agent who has worked his ways into the upper levels of the Iron Throne. He is seldom seen, and on those occasions when he is seen, few know who he is, but *The Durgh* is the man who rules New Sarshel, with an iron fist when needed. *The Durgh* is among other things the most trusted secret advisor of Nordolf Gilding. He reports directly, by magical means, to Chembryl in Zhentil Keep and is the commander of all Zhentarim activity in Impiltur, Damara, Vaasa, the Great Dale, Ashanath, Telflamm and Thesk.

28 - Smile of Your Shadow Festhall. On any given evening, 28 hostesses and 12 hosts are available to guests. Services begin at 2 gold pentars and go upward from there. The main hall sells *Fleeing Admiral* beer at 5 steel pennies per quart/liter tankard. Middle grade swamp whisky costs 5 silver hawks per shot/0.1 liter glass. Behind the storage cellars is a hidden temple to Loviatar, complete with torture chamber and 12 slaves locked in cells. The madame and priestess is High Whip Mistress Brigidh Tarscoll, human female, AL:LE, cleric (Loviatar) 10.

29 - Forecastle Inn. The *Forecastle* is a quiet house of middle-of-the-road quality in all respects. Lesser merchants tend to use it, as well as traveling traders, adventurers and others who pass through New Sarshel without having serious dealings in the business quarter or with the Iron Throne. The innkeeper, Renton Garbet, human male, AL:N, Exp 1, came to New Sarshel with his family in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR) from Sembian Daerlun. His father, who died in the Year of the Banner (1368 DR), was a middle level merchant in service of the Iron Throne. Garbet did not follow in his father's footsteps but instead used his inheritance to buy the then ramshackle and closed *Forecastle*, which he's slowly been restoring. For the past year, the *Forecastle* has been brewing its own decent-tasting top-fermented ale, which has no name. It sells for 3 steel pennies per quart/liter tankard. The brewmaster is Garbet's brother, Landell Garbet, human male, AL:N, Exp 5, who recently returned to New Sarshel after completing an apprenticeship and training as a brewer in Tassledale. He returned to his family after winning his papers as a brewmaster across the Dragon Reach. The *Forecastle* has 14 single rooms at 7 silver hawks and 6 doubles at 6 hawks per person. The maturbordh costs 8 hawks. The *Forecastle* is a good place for visitors to stay when they hope no one will take particular notice of them.

30 - Garrison of the Port Guard and Town Watch. The guard has 24 fighters, lvls 1-6. The watch has 30 fighters, lvls 1-12, and 70 warriors, levels 1-10. Together, they make up the full military defense as well as police power of New Sarshel.

31 - Harbor Sword. Terrible Sword Dietmar Zandel, human male, AL, mans the temple to Tempus: CN, cleric (Tempus) 3.

32 - Beauteous Wave. The temple to Sune has a single priestess, Heartwarder Narna Lingh, human female, AL:CG, cleric (Sune) 3.

33 - Eastern Chalice Inn. Located just south of the Town Hall and the Town Watch garrison, the *Chalice* is second only to the *Free Merchants Inn* in safety and quality in New Sarshel. Customers are required to wear fine dress. Adventurers with fine clothing may enter the inn in the back, go to their rooms, bathe and dress in their fineries, but during their stay, they're expected to constantly dress well. Weapons are forbidden in the public house. The common room is comfortable, well lit with wall lanterns and heated by two fireplaces. The maturbordh offers a wide variety of high quality food and costs 1 gold pentar per person. The house ales, a choice between light and stout top ferments, cost 4 steel pennies per quart/liter tankard. Fine Easting Reach wines run from 2 to 32 gold pentars per bottle. Mauberg's Oak malt whisky costs 1 gold pentar per shot/0.1 liter glass. The inn has 4 suites at 10 gold pentars per night. The 18 single rooms cost 1 gold pentar. The 10 doubles cost 8 silver hawks per person. The owner is Tarmon Darling, human male, AL: LN, Exp 2, a native of Selgaunt.

34 - Smoked Shark Tavern. A popular stop for hearty types and dart players who like to eat smoked fish. The owner, Keene Sealy, human male, AL:CN, Ftr 6, a retired sailor of the Sembian Navy, brews his own beers, a strong light bock with 7% alcohol in the main season and a dark double bock with 8.5% in the cold months. The beers have no names. Both cost 4 steel pennies per quart/liter tankard. The only other drink is Mauberg's Oak malt whisky at 8 silver hawks per shot/0.1 liter glass. A board with smoked seafish and dark rye bread smeared with horseradish sauce costs a silver hawk.

35 - Tower of the Eye. This is the abode of sage-for-hire Nundaleus Heeby, half-elf male, AL:CN, diviner 16, a native of Neverwinter in the Northwest who has been in the Great Dale for 150 years and in New Sarshel for the last 12 of them. Heeby is a dealer in magical objects that come from his own school of divination and he sells his services. He is quite knowledgeable about the Great Dale but less knowledgeable about New Sarshel and the Iron Throne. However, his spells, scrying devices and other magical tools can find out much that Heeby never has learned personally yet. His prices are negotiable but usually run at 10 gold pentars per hour or 100 gold pentars a day. Elaborate, high-level magical traps protect the tower.

36 - Gourmet Maturbordh. The *Bordh*, as it's called, is New Sarshel's finest and most expensive eatery. The maturbordh of the house offers a wide variety of excellent, often exotic gourmet food. It costs 2 gold pentars per person. Only wine is offered with the meals. Fine Easting Reach wines run from 3 to 60 gold pentars per bottle, and premium Ithmong wines from Tethyr sell at prices ranging between 10 and 500 gold pentars. Mauberg's Oak malt whisky, which can be ordered after dinner, costs 1 gold pentar per shot/0.1 liter glass. The owner is Larman Sandling, human male, AL: N, Exp 12, a native of Ordulin.

37 - Szenkh Tuhn's Estate. Tuhn, human male, AL: CE, abjurer 18, is a Thayan Red Wizard who voluntarily lives in New Sarshel, to escape the rat race for power that has been deadly for many other wizards in his native land. Tuhn spends most of his time in research, outside of New Sarshel's public eye. Layer upon layer of magic protect the estate and his tower from snooping, scrying and treachery. At times, Tuhn will accept contracts in his field of magical specialty, but his prices usually begin at 100 bloodstone bars and go upward from there.

38 - Easting Reach Meat Packing. This large plant is an operation of the Iron Throne. It has the export monopoly on all meat sold by the farms of the Akarnfljót Valley east of town. The plant packs hams and other fresh meats in salt brine in wooden barrels and makes a wide variety of smoked hams and sausages, all for export. The manager is Arnhung Talvidssonur, human male, AL:N, Exp 4, a native of Mauberg.

39 - Fleeing Admiral Brewery. The middle-sized brewery has one beer, a light lager of middle quality called *Fleeing Admiral*, intentionally named so to poke fun at Impiltur's naval Admiral Rilaunyr in Ilmwatch. The brewery is owned completely by the Iron Throne. The brewmaster is Nesbitt Sisten, human male, AL: NG, Exp 4, who earned his master's papers in Selgaunt.

40 - Emerald Tower. The home and laboratory of Jeevis Tardwick, human male, AL: CG, wizard lvl 16, a native of Iriaebor in the Backlands of the Sword Coast in the West. Tardwick claimed to buy the tower of his vanished predecessor to allow himself to do magical research untroubled and to take on occasional contracts. That is, in fact, what he does most of the time. He really is a top but covert member of the Twilight Hall branch of the Harpers in Berdusk. Tardwick is planned to be the head of a network of Twilight Hall Harper agents who will pay close attention to happenings in the Great Dale, but he can do little at present, because the network is in only the first stages of being built. Twilight Hall decided to buy the tower in New Sarshel because it is on neutral ground in the sense that it is not in Impiltur or in the Freemen's or Gallists' areas of the Great Dale.

Nyth

Village, Conventional, AL: NG, 200 gp limit. Assets: 5,500 gp. Population: 550; 98% human, 2% other. Authority figures: Alderman Habat Lagman, human male, AL:NG, Ftr 14. Other: Sahan rul Tezedh, human male, AL: NE, Exp 5, head of Easting Reach Cargo, Iron Throne agent; Tarad Dur Nam, human male, AL: NE (NG), Cleric (Mask) 6, a secret member of the House of the Master's Shadow. Village watch: 12 human male and female, AL: all non-evil; War 1-5 and Ftr 1-2). Village militia: All healthy village males from age 16, human male, AL: all, most War 1 or 2. Taxation type: For villagers and transportation bearing cargo to or from the village: benevolent; for all others: normal,

MAP: Please note that the map shows the main village but does not include the farms or other facilities stretching upstream along Nyth and Lethyr Creeks.

COMPATIBILITY NOTE: In official *Forgotten Realms* literature, Ethdale is considered a part of Thesk rather than a part of the Great Dale.

Until Telflamm moved in and annexed it some 400 years ago, Nyth was a simple fishing hamlet, with the best lobster beds on the Easting Reach. As such, it was noticeably smaller than Ethdale to the south. Telflamm annexed the villages as far north as Nyth because it needed food supplies. The Merchant Prince of Telflamm had refused to become a part of Thesk, but his own coastal city was unable to feed itself, so it simply annexed - meaning entering and asserting control of - Ethdale and Nyth to the north and Culmaster to the south.

Telflamm found fertile soils above the shores of Easting Reach in Nyth, but with the hamlet's strong focus on fishing, there were no means to process harvests. Telflamm proceeded to develop the potential agricultural acreage above the settlement as well as planting wine on the slopes north of Nyth toward New Sarshel.

Nyth wines are quite drinkable but well below the standard of the vintages in Uthmere and Uthving. Eastern shore wines, as they're called, seldom travel beyond the Great Dale, Telflamm and parts of Thesk. They are available at some spots in Impiltur but are relatively rare there.

Two small creeks - Lethyr Creek and Nyth Creek - flowed down from Lethyr Forest through the hamlet and into Easting Reach. The prime lobster beds were just below the mouths of the two creeks, but neither had a flow strong or reliable enough to power a grain mill.

Without asking the Dalesmen in Nyth what they thought of the idea, engineers and construction crews from Telflamm dug out a pond bed along Nyth Creek on the low hill above the fishing hamlet, dammed Lethyr Creek and built a diversion channeling Lethyr Creek's water into the pond. They named the pond Nyth Lake, although locals still refer to it only as the *Mill Pond*.

Telflamm's engineering project had two important consequences for Nyth:

- Nyth Creek, with help from Nyth Lake's reservoir capacity, had the flow necessary to drive a small mill.
- Lethyr Creek went dry except for the very wettest times of the year, causing the lobsters to vacate their bed beneath the creek's mouth and substantially reducing the hamlet's lobster trade.

Telflamm had no great interest in the lobster beds; the city needed grain. It built a mill just below Nyth Lake to grind grain into flour and press the oil from seeds - jobs the mill still does today - and it brought in Theskan farmers who were seeking a better fortune than in their somewhat dry homeland.

By the Year of the Orator (980 DR), five years after Telflamm's annexation, Nyth had become a prosperous farming village populated predominantly by Theskans. The Dalesmen, who continued to fish and catch lobsters, faded into Nyth's background.

Today, the coastal village, which reclaimed its independence in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), continues to be populated mainly by fishermen, wine growers, farmers and their families. Many still are of Theskan ancestry, but in the four centuries since the Telflamm annexation, the migrant Theskans fully integrated themselves into local life. They now consider themselves Dalesmen, although they have Theskan rather than old Turami names.

The village proper makes up about half of Nyth. The rest of the population is on farms that straddle Nyth and Lethyr creeks toward Lethyr Forest. Some of the farmers who work fields near to the village live within it, maintaining barns near the fields northeast of the settlement.

The two creek valleys have remained relatively safe and peaceful. Evil rangers have been coming with increasing frequency since Telflamm's departure. The Freemen of Nyth are among their choice prey. But the Hunters of Herne are not yet a critical problem. Nyth is meeting them with resistance too, causing a greater toll among the Gallists than from its own population.

Until the Tuigan invasion forced Telflamm to withdraw its occupational forces from Nyth in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), Alderman Lagman had led a band of rebels that conducted guerilla warfare against Telflamm from inside Lethyr Forest.

Quickly after taking the alderman's seat, Lagman saw that the absence of troops from Telflamm on the upper and Nyth and Lethyr creeks had created a void into which the Hunters of Herne were moving. He has done his best since to organize a strong resistance, both to fight the Gallists and Telflamm, should the city ever again attempt to move upon Ethdale.

All healthy men of the village who are 16 or older are required to serve in and train regularly with the militia, until they reach the age of 50. The militia at present is 130 strong. All members are at least first or second level warriors, and some are trained fighters of middle levels.

The militia has its headquarters and training center on the hill above the village, about quarter of a mile/400 m east of Nyth Lake (off of the village map). Alderman Lagman would like to have a mage or two in the village as well, and he will make offers to visiting magi. Because of Nyth's tax structure, he can pay well.

The folk of Nyth call themselves Dalesmen and Freemen, and in recent years, some even have taken to wearing the oak-leaf-and-acorn-badge of the Freemen, but they do not participate directly in the Freemen's militia, although some sons of Nyth have voluntarily gone northward to join the larger militia.

Specific taxes are defined in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. All taxes that Lagman levies which affect local residents are based upon benevolent levels in the guide. All taxes that affect only outsiders are levied at the normal rate.

Because organizations like the Iron Throne like to use the city's dock and warehouse to quietly store contraband still too hot for the market, and because they're subject to this tax, Nyth has a respectable source of revenue. Lagman uses this tax income and the rather substantial village treasury he confiscated from Telflamm's occupational forces to finance his defensive measures. For the most part, however, Nyth is a peaceful village with little to threaten those who pass through it, as long as they keep their noses to themselves.

Locals are indifferent to adventurers and maintain personal distance from outsiders. Too few adventurers pass through Nyth to make their silver and gold pieces of great value. Nevertheless, some villagers do spend an evening with a tankard in the inn when travelers are in town, to enjoy the tales adventurers tell.

Several people in Nyth have their own secrets that they wish to keep hidden. If a party of adventurers snoops too much, it could start stirring up trouble in the village. Because the PCs are outsiders, the villagers also may be inclined to take the attitude that the trouble that's been stirred up wasn't worth knowing in the first place, and they may resent the PCs for causing problems.

The folk of Nyth has little interest in the past histories of neighbors or in the outside affiliations these villagers may have, as long as they cause no obvious problems for Nyth. The majority of Nyth's residents are illiterate. The village therefore has no written laws. Alderman Lagman adjudicates legal cases on the basis of what he thinks is right or wrong. The system may sound arbitrary, but in practice, it actual approximates what is known as common law in much of the western real world.

There is a small jail in the cellar of the village hall, where sentenced offenders from outside serve their sentences. Locals usually are sentenced to labor in the village, but they are allowed to continue living in their own homes.

Anyone who would be sentenced to a term of more than a year is turned over penniless by the city watch to the captain of one of the boats from elsewhere that docks in the village. The prisoner has to work out with the captain how he will pay his passage, which usually means hard labor as a crew member. He is not allowed to return to Nyth for a number of years specified by the alderman when he passes sentence.

There is no death penalty in Nyth. Those convicted of what would be a capital crime elsewhere are sold into slavery by the alderman. It should be emphasized that slavery is not allowed in the village. It is used only as a substitute for capital punishment. Slaving itself is viewed as a high crime by Lagman, and those whom he convicts of it are sentenced to be sold themselves into slavery. Anyone sentenced to slavery is banned for life from returning to Nyth.

Most residents are hard working, industrious and peace-loving. The only outsiders who are looked upon with a dim view are residents of Telflamm. The village spent nearly 400 years unwillingly under Telflamm's thumb after being involuntarily annexed. Nyth has lived in freedom for only about a dozen years, and it has no allies it can depend upon except for Ethdale, but the village has a strong fear that soldiers from Telflamm may return and try again to annex them.

Adventure Hooks in Nyth

- The House of the Master's Shadow, the great Temple to Mask in Telflamm, intends to regain the village treasures In Nyth and Ethdale that were confiscated from Telflamm's occupiers a dozen years ago. The temple has a band of six rogues and an assassin en route by land to Ethdale, with orders to continue on to Nyth. The temple does not plan to stop at fulfilling this goal but also hopes to establish a new thieves guild in Nyth, to replace the one Lagman destroyed 12 years ago. The temple party from Telflamm could arrive while the PCs are there.

- The temple to Mask under the Sea Shadow Inn and Innkeeper Tarad dur Nam, who represents Mask's church secretly in Nyth, are overdue to be discovered by someone. Why not the PCs?

- Nyth and Ethdale are valued locations for both the Zhentarim and the Iron Throne, because few people elsewhere are aware of who is in these isolated villages or what may be happening in them. Nyth unwittingly stores hot contraband from both organizations in its warehouses, where covert agents of both organizations leave boats and return to land. These agents usually reside quietly in the Nyth's Seagull Inn until their services are required elsewhere. A few such agents usually are in the Seagull. You may wish to have some of them in the inn while the PCs are there and then offer the PCs some clues to the true identities of these persons.

- The PCs might come across some of the secret background of some of the people who are doing crooked or double dealing in Nyth.

Nyth
Lake
Easting
Reach
Nyth
Nexo Sanshel
Ebbdale
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Nyth

Map of Nyth

1 - Nyth Creek.

2 - Diversion Channel.

3. Dam and Spillway.

4 - Lethyr Creek.

5 - Old Lethyr Creek. The old creek bed is totally dry most of the year, but at rainy times, when the upper creek runs so high that water flows over the spillway at the dam, a small amount of water does flow down the dry creek again.

6 - Village Cemetery.

7 - Telflamm Milling. The City of Telflamm built the grain mill some 400 years ago. Hired miller Madar ab Surid, human male, AL: N, Exp 5, who ran the mill for the city until the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), took it over after Telflamm's departure and now considers himself to be the owner. He hasn't gotten around to renaming it yet. The mill grinds various kinds of flower and presses vegetable oil. The farmers pay Surid 10% of the grain they bring into the mill. The flour from that 10% he sells for his own profit. The farmers receive money from the other 90%.

8 - Sea Shadow Inn. Nyth's more expensive hostelry is run by Tarad dur Nam, human male, AL: NE (NG), Cleric (Mask) 6, a secret member of the House of the Master's Shadow, the great temple to Mask in Telflamm. The temple is the real owner of the inn, although no one in Nyth but Nam may know that. In Telflamm's days, secret tunnels beneath the village led to a secret dungeon temple to Mask that served the small thieves guild there. However, no one in Nyth other than Nam knew exactly where the temple was. When Telflamm evacuated the city and Lagman started wiping out the thieves guild, Nam used magical scrolls from the temple in Telflamm to cause the tunnels leading to the inn's cellar to cave in. As a result, the temple and guildhall never have been discovered. Nam, with other scrolls from the temple in Telflamm, has set up illusions of walls to hide the temple and its entrance, but it still is intact, waiting again for the day when Mask's church is restored to its old place in Nyth. Nam's alignment periapt has kept him beyond suspicion. The temple in Telflamm has secretly assigned Nam to do just what he is doing. His instructions are to run as profitable an inn as possible, and he's been successful at that. The profits go to the temple in Telflamm. The Sea Shadow is a very popular overnight stop for merchants traveling between Uthmere and Telflamm who can afford the bill. The maturbordh costs 9 silver shiners. The house lager beer costs 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. Uthmere wines cost 1 to 6 gold talers per bottle; local wine is not offered. Local fruit schnapps varieties run from 1 to 5 silver shiners per shot/0.1 liter. A glass of Vilhon Reach rum costs 7 silver shiners. Traders Bay swamp whisky costs 9 shiners a shot/0.1 liter. The 20 single rooms run 1 gold taler a night. The 7 doubles costs 9 silver shiners per person per night.

9 - Sea Shadow Inn Stables. Stable fees are a silver shiner for guests, 2 shiners for others.

10 - Temple to Chauntea. Manned occasionally by Alalta dal Suum, human female, AL: NG, druidess of Chauntea lvl 4, and fulltime by Narana tes Rala, human female, AL: NG, non-combatant monk of Chauntea, lvl 3.

11 - Shrine to Waukeen. Unmanned but maintained in good condition, even if Waukeen has not yet returned in your campaign.

12 - Old Millwheel Tavern. A favorite nightspot for locals and some travelers. Tavernkeep Býrfing Hroaldssonur, human male, AL: N, War 2, brews his own top-fermented stout ale, which sells for 3 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. Local wines run from 3 silver shiners to 1 gold taler per quart/liter bottle. Local fruit schnapps varieties run from 1 to 5 shiners per shot/0.1 liter. A glass of Vilhon Reach rum costs 7 shiners. Traders Bay swamp whisky costs 9 shiners a shot/0.1 liter.

13 - Nyth Warehouses. Owned by the village and rented to merchants, mostly foreign. Unknown to the alderman, the majority are Iron Throne agencies, and unknown to the Throne, some of the contraband it stores belongs to the Zhentarim.

14 - Easting Reach Cargo. Alderman Lagman has franchised this company to run the port, the boat docks and the village's warehouses. The business is headed by local investor Sahan rul Tezedh, human male, AL: NE, Exp 5. Tezedh really is the Iron Throne's resident agent in Nyth, and most of his business comes from and goes to the Throne. So far, no one anywhere seems to have noticed.

15 - Nassan phar Nulan, Blacksmith. Nulan, human male, AL: N, Exp 3, a master and Nyth's only smith. He has two journeymen and four apprentices. They do no work with weapons or armor.

16 - Narbie's Nautical Supplies. Narbie Tandwick, human male, AL: N, Exp 1. Tandwick, a native of Waterdeep, sells almost anything a fisherman could wants and most things sea boats tend to want.

17 - Shrine to Umberlee. Unmanned.

18 - Village Sea Boat Docks. Village property, see No. 13, *Nyth Warehouses*.

19 - Fishermen's Wharf.

20 - Village Warehouses.

21 - Nyth Seafood Packing. The company, once property of Telflamm, now is owned and operated by Pasan tar Kadidh, human male, AL: NG, Exp 4. Kadidh runs the packing company and the fishermen's warehouses under franchise from the village.

22 - Scurvy Lot Tavern. Three-Tooth Dillems, human male, AL:CN, Com 1, runs this popular but sometimes rowdy sailors bar, which also draws a lot of customers who never have been to sea. Dillems brews his own light, top-fermented ale, which he sells for 3 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. The simplest of the local wines are available at 2 to 5 silver shiners a quart/liter bottle. Local fruit schnapps varieties run from 1 to 5 shiners per shot/0.1 liter. A glass of Vilhon Reach rum costs 7 shiners. Traders Bay swamp whisky costs 9 shiners a shot/0.1 liter. Evenings, a plate of fish and chips with malt vinegar goes for 3 shiners.

23 - Nyth Seagull Winery and Inn. The traditional seafront inn is run by Marala lar Tulin, human female, AL: NG, Exp 3. The inn is comfortable but not luxurious; the food and drink are excellent. The maturbordh with many kinds of seafood but no meat costs 8 silver shiners. The top-fermented house ale costs 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. Local wines cost 4 shiners to 1 gold taler per bottle. Local fruit schnapps varieties run from 1 to 5 shiners per shot/0.1 liter. A glass of Vilhon Reach rum costs 7 shiners. Traders Bay swamp whisky costs 9 shiners a shot/0.1 liter. The 18 single rooms run 8 shiners a night. The 8 doubles cost 7 shiners per person per night. The northwestern part of this complex is the local winery. The winegrowers between Nyth and New Sarshel deliver their grapes here in the fall, and the village vintner Naras pas Telim, human male, AL: NG, Exp 8, makes wine of them. The wine is aged in casks and barrels in cellars beneath the complex.

24 - Village Hall. The jail is in the dungeon beneath the hall.

25 - Tom's Wagons and Sleds. The plant is run by Wainwright Tomulah dar Leetul, human male, AL: NG, Exp 7, a master wainwright. He employs a journeyman and two apprentices.

Ethdale

Village, Conventional, AL: NG, 200 gp limit. Assets: 4,000 gp. Population 400; 98% human, 2% other. Authority figures: Naldur Wyndyngssonur, human male, AL:NG, City Alderman. Important Characters: Trados Nilkie, human male, AL: NE, acting owner of Tradewind Cargo, really an Iron Throne agent, Rogue 4, War 3. Other: Village watch: 12 human male and female, AL: all non-evil; War 1-5 and Ftr 1-2. Village militia: All healthy village males from age 16, human male, AL: all, most War 1 or 2. Taxation type: For villagers and transportation bearing cargo to or from the village: benevolent; for all others: normal.

MAP: Please note that the map shows the main village but does not include the farms or other facilities stretching upstream along the Eth.

COMPATIBILITY NOTE: In official *Forgotten Realms* literature, Ethdale is considered to be a part of Thesk rather than a part of the Great Dale.

The most spectacular element of Ethdale is the River Eth, which flows down to Easting Reach from its source deep within the dark and dangerous shadow of Lethyr Forest. The Eth flows rapidly out of the forest but a swimmer or a boat still can cross it until it reaches a point about 4 miles /7 km above the village proper.

From there on, the Eth roars through an ever-rockier bed, thundering its way down a 10% grade through its own crystalline spray until it reaches the outskirts of the village. Few rivers in eastern Faerûn can match the beauty of this stretch of the Eth. Newcomers often can stand in a state of excited awe and stare long at the spray, foam and plethora of mini-rainbows created by the thundering Eth.

At the edge of the village proper, the river's descent again begins to level to a grade of less than 2%, making it possible for boats to cross within the village, although oarsmen who want to avoid being swept to sea need strong muscles to buck the tug of the rapid flow.

The small coastal village is populated mainly by fishermen, farmers and their families, although there still are some who earn their daily bread guiding strangers on hunts into the Eth Valley. The village proper is relatively small, but its population includes a long string of farms that follows the River Eth for several miles/kilometers upstream toward Lethyr Forest. Some of the farmers who work fields near to the village live within it, maintaining barns near the fields northeast of the settlement.

The Upper Eth Valley has remained relatively safe and peaceful, but the Lower Eth Valley, northeast of the farms, has proven more than once to be dangerous. The part of Lethyr above Ethdale is under the control of no particular faction, but Gallist Hunters of Herne who include the Freemen of Ethdale among their choice prey often visit it.

In the past, people from other areas have attempted to expand the valley's farms toward the forest, but those who survived have abandoned the attempt, due to raids by the Gallists. More than two dozen abandoned farms in various states of decay stand abandoned in the Lower Eth Valley.

In spring of the Year of the Wave (1364 DR), prospectors discovered caves with gold deposits near the river just beyond the eaves of Lethyr. Once word of the gold find had spread, a number of prospectors from the Trade Route as well as from Impiltur, Damara and even Telflamm came to the Lower Eth to seek gold.

Frequent battles with the Hunters of Herne drove most of these prospectors out of their claims, but about 30 miners remained and banded together for their own mutual protection. Armed conflict between the prospectors and the Hunters of Herne still is frequent. PCs who enter the Lower Eth Valley easily may find themselves being attacked by either side, although the miners will leave them in peace if a recognized guide from Ethdale accompanies them.

Once one returns downstream and passes the outlying farms, the first signs of the village begin to appear. About 4 miles/7 km northeast of the coast, one finds the only Eth bridge, bringing the Telflamm Coast Trail over the water and binding New Sarshel and Nyth to the north with Telflamm in the south. The garrison of the village militia also is at the bridge, along with the large training grounds where the men of Ethdale keep themselves fit to fight.

Just beyond the bridge, the Eth begins to descend more quickly toward the sea. The water flows rapidly, which always has made it economically infeasible for the village to build a bridge in the village directly above the Eth's mouth. A narrow trail follows the north bank from the bridge to the southwest, to the hovel of ramshackle buildings across from the village proper. A more substantial trail follows the south bank into the village center.

About 100 yards/meter below the bridge, just before the river begins its steeper descent, one finds the mill dam and the first of several small mill ponds. Three ponds, each at a different level, hold reserve water for the mill stream which turns the wheel of the mill in the village below.

About 200 yards/180 m northeast of the bridge is an unmanned shrine to Chauntea which is used by the farmers of Ethdale and visited frequently by a druid who serves the goddess.

As one follows the Eth downstream from the bridge, one passes the two remaining mill ponds and more farms, until one enters the village proper, which is shown on the map. The river- and mill-run-trail is marked as the road to Nyth on the map.

Ethdale for all purposes is a peaceful village with little to threaten those who pass through it, as long as they let sleeping dogs lie. Locals are indifferent to adventurers and maintain personal distance from outsiders. Adventurers who pass through the village are looked upon at first as a source of welcome but not particularly important income. Too few adventurers pass through Ethdale to make their silver and gold pieces of great value.

Some villagers who spend their evening with a tankard in the inn also enjoy listening to the tales adventurers sometimes weave there. But for most people, the old saw, *here today, gone tomorrow,* best summarizes the status adventurers have.

The one group of outsiders which is viewed as important by the locals is constituted by the rich hunters who come to Ethdale to hire a guide and hunt in the Lower Eth Valley or even in Lethyr Forest. The guest hunters bring a respectable amount of money into Ethdale, and much of it flows back into local pockets.

There are several people in Ethdale who have their own secrets that they wish to keep hidden. If a party of adventurers snoops too much, it could start stirring up trouble in the village. Because the PCs are outsiders, the villagers also may be inclined to take the attitude that the trouble that's been stirred up wasn't worth knowing in the first place, and they may resent the PCs for causing problems. The folk of Ethdale has little interest in the past histories of neighbors or in the outside affiliations these villagers may have, as long as they cause no obvious problems for Ethdale.

The majority of Ethdale's residents are illiterate. The village therefore has no written laws. Alderman Wyndyngssonur adjudicates legal cases on the basis of what he thinks is right or wrong. The system may sound arbitrary, but in practice, it actual approximates what is known as common law in much of the western real world.

There is a small jail in the cellar of the village hall, where sentenced offenders from outside serve their sentences. Locals usually are sentenced to labor in the village, but they are allowed to continue living in their own homes.

Anyone who would be sentenced to a term of more than a year is turned over penniless by the city watch to the captain of one of the boats from elsewhere that docks in the village. The prisoner has to work out with the captain how he will pay his passage, which usually means hard labor as a crewmember. He is not allowed to return to Ethdale for a number of years specified by the alderman when he passes sentence.

There is no death penalty in Ethdale. Those convicted of what would be a capital crime elsewhere are sold into slavery by the alderman. Slavery is forbidden in the village. It serves only as a substitute for capital punishment. Wyndyngssonur views slaving itself is as a high crime. Those whom he convicts of it are sentenced to be sold themselves into slavery. Anyone sentenced to slavery is banned for life from returning to Ethdale.

Most residents of Ethdale are hard-working, industrious and peace-loving people. The only outsiders who are looked upon with a dim view are residents of Telflamm. After the involuntarily annexation, the village spent nearly 400 years unwillingly under Telflamm's thumb. Ethdale has lived in freedom for only about a dozen years now. The village has no allies it can depend upon other than Nyth, but the village has a strong fear that soldiers from Telflamm may return and try again to annex Ethdale.

Until the Tuigan invasion forced Telflamm to withdraw its occupational forces from Ethdale in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), Alderman Wyndyngssonur had led a band of rebels who unsuccessfully fought the occupiers from Telflamm. He has done his best since to organize a strong resistance, should the city ever again attempt to move upon Ethdale.

All healthy men of the village who are 16 or older are required to serve in and train regularly with the militia, until they reach the age of 60. The militia at present is 100 strong. All of its members have at least the first or second level as warriors, and some are trained fighters of middle levels. Alderman Wyndyngssonur would like to have a mage or two in the village as well, and he will make offers to visiting magi. Because of Ethdale's tax structure, he can pay well.

Specific taxes are in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. All taxes that Wyndyngssonur levies which affect local residents are benevolent levels. All taxes that affect only outsiders are at the normal rate. Ethdale also levies a hunting tax. Outsiders who come to the village to hunt pay a 30% surcharge over and above the fees of the Upper Eth Hunters Guild.

Wyndyngssonur uses this tax income and the rather substantial village treasury he confiscated from Telflamm's occupational forces to finance his defensive measures.

Across the river from the village proper is a ramshackle collection of buildings used in earlier times by pirates from the Sea of Fallen Stars. Wyndyngssonur does not view this section as being a part of Ethdale and does not enforce the law there. On the other hand, he does not hesitate to send the watch there to apprehend fugitives from the village's justice. However, any crime committed on the lawless north bank well might go unpunished.

Adventure Hooks in Ethdale

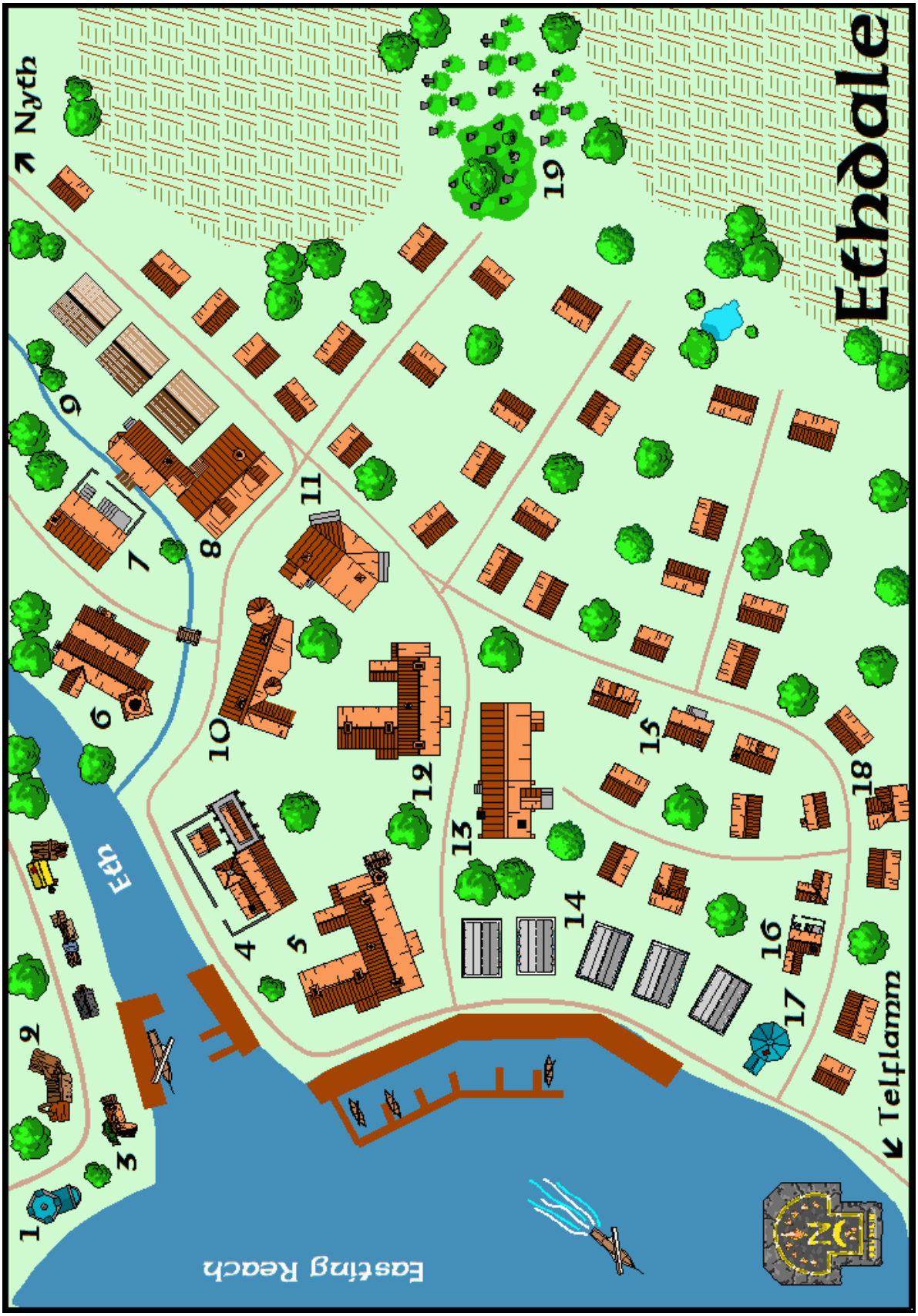
- The House of the Master's Shadow, the great Temple to Mask in Telflamm, intends to regain the village treasure confiscated from Telflamm's occupiers a dozen years ago. The temple has a band of six rogues and an assassin en route by land to Ethdale. The temple does not plan to stop at fulfilling this goal but also hopes to establish a new thieves guild in Ethdale, to replace the one Wyndyngssonur destroyed 12 years ago. The temple party from Telflamm could arrive while the PCs are there.

- Demeth Hardy, owner of the Crystal Wave, informed Fzoul Chembryl's Zhentarim agents some time ago that Alderman Wyndyngssonur is seeking to hire magi, and Chembryl passed the message on to Manshoon in the Citadel of the Raven. The archmage of the Black Network thinks it could be profitable to have covert mage agents in Ethdale, particularly if Wyndyngssonur finances them. He is sending two Zhentarim magi of levels 4 and 2 to Ethdale to volunteer their services. They may arrive while your PCs are there. The PCs may already have encountered one of the magi by and would recognize him.

- Ethdale and Nyth are valued locations for both the Zhentarim and the Iron Throne, because few people elsewhere are aware of who is in these isolated villages or what may be happening in them. Ethdale unwittingly stores hot contraband from both organizations in its warehouses.

The small docks of the village often are the point where covert agents of both organizations leave boats and return to land. These agents reside quietly in the Crystal Wave until their services are required elsewhere. A few such agents usually are in the Crystal Wave. You may wish to have some of them in the inn while the PCs are there and then offer the PCs some clues to the true identities of these persons.

- The PCs might come across some of the secret background of Trados Nilkie at Tradewind Cargo, Pegleg Darmos at the Salt Breeze Inn, Demeth Hardy at the Crystal Wave Inn and Brewery or Gimp Heath at Sailor Gimp's Nautical Supplies. The background information on these NPCs is in the location descriptions below under *Map of Ethdale*. Revealing such information - depending upon precisely what the PCs learn - also may anger the folk of Ethdale, who have a live and let live attitude as far as their neighbors' pasts elsewhere are concerned. That will be an entirely different matter, of course, if the PCs can show that these NPCs are harming Ethdale.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Ethdale

Map of Ethdale

1 - Shrine to Umberlee. The shrine is unmanned, but fishermen and sailors on the small boats docking in Ethdale frequently leave offerings in it. Iron Throne agent Trados Nilkie financed the shrine in the Year of the Wave (1364 DR). Nilkie fears and worships Umberlee. He takes all of the offerings out onto Easting Reach in his boat and throws them overboard. Within the small shrine building, a statue of Umberlee stands in a pool of water.

2 - Tradewind Cargo. This ramshackle building is the quiet home of Tradewind Cargo, a front for the Sembian Iron Throne. It used to be a secret stash for pirates, who brought booty to it in small boots. Trados Nilkie and Tradewind Cargo in the service of the Throne took over the building in the Year of the Wyvern (1363 DR). It is and always has been a rather small Throne operation. On the surface, Tradewind transports some agricultural products and salted fish to other markets, but the real purpose of the operation is to provide the Throne with a safe, off-the-beat stash for contraband that still is too hot to market safely. At times, the Throne also stashes pirate treasure here. Three hired mercenaries (War lvls 2-4) guard the building at all times. In the night, there is a 50% chance that they are drunk. No one ever has tried to break into Tradewind Cargo. The guards have become lax.

3 - Salt Breeze Inn. Another ramshackle building, the *Salt Breeze* also once was a safehouse for pirates from the Sea of Fallen Stars. Today, it's a cheap dive used mainly by sailors. Ballroom brawls and dead bodies are not unusual. The Ethdale watch does not patrol the north bank, and there is no other law enforcement there. The *Salt Breeze* brews no beer and sells none. A glass of rum or Trader's Bay swamp whisky costs 5 silver shiners. Easting Reach fish and Ethdale potatoes fried in usually rancid fat cost 8 copper bites per serving. A room costs 5 bites per bed, with four in a room. The barkeeper is a retired pirate named Pegleg Darmos (human male, AL: CE, War 2) who is wanted in Tantras, Ravens Bluff and Procampur on piracy charges. The three cities have placed a reward of 50 gold galleons on his head.

4 - Village Hall. Alderman Naldur Wyndyngssonur rules Ethdale from here. Ethdale's aldermen are elected every five years in a village meeting where all who are of age are allowed to vote. The village has no written laws. The alderman decides what is right and wrong and acts as a judge in legal proceedings. He also hires members of the city watch and controls the small port. Scribes and dockworkers also work for Wyndyngssonur in the village hall.

5 - Crystal Wave Inn and Brewery. The Crystal Wave is the only reputable inn, tavern and restaurant in Ethdale. It recently was taken over by Demeth Hardy (human male, AL: NE, Exp 3, War 1), a native of Sembian Selgaunt who is a covert agent of the Zhentarim. Hardy purchased the inn in the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR), when the former owner died without heirs. The Black Network subsidized the purchase of the inn in return for Hardy's services. Hardy's only duty to the Zhentarim is to pass information on to Zhentarim agents passing through the village. He collects all local news and tales of passing travelers for the Black Network. The Zhentarim have given him magical scrying and listening devices to help him when he encounters guests with potentially important news. The inn is comfortable but without frills. The food is of decent quality. Cold boards with sausage or smoked ham slices cost 2 to 3 silver shiners. Most entrées are seafood dishes, running between 3 and 8 shiners each. Local pork and beef entrées also are served at prices between 5 shiners and 1 gold taler, 2 shiners. The house lager costs 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. Uthmere wines cost 1 to 6 talers per bottle. Local fruit schnapps varieties run from 1 to 5 shiners per shot/0.1 liter. A glass of Vilhon Reach rum costs 7 shiners. Traders Bay swamp whisky costs 9 shiners a shot/0.1 liter. The 16 single rooms run 8 shiners a night. The 7 doubles costs 6 shiners and 5 bites per person per night.

6 - Lower Eth Distillery. This relatively small operation makes schnapps from plums, pears, cherries and raspberries harvested on the farms of the Lower Eth Valley. The distillery's schnapps is sold only in Thesk and on the eastern shore of Easting Reach. The distiller is an Ethdale native, Skarlok Huburdssonur (human male, AL:LN, Exp 4). He employs six laborers.

7 - Leifr Holvyng, Blacksmith. Holvyng (human male, AL:LN, Exp 6) is a master blacksmith who specializes in farm implements, wagon parts, ship parts, anchors and the like. He will not forge or repair weapons or armor. He has two apprentices.

8 - Ethdale Grains and Oils. The large waterwheel on the millrace grinds wheat, spelt and rye flour and stamps oil from thistle and sunflower seeds. Farmers who bring grain to the mill receive 90% of the flour and oil produced from their harvest. The miller, Harmon Gerren, whose family came several generations back from the Vilhon Reach, keeps 10% of the flour and oil as his milling fee. The mill's products are sold in Ethdale and Telflamm. Baker Rengaard Uthhusr is the main local customer.

9 - Millstream.

10 - Easting Reach Seafood. Fish caught locally are packed in salt brine and shipped to inland parts of the Great Dale and Damara for resale. The manager is a native of Ethdale, Fringga Saburdsdóttir (human female, AL:NG, Exp 1).

11 - Gunda's Hunting Equipment. Gunda Narthyngsdóttir (human female, AL:N; Com 3) runs this shop, which sells most types of travel equipment and provisions listed in the PHB. Her shop also offers any non-magical PHB item which is hunt-related. Prices run 10-25% above those in the PHB.

12 - Reth Keeling, Wainwright. Keeling (human male, AL:LN, Exp 2) builds small farm wagons and sleds. At times, he also makes wooden parts for boats on contract. He employs a journeyman and an apprentice.

13 - Great Boar Lodge. This facility belongs to the Upper Eth Hunters Guild, an organization of guides who leads paying visitors on hunts into Lethyr Forest. The lodge has quality rooms for its guest hunters and its own kitchen and dining facilities. Food is cooked in the lodge; drinks are brought in from the Crystal Wave. Eight local rangers currently are members of the guild. Guided hunts into the Lower Eth Valley cost 10 gold talers per hunter per day, with a minimum of 5 days. Guided hunts into Lethyr Forest cost 10 platinum marks per hunter per day, with a minimum of two rides or tendays. Nuila Sanvengsdóttir (human female, AL:LN, Com 2) runs the lodge and does the cooking.

14 - Village Warehouses. These warehouses are used to store goods brought in from or about to be transported on Easting Reach. They belong to the village. Storage fees amount to 8 copper bites per ton per day.

15 - Alderman Naldur Wyndyngssonur's House. The alderman lives here together with his wife, Gildrun Snarfyngsdóttir (human female, AL: NG, Com 1) and their daughter, Heidrun Naldursdóttir (human female, AL:NG, Com 1).

16 - Sailor Gimp's Nautical Supplies. Gimp Heath (human male, AL;NE, War 4), a deserted pirate from the Sea of Fallen Stars, runs this shop, which sells almost anything a fisherman or a small boat's crew might need. Heath escaped from his pirate crew in the Year of the Staff (1366 DR) and took with him a substantial treasure. He used it to pay a mage in Westgate to change his appearance and voice. His old pirate captain has offered a magnificent reward to anyone who captures Heath, but it's unlikely that he'll be discovered. Heath's only goal is to spend the rest of his days in peace in Ethdale. His prices average 15% above those in the PHB.

17 - Shrine to Valkur. The shrine is unmanned. Those who worship him take offerings left to him to the sea and lower them overboard.

18 - Rengaards Oven. Rengaard Uthhusr (human male, AL:NG, Exp 3), bakes and sells wheat, spelt and rye breads and sells them daily in the early morning hours. His bread sells for 6 copper bites to 2 silver shiners per loaf. The bakery is small, as is bachelor Rengaard's income.

19 -Cemetery.

C. The Merchants Run

Game Master's Note: With the exception of Lenchford, the material and the maps in this section duplicate in part information and tools offered in the 5th installment of *Northern Journey, Impiltur.* The information is being offered again in this installment for Game Masters who are not using the *Impiltur* accessory. The information on and map of Lenchford duplicates information offered in Part 7 of *Northern Journey, Bloodstone*.

This area is bordered by Merchants Run on the west and the western edge of Rawlinswood, the west bank of the Soleine and the west shore of the Easting Reach north of the Impilturian border. With the blessing of the Damaran druids of Silvanus is used intensively from their grove south of Tellerth, the west flank of Rawlinswood to a point about 15 miles/25 km south of Uthving.

Western Rawlinswood is subject to mild temperatures from Easting Reach, extraordinarily balanced precipitation and sunshine and highly fertile soils. This is a good example of an area where the melting of the Great Glacier has caused environmental havoc, throwing nature completely out of what was the normal balance for the region.

These weather conditions combined with the now favorable climate cause considerable problems for the druids of the western forest. Brush and tree seeds germinate at three times the normal rate and wildlife is uncontrollably proliferate. For this reason, the druids welcome and encourage intensive but controlled logging and hunting in this part of the wood, and this situation has made the cities and settlements of Merchants Run prosperous.

Timbertown is the largest logging center east of the Dragon Reach. Quality woods from Timbertown are transported by large wagons to Damara and Impiltur and by logging rafts down Easting Reach and on to markets all about the Inner Sea.

Wood craftsmanship also is a main occupation in Lenchford, Mulltown, Maracrath and Cairnpur, where masters of the hand crafts make small works of art and fine furniture from the premium trees fallen in Rawlinswood.

Guidodale is something of an exception. The population is a mixture of human merchants and craftsmen and a colony of gnomes. The latter import metal from Impiltur's mines and use it and lumber from Rawlinswood to build strange mechanical devices. Needless to say, the Great Dale's only temple to Gond the Wondermaker is in Guidodale. Interestingly, the gnomes have been drawing the attention of more than one human craftsman, and these Dalesmen too are looking with respect upon the teachings of Gond.

The wide Uth Valley for about 15 miles north of the Falls of Tumblingstars is home to about 200 halflings living in burrows and active in dairy farming. The cheeses produced by the halfling dairymen bring premium prices in Heliogabalus, Hlammach, Lyrabar and Telflamm, and traders on Merchants Run are beginning to bid high prices for Uth cheese for export to the Heartlands.

The halfling dairy business is at present under something of a cloud, however. Since the end of the troubles in Damara to the north, some halfling families have urged relatives in the West to migrate and open new farms in the valley beyond the river's bend to the northeast, north and west of the ruins of Tining. To date all such migrants have simply vanished, without exception.

The cause of these disappearances has not been determined. The answer is the mysterious Nentyarch of Rawlinswood. He has decided he wants no further exploitation of the Upper Uth Valley, and he also has decided to tolerate no further mischief by halfling settlers. His hobgoblin servants capture those who go too far. They take their captives back to Dun Tharos, where they are transmogrified into hobgoblins who serve the Nentyarch.

The rest of the area between Merchants Run and Rawlinswood south of the Sidewinder to within reach of the rolling hills on the north edge of Easting Reach are fertile farmlands. The grasslands west of the Merchants Run tend to be less fertile but are ideal grazing lands. The sheep farmers of Lenchford graze on both sides of the Sidewinder west of the Merchants Run for a distance of about 10 miles/15km inland.

Halfway between Mulltown and Guidodale, cattle ranchers from Mulltown have built low fieldstone walls to keep out the sheep, and they use the rolling grasslands west of Merchants Run from that point southward to Cairnpur and the Impilturian border to graze beef cattle.

There is, of course, a reason why Merchants Run bears that name. There are a fair number of merchants in Lenchford, Mulltown, Maracrath and Cairnpur who do nothing to produce income themselves but rather deal in the sale and trade of wares between the Dale, Damara, Impiltur and points distant.

Many of these merchants fell upon hard times during Damara's dark years, when the land to the north was under the thumb of Zhengyi the Witch King and on unto the 1360s, when the market for Damara's exports, especially for the then *"cursed"* bloodstone, had fallen away to a trickle. Purchases and sales of bloodstone had been the sole source of income for many of the merchants.

Since the surprising upturn in the bloodstone market in Damara, the merchants of Lenchford, Mulltown, Guidodale, Maracrath and Cairnpur have been busier (and more prosperous) than ever. Dalesmen in Uthmere and Wanneth now call the Merchant's run the *Bloodstone Trail.*

The main war damage in the history of these settlements occurred in the Year of the Crested Thrush (1094 DR), when hobgoblins of the Giantspire Mountains overran Lenchford, Guidodale, Maracrath and Cairnpur, destroying them and slaying all who did not escape.

Cairnpur was partially destroyed in a Gallist attack in the Year of the Shrike (1196 DR) but later rebuilt. Guidodale was badly damaged in a dragon attack in the Year of the Black Wind (1262 DR) but restored. Lenchford was damaged in a dragon attack in the Year of the Twelverule (1117 DR). Timbertown was ravaged by fire from dragon attacks in the Year of the Black Wind (1262 DR) and the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR). Uthving also was badly damaged in the dragon attack of the Year of the Twelverule (1262 DR) and suffered many deaths from the attack of a green dragon in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR). Cairnpur also was attacked once and damaged.

As regions of Faerûn go, this area was settled only fairly recently. The extension of the Heralds Road northward began as a thin track from Impiltur into the frozen wastes where the southern flank of the Great Glacier had stood less than four centuries ago.

With the discovery of bloodstone in the East Galenas, the founding of Heliogabalus and the establishment of the Damaran kingdom, various tiny hamlets began appearing along the road. As the thaw continued, traffic increased, and with it, the track became a trail and then a road and finally an important trade route. Impilturians still call the Heralds Road but most Dalesmen and Damarans name the Merchants Run north of Ilmwatch.

Until the Impilturian annexation of Cairnpur, Maracrath, Guidodale and Mulltown in the Year of the Blade (1347 DR), the Merchants Run area was a relatively homogenous region, with only the two Damaran towns being inside of a formally governed area. All others were autonomous settlements of the geographical Great Dale, which has no central government.

The Impilturian border had run parallel to and about 5 miles/8 km west of Merchants Run. The annexation simply shoved the border 10 miles/15 km to the east, from Mulltown to Guidodale. From there it looped out southeastwards to the Soleine's confluence with Easting Reach, then followed its old course southward through the middle of the reach.

After the annexation, the four villages became more Impilturian in character than had been the case in the past, but these towns, along with the rest of the region, still are much more representative of the Great Dale in character than the Kingdom of Imphras.

That also is true to a great extent with Lenchford, the Dale's northwestern most settlement, which has been a part of Damara for about two centuries. However, about 40% of Lenchford's current population comprises immigrants from other parts of Faerûn who have little in common with the Great Dale and its Dalesmen. Non-Dalesmen make up a much smaller part of the population in the other Merchants Run communities.

The tendency to think as a Dalesman is perhaps best illustrated by the Freemen's militia. Volunteers from the settlements on Merchants Run between Lenchford and Cairnpur – which are in Damara and Impiltur, have joined peasant farmers, druids and priests of various faiths in the centuries-long battle against the lich Harbet Gall and his minions in the Eastern Dale and Ashanath. This solidarity continues without question, for despite the fact that the Great Dale has no central government or other central authority, its folk views itself as one, as Dalesmen.

There are, however, vast differences among the Dalesmen in various parts of this sweeping land. Druidic teachings shaped the original Turami immigrants who settled the Dale, and principles of nature conservation remain an important part of most Dalesmen's thinking, even if their families have lived for centuries far from the forests.

While the druidic principles remain deeply-rooted within most Dalesmen, dominant religions are quite variable, depending upon location. Many Dalesmen between Lenchford and Cairnpur along the Merchants Run worshipped Waukeen before her disappearance in the Time of Troubles. Tymora inherited many of Waukeen's worshippers in this area, although a small temple to Gond has been established in Guidodale, and Mask has gained followers.

Like Damaran Lenchford, the four Impilturian villages benefit economically from being on the trade highway, but their basic economies - Lenchford excepted to some extent - still are tied integrally with those of the other villages of the western Great Dale.

A large part of the economy is based upon wood. With the blessing of the druids of Eldath at Tumbling Stars as well as the druids of Silvanus from their grove south of Damaran Tellerth, the western flank of Rawlinswood to a point about 15 miles/25 km south of Uthving is used intensively.

Western Rawlinswood is subject to harsh but still forest-hospitable temperatures, extraordinarily balanced precipitation and sunshine and highly fertile soils. This is a good example of an area where the melting of the Great Glacier has caused environmental havoc, throwing nature completely out of balance.

These weather conditions combined with the new, more favorable climate – compared to the climate when the Great Glacier covered Damara - cause considerable problems for the druids of the western forest. Brush and tree seeds germinate at three times the normal rate and wildlife is uncontrollably proliferate. For this reason, the druids welcome and encourage intensive but controlled logging and hunting in this part of the wood, and this situation has made the settlements along Merchants Run prosperous.

Timbertown in the Great Dale is the largest logging center east of the Dragon Reach. Large wagons transport quality wood from Timbertown and from the areas in the forest interior controlled by the Hunters of Herne to Damara. Logging rafts that run from the Falls of Tumbling Stars take lumber southward to Ilmwatch and then travel on to markets all about the Inner Sea. Wood craftsmanship also is a main occupation in Lenchford, Mulltown, Maracrath and Cairnpur, where masters of the hand crafts make small works of art and fine furniture from the premium trees fallen in Rawlinswood.

Guidodale is something of an exception. The population is a mixture of native Dalesmen, many of them artisans, along with immigrant human merchants and a colony of migrant gnomes. The latter import metal from Impiltur's mines and use it and lumber from Rawlinswood to build strange mechanical devices. The Great Dale's only temple to Gond the Wondermaker is in Guidodale. Interestingly, the gnomes have been drawing the attention of more than one human artisan, and the Dalesmen in Guidodale too are looking with respect upon the teachings of Gond.

The wide Soleine Valley, from the southern eaves of Rawlinswood to about 15 miles north of the Falls of Tumbling Stars, is home to some 200 halflings living in burrows and active in dairy farming. The cheeses produced by the halfling dairymen bring premium prices in Heliogabalus, Hlammach, Lyrabar and Telflamm. Traders on the Merchants Run also are beginning to bid high prices for Soleine cheese for export to the Heartlands.

The halfling dairy business in the Soleine Valley has comeunder something of a cloud, however. Since the end of the troubles in Damara to the north, some halfling families have urged relatives in the West to migrate and open new farms in the valley beyond the river's bend to the northeast. All such migrants have simply vanished to date.

Uthving is a prosperous town in the Merchants Run area, although one usually does not count it as one of the Merchants Run settlements. The large, walled town is a base for many rich leisure time hunters from the Vast and Impiltur. It even draws hunters from points as far as Sembia and Cormyr.

The grasslands west of Merchants Run tend to be less fertile but are ideal grazing lands. The sheep farmers of Lenchford, Mulltown and Guidodale graze on the west side of Merchants Run as far as the edge of the Trader's Bay swamp and the Maracrath area.

Between Guidodale and Maracrath, cattle ranchers have built low fieldstone walls to keep out sheep. They use the rolling grasslands west of Merchants Run from that point southward past Cairnpur to the Impilturian border and the outskirts of Ilmwatch to graze beef cattle.

Water for cattle ranching, farming and the waterwheels of grain and sawmills is abundant in the Merchants Run Region. There are many small springs in the farmlands northeast of the road that give birth to medium and tiny creeks which flow to then southwest, eventually emptying into the Trader's Bay and Buzzard's Beak swamp areas of Impiltur.

There is, of course, a reason why Merchants Run bears its name. Many merchants in Lenchford, Mulltown, Maracrath and Cairnpur do nothing to produce income themselves. Instead, sell and trade wares between the Dale, Damara, Impiltur and points distant.

Many of these merchants fell upon hard times during Damara's dark years, when the land to the north was under the thumb of Zhengyi the Witch King and on unto the 1360s, when the market for Damara's exports, especially for the then *"cursed"* bloodstone, had fallen away to a trickle. Purchases and sales of bloodstone had been the sole source of income for many of the merchants.

Since the surprising upturn in the bloodstone market (also see the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* and Module No. 7, *Bloodstone)* in Damara, the merchants of Lenchford, Mulltown, Guidodale, Maracrath, Cairnpur and Lenchford have been busier (and more prosperous) than ever. Dalesmen in Uthmere and Wanneth now call Merchant's run the *Bloodstone Trail.*

The Merchants Run settlements have become relatively safe and secure territory. However, there are occasional problems with bandits and monsters in farmlands, on the range and in the foothills east and west of the road. Bands of hobgoblins occasionally emerge from the ancient gnome delves beneath Rawlinswood to attack farms and once in awhile even villages, above all in the Lenchford area.

Rawlinswood poses its dangers to the east of Merchants Run, particularly due to the mysterious Nentyarch, but he seems to have no interest for things that lie beyond the forest. When PC groups find adventure along Merchants Run, it is more likely to be a matter of running afoul of whatever local law there is or tapping into the schemes of agents of the Iron Throne or the Hunters of Herne who follow the lich Harbet Gall in the Eastern Dale.

General Adventure Hooks on Merchants Run

Draconians: Draconians have been spotted under the eaves of Rawlinswood lately. If you're running the *NJ* adventure, they're out to kill the PCs and may attempt to do it in town. If you're not running the *NJ* adventure, the local authorities or military could give the PCs a contract to track down and destroy the draconians.

Iron Throne: Lesser spies and agents come often to all the settlements of Merchants Run, to keep a watch on them, gather news and learn what's happening on the various markets. The PCs could determine that some visitors are Throne agents.

The Great Dale – Page 200

Hunters of Herne: The agents of the Malarite lich Harbet Gall are active in all parts of the Central and Western Dale where the Freemen (as well as Damara and Impiltur) are in control. The PCs could find out that certain locals or passing travelers are Gallist agents.

Hobgoblins: Most activity from hobgoblins who travel from the Giantspires beneath Rawlinswood takes place north of the Lench or Sidewinder and would be most likely to affect the Lenchford area, but there are some distant gnome delves that end in the woods between Timbertown and the Soleine, and the hobgoblins use these occasionally to attack lumbering parties outside of Timbertown. Small hobgoblin bands do cause infrequent trouble in other areas of Merchants Run too.

Cairnpur

Village, Conventional, AL: NG, 200 gp limit. Assets: 6,000 gp. Population about 600; Mixed, 96% human, 3% dwarven, 1% other, Authority figures: Alderman Nylfyng Surdarsson, human male, AL: NG, Exp 8, Important Character: Tillyng Eriksbrodir, human male, AL: NG, retired ranger Lvl 10, Innkeeper, Exp 3; Lars Holgarsson, human male, AL:CG, Tavernkeeper, Exp 4. Taxation type: Benevolent,

Of the four villages of Merchants Run that Impiltur annexed, Cairnpur is the oldest. Damara was noted as being free of ice in the Year of the Spreading Spring (1038 DR), and it also is recorded that a rather large scale migration of young mostly folk from the war-plagued Great Dale, as well as refugees from the Vilhon Reach and seekers of fortune from the Vast, began at about time.

There is a journal in the Great Imphras Library in Impilturian Lyrabar that mention Cairnburr's Lodge as having already survived for five years about 12 miles/20 km northwest of the *"evil Narfelli tower"* on the track to the new lands in the Year of the Singing Shards (1044 DR). Caravans apparently used the lodge, which was above the cold and swampy lowlands in which the tower stood, and it *"provided well for man and horse,"* according to the journal.

If the village that has come to be known as Cairnpur has its roots in the time before Imphras I founded Impiltur's second kingdom, it also would explain why the majority of the wooden buildings – like those in Ilmwatch - have slate roofs rather than the baked clay tile roofs popular farther to the north on Merchants Run. The Mulltown clay pits and tile works had not yet existed when the first buildings went up. When the clay tiles began becoming available in the Year of the Twelverule (1117 DR), the free Dalesmen of Cairnpur (or *Cairnburr*, as it may still have been called then), switched to the cheaper tiles, while Ilmwatch continued to use the more expensive slate shingles.

Cairnpur has been destroyed, at least in part, and rebuilt twice. In the Year of the Crested Thrush (1094 DR) it was overrun and completely destroyed by hobgoblins from the Giantspires Mountains, who slew every man, woman and child who failed to escape. In the Year of the Shrike (1196 DR), it is recorded that a part of Cairnpur, which numbered itself a Free Dalesmen town, was destroyed in a bloody battle of town residents against a livid Gallist druidess and her rangers from Kilstad, who had come downstream tracking her runaway daughters.

The raiders were unable to damage Uthving or its city walls. The few survivors among the Gallists, trying to avoid the Free Dalesmen who were beginning to close in on them from the north, east and south, fled westward, where they were slain in the Battle of Cairnpur. However, they died only after taking the lives of a number of Free Dalesmen and causing fires that destroyed several wooden buildings. To provide a better future defense against possible Gallist attacks, the village began the next spring to construct a 20-foot/6m-high stone wall that was completed in the Year of the Lean Purse (1198 DR).

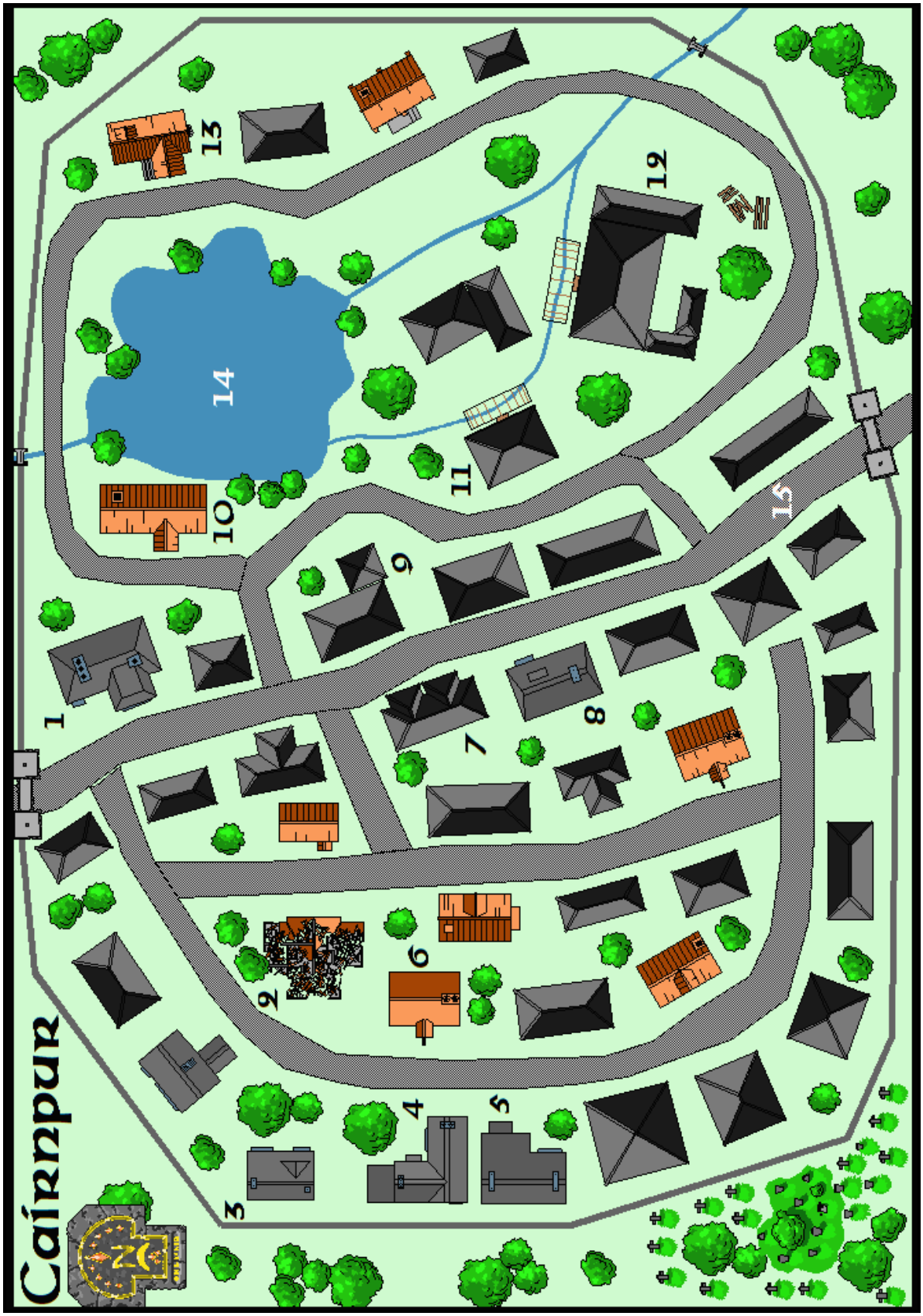
Today's Cairnpur is a well-to-do village, earning its living largely with woodcrafts. The raw materials the artisans use come from the western flank of Rawlinswood along the Damaran border with the Great Dale, to the northeast. The city also has a sawmill and a grain and vegetable oil mill.

A Free Dalesmen's Council rules the city. A voice vote in a village gathering that takes place every two years elects the council. The current Alderman (head) of the Free Dalesmen's Council is Nylfyng Surdarsson (hm lvl 0, AL: LN), master sawyer and owner of the Surdarsson Sawmill.

The city has its own volunteer militia. It trains once each tenday. However, Cairnpur's protection is largely in the hands of the Heralds of Imphras II, who maintain an eight-man detachment in the village.

Adventure Hooks in Cairnpur

Use the general adventure hooks for Merchants Run above.



Cairnpur

Map of Cairnpur

1 – Damara House Inn. A rustic, rural lodge with the smell of burning pine coming from the fireplaces and stoves in winter months, the *Damara House* is a favorite stop for many travelers who prefer Tillyng Eriksbrodir's (hm, Ranger Lvl 10, AL: NG, retired) hostelry to any inn in Ilmwatch. The *Damara House* has 10 single rooms and four doubles, all at 4 silver shiners per person per night, with a double room discount of one shiner per night. Tillyng brews his own strong, dark, bottom fermented lager, which goes for 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. The house also offers an assortment of Easting Reach wines at 4 shiners to 2 gold talers a glass. The menu offers various seafood dishes and wild boar and fowl, at prices ranging from 3 shiners to a taler per serving.

2 – House of the Golden Road – Temple to Waukeen (Ruin?). The temple, which went out of use after the disappearance of the goddess during the Time of Troubles, burned mysteriously during that time, in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR). If Waukeen has returned already in your campaign, this temple is in the process of being rebuilt or it already is back in operation.

3 – Fallen Star Holding. This branch office of the great holding company of Hlammach, which is a front for the Iron Throne, buys and sells merchandise coming through the village. The manager is Bethlraun (human male, AL: LE, Exp 5).

4 – Great Glacier Furniture Co. Uldwyng Rindugsson (human male, AL: LG, Exp 9) owns this small factory, which turns out wooden furniture of the finest quality. The company employs 20 furniture makers.

5 – Cairnpur Finishing. Brynhild Sithungsdóttir (human female, AL: LG, Exp 7) employs 22 woodworkers and carvers who make wooden objects and do wood carving of the finest quality.

6 – Druid's Grove Tavern. Despite the name, this popular tavern and restaurant has nothing to do with druids. It has a fine, handcrafted interior made of lumber from Rawlinswood and is lit with candles and chandeliers. The *Grove* is off the main road – intentionally. It caters more to locals and people from the rural areas who come to the village than to travelers, although it isn't closed or unfriendly to those who pass through. The owner, Lars Holgarsson, brews his own top fermented light ale with juniper gruit, which sells for 3 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. He also serves various Easting Reach wines at 2 silver shiners to 1 gold taler per chalice. Various dishes with wild boar, venison and fowl, bought from local hunters, are served at prices ranging from 3 to 8 shiners.

7 – Road to Fortune – Temple to Tymora. Luckbringer Luthar Ingvarsson (human male, lvl 3 Priest of Tymora, AL: CG) runs the card and dice tables in this modest but ambitious temple to Lady Luck. The only drink is ale on tap from barrels bought from the *Druid's Grove* (see No. 6).

8 – Long Lonesome Road Butcher and Tavern. Most travelers seeking a quick drink and bite to eat stop here, in the southern part of the building. Owner Lokar Heldungsson (human male, AL:LN, Exp 4) brews a good bottom fermented dark lager that sells for 3 copper biter a quart/liter tankard. The hungry can buy boards of dark bread with condiments and Lokar's own sausages – warm or cold – at prices ranging from 1 to 4 silver shiners. The other part of the building houses Lokar's butcher shop. He specializes in wild fowl, boar and venison brought in by local hunters, and he makes sausage from all of these meats.

9 – Heralds of Imphras II Way Station – An eight-man detachment is stationed in Cairnpur. This detachment also is responsible for Maracrath. Personnel vary, but the current head of the detachment always is a paladin with a level between 4 and 6. He or she commands a mixed group of fighters and warriors, levels 1 to 3.

10 – Bolthor Borverkssons' General Store. Bolthor's (human male, AL: NG, Com 3) store stands two stories high and has a large storage cellar. He sells almost any non-magical item an adventurer, lumberjack, hunter, trader, rancher, shepherd or farmer might want, at prices 15% above PHB.

11 – Tandy Hawthornbottom's Grain Mill. Tandy (halfling male, AL: CG, Exp 9) considered himself too advanced for his friends and relations in Halfling Downs in Damara, so he bought the Cairnpur mill and has been grinding flour and feed and stamping vegetable oil ever since.

12 - Surdarsson Sawmill. Master sawyer Nylfyng Surdarsson, Alderman (head) of the Free Dalesmen's Council, owns the mill. The mill cuts raw timber from Rawlinswood into any desirable entity, from building beams to small boards.

13 – Thrud the Great Tinker. Thrud (dwarf male, AL: LG, Com 10) is an immigrant Hillsafar Clan dwarf who came to Cairnpur in the Year of the Helm (1362 DR), mad at the Hillsafar Clan in the Galenas over something he's never explained. He simply stayed in Cairnpur and started doing business in the village. He's also stayed mad at his clan. Thud is a mediocre smith by dwarven standards and a good smith by human standards. He can do a decent job of building or repairing a wagon, and he also can fix almost anything else. Evenings he happily grumbles and mumbles into one beer tankard after another in the *Druid's Grove* (No. 6).

14 – Mill Pond, Mill Stream and Buzzard Swamp Creek.

15 – Merchants Run.

Maracrath

Thorp, Conventional, AL: NG, 40 gp limit. Assets: 140 gp. Population: 70; mostly human, Authority figures: Nathan Maracrath, human male, AL: LG, miller and unofficial town chairman, Exp 8; Important Characters: Luthvyng Haraldsson, human male, AL: LN, Tavernkeeper, High Painbearer Tyskyng Ibardsson, human male, AL:LG, Cleric of Ilmater, lvl 9. Taxation type: Benevolent.

Maracrath is the smallest of the four Merchants Run settlements annexed by Impiltur. It began as a wayside stable and inn in the Year of the Reaching Beacon (1042 DR), when the first caravans began heading northward in the Damaran Bloodstone Rush.

The timber-oriented settlement picked up its name from Tarmash Maracrath, the man who built an unusual sawmill with a double waterwheel there in the Year of the Trembling Tree (1223 DR), after druids allowed the first consequential logging in western Rawlinswood. Why Maracrath was heading northwestwards on the Damaran Trail – as the Merchants Run was called then – no longer is known, but Maracrath did take note of the fact that the Scrag Swamp Creek was flowing rapidly and steadily toward the swamplands at a time of the year when other creeks in the area were lax and laggard.

Maracrath continued onward to the northwest, but at some point, he decided he'd seen enough. He turned back, returned to the site of present day Maracrath, where he hired men to build his sawmill, and then began using timber from the northeast to make everything from huge wooden construction beams to small boards.

The business prospered and Maracrath set up a lumbering camp. After watching for a few years, he noticed that the Scrag Swamp Creek flows steadily the year through, except when there is a heavy winter freeze, whedre most swamp drainage was irregular. Deeming the creek's flow to be unusually trustworthy, he added a second saw and waterwheel to his mill. His ancestors (the mill still is in the Maracrath family) later had to add a diversionary pond east of the village along with dams to the east and west during a few unusually dry years, but these have been used only rarely.

The Lumberjack Tavern probably is the only location that would interest adventurers here. The tavern does have four small, slightly cold rooms that can be rented out on the top story, negotiable for a silver shiner or two a night, in cases of emergency, but beyond that, there is no inn here. The village consists of the sawmill, the tavern, Maracrath Implements, which produces small wooden products, and housing. About 70 people live there.

Maracrath was destroyed and rebuilt once, when hobgoblins from the Giantspires overran and leveled it in the Year of the Crested Thrush (1094 DR). They slew every man, woman and child who failed to escape.

Adventure Hooks in Maracrath

Use the general adventure hooks for Merchants Run above.

Map of Maracrath

1 – Maracrath Lumber Mill – Workers Housing. These barracks-like wooden cabins can sleep up to 30 workers of the sawmill.

2 – House of Nathan Maracrath (hm Lvl 0, AL: LG), the current owner of the family operations and unofficial town chairman.

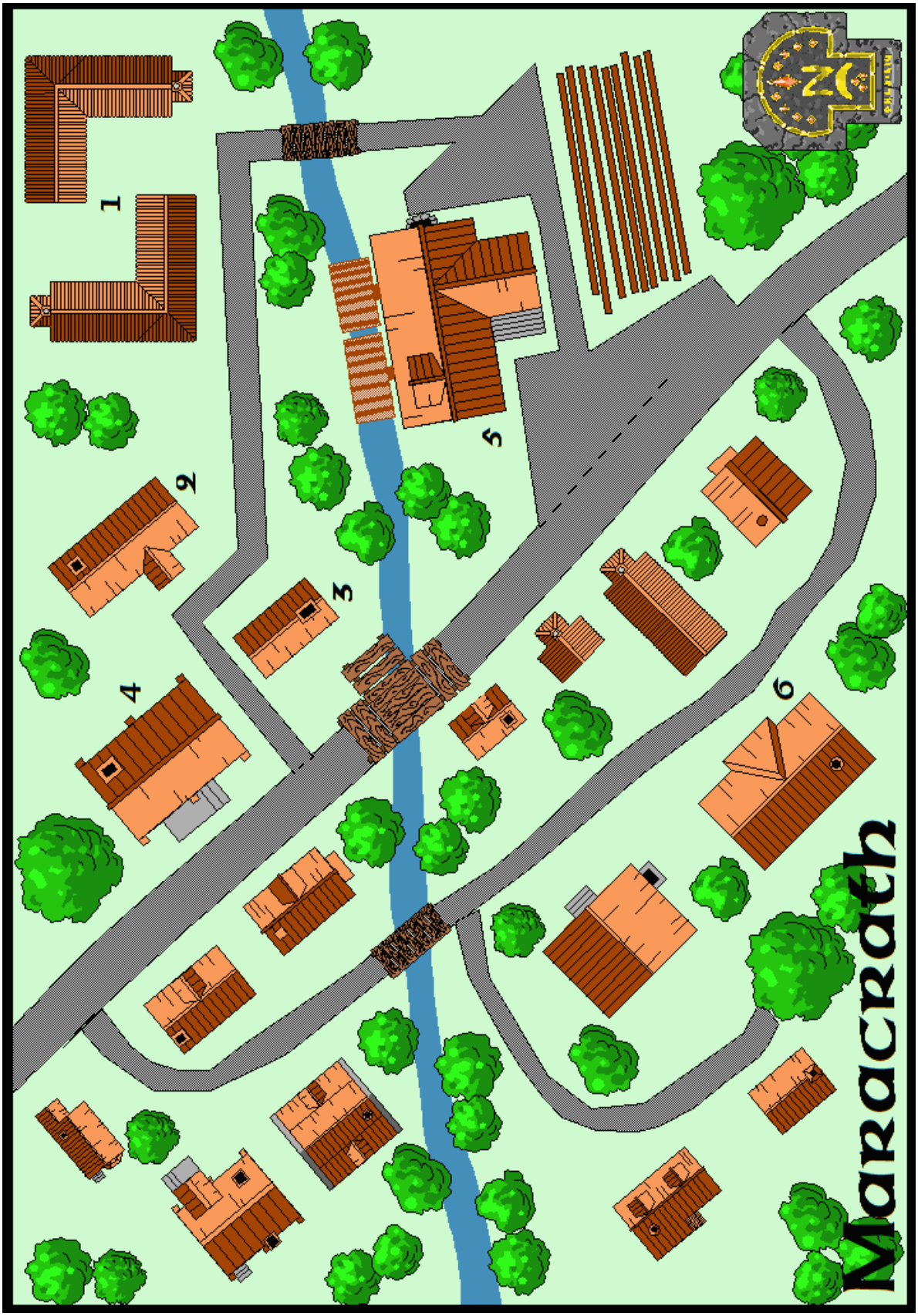
3 – Maracrath Lumber Mill – Business Office.

4 – Lumberjack Tavern. This roadside watering hole, run by Luthvyng Haraldsson (hm, Lvl 0, AL: LN), is quiet and mostly empty by day and a loud, fun tavern by night, after the waterwheels are raised for the day and the saws stop turning. Haraldsson brews his own medium top fermented ale with juniper gruit and sells it at 3 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. The only hot dish is a plate of flapjacks drowned in maple syrup with hot wild boar bacon at 2 silver shiners a serving. Small sandwiches also are available.

5- Maracrath Lumber Mill – Sawmill.

6 – Maracrath Implements. Nindloc Targarsbodir (human male, AL: NG, Exp 3) runs this family operation, which produces a wide variety of small wooden items such as cutting boards, rolling pins, wooden mallets, etc.

Beyond the Map - Monastery of the Red Petals. This cloistered monastery is home to 12 clerics, 14 paladins and eight monks of Ilmater who serve the Order of the Lambent Rose. Its residents live in contemplation, isolated from the rest of the world, except when they are sent on a mission of help. Visitors are not allowed within the monastery, but those seeking help may confer in the meeting room at its gate with its head, High Painbearer Tyskyng Ibardsson.



Maracrath

Guidodale

Hamlet, Conventional, AL: NG, 100 gp limit. Assets: 1,250 gp. Population: 250; 95% human, 5% gnome, Authority figures: Gingus Ghan, gnome male, Priest of Gond, lvl 12, AL: NG, unofficial hamlet leader; Important Characters: Gonchakh Ghan, gnome male, AL: CG, Exp 13, Seeker of the 12th Order Webley Dart, human male lvl 5 Priest of Gond, AL: CN, Seeker Postulant Tschass Minghus (gnome male, lvl 2 Priest of Gond, AL: NG; Luckbringer Marda Wunnd, human female, lvl 2 Priestess of Tymora, AL: CG; Lodur Ifnyngsson, human male, AL:NG, Com 6, tavernkeeper; Enned Tarstin, human male, AL:LG, miller, Exp 6; Gjuki Hroksson, human male, AL: NG, Exp 4, innkeeper; Tarndry Greubb, human male, AL: NG, blacksmith, Exp 5; Brimur Burson, human male, AL: NE, Com 6, horse dealer. Taxation type: Benevolent.

Guido Tarstin, his wife, and their seven sons left Luthcheq in Chessenta in the Year of the Falling Stars (1035 DR) and sailed to the northwest, looking, as Guido put it, *"for a lot of land where we can settle down and do our business without being bothered."*

In the Year of the Dark Rider (1043 DR), Tarstin and has family stopped in a narrow valley, not particularly deep but long. It cut its way through the cold but fertile sub-glacial land. When they stopped, they were the better part of a day's ride northwest of the Narfelli tower (modern Ilmwatch) on Easting Reach.

The stream, which the Tarstins for obvious reasons named *Mosquito Creek* during their first summer in the valley, provided a strong enough flow for grain milling, and Guido Tarstin used the small fortune he had taken with him out of Luthcheq to finance construction of what's still called *Guido's Mill.*

The mill was a success. Above all, it became an important supplier for the Bloodfeathers family caravans heading north to develop bloodstone mining. Within weeks, the Tarstins had their first neighbor, the keeper of a provisional inn that also came quickly to riches serving travelers into the newly opened North.

Over the years, more people settled in the valley, mainly to graze sheep or to raise crops. When logging began on a large scale in western Rawlinswood to the northeast, another pioneer settler named Ali Njördsson built a sawmill in the valley, to handle the timber being rafted down Mosquito Creek from newly founded Timbertown.

The latest development in Guidodale began in the Year of the Banner (1368 DR), when a somewhat mysterious group of gnomes and men from west of the Dragon Reach who call themselves the *Society of the Golden Wheel* came to Guidodale.

The gnomes claim to be descendants of a burrow that once inhabited the area. They know little about their ancestors east of the Dragon Reach, other than that they mined ore until the veins petered out and then slowly migrated westward over what now is known as Impiltur and the Vast.

Most of the burrows died there in battles against the orcs, they say, but a few escaped by crossing the River Lis somewhere north of Ylraphon and then wandering on in the West. This has led to speculation among some Impilturian scholars that the burrows in Guidodale may have descended from the Kadestarmestilpus gnomes believed to have once mined beneath Rawlinswood.

The *Society of the Golden Wheel* purchased the bankrupt sawmill of the Njördsson family and the surrounding land, enclosed their holdings in a 10-foot/3m high stone wall and began building, first of all a small but luxurious temple to Gond, then housing and finally a foundry with so-called assembly hall.

Just what the society does in its compound is a bit of a mystery to most folks in Guidodale. There's nothing secret about the society; it's more than wiling to explain to anyone with an open ear. It's just that no one in Guidodale understands more than a few of the highly technical terms being explained to them.

The *Society of the Golden Wheel* consists of a group of devoted gnome and human worshippers and priests of Gond who have made it their life's work to boil water in an enclosed container, harness the pressure of the steam created and then channel this wild energy into powering implements and machines. Most residents of Guidodale recognize this theory for the insanity that it obviously is.

The first perhaps successful project of the society was the construction of a steam pump. The society dug a well on its property and then built a steam boiler contraption that pumped water up from the well and poured it into the already abundant flow of Mosquito Creek. The pump work magnificently for about three months, until the boiler became overheated and exploded, killing a village dog that happened to be wandering nearby, no doubt seeking a steamed bone.

Some villagers took the dog's death poorly, but most simply questioned what the purpose was in pumping well water into Mosquito Creek, while also noting that whatever benefits there may have been were short-term, in view of the apparent volatility of steam machines.

In Midsummer of the past Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), the society disabled the waterwheel of its sawmill and substituted a steam machine to turn the saw instead. On the first day, the pressure of the steam in the boiler caused a crack in a metal seam, and scalding hot water began flowing everywhere within the sawmill, doing substantial damage and also knocking over a support for the firebox, which in turn sent glowing embers flying against a wooden wall.

The wall began burning, but one of the gnomes then brought out a machine that actually seemed to work. A wagon with a small boiler and steam pump pumped water from Mosquito Creek through a hose that squirted water on the flames. While the pump functioned well, most villagers noted that the western third of the mill had burned down before the machine had been set up and enough steam could be generated to make the pump work.

There was some grumbling about the danger of the society's inventions after the fire, but this was quelled quickly when the society offered high wages to all villagers who would help rebuild the mill before winter set in, a non-steam project that succeeded completely.

Most adventurers probably won't find much of substantial interest in Guidodale – unless they have a bent for steam. However, there is an inn, a tavern and a small temple to Tymora with gambling.

Guidodale has been at least partially destroyed and rebuilt twice in its history. The first time was after hobgoblins from the Giantspires Mountains overran and leveled it in the Year of the Crested Thrush (1094 DR), slaying every man, woman and child who failed to escape. The second time was in the Year of the Black Wave (1262 DR), when the red dragon Furchtbarhitzentendolo set the northern quarter of Guidodale and all of nearby Timbertown ablaze. Reconstruction in Guidodale was completed in the Year of the Tressym (1263 DR).

Adventure Hooks in Guidodale

See also the general adventure hooks for Merchants Run above.

Steam Power - The PCs could intentionally or through coincidence become involved in haphazard steam power experiments with the followers of Gond.

Map of Guidodale

Game Master's note: Guidodale spreads out over the countryside, with conventional farms continuing on to the northeast and sheep farms to the southwest. These are not shown on the village map, nor is the eastern turnoff to Timbertown und Uthving, which is about a mile/1,5 km north of the village.

1 – Society of the Golden Wheel – Foundry and Assembly Hall. The chief steam mechanic is Gonchakh Ghan.

2 - Society of the Golden Wheel – Housing.

3 – House of the Golden Wheel – Temple to Gond. The high priest is Seeker of the Fifth Order Gingus Ghan, who also is the cousin of the society's chief mechanic, Gonchakh Ghan. The temple also has two other junior priests, Seeker of the 12th Order Webley Dart and Seeker Postulant Tschass Minghus.

4 - Society of the Golden Wheel – Sawmill.

5 – Golden Wheel of Luck – Temple to Tymora. Luckbringer Marda Wunnd had hoped the name she chose for her two-year-old temple would draw a few folks from the Society of the Golden Wheel to Lady Luck. Her hopes grew after the failure of the first important steam experiments, but to no avail. There are too few locals to justify the temple, but it is popular with traveling adventurers, who carry it through financially. The house has card tables and serves tap ale from the Miller's Rest (No. 6) at three copper bites a quart/liter tankard.

6 – Miller's Rest Tavern. Lodur Ifnyngsson runs Guidodale's only tavern, a quiet daytime stop and a lively night spot that draws some locals, most travelers spending the night in the village and occasionally even some of the engineers and Gondsmen from the Society of the Golden Wheel, who will tell all about their work at great length and in great detail. Lodur brews a popular, top fermented light ale with a mix of cloves, fennel, mace, nutmeg and rosemary as gruit, giving it a much different taste than most Impilturian ale, which usually uses juniper gruit. It sells for four copper bites a quart/liter tankard. The Miller's Rest also serves a house specialty made of potatoes, eggs and wild boar bacon, at three silver shiners a serving, in the skillet.

7 – Guido's Mill. Enned Tarstin is the current miller. He grinds wheat, barley, oats and spelt into flour and meal and stamps vegetable oil with his mill's hammer.

8 – Wooden Trail Inn. This pleasant if sometimes drafty hostelry is run by Gjuki Hroksson and his family. Gjuki manages the inn, his wife cooks, his eldest son brews the house ale, his second son takes care of drinks, the two daughters are the waitresses and his youngest son runs the cellar stable beneath the inn. The house brew is stout, bitter ale, top fermented, which sells for three copper bites per quart/liter tankard. The Wooden Trail also sells north coast wines at three silver shiners to 1 taler per glass. Meals include various dishes of boar, venison and wild fowl, at 4 shiners to 1 gold taler per serving. Cold plates with smoked or salt packed fish also are available at 2 shiners a serving. The 12 single rooms go for 7 shiners a night; the 6 doubles are 6 shiners per person per night.

9 – Tarndry Greubb, Blacksmith. Greubb is a native of the Vilhon Reach who's been shoeing horses and making and repairing farm and mill implements in Guidodale for the past 25 years. He also helps repair damaged items of the Society of the Golden Wheel, at least when that's possible. He does no smith work with weapons.

10 – Brimur Burson's Livestock. Burson has a wide variety of horses on sale. He knows better than to cheat the locals, but he's good at covering signs of age and old injury on a horse, and he's more than happy to peddle off a problem horse on someone he thinks he'll never see again. His prices run about 10% above those in the PHB.

11 – Mill Stream.

12 – Mosquito Creek.

13 – Mill Pond.

14 – Merchants Run.

Guidodale

Mulltown

Small town, Conventional, AL: NG, 800 gp limit. Assets: 40,000 gp. Population: 1,000; 97% human, 2% dwarven, 1% other. Authority figures: Nestlumbrar, human male, AL:LG, Royal Impilturian Administrator, Aris 6; Sword Wielder Darlumbrar, human male, AL:LG, Commander, Sword of Impiltur; Important Characters: Evandar Ulgarsbrodir, human male, AL: NG, Exp 2, innkeeper; Lodur Urdsson, human male, AL: CG, Lvl 3, Priest of Tymora; Zandalyr, human male, AL: CG, Exp 2. Tavernkeeper. Taxation type: Benevolent.

As far as the lot of slaves goes, Lucius Mulden had lived like a king in Thay. Born into slavery, Lucius knew no other life and sought one nonetheless. Dating back to the time of his grandparents, Lucius' family had been owned by the wealthy industrial house Erkadzar, which controlled Thay's largest clay quarries and brick and roofing tile plants, all in the foothills beneath Thaymount on the south shore of the Eltar between Thaymount and Lake Thaylambar, northwest of Eltabbar.

The Erkadzars were expedient rather than cruel masters. They understood, in contrast to many other Thayans, that injured slaves and slaves in pain were slaves whose ability to work had been diminished. House Erkadzar treated its slaves well, it fed them well and it even educated those deemed able to learn, not as an act of charity but rather to increase the return on their investments. The only threat that hung over an Erkadzar slave was the knowledge that he or she would be sold back to the slave market, if the masters were dissatisfied.

Lucius Mulden was one of the more privileged of the Erkadzar slaves. He had been trained as a master maker of bricks, roofing tiles and clay pots. Nevertheless, he wanted more; he wanted to be a free man. Therefore,, at great risk, he escaped Thay and fled into Aglarond, continuing onward to see the world beyond Thay, eventually reaching Telflamm and sailing from there to Hlammach.

The Impilturian cities of the Golden Coast offered Mulden no market for his talents, however, because the coastal cities in those days roofed their buildings with shingles of slate, and his attempts to interest them in baked clay roofing tiles failed. So Mulden continued earning what money he could at odd jobs, traveling ever farther northward with the young land of Damara as his goal.

He had not quite reached that goal in the year of the Midday Mists (1195 DR), when he accidentally discovered hills in the northwestern Great Dale rich in the thick red clay that was ideal for his craft. Using what money he had, Mulden built a small plant with a kiln and an apartment for himself on an upper floor along the Damaran Trail, on the spot where Mulltown stands today.

The time was not yet ripe for Mulden's idea. He had too little wherewithal to export his roof tiles and bricks into budding Damara, and the Impilturian cities to the south continued to ignore his attempts to sell his new product. Within a few years time, Mulden went broke, abandoned his kiln and continued his journey northward into Damara, and no other tales were told of him again in Impiltur.

Nonetheless, Mulden left his mark upon the dip in the land where his cold kiln stood. In the first year, the hamlet was known as *Mulden's Kiln*. Most of the folks there were illiterate, so spelling made no indelible claims upon the settlement's name. Less than a decade later, mention of the kiln had vanished and the pronunciation had changed to *Muldoon*, with the evolution continuing until today's name, *Mulltown,* became the standard.

Although Mulden vanished from the settlement’s story, the village continued to grow in his absence, evolving into the thriving frontier town it is today, Impiltur’s and the Great Dale's gateway to Damara, with nearly 1,000 souls under the protection of the Impilturian queen and a sturdy stone wall 30 feet/9m high.

Ironically, as Impiltur awoke to the advantages of baked clay roofing tiles, others found the rich deposits of clay Mulden had discovered and made their fortune where his kiln had cooled and vanished with time. The Mulltown Kiln of today is the main purveyor of roofing tiles in Impiltur, along Easting Reach and in southern Damara.

Three waterways cross the town. The main one is Swamp Snake Creek, which has its source in the low hills northeast of Mulltown and flows on southwestward into the Impilturian swamps. The other two are dirty runoff channels from the clay quarry east of town, both of which carry large quantities of clay particles and silt into the creek at the western edge of Mulltown.

In addition to its kilns, Mulltown boasts a large regional sawmill, a grain mill, a meat packing plant and all the supportive trades such a village needs. Mulltown also is a prime location for shady, crooked and illegal deals between Damaran interests and those of Impiltur or the Great Dale. Indeed, in the heyday of the late Tarkos Ree and his now, mostly shattered Tightpurse thieves guild of Heliogabalus, members of his organization were one of the great if unseen factors working in Mulltown.

Most modern day smuggling operations are done by fronts of the Iron Throne, which ships contraband to Uthmere in the Great Dale, a free port that watches ships closely for signs of illegal slave running but exercises no control over merchandise beyond assuring that no items of absolute evil are being moved through the city.

Contraband headed for Damara or Impiltur is loaded onto small fishing boats, which avoid the Impilturian shore of Easting Reach and sail instead to the mouth of the Soleine, following the river upstream to its last navigable point, Uthving Bridge, a small settlement with an inn and a few other buildings west of Uthving in the Great Dale.

Small caravans usually take smuggled goods bound for Damara up the Great Imphras River Valley to Zarach, through the wilderness foothills of the Earthspurs. Zarach, a remote southern village of the Damaran province of Ostel, still has only small and inadequate customs facilities. The goods smuggled by such methods into Impiltur usually are diverted at night into the northern swamps, where Impilturian smugglers of the Regdresk family intercept them and bring them on into the Trader's Bay area.

Mulltown offers ideal conditions for men of evil to deal over and even move swamp contraband. The Impilturian Royal Customs has no stations in Mulltown or anywhere else on Merchants Run. Smuggled goods and contraband can move through the area with relative freedom. At the same time, participants in shady dealings enjoy the full protection of the Impilturian crown in Mulltown. It is a village with safety and comfort but a closed eye to the passage of most goods.

Mulltown has its own local district government and a village watch, but it also is the home of the Citadel of Lashilmbrar, which houses a permanent border detachment of 200 soldiers from the Sword of Impiltur, all part of the Eastern Wave under Admiral War Captain Rilaunyr in Ilmwatch, and the 24-man headquarters of the Heralds of Imphras II.

Adventure Hooks in Mulltown

Also see the general adventure hooks for Merchants Run above.

Plots - Mulltown is an ideal place for PCs to stumble across plots that involve the Iron Throne, the Impilturian Regdresk family, the church of Mask and/or other sinister elements.

Map of Mulltown

Game Master's note: Mulltown spreads out over the countryside, with conventional farms continuing on to the west. These are not shown on the village map, which portrays only those buildings within the wall.

1 – Royal Government. This governmental office, headed by Royal Impilturian Administrator Nestlumbrar, is manned mostly by royally appointed native Dalesmen. It handles regional government matters for Mulltown, Guidodale, Maracrath and Cairnpur.

2 – Damaran Gate Inn. Damaran immigrant Anton Pletsch, whose inn in Goliad was destroyed by a dragon during the war against Zhengyi, the Vaasan Witch-King, built this last hostelry before the Damaran border. It's a comfortable house with 18 singles at 7 silver shiners a night and 8 doubles at 6 silver per person per night. Anton brews his a dark, top fermented ale with juniper gruit. He sells it for 4 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. He also has a small selection of north coast wines at 5 shiners to more than a gold taler per glass. His menu includes dishes of venison, wild boar, local beef and trout, running from 4 shiners to a taler per serving.

3 – Mulltown Livestock Sales. Owner Noldur Sigurlamison (Human male, AL: LE, Com 4) sells riding, field and draught horses. Like his counterpart in Guidodale, he knows better than to cheat the locals, but he will use purchased illusionary magic to conceal signs of age and old injury on a horse he sells to strangers. His prices run about 10% above those in the PHB.

4 – Bloodstone Tavern. Hervard Hlödynsson brews a light, top fermented ale with rosemary and nutmeg gruit. It has a solid reputation with regular shippers and travelers between Damara and the Great Dale or Impiltur. He also runs a friendly house. The combination makes the *Bloodstone* one of the more popular stops on Merchants Run. The house ale costs four silver shiners a quart/liter tankard. Hervard also has a few north coast wines at 9 shiners to 5 gold talers per quart/liter bottles. 2 shiners buy a serving of cold cuts and dark rye bread served on a cutting board, but no other food is offered.

5 – Vidar the Wainwright. Vidar Grimnirsson (human male, AL: LN, Exp 3) builds and repairs wagons, sleds and sledges of all types.

6 – North Dale Milling – Grain and Oil Mill. The mill belongs to the North Dale Cooperative, an organization of farmers in the Mulltown area. The meal grinds flour and feed from wheat, oats, rye, barley and spelt and the hammer of the stamper mill produces vegetable oil from sunflower and rape seeds.

7 – North Dale Milling – Grain Elevator and Storage.

8 – Mulltown Lumber. The large sawmill provides the lumber needs for the entire Mulltown area. The wood comes from Rawlinswood to the northeast.

9 – Mill Pond.

10 – Mulltown Clay Pits. The nearest clay quarry. More clay is mined in hills just east of the area shown on the map.

11 – Mulltown Kiln. This large factory, now owned by Fallen Star Holding of Hlammach (a front of the Iron Throne), is the largest employer on Merchants Run and the producer of all clay bricks, roofing tiles and flower pots used on Impiltur's Golden Coast, in southern Damara and in the western Great Dale.

12 – Citadel of Lashilmbrar. Detachment of 200 soldiers of the Sword of Impiltur and 24 Heralds of Imphras II. The Commander is Sword Wielder Darlumbrar.

13 – House of the Bloodstone Merchant – Temple to Waukeen (Ruin?). The temple has been abandoned since the Time of Troubles and is in a growing state of disrepair.

Game Master's Note: If Waukeen already has returned in your campaign, the temple should be in the process of being restored.

14 – Skáfidur Álfsson, Blacksmith. Álfsson (human male, AL: LG, Exp 3) is a quality smith when it comes to making mining implements and farm tools or shoeing horses, but he does not work with weapons.

15 – Vegsvin House. *Vegsvin* means *Way of Knowledge* in the old Turami tongue that still is a key language in the Great Dale. Until some nine decades ago, this hostelry was a cloistered monastery of monks of Oghma, all of whom died when plague crossed Merchants Run in the Year of the Dying Stars (1284 DR). The books were rescued and taken to the House of Many Tomes above Sarshel. A few years after the plague, the empty monastery was bought and restored by the family Ulgarsbrodir. They converted it into a conservative, quiet inn. The owner of the current generation, Evandar Ulgarsbrodir (hm, Lvl 0; AL: NG) , brews a barley-malt-rich bottom fermented double bock according to a recipe the monks left behind. He sells it for 4 silver shiners a quart/liter tankard. North coast wines sell for 6 shiners to 3 gold talers per quart/liter bottle. All menu items offer local meats and produce at 4 to 9 shiners a serving. The 22 single rooms cost seven shiners a night. The 8 doubles go for six shiners per person per night.

16 – Finn's General Store. Finn Ginnarsson (human male, AL: LN, Com 2) sells almost any non-magical item a farmer, clay miner or adventurer might seek, at prices ranging from 10 to 15% above PHB.

17 – House of the Goldbrick – Temple to Tymora. The high priest is Luckbringer Lodur Urdsson, the only cleric in the temple. Card and dice games are available, along with *Vegsvin Monks Brau* from the *Vegsvin House* (No. 15) on tap.

18 – North Star Packing. This plant, owned by Hlammach Trading Co., conserves meat by smoking it and packing it in salt brine.

19 – Haelimbrar's Tankard Tavern. This house was named after the huge two-quart/two-liter tankard that rests above the tapped beer on an honored shelf on the wall. The General War Captain of Vordric-Dun stopped in Mulltown a decade or so ago, returning from a quiet mission into Damara. Upon entering the tavern, the general declared he was thirsty. Tavernkeeper Zandalyr offered his special guest the full tankard. A traveling Hillsafar dwarf had left the tankard behind a few years earlier. Haelimbrar swallowed the contents non-stop, so great was his thirst. Zandalyr, a native of Ilmwatch, decided to cash in on the name of his famous guest. He also names his bottom fermented bitter hops lager *Wall Sentry,* in honor of the general. It sells for 3 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. Zandalyr also sells north coast wine at 5 silver shiners to 1 gold taler a glass and fried board sausages with sour kraut at 2 shiners a serving.

Mulltown

Lenchford

Village, Conventional, AL: L-NG, 3,000 gp limit. Assets: 200 gp. Population: 440; 95% human, 3% halfling, 1% dwarven, 1% other. Authority figures: Authority figures: Donlevy, human male, AL:LG, Baron of Polten, Aristocrat 5, Paladin 5 (absent, in Monastery of the Golden Cup); Chancellor Hanset Dargun, human male, AL:NG, Aristocrat 8, Fighter 5 (in Trailsend); Hulkyng Tarnstjúpsonur, human male, AL:NG, Alderman, Commoner 3, Warrior 1; Heathvynga Elgundsdóttir, human female, AL: NG, commander of the Bloodstone Riders detachment, Ranger 9; Devit mac Turrn, dwarf male, AL: LG, Expert 10, Fighter 8, master smith and co-commander of the volunteer watch; Orthric Tenbuster, human male, AL: NG, Expert 5, Warrior 6, wainwright and co-commander of the volunteer watch; Eino Gurdjeff, human male, AL:NG, Expert 6, Fighter 4, master tanner and co-commander of the volunteer watch. Other important figures: Sir Tilinyr, human male, AL: LG, commander of the Sword of Impiltur detachment on the south bank, Paladin of Ilmater 6; Randall Delton, human male, AL: LG, Expert 3, Warrior 3, manager Royal Damaran Bloodstone Trust branch office; Tinder Newton, human male, AL: LN(E), manager Heliogabalus Cooperative branch office and Iron Throne agent, Rogue 4, Expert 1; Sister Gunda, human female, AL:NG, Druidess of Chauntea, 5. Others: 12 Bloodstone Riders, human male and female, AL: various good, Fighter 1-5. Taxation type: Benevolent.

The development of Lenchford began with the construction of the trailside Lenchford Inn during the Year of the Twilight Campaign (1046 DR). The inn stood at the old ford on the southeast bank of the Lench and therefore, ironically, stands today on the Impilturian side of the border outside of the village wall.

The rest of the settlement grew on the northwest bank with the addition of a sawmill in the Year of Auril's Absence (1049 DR). Lenchford continued as a slowly growing but completely independent village for some 80 years, rising, falling and being rebuilt again during that time after devastating attacks by hobgoblins and dragons.

In the Year of the Shattered Chains (1123 DR), Baron Donlewis of Polten in the still young kingdom of Damara wooed the embattled folk of Lenchford with promises of protection, and they voted to become a part of his barony.

That Lenchford is the border between the Impilturian part of the Great Dale and Damara becomes quickly clear to a visitor through the people he or she meets. Descendants of the Turami make up the majority of the population in most of the rest of the Great Dale. In Lenchford, less than 60% of the people have Turami names. The rest of the population stems from hard-working immigrant families from many corners of Faerûn, the kind of folk typical for the Kingdom of Damara which begins in the middle of the Lench River at Lenchford.

There is absolutely no animosity between Turami descendants and immigrants from elsewhere in Lenchford, but there is some separation and distance. The Turami-rooted still call themselves Freemen of the Great Dale and often do voluntary service with the Freemen in the rest of the Dale outside of Damara's borders.

The immigrant population tends to look upon the Great Dale outside of Damara and Impiltur as being a primitive, illiterate, instable, anarchistic and even dangerous frontier to the East, a land with which they have little or nothing common. The idea that Lenchford is a part of the Great Dale - even though it is a part of Damara and the Bloodstone Kingdom - has not taken root with them. They view themselves as being more the type of folk one finds in the rest of Damara or in Impiltur to the southwest.

The true Dalesmen in Lenchford have difficulty understanding this viewpoint. Historically, Lenchford has been victim to the same hobgoblin attacks and the same Gallist dragon attacks as other parts of the Western Great Dale and the village has relied heavily not only upon Impiltur but also upon the Freemen for their defense.

Modern day Lenchford is protected by a volunteer city watch that belongs to the Freemen's militia of the Great Dale, and many younger members of the Lenchford Freemen have done volunteer service against the Gallists in the Central and Eastern Dale. Although immigrant villagers from elsewhere in Faerûn are willing to financially subsidize the local Freemen's watch, few volunteer for service. In contrast, almost all Turami descendants in Lenchford of the proper age are active in the Freemen.

The organization is divided into six teams. Each tenday, three of the six teams have duty, done in three, daily eight-hour shifts. Six men work each shift. Three co-commanders - the dwarven master smith Devit mac Turrn, wainwright Orthric Tenbuster and master tanner Eino Gurdjeff each command two of the six teams. One of the three commanders is on duty at all times. Interestingly, the command does not reflect the tendencies of the population as a whole. Only Gurdjeff is of Turami origin. Tenbuster and the dwarf Turrn both are immigrants.

Additional protection is available from the small detachment of the Bloodstone Riders, commanded by Heathvynga Elgundsdóttir, a native daughter of Lenchford. The village also can turn to the detachment of the Sword of Impiltur on the south bank of the Lench for aid in time of need. Such help has been specifically authorized by the Impilturian command in Ilmwatch, when the Damaran commander requests it.

Throughout most of its history, Lenchford has been content to remain Damaran. However, more than 200 years after Baron Donlewis convinced the folk of Lenchford to join Damara, when the Vaasan witch king Zhengyi overran the Damaran kingdom, the villagers petitioned the Impilturian queen Sambryl to become a part of her kingdom. She reluctantly declined, being unwilling to annex territory of a befriended nation, even if it was at the time coming under the thumb of a ruthless lich tyrant.

Impiltur did make clear to the villagers that if Zhengyi's minions marched upon Lenchford, the kingdom of Imphras would evacuate every resident who wanted to flee and seal the border at the Lench, warding off any attempt by the Witch King's followers to cross into Impiltur.

It should be mentioned that Zhengyi's influence never reached as far south as Lenchford. In the Year of the Spur (1348 DR), the citizens of Lenchford raised enough money, with substantial financial help from the Impilturian royal treasury in Lyrabar, to purchase sufficient quarried stone from Timbertown to build a small wall around their village, which was completed in the Year of the Bridle (1349 DR). Impiltur viewed the fortification of Lenchford and the village's readiness to stand against Zhengyi as a first line of the Impilturian defense against the Witch King.

With Impiltur's help, the ford also was fortified into a measurable hurdle for any supporters of the Witch King who might attempt to dominate Merchants Run. The Lench flows into a chute above the old ford and drops about 4 feet/120 cm into the fordable shallows. The fast flowing water of the ford always had made it necessary for riders to carefully guide their horses across, to avoid a fall.

After crossing the old ford, Merchants Run quickly zigzagged up the 4 foot/120 cm rise in the land and then ran on to the northwest along the drop, shown by the contour lines on the village map. While the villagers of Lenchford built their wall in the Year of the Bridle, Impilturian workers from Ilmwatch were busy constructing a double drawbridge above the end of the Lench's chute at the end of the drop where the water spread into the shallows that made the ford.

The unusual construction really consists of two half drawbridges that meet in the middle of the Lench and rest upon a stone supporting wall the Impilturians built there. The double drawbridge gives both Lenchford and the Impilturians the ability to raise their side of the bridge, closing the crossing.

Once the drawbridge was finished, the Impilturian workers rerouted the path of Merchants Run to the bridge and then dredged the old ford, making it impossible to cross the Lench in the Lenchford area by any means other than the bridge. Once that work was completed, the Impilturians completed their small border garrison on the southeast bank of the river, which still is in use today, and they built a 20-foot/6m high defensive wall along their side of the Lench for 500 feet/150m in both directions, up and downstream.

It would have been relatively easy for Impiltur to evacuate Lenchford's population into its own lands and then seal its border against an invasion at the Lench, but it never came to that, and in the years after Zhengyi's fall and Gareth Dragonsbane's coronation as monarch of the Bloodstone Kingdom, the defensive wall on the Impilturian bank was torn down.

After Zhengyi's minions assassinated Baron Donlevy the Old in Polten's baronial seat of Trailsend, the citizens of Lenchford closed their village to emissaries of the barony, declaring itself independent. On the few occasions when Zhengyi's minions showed up at Lenchford's gate, they simply vanished. Under the alderman's orders, they were taken to the cells beneath the town council's chamber and beheaded there.

When emissaries of Donlevy's successor, pretend cousin Zorth who had been put in power by Zhengyi, came to Lenchford, they were denied entry to the village, being told that Lenchford had declared its independence and no longer was a part of Damara or the Barony of Polten.

Theoretically, the usurper Baron Zorth in Trailsend as well as Zhengyi could have sent troops to Lenchford and erased the town from the maps of Faerûn, but it was too small and remote to be worth the effort, and such a southward march might well have brought Impiltur into the Damaran struggle against the Witch King. Thus, Zhengyi's dark and sinister hand never succeeded in reaching into the Bloodstone Kingdom's only settlement truly in the Great Dale.

Lenchford survived Zhengyi's reign in Vaasa with less difficulty than most other parts of Damara, although it suffered severely from the collapse of the bloodstone market, and disguised assassins in Zhengyi's service did succeed in slaying two of the rebellious aldermen who ruled the city during the Damaran interregnum.

After Zhengyi's fall at the hands of Sir Gareth and his companions in the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR), Baron Donlevy the Young, then only 14 years old, was returned to Trailsend by the Tellerth druids of Rawlinswood who had hidden and sheltered him. The pretender Zorth was forced to step aside in favor of the blood heir, but Zorth was retained as an advisor to the youthful baron, a fact that stuck in the craw of Lenchford's citizens, leading them to continue to maintain their declaration of independence.

During the year after Zhengyi's fall, both Spysong and the Twilight Riders, in Sir Gareth's service, visited Lenchford several times, reawakening old Damaran loyalties and building among the people staunch loyalty to Sir Gareth.

Zorth knew his days were numbered. After he skipped town, Baron Donlevy the Young proclaimed his support for Sir Gareth in the Year of the Turret. Alderman Denneth Bekin of Lenchford, a friend of both the Twilight Riders and Spysong, then urged the folk to yield their claim of independence and to throw their support instead to the young baron, arguing that this would help bring Sir Gareth to the Damaran throne.

Today, Lenchford again is a full-fledged village of the Barony of Polten, loyal to both Baron Donlevy the Young in Trailsend, Damaran Prince Quillan in Heliogabalus and the Bloodstone King Gareth Dragonsbane. The local administrator of the baron is Alderman Hulkyng Tarnstjúpsonur, who was elected to succeed Bekin upon his death of old age in the Year of the Gauntlet (1369 DR).

Tarnstjúpsonur is fully loyal to his baron, his prince and his king, but he also is strongly but unwittingly influenced by agents of the Iron Throne. As alderman, it is Tarnstjúpsonur's job to issue by edict the local ordinances that steer the day-to-day life of Lenchford. He also presides as acting judge over minor criminal and civil cases, but trials of more serious cases are conducted in the baronial seat of Trailsend.

Much of Lenchford's modern economy is found well outside of the village proper. It also is beyond the bounds of our village map. The lands east of the village along the north bank of the river to the eaves of Rawlinswood are fertile and make for prosperous farming for the folk of Lenchford. The village also is a center for cattle ranching and is the main source of mutton for northeastern Impiltur and the western Great Dale as well as for Halfling Downs, Tellerth and Lenchford itself in Damara.

There are five large family ranching operations in Lenchford. In the winter months, young calves are raised in the village ranch barns. In spring, they are driven westward into the Damaran and Impilturian range lands between the foothills of the Earthspurs and the Lench to graze. Cabins are set up on the range, and the ranchers and their cattlemen spend the warm months there, driving the grown steers back to Lenchford in late autumn for slaughter.

The sheep raisers of Lenchford use the raw and less fertile grasslands west of Merchants Run between Lenchford and Impilturian Mulltown for grazing. Long-term grazing rights were acquired by the Lenchford farmers from the Impilturian crown nearly a century ago and are due for re-negotiation in the Year of the Risen Elfkin (1375 DR).

The shepherds employed by the Lenchford sheep farmers live during the warm season in the grasslands, sleeping in mule-drawn, enclosed wagons and moving from one grazing area to the next with their flock and their dogs.

The lives of cattlemen on the range and shepherds on the prairie are not without their dangers. Cattle rustling bandits, bands of goblins from the Earthspurs and even wild animals sometimes bring danger and death, however, the farmers of the village banded together years ago in the Lenchford Cattlemen's and Shepherd's League, which hires several bands of experienced mercenaries to ride the ranges and prairies to protect the men they have working there.

In summer, sheep farmers travel with workers out to their flocks to do the annual shearing. However, beyond the work done at home by farmers' wives, nothing is done with the shorn wool in Lenchford. Instead, it is transported to Ilmwatch and Heliogabalus for sale on the open textile markets.

Both cattle and sheep are driven out of the village in late Tarsakh and early Mirtul. Sheep are brought in for slaughter in late Eleint and the cattle are driven into Lenchford in late Marpenoth to be slaughtered, in both cases at the Lenchford Slaughterhouse and Tannery, which has smoking, curing and meat packing facilities. Some of the mutton and beef is packed on a short-term basis in brine barrels and rushed to Heliogabalus for sausage making before the curing process is completed. However, most of the meat is smoked or cured and sent to Ilmwatch and Heliogabalus for resale.

A sufficient number of animals are slaughtered year round to take care of the village's needs for fresh beef and mutton, and many households have a barn wing on their houses where pigs are raised, which they either butcher themselves or have butchered at the slaughterhouse.

The hides and skins of slaughtered cattle and sheep are processed at the Lenchford Slaughterhouse and Tannery, which also stores sacks of shorn wool that have not yet been taken to market. From Mirtul until Eleint, when the animals are on the range or grazing the fallow grasslands, and again from Nightal through Ches, the plant is busy making Lenchford's air putrid with tanning operations upon the dried cattle hides taken at slaughter.

Tanned leather from Lenchford is sold not only in the Great Dale, Damara and Impiltur but also throughout the Inner Sea area. Most of the tanned leather is sold on the market of Heliogabalus or shipped to Ilmwatch and then taken to Hlammach's market by Impilturian merchants.

Some of Damara's bloodstone is transported down the Great Imphras all the way into Impilturian Traders Bay by raft. However, the dangers of bandits and monsters along the wild running river beneath the foothills of the Earthspurs combined with the organized crime on Traders Bay has caused the amount of rafting to diminish substantially from what it had been before Zhengyi's time.

Most Damaran bloodstone now is transported from Trailsend on Lake Mogador down Merchants Run to Lenchford and then on across the Impilturian border to Ilmwatch where it tends to be loaded on ship. Some of the bloodstone sails from there out onto Easting Reach and the Sea of Fallen Stars to destinations beyond. However, most is taken by ship to the Impilturian port city of Hlammach, where it is stored and then sold and shipped by Impilturian merchants to end buyers, more often than not under the clandestine guiding hand of the Iron Throne.

The two biggest purveyors of bloodstone in Heliogabalus, the Royal Damaran Bloodstone Trust, which belongs to the Damaran crown, and the Heliogabalus Cooperative, which belongs to the Iron-Throne-influenced Damaran Merchants League, both have heavily guarded regional branch offices and warehouses in Lenchford. Royal Damaran stores only bloodstone in its warehouses. The cooperative stores a wide variety of wares including bloodstone. In both cases, the warehouses hold material to be offered on the market in Hlammach.

There are other commercial activities in Lenchford as well. The New Iljak Lumberworks produces building wood, although on a much smaller scale than in nearby Timbertown, and the Bloodstone Inn produces cheese wheels, which are sold far beyond the village's walls.

The village also has a grain and oil mill, a smithy and other facilities. The question of a favored inn is a divided issue in Lenchford. Those who prefer lager beer tend to cross the river and visit the Lenchford Inn on the Impilturian side. Those who like the halfling-brewed wheat beer offered in the Bloodstone Inn tip their evening tankard within the village walls.

There are no temples in Lenchford, although there once was a small one to Waukeen, but the building now houses Talveig's Provisions and Turja's Fabrics. There are some private shrines to various gods. Halflings coming to Lenchford can visit a small shrine to Yondalla in the Bloodstone Inn. However, there are no clerics or magi within the village.

Those needing a cleric's aid may be able to gain help from Sister Gunda, a druidess of Chauntea whose grove is by the upper mill pond a bit upstream of the village. In times of need, the village also can solicit help from whatever junior wizard or war priest is serving at the moment with the Wand of Impiltur in the Impilturian garrison across the river from Lenchford.

Adventure Hook in Lenchford

Rustlers, Bandits and Monsters: There is relatively little trouble in Lenchford, but when it does come, it often involves rustlers, bandits or monsters making trouble for the cattlemen east and west of the road. Bloodstone Riders Commander Elgundsdóttir could give the PCs a contract to track down and destroy such foes.

Map of Lenchford

1 - Damaran Gate. The gate always is manned by two hired guards, human male and female, AL: various good, Warrior 1. The gate is made of stone, with two wooden doors, each 10 feet/3m high and wide. The gate is closed from sunset to sunrise but will be opened to admit legitimate travelers. It remains open during the daylight hours.

2 - Heliogabalus Cooperative – A branch office of this quickly growing coster, with headquarters in Heliogabalus. The cooperative is the trading coster of the great Damaran Merchants League, which has a monopoly on almost all goods exported out of Damara except for bloodstone. The Bloodstone Mines in the Damaran Bloodstone Pass are under government control and are marketed by the Royal Damaran Bloodstone Trust. Most bloodstone mined elsewhere in the Damaran Galenas is sold by the cooperative. The parent Damaran Merchants League is not a front for any other organization, but many of the member merchants have ties, sometimes unwittingly, to the Iron Throne. It can be assumed that the Throne has an estimable influence on the decisions of the league and the cooperative, and it no doubt gleans a share of profits from both. Tinder Newton is the branch manager in Lenchford. The compound always is guarded by a walking patrol of six guards, human male, AL: various, Warrior 4-8. The warehouses usually are filled with valuable merchandise.

3 - Royal Damaran Bloodstone Trust - The Lenchford office checks and controls cargoes of bloodstone being transported into Impiltur and the Great Dale. The Damaran government operates royal Damaran. Royal Damaran is the exclusive purveyor of bloodstone from the Bloodstone Mines of Bloodstone Pass in Damara. Randall Delton is the Lenchford manager. The warehouses usually are filled with bloodstone. Eight private guards, human male and female, AL: various good, one sergeant Fighter 8, 7 Warrior lvls 4-8, patrol the grounds constantly.

4 - Devit mac Turrn, Master Smith. The emigrant Earthfast dwarf from the Impilturian mountains, age 262, AL: LG, Expert 10, Fighter 8**,** is a master smith who handles weapon-, armor- and blacksmithing. He has two human male journeymen smiths, AL: various, Expert 1, and four human male apprentices, AL: various, Commoner 1, working for him. Because of his diversification, he can produce high quality work but not master weapons or armor. Turrn is one of three men in Lenchford who takes turns commanding and training the volunteer watch. He fights with a warhammer +4 and wears enchanted dwarven chain mail +3.

5 - New Iljak Lumberworks. An immigrant from the Vilhon Reach whose name has been lost with time built Lenchford's first sawmill in the Year of Auril's Absence (1049 DR) and named it after his old hometown. Subsequent owners, including modern day Erik Skógursögur, human male, age 58, AL: NG, master sawyer, Expert 5, have seen no reason to change it. The sawmill produces timber and lumber for local use and in Tellerth. It does not compete with the huge sawmill in Timbertown.

6 - Orthric Tenbuster, Wainwright. Tenbuster, human male, age 57, AL: NG, Expert 5, Warrior 6, builds wagons and sleds of all sizes upon order. He has three human male journeymen wainwrights and two human male apprentices working for him. Tenbuster is one of three men in Lenchford who takes turns commanding and training the volunteer watch.

7- Bloodstone Trail Inn, Cheese Dairy and Brewhouse. Dera Wamby, halfling female, age 59, AL:CG, Expert 7, a native of the Waukeshire in the Barony of Bloodstone, fled southwards with her family after the rise of Zhengyi in Vaasa and built this complex in the Year of the Spur (1348 DR). She continues to run the house today, along with her children and grandchildren and other relatives. Her eldest son Temnar Wamby, halfling male, age 34, AL: NG, Expert 7, is the brewmaster. His *Yondalla's Milk* wheat beer also is sold in Tellerth. When Dera's husband, Wilmar, died in the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR), her eldest granddaughter, Wilma Wamby, halfling female, age 30, AL; CG, Expert 5, took over the cheese dairy. The *Bloodstone Wheels* that she (and before her, her grandfather) produces are the inn's real main product. The wheels, similar to Swiss Emmentaler but darker yellow in color and stronger in taste are popular along all of the Inner Sea region, particularly in Impiltur. Although the *Bloodstone Trail* calls itself an inn, it has only four relatively small single guest rooms, priced at five silver shiners. However, the inn does offer the best food in town, with cold plates running from three to five shiners and hot meals between five and nine shiners. A quart/liter tankard of *Yondalla's Milk* costs two copper bites. No other drinks are offered.

8 - Nathan's Livery. Tack, saddles, reins, horses, donkeys, mules and just about anything else needed for single, group or caravan travel outside of sleds and wagons are available here. The owner is Nathan Twining, human male, age 33, AL:NG, Expert 1, who inherited the business from his father. It has been in the family for four generations. Nathan says his family originally migrated to Lenchford from Tsurlagol in the Vast. Prices are 20% above PHB.

9 - Talveig's Provisions and Turja's Fabrics. Talveig Rugursdóttir, human female, age 39, AL:NG, Expert 4, and her daughter, Turja Kandursdóttir, human female, age 20, AL:NG, Expert 1, run this food store and bakery. Local smoked, cured and dried meats, local produce in season and wool goods made by Turja and the women of the village are sold here with prices at about 10% above those in the PHB. Farm wives in the outlying area around Lenchford knit woolen clothing in winter and sell it to Turja for resale.

10 - Bloodstone Riders Outpost. This small garrison is a permanent installation with 12 rangers, human male and female, AL:NG, Ranger 1-6, under the command of Heathvynga Elgundsdóttir, human female, age 39, AL: NLG, Ranger 9. At any given time, a patrol of four soldiers usually is under way in the Lenchford area, with another four on duty in the garrison and the remaining four off duty. When necessary, Elgundsdóttir will send soldiers out to track down bandits, but when there is trouble, she prefers to hire adventurers passing through the area to take on such task instead. There also always is one inspector of the Royal Damaran Customs on duty here to control what moves into and out of the kingdom. Customs taxes are charged for items that originate outside of the Great Dale and Impiltur, but both the communities of the Dale and Impiltur can import products into Damara without tax.

11 - Dale Gate. The gate always is manned by two hired guards, human male or female, AL: various good, Warrior 1. The gate is made of stone, with two wooden doors, each 10 feet/3m high and wide. The gate is kept open except in time of attack.

12 - Border Bridge. This double drawbridge was built by Impiltur in the Year of the Spur (1348 DR) as a protection against Zhengyi the Witch King. At the same time, Impiltur banned the use of the old ford, which is just below the bridge to the southwest. The Impilturian side controls half of the drawbridge, the Damaran side other half. The two ends of the bridge rest on a large brick support in the middle of the Lench. Neither side, except for brief maintenance work, ever has cut off the bridge crossing.

13 - Impilturian Garrison. 12 soldiers of the Sword of Impiltur, all human male, AL: various good, Fighter 1-5 and Warrior 1-3, are stationed permanently here under the command of Sir Tilinyr, human male, age 35, AL: LG, Paladin of Ilmater 6. There always is one low level (1-3) mage from the Wand of Impiltur on duty. In times of need, Sir Tilinyr will lend the wizard's services to Captain Elgundsdóttir, commander of the Damaran garrison across the river. At any given time, a patrol of four soldiers usually is under way in the area between Lenchford and Mulltown, with another four on duty in the garrison and the remaining four off duty. When necessary, Sir Tilinyr will send soldiers out to track down bandits, but when there is trouble, he prefers to hire adventurers passing through the area to take on such task instead. There also always is one inspector of the Royal Impilturian Customs on duty here to control what passes into and out of the kingdom. Customs taxes are charged for items that originate outside of Damara, but Damarans can import products into Impiltur without tax.

14 - The Old Ford. Impiltur banned the use of the ford after constructing the bridge in the Year of the Spur (1348 DR). Both sides uphold that ban now, but it's a rather theoretical issue, because no one really is interested in fording the shallow but swift water of the Lench below the bridge when the bridge is there.

15 - Lenchford Inn. Although it's technically not in Lenchford and by no means within the Kingdom of Damara, this old but still valued inn was the first structure raised at the old *Lench Ford* and thus the beginning of the village. The inn is outside the village wall, but the folk of Lenchford still view it as being a part of their village, even if it is on the Impilturian side of the river. Both kingdoms agreed to draw the border in this area down the middle of the Lench. Anyone who wants to spend the night in Lenchford - except for those who book the four beds in the *Bloodstone Inn* - needs to book on this side of the river. There are no other accommodations in Lenchford proper. The current owner is Sergeant Seamus, a retired non-commissioned officer of the Sword of Impiltur, human male, age 62, AL:LG, Fighter lvl 8. He brews his own house beer, a lager which he calls *Imphras' Foamy Mustachio*. However, to Seamus' consternation, most people use its nickname, *Imphras Suds*. The inn has a zig-zag extension to the rear where the Merchants Run ran before the bridge was built. It contains six double rooms at 9 silver shiners per person per night and 10 singles at 1 gold taler. The rooms are secure and comfortable, and they're warm in winter. The inn offers good country cooking, with cold plates and boards from 2 to 5 shiners and hot meals from 4 shiners to a gold taler. The only drink offered is Imphras Suds at 2 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard.

16 - Lower Mill Pond. The more recent of the two millponds, this one was dug to build a water reserve for the Lench Valley Grail and Oil Mill. The bridge just above the pond actually is the top of a dam gate.

17 - Cattle Ranches. These five large ranches have been in their current families' ownership for many years. The plots in the village proper are only the ranch houses and the winter barns and grazing yards, where calves are kept which are taken to the range the following summer.

18 - Lench Valley Grain and Oil Mill. An immigrant from the Moonsea named Alder Dunn built this mill in the Year of the Great Harvests (1325 DR). Before that time, flour and oil had to be brought to Lenchford from the other communities of Merchants Run. Alder Dunn’s grandson, Leighton Dunn, human male, age 32, AL:NG, Expert 4, owns the mill today. The mill produces wheat, rye and spelt flour and oil from field seeds. It also makes barley malt for the two inns. Dunn employs a journeyman miller and two apprentices.

19 - Lenchford Slaughterhouse and Tannery. This facility is owned by the Lenchford Cattlemen's and Shepherd's League. There are many cattle ranches in the Great Dale on the Merchants Run, on both sides of the Impilturian-Damaran border. All of the meat and hides from these ranches are brought to the slaughterhouse and tannery, as is shorn wool, which is stored there. The tanning operation often leaves a miserable smell over the village, but the folk has learned to grin and bear it, saying, *"It's the smell of bread and butter."* The facility is run for the league by master tanner Eino Gurdjeff, human male, age 44, AL:NG, Expert 6, Fighter 4, who also is one of the three co-commanders of the volunteer watch.

20 - Downs Gate. Two hired guards, human male and female, AL: various good, Warrior 1, always man the gate. The gate is made of stone, with two wooden doors, each 10 feet/3m high and wide. The gate is closed from sunset to sunrise but will be opened to admit legitimate travelers. It remains open during the daylight hours.

21 - Millrace.

22 - Watergates. A portcullis can be dropped into the water from these gates, and the towers can accommodate eight archers each. Normally, the gates are opened and the towers are unmanned.

23 - Village Wall. Lenchford is protected by a relatively weak wall of stone brick from the quarry in Timbertown. The wall is only about a foot/30 cm thick and 20 feet/6m high. The towers can accommodate 6 archers each in time of need, but they usually are left unmanned.

Beyond the Map of Lenchford

Farms and Ranches - Farms and relatively large cattle ranches dot the rural lands surrounding Lenchford. The owners of the nearer ranches and farms live in houses in the village, and most of their hands tend to take room and board in private homes in the village when they're not working. The rest of the time, they usually live in bunk cabins attached to the stalls and barns in the countryside.

Upper Mill Pond and Druids Grove- When the New Iljak Lumberworks sawmill was built more than three centuries ago, the Lench diversion that fed the race which turned the waterwheel that powers the saws was cut more than a mile/almost 2 km northeast of the village. The mill pond was built a few hundred yards/meters past the diversion. The edge of the pond is planted today with trees, and farm fields and orchards surround it. Sister Gunda, the local druidess of Chauntea, makes her grove on the pond's banks, although she usually is under way in the countryside rather than being in the grove. There is a small shrine to Chauntea in the grove.

Cemetery - Until the Year of the Many Mists (1282 DR), the village cemetery was just northeast of the site of the lower mill pond, along the Merchants Run. Panicky villagers dug up the graves in that year and moved the remains to a new cemetery near the upper mill pond, after Lenchford was plagued for an entire summer with vampirism. By autumn, traces of the vampires had vanished, although no one in Lenchford knows the explanation for this. However, to this date, the village cemetery remains well outside of town.

Lenchford
Trailsend
Tellerth
Lench
(Spearingea)
Barony of Polten - Bloodstone Kingdom
Kingdom of Impiltar
Malltown
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Lenchford

Timbertown

Small town, Conventional, AL: LN, 800 gp limit. Assets: 38,000 gp. Population: 950; 98% human, 2% other. Authority figures: Deacon Tumbrar, human male, AL:LN, Alderman, Judge, Deputy Constable and Co-Tavernkeeper, Fighter Lvl 12 (see NPC descriptions, *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*); Tulpin Mary, Constable and Co-Tavernkeeper, halfelf female, AL:N, Constable, Ranger Lvl 14 (see NPC descriptions, *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*);; Important Characters: Badeye Tom, Evoker lvl 15, human male, AL:N(E), private wizard, (see NPC descriptions, *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*); Liefra Gardoldsdóttir, Cleric of Chauntea, lvl 4, human female, AL:NG; Doolin Kandel, human male, AL:CG, cleric of Tymora, lvl 2; Quarzbeard, dwarf male, AL:LN, quarry master, Exp 12, War 8; Rolf Skógarhöggsmadhur, human male, AL:NE, master sawyer, Druid (Herne the Hunter) 6, Exp 6; Gunda Malarisdóttir, human female, AL:LG, master miller, Exp 6; Ranik Kaflokssonur, human male, AL:LN, wainwright, Exp 6, War 2; Khizikhz, dwarf male, AL:LG, master weaponsmith, Exp 10, War 4; Darnik Galthungssonur, human male, AL:LN, blacksmith, Exp 4, War 2. Others: 12 deputy constables, human male and female, AL:LG and LN, War, lvls 1-5; 18 town guards, human male and female, AL:LG and LN, War, lvls 1-2; 350 lumberjacks and other civilians, human male and female, AL: LG, NG, LN, CG and CN, qualified as War, lvls 1-6. Taxation type: For villagers and transportation bearing cargo to or from the village: benevolent; for all others: Normal.

Timbertown began in the Year of the Singing Shards (1044 DR) as something of a rough-and-tumble lumberjack camp. In the more than 300 years that followed, it grew slightly more civilized, and in recent years, it also has gained a reputation for harsh but fair justice.

PC groups who come to Timbertown and get too heavy-handed well may end up facing the likes of Constable Tulpin Mary and the town alderman and judge, Deacon Tumbrar. If they wield magic against these two pinions of the law or otherwise seriously threaten them, they'll have to contend with Badeye Tom as well as a few hundred angry and tough lumberjacks.

Because the Game Master well may have to play the roles of the constable, the deacon and even Badeye Tom at some length, it is strongly suggested that one become thoroughly familiar in advance with the details for these NPCs listed in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

Lumbering and cattle farms are at the center of Timbertown's economy. The local penal colony also quarries a substantial amount of stone for construction. The town's main markets are in Damara and Impiltur, but rafts also transport lumber down the Vidurlækur and the Uth to the harbor of Uthmere. Timbertown is the largest logging center east of the Dragon Reach. Large wagons carry quality wood from Timbertown to Impiltur and Damara. Barges take the timber from Ilmwatch to markets all about the Inner Sea.

The wainwright, Ranik Kaflokssonur, produces quality wagons off all types as well as sledges. He accepts contracts for small wagons for private use, and he builds the medium-sized wagons used to transport lumber and the large logging wagons used to transport raw timber into Damara

Most folk who live in Timbertown are tough and hard working but also hard laughing people. They keep some distance from strangers, particularly those who dabble in magic and religion or who bear powerful weapons, at least until they have shown of what fiber they are. Outsiders who are rangers have the easiest time gaining acceptance among the locals, followed by priests, druids, paladins and monks of Silvanus, Chauntea, Mielikki and Ilmater.

Enough outsiders with ill intentions have visited Timbertown over the years to justify the town's caution with bragging warriors and careless magi. Fire from dragon attacks ravaged Timbertown also in the Year of the Black Wind (1262 DR) and the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR).

Not only hobgoblins number among the town's prime enemies, but also humans who murder, mishandle women, deal in slavery, steal horses, rustle cattle, rob or burgle. Murderers, rapists, slavers, rustlers and horse thieves say their farewells with the snap of a breaking neck on the gallows. Robbers, burglars and thieves and thieves can expect to spend several years at backbreaking labor in the town stone quarry's penal colony. Fairness is of high importance in dealing with accused criminals; mercy for its own sake is rare.

The majority of the residents of Timbertown, like the rest of those in Uthving, Wanneth and the farmlands between Rawlinswood and the Merchants Run, Easting Reach and the Trade Route, are worshippers of Silvanus and Chauntea, with Mielikki and Ilmater also having respectable followings.

There are a cleric of Tymora and two junior priests each of Hoar and Tyr in Timbertown, the latter by invitation of the alderman and judge, Deacon Tumbrar. The clerics of Hoar serve as the town's prosecutors, the clerics of Tyr as public defenders. Any suspect who faces the deacon upon his judge's bench in trial has a right to counsel by one of the priests. However, none of the four has succeeded in winning much of a following for his deity in Timbertown, and there are neither temples nor shrines to Tyr or Hoar.

There are secret shrines to some other gods in Timbertown, but this is difficult to confirm. However, the master sawyer Rolf Skógarhöggsmadhur, who claims to be an escapee from the Gallist village of Kilstad in Rawlinswood, maintains a secret shrine to Herne the Hunter in a magically hidden chamber beneath his office in the sawmill. Skógarhöggsmadhur in truth is a Gallist spy.

Timbertown is one of few localities in the western Great Dale that deals with the followers of the lich Harbet Gall. However, contact between the Gallist Hunters of Herne in Great Boar and the Freemen of Timbertown is limited. Wagon and sleighs transport wood and meat from Great Boar to Timbertown, where they are exchanged for materials needed in Great Boar.

Only small, trusted crews of teamsters and raftsmen bring wares from the hunters' settlements to Timbertown and Uthving. These men always are be close mouthed, remaining among themselves and rooming together when in town. The Freemen, in turn, usually avoid them, and there seldom has been conflict.

Timbertown and Uthving both have local ordinances prohibiting aggressive behavior. People who have ignored these ordinances and attempted to cause problems with travelers from the hunters' enclaves have found themselves doing hard labor for their efforts. Keeping peace long has been the first commandment in the Freemen's areas of the Western Dale.

When the loggers from Great Boar bring timber to town, they negotiate their prices and close their sales in Skógarhöggsmadhur's office in the sawmill. The secret True Druid then passes on all relevant information he has gained to them, and he makes his secret shrine available to them.

The Law in Timbertown

Deacon Tumbrar is the law in Timbertown. His laws have their roots in his background as a former paladin of Tyr, but unlike the priests of Tyr's church, Tumbrar places fairness above the letter of the law. He also believes that the law should be easily understandable. This philosophy is a matter of concern, above all to Tyr's clerics but also to some of the more meditative folk in Timbertown. As long as the deacon lives, they argue, his somewhat arbitrary system of law may indeed lead to truly fair justice, but once he's no longer in control, his laws beg for abuse.

The law in Timbertown has several peculiarities, one of which makes it a haven for criminals wanted elsewhere who have reformed, at least for the time being. Deacon Tumbrar does not trust anyone else's legal system to produce what he views as being fair justice; therefore, he refuses to turn wanted criminals found in Timbertown over to authorities from elsewhere.

He is, however, willing to put such persons on trial in Timbertown, applying Timbertown's laws to the case. There have been few instances where this willingness has been put to the test, however, but Impiltur recently has begun taking the deacon up on his offer, and in those cases that have been tried, the Kingdom of Imphras has not been dissatisfied with his verdicts.

Deacon Tumbrar also has an unusual relationship with bounty hunters. Impiltur and Damara frown upon bounty hunting. Under most circumstances, it is illegal in the two kingdoms. The deacon also has declared bounty hunting within Timbertown illegal. However, he provides a safe haven for headhunters with Damara and Impilturian contracts in Timbertown.

He and Tulpin Mary also hire bounty hunters at times to bring fugitives back to the town for trial. Moreover, it is said that the deacon has befriended many a headhunter, reportedly including the famed Thayan Sleyvas, who brought down Baroness Sylvia of Damaran Ostel.

Nonetheless, the deacon's law prohibits the forceful capture of anyone in Timbertown by anyone but Tulpin Mary and those she deputizes and hires, except in times of need. Therefore, any bounty hunter who attempts to bring in a fugitive within Timbertown may find him- or herself being convicted of slavery and dying on the gallows, or at a minimum doing several years hard labor in the stone quarry.

Deacon Tumbrar also insists that both sides of a case be argued fully in his court, before he reaches a verdict. A few years ago, when two traveling priests of Hoar attempted to convert the deacon to their faith, he declined but then offered them positions as public prosecutors. He then sent a challenge to the temple of Tyr in Ilmwatch, offering public defender positions to any two priests of Tyr. Not to be outdone by Hoar's church, Ilmwatch accepted.

The laws of Timbertown are simple if vague. They are posted at both gates to the town, and the guards will tell newcomers to read them. Game Masters should show these laws to any PCs entering Timbertown.

The Laws of Timbertown

It is forbidden to take the life of another except in self-defense. The willful taking of another's life is punished by hanging.

It is forbidden to use violence against other persons except in self defense. The willful use of violence is punished by one to 30 years hard labor in the penal quarry. If the willful use of violence results in the death of another person, even if unintentional, the punishment is hanging.

It is forbidden to force another person to act against his or her will or to hold another person against his or her will except to prevent a crime. Illegal coercion and confinement are punishable by up to 30 years hard labor. Slavery or the coerced movement of another person against his or her will beyond the bounds of Timbertown are punished by hanging.

It is forbidden to rape or otherwise sexually abuse other persons. Such offenses are punished by hanging.

It is forbidden to steal the horse or other transport animal of another. Such theft is punished by hanging.

It is forbidden to steal the cattle, sheep or swine of another. Such theft is punished by hanging.

It is forbidden to steal the possessions of another. Such theft is punished by one to 30 years hard labor.

It is forbidden to cheat another. Such fraud is punished by one to 30 years hard labor.

It is forbidden to otherwise do wrong to another person. Such wrongdoing is punished by one to 30 years hard labor.

Adventure Hooks in Timbertown

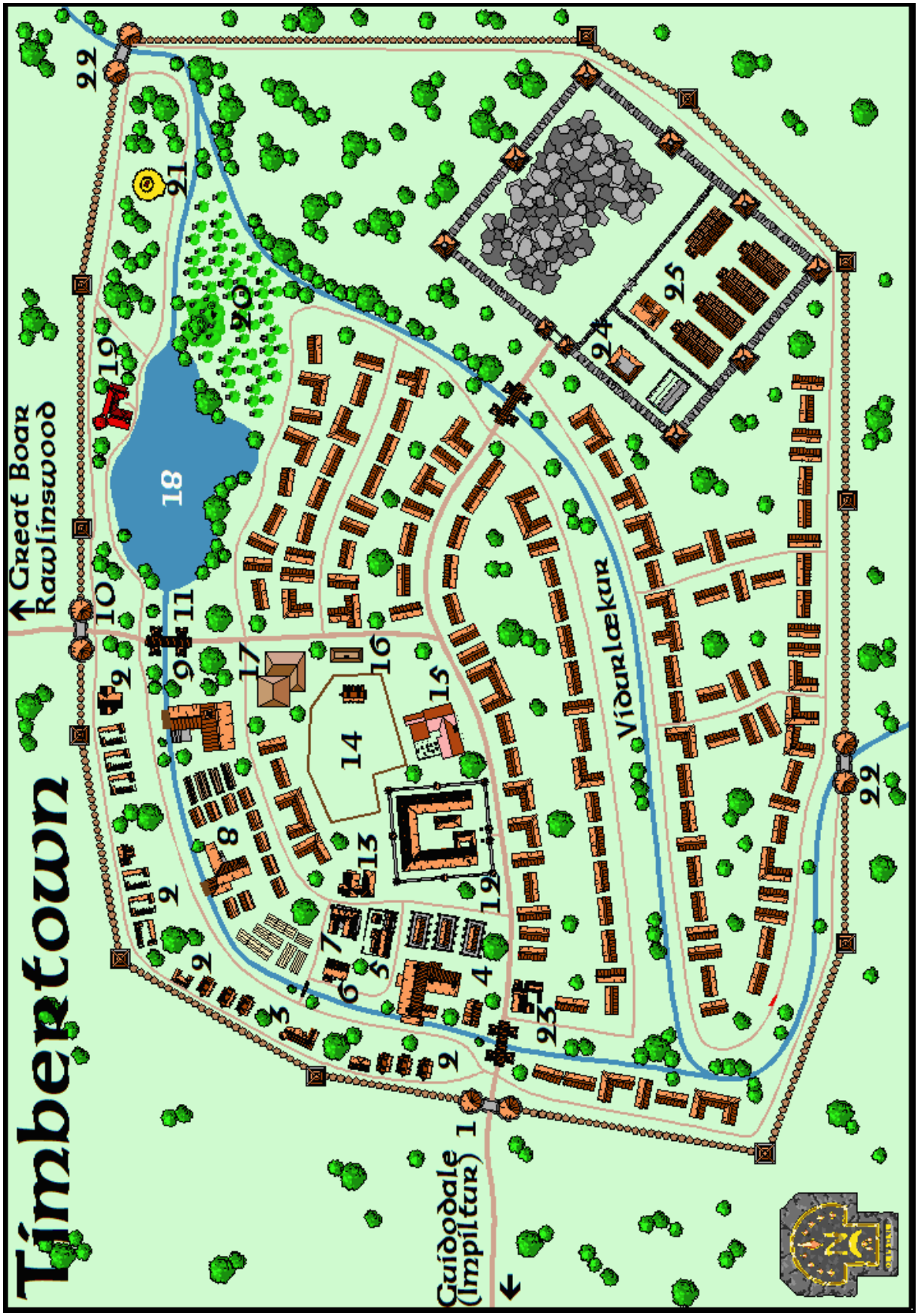
Also see the general adventure hooks for Merchants Run above.

Religion: Deacon Tumbrar's aversion to and disrespect for the church of Tyr, its priests and paladins and paladins in general may lead to conflicts between him and the party.

Afoul of the Law: The lumberjacks of Timbertown enjoy a good barroom brawl, but they also know where the line is between an enjoyable fight and a deadly fight. The PCs may not have that keen a sense for how far they can go.

Catching the Spy: The PCs might discover that master sawyer Rolf Skógarhöggsmadhur is an agent of the Gallists.

Wanted Clockmaker: The PCs may find out that Dieth Tennell (see *13 - Toolmaker* below) is wanted for murder in Neverwinter. Deacon Tumbrar will not be willing to do anything about it. A PC from Neverwinter might know who Dieth is.


Timbertown
Great Boar
Rawlinswood
Gaidodale
(Impiltar)
Vidarlækar
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Timbertown

The Map of Timbertown

1 - Merchants Gate. Four guards always man the gate.

2 - Cattle Farms.

3 - Timber Range Slaughterhouse. The master butcher is Tarslok Nurdyngssonur, hm, AL:LN, Exp 1.

4 - Vidurlækur Grain & Oil Mill. The lady miller, Gunda Malarisdóttir, stone grinds grain and hammer presses oil from grain seeds.

5 - Weaponsmith. The dwarven master smith Khizikhz forges weapons of highest quality and repairs weapons of worthy quality. His prices for new weapons are double those in the PHB.

6 - Wainwright. Ranik Kaflokssonur makes wagons and sleds of all sizes.

7 - Blacksmith. Darnik Galthungssonur specializes in logging and farming equipment but takes on all other metalwork except for the manufacture and repair of weapons and armor.

8 - Sawmill. Rolf Skógarhöggsmadhur, the sawyer, is well respected in Timbertown. No one in the town is aware of his activity as a Gallist spy. The mill can turn out all imaginable types of timber and lumber including masts for sailing ships on Easting Reach.

9 - Mill Bridge.

10 - Druids' Gate. Four guards always man the gate.

11 - Mill Race.

12 - Garrison. This is the headquarters for the 12 deputy constables and the 18 members of the town watch. It also is the training center for the 350 townsmen who comprise the town defense force. Some 30 townsmen are in training at any given time. The stockade also is in the garrison. Prosecutors Regeth Druun, cleric of Hoar lvl 3, human male, AL:LG and Marana Deskin, cleric of Hoar lvl 1, human female, AL:LN, and Public Defenders Tamnimbra, cleric of Tyr lvl 4, human female, AL:LG, and Rashilraun, cleric of Tyr lvl 1, human male, AL:LG, all have offices and quarters in the garrison.

13 - Toolmaker. Dieth Tennell, human male, AL: LN(E), Exp 8, is a former maker of water clocks in Neverwinter. He makes precision tools in Timbertown, most of which are sold to artisans on Merchants Run or imported beyond. In a family feud over inheritances some 25 years ago, Dieth killed several members of his family, took as much of the family fortune with him as he could and fled. He still is on Lord Nasher's list of wanted fugitives, but Neverwinter is unaware that he is in Timbertown. If it were to become known, it is doubtful that Deacon Tumbrar would place Dieth, who is a respected citizen, on trial.

14 - Public Corral.

15 - Swamp Rose Inn. The *Swamp Rose* is the second largest inn in Timbertown. It's owned by Deacon Tumbrar and Tulpin Mary, and the deacon holds court in the inn's large public room. There are 10 double rooms at 7 silver shiners per person per night and 18 singles at 8 shiners a night. The deacon buys his beer from Paddy Durham at the Rawlinswood House and sells it at three copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Cold food runs from 3 to 6 shiners, hot food from 5 to 9 shiners. The quality of everything is about mid-level. Deacon Tumbrar and Tulpin Mary live in the northeast building of the complex.

16 - Merry Lumberjack Tavern. Doolin Kandel, a low level priest of Tymora, was passing through Timbertown with a band of little experienced adventurers when the previous owner of the Merry Lumberjack died unexpectedly. Deacon Tumbrar, who had hoped to establish a temple to Tymora and a shrine to Tempus in his town, interpreted Doolin's timely arrival as a sign from the goddess. He bought the Lumberjack and turned it over to Doolin, on the condition that the cleric remain in town and serve the goddess at the temple, which the deacon intends to make of the tavern.

The Lumberjack is a favorite watering hole for locals. It also tends to draw traveling adventurers, when they come to Timbertown. It has no accommodations, and all that's served is beer from the house brewery of the Rawlinswood House at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. A band of six wandering dwarves who once were at home in Damara recently arrived in town, under contract from the deacon, to expand the Lumberjack to the rear with a large hall that will serve as a gambling den and temple to Lady Luck.

17 - Rawlinswood House Inn. The Rawlinswood House is a comfortable inn with good food, fine accommodations and relatively high prices. Merchants coming to Timbertown usually stay there, but it also frequently plays host to groups of well-behaved adventurers, with the inclination more toward bands led by wizards and priests than those led by fighters or rogues. The innkeeper is Paddy Durham, halfling male, AL:N, Exp 4, a retired merchant from Guidodale. Paddy operates the inn with his family. His wife, Gilda, halfling female, AL:N, Exp 3, runs the kitchen. His son, Bardo, halfling male, AL:N, Exp 5, runs the brew house, which produces the only beer available in Timbertown. The 18 single rooms run 1 gold taler and 2 silver shiners per night. The 12 doubles cost 1 taler per person, per night. Hot meals cost between 8 silver shiners and 1 taler, 6 shiners. A bottle of Easting Reach wine runs between 2 and 10 talers. The house brew costs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard.

18 - Mill Pond.

19 - Badeye Tom's Complex. The precise definition of this complex is left open to the Game Master to match the needs of his campaign. Also see the description of Badeye Tom in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide.* The complex consists of an L-shaped mansion and a tower in the northwestern corner.

Badeye Tom took with him from Ilmwatch a substantial number of magical items, and it well may be that he has something your PCs want or need. It just as well may be that your PCs have something he wants or needs, and if so, he will be willing to trade. Tomylraun - Badeye Tom's real name - has become somewhat withdrawn from day-to-day affairs, although he will jump quickly back into them if Deacon Tumbrar or Tulpin Mary requests his help.

For the most part, however, he is deeply buried in his research, which focuses upon combining his evoker's art with physical mechanics to produce magical devices that defy counter-magic. He currently is working on a primitive magical rifle that does not yet work properly.

The prototype has no trigger; a small, magical blast sets the round, lead bullet in motion, which then speeds down the barrel. Tomylraun believes this combination of magic and physics will produce a weapon of high, killing accuracy that expends only a small amount of magical power. However, the gnomes who work with him do not yet understand the principles of tolling a barrel properly. Anything the PCs have or know that pertain to such matters will interest him.

He already works closely with the Gondsmen of Guidodale in this field. At any given time, one to three gnome illusionists of levels 4 to 8 who follow Gond's teachings may be found working with him in his towers. Those gnomes who work with him also have a degree of access to the school of evocation, having foresworn divination and necromancy.

Precisely what role they play in Tomylraun's research is unknown. There is speculation that they are in the tower to learn more about evocation in combination with physical mechanics, that they aid Tomylraun to a certain extent in his research and that they also use illusion - a school to which Badeye Tom has no access - to hide the secrets behind his magic.

The mansion is fully staffed with two cooks, a chief caretaker named Darnlyr, human male, AL:LN, Exp 4, four human servants of various non-evil alignments and six guards, also humans of non-evil alignments who are qualified as fighters, levels 5-8. Badeye Tom's staff is equipped with high-powered magical defensive devices, and scrying devices keep the entire complex under constant observation. All sensitive areas are protected with very dangerous magical traps, many of which are hidden through the gnomes' illusionary magic.

20 - Cemetery.

21 - Temple to Chauntea. Liefra Gardoldsdóttir is the only temple cleric.

22 - Watergates. Rafts can navigate the Vidurlækur in and out of Timbertown. Four guards, always man the water gates, just like the road gates.

23 - Westwood Inn. This rather modest inn was built by Tandas Hardby, human male, AL:NG, Exp 2, a native of Lenchford, in the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR). Hardby is the brother of Jerbin Harby, the Lenchford tailor (see the Lenchford description) who is a low level information gathering agent for the Iron Throne. Tandas Hardby knows nothing of the Iron Throne or his brother's affiliation with it, but Jerbin visits him once every tenday and gleans whatever scuttlebutt from his brother that he can. Tandas is considering building his own house brewery, but at present, he buys his beer from the Rawlinswood House. It sells for three copper bites a quart/liter tankard. The Westwood caters to travelers with modest demands. Food is simple but good. The rooms, all singles, are spartan but comfortable. They run 7 silver shiners a night. Cold meals cost 3 to 5 shiners, hot meals 4 to 7 shiners.

24. Timbertown Quarry. Quarzbeard (see above) runs this operation, with labor from the penal colony. Rock is quarried outside of Timbertown and transported here in heavy duty wagons to be cut by prisoners serving sentences at hard labor.

25. Timbertown Quarry Penal Colony. The barracks can house up to 150 prisoners. They usually hold less than 100. Prisoners are kept in riveted chains at all times. The chains are made in such a manner as to hobble the prisoners slightly but to interfere little with their work. When marching to work, the prisoners are chained together. There is a large iron ring in the center of the leg chains. After lights out, the prisoners sleep on hay-covered rock beds. A metal bar is run through the large holes in the center of the leg chains and locked in place to keep the prisoners from leaving their barracks. Quarters are uncomfortable but livable. Food is sufficient and the barracks are properly heated in winter. The prisoners always are watched by guards - both human and dwarf - who are qualified fighters of levels 4 to 8 and expert in the use of bows and crossbows.

D. The Trade Route

The road that passes through the two forests is called the *Dead End* by many of those who live upon it. The Trade Route may have been an important merchants' highway at some time in the distant past, but in the more than 600 years that civil war has raged in the Dale, it has led virtually nowhere. Supply wagons that take the eastern turn onto the Trade Route usually go no farther than Bezentil - a town which often has changed hands but always has marked the boundary to the areas in Harbet Gall's firm but fell grip.

Even if there were peace in the Dale, the Trade Route extends only as far as Kront in Ashanath. The market for caravans would be limited to those with something to sell to the town, whose residents would have modest wherewithal even in times of peace, to the barbarians of Narfell and to underdeveloped Rashemen, which already can be reached more easily over the Golden Way through Thesk to the south.

There doubtless is business to be done in all three places, but it would be specialized and limited, rather than being the kind of traffic that would turn the Trade Route into an *important* road of commerce. The main merchants whose wagons go beyond Bezentil today are traders wanting to do business with Nar tribesmen at the trade fair in Bildoobaris.

Harbet Gall has never shown interest in the barren, wind-blown lands of this nomadic folk. Gall's followers do allow wagons from foreigners (but not the folk of the Western Dale) to pass the border near Bezentil, and such traders then can travel on to Kront in Ashanath and head on to the trade fair unmolested. There is however one important exception: If the traders happen to be carrying items sought within Gall's domain, they usually are forced to sell the wares in Kront, rather than being allowed to market them in Bildoobaris.

The virtually closed border near Bezentil together with the fact that there is little wealth in the villages and settlements along the Trade Route results in little commercial traffic moving on the road. Instead, it is an usually wide farmers' and hunters' road that leaves Uthmere, passes through the small but prosperous dairy farming village of Wanneth and then continues through or bypasses several other hamlets, villages and ruins.

Bezentil was a small but important duchy in the days before the Gallist wars began. The dukes of Bezentil once ruled over the County of Vulddin as well as Skarlshofn, Ulfshofn, Gurshofn and Auststad, but the Hunters of Herne quickly took these settlements. The Gallists killed the last duke when they overran Bezentil in the Year of the Turning Wheel (937 DR). In the succeeding years, when Bezentil has been in the Freemen's hands, militia officers have ruled it.

Bezentil itself lies mostly in ruin today after having changed hands time and again throughout the 600 years of civil war. It currently is a Malarite stronghold control by Skith Tsornagar, High Huntmaster of the Beastlord. Bezentil no longer has an important commercial function. What remains of its economy is based upon hunting, meatpacking and smithing.

At times in its history, Bezentil has provided shelter for outlying farmers when the area was under attack, and it long has been an armed watchpost defending against invasion from the East or West, depending upon who is in control. Dender's Creek to the north is flooded for much of the year, making the swampy grasslands north of the Trade Route impossible to pass on horseback.

Although there is no conscription in the Freemen's part of the Great Dale much less a government capable of enforcing mandatory military service, most young men who grow up in the towns, villages and settlements along the Merchant's Run and the Trade Route tend to do their voluntary *Year in Bezentil*. That means a year of front duty, being stationed either in Vulddin or Bezentil, depending upon who is controlling Bezentil.

Most residents of the westernmost parts of the Dale know that their relative security is due only to the steadfastness of the settlers on the Trade Route, who have resisted Gall's attacks for centuries and usually have managed to hold the line somewhere between Bezentil and Vulddin.

This is much less the case with the Dalesmen of the coastal cities. New Sarshel's largely Sembian population has shown no interest in the conflict that brews primarily in the eastern reaches of the Great Dale, and until the Tuigan invasion in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), young men from Nyth and Ethdale were forced to serve in the militia of Telflamm, which ruled the two towns.

Since that time, both Nyth and Ethdale have asserted their independence again, and Telflamm is not willing to wage war with the two cities to bring them back under its yoke. The peasant farmers of the Eth and Flam valleys have formed their own militia to defend themselves against the Gallists in Spearmouthdale, but they never have taken part in the main defense force of the Great Dale.

Vulddin too is walled and heavily fortified, but it also is a bustling regional farming center serving Ganglhofn, the village of Bridhh and Denderdale and the settlement of Torside above Dender's Creek. Vulddin and the two villages of Dender's Valley - Torside and Denderdale - live almost exclusively from crop, cattle and dairy farming and a small but steady trickle of trade. Vulddin is a small county that once was under the duke of Bezentil. It also once included Riggh, which was taken by the Gallists and later destroyed by them. It consists today of Vulddin, Torside and Denderdale, but the duke also considers haunted Riggh to be a part of his duchy.

Parts of Bridhh, Ganglhofn and the village of Denderdale lie in ruins, all remnants of past skirmishes. Bridhh is a hunting village, and many of its residents are Gallists, but there is a peace agreement between Bridhh and Vulddin, and travel between them is possible.

A hereditary baron whose family has remained loyal to Herne's church over the years rules Briddh. The barony also includes Rublshofn, which lies totally in ruin. The Mucklestones Druids destroyed the village in the Year of the Storms (1310 DR). Only a few partial stone walls and overgrown foundations and cellars remain, and these are said to be haunted.

The village of Torside just above Dender's Creek below the solitary hill known as the *Tor* on the southern edge of Dender's Valley has had little war damage and never has been attacked by dragons. A small monastery to Helm, a deity who otherwise who has drawn little attention from the Dalesmen, is there. There are those who believe that the monastery has something to do with the relative sanctuary Torside has enjoyed. Still others believe that ghostly doings on the Tor and the superstition of uneducated Dalesmen deserve the credit.

In addition to the harvests from fertile farmlands, the folk of Torside have earned a steady income from foreign magi investigating the haunted hill that looms over the village and from adventurers who venture deep into the wood, in search of the treasures of Dender's Valley or *Dun Tharos*. Needless to say, far more adventurers have entered the wood than have returned.

However, escapees from the Gallist slave farm in Ashanath say that the blame for such disappearances cannot be laid totally at the feet of the mysterious Nentyarch. They report encountering slaves on the farm who say they were adventurers searching Dender's Valley when they were captured by huntsmen of *Herne* and brought in chains to the slave farm south of Kront.

For several centuries, the druids of Rawlinswood have concentrated their efforts to the west of Dender's Valley. Much of the western wood has remained unpopulated except for its animal and monstrous denizens. Although few Dalesmen have seen the heart of Rawlinswood, there are legends far beyond the Great Dale of ancient elven ruins beneath its eaves in its darker depths, and above all, there are tales of the old woodland fortress *Dun Tharos*, now home to the Nentyarch.

Continuing westward down the Trade Route toward Uthmere one encounters the farming villages of Riggstad, Gylving, Veststad and Karlshofn. They all are small settlements involved mainly in crop, cattle and dairy farming, along with some milling and tanning.

South of Veststad one finds the farming community of Mauberg, a town with a temple to Chauntea. Mauberg too is a crop and dairy farming community, but it's real specialties are barley, hops and fruit. The fields of Mauberg begin along the trail just south of Veststad, where barley stalks wave in the wind.

At slightly higher levels, the hops fields begin. The fields south of the village ascend gently to the south before reaching the edge of Lethyr Forest and the beginning of the large forest hill – small mountain, according to the Dalesmen – called the Mauberg. In the sun-blessed rolling hills with their southern exposure grow miles upon miles of fruit trees.

In a forest glade atop the Mauberg between the village of Mauberg and New Sarshel, one finds a double monastery called *Mauberg's Oak* operated jointly by the churches of Chauntea and Ilmater, together with twin temples to the two gods. Priests of Ilmater and non-combatant monks of both faiths are trained in the monasteries there.

Unlike the coastal areas and along the Merchant's Run, the Trade Route has been singed often by the flames of war. The farther east a settlement stands, the more likely that it often has come under attack, and the nearer it is to one of the forests, the more that likelihood compounds. Many war ruins straddle the Trade Route, to say nothing of the many tiny hamlets and thorps that have been destroyed in the past six centuries.

Veststad

Village, Conventional, AL: NG, 100 gp limit. Assets: 3,500 gp. Population: 700 (including 250 militiamen); 99% human, 1% other. Authority figures: Baron Módi Heimirssonur, human male, AL:NG, Fighter Lvl 5, Aris 6; Major Tandur Ligurdhssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 10, Commander, 2nd Battaion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia; Captain Vegdeg Tróánssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 8, commander, Company A, 2nd Battalion; Captain Turin Dálgolfssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 8, commander, Company B, 2nd Battalion; Baronial Warden Hvin Geirssonur, human male, AL: NG, ranger lvl 3. Others: Ylg Yrsassonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 2, Exp 1, village blacksmith; Thjalf Gridhssonur, human male, AL: NE, com 1, farmer and Iron Throne agent. Taxation type: Benevolent.

The village of Veststad is the gateway to the heart of the Great Dale, although it serves that role inconspicuously, which perhaps is fitting. Adventurers who have seen the parts of Faerûn west of Veststad usually find most settlements east of Uthmere to be simple, primitive and rather unimpressive.

The name itself is simple, being old Turami for *western steading* or *settlement*. When passing through Veststad, one takes in quickly that the richer coastal regions of the Great Dale have been left behind. Little trace remains of the Impilturian names and wealth that still are frequent on the coast. The presence of organizations like the Iron Throne and the Zhentarim, who have nested in the coastal settlements, is now nothing more than individual pairs of eyes belonging to low-level watchers.

Militiamen, who defend the land against the evil Hunters of Herne, are protected more often by leather than shining metal armor. Veststad is the last village where roofs of baked clay tiles predominate. The residents along the Trade Route east of Veststad seldom can afford the fine tiles of Mulltown or those from the newer competing kilns in Damara, to speak nothing of the more expensive slate roofs seen near Impilturian Ilmwatch. Most buildings east of Veststad have hatch roofs.

If an adventurer offers to pay a farmer in Veststad an Impilturian gold taler for wares he wants to buy, the farmer well may be reluctant to close the deal, preferring to receive another tangible item as payment instead. Barter is the key currency of the Trade Route, not gold, silver and copper. Written material is largely useless east of Veststad. Only a few people in any settlement may be literate, and in some hamlets and thorps, no one can read or write.

Nonetheless, as limited as Veststad's resources may be, the village has a history that goes back for more than 2,000 years. For more than six centuries, it was an important source of grain, meat and dairy products for the Narfelli Empire.

After Narfell's fall, the post-Narfelli first kingdom of Impiltur annexed the village, and it remained in the kingdom for another millennium. When plague, incest and corruption brought the first Impilturian kingdom to its collapse, the Dalesmen at last took control of the own fate in the Year of the Burning Tree (890 DR), and they have held Veststad ever since.

Sages believe that Veststad was the seat of a small barony in Narfelli times, and it has retained that governmental form since. However, exactly when the barony fell into the hands of the old Turami family of the current Baron Módi is a fact lost in the pages of a history no one ever wrote. As long as oral tradition can recall, the baron's family always has been the usually benevolent power in Veststad.

One can understand why Veststad's barons have tended to be benevolent rulers. An evilly inclined baron would have had no chance to expand his base of power. Uthmere to the west, Mauberg's Oak to the south and Gylving to the east always have been larger and more powerful than little Veststad.

Wanneth, between Veststad and Uthmere, belongs to the count of Uthmere. To the north are only the barony's croplands and the south eave of Rawlinswood. His more powerful neighbors doubtless would have crushed a baron inclined to expand with violence.

There was little alternative left to the barons then, other than to support and be supported by the peasants who raised crops north of the Trade Route and raised beef and dairy cattle south of it. The borders of the barony are Rawlinswood in the north, the Leth in the east and points halfway to Mauberg and Wanneth in the south and west, respectively.

Over the years, the barons received a 5% tithe from the peasants. These payments paid for the mercenaries who guarded Veststad, which spread from the center of the settlement outward to its borders. The tithe also maintained the modest defensive castle where the peasants could flee in times of trouble, which they last did in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), when two green dragons serving the Gallists attacked Veststad.

The barons traditionally have owned the largest herd. It has the best grazing land, on the south side of the Trade Route. The baron also has the best croplands with the most acreage, beginning on the north bank of the Auststraumur. This assures the barons of having the most income as well, but that income has to pay the family that runs the baronial farm. As a result, no baron of Veststad ever has been genuinely rich.

All of the village's farmers including Baron Módi are members of the Veststad Market Alliance, a farm cooperative which buys and sells as a unit. The alliance, in turn, is a member of the much larger Uthmere and Veststad Farmers Collective in Uthmere, an umbrella organization that consists of individual farm cooperatives in Uthmere, Wanneth and Veststad. The collective owns its own granary on the outskirts of Uthmere and pays the Uthmere mill to grind its flour and market it.

The only facility for travelers or adventurers in Veststad is the baron's own Veststad Inn, an additional source of good income for the village. It takes two days to travel from Uthmere to Gylving or Mauberg's Oak and a day and a half to reach Mauberg from Uthmere, so a stop at the inn is mandatory for most travelers.

Travelers who want to buy things in Veststad have a harder time. There are no stores. The village blacksmith is a farmer with less acreage than most of his neighbors, Ylg Yrsassonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 2, Exp 1.

To increment his income, his does some smithing with farm equipment and implements on the side. He won't touch weapons or armor, and he has little interest in dealing with travelers, who usually can offer nothing he wants in barter. He does make exceptions, however, if he needs to buy new tools in Uthmere. However, under normal circumstances, coins interest him little.

There are no temples in Veststad, but there are unmanned shrines to Ilmater, Silvanus and Chauntea in the castle. Non-clerical workers of Baron Módi tend them.

Most of the moderate traffic through Veststad follows the Trade Route. The road through Mauberg and Mauberg's Oak degenerates quickly into a trail east of Mauberg's Oak. The road leads to the woodland village of Leifrskross in Lethyr Forest, which fell to the Hunters of Herne more than 350 years ago and has been in enemy Gallist hands ever since.

Justice does not have to be called upon often in Veststad, but when it is necessary, Baron Módi is both judge and jury. Baronial Warden Hvin Geirssonur, human male, AL: NG, ranger 3, is Veststad's equivalent of a village policeman. When travelers whom Geirssonur considers more than he can handle make trouble, he calls on and receives help from the Freemen.

There is a dungeon beneath the castle where prisoners with short sentences are held - when there are any at all. The baron pays Uthmere to execute the sentences of those he gives long prison terms and those he condemns to death, but such cases are rare in Veststad. The current Baron Módi never has passed a death sentence.

Adventure Hooks in Veststad

Most PCs who pass through Veststad will do nothing more than that - pass through. It's a quiet farming village with no particular landmarks other than the barracks of the two companies of the Freemen's militia that stationed there and the baron's modest castle. The only at all likely matters that might be out of the ordinary are:

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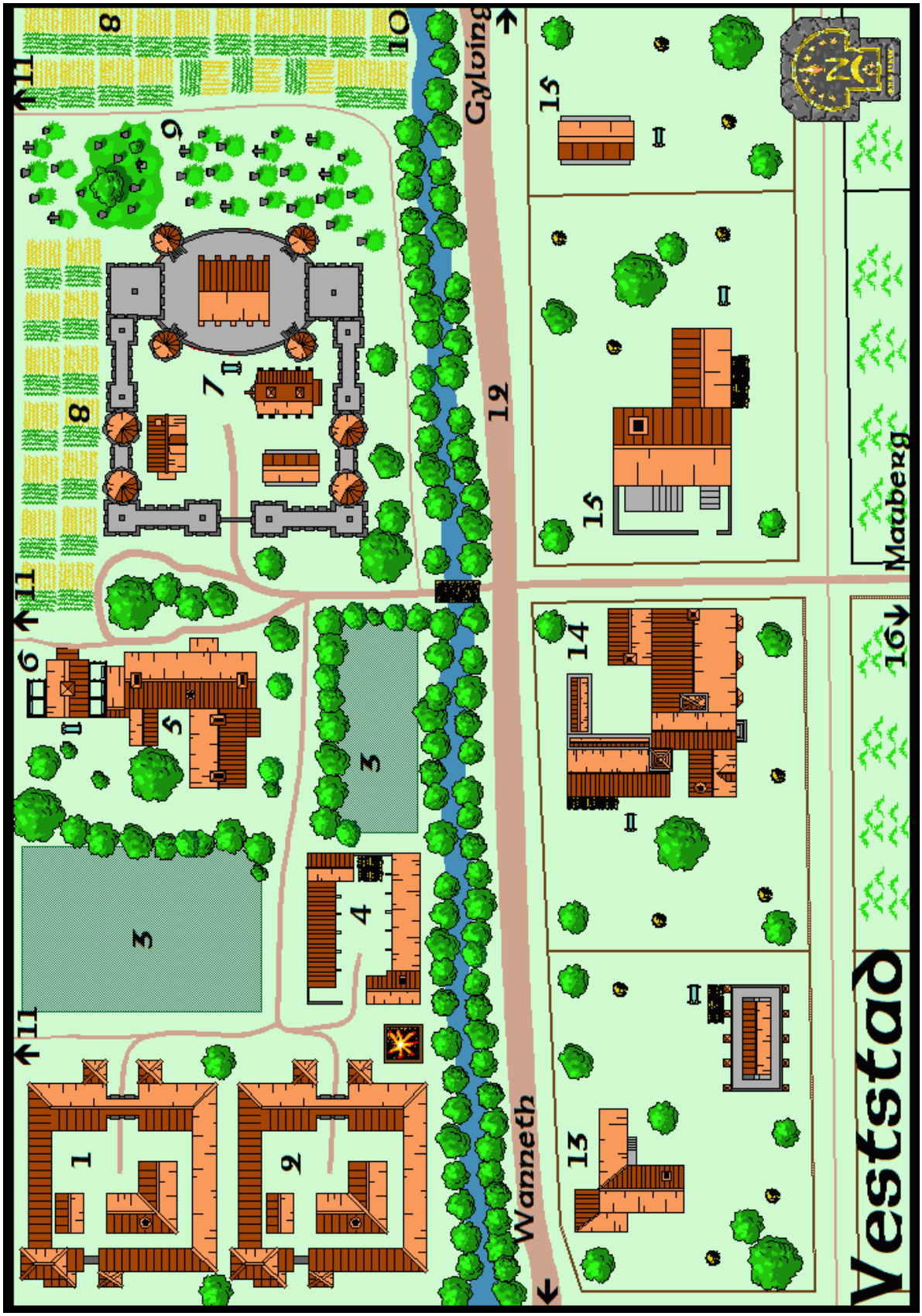
- The PCs hear news in the Veststad Inn public room that leads them either toward their goal or into one of the two great forests to investigate whatever they learn from travelers.

- The PCs find out that farmer Thjalf Gridhssonur passes news on to the Iron Throne. This discovery may make no waves in Veststad, however. The residents of Veststad know little about the Iron Throne, and it may be hard to convince the duke that he's ever done anything to inform Gridhssonur or any other resident that there is anything questionable about giving information to people who work for the Throne. This could end up being a matter in which the PCs become quite involved, but one that nonetheless ends up being much ado about nothing.


Vestad
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Veststad

Map of Veststad

1 - Barracks, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia. The battalion headquarters also are in this building.

2 - Barracks, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia. The village's signal tower for times of crisis stands between the barracks and the militia stables (No. 4).

3 - Training Fields, Freemen's Militia.

4 - Stables, Freemen's Militia.

5 - Veststad Inn. Owned by Baron Módi, operated by innkeeper Regin Gjúkissonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 2. The inn is comfortable but not luxurious. The 14 single rooms cost 7 silver shiners, the 8 doubles 6 shiners per person per night. The simple but satisfying maturbordh costs 7 shiners. Gjúkissonur's house brew, a decent, bottom fermented lager, costs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. The house has a small selection of middle quality Uthving wines at 4 to 8 shiners for a quart/liter bottle.

6 - Veststad Inn Stable.

7 - Baron Módi's Castle and Court Farm.

8 - Baronial farm fields.

9 - Cemetery.

10 - Auststraumur.

11 - To the farm fields.

12 - Trade Route.

13 - Thjalf Gridhssonur's Farm. Gridhssonur, human male, AL: NE, com 1, is a farmer who receives a gold taler a month from a passing Iron Throne agent in return for news of the village and those who have passed through it. Gridhssonur is semi-literate and the only farmer in Veststad who can read or write at all. He keeps notes to make his reports. No one in Veststad is aware of his source of additional income, but it may be that no one would care. Gridhssonur stashes all the gold pieces he earns under a loose floorboard in his barn.

14 - Ylg Yrsassonur's Farm and Smithy. Yrsassonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 2, Exp 1, is a farmer with less acreage than most of his neighbors who increments his income as a village blacksmith. He usually accepts only local jobs, and he will not work with armor or weapons. He also usually accepts only bartered goods in payment, but he will take coins now and then when he needs to buy new smith's equipment in Uthmere.

15 - Other farms.

16 - Road to Mauberg and to other farms and the grazing meadows.

Mauberg

Small Town, Nonstandard - Theocratic, AL: NG, 800 gp limit. Assets: 44,000 gp. Population: 1,100 (including 100 militiamen); 99% human, 1% other. Authority figures: Baron Harvestmaster Eakin Tavish, human male, AL:NG, Cleric (Chauntea) Lvl 6; Captain Njarm Hrongssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 8, commander, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia; Grove Warden Hjál Gudolfssonur, human male, AL: NG, ranger lvl 4. Others: High Druidess Lýfa Narfisdóttir, human female, AL: NG, druidess (Chauntea) lvl 14. Taxation type: Benevolent.

Riding southward from the Dale gateway village of Veststad, one crosses the barren grazing lands of the Auststraumur Valley and begins a gradual ascent into the southern highlands locally called *Chauntea's Blessed Land.*

The crown of the rise is a large hill - Dalesmen call it a small mountain - already enveloped by the southern eaves of Lethyr Forest known as the Mauberg. At the summit, one finds the famed Mauberg's Oak monastery together with a border detachment of the Freemen's militia. At the forest's edge, beneath the summit, is the small, walled town of Mauberg, which is the center of Chauntea's faith in the Dale.

Before reaching Mauberg from Veststad, one crosses long stretches of verdant rolling hills, wide and low ridge lines running from east to west, most with soil structures unique to the Dale. On both sides, the hills have a base of heavy loam, fertile but not suited for all crops. However, the soil is ideal for growing plum, pear, apple and cherry trees. The heavy loam base on the north face of the hills is covered with a thick layer of sandy loam rich in humus, which is ideal for growing grains.

There's a much speculation on how this came to be. The druids of Chauntea believe that the sandy loam once covered the raw prairie-like land south of the Auststraumur where beef and dairy cattle now graze. In the severe storms that crossed the Dale more than three centuries ago in the final phases of the Great Glacier's southern melt, the druids believe that strong winds blew the fertile valley soils up into the foothills below Lethyr Forest, covering the north faces of the gentle hills.

Whatever the cause, the result made the hills beneath Mauberg into the agriculturally richest area of the Great Dale. On the northern faces of the lower hills, farmers raise poles and hemp in Spring to grow premium quality hops. The harvest not only supplies most brewers of beers and ales in the Great Dale but also is exported westward. Expensive inns as far westward as Cormyr brew their elite beers and ales using the expensive premium Mauberg hops extract, which is kiln dried by the brothers of Mauberg's Oak.

As one rides a bit higher, the hops yield to endless fields of barley. They turn gold in Eleasias, before the harvest, giving the higher landscape its popular name *Golden Hills*. On the north sides of the hills, one finds Mauberg's legendary fruit orchards. Temperature sensitive cherries grow on the backside of the lower hills where hops thrive. Going upward then, one rides through orchards of prune plums and pears, at last reaching the apple stands at the highest levels, finally coming into the small town of Mauberg.

The fruit harvests end at the village, but berries prosper above it. North of Mauberg, at the foot of Lethyr Forest are stands of brush in which wild raspberries, blackberries, currants and sloe grow, and within the eave of the forest, one finds a broad carpet of wild blueberries.

One might rightfully ask what the Dalesmen of the Mauberg area do with so much fruit and berries. Only a certain amount of it can be stored, and then for only so long. The Dalesmen do indeed have generous fruit cellars where apples are stored in good condition, some varieties holding until early spring.

However, the bulk of the fruit is sold either to the brothers of Chauntea at the Mauberg's Oak monastery or to the distillery in Uthmere, to make fruit liqueurs and schnapps that are prized throughout much of Faerûn. The barley is malted by the brothers and most of it used to make their single malt whisky, considered to be Faerûn's finest distillate. The brothers also kiln dry part of the barley malt for sale as extract to brewers who have no malting house of their own.

Farming in Mauberg continues on to Lethyr Forest itself. Inside Lethyr Forest within a few hundred yards of its edge beneath Mauberg's Oak, one finds several large but ancient clearings, some with verdant meadows and others with rich, fertile soil. The druids believe that the forest clearings are the legacy of the long vanished green elves who first settled Mauberg's Oak. The Dalesmen of Mauberg use the clearings to raise their crops and graze their cattle.

In another higher forest glade atop the Mauberg, one at last finds the double monastery *Mauberg's Oak* operated jointly by the churches of Chauntea and Ilmater, together with twin temples to the two gods. The monasteries there train both priests of Ilmater and non-combatant monks.

Mauberg can look back on a long history, although much of it is unclear. It was founded by the Narfelli in -886 DR, according to records in the royal library in Impilturian Lyrabar, and it remained within the empire until its collapse in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR).

According to some Impilturian records, Mauberg was annexed into the first kingdom of Impiltur two years later, in the Year of the Black Ice (-148 DR), and it remained Impilturian until the kingdom's collapse in the Year of the Burning Tree (890 DR).

Oral tradition in the Dale claims that an Impilturian expedition traveled to Mauberg and Mauberg's Oak shortly after the fall of Narfell, but that Impiltur never made any attempt to occupy either location, and both settlements were independent after Narfell's fall, even if they are shown on old Impilturian maps as being within the Impilturian border. Whatever may be true, Mauberg has been a Freemen's enclave since the Year of the Burning Tree at the latest.

When reaching the town, one finds it surrounded by a rectangular wooden palisade wall 30 feet/9 m high, interrupted by wooden watchtowers and two gates. These guard the old Narfelli highway that once carried wares between the Trade Route in Veststad and the Golden Way in Theskan Phsant. The old highway now dwindles into a foot trail east of Mauberg's Oak, where it crosses the hostile and wild stretches of Lethyr Forest before entering the enemy territory of the Hunters of Herne west of the Gallist village of Leifrskross.

Except in times of crisis, the towers in the wall are unmanned, as are the gates during daytime hours, when they stand open. From sunrise to sunset, the gates are closed. Two guards are on duty then at each gate to allow visitors to enter the town.

As far back as Dalesmen's memories run, Mauberg has centered around the faith of Chauntea. For many centuries - perhaps even since the fall of the first Impilturian kingdom, the administrative cleric for the church of Chauntea in the Great Dale has had his or her seat in Mauberg and has also been the ruling baron. The barony, in other words, is not inherited but instead comes together with the title of administrative cleric.

The name of this office also is somewhat deluding. The administrative cleric is one of the few general clerics serving Chauntea's church outside of a city area in Faerûn. The church in the Great Dale is well tithed, due mostly to worship in Uthmere and other larger settlements on Easting Reach.

While druids and non-combatant monks in the Dale do the work of the church almost exclusively, the faith also needs a strong central figure to regulate the affairs of the church itself, to see to it that funds for the maintenance of temples and shrines are distributed fairly, etc. This is the job of the administrative cleric, who heads the church's organization in the Great Dale but by no means is head of the church itself.

The administrative cleric is, of necessity, brought into the Dale from other areas of the Realms. A vote of the entire circle of druids of Chauntea serving in the Great Dale, including those in voluntary service in the Gallist Eastern Dale, appoints the administrative cleric. The circle's High Druid, who is the true leader of the circle, nominates the candidates. The circle also can vote to remove an administrative cleric from office, which results in his or her loss of the baronial title.

At present, the High Druidess is Lýfa Narfisdóttir, human female, AL: NG, druidess (Chauntea) lvl 14, who spends almost all of her time under way in the agricultural areas of the Great Dale. The administrative cleric is Baron Harvestmaster Eakin Tavish, human male, AL:NG, Cleric (Chauntea) 6.

Tavish spends most of his time in Mauberg, but he does travel at times to inspect the temples, shrines and other properties of the church in all areas of the Dale. Tavish had served as an urban cleric of Chauntea in Berdusk in the Backlands of the Sword Coast before his appointment to his current position.

His duties as baron of Mauberg are limited. The town has a full body of law, and neither he nor his successor has seen much need for new legislation. Crime is virtually unknown in Mauberg, but when it does occur, the baron is judge and jury, and there are dungeon cells beneath the baronial manor house.

Law enforcement, as it were, is in the hands of Grove Warden Hjál Gudolfssonur, human male, AL: NG, a Chauntea-worshipping ranger 4, who works for the baron. Gudolfssonur also is in charge of the town watch, which comprises local farmers. All locals age 50 or less usually serve in the watch, each having an infrequent overnight turn as guards. The watch is not active during the day but does guard the town at night after the gates close.

The baron is in his judicial usually only to settle civil disputes, either between two farmers or between farmers and those who buy wares from them, although such cases too are infrequent. His main contact with the locals is as a helping hand representative of the Mother's church and as the clergymen who conducts the regular services in the temple, which is well attended.

Baron Eakin and Captain Njarm Hrongssonur, human male, AL: LG, fighter 8, commander of the Freemen's Militia's Company C, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, are the only steady town residents who are reliably literate. Other militiamen from other parts of the Dale sometimes also are literate, but these come and go with their tours of duty.

Both Mauberg and Mauberg's Oak are well protected, with a 100-man company of the militia stationed in each settlement. Neither location has yet been a target of serious hostilities from the Gallists, even though Mauberg's Oak is the borderline of the free Dale. Beyond there, until one reaches Gallist Leifrskross or Veidarsudur, the forest is a hostile, contested zone, claimed by no side and threatened not only by the Freemen and by Gallists fighting one another within it, but also by forest monsters and a band of hobgoblins believed to be 500 strong.

Most travelers who come to Mauberg are there on business, usually with the distribution center for the distillery and malting house run by the brothers in Mauberg's Oak, who receive no commercial visitors in the monastery.

Other kinds of travelers are rare in Mauberg, because the village is a dead end for all those who have no affairs to conduct with the monastery above. Beyond it is only trouble. That is not to say that no one ever seeks his or her adventure in Lethyr Forest beyond, traveling through Mauberg en route, but such foolhardy souls are rare, and most can be convinced to seek their doom elsewhere before entering the wood. Because no one has friends in southwestern Lethyr Forest, just about anyone who enters it should consider all encounters hostile, including those with druids and rangers of the Freemen.

Whether one comes to Mauberg on legitimate business or merely seeking adventure, most of the amenities a traveler seeks can be found in the town.

Adventure Hooks in Mauberg

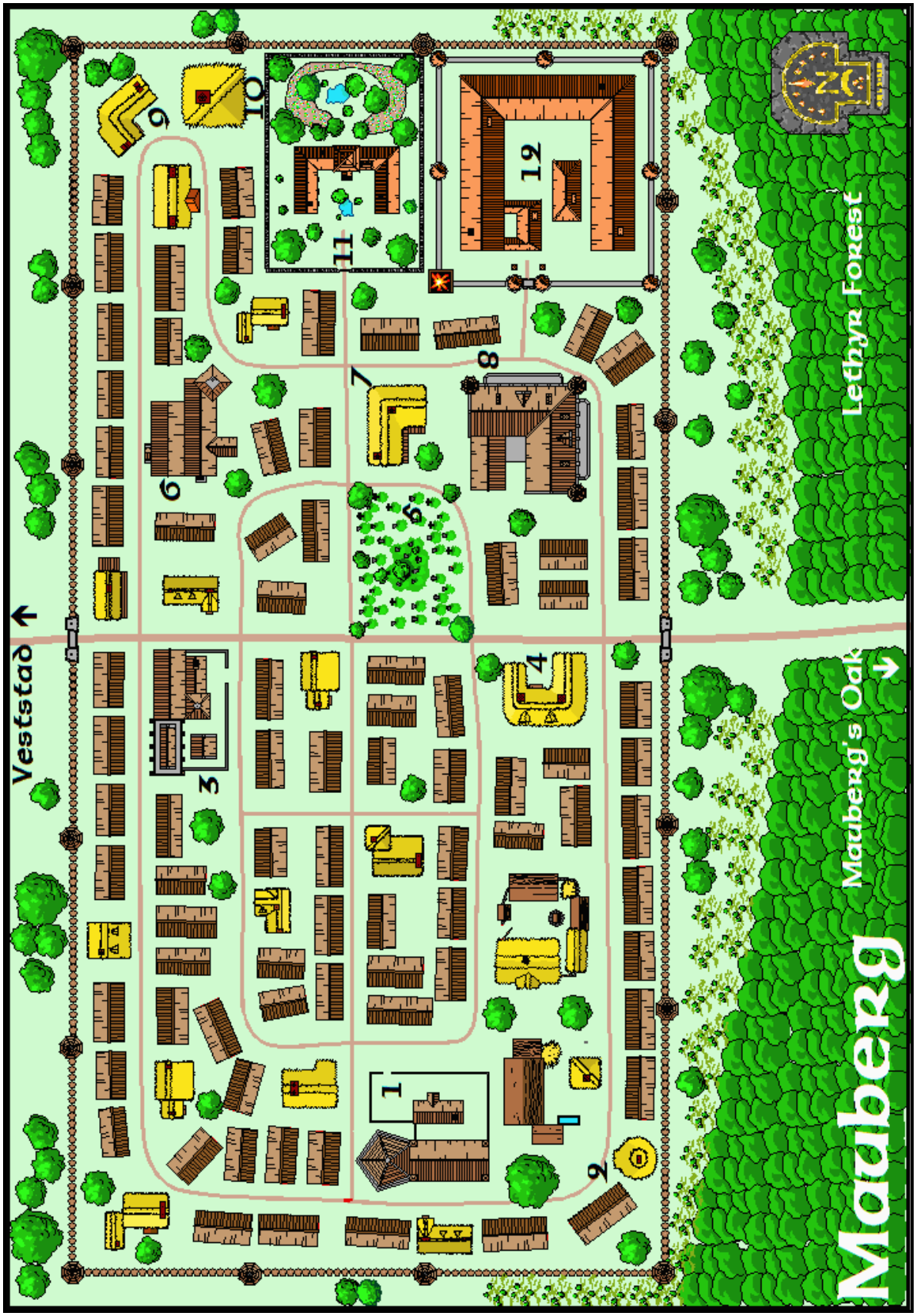
Mauberg usually will not be an adventuring goal in its own right. If you're running the *Northern Journey* adventure, a decision by the PCs to head to Mauberg probably will be the result of leads or false clues that the Game Master has inserted into the adventure, which draw the PCs southward, but for most campaigns, Mauberg will be off the path the PCs beat.

The reason is that the ancient Narfelli highway that runs through Mauberg comes for most intents and purposes to a dead end at Mauberg's Oak, in the forest above the village. To find the adventure hooks in Mauberg, one must look then at the possible motivations that PCs could have for going there:

- **Cleaning Up the Iron Throne:** This may be the adventure thread of some Game Masters who use this accessory as a setting expansion for their own campaign. It usually will not be relevant for Game Masters using the *NJ* adventure. The only bit of the Iron Throne the PCs might come to clear up in Mauberg is Zendlryr, manager of the Mauberg's Oak Distillery Center. Zendelryr is no criminal. He is an employee of the Throne rather than a covert agent. If the PCs are acting lawfully, they may bring Zendelryr's Iron Throne connection to light, but it's doubtful anything will be done about it. He's done nothing wrong and has broken no law. Baron Eakin is the judge to whom lawful PCs must take Zendelryr for justice, and the cleric baron will not be able to find a law that Zendelryr has broken. The worst that might happen to him is that the brothers of Mauberg's Oak fire him for being deceptive.

- **Healing.** It could be that one or more of the PCs requires long-term, knowing care as a result of battle damage. In that case, the PCs could be passing through Mauberg on their way to the healers of Ilmater in the monastery at Mauberg's Oak.

- **Lethyr Forest Adventure.** This hook is wrought with danger. Just about everyone in southwestern Lethyr Forest assumes that everyone else there is the enemy, and there's an outstanding chance that the assumption is right. When the druids and rangers of the *Avenging Leaf* come upon a band of Herne's hunters, they attack immediately. Likewise, if the Gallist rangers come across a patrol of the *Avenging Leaf*, slaying quickly is the only thing that's on their minds. Both groups will do all they can to liquidate hobgoblin bands. If another unknown band is under way in the forest, it should expect all of these factions to consider it free prey, with the motto, *Liquidate now, ask questions later*. This tenuous situation makes it difficult to tell friends from enemies and to avoid killing friends. Both the *Avenging Leaf* and the Hunters of Herne each have their own complex systems of natural sound imitations that communicate friendly intentions. Wise druids and rangers usually can tell imitated sounds from the real voices of nature, so friendly signals within rangers and druids of one camp also may tip both the opposing party to the presence of the enemy, setting off interesting but deadly cat-and-mouse chases within the wood. If a PC party goes into this hostile woodland, its chances of merging alive again are minimal, unless, of course, it makes advance arrangements. PC parties who wish to enter southwestern Lethyr Forest as friends of the *Avenging Leaf* need to convince whatever druids or rangers may be resting at Mauberg's *Fickle Dryad*, first of all that they're allies and then, that they can make a useful contribution if they enter the forest. If they succeed on both points, the *Avenging Leaf* may help them. Any evil PC party that wants to join up with the Hunters of Herne needs to makes its way to Leifrskross to convince the Hunters of Herne there in the same manner. (For more details on the *Avenging Leaf,* see the *Unofficial NPC Encounters* section of the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.)


Mauberg
Veststad
Mauberg's Oak
Lethyr Forest
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Mauberg

Map of Mauberg

1 - Mauberg's Oak Distillery Center. Monks of Chauntea bring the distillates and other products of the monastery down in wagons or sleds to the center for commercial sale and distribution in the Realms. There also is a granary tower in the compound for the temporary storage of hops and barley brought in by local farmers at harvest time. It stays there briefly, until the monks pick it up. The manager is Zendelryr, human male, AL: N(E), Aris 1, Exp 1, a native of Impilturian Hlammach who works for the Iron Throne, although he has little knowledge of the Throne itself. Zendelryr is a pure business employee of the Throne, but his insertion as manager in Mauberg shows the extent to which the Throne has taken over distribution of the monastery's coveted products, unknown to the monks. The brothers are unaware of Zendelryr's second income from the Throne and well might be displeased, were they to become informed of this relationship.

2 - Shrine to Ilmater. Unmanned.

3 - Mauberg Smithy. The twins, Darthur and Geldar Hravidssonur, jointly own the business. Darthur, human male, AL: LG, Exp 5, is a master weaponsmith and armor maker. Geldar, human male, AL: NG, Exp 4, is a master blacksmith. They hire a journeyman weaponsmith, a journeyman armor maker, two journeymen blacksmiths and six apprentices. Farmers pay in barter.

4 - Fickle Dryad Inn. For the most part, the *Fickle Dryad* is just another inn. Any traveler can come in, enjoy a meal or drinks in the common room, perhaps hear a better grade of tales than are told in most other hostelries, and sleep undisturbed in a modest but comfortable room. Nonetheless, the *Dryad* in another respect differs considerably from any other inn in the Great Dale and perhaps in all of Faerûn. That has to do with the no man's land nature of southwestern Lethyr Forest. Most Dalesmen would be content to stay out of that part of the wood and let it remain as it is, as long as the forest returns the favor. However, the Hunters of Herne and the tribe of 500 goblins in southwestern Lethyr Forest would be a threat to settled areas of the free Dale if they go unbridled. To bridle them, then, in a manner of speaking, General Friedhleif Skjöldurssonur, commander of the Freemen's Militia in Uthmere, formed a special unit consisting of some of the toughest and even bitterest rangers and druids he could find, with the mission of hunting and destroying the enemy. Most members of this unit are aligned either NG or N, but they are an exception to the AD&D 2E and D&D 3E rules for non-evil rangers: Humans are among their favored enemies, as well as hobgoblins. Their main goal of their mission is to liquidate human Hunters of Herne and hobgoblins from the forest tribe. Members of the guerilla unit wear the Oak Leaf and Acorn badge of the Freemen. However, they report only to their own commander, Thekk Liflilsson, half-elf male, AL: N, ranger lvl 18, a half-human, half-green-elf from Rawlinswood who went to General Skjöldurssonur in Uthmere seeking tougher work after the rest of his own patrol in the northern wood had been slain in a battle with Gallists. Skjöldurssonur gave him the task of assembling the elite unit, which calls itself the *Avenging Leaf* and now numbers 12 druids, mostly of Silvanus, and 44 rangers, by and large followers of Mielikki. Liflilsson reports directly to the general and accepts no commands from any other officers of the militia. The *Avenging Leaf* has a hard and dangerous mission in the forest, and its members need periods of rest and recuperation. They own the *Fickle Dryad*, and it's where they head when they're on leave. A retired ranger, Göndlir Vakssonur, human male, AL: NG, ranger (Mielikki) lvl 6, runs the *Fickle Dryad*. He buys his beer from the *Golden Hills Brewery,* serving the regular lager at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard and, in season, *Mother's Milk* double bock at 4 copper bites. Various fruit schnapps from the Mauberg's Oak monastery run from 2 silver shiners to 1 gold taler per shot/0.1 liter glass. The maturbordh, which often includes venison and boar brought in by the rangers, costs 8 shiners. The 12 rooms, all singles, run 6 shiners per night. The cellar of the *Dryad* is used to store food, beer and schnapps. The ground floor includes the public room, the kitchen and Vakssonur's quarters. Guest rooms are on the floor above, and the closed quarters of the *Avenging Leaf* are on the top floor. (For more details on the *Avenging Leaf,* see the *Unofficial NPC Encounters* section of the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.)

5 - Cemetery.

6 - Golden Hills Brewery. The brewery's main customers are locals from the Veststad area to Mauberg's Oak as well as the *Fickle Dryad* and Mauberg inns. The brewmaster, an immigrant from Thesk, Nassem tel Adbar, human male, AL: N, Exp 3, brews a strong golden orange bottom fermented lager year round and dark *Mother's Milk* double bock, sweet in barley malt, from late Marpenoth until mid-Ches. Farmers pay in barter.

7 - Bolton Nealing Wainwright. Nealing, human male, AL: LG, Exp 2, a Sembian merchant who left New Sarshel after the power of the Iron Throne was sealed there, makes wagons and sleds of all types. He also sells riding and draft horses, which he stables south of the town. His prices are about 25% above those in the PHB. Farmers pay in barter.

8 - Mauberg Inn. Gauta Sadhsdóttir, a widow from Gylving, runs Mauberg's finest hostelry. She offers travelers, mostly businessmen, fine accommodations, with 16 single rooms at 9 silver shiners and 4 doubles at 8 shiners per person. She serves *Golden Hills* beer, at 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard of lager and 4 bites for a tankard of *Mother's Milk* double bock. Various fruit schnapps from the Mauberg's Oak monastery run from 4 silver shiners to 2 gold talers per shot/0.1 liter glass. Uthving wines cost between 7 shiners and 2 talers per quart/liter bottle. The maturbordh, which serves Veststad beef specialties, costs a taler.

9 - Hymir's Provisions. Hymir Nargungssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 2, runs this general store, which caters more to farmers' needs than those of adventurers. Prices are 5 to 10% above those in the PHB. Farmers pay in barter.

10 - Temple to Chauntea. The cleric is Baron Harvestmaster Eakin. He holds a service every 10 days.

11 - Duke's Manor House and Gardens.

12 - Barracks, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia

Mauberg's Oak

Hamlet, Nonstandard, AL: NG, 100 gp limit. Assets: 550 gp. Population: 150 (including 100 militiamen and 40 clergy); 100% human, occasional half-elf patient. Authority figures: Captain Vandur Jandrssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 6, Ranger 4, commander, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia; Others: Sister Melooni, human female, AL: LG, Monk (Ilmater) lvl 12*, Abbess of the Rose Arisen monastery (Ilmater); Brother Aldingufa, human male, AL: NG, Monk (Chauntea) lvl 13*, non-combatant Monk, Abbot of the Waters of the Mother monastery (Chauntea); Brother Reamus, human male, AL: NG, Exp 12, Monk (Chauntea) lvl 8*, non-combatant Monk, Master Distiller of the Waters of the Mother monastery (Chauntea). Taxation: None.

*** See 2nd Edition AD&D *Faiths & Avatars,* not the 3rd Edition D&D class definition.**

It should surprise no one that Mauberg's Oak is one of the least desirable duty stations in the Great Dale for members of the Freemen's Militia. There is nothing in the hamlet - which would be a thorp without the Freemen's barracks - except the barracks themselves and the twin monasteries of Ilmater and Chauntea, both of which are closed to social life.

There also are shrines to Silvanus and Mielikki, which often are visited by druids and rangers from the *Avenging Leaf* who are on leave. These are just south of the hamlet, along the road to Mauberg.

Making the duty an even greater burden are the occasional forays patrols make together with members of the *Avenging Leaf* into Lethyr Forest, which usually result in some losses. The only social life in Mauberg to compensate are the evenings in the joint mess, which serves the Freemen beer from the *Golden Fields* brewery in Mauberg as well as the distillates of the brothers of Chauntea in Mauberg's Oak.

Visitors are rare in Mauberg's Oak, and their stay is brief. The Freemen's barracks have no guest lodgings. The two monasteries do not welcome guests. Anyone who passes through Mauberg's Oak may spend one night in the modest guest quarters of the *Waters of the Mother* monastery of Chauntea, eating and drinking with the monks.

There is no charge for these accommodations, but donations are accepted. On the next day, however, the monastery expects guests to depart quickly from Mauberg's Oak. Wounded who need treatment in the Ilmatari *Rose Arisen* may of course stay until they are healed.

This isolation is a true burden for the Freemen serving with the militia in Mauberg's Oak. Not only to alleviate their hardships but also to prevent from turning the militiamen into a band of alcoholics, they receive passes regularly for a few days leave in Mauberg.

Until the Year of the Helm (1362 DR), the Freemen's barracks were the only buildings not still in a state of ruin in Mauberg. Long ago, more than 2,000 years ago, the hilltop was the site of an ancient elven fortress. The buildings of the fortress were long without roofs when the Narfelli Empire claimed it in -847 DR. The Narfelli ignored most of what remained but built a military outpost out of the ruins on the southern end of the hilltop glade. After the fall of Narfell in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR), the Freemen of the Dale claimed the Narfelli barracks - which survived the war with Raumathar - and they have served as a Freemen's outpost ever since.

The priests and monks of Ilmater came to the Mauberg only relatively recently, in the Year of the Helm, with two goals in mind. After the fall of Zhengyi the Witch King in Vaasa, questions of royal and noble lineage came to be of critical importance in the Bloodstone Region, above all in Damara. Researching bloodlines was an important pursuit of the Ilmatari Monastery of the Yellow Rose in the mountains above Damara and Vaasa. The Ilmatari also felt called to help heal the victims of the oppressive Gallists.

Monks of the *Disciples of St. Sollars the Twice-Martyred*, who traveled to Mauberg's Oak from the Monastery of the Yellow Rose, rebuilt more of the ruins of the ancient elven forest fortress into a monastery with facilities to care for the ill and the wounded. They succeeded in part due to help from the Dalesmen of Mauberg and Veststad as well as militiamen in the barracks,

Special attention is given to the healing of druids and rangers of the *Avenging Leaf*. Most are followers of Silvanus and Mielikki, who were injured or wounded in their seemingly unending clashes with the Hunters of Herne inside of both Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest.

In their journey to the Mauberg, the Ilmatari spirited valuable writings dealing with genealogical trees within Damara and the Bloodstone region. The monks were convinced that more than one ruler of Damara's baronies were commoners making false claims of noble lineage, but they also wished to conduct their research secretly and securely.

Their theories were proven through their research in Mauberg's Oak. Their work helped lead to the overthrow of several evil barons in Damara and the eventual coronation in the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR) of Sir Gareth Dragonsbane, himself a paladin of Ilmater in the *Order of the Golden Cup,* as king of Damara (see the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* and Segment No.7, *Bloodstone*).

Unfortunately, the Ilmatari research helped lead to the overthrow of one evil faction, the remnants of Zhengyi's domain, only to create a vacuum that another evil organization, the Iron Throne, quickly filled. The cloistered monks of the Ilmatari monastery now are investigating whether members of other nobilities within the area surrounding the Sea of Fallen Stars also may be imposters, while the other monks and priests run the monastery hospice that heals war victims.

The Ilmatari had built their monastery upon the walls that remained of the ancient elven fortress north of the barracks and west of the old Narfelli highway. In the Great Dale, the churches of Ilmater and Chauntea have a long history of working together to alleviate the misery of the folk. This close relationship between members of the two churches is somewhat unusual elsewhere in Faerûn, but it has an historical foundation in the Dale.

The trials and tribulations through which Dalesmen have had to persevere had their roots in hunger and starvation many centuries earlier. The alleviation of misery, which is the goal of the Ilmatari, goes hand in hand with the development of agriculture, which is the goal of Chauntea's faith.

In the Year of the Helm (1362 DR), Ilmatari priests urged the baron cleric of Mauberg to support the establishment of a monastery of Chauntea's faith in the remaining ruins of the elven fortress. The Ilmatari hoped that such a monastery would assure a reliable supply of food for the hospice and for the cloistered monks doing genealogical research.

The church of Chauntea followed the suggestion to some extent, but instead of building a farming community on the mountain clearing, the monks of the Mother began construction of facilities to help deal with the surplus of fruit growing in the orchards of Mauberg.

The first project was the distillery, completed in the Year of the Wyvern (1363 DR), to produce the so-called *Waters of Chauntea* - the name the brothers give to their schnapps. The distillery produces raspberry, blackberry, current, sloe, cherry, prune plum and pear waters and it cellars apple cider.

In the Year of the Wave (1364 DR), the brothers expanded their operation with the completion of a malting house intended to process the consolidated harvest of barley in the Western Dale, making barley malt extract to reduce the costs of brewers in the Dale. Expensive inns as far westward as Cormyr now also brew their elite beers and ales using the expensive premium Mauberg hops extract, kiln dried by the brothers of Mauberg's Oak.

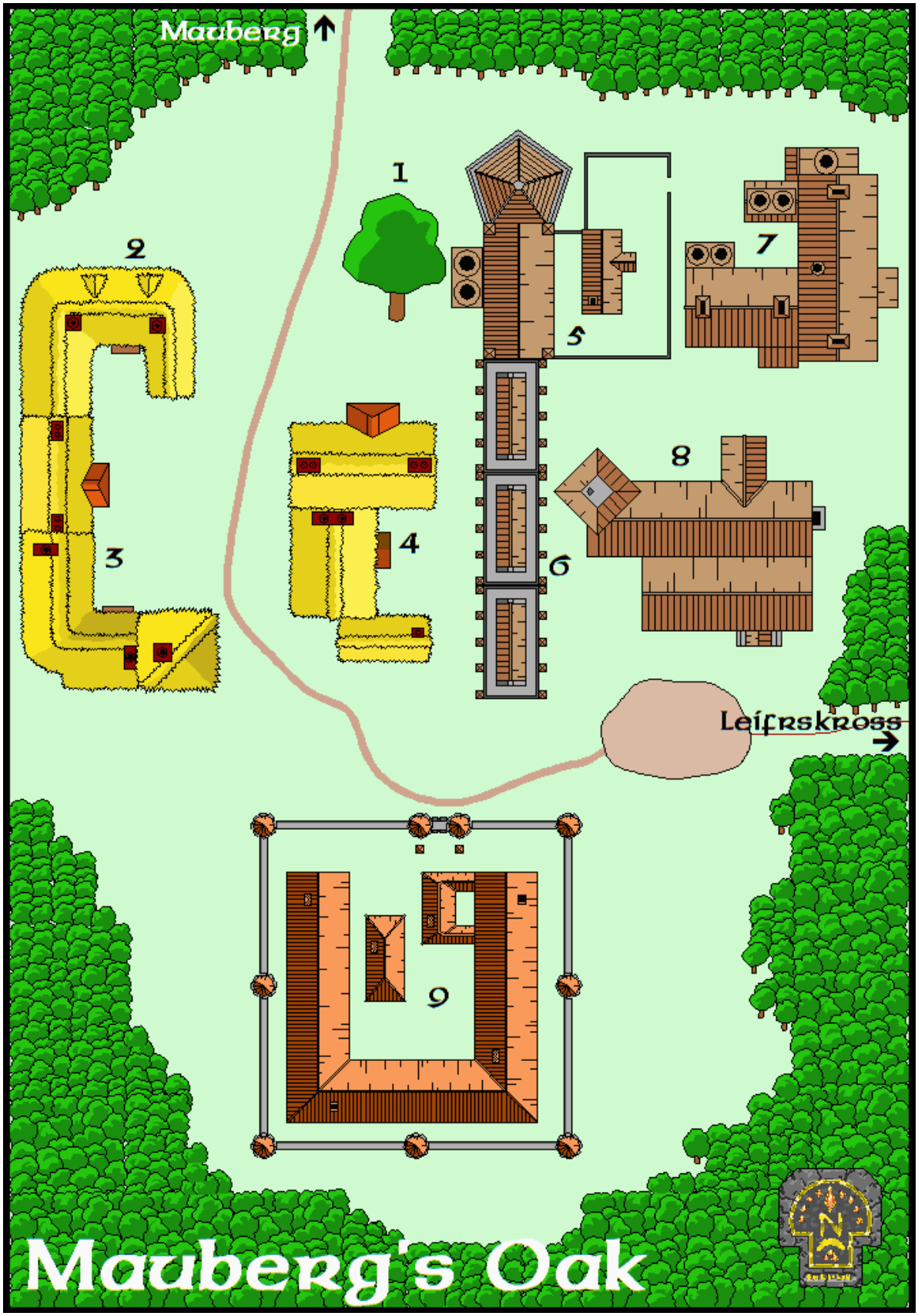
In the Year of the Staff (1366 DR), the brothers substantially expanded their malting house and expanded the distillery to produce malt whisky. Unknown to the brothers, the Iron Throne is their principal exporter. The Throne reaps the greatest profit of all from the brothers' work, but the monastery too has substantial earnings, which are funneled back into supporting the towns, villages and settlements along the Trade Route.

Adventure Hooks in Mauberg's Oak

Because visitors are expected to stay no longer than one day in Mauberg's Oak, it is highly unlikely that they will find any adventure in the hamlet other than being escorted out by the militia, if they refuse to take the leave expected of them.

It is, of course, possible that one or more PCs may have to be brought to Mauberg's Oak for longer term treatment in the Ilmatari hospice. They may spend a day in the hamlet too, resting on their way in or out of Lethyr Forest. The most that they can expect in that case is information.

If the PCs are planning to enter southwestern Lethyr Forest, please see the adventure hooks listing for Mauberg.



Mauberg's Oak

Map of Mauberg's Oak

1 - The Oak. This famous tree, probably a product of ancient elven agriculture, gives Mauberg's Oak its name. Most scholars believe that the great oak on the Mauberg is related to the Tall Trees of the High Forest far away in the Northwest, which also grew under elven husbandry. The oak stands more than 160 feet/50 m tall and has a girth of more than 10 feet/3 m. Few druids of Silvanus in the Inner Sea region go through life without making at least one pilgrimage to see the great tree.

2 - Rose Arisen Monastery. The thatch-roofed Ilmatari monastery is home to four priests, six monk healers and eight cloistered monks who do research in genealogy. The non-cloistered priests and monks take their meals in the dining hall operated by the monks of Chauntea in the Waters of the Mother monastery. Food is brought from there to the cloistered Ilmatari monks, who have their own small dining hall. The monastery has a cellar and three stories above ground. The cloistered monks have their library on the upper story. Sister Melooni, human female, AL: LG, Monk (Ilmater) lvl 12, is the Abbess. In the church hierarchy, she is directly under the grand master of the Monastery of the Yellow Rose (Citadel of the White Worm) in Damara.

3 - Rose Arisen Monastery - Hospice. The hospice can handle up to 14 patients at any one time. Usually, there are 10 or less patients in the hospice.

4 - Waters of the Mother Monastery. A total of 18 non-combatant monks of Chauntea live here. The leaders of the monastic order are Brother Aldingufa, and Brother Reamus, master distiller.

5 - Waters of the Mother Monastery - Malting House.

6 - Waters of the Mother Monastery - Storage.

7 - Waters of the Mother Monastery - Distillery.

8 - Waters of the Mother Monastery - Kiln House.

9 - Barracks, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia.

Gylving

Small Town, Conventional, AL: NG, 800 gp limit. Assets: 80,000 gp. Population: 2,000 (including 100 militiamen); 98% human, 1% dwarf, 1% other. Authority figures: Baron Annar Gunnarsson, human male, AL: NG, Aris 8, Ftr 8, baron of Ganglhofn and Riggstad; Hlér Hléseyssonur, human male, AL: NG, Aris 4, Ftr 4, steward of Gylving. Important Persons: Captain Gerdh Ulfssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 5, Ranger 5, commander, Company A, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia; Others: Painbearer Elias Gundl, human male, AL: LG, cleric (Ilmater) lvl 2. City watch, 32 male and female human, AL: All, Ftr 1-2, War 1-6. Taxation type: Benevolent.

One traveling for the first time from the West notices a different air when entering Gylving. Although Gallist troops never have overrun the Trade Route, it nonetheless is the start of what clearly is the Great Dale's war zone.

The men of Gylving have a tougher appearance than the men of the settlements to the West. Most look as though they're quite capable of carrying their own weight in battle. A newcomer has the feeling he's being closely scrutinized by the Dalesmen of Gylving, a feeling that will grow, the farther eastward one travels.

Although the Hunters of Herne and the soldiers of Garagos who serve Harbet Gall never have ridden as a host into Gylving, the town - protected by no wall - still has felt the sword of evil on many occasions, as well as mass destruction from the breath of Gall's dragons. A third of the town was destroyed in a dragon attack as recently as the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR). Gylving today looks much the way it did after the completion of reconstruction in the Year of the Trumpet (1301).

Gylving also is the beginning of the legend of the paladin Sir Tebbet, who saved Gylving from mass destruction in the Year of the Oracle's Carcass (1004 DR). On a fateful spring day in that year, the Gallist dracolich Nestamanur flew toward Gylving, intending to level the town.

At the same time, Sir Tebbet and his party approached the town from the West, and they drove the dracolich northward through Rawlinswood to the Narfelli plain southeast of the Giantspires. There, the paladin and dracolich met in battle, an encounter that proved fatal for both. Sir Tebbet's remains and his magic *Deadslayer* sword still are buried in a cairn on the plain, at least according to the claim of locals in Gylving. Tebbet's chase, as it is called, is only one of Gylving's heroic tales, albeit the greatest of them.

Years have passed since Gylving has been threatened by dragons, but sapper units of the Hunters of Herne are a continuing problem. Gylving, just east of the Leth, is on the eastern fringe of the Trade Route's western neck. East of Gylving, the swath of the Trade Route broadens considerably to both the north and the south, the result of massive clearing operations by the Narfelli in an earlier age, done to turn the center of the Dale into an agricultural breadbasket.

As a result, Gylving is much closer to the northern edge of Lethyr Forest than the settlements east of it. It is hit more often by Gallist sappers, who emerge from the forest's edge under the cover of night to rob, to conduct planned assassinations or to kidnap farm families who are taken off to work in the slave farms near Kront in Ashanath.

More than half of these raiding parties are caught before they can flee back into wood, keeping the baron's hangman in Riggstad occupied. Nonetheless, the Gallist attacks serve their purposes. They contain much of the farming in Gylving within the area surrounding the town, leaving many of the outer farms abandoned and their fertile fields fallow. In addition, they keep the people of Gylving feeling insecure.

Most of the raiders come from Herneburg in Lethyr Forest. There are those in the Central Dale who urge sending a large expedition to the Gallist forest enclave to destroy Herneburg, but the militia's leaders in Uthmere know better. The Freemen would suffer severe losses in their march through the forest to the walled town, leaving the Central Dale inadequately defended.

Despite the Gallist intimidation, Gylving remains a successful if somewhat primitive farming town with a tannery to make and work leather of the hides from the slaughterhouse. It also has a small garrison that houses a single company of soldiers from the Freemen's militia, something of a rear line for the larger units stationed in Riggstad and Ganglhofn to the east.

Gylving is one of five communities belonging to the Barony of Ganglhofn and Riggstad, which also includes the two towns for which it is named. The others are the hamlet of Karlshofn and the town of Hnútar, within the edge of Rawlinswood.

Baron Annar has appointed a steward, a native son of Gylving named Hlér Hléseyssonur, to administer the town. Hléseyssonur works together with a council of five appointed by the baron to pass the ordinances that govern Gylving. Minor civil and criminal cases also are tried by the steward, but major cases are tried personally by the baron in Riggstad, where the barony's prison is. The steward maintains a town watch 32 strong.

There is no wall protecting Gylving, but there are guard towers along both entrances to the town on the Trade Route, on the road to Karlshofn and also on the little used road to Gallist Herneburg. Several smaller roads also run northward from Gylving, but they lead only to farm fields and have no guard posts. However, these roads are in clear view of many town residents, who will alert the watch if strangers enter town in this manner. Using the farm roads rather than the Karlshofn road to enter Gylving would immediately draw suspicion.

When unknown persons including PC parties enter Gylving, they can expect to be asked frequently about their intentions. The watch and perhaps the Freemen’s militia or even the steward will interrogate PCs who say they intend to travel into Gallist areas and show no evidence of being merchants en route to Bildoobaris.

Residents of the Central Dale have been attacked often by members of the Dragon Cult and other organizations serving Harbet Gall who traveled through the Free Dale to reach their destinations in the East. Local officials may tell any visitors who are suspect that they may not leave Gylving until further notice. Local law provides for such detention. Those who violate the travel ban may be arrested and tried.

Gylving is dependent to some extent upon the Western Dale for food. There is fertile soil north and northwest of the town along the Auststraumur and the Sudurstraumur where some crops can be raised, but most of the soil north of the Trade Route is suitable only for grain and flax, while the land south of the Trade Route is used mainly to graze dairy and beef cattle.

As in most other settlements of the Central Dale, Gylving also is an important source of textiles. In the cold months of the year, when there is less farm work to do and the men tend to be harvesting firewood, the women often sit at their spinning wheels and looms, making linen. The material is used first to provide for their own families, but the surplus is sold and exported westward. Most of the linen is purchased by front operations of the Iron Throne in New Sarshel.

Because no water flows through Gylving, the town cannot mill its own grain. Therefore, when grain is harvested, it usually is brought directly to the mill in Karlshofn on the Auststraumur to the north.

Adventure Hooks in Gylving

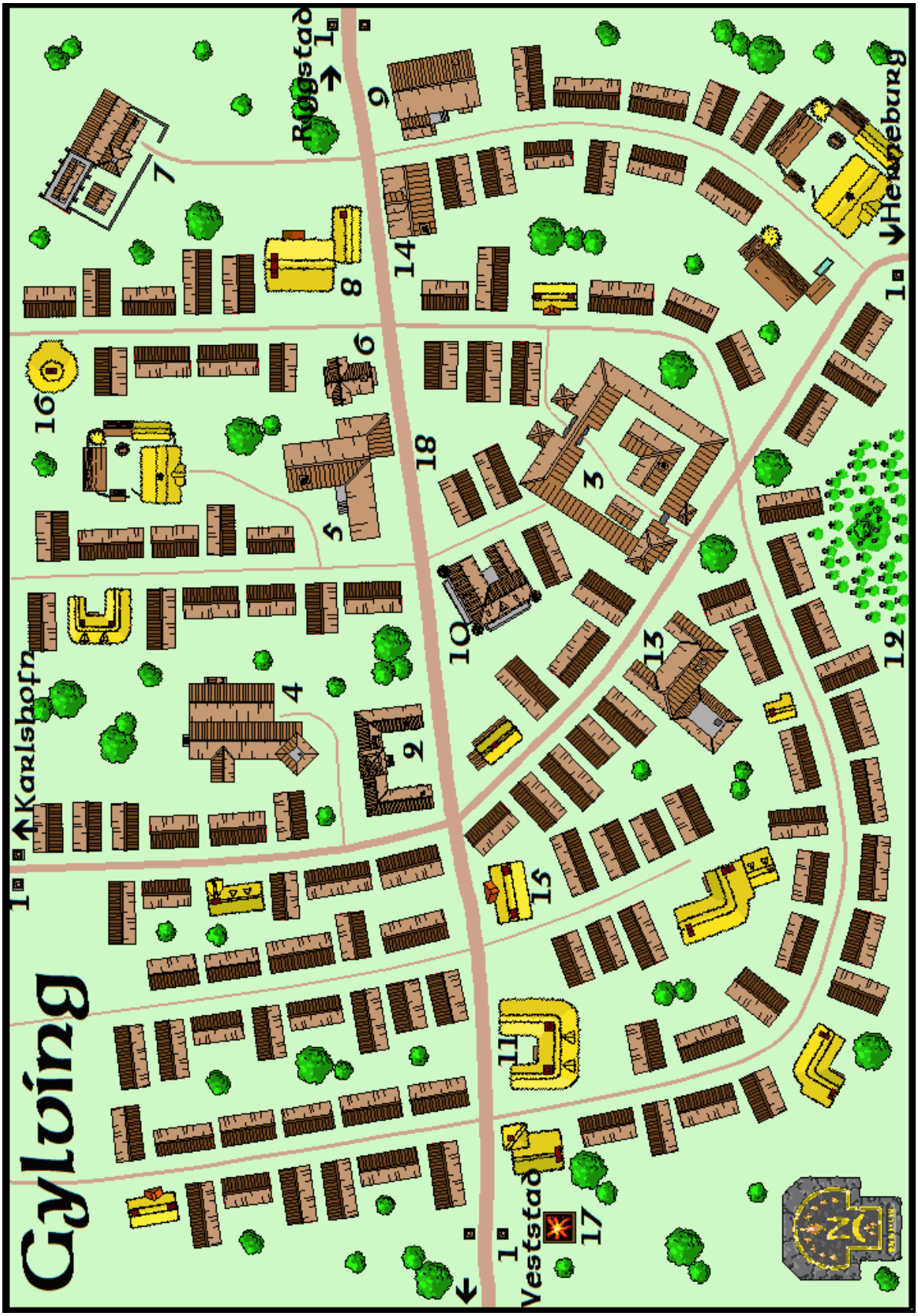
Being a farmers' town with few things of value and little magic, Gylving is not exactly busting at the seams with adventure hooks. Nonetheless, a number of things can pop their corks when the PCs hit town:

- **Raid -** After the PCs settle in to spend a night in Gylving, a raiding party of Hunters of Herne comes up the trail from Herneburg, but not before the dying guard at the town entrance can sound the alarm. Soldiers from the Freemen's barracks respond quickly, and there's a battle going on at the southeastern end of town, where the raiders are holed up in the farm in the lower right corner of the Gylving map (unnumbered, with thatched roofs). The PCs doubtless will react to all of the commotion, but before they reach the scene of the battle, a crying young girl, about 7 or 8 years old, comes running up to them and begs for help, saying her family is being beaten and taken captive by a group of men.

She leads them to the large farm (unnumbered with a thatched roof) in the lower left part of the map, between the two inns (Nos. 11 and 13). A second band of raiders has slipped unnoticed to the farm and is in the process of leading the girl's family away into captivity. The raiding party should be adjusted according to the level of the PCs' party. Normally, it would consist of evil rangers of Herne, perhaps an evil true druid of Herne, and where more power is needed, there also can be a necromancer from the Tower Threespires cell of the Dragon Cult looking for material to work with, in a manner of speaking. If the PCs give their best to fight the Hunters of Herne, the adventure hook *Suspicion* no longer is possible. The people of the Central Dale are careful, but they also are a sincere folk of good will.

- **Suspicion:** Whenever anyone comes to the Central Dale without any apparent reason to do so, people wonder why. After all, there isn't much reason why most people would want to come to the Central Dale. The most convincing reason one can give is that one has business in Vulddin, which is a frequent and legitimate reason for passing through town. PCs with a credible connection to the church of Helm could contend successfully that they're on their way to the monastery near Torside. At Trade Fair time, PCs who look convincingly like traders with merchandise also could be bound to Bildoobaris. However, all other answers will cause skepticism and will lead to the watch, members of the Freemen's militia and alert citizens keeping a close eye upon the visitors, hoping to catch them making a mistake. The worst possible answer the PCs could give is that their destination is in the Gallist areas. With few exceptions, Dragon Cult members and other villains who have gone to the Eastern Dale to help Harbet Gall wage war upon the people of the Central Dale have taken advantage of the relatively high level of free movement allowed in the Central Dale and reached their destination traveling down the Trade Route. For that reason, almost every settlement of the Central Dale has an ordinance allowing the detention of persons suspected of being Gallist allies. Whoever is detained must surrender his or weapons and magical items to the commander of the Freemen until the issue is clarified. Clarification is the process of magically testing the suspects to see if they are what they claim to be. The local authorities have three rides (30 days) time to bring magi or priests to town to perform the tests. If the suspects object to detention and make a binding pledge not to travel eastward of Uthmere again, they are allowed to be taken with patrols back to Uthmere, where they are freed. Such a return journey is made in steps, however, as patrols happen to be returning. Upon reaching Uthmere, the suspects are given their possessions once more. It is a crime for such suspects to return to the Central Dale. It also is a crime to leave an area where one is retained. Violators are sentenced to one year's imprisonment, and after serving their sentences, they are deported to Uthmere, where they are freed but banned for life from returning to the Central Dale. The *Suspicion* hook can make an adventure more interesting; it can force the PCs to reach Harbet Gall by a very roundabout way. It also can be used in a number of settlements, not just Gylving.

- **Deadslayer:** The PCs may hear the full tale of Sir Tebbet's valiant deeds and also learn that his *Deadslayer* sword is buried in Tebbet's Cairn, causing them to head northward to rob the grave.


Gylving
1 Karlshofn
1 Ruggstad
1 Veststad
1 Hekneburg
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Gylving

Map of Gylving

1 - Guard Towers. These watchposts stand 20 feet/6m high and are manned 24 hours a day by the town watch. At normal times, one member of the watch is present at each location. Where there are two towers, only one is usually manned.

2 - Town Hall. The hall is Gylving's administrative center where Steward Hléseyssonur maintains his office, along with other town officials. The city watch also has its headquarters in the hall.

3 - Garrison, Company A, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia. The company averages 100 man strong.

4 - Gylving Cooperative Brewery. Brewmaster Kevin Duarth, human male, AL: NG, Exp 3, an immigrant from Damara, brews a single beer, a light bottom-fermented lager known only as *Gylving Beer*. It is sold only within the Gylving area. The Gylving Barley Growers Cooperative, an organization of local farmers, owns the brewery and malting house. Hops are not grown in Gylving. Duarth buys hops extract from the monks of Mauberg's Oak. Most locals pay in barter.

5 - Gylving Slaughterhouse. The owner is Bardhr Ullarsasonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 5, a master butcher. The combined slaughterhouse and smoke house employs four journeymen and four apprentices. Most meat slaughtered in Gylving and Karlshofn is processed here. Locals buying meat or sausage usually pay in barter.

6 - Temple to Ilmater. Painbearer Elias Gundl, human male, AL: LG, cleric (Ilmater) lvl 2, makes his home on the temple's upper floor, but he is in Gylving only part of the time. His congregation also includes Karlshofn and Hnútar, where he spends at least half of his time.

7 - West Neck Tannery. Hides from slaughtered cattle are fashioned into leather in this plant on the edge of town and then tooled by leather workers in the plant. The prevailing wind in Gylving is from the West, which blows the tannery's fumes away from town on most days, dispersing them over the range. Under an ordinance passed by Steward Hléseyssonur and the council, the plant is required to stop tanning operations and concentrate on leather tooling on those rare days when the wind shifts unfavorably.

8 - Neidh Hunarssonur, Wainwright. Hunarssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 3, his journeyman and two apprentices build wagons and sleds for local customers. Most pay in barter.

9 - Karan Deepore, Smith. Deepore, dwarf male, AL: LG, Exp 3, Ftr 3, is a moderately talented blacksmith from Hillsafar Hall in Vaasa. He left his home halls in Zhengyi's time, largely because he wanted to work as a smith, although his clan had relegated him to the fighter's role, due to his limited talents. He settled down in Gylving, buying the smithy that had been owned by a deceased human master. Deepore does no work with weapons or armor. He spends most of his time making and repairing farm implements. About 80% of his business is done on the basis of barter.

10 - West Neck Inn. Gylving's finest inn is modest by Faerûnian standards. Both the public room and guest rooms are simple but comfortable. The inn is owned by Nylda Tardungsdóttir, human female, AL: NG, Exp 2, the widow of a ranger from the Tellerth circle. The 10 single rooms costs 6 silver shiners per night. The four doubles cost 5 shiners per person. The maturbordh costs 6 shiners. The house offers Gylving beer at 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard and it has a selection of Mauberg's Oak fruit waters at 2 to 6 shiners per shot/0.1 liter glass. Locals using the common room pay in barter.

11 - Dalegate Inn. The oldest of Gylving's two inns is somewhat in need of repairs. In the cold months, the house is a bit drafty, and the age of the construction shows. The inn itself is about 500 years old, although several parts of it have been added since and others have been rebuilt. The owner is Tendar Darfyngssonur, human male, AL: LG, Com 3, who inherited the inn, which has been in his family for several centuries. Darfyngssonur would be glad to repair the house, but he lacks the money to do so. The 8 single rooms costs 4 silver shiners per night. The two doubles cost 3 shiners per person. The maturbordh costs 5 silver shiners. The house offers Gylving beer at 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard, the only drink offered. Locals using the common room pay in barter.

12 - Cemetery.

13 - Trade Route Textiles. The company, owned by Mina Sinfurssdóttir, human female, AL: NG, Exp 1, buys woven linen wares from local farmers' wives and transports them to New Sarshel for resale. This rather unusual business collects shopping lists from the farm women. In New Sarshel, the linens are sold for cash, and the company's merchants then buy the items on the shopping lists and deliver them to the wives in payment, making the company's finances a mix of cash and barter.

14 - Ranger's Rest Tavern. This is a popular gathering place for travelers and adventurers passing through Gylving as well as roving rangers and druids. The lantern-lit tavern is run by Renneth Kurby, human male, AL: NG, ranger lvl 7, a retired member of the Tellerth circle. He offers Gylving beer at 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard and has a selection of Mauberg's Oak fruit waters at 2 to 6 shiners per shot/0.1 liter glass. No food is sold. Locals pay in barter.

15 - Ploughshare Tavern. Farmers who have put in their day's work tend to come evenings to the simple tavern of Hárm Tudhlssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 2, which opens daily at sunset. Tudhlssonur serves only Gylving beer at 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard or for a barter payment. Talk in the Ploughshare usually is limited to local life. Travelers who come to the Ploughshare often move on to the Ranger's Rest or one of the inns after a single drink. Locals pay in barter.

16 - Shrine to Chauntea. The faith has no clerics in Gylving, but the town often is visited by druids.

17 - Signal Tower. In times of emergency, semaphore fires are built atop the tower to warn neighboring settlements.

18 - The Trade Route.

Karlshofn

Hamlet, Conventional, AL: NG, 40 gp limit. Assets: 240 gp. Population: 60; 100% human. Authority figure: Baron Annar Gunnarsson, human male, AL: NG, Aris 8, Ftr 8, baron of Ganglhofn and Riggstad; Tandur Hlítssonur, human male, AL: NG, Ftr 1, alderman of Karlshofn. Watch: All 14 adult male farmers, War 1-2. Other: Narfi Lorgssonur, human male, AL: NG, Ranger lvl 8 (retired). Taxation type: Benevolent.

Karlshofn exists to run a grain and oil mill for Gylving and Hnútar, neither of which have water. It's a tiny place with a few farms that really are nothing more the northern fringe of Gylving. In the evening, the doors of a small tavern open. It's in the end of the alderman's farmhouse where the owner serves Gylving beer and his own moonshine whisky. That's about all there is today in Karlshofn, although there once was more, before the old village was leveled by war.

Baron Annar's representative in Karlshofn is a farmer named Tandur Hlítssonur who has the honorary title *alderman*. He was chosen because he was the only literate person in the hamlet at the time. Since the arrival of retired ranger Narfi Lorgssonur there are two people in Karlshofn who can read and write.

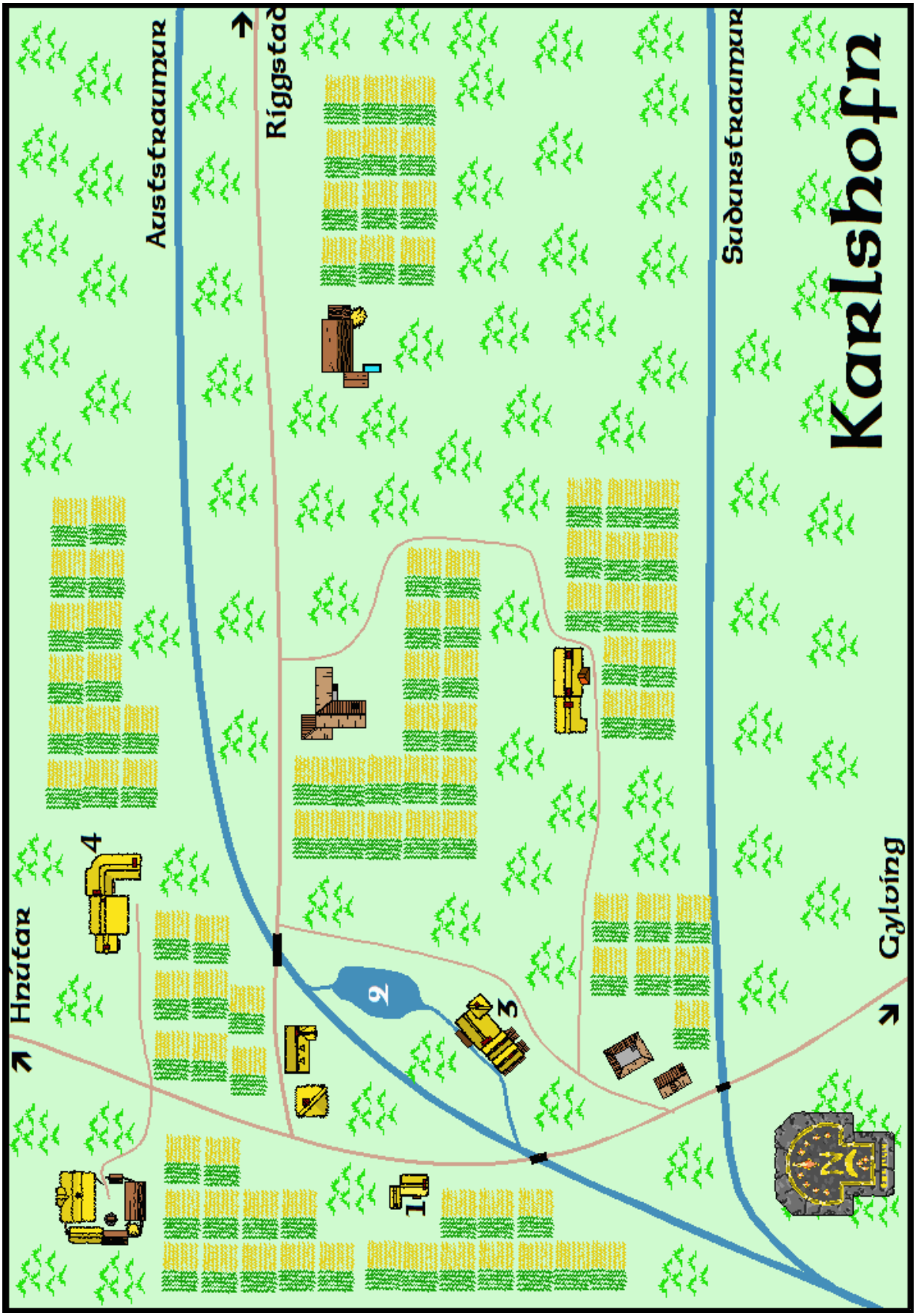
When patrols from Riggstad pass through Karlshofn, they bring messages from the baron's court to Hlítssonur, and he sees to it that word is passed among the folk. Legal problems almost never arise in the hamlet, but if they should occur, they would be resolved at the baron's court in Riggstad. In the unlikely case of crime, Hlítssonur and the other farmers doubtless would try to take the perpetrator prisoner and see to it that he reaches the baron's court for judgment.

Like most of the rest of the Central Dale, Karlshofn also has a history of being destruction and reconstruction during the run of the ongoing civil war. Three miles/5 km east of the hamlet's center (not shown on the map) is the garrison of Company D of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment of the Freemen's militia. It has a total strength of 100.

Adventure Hooks in Karlshofn

- **Suspicion -** See the adventure hooks for Gylving.

- **Secrets -** Narfi Lorgssonur, now a retired ranger, spent 10 years on the slave farm near Kront in Ashanath before succeeding in a daring escape. The details of the escape are left up to the Game Master. Lorgssonur is a special adventure hook designed for the Game Master to use to give the PCs whatever advance knowledge of things he wishes them to have regarding the Eastern Dale.


Auststraumar
Hnútar
Riggstad
Suðurstraumar
Gylving
Karlshofn
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Karlshofn

Map of Karlshofn

1 - Narfi Lorgssonur's Farm.

2 - Mill Pond.

3 - Auststraumur Mill. Tielur Halbardssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 5, owns the Mill. He is a master miller who employs two journeymen and three apprentices. The mill grinds flour and presses oil from wildflower seeds. It serves both Gylving and Hnútar.

4 - Alderman Tandur Hlítssonur's Farm and Tavern. Hlítssonur has a homemade still in the end of his easternmost farm shed where he makes his own rye whisky. The extension on the west side of the main house is a small tavern where local farmers gather at night to drink Gylving beer or the alderman's rye. Locals pay in barter. If travelers stop by in the long months of the year en route to Hnútar, he'll sell them a beer for 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard or his own whisky at 1 silver shiner per shot/0.1 liter glass. He'll also sell a slice of bread, butter and several slices of cold sausage on a board for a shiner.

Hnútar

Small Town, Conventional, AL: NG, 800 gp limit. Assets: 44,000 gp. Population: 1,100 (including 200 militiamen); 98% human, 1% dwarf, 1% other. Authority figures: Baron Annar Gunnarsson, human male, AL: NG, Aris 8, Ftr 8, baron of Ganglhofn and Riggstad; Súkur Krogrssonur, human male, AL: NG, Aris 3, Ftr 5, steward of Hnútar. Important Persons: Major Nuring Turidhssonur, human male, AL: NG, Ftr 11, Commander, 4th Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia; Captain Raghad Nútunsonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 6, Ranger 4, commander, Company A, 4th Battalion; Captain Tarkyng Kevidssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 3, Ranger 7, commander, Company B, 4th Battalion,; Others: Painbearer Elias Gundl, human male, AL: LG, cleric (Ilmater) 2. City watch, 22 male and female human, AL: All, Ftr 1-2, War 1-6. Taxation type: Benevolent.

Hnútar is something of a monument to Ilmater, who is one of the gods most worshipped there. It is a model not only of perseverance but also of the pride in perseverance triumphing.

Gylving to the south celebrates its salvation by Sir Tebbet, who drove the dracolich Nestamanur northward to their mutual doom in the Year of the Oracle's Carcass (1004 DR). That event, as great as it is in the legends of the Central Dale, came too late for Hnútar or Karlshofn to the south. The undead wyrm's deadly chlorine breath slew every man, woman and child who remained in the two settlements before his fateful first encounter with Sir Tebbet in Gylving.

Unlike Karlshofn, which never again grew to be more than a shadow of the milling center it had been, Hnútar rose from the ashes, fell then briefly to the Hunters of Herne and rose once more, to become a banner of the glory of perseverance for all of the Dale.

After the ravaging attacks of the fallen dracolich, the Hunters of Herne made a strong and determined move southward in the Year of the Three Signs (1010 DR). They established Tangetsjódur in ancient elven ruins, and reached the sylvan source of the Auststraumur two years later, in the Year of the Flamboyant Coif (1012 DR). There they established the Gallist hamlet of Zieth. They continued downstream, founding the thorp of Tils, and then rolled southwestward toward Hnútar, establishing the thorp of Mugh along the way.

The Freemen had sent reinforcements to Hnútar, to stop the march of the Hunters of Herne. Unfortunately, they badly underestimated the size of Gall's force – about 800 men – and were sorely defeated at Hnútar. The most the 200 Freemen who attempted to defend the forest town could do was to hold Gall's men long enough to make a defended retreat to the ruins of Karlshofn, where the decisive battle occurred.

By this time, reinforcements from Gylving and Riggstad had reached Karlshofn. The few farms that had been rebuilt there burned to the ground before the battle's end. The Freemen were some 600, fresh and ready for battle. Among the flames of Karlshofn, they gave the weary Hunters of Herne a thorough thrashing, forcing them into the forest east of the road to Hnútar, while the main flank of Freemen marched upon Hnútar, slaying the small contingent of Gallists who had remained behind. Since that day, the Freemen have held Hnútar proudly.

Nestled just inside southern Rawlinswood, Hnútar remains a strong bastion in the Freemen's fight against evil, although those stationed in Hnútar are justifiably uncertain against just which evil they're defending their fellow Dalesmen.

The presence of the Hunters of Herne has become negligible in Rawlinswood west of Dender's Valley since the rise of the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos. No one in the militia, including its high command in Uthmere or the few druids of the Tellerth Circle who keep secret that the Nentyarch once was one of their own, Cynric Evenhand, knows what to expect in the future from the strange power now dominating north central Rawlinswood.

The high command of the Freemen in Uthmere is not eager to make a foe of the Nentyarch. This is in part because it has too little knowledge to assess his powers and his weaknesses, but also because the Nentyarch to date has been above all the enemy of the Freemen's enemy - Harbet Gall - and he has posed no threat to Dalesmen who stay out of his domain.

However, there's the rub, as a bard once said. Some Dalesmen in the Hnútar area have gone into the Nentyarch's mysterious domain, and they have not returned to tell about it. The Nentyarch does indeed pose something of a threat for the men of Hnútar. They work in Rawlinswood, but no one is certain exactly where the Nentyarch considers the borders of his domain to be.

The occupied Gallist hamlet of Zieth apparently still is outside of the Nentyarch's self-defined borders, because he has not troubled it, but the invisible line over which some hunters have crossed, never to return again, appears to be not too far north of Zieth. Moreover, the Nentyarch clearly claims the ruins of Tangetsjódur.

This issue is important, because most of the men of Hnútar are woodsmen and hunters by trade, although there are some grain and cattle farmers south of town. For hundreds of years, the men of Hnútar have worked closely with the druids of Silvanus to see to it that the surrounding woodlands are hunted, logged and replanted properly.

In earlier times, before Harbet Gall came to the Dale, there were full druid circles in Hnútar and Dender's Valley, comparable to today's Tellerth Circle in the northwestern part of the forest. These were destroyed in the course of the civil war, the Dender's Valley circle having been almost totally eradicated even before Gall's time.

The druids who work with the men of Hnútar today are the descendants of the vanished circles, viewed by some other druids as being renegades, because they belong to no circle. That notwithstanding, these men obviously still are blessed by Silvanus, the deity they serve. The rangers who work with them also still are clearly in the good graces of their goddess, Mielikki. Whether the Nentyarch recognizes this is unknown.

Hnútar does not bury its dead in town. Instead, burials take place in a small grove sacred to all four of the town's faiths. The grove is in the forest outside of town along the road to the ruins of Mugh and to the occupied hamlet of Zieth.

Men's business in Hnútar has first and foremost to do with the hunt in summertime. When oak leaves begin their slow fall in autumn, the men turn from the hunt to logging, thinning out stands of forest to assure healthy future growth and replanting areas the druids have approved for cutting. The new wood is brought back to town, some of it going to the treadmill-turned sawmill, the rest being stored for two years before it's fit as heating fuel.

The women spend the entire year taking care of their households, children, if any, and the like. In the warm season, the women are responsible for the small farm patches the families maintain south of town to feed themselves. In the winter, they spend much of their time behind a spinning wheel or a loom, making the cloth used to clothe their families and selling the surplus material to the Linen Center, which transports it to Uthmere for resale.

Those men who don't go logging or hunting often spend the entire year doing carpentry or woodcarving. Traders who come to Hnútar to acquire products that they resell in the West purchase their wares.

Hnútar has no temples, but it does have shrines to Silvanus and Mielikki in the forest just north of town and to Chauntea in town. These are visited by druids and rangers of these faiths. There also is a shrine in town to Ilmater, where regular services take place, conducted by Painbearer Elias Gundl of Gylving, who works as a traveling cleric.

Baron Annar has appointed a steward, a native son of Hnútar named Súkur Krogrssonur, to administer the town. Krogrssonur works together with a council of five appointed by the baron to pass the ordinances that govern Hnútar. The steward also tries minor civil and criminal cases, but the baron personally tries major cases in Riggstad, where the barony's prison is. The steward maintains a town watch 22 strong.

A wooden palisade wall 20 feet/6 m high protects Hnútar. There are wooden guard towers at regular intervals in the wall, but these are manned only in times of trouble. However, the guard towers at the two entrances to the town are manned at all times, each by two guards.

PC parties who are strangers in Hnútar should expect the same kind of reception and observation as in Gylving. No one in Hnútar would understand why anyone would visit their town, except to perhaps negotiate a linen contract or to buy the wares of artisans.

If the PCs name Zieth as their goal, they will be watched very carefully. The Freemen have occupied Zieth for more than 300 years, but the people of Hnútar still suspect that they are merely waiting for the Hunters of Herne to rekindle the old war. The only reason they can imagine for outsiders wanting to go there is to bring secret information to the enemy.

If, on the other hand, the PCs say that their goal is Dun Tharos, the locals will assume them to be insane and be happy to see them depart, after the PCs have paid all of their debts.

Adventure Hooks in Hnútar

- **Suspicion -** See the adventure hooks for Gylving.

- **The Nentyarch -** The mysterious power in Dun Tharos is a key theme in Hnútar. No one in town knows who or what the Nentyarch is or what his intentions may be, but almost everyone has lost someone they know who ventured northward and never returned. Many people also think they know third hand of people who have entered Dun Tharos and escaped again, although this never has occurred as far as residents of Hnútar are concerned. However, as a result of these false claims, the people of Hnútar are more than delighted to whisper *"secrets"* of Narfelli magic and other invented details of Dun Tharos to strangers, although no living person in Hnútar every has been anywhere near the Nentyarch's stronghold. Any campaign that will take the PCs to Dun Tharos will find that Hnútar is the ideal starting point.

Hnútar

Map of Hnútar

1 - Town Hall. The hall is the seat of Steward Súkur Krogrssonur, his council and the town administration, and it also contains the barracks of the town watch. A small dungeon is beneath the hall where prisoners sentenced to short jail terms are confined.

2 - Watch Stables. The horses for the town watch and town officials are housed here.

3 - Barracks and Stables (right) of Company A, 4th Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia. The battalion headquarters also are in this building.

4 - Barracks and Stables (right) of Company B, 4th Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia.

5 - Training grounds, Freemen's militia.

6 - Shrine to Chauntea. Unmanned but visited occasionally by druids.

7 - Shrine to Ilmater. Unmanned but visited frequently by Painbearer Elias Gundl of Gylving.

8 - Rawlinswood Inn. The hostelry is somewhat rundown, a result of doing only marginal business. The guest rooms often are empty. The only guests usually are traders and merchants who come to town to buy local wares, and most of them visit Hnútar in spring. As a result, the guest rooms are somewhat drafty and chilly in winter, even if a fire is roaring in the fireplace. However, the thick feather quilts provided with each bed compensate for the chill. Jildlya Niblsdóttir, human female, AL: NG, Com 2, the widow of a ranger who fell in a skirmish in the south, owns the inn. The 10 single rooms cost 3 silver shiners. The public room, in contrast to the hostelry, tends to be quite lively in the evening. The inn draws local artisans, businessmen and members of the Freemen's militia. Most of them come to drink rather than to eat, therefore, there's too little business to sustain the maturbordh typical for inns in the Great Dale, but Niblsdóttir will prepare a hearty meal of boar or venison for travelers or houseguests when they come. The prices, depending upon what she has to offer, range from 3 to 6 shiners. The only drink offered is traditional Rawlinswood Ale from the local brewery at 3 copper bites pre quart/liter tankard. Locals usually pay in barter. Guests with horses can keep their animals overnight in the inn's stable, just south of the main building, for a copper bite a night.

9 - Narg Stoutaxe Smith. Stoutaxe, dwarf male, AL: LG, Exp 3, is a refugee of only modest smith's talent who comes from Vaasa's Hillsafar Hall. While his abilities are below master level, he has learned not only the blacksmith's craft but also the basics of repairing armor and metal weapons. Locals pay in barter.

10 - Rawlinswood Wagons and Sleds. Wainwright Nyrfi Bolthungssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 2, makes wagons and sleds for local customers. Most of his trade is barter.

11 - Hnútar Linen Center. Much of the year, this building is used only for storage. The center itself is a cooperative. Its members are the farmers' wives who make linen in the cold months from flax grown south of the town and the forest. In Mirtul, the center's doors open to business. At that time, traders from other areas come to town to purchase the works of linen.

12 - Hnútar Sawmill. All the timber harvested in Rawlinswood that is not intended to serve as firewood is taken to the sawmill to be cut into lumber, much of which is used locally. The rest is sold to lumber traders who come through in spring to make lot purchases. Because no stream flows through Hnútar to turn a waterwheel, a treadmill in the eastern end of the main building powers the saws. Four draught horses drive the mill.

13 - Woodsman's Retreat Tavern. Vragg Sundurssonur, human male, AL: N, Com 1, owns this watering hole, which is the place where loggers, hunters and occasionally the rangers or even druids who work with them come evenings for a draught or two. There is no food, and the only drink served is local Rawlinswood Ale, normally paid for in barter. If a customer wants to pay in coin, a quart/liter tankard costs 3 copper bites.

14 - Signal Tower. A large fire can be set atop to the tower to warn neighboring villages of danger.

15 - Rawlinswood Brewery. Targl Liflssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp1, brews a simple but drinkable, top fermented light ale. Those who want ale at home bring ceramic jugs to the brewery, and Liflssonur fills them. Pay is almost always in barter. He also provides ale to the Rawlinswood Inn and the Woodsman's Retreat Tavern.

Riggstad

Large Town, Conventional, AL: NG, 3,000 gp limit. Assets: 660,000 gp. Population: 4,400 (including 250 militiamen); 98% human, 1% dwarf, 1% other. Authority figures: Baron Annar Gunnarsson, human male, AL: NG, Aris 8, Ftr 8, baron of Ganglhofn and Riggstad. Important Persons: Major Talverk Noridhssonur, human male, AL: LG, commander, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment; Captain Lyngi Burdolfssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 5, Ranger 5, commander, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia; Captain Nedh Ketelssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 4, Ranger 6, commander, Company 3, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia; Others: Painbearer Rod Lascoll, human male, AL: LG, cleric (Ilmater) 3; Ronneth Bloodfeathers, human male, AL: CG, Cleric (Tempus) 1. City watch: Commander Andul Gefardhssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 10; 80 male and female human, AL: non-evil, Ftr 1-5, Ranger 1-4. Taxation type: Benevolent.

Riggstad, the seat of the Barony of Ganglhofn and Riggstad, has the same tragic history as much of the rest of the Dale. It is a story of death and destruction, the worst of it from the dragons of Harbet Gall and from quarter of a century the town spent within the firm control of the Hunters of Herne in Gall's early years in the Dale.

The town, the largest of the barony's five settlements, stands now defiant as a protecting sentinel of the West. That defiance is nowhere so clearly seen as in the town wall; there is none. It's almost as if the people of Riggstad are *daring* the Gallists to come back and make trouble for them again. However, that attitude at least isn't as bad as in Ganglhofn.

Riggstad is a town that has learned that it has to fight to live. Some generations of Dalesmen have been able to live in relative peace, but others can expect some abomination from Harbet Gall to wing in over Rawlinswood or hordes of attackers to march down the Trade Route westward, leaving behind their own carcasses perhaps, but not before leaving death and devastation in the lands of the Freemen.

As a result, the people of Riggstad always are fully fit. There's hardly a male in the town who hasn't done his service with the Freemen. The majority of them have come back as talented rangers or fighters. The same goes for a fair share of the young women. Anyone who is fit to wield a weapon in Riggstad usually has one of respectable quality, and he or she keeps it in good repair, which provides more than one dwarven smith with work.

Adventurers who come to Riggstad for the first time shouldn't expect to impress the locals. What’s more, big mouthed PCs will have a terrible time in Riggstad, being banned from inns where they misbehave, and the like. The town watch will uphold an innkeeper's decision to throw an undesirable out. If high-level parties start attacking locals or killing them, the town will fight until the last man and woman are dead. Few parties can hold out against a few thousand angry simultaneous attackers, particularly if a large number of them are trained rangers and fighters.

Riggstad's worst times were in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), when two green dragons who had earlier left a trail of terror in Uthving and Gylving came to Riggstad, leaving many choking in chlorine gas. They were followed by an ancient blue dragon who attacked the survivors with lightning. In the end, 60% of the town lay in rubble and ashes and 95 were dead. With building materials in short supply, it took until the Year of the Fist (1311 DR) before the town could be completely restored.

In addition to a town watch 80 strong, all trained rangers and fighters, the 200 men of companies B and C of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, also protect Riggstad. Another 50 are support troops for the battalion's headquarters. Not only the militia and the watch but also the general population is on the alert when it thinks the bread is rising again in the East.

That's certainly the case these days in Riggstad. There have been no attacks yet, but there are reports of dragons winging from the northwest over the Narfelli Plain into eastern Rawlinswood, and upset Nar tribesmen confirm these as well. There also are a number of reports describing large numbers of undead in the area around Tower Threespires, the stronghold of Gall's Tiamatist Dragon Cult cell, which is led by a necromancer. Riggstad is as prepared as it can be.

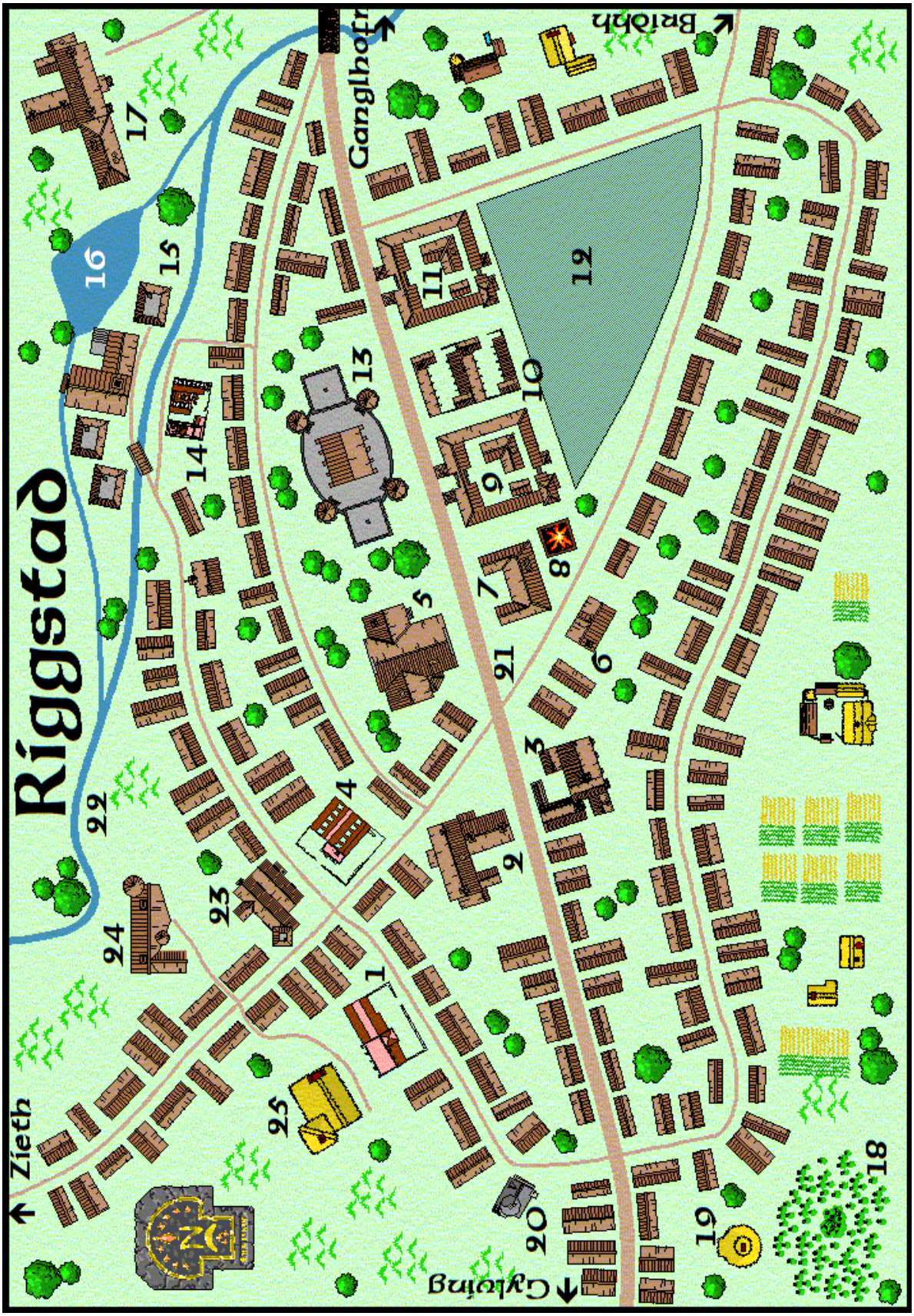
As in most of the Dale, Ilmater and Chauntea have a strong following in Riggstad. Tempus also has a growing following here and in Ganglhofn and Vulddin. Riggstad, being somewhat removed from Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest, has fewer worshippers of Silvanus than in other parts of the Western Dale. Many of the rangers who have returned from service with the militia have taken up the worship of Mielikki.

Adventure Hooks in Riggstad

- **Suspicion -** See the adventure hooks for Gylving.

- **Bad Behavior -** The residents of Riggstad are a proud folk. They have fought hard to defend what they own. The always are glad for the help of outsiders, but they don't ask for it. They're willing and ready to handle their own problems. Outsiders who come to town and who begin belittling, demeaning or insulting locals will quickly have a fight on their hands. If the fight gets to the point where there are arrests, the baron usually convicts the outsiders who started the fight of disorderly conduct and will send them to jail for 10 days.

- **Information -** Just about any information the Game Master wants the PCs to gain about the East, including false information, should be available in Riggstad. The town is only two settlements away from Bezentil and the border area.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Riggstad

Map of Ríggstad

1 - Guran Goldhelm, Smith. Goldhelm, dwarf male, AL: LG, Exp 8, Ftr 8, has been in Riggstad for some 200 years. He tells no tales of his homeland or his clan. Goldhelm is a master weaponsmith and armor maker as well as a master blacksmith, although he seldom practices the latter craft. He employs a journeyman weaponsmith, a journeyman armor maker, two journeyman blacksmiths and four apprentices, all of them human. Locals usually pay in barter.

2 - Trade Route Inn. A very modest inn by Faerûnian standards but Riggstad's best. The innkeeper is Narda Lifurdhsdóttir, human female, AL: N, Exp 2, a native of Riggstad. Overnight guests are relatively infrequent but the public room does good business. The 10 simple single rooms cost 6 silver shiners a night, the six equally simple doubles cost 5 shiners per person. The relatively small maturbordh costs 7 shiners. The only drink is Riggstad Ale from the local brewery at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Locals usually pay in barter.

3 - Dead Hunters' Inn. Innkeeper Leemy Drugh, human male, AL: NG, ranger 6 (retired), a fugitive from Damara, gave his house its confusing name in an attempt to praise the slaying of the Hunters of Herne. The house is just slightly lower in quality than the *Trade Route*. There are few overnight guests but the public room does fairly well. The 12 single rooms cost five shiners a night, with the two doubles going for four shiners per person. The maturbordh, at 7 shiners, doesn't offer a large selection, but Drugh has good connections from his active days and does get high quality boar and venison. The only drink is Riggstad Ale from the local brewery at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Locals usually pay in barter.

4 - Lareg mac Tuat, Smith. Mac Tuat, dwarf male, AL: LG, Exp 6, Ftr 10, is from the Earthfast Clan above Impiltur. However, he speaks little of his past. He's a master weaponsmith and armor maker, but his smithy also does blacksmith's work. He employs a journeyman weaponsmith, a journeyman armor maker, two journeyman blacksmiths and five apprentices, all of them human. Locals usually pay in barter.

5 - Ilmater Temple. The temple also serves Ganglhofn. It is manned by Painbearer Rod Lascoll, human male, AL: LG, cleric (Ilmater) lvl 3.

6 - Sleeping Lynx Tavern. This is a popular watering hole with fighters and soldiers but not visiting rangers, who tend to go to the Dead Hunters' Inn instead. The tavernkeeper, Bog Docks, human male, AL: N, Com 1, is a fugitive from the Vast. He's being sought for theft in Tsurlagol, not that anyone in Riggstad would care much. His only drink is Riggstad Ale from the local brewery at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Locals usually pay in barter.

7 - Town Watch Barracks.

8 - Signal Tower.

9 - Barracks, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia. This building also houses the 3rd Battalion's headquarters.

10 - Stables, Companies B and C.

11 - Barracks, Company C, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia.

12 - Training Grounds.

13 - Baron Annar's Castle. In additions to the baron's areas, the town administration is housed in the castle. The Riggstad jail is in the dungeon of the castle.

14 - Gylfur Ginnarssonur Wainwright. Ginnarssonur, human male, AL: LN, Exp 5, has a booming business, building sleds and wagons not only for local farmers but also for the 3rd Battalion of the militia. He has two journeymen and four apprentices. Locals usually pay in barter.

15 - Central Dale Mill. The miller, Drómi Duradhssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 2, grinds various flours and presses vegetable oil. Two journeymen and Duradhssonur's sons work in the mill. Locals usually pay in barter.

16 - Mill Pond

17 - Riggstad Tannery. The tannery makes leather of the hides of slaughtered animals. On most days, the wind blows the tannic acid fumes to the east, away from the tannery. On days when the wind shifts, under the baron's law, the tannery must suspend its tanning operations and concentrate instead upon leatherwork. The master tanner is Liam O'Fathel, human male, AL; NG, Exp 2, an immigrant from Damara. He employs five journeymen and seven apprentices. Locals usually pay in barter.

18 - Cemetery.

19 - Shrine to Chauntea. Unmanned.

20 - Shrine to Tempus. There is discussion among followers of building - as a volunteer town effort - an expansion of the shrine into a small temple. There is an ever-growing following for the war god among the soldiers of the Freemen's militia. Recently, a newly ordained priest of Tempus, Ronneth Bloodfeathers, human male, AL: CG, Cleric (Tempus) lvl 1, was sent from the Vast to serve the shrine, but the building at present is too small to house him. He lives in the Dead Hunters' Inn.

21 - Trade Route.

22 - Sudurstraumur.

23 - Riggstad Brewery. The small brewery and malting house produce a single brew, Riggstad Ale, a light top-ferment that is pleasant but not among the legendary beers or ales of Faerûn. It is sold only in Riggstad, and it is the only ale or beer brewed in Riggstad. The brewmaster is Fal Fenjurssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 2. He employs two journeyman brewers and two apprentices. Locals usually pay in barter.

24 - Riggstad Slaughterhouse. Under the baron's laws, Riggstad animals may be slaughtered only here. This law is the result of diseases that had spread among the herds several years ago. The druids of Chauntea determined that the diseases were the result of unsanitary private slaughtering practices. In charge of the slaughterhouse is master butcher Tul Nedhurssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 2. He employs three journeymen and four apprentices. Locals usually pay in barter.

25 - Riggstad Granary. This communal facility, owned by the baron, stores locally harvested grain, delivering it to the malting house and the mill and distributing it back to farmers as feed and for seeding. The farmers are paid, mostly in barter credits, for the grain when they bring it in, and they buy back feed and seed, again mostly with barter credits.

Ganglhofn

Small Town, Conventional, AL: NG, 800 gp limit. Assets: 56,000 gp. Population: 1,400 (including 450 militiamen); 99% human, 1% dwarf, half-elf, halfling. Authority figures: Baron Annar Gunnarsson, human male, AL: NG, Aris 8, Ftr 8, baron of Ganglhofn and Riggstad; Módhgudh Ófinssonur, human male, AL: NG, Aris 2, Ftr 5, steward of Ganglhofn. Important Persons: Major Burur Brokkssonur, human male, AL: LG, commander, 4th Battalion, 2nd Combat Regiment; Captain Frjódigar Ekinssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 5, Ranger 5, commander, Company A, 4th Battalion; Captain Gládhur Frekurssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 4, Ranger 6, commander, Company B, 4th Battalion, 2nd Combat Regiment; Captain Fidhur Galarssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 3, Ranger 7, commander, Company C, 4th Battalion; Captain Erp Fárbaudhssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 2, Ranger 8, commander, Company D, 4th Battalion. Others: Painbearer Géirur Vidhurssonur, human male, AL: LG, cleric (Ilmater) 7; Yalimbrar, human male, AL: CG, Cleric (Tempus) 3. City watch: Commander Borudh Brandurssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 9; 50 male and female human, AL: non-evil, Ftr 1-5, Ranger 1-4. Special: Most men in Ganglhofn without other PC or NPC classes are qualified as War 1-3. Taxation type: Benevolent.

From a bird's eye view, Ganglhofn looks something like a town that has burst at the seams and now is leaking through the holes. Until the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), when 90% of Ganglhofn was destroyed in dragon attacks, a protective wall of stone surrounded the town. Some stretches of the wall with their abandoned watchtowers still stand, but more sections of it are missing, and the town has grown outward through the breaches.

The fallen wall never has been rebuilt, nor have a number of other buildings in town. Many of those that stand and remain in use are in need of repair, but materials are hard to come by without money, and Ganglhofn lives on barter.

Only a part what stood was replaced in the years that followed the dragon attacks. Much of that came through new construction on empty land, rather than by replacing devastated structures. Most of the thatched roofs that once colored Ganglhofn's skyline are gone, replaced with wooden shingles. Both types of roofs burn, but a fire in shingles can be extinguished with luck. When thatch goes up in flame, the entire building usually is lost.

Many of the farmers who once worked the fields around Ganglhofn have vacated their homesteads and land, leaving ghost farms in the outlying areas. These farmers now raise their crops and animals farther westward.

The tannery, slaughterhouse and treadmill that once handled the town's agricultural production lay in ruin or have been torn down. Slaughtering, milling and the like now are done in Vulddin. The old granary ihas become a sales outlet for food products. Soldiers of the Freemen's militia make up a third of the population today. Ganglhofn is a town ready for war.

Ganglhofn has the same tragic history as much of the rest of the Dale with tales of death and destruction. The worst of it came from the dragons of Harbet Gall and from a quarter of a century within the firm control of the Hunters of Herne in Gall's early years in the Dale.

One could describe Ganglhofn's population today as people looking for a fight, a proud folk with a chip on its shoulder. Those who have stayed on usually are people who have lost one or more family members in battles or to slave-seeking kidnappers from the Hunters of Herne, and revenge is a prime motive in their lives. Dalesmen from other settlements also have come to the border town, sharing the natives' thirst for Gallist blood.

These people too are victims of similar loss. The town tends to draw bitter escapees from the Gallist areas. Most are unmarried or widowed farmers who work their small parcels, eking out an existence, and training as volunteers with the militia, an option offered only in Ganglhofn and Vulddin. They wait, often eagerly, for the flames of war to be fanned again, and they look forward to slaying Hunters of Herne.

Outsiders are not particularly popular in Ganglhofn. Townsmen have the immediate suspicion that anyone who's not a Dalesmen and is traveling eastward probably is planning to deal with their enemy. They begrudgingly tolerate traders traveling to Bildoobaris to do business at the trade fair, but traders too are a bit suspect.

Anyone who can convince the townsmen that they really are nothing more than adventurers will be scorned. As far as the residents of Ganglhofn are concerned, adventurers who ride into the Gallist areas are fools. Such people, they think, could be making a positive stand against the Hunters of Herne and their allies by working with or serving in the militia. Instead, they think, such adventurers are riding off to their purposeless deaths or enslavement.

Arrogant or big-mouthed PCs who come into Ganglhofn will find themselves almost immediately in trouble. The townsmen think that *they* are tough and that they prove it in their day-to-day lives. They not only want but demand respect from strangers. If they don't get it, a fight is likely to start.

The baron's steward in Ganglhofn, Módhgudh Ófinssonur, human male, AL: NG, Aris 2, Ftr 5, is the judge and jury in such matters. His basic standpoint in cases where brawls begin that involve strangers is that there would have been no brawl if the outsiders hadn't come to Ganglhofn, and they have no reasonable business in town anyway. The outsiders usually can reckon with having their pockets emptied, to pay for damages, and with a 30-day stay in the dungeon under the town hall.

Those outsiders who know how to talk respectfully and keep their mouths closed will have no problems and will find a place in the corners of Ganglhofn's nightlife, as it were. However, someone new needs to either live in Ganglhofn for about six months, behaving the way the townsmen expect him or her to, or perform an heroic deed in the town's service without seeking a reward, before he or she can expect to begin being *accepted* by the folk of Ganglhofn.

Because there are relatively few married people or families living in Ganglhofn and a full militia battalion is stationed there, the town has more taverns with more business than once usually expects to find in a settlement of its size.

After evening chores are over, many townsmen tend to drift to their favorite watering hole or the festhall. Most of these locations can be a good source of information on the East, for PCs who know how to keep their mouths closed and their ears open. None of the establishments is big enough or has resources enough to brew its own beer on premises. All use the communal brewing house.

As in Riggstad, the town watch will uphold a tavernkeeper's decision to throw an undesirable out of his house. If high-level parties start attacking locals or killing them, the town will fight until the last man and woman are dead. The militia will join in efforts to take the party.

In addition to a town watch 50 strong, Ganglhofn also is protected by the 400 men of the four companies of the 4th Battalion, 2nd Combat Regiment. Another 50 are support troops for the battalion's headquarters. Not only the militia and the watch but also the general population is on the alert when it thinks the bread is rising again in the East.

That's the case these days, as explained under the entry for Riggstad. There have been no attacks yet, but there are reports of dragons winging from the northwest over the Narfelli Plain into eastern Rawlinswood. Upset Nar tribesmen confirm these reports. Other news describes large numbers of undead in the area around Tower Threespires, the stronghold of Gall's Tiamatist Dragon Cult cell, which is led by a necromancer. Ganglhofn is as prepared as it can be.

In Ganglhofn, the most frequently worshipped deities are Tempus, Ilmater and Mielikki. Silvanus and Chauntea also have strong followings, but in most cases, they are subjects of secondary worship rather than being a person's prime deity. There is a shrine to Sharess in the festhall. The extent to which she is worshipped in Ganglhofn depends upon one's definition of worship.

Adventure Hooks in Ganglhofn

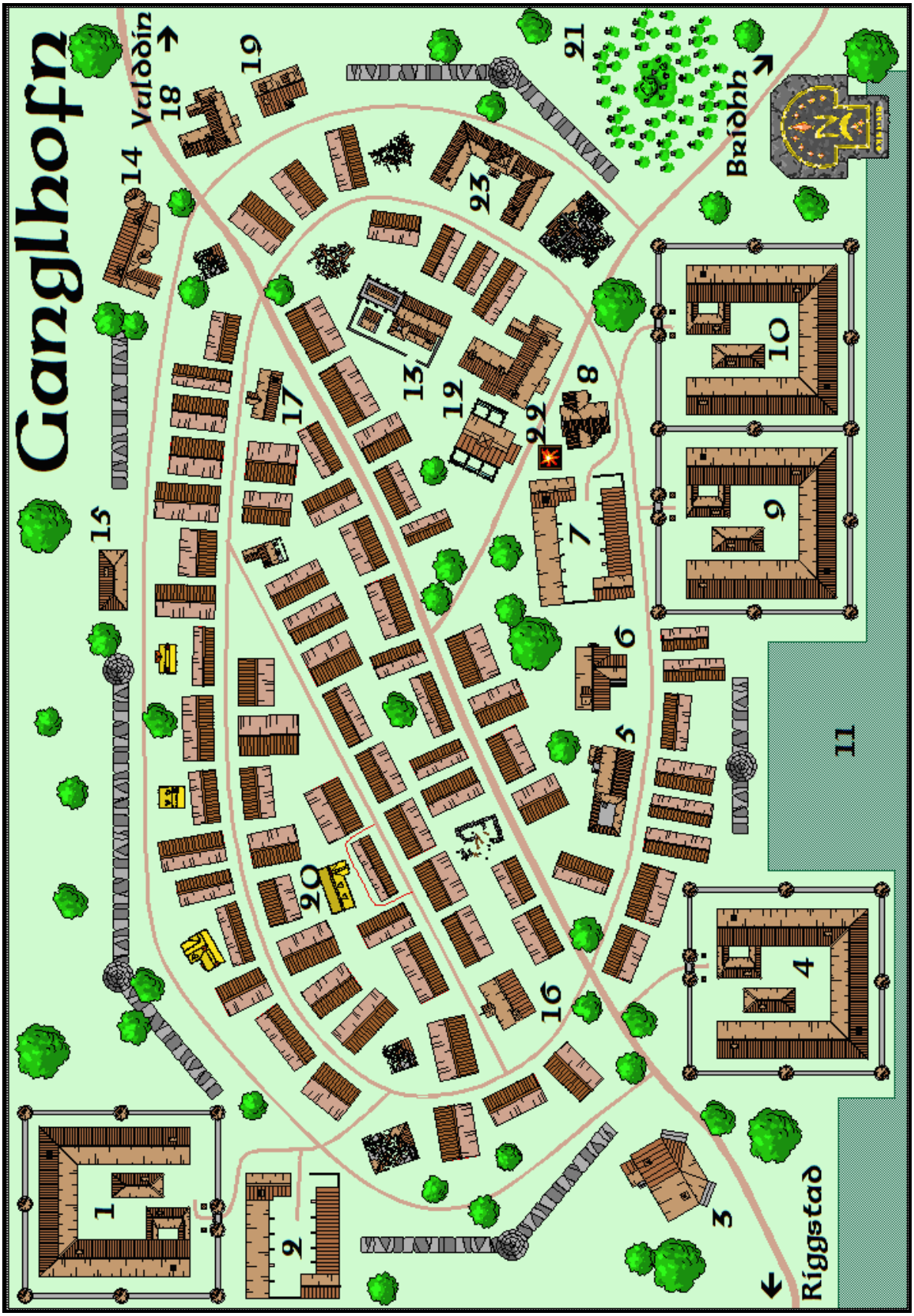
- **Suspicion -** See the adventure hooks for Gylving. Nowhere in the Dale is this hook so likely to make problems for PCs as in Ganglhofn.

- **Bad Behavior -** The residents of Ganglhofn are a proud folk. They have fought hard to defend what they own. They have little use for outsiders. Those who come to town and who begin belittling, demeaning or insulting locals will quickly have a fight on their hands. If the fight gets to the point where there are arrests, the steward usually convicts the outsiders who started the fight of disorderly conduct and will send them to the jail for 30 days. He also will assess them the costs of all damages. The costs often amount to every last copper bite in their pockets.

- **Information -** Just about any information the Game Master wants the PCs to gain about the East, including false information, should be available in Ganglhofn. The town is only one settlement away from Bezentil and the border area.

- **Guided Tour -** If the PCs can explain their mission convincingly enough to begin drawing the interest of some of the more rabid haters of the Hunters of Herne in Ganglhofn, they may be able to get a local who has been there to join the party as an NPC. He or she could lead the group as safely as possible into the Gallist areas of the East.

- **The Enemy -** Both Baron Annar and the militia commanders assume that some of the Gallist escapees purportedly waiting in Ganglhofn to seek their revenge are in truth Gallist agents, serving either the Hunters of Herne or the Kront cell of the Dragon Cult in Tower Threespires. The key agent is Luthar Nuflungssonur, who runs the *Blood of the East* tavern. It is a difficult nut for PCs to crack, but if they do, they may get past the tavernkeeper's cover. They also may have to help keep him from being lynched by his customers, if he's intended to receive the baron's justice.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Ganglhofn

Map of Ganglhofn

1 - Barracks, Company A, 4th Battalion, 2nd Combat Regiment.

2 - Stables, militia companies A and B.

3 - Horned Hunter Festhall. The ground floor is a dancehall where business begins. The upper floor is the bordello where it's transacted. The madame, Narda Teeling, human female, AL: CG, cleric (Sharess) lvl 4, runs a clean house. She hardly could afford to do otherwise. The representatives of the law are among her better customers. The costs of services are negotiated privately with the ladies who work in the house. The only drink sold on the first floor is the light ale that house brewer Tardo Deegan, human male, AL: NG, Exp 1, brews in the communal brewing house. It costs 5 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. A shrine to Sharess is in the entryway to the house. Both Teeling and Deegan are refugees from Damaran Heliogabalus.

4 - Barracks, Company B, 4th Battalion, 2nd Combat Regiment.

5 - Gildur Teginssonur Wainright. Teginssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 2, War 2, is a refugee from Gallist Kars. He builds wagons and sleds for both locals and the militia. He employs a journeyman and three apprentices. Locals pay in barter.

6 - Sleeping Watch Tavern. This is the favorite watering hole for the sergeants of the militia and some visiting rangers. Strangers are on delicate ground in the *Sleeping Watch*. The tavernkeeper is Dulgur Hundarssonur, human male, AL: NG, ranger 5, Exp 1, a retired veteran scout of the militia. In the communal brewing house, he brews a light bock in the main season and a double bock in the cold months. Both cost 4 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Hundarssonur is no master brewer. His beer is drinkable but by no means extraordinarily good. Locals pay in barter.

7 - Stables, companies C and D.

8 - Headquarters, 4th Battalion, 2nd Combat Regiment.

9 - Barracks, Company C, 4th Battalion, 2nd Combat Regiment.

10 - Barracks, Company D, 4th Battalion, 2nd Combat Regiment.

11 - Militia Training Grounds.

12 - Crossed Swords Inn and Stables. The somewhat dilapidated inn is Ganglhofn's only hostelry. It does enough trade to survive by putting up visitors from elsewhere in the Dale who come to visit members of the Freemen's militia stationed in Ganglhofn. The inn will, of course, also put up travelers, but these are infrequent except during the Bildoobaris trade fair season. The 14 single rooms cost five silver shiners a night, the six doubles four shiners per person. The maturbordh, considerably better in quality than the accommodations but modest in comparison to what is offered in the Western Dale, costs six shiners. The house ale, a light bottom ferment from the communal brewhouse, is middle-of-the-road in quality. It costs four copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Locals pay in barter. The innkeeper is Thúridh Dalmarssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 2. He also brews but is no master brewer.

13 - Rughar Tándarssonur's Smithy. This rather sizeable smithy works with weapons and armor as well as performing blacksmith work. Tándarssonur, human male, AL: LG, Exp 3, is a master blacksmith. He employs two dwarven brothers from the Earthfast Mountains above Impiltur who are waiting for great battles to begin again, so that they can help avenge the death of their sister, a warrior adventurer who had been in the battle against the Tuigan Horde in Thesk in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR). She and a band of other dwarves headed off after the battle to follow a tip that was to lead to ancient treasure in Lethyr Forest. The Hunters of Herne attacked her party, and she was slain. Devitt mac Barnh, dwarf male, AL: LG, Ftr 9, Exp 14, is a master weaponsmith. Durat mac Barnh, dwarf male, AL: LG, Ftr 8, Exp 13, is a master armor maker. Tándarssonur's son, Ruagh Rugharssonur, human male, AL: LG, Exp 5, learned the weaponsmith's trade under Devitt mac Barnh and recently was raised to the master's ranks by mac Barnh. The smithy employs a journeyman armor maker, a journeyman blacksmith and six apprentices. Locals pay in barter.

14 - Communal Brewhouse. This facility once was the *Trade Route Gold* brewery, but it was abandoned when the last owner died without an heir. For that reason, the barony became the de facto owner of the brewery. Baron Annar's administrative personnel attempted to sell the brewery, but because of its somewhat dilapidated condition and the marginal profits it had earned, no buyer could be found. After the brewery's closure, the taverns and the Crossed Swords Inn had a disaster on their hands. With barter the main means of trade, no one could afford to constantly buy a sufficient supply of beer from other towns, and Ganglhofn was beginning to go dry, a situation which can quickly cause serious problems in a military and border town like Ganglhofn. As a result, the baron offered the brewery to the town for use as a communal brewhouse. Any tavern or inn that wishes to brew beer in the brewhouse may do so by paying an equal share of the maintenance costs for the facility. All member taverns and the inn belong to an organization set up by the baron. Among themselves, they elect an administrative board which maintains a schedule that decides which tavern my brew when. Each tavern is responsible for cleaning the brewhouse when brewing is completed. The taverns and inns each may brew according to their own recipes, and they are individually responsible for buying their own hops and barley. A system also has been worked out among most taverns under which one can borrow a barrel of beer or ale from another, if one tavernkeeper brewed too little in his last turn, and then replace it when he brews again. As a result, one sometimes gets a variety of beer tastes in a single tavern, which can be a good thing, a bad thing or both.

15 - Annalenas Boardinghouse. Annalena Doone, human female, AL: NG, Ftr 7, Rogue 13, from Berdusk in the West, purchased the former *Dale Eagle Tavern* in the Year of the Banner (1368 DR). She turned into a boardinghouse. It appears to do a good business with the few travelers who come to Ganglhofn and stay for more than a few days. In truth, Doone usually hangs out the *No Vacancy* sign whether the house is full or not. She is the chief agent of the Twilight Hall branch of the Harpers for the Central and Eastern Dale, and she puts up Harper agents here. At present, the Harpers are watching the tension brewing anew between the Gallist East and the rest of the Dale, but they are not acting. Twilight Hall is concerned about Gall but also is worried that if he is defeated, a move might be made to merge Impiltur, Damara, the Great Dale and perhaps also parts of Vaasa into one, huge Bloodstone Empire, which the Harpers would oppose vehemently. In truth, there are no such plans that are of any substance, although King Gareth of Damara, War Captain Regent Kyrlraun of Impiltur and War Captain General Haelimbrar of Impiltur have speculated on the idea lightly a few times.

16 - Ranger's Rest Tavern. Retired Sgt. Tavis McNabb, human male, AL: NG, ranger 6, a Damaran who came to the Dale a few years before Zhengyi's rise in Damara, runs this not totally clean but lively and popular tavern. After coming to the Dale, McNabb joined the Freemen's Militia and made a 30-year career of it. His house tends to draw above all the militiamen who do scout duty, perform commando missions and the like, as well as independent rangers and sometimes even druids, on those rare occasions when they're in the area. If adventurers show up here, they may be ridiculed a bit at the start, but if they can take it without starting a fight and tell some good stories (regardless of whether they're true), they may be accepted into the conversations. McNabb's old scouting sidekick from the militia, Colossal Tim Hardbrick, halfling male, AL: CG, Rogue 8, Exp 3, brews McNabb's dark golden lager in the communal brewhouse. Hardbrick is a native of Halfling Downs in Damara. His brew generally is rated Ganglhofn's best beer, but not too many regular militiamen are willing to enter the tavern, knowing that the heavy combat and scouting types consider it be their turf. The lager costs 4 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Locals pay in barter.

17 - Eastgate Tavern. This establishment, one of Ganglhofn's oldest, survived the dragon attacks of the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR). The current owner is Úlf Hrafnssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 2, who also brews the light draft beer served at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. The *Eastgate* is a warm, friendly and jovial but unexciting tavern. It draws mainly the non-military locals - artisans, farmers, laborers, etc. Locals pay in barter, which makes cash rare in the *Eastgate*.

18 - Trade Route Food and Farm Supplies. Part of this complex is what remains of the old treadmill and granary complex; part of it is newer construction. Dendar Lidl, half-elf male, AL: NE, Rogue 6, an enterprising businessman from Tantras who is being sought there for fraud, finally has found a way to make an honest living in Ganglhofn. He skipped Tantras with a small fortune in the Year of the Sighing Serpent (1289 DR) and used it to buy the ruins of the mill and granary complex, as the food shortage already was becoming severe in Ganglhofn.

Lidl and his four employees take grain, crops and on-the-hoof cattle from the locals in barter and return other food supplies and seeding grain to them. Lidl always pays a bit less than he should and charges a bit more than he should, assuring him a steady income. He also sees to it that almost anyone in Ganglhofn who produces anything of value can get the necessities of life through the local barter system. He's a master at putting together four- and five-way barter trades and skimming a commission from each of the four or five trading partners. Only a part of the old granary still survives. Lidl uses it to maintain a steady source of supply of feed for local farmers who run short and of barley and hops for the taverns that have to brew their own beer and ale.

19 - Blood of the East Tavern. Luthar Nuflungssonur, human male, AL: NE (NG), Rogue 12, runs this house. He is an agent of the Hunters of Herne in Ganglhofn. *Blood of the East* is the most treacherous house in Ganglhofn. Nuflungssonur claims to be an escapee from Gallist Kront in Ashanath who hates the Malarite lich and all that the East stands for. He wears three rings on his left hand, with red, green and blue jewels respectively. When he is checked with magic, the red jewel masks his true alignment and shows it to be neutral good. The green jewel shows his lies to be true. The blue jewel gives him the ability to communicate telepathically with another agent in Kront. One thing that could betray Nuflungssonur, however, is his small shrine behind a hidden door in the cellar of the tavern. *Blood of the East* is the favorite watering hole for escapees from the East who are thirsty for revenge against Gall and his followers. They are not tolerant of outsiders, and if a group of PCs were to show up in the tavern, they would have to talk convincingly to avoid being told to leave, which Nuflungssonur would enforce, with his rights as a tavernkeeper in Ganglhofn. His customers, believing themselves all to be of the same bitter motivation, talk freely in the *Blood of the East,* sometimes revealing secrets that they have learned through their militia contacts. Nuflungssonur pays a local farmer, Drudhur Harbegssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 1, to brew his mediocre light draught beer for him. Harbegssonur is not a customer of the tavern and knows nothing of Nuflungssonur's Gallist loyalties. The beer costs 4 copper bites per liter/quart tankard.

20 - Inner Sanctum Wine House. This tiny tavern is an unknown quantity to most Ganglhofner, but it's yet another spying center in the town, albeit a friendly one. The house is run by Simelmbrar, human male, AL: NG, Diviner 17, a high-powered agent of the Wand of Impiltur. His task is to keep an eye upon the East in the most literal sense. He scries upon the Gallists and he communicates with Archwand Daerthnur in Ilmwatch. Queen Sambryl and War Captain Regent Kyrlraun in Impiltur already have made the firm decision to invade the Great Dale and fight Harbet Gall, if the Malarite lich ever again makes a massive move to conquer the Western Dale. They believe that Impiltur now is strong enough to prevent having a Gallist kingdom as a neighbor. Simelmbrar probably will be the one whose news triggers the decision to invade, if indeed that decision ever is made. Luthar Nuflungssonur, the Gallist agent, would love dearly to find out who Simelmbrar is. The Gallists in the East are aware of attempts to scry upon them, and they know that the mage watching them is somewhere between Vulddin and Riggstad, but that's as far as they've gotten. The wine house was Simelmbrar's idea, opened by him despite the objections of Daerthnur. The reason for the opening: Simelmbrar was lonely for intellectual company. He had some 100 bottles of Uthving's finest wines magically transported to him, registered the wine house at town hall and then put up a wine card near the door listing the wines he has, prices beginning at 2 platinum marks a bottle and going upward from there, with a notice that no barter is accepted. 99% of those who look at the notice shake their heads and walk on. However, some of the few well-to-do in Ganglhofn have samples Simelmbrar's costly wares. From this grew a few friendships, tips to others, etc., and the Inner Sanctum now usually has four or five guests several nights a week who sit and chat over intellectual themes with Simelmbrar at no charge for the wine. Interestingly, one of his favorite customers is Annalena Doone, the Harper agent in town who runs Annalena's Boardinghouse. To date, neither is aware of the other's affiliations.

21 - Cemetery.

22 - Signal Tower.

23 - Town Hall and Barracks of the Town Watch. The local dungeon is beneath town hall.

Rublshofn

Ruin, Nonstandard (ungoverned), AL: Various, 0 gp limit. Assets: 0 gp. Population 0. Authority figures: (nominal) Freeman Ottur Bardulfssonur, human male, AL: NE, Aris 8, Ftr 8, baron of Briddh. Others: 25 ghosts of varying alignment. Taxation: None.

The ruins of Rublshofn have not been mapped.

Sixty-two years have passed since the village of Rublshofn ceased to exist, and still its ghosts do not rest. There are a few ancient heads in the Dale yet who recall the night of its fall.

The tiny settlement along the Sudurstraumur on the northern fringe of Rawlinswood and now its ruins belong to the Barony of Briddh, which is just a bit downstream to the east. The Gallist baron at the time of Rublshofn's fall in the Year of Storms (1310 DR) had allowed the clear-cutting of a large swath of forest between Briddh and Rublshofn, and the Mucklestones Druids were out to avenge the deed.

It was a high time for the Hunters of Herne. The border city of Bezentil had returned to their hands, and the main restoration of the contested city had been completed. The Gallist governor had called a celebration shortly before the harvest in Eleint to mark the official completion of restoration. Many of the protectors of Briddh and Rublshofn were off to the city, to join in the celebration beneath the thunderclouds which had moved in late in the afternoon.

On this stormy night, the Mucklestones Druids set out to gain their revenge. A band of more than 30 druids and rangers managed to slip past Sudhofn unnoticed and make its way through the forest to Rublshofn. The rangers sent a barrage of flaming arrows into the village of wooden cabins, while the druids called down several blasts of lightning. Within half an hour after the attack had begun, the village was totally afire. Because the attack came unexpectedly and under the cover of darkness, more than 300 of the 500 villagers died in the flames.

Rublshofn was an evil village, devoted to the worship of Herne the Hunter and determined foes of the Mucklestones Druids. Of the 300 who fell, 275 were true enemies, and tragic as their deaths may have been, they were genuine casualties of a seemingly endless civil war.

The remaining 25 who perished screaming in the flames on that stormy Eleint night were good people and evil people and people who were neither one or the other, but above all people who paid no obeisance to Harbet Gall and had nothing to do with the deeds that led to the Mucklestones' attacks nor had they supported them. None of the 25 has left Rublshofn yet. All wait, demanding from visitors to know why they were so horribly slain. Some beg for an answer in the plaintive tones of the confused and wronged. Other voices cry out evilly, demanding the answers they seek.

If a group of PCs visits the ruins of Rublshofn from the north, the first thing it will notice is a diffused dullness along the Sudurstraumur where the village once stood. Regardless of the season, regardless of the weather, regardless of the fact that the stream flows rapidly there, something of a yellow haze always is in the air about the site of Rublshofn. On a moonlit night, a thin cloud appears to grace the ground there.

By day one finds few traces of Rublshofn. The little used trail from Riggstad to Briddh - once a Narfelli Road - still winds through the village's burying place, kept visible only because it has become a deer path that rangers and druids of both warring sides sometimes tread.

Here and there are the remnants of an ancient stone foundation, and when one removes brush or digs a bit, one may come upon the entry to an old cellar that still is intact, sometimes complete with inanimate skeletons. The houses of Rublshofn were mostly of wooden frame construction. The flames of the Mucklestones Druids and their rangers left little of them behind except ashes - and ghosts.

Bridhh had set out in the Year of the Spilled Blood (1315 DR) to begin restoration of Rublshofn, but the project was abandoned within a few days time, after several members of the construction team died in confrontations with the undead haunting the ruins.

Farmers still till, seed and harvest the fields near Rublshofn still are tilled, but they hurry home before the sun sets. It is in the nighttime when the slain innocents of Rublshofn return, to demand to know why they died.

Adventure Hooks in Rublshofn

- **Daytime - Patrol.** Ranger Hunters of Herne from Briddh regularly patrol this area and tolerate the presence of no strangers. Rangers of the Freemen's Militia sometimes patrol the area too. If both factions encounter each other there, it leads to a standoff and a mutual retreat at some times and a battle at others. Which will happen always is unforeseeable.

- **Nighttime - Ghosts.** The number of ghosts to appear seems to vary with conditions. Of the 25 ghosts, nine are evilly aligned, eight are of neutral alignment and eight are of good alignment. The evilly aligned haunt the ruins every night. The neutrally aligned appear only on moonlit nights. All of the ghosts appear only on stormy nights, nights like the one upon which they died. Those of evil alignment will demand the answer as to why they were slain, but there is no answer that will satisfy them. They will attack the PCs with all their special powers. Those of neutral alignment also will demand this answer. How they react will vary with the PCs' attitude. The neutrally aligned ghosts will accept any absolutely reasonable answer and will be freed from haunting the ruins if given one. If the PCs are polite or sympathetic and give an answer that is less than absolutely reasonable, the neutrally aligned ghosts will ponder their answers for 1d20 + 10 minutes before returning and in some manner demanding more detail. If the neutrally aligned ghosts are not treated with respect, they too will attack. The good aligned ghosts will accept any absolutely reasonable answer and will be freed from haunting the ruins if given one. If the PCs give an answer that is less than absolutely reasonable, the good aligned ghosts also will ponder their answers for 1d20 + 10 minutes before returning and in some manner asking for more detail, but they will not attack the PCs. No ghost will interfere with another ghost's attacks, regardless of alignment. The ghosts are bound to remain within 10 feet/3m of the area in which they appear, so a PC group with luck may be able to free themselves by running. It's up to the Game Master to decide if the PCs' answers are absolutely reasonable.

Bríddh

Small Town, Conventional, AL: N, 800 gp limit. Assets: 44,000 gp. Population: 1,100; 100% human. Authority figure: Freeman Ottur Bardulfssonur, human male, AL: N, Aris 8, Ftr 8, baron of Briddh. Important Persons:. Delvyng Gurssonur, human male, AL: NE, True Druid of Herne 6; Arlkur Borssonur, human male, AL: NE, ranger 5 (Hunter of Herne); Tardh Rangurssonur, human male, AL: N, Ftr 8, commander of the Baronial Troops. Others: Narbi, human male, AL: CG, Wizard 14 (Harper); Barnelraun of Lathander, human male, AL: LG, Cleric (Lathander) 6. Watch: Baronial Troops consisting of 100 fulltime locals and mercenaries and 60 part-time locals, human male and female, AL: Any, 25 Ftr 1-6, 75 War 1-6, part-time 60 War 1-6. Taxation type: Benevolent. Currency: Impilturian and Theskan coins are accepted in Briddh.

The Barony of Briddh was one of the first areas of the Great Dale to jump wholeheartedly over to the teachings of Herne the Hunter and it has been the most half-hearted part of Harbet Gall's empire ever since.

The town of Briddh, which is the baronial seat and the only surviving settlement of the old barony, stands in something of a military no man's land, in the open, along the young Sudurstraumur in plain view of the domain of the Freemen's militia while flying a limp Gallist flag inside its circular wall. Just as near to the wall as the Freemen are the forest enclaves controlled by the Gallist Hunters of Herne.

For nearly 450 years, various barons of Briddh have managed to assure the town's survival inside this vise, walking on the tightrope between good and evil, flying the flag of evil, while tightly controlling its activity in the name of good. The valor of the barons is demonstrated perhaps best in the fact that in all of Harbet Gall's realm, only the hereditary barons of Briddh have survived the purges that replaced barons elsewhere with Gallist druid barons.

In the Year of the Watching Raven (913 DR), starvation was taking a steady toll of lives in the barony. Townsmen and the druids and rangers who opposed them were taking heavy casualties, as the people of Briddh and Rublshofn defied the edicts of the druids of Silvanus to hunt for meat, to provide sustenance after drought and crop failure, or to fell timber to heat their homes through the Dale's frozen winter.

It was at this time that the teachings of Harbet Gall fell upon the sympathetic ears of Baron Nondur, an ancestor of the current Baron Ottur. Gall's gospel that nature was intended to serve man rather than the opposite was the holy word Nondur wanted to hear to justify what he needed to do to feed and shelter his people. He proclaimed the church of Herne to be the sole faith of the barony, burned the temple of Silvanus and drove those who opposed his action from town or slew them.

At that time, several renegade druids of Silvanus from eastern Rawlinswood had disagreed with their hierarchies' strong bans on hunting and logging, arguing that the drought was a temporary condition and the needs of the Dale's humans must be reckoned with in calculating where the balance lies. Some of these threw in their lot with Gall.

Because Baron Nondur had given the church of Herne a welcome that Gall could use as an example to spread his faith elsewhere in the Dale, Gall sent a group of turncoat True Druids of Herne to Briddh. They helped the baronial troops drive the druids of Silvanus away from the town and into the depths of Lethyr Forest and then hold them there, and for some long time they were successful.

With the druids and rangers held at a distance, the townsmen could return safely to the forests, bag deer and boar and bring wood home to warm their hearths. Briddh and Rublshofn made it into the Year of the Book (914 DR) with relatively little suffering, while other settlements, particularly in the Eastern Dale, mourned their way through a winter of funerals.

Some families buried fathers who had been slain in skirmishes with the druids of Silvanus or the rangers of Mielikki who worked with them, but most of them buried wives and children who had starved or at times entire families who had simply frozen to death.

Throughout this deadly winter, Harbet Gall and his minions traveled from settlement to settlement in the East, telling the tale of prospering Briddh, which had shown the courage to drive out its oppressors and return the balance through the worship of Herne and the practices of *"true druidism."*

It became known as the *Spirit of Briddh*. It spread across the Eastern Dale like a flame. In a mere four years, the druids of Silvanus and the rangers of Mielikki had been hunted out of Rawlinswood east of Dender's Valley and central Lethyr Forest south of Briddh. By the Year of the Turning Wheel (937 DR), Auststad, Bezentil, Briddh, Gurshofn, Kront, Riggh, Rublshofn, Skarlshofn and Ulfshofn all were solidly in Gall's hands.

The men of the Central Dale who remained loyal to the druids of Silvanus took up arms and eventually succeeded in stopping and then partially turning back the Gallist tide, but that took about a quarter of a century. By the Year of the Circling Vulture (942 DR), the Gallist Hunters of Herne had overrun even Ganglhofn, Riggstad and Vulddin, and the Freemen would not succeed in driving them out of all three settlements and Bezentil until the Year of the Emptied Lair (973 DR).

Ironically enough, the Gallist area that took the least pleasure in these victories was Briddh, where the string of Gallist conquests had begun. The aging Baron Nondur was not an evil man. He had turned to Herne's church because he had come to see the druids of Silvanus and the rangers of Mielikki as evil oppressors who were wrongfully starving and freezing to death the Dalesmen of Briddh and Rublshofn, whom his honor bound him to protect.

Once the true druids of Herne had established themselves in the barony, Nondur learned there was much more to Herne's faith than a redefinition of priorities in calculating how to best achieve a balance in nature. The Gallists' insane passion for the hunt and their introduction of the Great Hunt with human prey were abhorrent to Nondur. He banned the Great Hunt in the barony, over the protests of Gall's loyalists.

The old baron also had heard the tales of the ongoing purges of the hereditary barons in other settlements that had turned to Gall and their replacement with oppressive true druid barons. Briddh had willingly joined Baron Nondur in the conversion to Herne, and the townsfolk credited the baron, not Herne's church, with their salvation in the hard years of drought. Their loyalty was more to the baron than the church of Herne.

Aware of these loyalties, Nondur summoned the leaders of his baronial troops and ordered them to keep a consistent eye upon the druids and rangers of Herne in Briddh. Nondur's heir, young Baron Skíflar, also was included in the talks.

In the Year of the Haunting Harpy (974 DR), shortly after Baron Nondur had sent his troops out to stop an illegal Great Hunt and had banished the true druid who organized it, he died in his sleep. The facts of his death remain unknown; there are old tales that there was evidence the baron was poisoned. However, he also was aged and in failing health.

Regardless of the cause of his death, the news had barely begun making the rounds when the two true druids who served the temple in Briddh and several ranger Hunters of Herne who served them appeared armed at the castle. They attempted in a coup to take it over. They bore an edict signed by Harbet Gall in Nighthawk Tower appointing the senior true druid as new druid baron of Briddh.

The baronial troops were waiting hidden in the castle for the perpetrators of the coup. Most of the Gallists were slain. The senior druid was among the survivors who surrendered, but he lived only briefly. The new Baron Skíflar ordered the commander of the baronial troops to behead the druid quietly and secretly with his sword. The surviving ranger Hunters of Herne were publicly tried for trying to overthrow the barony and with one exception hanged.

Young Baron Skíflar sent the spared ranger, a young and inexperienced man, back to Nighthawk Tower with a polite, written message and a more frank verbal message for Harbet Gall. The written message informed Gall regretfully that both the baron and the true druids had died, and that he had taken his father's place, asking that a new druid be assigned to serve the temple in Briddh.

The verbal message warned Gall not to try any new coup attempts in the barony. It said that Briddh intended to remain faithful to the church of Herne. However, if Gall's rangers and druids violated baronial law in the future, or if there were any unrequited concentrations of Gall's followers in Lethyr Forest within 15 miles/25 km of Briddh, Skíflar said he would end the barony's alliance with Gall and begin negotiations to reach a mutual defense pact with the Freeman Count of Vulddin.

In most areas he controlled, Gall simply would have overrun the barony with force, slain those who opposed him and set up his own government. However, he had no trump cards to play in Briddh. A year before, the last of his victorious forces of a quarter of a century earlier had been driven running and bleeding from the Central Dale. Bezentil, Ganglhofn, Riggstad and Vulddin all were back in the hands of the Freemen.

The forests settlements of Herneburg and Sudhofn had net yet been established at that time, and Gall had too few men in the wood to take Briddh with force. On the other hand, he already was forming new plans for expansion and for dealing with the Mucklestones Druids as well, and Briddh was a key element in that plan.

Within a few years, Gall intended to send troops around the southeast corner of Lethyr Forest into Spearmouthdale and Mettledale and then upward through the forest from both settlements to Briddh, claiming the center of the wood for himself and leaving western Lethyr Forest open for future conquest, while cutting off the Mucklestones Druids in the East.

The scheme proved later to be one of Gall's few long-lasting successes, but at the time he received young Baron Skíflar's messages, it still was in the planning stage. One thing was immediately clear to Gall. The plan would be severely endangered if Briddh went over to Vulddin. It was crucial to retain Briddh as something of a strategic wine cork, to keep the Freemen from entering Lethyr Forest from the north and stemming his invasion in mid-forest.

Angered, Gall sent the young ranger back to Briddh with a written message speaking his condolences over the old baron's death, congratulating the young baron on his new position and assuring young Skíflar that he had no intention of acting against his will in the matters mentioned. The message admonished Skíflar that Gall was a spiritual person interested in the welfare of the folk who worship his deity, Herne, but that he had no interest in political affairs, that he left such things in the hands of the barons who rule them. There was no additional verbal message.

A low-level true druid who Gall considered to be weak was sent with the ranger back to Briddh. Gall intended this gesture as an insult, but it fit the young baron's wishes perfectly. Skíflar wanted and to some extent needed a true druid to serve the Briddh area, to keep the folk feeling secure, but he had no interest in having to tangle regularly with a powerful true druid.

That remained more or less the status of Briddh until the Time of Troubles, although old Baron Vitur, grandfather of the current Baron Ottur, did allow a larger contingent of Gallists into Briddh after the burning of Rublshofn in the Year of the Storm (1310 DR). However, at that time, the Gallists had orders to return southward as quickly as possible. It was their duty to keep Herneburg, Leifrskross and Veidarsudur secure against the troublesome Mucklestones Druids of the East.

After the avatars had come to Faerûn in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR), the still young current Baron Ottur surveyed Briddh's situation and was less than satisfied. Bezentil had been lost to the new and unknown factor of Skith Tsornagar and the church of Malar.

Ottur suspects that the establishment of Bezentil as an independent Malarite city may be first sign of Gall's own demise. That suspicion is enhanced by whispers from Gallists who repeat tales from Nighthawk Tower that claim Gall is going gradually insane.

Baron Ottur also believes that Briddh could prosper, if the markets of the Central and Western Dale were fully open to the town, and Briddh could tap what those markets have to offer too. However, there would be considerable difficulties in leaving the Gallist camp, the least of them military.

To strike a complete peace with the Freemen, the baron would have to denounce the faith of Herne the Hunter and close the temple in Briddh. That would be a risky move on his part, although he feels no personal allegiance to the Gallist church and does not worship in it or make offerings to it.

For more than four and a half centuries, the folk have Briddh has despised the deities Silvanus and Mielikki, considering their druids and rangers to be the people who tried to starve and freeze out their ancestors. Although it always has been Harbet Gall's intention to slight the barons of Briddh in doing so, he rather has cemented the faith of many locals in Herne the Hunter by sending only weak and low-level druids to serve Briddh's temple.

Such druids enjoy living in a less oppressive atmosphere than in other Gallist areas. Herne's worshippers treat them well, and those in Briddh who do not worship Herne do not treat them poorly. Moreover, they do not attempt to assert the elements of Herne's faith that most folk in Briddh despise, such as the Great Hunt.

However, Briddh is a poor town. The things it has in surplus have had to be transported through Lethyr Forest southward to the Golden Way to be sold, leaving only scant profits, compared to the margins that can be reached through sales over the nearby Trade Route, which requires access to the Freemen's areas.

Briddh has a sawmill and joiner's shop that turns out high grade timber and wood products, but these too must be transported through Lethyr Forest to the Golden Way, which is only marginally profitable. To gain access to markets over the Trade Route, the wood would need to be cut with the blessings of the druids of Silvanus. Working with them, however, is a tremendous hurdle for Baron Ottur and many of his townsmen to jump.

Nonetheless, Ottur has been under tremendous pressure for a number of years to make some decisive moves, unfortunately from an indecisive folk. The greatest pressure of all stems however from Briddh's waning economy. There are those who simply argue that the baron should do something to bring more money to town. Both sides think he's blind to whatever possibilities they see. In fact, some of his detractors have begun whispering the nickname *Blind Baron,* although in truth Ottur probably is the most visionary ruler Briddh has had in centuries.

With its farmlands and the nearby forest, the townsmen are able to eat and stay warm. Flocks of sheep, fields of flax and busy looms and spinning wheels in winter keep the population clothed too. However, more and more people have been having a difficult time fixing their houses. Nails are difficult to come by, hammers too for that matter, to say nothing about more refined tools, like saws.

In addition there now also are the townsmen who have dared to travel to Vulddin. The people of Briddh now may travel freely, unlike those in most Gallist towns. They have heard of things like wine from Uthving, have spoken of them, thereby generating illusive visions in the minds of sons and daughters who soon will become young lovers and think how fine it would be to - once, just once - drink Uthving wine together, whatever Uthving wine may be.

Feeling the pressures building within Briddh, Baron Ottur sent a delegate to the County of Vulddin to negotiate a proposal in the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR). Ottur sought to make a peace agreement with Count Báldr and even traveled incognito to Vulddin twice to make his plea directly to the count.

Before winter had set in, the two noblemen had reached a peace agreement with certain limitations that can be lifted only when Briddh comes to terms with the druids of Silvanus, a stipulation that cannot yet be fulfilled politically, but the day of its realization could be approaching.

As a result of the agreement, which also was signed and sealed with Baron Annar of Riggstad, Baron Ottur declared Briddh an open town. Travelers may enter Briddh from all directions, be it Gallists from the South or Freemen from the North, and townsmen of Briddh likewise may travel into the Freemen's areas.

Baron Ottur may maintain his baronial troops, and he also may buy weapons in Vulddin, once he has the wherewithal. The County of Vulddin has given the baronial troop some weapons to replace those that had come to be in bad repair.

The Baron of Briddh and his baronial troops are required to assure the safety of visitors to his town and to make druids of any faith as well as rangers of Mielikki and Herne the Hunter aware that they are required to keep the peace when in Briddh. The agreement also requires all persons in Briddh other than the baron or his baronial troops to secure weapons they carry with leather thongs tied in peace knots.

Under a baronial edict, it is illegal to enter any public house in Briddh with any kind of weapon including small knives. The use of magical spells or items for purposes other than healing without permission of the on-duty commander of the baronial troops also is forbidden, and the law is enforced strictly.

Vulddin won the right to establish a delegation house in Briddh. The delegates have no legal authority in the town, but it is their task to report regularly to Count Báldr on whether the terms of the agreement are being properly fulfilled.

The delegation also has the right to regularly control whether all weapons provided by the Freemen to the baronial troops remain in Briddh, and it has the right to observe inspections made of those things that travelers who are heading southward into the Gallist areas are taking with them. Under the baron's agreement, it is forbidden to transport weapons other than one's own personal weapons out of Briddh in any direction.

In return, free trade has been opened between Briddh, Vulddin and Riggstad, with only two restrictions: Wood products and food products that include venison or the meat of boar are barred from being brought into the Freemen's areas. Baron Ottur knows that this ban can be lifted only when the druids of Silvanus have approved of the methods being used by the townsmen of Briddh to hunt and log.

Within a short time after the baron's agreement became effective, more than 300 townsmen, at last free to travel northward, packed up their belongings and moved permanently into the Freemen's areas, a result that the baron both regretted and welcomed. The reduction in population has substantially eased the problem of shortages in town.

The peace in Briddh as an open town where the faith of Herne the Hunter still is the official faith is tenuous, but Baron Ottur has agreed to allow the faiths of Ilmater and Chauntea free hand in his town, and he recently approved a petition from the church of Lathander for similar rights. To date, none of these faiths has erected a shrine or temple in Briddh, although clerics of Ilmater and druids of Chauntea have made frequent visits.

There are moments when everyone's breath comes to a standstill in Briddh. There are rare occasions when Freemen rangers of Mielikki and Gallist Hunters of Herne encounter each other in the ruins of Rublshofn, engage in battle and break contact, only for the survivors of the two groups to find themselves staring at one another angrily across the public room of the Outer Circle Inn. To date, however, the peace has held, and the baronial troops appear to be strongly committed to seeing to it that the law is upheld impartially.

Such tense occurrences are the exception, however. The peace is bringing prosperity to Briddh, and neither the Gallists nor the Freemen appear to be suffering for it yet. An increasing number of the curious from the Freemen's areas has been coming to Briddh out of curiosity, to see a Gallist enclave personally. Not knowing what they can use in barter, they bring with them and spend the coins that have accumulated in their homes, where they have little need for them.

In the years of isolation spent by the townsmen of Briddh, the women have developed sewing styles different from and more colorful than those in the Freemen's areas. Both travelers and peddlers have begun coming to town to buy such textiles for resale in Uthmere, Uthving and other parts of the Western Dale.

Briddh also has several farmers who are master wood carvers in their spare time. Their works of craft also are popular sales items. Technically, because their work uses wood from Lethyr Forest, these craft items are barred from import into the Freemen's areas, but all sides have decided to look the other way on such trade. The Freemen are more interested in barring the import of lumber into the free Dale.

It recently came to the attention of an agent of the Iron Throne in New Sarshel that the fields on the north side of the Sudurstraumur between Briddh and Rublshofn grow spelt of usually high quality. Liver dumplings made with spelt and potato flour are an expensive gourmet delicacy in Sembian Ordulin, but the finest dumplings require spelt of excellent quality.

The Throne has brought samples of Briddh spelt back to Sembia, had flour made of it and had it tested by a gourmet dumpling cook. There was a unanimous verdict that Briddh spelt flour produced the best gourmet dumplings the cook ever had made.

Covert agents of the Throne will be in Briddh at the time the PC group is there, negotiating to buy most of the new spelt crop as a future commodity, offering a price well below its true value in Sembia but one that seems to be overwhelmingly high in Briddh.

All of these things are beginning to raise the standard of living in Briddh, which in turn is increasing pressure upon Baron Ottur to bring the benefits to the village's woodsmen and hunters as well. There already are discussions in progress that could lead to this end.

Barnelraun of Lathander, a young but rising member of the Morninglord's faith in Impilturian Lyrabar, has been in Briddh since Marpenoth of the previous Year of the Unstring Harp (1371 DR). Druids of Silvanus asked his home temple to negotiate with the baron on behalf of the Oak Father's faith, to settle the centuries old dispute with Briddh.

Barnelraun has purchased an abandoned house in Briddh. He has hopes to stay in town and eventually build a small temple there. He has found no other place in his travels that he believes to be so in need of the Morninglord's word as Briddh, which now has every chance to experience a new dawn. The cleric's evangelic work in town has borne fruit, and Lathander is beginning to win a small following there.

The message that Barnelraun has brought to Baron Ottur is that the druids of Silvanus see the Great Dale from a much different perspective than was the case some 450 years ago when hostilities first began. At that time, the melt of the southern end of the Great Glacier still was melting. The entire ecological structure of the Dale and the problems attendant to it have changed dramatically as a result of the melt, the druids have said.

Their wish today is not so much to control Briddh's activities in Lethyr Forest as to be able to observe better for themselves what ecological alterations have taken place in Lethyr as a result of the melt. The druids, who understand that time must pass and deeds must be done before they can be accepted by the townsmen, do not want to enter Briddh and also are willing to keep their rangers out of Briddh. Instead, they want the baron to give them full rights to establish the ruins of Rublshofn as an operating base.

The current status is, that the baron is willing to agree to the druids' request, if they will give Briddh the right to manage the part of Lethyr Forest within a 5 mile/8km radius of the town as Briddh sees fit. If the druids agree to this, Ottur has said, and will end the blockade of Briddh's boar, venison and wood products, he will grant Rublshofn to the druids and relinquish all rights to the ruins.

At the time the PC party reaches Briddh, Barnelraun will receive an answer from Righan Eikensson, high druid of the Tellerth Circle in northwestern Rawlinswood. Eikensson will agree to the baron's offer, if the baron will agree to establish a security perimeter along this 5-mile/8-km boundary.

During the PCs stay in Briddh, the baron will reply that he will create the security perimeter if the druids will allow him to clear cut a 500-foot/150m wide path through the forest so that the perimeter can be patrolled. Without this path, the baron will say, he does not believe it is possible to keep the security agreement. How this last question will be resolved is left up to individual Game Masters. There will be no official *Northern Journey* outcome.

Whether the PCs become aware of these negotiations is dependent upon what they do while in Briddh. Barnelraun and the baron are conducting secret negotiations. Few who live in Briddh are aware of them, nor are any members of the Freemen's militia, although Count Báldr in Vulddin and Baron Annar in Riggstad have been informed that talks are being conducted. Neither knows the status of the negotiations.

When the PCs arrive in Briddh, they'll be greeted by a rather unusual urban layout for the Great Dale, one later emulated by some settlements in Damara. The ancient Narfelli who once held and also developed much of the Great Dale, protected their settlements and those they took over from the Dalesmen almost exclusively with rectangular or sextagonal walls.

Only three Narfelli settlements had circular walls. The reason for these exceptions is lost in time and the destruction of any records the Narfelli may have kept east of Impiltur. Narfelli documents still in the royal library in Impilturian Lyrabar show that two settlements with circular walls were developed by the Narfelli, where the Turami Dalesmen had no villages.

The first of these was Briddh, developed by the Narfelli and protected with a ring wall in -908 DR. More than half a century later, in -855 DR, the Narfelli had finished development of their own large and important eastern outpost, which they named Bezentil, and it too was surrounded by a ring wall.

The third ring wall was built around Kront in Ashanath, sometime after the Narfelli took it from the Dalesmen in -801 DR. For the Narfelli, Kront was a key border defensive post, facing toward enemy Raumathar across Lake Ashane where the nation of Rashemen now lies.

All three ring walls were destroyed in the Narfelli-Raumathari conflagration in the Year of Recompense (150 DR), but each was rebuilt eventually, although perhaps with other materials. Records show clearly that Impilturian merchants who made an unsuccessful attempt to turn Kront into a trade center in the Year of the Laughing Nightmare (56 DR) rebuilt the ring wall there, which still stands today.

Impiltur took no interest in Bezentil or in Briddh. One assumes that the Dalesmen rebuilt these ring walls, although there are no records to document precisely when or how this was done.

Inside of Briddh's wall, one finds two concentrically circular streets upon which most structures have been built. In modern times, a third concentric semi-circular street was built along the northwestern half of the town's wall and outside of it, where more construction took place. Within the wall, the circular roads are crossed by the main roads outward, which lead to Ganglhofn, Vulddin, Sudhofn and the ruins of Rublshofn.

Most farming is north of the Sudurstraumur. Between Briddh and the ruins of Rublshofn to the west one finds fields of crops, grain and flax. Most of the farmland to the west is used to graze beef and dairy cattle as well as sheep. The sheep grazing areas are beginning to spread quickly northwestward in heretofore unclaimed land toward the Trade Route.

The Dalesmen outside of Briddh have done little to develop the wool trade because of conflicts with cattlemen. In Briddh, however, wool historically has been one of the town's important commodities, and it is turning into one of the town's key new sources of outside income.

At the time the PCs reach Briddh, merchants from Yhaunn Textiles in Sembia will be in Briddh, looking at the possibilities of establishing a combination weaving and spinning mill there. The Sembian visitors are a key topic in the town right now, and it's also well known that the Sembians have told the baron that the realization of their plans depend greatly on whether the baron can succeed in turning Briddh from an open Gallist enclave into a truly neutral island between fronts that is open in all respects.

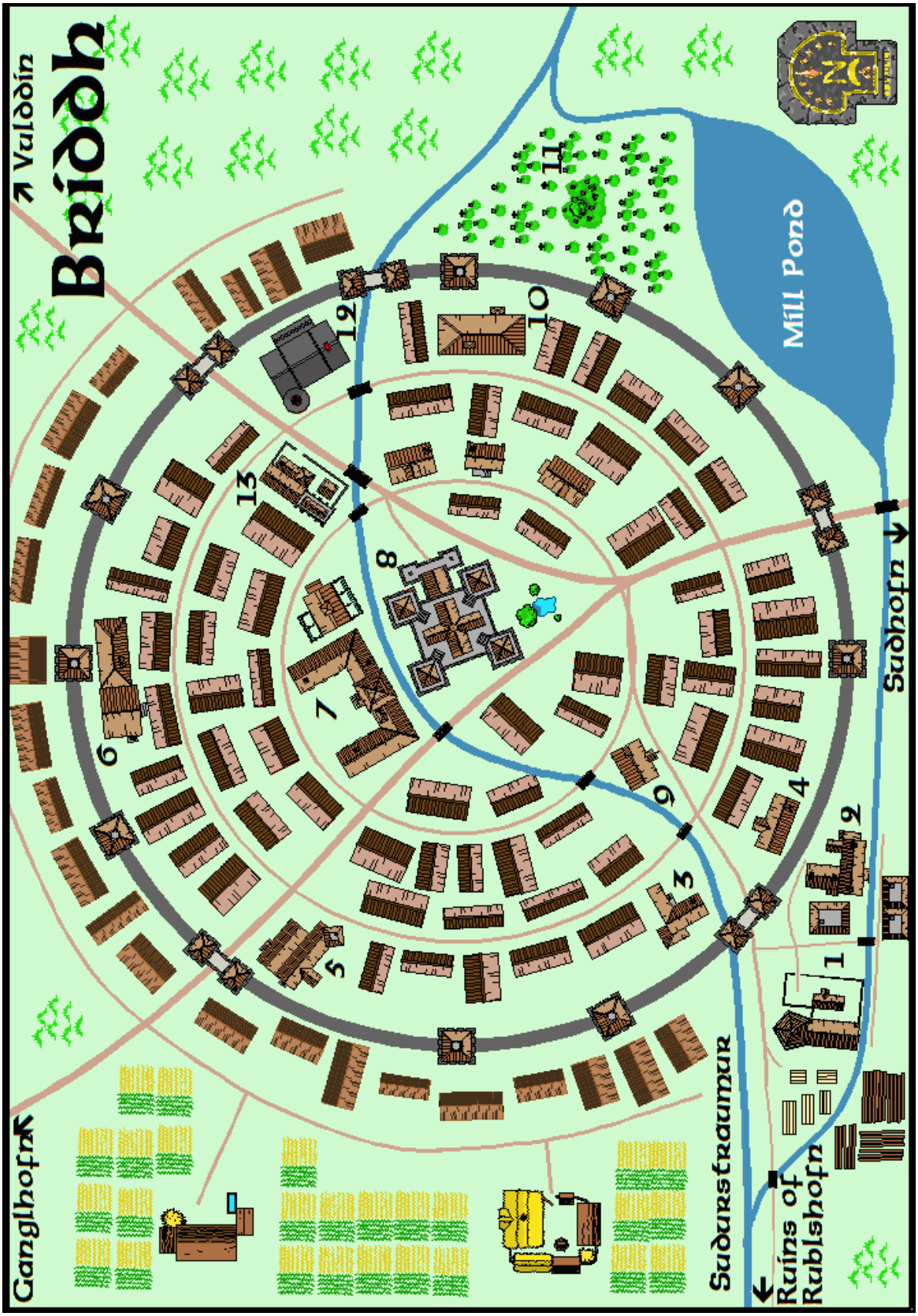
Adventure Hooks in Briddh

- **Harper Wizard.** Over the centuries, the Harpers have stayed out of affairs in the Great Dale, for the most part. With the growth and expansion of the Bloodstone lands after the melt of the southern Great Glacier, the rise and fall of Zhengyi the Witch King and recent signals that a great new empire could emerge, larger even than old Narfell, the Harpers are beginning to take a keen interest in the area. As usual, the Berdusk and Shadowdale factions both are active and in different manners. The agents of Twilight Hall who are in Impiltur, the Great Dale and Damara are closely observing developments, discussing them intently and taking little action. The Shadowdale faction has fewer agents in these three lands but it already is active in Vaasa, where Berdusk has yet to tread. The Shadowdale agents went eastward to observe and act, rather than to observe and ponder. Despite those differences, both factions share similar goals. They would like to see Impiltur contained within its current borders. They hope to see Damara maintain a relatively weak central kingdom while strengthening the regional baronies and duchies. They hope to keep the Iron Throne or Zhentarim from controlling Vaasa. They want to see Great Dale free itself from Harbet Gall but remain a collection of local duchies, counties, baronies and free settlements. Both Elminster of Shadowdale and his neighbor Storm Silverhand see the developments in Briddh as the spark that could ignite the flame of peace in the Great Dale. However, they also recognize that Briddh's defenses are extremely weak, that a Gallist Dragon Cult wizard could be sent to town and wreak havoc everywhere in the Baron's peace plans.

For that reason, they suggested that Barnelraun, the priest of Lathander, be sent by the druids of Silvanus to negotiate for them, and for the same reason, they asked a roving Harper wizard named Narbi to offer his protective services to Baron Ottur in return for the exclusive use of one of his castle's towers. The baron, who is unaware of Narbi's Harper affiliation, accepted and gave the wizard his southwestern tower. Narbi considers himself a battle mage. He has concentrated particularly upon learning fire-based spells, and he has used his skills and feats to concentrate the accuracy and impact of such magic. The PCs may encounter Narbi for either positive or negative reasons. For Game Masters running the *Northern Journey* adventure, Narbi is aware of the tale of the sigyll bearers, but he is not expecting them to turn up in Briddh.

- **Gallists.** By the time the PCs reach Briddh, they should be well aware of the meaning behind the oak-leaf-and-acorn badges of the Freemen and the eagle's-head-and-claw badges of the Hunters of Herne. They are certain to encounter both in Briddh. At the beginning, neither side will show particular interest in the PCs, although their actions could change that. The PCs will observe that Briddh can be something of a powder keg, when rangers of both factions begin drinking in the inn, particularly if the two factions are survivors of a recent battle with each other that has taken casualties on one or both sides. The PCs, by acting carelessly, could suddenly find themselves caught between the two fronts. However, they also may attempt to learn what the Hunters of Herne are seeking in Briddh. Interestingly enough, their orders are to stay out of trouble, observe closely what is happening in the town and report back to the druid countess of Herneburg. At present, the Gallists are not interested in upsetting the state of things in Briddh. The town still is serving as a useful barrier between the two fronts, and the Gallists have no plans at present to move northward through Briddh to attack the Freemen, nor do they have the military means to do so. On the other hand, the opening of Briddh to trade from the north has been of economic benefit to Gallist Herneburg and to some extent to Leifrskross. Traders from Briddh who transport wooden products southward to Theskan Phsant and Tammar on the Golden Way have begun taking along merchandise not available in Herneburg or Leifrskross that they have acquired in the Free Dale and selling and bartering it in the Gallist enclaves. Druid Countess Tindalsdóttir of Herneburg is particularly interested in maintaining this level of trade. She has become virtually addicted to the fine wines of Uthving, which the wood dealers bring to him.

- **Messengers.** This hook is of use only to Game Masters who are ***not*** running the *Northern Journey* adventure. The PCs could be brought in on the secret negotiations between Baron Ottur and Barnelraun and be asked to deliver messages to the druids of the Tellerth Circle.


Valdóin
Bríðh
Ganglhofn
Mill Pond
Suðhofn
Suðarstraumar
Ruins of Rablshofn
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Ganglhofn

Map of Bríddh

1 - Sudurstraumur Woodworks. The large sawmill, owned by Baron Ottur produces quality timber and has a large shop that builds furniture and accepts custom woodworking orders. The master sawyer is Darem nul Talar, human male, AL: N, Exp 4, a native of Phsant in Thesk who was in Briddh on business when his predecessor died. He applied to the baron for the job and won it. He employs two journeymen and three apprentices. The master joiner is a local, Narg Turughssonur, human male, AL: LN, Exp 3. He employs a journeyman and two apprentices. The baron's personnel negotiate export sales. Locals pay in barter.

2 - Forest Meadows Milling. Baron Ottur owns this mill too. Its granary stores barley, wheat, rye, oats, spelt and hops. The mill grinds wheat, rye and spelt flour and presses oil from sunflower and thistle seeds. The master miller is Gránur Duridhssonur. He employs three journeyman millers and four apprentices. Locals pay in barter.

3 - Outer Circle Inn. Briddh's only hostelry also has become one of its most booming businesses since the town's opening to the Freemen. Innkeeper Núla Kitvyngsdóttir, human female, AL: LN, Exp 2, already has expanded the public room and added an upper story of guest rooms. Guests are searched for weapons before entering the public room. There are too many occasions when the inn has served as a meeting ground for hostile and antagonistic rangers on opposite sides of the civil war. The inn has two bouncers with Strength 19 who are highly skilled in weaponless melee. On a few occasions, an unarmed ranger has needed an extra reminder from Kitvyngsdóttir's cook, Tarbeg Dargedhssonur, half orc, AL: LN, barbarian 12, Str 21. Dargedhssonur, who normally is an incredibly peace-loving barbarian (which also is the reason he learned to cook). When asked by his boss to the table where one or more troublemakers sit, Dargedhssonur comes with a bloody meat cleaver in hand. He slams the cleaver into the table with such force than anyone with Str of less than 18 needs to check to remove it. Then with the friendliest and most loving of smiles, he says, *You please pay and go home now*. Only once has he been refused. A drunken young ranger of Mielikki who felt he had been insulted by a look on the face of a Hunter of Herne sitting across the room refused to leave. Dargedhssonur picked the ranger up by the scruff of his neck and threw him into the road. The ranger landed with impact enough to break his weapon arm. The next day, the baronial troops collected the still open inn bill from the ranger, who was seeking a healer. Dargedhssonur's cooking is quite good although not always to everyone's taste. He prefers strong seasonings, which also fits the taste of most locals and of the woodsmen who come to the Outer Circle but is not quite delicate enough for the tongues of visiting merchants and traders. The half-orc cook makes generous use of garlic and hot red pepper. He also has a few secret spices he favors. Traders coming from the east on the Golden Way bring these seasonings to him in Briddh. The maturbordh costs 6 silver shiners. The only drink currently available is the local Waterside Lager, which costs three copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Kitvyngsdóttir is seriously considering adding some Easting Reach wines to her menu. The rooms are modest, and the older rooms are slightly drafty, but they're otherwise comfortable. The eight older singles cost 5 shiners. The 10 singles in the new addition cost 7 shiners, and the six doubles there cost 6 shiners per person. When the inn is full, Kitvyngsdóttir will try to arrange for accommodations in a private home. Locals may pay their bill in the public room in barter.

4 - Vulddin Delegation House. The chief delegate at present is Tardh Gafnirssonur, human male, AL: LG, Aris 7.

5 - Waterside Brewery. Dedhur Tindlssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 2, is the owner and brewmaster of the combined malting house and brewery. He has only one beer, a respectable lager. He employs a journeyman brewer and two apprentices. Locals often come to the brewery evenings to have a large tankard with lid filled for home consumption. The usual portion is two quarts/liters. The nominal cost is 4 copper bites, but almost all of the sales are paid in barter. Tindlssonur's wife is a potter who makes a variety of ceramic wares, among them lidded beer tankards, which the brewery sells at two shiners for a quart/liter tankard and three shiners for one with double that capacity.

6 - Samat tul Delem, Wainwright. Delem, human male, AL: LN, Exp 3, was the second and non-inheriting son of a wainwright in Theskan Tammar. When he learned from traders that Briddh's last wainwright had died heirless, he traveled to the Gallist enclave and negotiated with the baron, who had gained the closed shop under inheritance law. Delem had little money to pay, but the baron was interested in having the shop reopened as quickly as possible, so he agreed to rent it to Delem for one copper bite a year, with the stipulation that Delem would gain ownership after five years of successfully doing business.

Delem became the owner two years ago. He now employs a journeyman wainwright and three apprentices who build good quality wagons and sleds for farm use. Delem is hoping the baron can reach an agreement that will allow Briddh to market wooden products in the Free Dale, where he thinks he could find a good market. Locals deal with Delem in barter.

7 - Baronial Troops Barracks and Stables. Tardh Rangurssonur, human male, AL: N, Ftr 8, is the commander.

8 - Baron Ottur's Castle. The town dungeon is beneath the castle.

9 - Resting Scythe Tavern. Tavernkeeper Siludh Tárburssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 1, runs this small, comfortable evening tavern for locals. He seldom needs to discourage travelers or rangers from upsetting his wishes. One peek inside the door usually convinces them that the *Scythe* isn't what they're seeking. The usually see simple artisans and farmers chatting over a beer or playing cards, with no sign of excitement anywhere. The local Waterside Lager goes at a nominal price of 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard, but Tárburssonur does almost all of his business in barter.

10 - Narda's Bakery. Some people contend that master baker Narda Lidhlsdóttir, human female, AL: NG, Exp 6, bakes the finest spelt, wheat and rye breads in the entire Dale. She sells to private customers on premises and provides baked goods to the Outer Circle Inn. Locals pay in barter. Lidhlsdóttir hires a journeyman baker and two apprentices.

11 - Cemetery.

12 - Hunters Rest Temple. Temple to Herne the Hunter. The Hunter’s Rest always is manned. Either Delvyng Gurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 6, or Arlkur Borssonur, human male, AL: NE, ranger 5 (Hunter of Herne), is there. Whichever one of the two is not in the temple usually is working among hunters and loggers in Lethyr Forest. Gurssonur will greet strangers enthusiastically and try to preach to them of the sunny side of Herne's church, leaving out themes like the Great Hunt or Gallist oppression in the Eastern Dale. Borssonur, a ranger who is bitter about Briddh's drift away from Herne's faith and even more bitter that he has been ordered to work for Gurssonur, who he considers to be a weak sister and incompetent to boot, will greet visitors with surface courtesy but remain mostly quiet. Temple duty is the low point of his dissatisfying life. He seldom is seen in town outside of the temple.

13 - Gardhur Dendarssonur, Blacksmith. Denadrssonur, human male, AL: LN, Exp 2, does no work with weapons or armor. His main trade is in tools for artisans and in farm implements. His eldest son, a journeyman, works for him, and he employs two apprentice smiths. Locals pay in barter.

Vulddín

Large Town, Conventional, AL: NG, 3,000 gp limit. Assets: 480,000 gp. Population: 3,200 (including 1,300 memebers of the Freemen's miitia); 97% human, 3% half-elven, dwarven, halfling, gnome. Authority figure: Count Báldr Játssonur, human male, AL: N, Aris 8, Ftr 8, Count of Vulddin. Important Persons: General Hrotr Gunnlödssonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 14, commander, 2nd Combat Regiment, Freemen's Militia; Major Heingest Byrgurssonur, human male, AL: NG, Ftr 9, Rgr 1, commander, 1st Battalion; Major Nyrda Liglsdóttir, human female, AL: LG, Ftr 9, Rgr 2, commander, 2nd Battalion; Major Karlur Lálurssonir. human male, AL: NG, Ftr 10, Rgr 1, commander, 3rd Battalion. . Others: Kebel Dagget, human male, AL; CG, Transmuter 12; Radulmbrar, human male, AL: LG, diviner 13; Kyla Leeb, human female, AL: NG, conjurer, 13; Niekk, gnome male, AL: NG, Ill 2, cleric (Gond) 4, Exp lvl 18; Painbearer Kjála Hungstarsdóttir, human female, AL: LG, Cleric (Ilmater) 12; Radabar of Tempus, human male, AL: CG, cleric (Tempus) 7; Nardul Ergurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rogue 8, Tavernkeeper at the Vigilant Dalesmen and Gallist spy. Watch: Nýgla Taradhsdóttir, human female, AL: NG, Ftr 11, commander of the watch; 100 Watch members, human male and female, AL: all non-evil; 35 Ftr 1-6, 65 War 1-6. Taxation type: Benevolent.

Vulddin really is a town with two names, and the one that's unofficial is just as well known. It's *The Front*.

The last battle lines sometimes are farther to the east, in Bezentil, but in the last 450 years, no one side ever has held that city for very long. Except for a brief 32 years when it was under Gallist control, from the Year of the Sudden Sorrows (941 DR) until the Year of the Emptied Lair (973 DR), Vulddin always has been a forward line of the Freemen.

In those four and a half centuries, Vulddin has been hit with everything Harbet Gall has had to throw at the Freemen - magic, warriors, rangers, druids, Reavers of Garagos, ravaging dragons, marching undead and even Tuigan raiders. Twice nearly three quarters of the town has been laid in ruin, and a third time, 40% of it has been destroyed, but each time, after driving Gall's minions back, the Freemen have rolled up their sleeves, rebuilt and resuscitated Vulddin.

The most recent devastation was a mere 30 years ago in the Year of the Behir (1342 DR), when Harbet Gall sent two green dragons and a Dragon Cult necromancer's undead marching against the town. The enemy wreaked 70% destruction before being defeated, but Vulddin stood against it and raised the town back up from the ruins in only four years time. Today's Vulddin is pretty much the same as the town that emerged from reconstruction in the Year of the Bloodbird (1346 DR).

Towns like Ganglhofn and Riggstad, a bit farther behind the lines, are bitter over their past losses and waiting for Gall to dare to attack again, as though they have a chip on their shoulders. The atmosphere in Vulddin is much different. Despite being right on the front of the currently quiet civil war, Vulddin is a bustling farm town and regional center.

The people of Vulddin are certain the Gallists will strike again. That's almost a part of second nature to them. Nevertheless, as long as there is no attack, the townsfolk have business to do. They'll take time out to deal with Gall's minions when it's necessary, but until then, they think there's nothing more sensible than to let life go on as usual.

Throughout most of its existence, Vulddin has been a military bastion of one sort or another, dating back to the hostilities between ancient Narfell and Raumathar, which remained in a simmering standoff for many centuries before the end of the great conflagration that led to their mutual destruction in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR).

The east-west border between the two great empires met in the south at Lake Ashane, with Raumathar controlling what now is Rashemen, and Narfell having conquered the Great Dale and Ashanath. Narfell's mighty front settlement, filled with magic, soldiers and naval power, was the first of Narfell's two ring-walled cities, Kront in Ashanath on the Lake of Tears.

The Narfelli had taken Kront from the Turami in -908 and built a huge military base there, much larger than the small, ring-walled city that stands on the lakeshore today. Once Kront was completed and armed with weapons and sorcery, the Narfelli began building their secondary ring-walled support bastion of Bezentil, reputedly the most magnificent of the Narfelli cities in the south, exceeding even Impilturian Lyrabar in riches and magic.

The Narfelli emperor vested one of his high nobles with the title Duke of Bezentil and granted him a duchy that is said to have been the rich, southern breadbasket of Narfell. Whether Bezentil stood on previously undeveloped ground or whether there had been a Turami settlement on the site is unknown today, but the city of Bezentil was totally new. The Narfelli completed it in -851 DR.

According to Impilturian experts on Narfell, the duchy included not only Bezentil but also the current day sites of Vulddin, Denderdale, Torside, Riggh, Skarlshofn, Ulfshofn, Gurshofn and Auststad. The emperor gave his new duke a two-fold mission: To produce needed food for southern Narfell and to be the backbone of support and for supply of the imperial margrave who held the genuine front against Raumathar, the March of Ashanath, as Narfell called it, with its seat in Kront.

The Duke of Bezentil reportedly gave his wizard brother the responsibility for maintaining the high standard of war magic available in the duchy, and he created a special enclave for him, building Vulddin as the town of magi. It was completed in -802 DR. With the emperor's blessing, the Narfelli Duke of Bezentil saw to it that his wizard brother became count of the new mage's town, Vulddin.

The county, which remained a subordinate part of the duchy, was ceded three tiny farming settlements the Narfelli had built, Torside and Riggh, which were built in -850 DR, and Denderdale, which had been built in -807 DR. Together, the town of Vulddin, the thorp of Denderdale, the village of Riggh and the hamlet of Torside comprised the County of Vulddin, which in turn was a part of the Duchy of Bezentil.

Although the Narfelli magi and their magic were gone and Vulddin turned toward farming, the Narfelli-designed political structure survived for nearly a millennium after Narfell's fall, being carried on by the Dalesmen after they had rebuilt settlements along the Trade Route, which had been totally devastated in the final explosions of the Narfelli-Raumathari war.

Until the Year of the Turning Wheel (937 DR), the County of Vulddin continued to be a part of the Duchy of Bezentil. That ended, when the Gallists captured Bezentil and slew the last in the line of the Dalesmen dukes. Since that time, military commanders usually ruled Bezentil, as it frequently shifted sides. Today, Bezentil is in the hands of the Malarite high priest Skith Tsornagar.

The outer settlements of the duchy - Skarlshofn, Ulfshofn, Gurshofn and Auststad - also fell to the Gallists. The barons the duke had chosen to rule there were slain, and Harbet Gall appointed druid barons. After that time all that remained of the duchy was the County of Vulddin, and it too had forfeited the village of Riggh to the Gallists, where a usurper true druid had been named baron by Gall.

In the Year of the Sudden Sorrows (941 DR), the count of Vulddin was forced to flee for his life, as the Gallist shadow moved westward across the Central Dale. It was forced to stop at last between Riggstad and Gylving. The count fled to Riggstad, and then, when its fall was imminent, to Gylving, where he remained to the end of his days. His son at last took up the county's scepter of rule in Vulddin in the Year of the Emptied Lair (973 DR).

During the 30 odd dark years in the Central Dale's history when it was under Harbet Gall's thumb, all of the old Duchy of Bezentil had fallen to the Hunters of Herne except for the thorp of Denderdale and the hamlet of Torside. The magic of the Tor apparently protected both.

The young duke who reclaimed Vulddin was forced to settle for a smaller county including only Denderdale and Torside. The largest of his farming settlements, the village of Riggh, remained solidly in the Gallist camp under the rule of a druid baron of Herne.

The situation is not much different today. Count Báldr rules over Vulddin, Denderdale and Torside. The county's official map of its borders also includes and claims Riggh, but the village, which the Hunters of Herne no longer claim, is in charred ruins.

In the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), the Hunters of Herne, facing imminent attack from the powerful Impilturian paladin Sir Punumbrar, put the torch to Riggh, unfortunately before their own men had finished evacuating it. Two dozen Hunters of Herne perished in the flames, and their angry ghosts still haunt the ruins today. Although Count Báldr claims the ruins of Riggh again, neither he nor his troops have attempted to assert that claim among the village's ghosts.

Today, only the Freemen's training base in Uthmere is more highly fortified than Vulddin, but seasoned warriors fill Vulddin, while a large number of militiamen in Uthmere are just beginning their service. Vulddin houses the headquarters of the Freemen's 2nd Combat Regiment and three of its four battalions, with a total strength of 1,300. The fourth battalion is stationed in nearby Ganglhofn in the Barony of Riggstad. Volunteer wizards who have come to town from various areas, the priests and paladins of Helm in the Abbey of the Vigilant One in Torside and the more than 1,000 warrior loggers in the Dender's Valley Logging Camp village to the North bolster the militia's strength.

Since the construction of the wooden palisade walls Hernestönna and Skarlstönna in the open lands near Bezentil and east of the ruins of Riggh, skirmishes with the Hunters of Herne have been rare, both in the County of Vulddin and in the logging camp. Even the reconstruction of abandoned Riggh would be possible, were the ruins not haunted.

Vulddin always is under the threat of being the brunt of any campaign. There also is little flowing water in the town, other than a tiny creek. Nonetheless, Vulddin is an important regional trade center that serves Torside, Denderdale, the logging camp, Ganglhofn and to some extent even Riggstad and Briddh, which still is an enclave of Herne the Hunter.

Láli's Tears Creek, doubtless named after a now forgotten figure or heroine of the past, is a small trickle that has its source in the fields between Briddh and Vulddin in the south. The creek is too small to support fish although some locals do take freshwater crabs from it. The only virtue the creek has is that its flow is steady year round, except when it's fully frozen in Winter.

The Narfelli made optimal use of the creek some 2,000 years ago, channeling it to form the only water moat in the Great Dale, a channel that fills the gap between the town's two defensive walls. Guarded, barred gates go below the creek bed at the points where it flows into Vulddin in the south and out again in the north, preventing anyone from entering at those points without the help of magic. It is said that other magical wards are in place to detect magical attempts to breach the gates.

From Vulddin, fields spread southward for a few miles/kilometers until they reach a fallow area that has gone unplanted for centuries. The County of Vulddin views the end of the fields as being its southern border. About two miles/3 km farther to the south, the fields of the Barony of Briddh begin. In the north, Vulddin's farms spread onward, in a sense all of the way to Rawlinswood. The thorp of Denderdale and the hamlet of Torside, both of which belong to the county, really only are central clusters of buildings within a large farming belt.

When the PCs reach Vulddin, they'll find the town well fortified. A 30 foot/9 m high stone wall a meter/yard thick surrounds the town outside of the moat which is formed by channeling and damming Láli's Tears Creek. The moat is filled to a depth of 20 feet/6 m. The Trade Route, the single road into and out of Vulddin, has a drawbridge across the moat on both sides of town.

Beyond the moat is the main city wall, also 30 feet/9m tall. Both the outer and inner gates are made of massive oak magically treated to prevent fire. The outer face of the gates is plated with metal. The outer and inner walls have both watchtowers and combat ramparts along their entire length.

The very center of the town, where one finds the Freemen's barracks and training grounds, the count's fortress castle and town hall, is enclosed by yet another wall - in this case 20 feet/6 m high - with watch towers and strong gates.

In normal times, only a few of the towers in each of the walls will be manned on any given day. A rotation plan decides which towers are manned each day, so that Gallist spies cannot know where there are weak spots in Vulddin's defense. All of the gates are open from sunrise to sunset each day, and the gates of the inner wall across the moat are closed only in times of crisis.

Anyone who properly identifies him- or herself usually will be allowed to enter the town after the main outer gates are closed. However, only members of the militia, the town administration and the count's staff usually are allowed through the innermost gates in the hours of darkness. Exceptions are made only rarely, and then only for very important reasons.

Anyone who wishes to alert the watch or make a criminal complaint can do so with the duty officer, who is stationed in the night hours in the western gatehouse. If the duty officer believes the person reporting should be admitted to the town center, he has the authority to do so.

The only manned temples in Vulddin serve Ilmater and Tempus. There is a shrine to Chauntea among the farm fields north of town and another to Lathander in the Sunrise House Inn.

After the last Gallist attack in the Year of the Behir (1342 DR). Count Báldr made it clear that Vulddin would welcome and support magi who would move to the border town and pledge to stand by Vulddin with their magic in times of need. Three did so, and all three have built towers, two of them with attached manor houses. Their statistics are listed in the town summary above, and more details can be found in the explanations of their map locations.

The inns and taverns of Vulddin have a rather active nightlife. None has its own brewery. All serve Freemen's Lager from the Free Dale Brewery.

Because Vulddin is on the front, leaving it and traveling eastward is not always easy. Count Báldr has no interest in serving as a transit town for Gallist sympathizers who want to go eastward, only to turn around and mount attacks against him. Anyone who wants to pass into the East needs a convincing explanation.

It also is a bad idea to try to circumvent the town and slip through the farming areas into the East. Platoons of the Freemen's militia heavily patrol these areas. Travelers attempting to go eastward through the farmlands usually are viewed immediately as being suspect and are taken to Vulddin for questioning.

Even if one does succeed in eluding the patrols, only a circuitous route would take one into the Gallist areas. One would have to enter Rawlinswood at some point and then come back out again. The only road other than the Trade Route that went from the Central Dale to the East was the small trail connecting Riggh with Skarlshofn. The bridge on that route across Dender's Creek, which flows too fast to be forded, was destroyed more than 80 years ago. The rest of the open land between the Trade Route and Rawlinswood is blocked by the Hernestönna and Skarlstönna palisade walls, which are watched.

For Game Masters running the *Northern Journey* adventure, General Gunnlödssonur and his top officers will be aware of the PCs and their sigylls. None of them will know automatically that the PCs are in Vulddin, but if they become aware of this, they will see to it that the PCs are allowed to go east. They also will see to it that the PCs are briefed on the East. If it appears advisable, Gunnlödssonur may even arrange for the PCs to view parts of the East through the scrying of the Impilturian mage Radulmbrar.

Adventure Hooks in Vulddin:

A PC group that travels to Vulddin in most cases will have done so with the intention of getting across the border and entering the Gallist East. Although it is difficult in and of itself, the easiest way to do this is to leave Vulddin legally through the Eastgate and then pass through Bezentil, which is not quite aligned with either side in the civil war.

In most cases, one assumes that PCs will not necessarily be looking for mini-adventures in Vulddin but rather will try to do all they can to learn anything useful about what they face and where they might want to go in enemy territory.

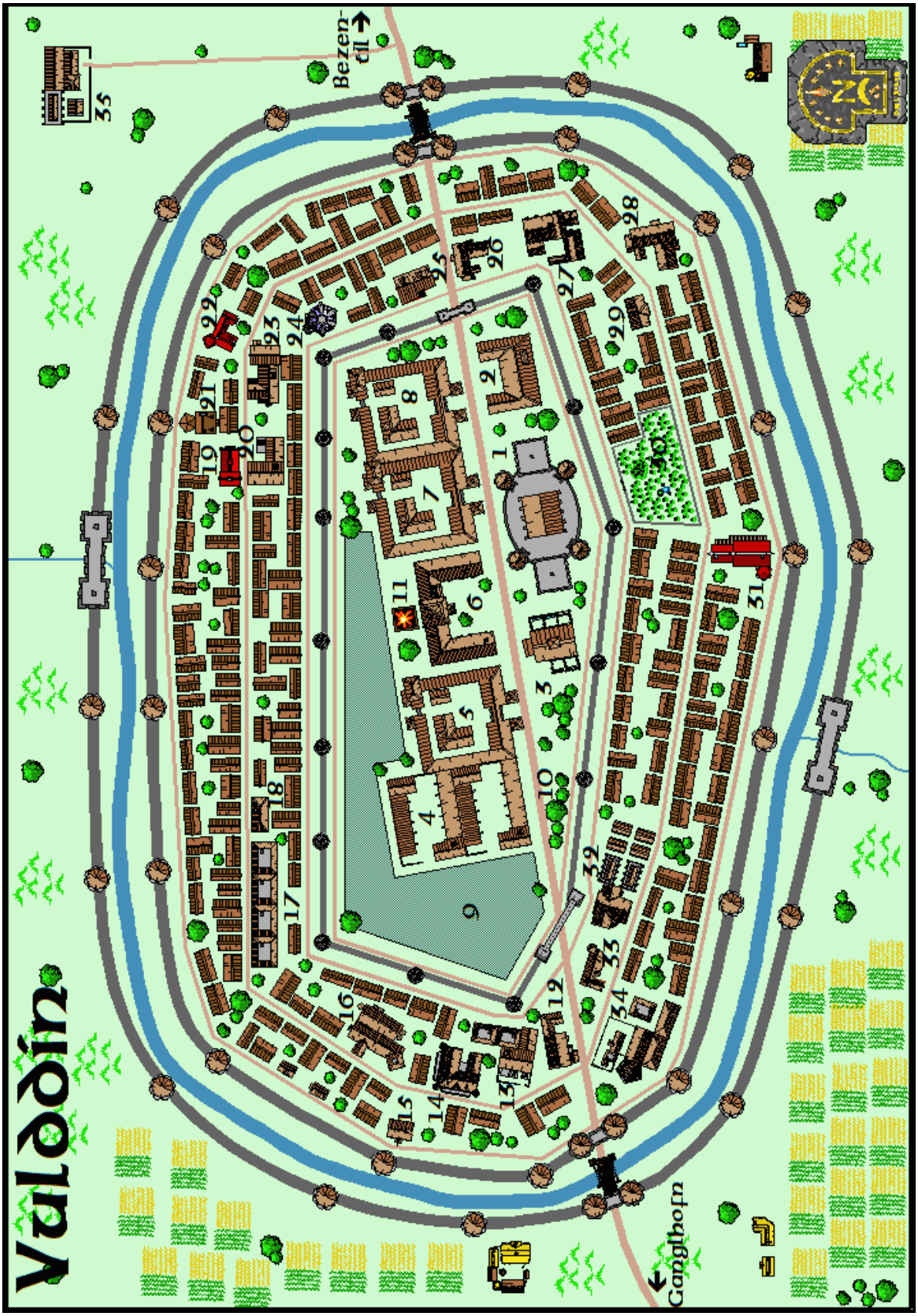
Almost any of the standard encounters that have taken place elsewhere in the Dale also are possible here.

- **Ancient Magic.** This hook will not come up automatically, but alert PCs may stumble upon it. The Cormyte conjurer Kyla Leeb and her gnome sidekick Niekk (see map description No. 31) are meeting with some success in finding the old, long forgotten tunnels that ancient Narfelli magi once built beneath Vulddin. They also are beginning to occasionally find some objects of considerable magical power in the subterranean ruins. Under Leeb's agreement with Count Báldr, all found items are assessed and then through negotiations, she and the county receive approximately equal shares. Game Masters who have underpowered PC groups on the verge of entering the East can use this hook to make additional magic available to the party.

- **The Horse's Mouth.** This option applies to groups running the *Northern Journey* adventure. If the PCs go to the Freemen's militia and tell their tale as well as that of their sigylls, a report of their contact will reach General Gunnlödssonur within 24 hours. He will arrange for the party to be thoroughly briefed, allowed to depart the Eastgate and, if he thinks the circumstances warrant, he may even arrange for the party to see the results of Radulmbrar's scrying (see map description No. 24 below).

- **Ears Open.** If the PCs keep their ears open and their lips relatively tight, they can learn quite a bit about the East by listening to what's said during the evening discussions of visitors in the taverns and public rooms of the town's inns.

- **Vigilant Dalesman.** A particularly good source of information is Nardul Ergurssonur, owner of this tavern (Map Description No. 18) and local spy for Harbet Gall. The PCs will be able to gain considerable information from Ergurssonur. If he gains any useful information from the PCs, he will send it back to Gall. In campaigns running the *Northern Journey* adventure, Ergurssonur has already been alerted by Nighthawk Tower to the fact that such a group is traveling eastward, but he will not know the PCs are in Vulddin until they reveal themselves to him or until he hears scuttlebutt about them from other sources. He will pass on any information the PCs reveal to him and also answer questions Gall will have about the PCs' conceptions and misconceptions of what their mission is all about.



Vulddin

Map of Vuldín:

1- Count Báldr's Castle.

2 - Town Hall. Town administration, watch barracks, dungeon.

3 - Town Stables. The stables serve Count Báldr, the town watch and the town administration.

4 - Stables of the Freemen's Militia.

5 - Barracks, 1st Battalion.

6 - Headquarters, 2nd Combat Regiment and the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions.

7 - Barracks, 2nd Battalion.

8 - Barracks, 3rd Battalion.

9 - Training Ground, Freemen's Militia.

10 - Trade Route.

11 - Signal Tower. Lit in time of need to warn surrounding settlements.

12 - Hebard Daggart Blacksmith. Daggart, human male, AL: LG, Exp 3, is a master blacksmith who migrated from Damara. He employs a journeyman and four apprentices. Locals pay in barter.

13 - Vulddin Textiles. Owner Minna Näiklsdóttir, human female, AL: LG, Exp 3, buys wool, linen and woven and sewn materials from housewives who do textile work at home in the winter. She exports them westward for sale.

14 - Westgate Inn. The Westgate is Vulddin's most economical inn, run by Argur Urnurssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 3. The rooms are simple but comfortable. The 10 singles cost 6 silver shiners, the four doubles 5 shiners per person. The maturbordh is well done but by no means of gourmet level. It costs 5 shiners. A board with bread, cheese and cold sausage costs 2 shiners. The only drink is Freemen's Lager at 3 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. The inn tends to draw a cross section of guests from different walks of life, usually those looking for a good price. In addition to houseguests, local laborers, artisans, minor town officials and small shop owners tend to congregate in the public room evenings. Locals often pay in barter.

15 - Rear Flank Tavern. Retired town watch Sergeant Brundar Gorburssonur, human male, AL: CG, Ftr 5, owns this watering hole, a favorite night stop for some adventurers who come to town as well as low ranking members of the Freemen's militia and the town watch. Because most of his customers have nothing to barter, Gorburssonur usually accepts only coins. He sells a breadboard with cheese, bread and sausage for a silver shiner and Freemen's Lager for 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard.

16 - Free Dale Brewery. Brewmaster Lovur Geidhurssonur, human male, AL: LG, Exp 4, owns and runs the combination brewery and malting house and brews a golden orange lager that's one of the Dale's better beers east of Mauberg. He employs a journeyman, four laborers and three apprentices. Locals can have their tankards for at home filled at the brewery for 3 copper bites a quart/liter, with barter payment accepted.

17 - Narduls Warehouses. Nardul Ergurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rogue 8, owner of the neighboring Vigilant Dalesman Tavern, owns the four warehouses. Anyone can rent storage space in them at a silver shiner per square yard/meter per month.

18 - Vigilant Dalesman Tavern. Nardul Ergurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rogue 8, a spy for Harbet Gall in Nighthawk Tower, owns and runs this tavern, which offers some warm food, local beer and a bit of Easting Reach wine. The *Dalesman* is a favorite stopping point for adventurers, scouts, rangers, middle level town officials, non-commissioned officers and lower level officers of the Freemen's militia. Ergurssonur is a friendly, outgoing, well-liked tavernkeeper, but his real mission is to keep his ears open when his guests talk, gather news and then use scrolls with telepathic spells to communicate back to Nighthawk Tower. He does this infrequently, not only because his supply of scrolls is limited and it is difficult to smuggle new ones to him, but also because Gall wants only one summary communication annually and wants other communications only when there is truly important news. Ergursonur is a native of Kront in Ashanath who tells a credible tale of having escaped from there. He knows the Eastern Dale like the back of his hand, and he knows what the Freemen already know about the Eastern Dale. For that reason, he will give considerable detail about things in the East to those who ask, knowing that he isn't revealing anything not already known, at least in the Freemen's upper command levels. Much of what he reveals is new knowledge to the lower ranking officers, rangers and adventurers who question him, so they're quite convinced that Ergursonur is ready and willing to divulge quality information that's highly detrimental to the Gallists. As a result, he not only is popular in Vulddin, but his credibility is quite high. That notwithstanding, the Freemen believe they have traced an information leak back to the *Vigilant Dalesman*. They do not suspect Ergursonur. Instead, they assume that some other Gallist agent who still is unknown frequents the tavern at times. To counter this situation, there are secret orders that have been issued to officers who frequent the *Dalesmen* not to discuss what they know there, even with each other, and there are some agents of the militia who go to the *Dalesmen* and intentionally disseminate false information. Ergursonur is not aware of this. His house has dartboards and card tables. One can order warm sausages with sour kraut at 3 silver shiners and various cold boards with sausage, cheese and bread at 1 to 3 shiners. Freemen's Lager costs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Ergursonur also has various Easting Reach wines at 8 shiners to 2 gold talers a bottle. Few pay in barter.

19 - Blade of the Dale Temple. The temple serves Tempus. The high priest is Radabar of Tempus, human male, AL: CG, cleric (Tempus) 7, a native of Baldur's Gate in the distant West. Two other priests of lvls 1 and 2 also serve the temple.

20 - Jeevy's Supply Center. Damaran Halfling Downs immigrant Jeevy Tark, halfling male, AL: CN, Rogue 4, sells almost anything a farmer, shopkeeper or adventurer might need other than weapons. His prices are 25% above the PHB for strangers and 10% above the PHB for locals, barter accepted. He also trades in used items. The three-story store has a huge torch-lit area below ground, accessed only by Tark and his employees, that's filled with merchandise. The underground storage area was a part of Narfell's old tunnel system in Vulddin, but the subterranean corridors that lead into and out of it are caved in. Tark employs six salespeople, all human.

21 - House of the Persevering Dalesman. The high priestess of the temple to Ilmater is Painbearer Kjála Hungstarsdóttir, human female, AL: LG, Cleric (Ilmater) lvl 12. She is served by three additional clerics of levels 9, 5 and 2.

22 - Kebel Dagget's Manor House and Tower. This is the abode of Kebel Dagget, human male, AL; CG, Transmuter lvl 12, one of the three magi in Vulddin who is pledged to aid the town in times of trouble. Dagget is reclusive and spends most of his time in his tower doing magical research and making magical items. He usually rejects requests of adventurers to see him. Dagget is from Tellerth in Damara. His older brother was a druid of the Tellerth circle who was captured in a skirmish by the Hunters of Herne and slain. Dagget came to Vulddin intending to avenge his brother's death the next time the Gallists attack the West.

23 - Kendelraun Weaponsmith. Kendelraun, human male, AL: LG, Exp 8, War 6, a native of Impilturian Outentown, is a master weaponsmith and armor maker who learned his crafts as an apprentice and then journeymen to twin dwarven brothers of the Earthfast clan who ran a smithy in Impilturian Outentown. After being dubbed a master, he opened a smithy in Ilmwatch, where he came to know a number of traveling Dalesmen. The Freemen's perseverance in the centuries old religious civil war inspired him. He decided to sell his smithy and travel east into the Dale's border regions, hoping to help in the fight for freedom. He took over the smith's operation in Vulddin after the previous owner and master had died. Kendelraun employs a journeyman weaponsmith, a journeyman armor maker and four apprentices.

24 - Radulmbrars Tower. Radulmbrar, human male, AL: LG, diviner lvl 13, is a covert member of the Wand of Impiltur, the magicians' arm of Impiltur's defense forces. He was assigned personally by Archwand Daerthnur in Ilmwatch to carry out his current mission in Vulddin. He reports directly to Daerthnur's aide, the archdiviner Glira Aboadus in Ilmwatch. Although it is highly secret, Radulmbrar temporarily has the Scrying Stone of Myth Drannor (see the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*) that had been held by battle wizards of War Captains Imbraun and Soargilm in the Impilturian coastal city of Dilpur. When Radulmbrar completes his mission, it will be returned there. The stone not only is one of Radulmbrar's important scrying tools, but it also allows him to communicate directly and quickly with Daerthnur and Aboadus, and it gives either of them the ability to travel immediately to Radulmbrar in Vulddin as a projected image, as with the *PHB* spell *Project Image.* Daerthnur and Aboadus also have equipped Radulmbrar with a number of other highly powerful tools of scrying and observation from the treasure chamber of the Wand of Impiltur. In Vulddin, only Count Báldr and General Gunnlödssonur know who Radulmbrar really is. At times, when he discovers significant new activity by the Gallists in the East, his aide will inform the count and the general and they will come secretly to the tower to see the fruits of the Impilturian mage's scrying. Gunnlödssonur also comes alone at times to the tower, to request the Impilturian magi to show him certain things. He already has spent hours watching the Reavers of Garagos in the ruins of Fortress Clymph train, and he has spent considerable time watching the undead raised by necromancers of the Dragon Cult at Tower Threespires, in both cases to help him devise and prepare battle strategies. Radulmbrar spends most of his time in his tower, scrying and watching the Gallist regions. He seldom leaves the complex, and few people in Vulddin ever have seen him. His three aides, all sergeants in the Sword of Impiltur, the royal Impilturian army, handle the tower and Radulmbrar’s day-to-day necessities. They live in the tower with Radulmbrar.

25 - Tomur’s Wagons and Sleds. Local wainwright Tomur Lukurssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 5, owns this shop. Lokurssonur builds wagons and sleds both for locals and for the Freemen's militia. Locals may pay in barter.

26 - Dragon Tomb Inn. Túlja Gídursdóttir, human female, AL: LG, Exp 2, owns this hostelry, Vulddin’s elite inn, as it were. Her ancestors named the inn to mark the fact that Vulddin was an important stop on the path to many a wyrm's death. Prosperous traders, high officers of the militia, key members of the count's staff and their guests tend to stay in the inn and use its public room. Sometimes the count or the general dines here. It is the Dale's only genuinely luxurious house east of Mauberg. Dress clothing is the rule, and weapons are prohibited except when worn by the count, the general or their aides. Gídursdóttir prides herself in importing fine food items from the Western Dale and Impiltur, as well as having a few items from the Far East, which are brought up from the Golden Way through the Gallist areas in the South over Briddh. The *Dragon Tomb* has no conventional rooms but rather four suites that cost 1 bloodstone bar (10 platinum marks) weekly. The exquisite maturbordh costs 3 gold talers. Wines from Uthmere and Uthving run between 1 taler and 2 marks for a quart bottle. Mauberg's Oak Malt Whisky costs 1 taler per shot/0.1 Liter. Freemen's Lager is free with the maturbordh. If gold-laden adventurers seek to rent suites and there are any free, they will not be turned down, but they will be required to adhere strictly to dress and weapon rules. They also will be warned that the rules are enforced by the Count's court, and that an attempt to smuggle a hidden weapon into the public room might result in suspicion that one is planning to assassinate either the count or the general, because both dine there at times.

27 - Eastern Sentinel Inn. Karbyng Hrandssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 2, owns Vulddin's largest inn. Like the Sunrise House a bit to the south, it draws a wide cross section of customers. Hrandssonur offers 18 single rooms at 7 silver shiners and 8 doubles at 6 shiners per person. All are decent comfortable rooms. The maturbordh costs 6 shiners, and Freemen's Lager, the only drink available, costs 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. The *Sentinel* has a large public room heated by two sizeable, wood-burning tile stoves, which keeps it warm and comfortable in the winter months. The public room draws a decent local trade, making for nights of happy beer drinking and animated discussion. Locals who come to the Sentinel tend to be in business, trade or be officers or non-commissioned officers of the Freemen's militia.

28 - Sunrise House Inn. This hostelry got its rather strange name a few centuries earlier when it was built by the enterprising one of two twin brothers. The second brother, a cleric of Lathander, owned the property directly to the west, where he built a temple that he called the Sunrise House. His brother gave the inn the same name. The temple is long gone, but the inn still stands. Within it remains a shrine to Lathander that dates from the inn's early days.

Interestingly enough, with the still small but growing rekindled interest in the Morninglord's faith in the Eastern Dale, a novice priest of Lathander, Sean O'Fathel, human male, AL: LG, cleric (Lathander) lvl 1, a native of Damara, has recently come to Vulddin and started caring for the shrine again, where he also conducts services for the small number of believers in town. O'Fathel rooms permanently in the *Sunset House*, which now belongs to Innkeeper Lars Tifurssonur, human male, AL: LG, Exp 1. The inn building looks considerably larger than the inn facility itself proves to be. One wing of 10 former double rooms has been turned into a wing for permanent residents. The Freemen rent eight of the rooms, which are a home base for eight freelance rangers who patrol the dangerous border areas for the militia. When they come to Vulddin for rest and recuperation, these are their rooms. One room is rented to the cleric O'Fathel. The last room is paid for by the count. It has no permanent resident as such, but the local rural druids of Chauntea know that when one of them comes to Vulddin, the room is there at no charge, as is the public room, where the count also pays the tab. Tifurssonur has a maturbordh that offers what most folks would term simple but good home cooking. It costs six silver shiners. Freemen's Lager runs 3 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. The 16 single rooms cost 6 shiners. There are no doubles available. As in the Eastern Sentinel, one can expect a good cross section of people here, including locals. However, one should not expect to have much contact in the public room with the rangers who have rooms here. They tend to eat in the Sunset House, but then they head just down the street to the *City of the Dead* for more serious drinking.

29 - City of the Dead Tavern. Until not too long ago, this watering hole was called *The Moat Tears.* Gimp, human male, AL: NG, Rgr 12, recently retired from border patrol service with the Freemen and bought the *Tears*. He renamed it *City of the Dead* as a joke, because the town cemetery is just down the street. Gimp is not the aging ranger's real name. He refuses to answer what his real name is, other than to say, *"It ends in 'sonur,' like just about everyone else's."* Anyone who wants to can drink in the *City of the Dead*, but the only people who usually want to are the regulars. This is home in Vulddin to the border patrol rangers, to members of special commando units of the Freemen who sometimes make suicidal raids within the Gallist areas and to a few bands of adventurers who have had a certain degree of luck slipping ancient Narfelli objects they've found on the Gallist side of the border out and back into the Free Dale. Most of the visitors die young, which also makes the new name fitting. Gimp serves his own homemade canned sausage spread on a breadboard with cheese, pickle, horseradish and grated raw onions for 2 silver shiners. Freemen's Lager costs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard.

30 - Town cemetery.

31 - Kyla Leeb's Manor House and Tower. Leeb, human female, AL: NG, conjurer lvl 13, a native of Arabel in Cormyr, is the third mage who came to town to offer the count her help in time of need in return for his support. However, she has a special purpose in being in Vulddin, of which the count is aware. Leeb bought a set of parchments from an Impilturian thief that shows the plans for a network of tunnels built by the Narfelli beneath Vulddin. According to the parchments, the tunnels were completed in the Year of the Creeping Thieves (-680 DR). Leeb has assumed correctly that some Narfelli items of magical power are hidden in the ancient tunnels. She and her sidekick, a former illusionist from Lantan who now calls himself a mechanical engineer, are seeking out and exploring the tunnels. The sidekick says he has a much longer name, but he calls himself Niekk, gnome male, AL: NG, Ill 2, cleric (Gond) 4, Exp 18. Niekk has built not only contraptions that he claims can detect underground passages and whether there's metal within them but also other devices he claims can clear out caved-in areas rather quickly.

32 - Vulddin Slaughterhouse. This is a public facility run for the count by master butcher Rubar Nilssonur, human male, AL: LG, Exp 4. To prevent illness and to test for the presence of Gallist poisons, the count insists that all meat intended for commercial sale be slaughtered here. Farmers may pay in coin or barter for the slaughtering services.

33 - Satisfied Warrior Festhall. The count secretly own the festhall. He maintains it not to skim profits off the soldiers but rather to maintain morale in the border outpost town. Nelda Teflsdóttir, human female, AL: CG, cleric (Sharess) lvl 6, has been commissioned by the count to run the hall for him, although most folk think it's hers.

34 - Vulddin Mill and Granary. Master miller Thvídhur Hrungurssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 9, runs this sizeable operation. Hrungurssonur mills wheat, barley, rye and spelt, rolls oats and hammer presses sunflower and thistle seeds for oil, in addition to storing and selling grain. Four oxen on a large treadmill turn the millstone. Hrungurssonur employs a journeyman miller and four apprentices.

35 - Borderland Tannery. Master tanner Ardhur Vargrssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 7, runs this operation, upwind from town. He employs a journeyman tanner, two apprentices and eight laborers.

Dender's Valley

One of the first questions usually asked about the valley is, *Who is Dender*? The only answers seem to be in bard's songs, troubadour ballads and a local few jokes in the Dale. Dender and his settlement are mentioned briefly in one old Narfelli parchment in the Royal Impilturian Library in Lyrabar, but that source too offers little information.

It appears that Dender and his followers settled in the area now bearing his name, perhaps before the Narfelli came into the Eastern Dale, but more likely after they already were there. It seems that Dender was either a high-powered wizard or sorcerer, or perhaps a high priest of Lathander. He may have been both, as some songs and ballads claim. Whatever the answer may be, one Morninglord as well as magi seem to have been in his settlement.

All indications are that Dender and his following came somehow to the valley from the Sword Coast, quite possibly as part of a mission of Lathander's church. Oral history has varying viewpoints on where the party originated, with some versions naming Waterdeep and others Baldur's Gate.

Apparently, Dender's settlement was relatively large and devoted above all to agriculture. When Narfell warred with Unther, some enemy troops managed to make it up the Lake of Tears and into the Dale. The Narfelli Empire wanted to construct a defensive tower in Dender's Valley, and Dender and his settlers supposedly fought a formidable war of high magic with the Narfelli before at least being destroyed. Afterward, the Narfelli built their tower where Torside now stands.

For the traveler in the Great Dale, it is more important to understand what the valley is than it is to know who Dender was. Dender's Valley is an ecological fluke and a magical area that connects the eastern and western sections of Rawlinswood. It begins at the generally acknowledged border of modern Narfell to the north and spreads then downward toward the southeast, ending just south of the villages of Denderdale and Riggh (in ruins), where the land begins to ascend slightly before it reaches the Trade Route.

The portion of Rawlinswood that crosses Dender's Valley is known as *The Neck*. It is a strange and problematical area caused by the melting of the southern Great Glacier. The valley is one of the lowest parts of Rawlinswood, with the forest floor much closer to the water table than in other parts of the Dale's woodlands.

In the many centuries when the Great Glacier covered what now is Damara, the Giantspires to the northwest remained year round under a blanket of snow that often was several yards/meters deep, but as the ice receded from the northern and western flanks of the Giantspires, their snowcaps too began gradually to melt.

Most of the melt flowed southwestward down the tiny creek that gradually evolved into the rushing River Lench, or Sidewinder, as the rangers and forest druids call it. However, the melt from the last ridges to the southeast flowed instead onto the Narfelli Plain north of Rawlinswood, forming many tiny rivulets that spread across the first few miles/kilometers of the plain, before percolating into the gravelly soil. The water continued to flow underground to the southeast, where it reemerged in a number of warm springs in southern Dender's Valley and in the neck of Rawlinswood to the south.

From there, the water again crossed the surface into tiny, often seasonal brooks which eventually coalesced into Dender's Creek north of Torside. This concentration of rapidly shifting ecological factors plays havoc in Dender's Valley, particularly in the neck of Rawlinswood.

Because of the frost that had covered the forest floor nine to 10 months of the year until the mid-10th century, the fungi and moulds that ordinarily turn fallen leaves and needles into humus had worked very slowly in the neck for centuries. Likewise, the short warm season had led to little washing away of the humus that had accumulated.

The emergence of warm springs in the neck suddenly accelerated these processes. In addition, the thin steam that rises from the springs together with an almost daily inversion over the neck causes it to have a warmer microclimate than in most other parts of the Dale. Similar occurrences have been noted only in the West, between the Lench and the Soleine.

On most days, the inversion seals the air of the Neck in the hour before sunset. By the time the sun vanishes in the West, the trees are surrounded by a thick, warm ground fog that rises in the evening hours above their crowns, holding the warmth and moisture in the neck until at least the late morning hours of the next day. When a strong, warm sun is in the sky, it breaks the inversion in the late morning hours, freeing the fog until the late afternoon, when it rises anew.

The result of this unnatural situation, caused by the melt of the southern glacier, is that plant life grows at almost double its normal rate in the Neck. Dry spells never torture the forest there. These usually hit the rest of the Dale in late Eleint, and strong, dry autumn winds that blow across the lands in late Marpenoth and early Uktar, stretching the ability of the evergreen conifers, above all, to store adequate water.

The druids of Silvanus claim that the effects of nature gone awry in the neck and in the West along the Lench and Soleine are worse than those most magical attacks against the forest could achieve. Three times as many trees grow as the forest can support, and the ready availability of forage in turn causes an overpopulation of animal life. To help the forest survive until the climate stabilizes again in some future century, the druids allow intensive logging and hunting both in the neck and the low woods between the Lench and the Soleine.

Dender's Valley is unusual not only in its ecological instability but also in the strange magic that seems to pervade the valley. Over the years, the valley has been studied by several quiet and subtle Royal Impilturian Research expeditions, all sent to learn more aboutits magic.

Impilturian interest has been stimulated by the knowledge that powerful magi who enter parts of the northern valley seem to sense magic there without ever being able to really identify it or find its source. Some ruins have been found in the forested parts of the valley, and ancient and contradictory writings have been found in these ruins that some use to attempt to reconstruct the valley's ancient history.

There are those sages with geological knowledge who believe that Dender's Valley was a huge, inland lake or perhaps small sea many long years ago. They go on to hypothesize that this lake may have been an important, magically protected retreat for the rulers of Narfell or perhaps a Narfelli site of high religious importance.

Others argue that the special nature of Dender's Valley finds its origin in Narfelli magic, but there is no geological evidence whatsoever to indicate that the valley once was a sea or lake. On the contrary, geological research indicates that the valley never was under water.

Specialists in such matters, the higher druids of the forest and even dwarven miners who have visited the area agreed that much of what can be found beneath the trees in the forest bridge of northern Dender's Valley defies nature rather than having its explanation in the laws of nature.

There also are disputes among many scholars over the degree to which the valley's fertility is the product of the glacial melt and to what degree it is the product of magic. The druids of Silvanus have nothing but scorn for the idea that magic has caused their problems. Researchers from Impiltur are quiet about their findings, but they are convinced that there is much strange and perhaps even wild magic in Dender's Valley.

This much is certain: Beginning at the southern edge of Rawlinswood and going northward, the land becomes continually more fertile, unnaturally fertile, in most observers' opinions. Numerous springs beneath the trees feed small creeks and brooks. These meander a few miles through the wood and then tunnel strangely back into the ground again.

Many but not all of these have warm springs as sources, which some say explains the somewhat higher temperatures in Dender's Valley, as compared to other parts of the Great Dale. The warm spring and brook water tends to generate the shroud of mysterious fog over northern Dender's Valley on many days of the year. The contention that melting water from the Giantspires gave birth to the surface and subterranean waters of the valley is challenged by few; that the Giantspires continue to generate so much water is doubted by many.

The trees in the woodland bridge that spans Dender's Valley, connecting both parts of Rawlinswood, are old but nonetheless much younger than those in the remainder of Rawlinswood. More important however is the fact that much different trees grow in the bridge than in the main parts of Rawlinswood.

The predominant tree in the bridge is the deciduous *meshu* tree, otherwise found only in the East in Kara-Tur. No one believes that the *meshu* came naturally to Dender's Valley. It is clearly an import, although one from ancient times.

Those who reach the wide swath of unsettled land north of the forest bridge in Dender's Valley say that this end of the valley well could be the most fertile farmland in all of Faerûn, if anyone ever succeeds in securing the area and protecting it from the Nars. It is heavily overgrown with lush wild bushes and weeds in the frost-free times of the year. The only signs that this rich stretch of land ever has been settled are the marks of ancient Narfell.

Ironically, the barbaric Nar tribesmen of today settle no areas and make no use of this extraordinarily fertile area within the Great Dale that borders on their barren plains, but it also is certain that they would not tolerate the settlement of this area by Dalesmen.

The Nar riders know nothing of political boundaries. In word but not deed, they still claim all of Ashanath and the Great Dale. In both word and deed, they view all open land to the edge of Rawlinswood as being their domain, although they dislike fertile northern Dender's Valley because the thick overgrowth prohibits horse riding. However, that would not stop the Nars from trying to liquidate anyone who would attempt to settle there.

Those who want to research the past of Dender's Valley must draw their own conclusions from the relics and artifacts left behind by fallen Narfell and the early Dalesmen. These are few, and they relate only small fragments of a large story that is lost in time. They are difficult to find and obtain, for most such relics are deep within Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest.

The strange and perhaps wild magic found in the valley lends support to some sages, who argue that the unusual circumstances found in Dender's Valley are the result of Narfelli wizardry. The phenomenon begins today on the southern fringe of the woodland bridge between the two segments of Rawlinswood and extends northward to the edge of the barren plain of Narfell. However, information has been passed on from generation to generation in Dender's Valley that the magical area once extended southward nearly to the Trade Route.

This magic, which is ancient, seems to be akin to the dead magic areas that began appearing in Faerûn during and after the Time of Troubles, except that the magic of Dender's Valley has somewhat the opposite effect. Magi who enter dead magic areas become powerless and ill. Magi who enter the magical zone of Dender's Valley strongly sense the power of the weave and find that they can use their magic in this zone with considerably less effort and concentration than usual.

Archmagi who have visited this area are convinced that a wizard's magical abilities would be greatly enhanced by this phenomenon, if one only new the secret of tapping its power. However, this secret that was lost with the fall of ancient Narfell or the Mal T'unan green elves, if not some earlier race.

Whether one or the other of these theories is true, the magic and the fertility of Dender's Valley bring only minor advantages to the Dalesmen of today. The magic is there, but no one in the Great Dale knows how to make use of it. The only further knowledge on the magic of Dender's Valley is well hidden and well guarded in Impilturian Lyrabar and Ilmwatch. Daerthnur, Archwand of Impiltur in Ilmwatch, has from time to time pondered the shifts in nature in the Great Dale and wondered casually whether they might be more than natural, whether magic might be in play as well.

In the year of the Spur (1348 DR), after the rise of Zhengyi the Witch King in Vaasa, the Archwand sent covert patrols consisting of both Wands and Swords of Impiltur into the Great Dale, Ashanath, Damara and Vaasa, to quietly report on the true situation in these lands. In the Dale, they succeeded in gaining information on many things except for the mysterious Nentyarch, whose Dun Tharos somehow eluded them.

One of Daerthnur's own students of earlier years, Dendelbrar of Filur, made some unusual discoveries in Dender's Valley, after talking with people there and gaining a bit of oral history. Some of the information he received indicated that Dender Creek flowed too steadily, that it emptied more water into the Lake of Tears than could be explained.

He also heard that over the years, the hamlet of Torside had been spared most of the trials and tribulations of civil war; dragons flew by Torside, and the rangers and druids of the Hunters of Herne had always detoured around it.

After gaining this information, Dendelbrar performed magical tests in the vicinity of the logging camp in the north and in Torside. The results of these tests were inconclusive but led to Dendelbrar's development of two theses that he hoped to research:

- The unnatural ecological conditions in Dender's Valley are the result of the glacial melt, but some wild form of magic present in the valley amplifies and strengthens them.

- There is a strong, inherent evil within the Tor over Torside. The wild magic of the valley increases the aura of this evil in such a manner that it repels other evil, in much the some manner that like poles of two magnets repel one another.

Upon his return to Impiltur, Dendelbrar explained his findings and his theories to the archwand. Daerthnur's interest was great, but it he could not deal immediately with the matter. Zhengyi the Witch King had begun his aggression against Damara in the North. Impiltur's defenses were in full alert. The resources of both the Wand and Sword of Impiltur were concentrated completely upon the defense of the kingdom. The state of alert continued until Zhengyi's fall in the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR).

During the years of the alert, Daerthnur often pondered the news that Dendelbrar had brought him. At first, the archwand saw great possibilities for Impiltur's defense, if a magical secret could be unraveled that would force evil to repel other evil. On second thought, however, Daerthnur realized how powerful such magic could be in enemy hands. If evil could be brought to repel other evil, he wondered, what would keep good from being used to repel other good?

This question began to trouble Daerthnur to such an extent that he called Dendelbrar to him and swore the younger Wand to absolute secrecy. Therefore, the theses of Dendelbrar remained known only to the two wizards for many years.

After Zhengyi's fall, before the Year of the Serpent had ended, Daerthnur already had completed all preparations to send Dendelbrar back to the Great Dale with a secret expedition to conduct further research, but then he was forced to cancel his plans again. The warning had come that the Tuigan Horde was marching westward, and the Kingdom of Imphras once more was in a full state of alert.

At last, in the Year of the Helm (1362 DR), Dendelbrar and his expedition headed off across Easting Reach and down the Trade Route to Dender's Valley, starting a research project that now is in its 10th year and still is active. To keep from drawing attention, the wizard goes under the fictitious name of *Heckelraun*. He and the other members of his group tell the locals that they're from the school of agriculture in Impilturian Lyrabar and are in Dender's Valley to study the unusual weather there and its effects upon plant life. They explain their observations in the vicinity of the Tor by saying they think that the hill plays an important role in affecting weather patterns.

In his first decade in Dender's Valley, Dendelbrar has made several trips back to Impiltur to report to Daerthnur on his research. To date, the Impilturians have come to no conclusive results, but Dendelbrar's expedition has used divine magic to establish beyond doubt that there is something utterly evil about or in the Tor.

He also has concluded that it is impossible to bring enchanted objects of utter evil onto the Tor. Those who have attempted to do so as part of the project's research simply have lost the will to move evil magical objects near to the Tor. Attempts to use magic to transport evil objects to the Tor simply fail.

Dendelbrar's research also indicates without proving it conclusively that the Tor's repulsion of evil is limited to evil connected to magic. Evil creatures, such as hobgoblins or cruel Tuigan warriors, have had no compunctions about trying to enter Torside. Evil users of magic, such as the true druids of Herne, the ranger Hunters of Herne and dragons, avoid the hamlet.

Through detection dweomers, the expedition also has confirmed that magical currents of some still unidentifiable nature flow through Dender's Valley, beginning in the lands of the Nar tribesmen north of Rawlinswood's neck and continuing to the rise between Denderdale and the Trade Route. These currents are strongest in the neck and diminish as one moves to the north or south.

Based on these findings, Daerthnur and Dendelbrar have come up with new theses that the expedition is attempting to test at present:

- There may be a rent in the Weave in Dender Valley, like those that cause magic dead areas elsewhere, but in this case with the opposite effect, causing instead a *magic live* area,

- This magic polarizes the evil of or in the Tor in such a manner as to cause it to repel other evil magic.

Daerthnur considers these possibilities frightening, particularly if the same magical effects can be used to ward off carriers of good magic. However, these remain only theses that have yet to be proven.

Beyond the scope of the expedition, Dendelbrar's team also has discovered that the highly fertile land in Dender's Valley is not limited to the area south of Rawlinswood's neck, where Harbet Gall and his marauders often threaten it. With care and magical disguise, the expedition also has entered the reach of the valley north of the neck claimed by the Nar tribesmen and found it to be equally arable.

The druids of Silvanus also are aware of this. They view the strange fertility of Dender's Valley as something of a mixed blessing. The continuous supply of water in the bridging wood, the moderate temperatures and the rich soils permit far too many tree seeds to germinate, and too many seedlings succeed in taking root and in growing.

When the trees grow too densely, they grow into unhealthy trees that are highly susceptible to disease, parasites and fungus. The bridge forest and above all the stands of foreign *meshu* trees are constantly threatened. The excessive growth within the bridge forest also leads to an overabundance of natural forage for deer, boar, foxes and rabbits in the forest's border areas, which has additional negative impacts upon Rawlinswood.

Because of the abundance of food, the bridge also tends to draw animals from other parts of the forest, reducing the populations there to levels below an acceptable minimum. Once the animals move into this section of the wood, they procreate, bringing populations to an unacceptably high level, again fostering disease and parasites.

For this reason, the druids have encouraged controlled logging in the bridge wood as well as hunting. The logging is done by an operation based in Torside under the guidance of a druid resident in the logging camp. The hunters are locals seeking food as well as tourists who hunt for sport in the company of local guides who are recognized by the druids.

One condition for hunting is that a guide must assure that the meat of fallen prey is taken into the populated area of the valley and used for food rather than being wasted. Visitors can find recognized guides in Torside and Denderdale. The druids will not allow hunting without guides. Such hunters will be driven from the forests. If Harbet Gall's *Hunters of Herne* enter the bridge wood, the druids attempt to destroy them.

Dender's Valley Logging Camp

Thorp, Nonstandard (ownership), AL: N, 40 gp limit; Assets: 120 gp. Population: about 60 humans, Authority figure: Heafvyng Woldstad, human male, AL: LN, Rogue lvl 5, owner; Huldyng Gundarssonur, human male, AL: NG, Com 2,camp manager; Important characters: Högnar Rundalfssonur, Human male, AL:N, Druid of Silvanus, 6; Targest Ulfssonur, human male, AL:LN, thief 5, miller, Others: 6 rangers 1-6, 50 logger-fighters Com 2-5/War1-3, three teamsters Com 2-4, four to six hired mercenaries, variable. Taxation type: None.

The rather simple logging camp has not been mapped.

The camp, wholly owned by Torside miller Heafvyng Woldstad, is in Dender's Valley on the southern edge of Rawlinswood, about 10 miles/15km northwest of Torside.

This logging camp operates only through the good graces and under the supervision of the Tellerth Circle of Druids of Silvanus. A native of Denderdale named Huldyng Gundarssonur runs the camp. The resident supervising druid of the Tellerth Circle is Högnar Rundalfssonur.

The logging camp is a row of lumberyards on the south eave of the forest combined with two large timber barracks, a wooden mess hall and a wooden wagon hall and stall. The latter houses the massive lumber wagons that transport the trunks of huge fallen trees to Dender's Mill in Torside but and the teams of draft horses who draw the wagons. The buildings all are within a wooden palisade wall 20 feet/6m high. The barracks house the loggers, wagon team masters and the mercenaries who help guard the camp.

There usually are extra beds in the barracks. Woldstad will rent these out at 3 silver shiners a day including food in the mess to hunting guides, hunters and other non-troublemakers who pass through, albeit with great infrequency. Mauberg's Oak whisky is available in the mess hall at 5 shiners per shot/0.1 l glass. The main drink is *Draugator Ghost Brew,* the double bock bier brewed year round by Torside's *Ghost in the Ring* tavern. It costs three copper bites per quart/liter tankard.

The men in the camp are there to harvest timber. When there is trouble, the mercenaries, rangers and druids are the first line of defense, but the loggers and teamsters certainly can hold their own in a battle against forest animals, hobgoblins or Herne's hunters.

Adventure Hooks in the Logging Camp

- **Hunters of Herne.** About the only kind of enemy encounter that's likely in the logging camp is one of the highly infrequent raids by Hunters of Herne who have wandered either far from Veidarhofn or Kars.
- **Trouble With the Nentyarch.** A Game Master using this hook should be aware that he or she may shift the future history of the setting somewhat in using it. To date there have been no hostilities between the logging camp and the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos. However, this might change if you have hunters from the logging camp enter too deeply into the Nentyarch's domain. A likely result would be the return of the trespassers as transmogrified hobgoblins who attack the camp.
- **The Guide.** Some private rangers serve as guides for hunters in parts of the forest where the druids have approved hunting. The PCs might be able to pay a guide enough to lead them to the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos.

Denderdale

Thorp, Conventional, AL: NG, 40 gp limit. Assets: 128 gp. Population: 64; Mixed, 61 humans, 3 half green-elves, Authority figures: Count Báldr Játssonur, human male, AL: N, Aris 8, Ftr 8, Count of Vulddin (no local representative). Important characters: Gardag Hlindsson, human male, AL: LG, War 14, inn- and tavernkeeper; Harald Rundlssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 6, miller, Others, 25 farmers. human male, AL: all non-evil, Com 1-6/War 1-2. Taxation type: Benevolent.

Denderdale is more a place than a thorp. The term applies to a relatively wide plain of land that gently slopes downward toward Rawlinswood. Trees and small bushes dot the landscape, but it's predominantly a collection of farm fields, pasture for dairy herds and beef cattle and groves of apple, pear and plum trees, along with the 17 scattered farms that use the land.

There also are the ruins of another half dozen or so farms. The only things that Denderdale really can offer an adventuring band are rest, simple but good food, an earthy beer and a chance to be far beyond curious eyes. Where Denderdale stops and the outlying areas of Vulddin and Torside begin is a matter of opinion, but seeing that all are parts of the County of Vulddin, it's not particularly important.

The only people who usually come through Denderdale are those who are selling or buying something and then traveling on to Torside or the Dender's Valley Logging Camp. There also are Dalesmen from the nearby area who have business with the locals and there are occasional peddlers who come to sell the locals wares from distant points.

More exotic wares seldom come to Denderdale. The peasants who live here deal largely on a barter system and would have little with which to buy such goods. Likewise, adventurers wanting to rest or hide out could take rooms in the *Yellow Rose Inn* or at a farm and work off their room and board.

However, the only visitors stay the night in Denderdale usually are those who leave Vulddin near midday and then travel the following day over Torside to the logging camp. Because it's more comfortable to room at the *Ghost in the Ring* tavern in Torside than in the logging camp, most visitors pass through Denderdale at midday and stop at the *Yellow Rose* to eat.

The thorp center, such as it is, is in the middle of the Dale from north to south, but it lies somewhat to the west of the Dale's actual center point. It straddles Lazy Creek, which has its source about 3 miles/5 km to the south and flows northward to the eave of Rawlinswood, where it flows into Dender's Creek about a mile/1.5 km east of Dender's Creek's source.

Only three factors distinguish what one calls the thorp center:

- This is the point where the roads to the rest of the farms branch off from the unnamed road that leads from Vulddin on the Trade Route to Torside and the logging camp beyond.
- The only tavern and hostelry in Denderdale, the *Yellow Rose Inn,* is at the crossroads.
- The only other business in Denderdale, the *Yellow Rose Mill,* also is at the crossroads.

Everything else in Denderdale is a farm, farmland or pure nature. The Dale's primary trade is farming, and the farmers' main business goals are to keep themselves and their families fed. Gardag Hlindsson, a retired warrior who was born and raised in Vulddin, has done much to help the local peasants reach these goals, restoring Denderdale from the ruins of war.

A decade and a half ago, no one in Denderdale would have talked of it as an entity. It was a landscape occupied by a few poverty-stricken peasants just steps away from starvation. The peasants of Denderdale long have been worshippers of Ilmater and Chauntea, but worship of the Crying God has grown considerably since Gardag's arrival some 15 years ago.

Most peasants now talk of their thorp with pride, also referring to it as *Gardag's Settlement,* because the retired war veteran turned tavernkeeper and miller has indeed rewarded their Ilmatari perseverance and made their lives better.

Gardag was the son of a poor tinker in Vulddin. The only trade he could learn was that of his father. However, a tinker in the eastern Great Dale can earn barely enough to escape starvation. The young Gardag had no money with which to build a farm, so when the time came to join the Great Dale's Freemen's militia, he stayed on and rose through the ranks to a post as captain of a successful sapper troop that repeatedly took a heavy toll from bands of the Hunters of Herne.

In the Year of the Crown (1351 DR), Gardag was taken prisoner by the Malarites and kept in a dungeon in Kront on the Lake of the Tears. He was held together with a captured monk of Ilmater from the Monastery of the Yellow Rose above Damara who had come to the Great Dale to do research on a Damaran family's lineage.

Gardag had been a worshipper of Ilmater since childhood, but he first learned to understand his god's teachings of perseverance in the company of the monk who followed St. Sollars the Twice-Martyred, while the two were regularly tortured in the dungeons of Herne's Hunters.

After surviving two years in the cells of the tortured, Gardag and the monk were transferred to the slave farms on Lake Ashanath south of Kront. Gardag's work team was blessed by the presence of the Ilmatari monk, who repeated the teachings of perseverance in the midst of hard labor, often being rewarded by the lash of an overseer's whip.

In the Year of the Harp (1355 DR), when the harvest along Lake Ashane was rather dismal, their perseverance paid off. Gardag and the other slaves of their work team were taken to brush lands on the eastern edge of Lethyr Forest, to harvest rose hips and wild nuts. Most slaves considered this to be the worst of all hard labor, for the Malarite overseers would drive them through painful brambles and other torturous brush to the fruits of the wild lands east of the wood.

On this occasion, however, one of the overseers had taken along a winesack of stolen whisky from the West, and within short order after the slaves' arrival, the overseers had become inebriated enough that Gardag and the other slaves were able to overwhelm and slay them, taking their armor and weapons as well.

Against tremendous odds and only after deadly, nip-and-tuck clashes with bands of Herne's Hunters, Gardag and his band at last came upon the Mucklestones Druids, who helped the escaped slaves to safety in Gardag's old hometown of Vulddin.

By that time, however, Gardag and two other escapees in his band had been sorely wounded and were beyond the healing abilities of the druids available to them in Vulddin. They were taken upon wagons on a journey of several days to Mauberg's Oak in the Western Dale, where they were given over into the care of the Ilmatari monks of the Yellow Rose in the monastery there.

In the Year of the Worm (1356 DR), Gardag left the monastery, healed, but no longer fit physically or mentally for the duties of a war captain in the Freemen's militia. A soldier in the loose border defenses of the Great Dale earns a mere pittance in comparison to the pay of, say, a Purple Dragon in Cormyr, but a warrior in the Great Dale also can live on less than a soldier in the Heartlands of the West.

Gardag's needs were less than those of most members of the Dale's defense, for he had no family to support. As a warrior, he lived at no cost in a modest barracks quarters, and he ate with the other soldiers in their mess, also at no extra cost.

Thus, he was able over a number of years to accumulate a large portion of the modest sums in Impilturian coins and in barter notes from merchant Dalesmen that had been his soldier's pay. Taking his modest treasure back to his hometown of Vulddin, where he rented a small room, Gardag wanted nothing more than to honor his god Ilmater as a devoted lay servant, and he began to ponder how to best use his modest fortune to fulfill that goal.

Gardag wandered as he pondered, traveling by foot through Ganglhofn and Bridhh, on to Riggstad and then along the Trade Route back to Ganglhofn, where he intended to head northward into Dender's Valley through Denderdale to Torside before returning home. In Denderdale, he found the answer he had been seeking.

Unlike the other villages he'd traveled through, where life was hard and bleak, the peasants of Denderdale eked out a borderline existence, and that without the cohesiveness of a village to bind them together in their times of need and perseverance.

In the clashes between the defenders of the West and the minions of Harbet Gall and his Hunters of Herne, many of the scattered farms of Denderdale had been damaged and destroyed, each time with families and children who had little to begin with forced to return again with nothing, hoping only to survive.

Yet the stalwart Dalesmen who farmed the land between Vulddin and the Tor did persevere, as their Ilmatari faith had taught them, rebuilding what had been razed and eking a living from the land, according to the teachings of Chauntea, whom they also worshipped. However, despite the fact that they rebuilt their somewhat isolated farms anew after each devastation, the peasants of later day generations never had succeeded in developing Denderdale into a physical or spiritual community.

Folks who owned neighboring farms would know one another and often help each other, but the chances were good that one barely knew who the Dalesmen were who lived in the house four farms removed. Life in Denderdale was hard, the facilities of a community that can ease everyone's work were missing, and there was no central point where people could come together. Denderdale united only in time of danger.

When Gardag arrived in Denderdale in the Year of the Worm (1356 DR), he changed that. He had his modest savings as a soldier and the barter notes prominent merchants in Vulddin, Ganglhofn, Riggstad and even in Gylving and Uthmere had issued in earlier times of trouble, to help maintain the guard in the East. He was able to bring outside materials and workers into Denderdale to divert Lazy Creek into a millpond and stream and to build a small grain mill that could grind flour and stomp the oil from seeds.

The waterwheel of the *Yellow Rose Mill* began turning in time for the harvest of the Year of the Worm, its name paying tribute to St. Sollars and Ilmater, its work paying tribute to Chauntea. It was in a sense a small addition to Denderdale, but its impact was large. A central mill not only spared many peasants much of the backbreaking work that always had been done to make use of their own harvested grain, but it also gave them for the first time a product they could trade with or sell to other Dalesmen.

In the spring of the Year of the Prince (1357 DR), Gardag cashed in his remaining notes of barter and began construction of a second building, on the west side of Lazy Creek opposite the mill, his *Yellow Rose Inn,* also in tribute to Ilmater and St. Sollars. Not only does the inn have modest accommodations but also a comfortable tavern with simple food.

The inn has four small but comfortable albeit seldom used guest rooms in the second story (European first floor) and cold cellars beneath the inn where the Dale's farmers can store produce for market. The *Yellow Rose Inn* is anything but the hot night spot of Denderdale. Any adventuring company passing through this crossroads would be convinced through the adventurers' own yawning to make an early night of it after hearing most evening's conversations in the *Yellow Rose.*

That, of course, is not the point. For the past 14 years, the peasant farmers of Denderdale have had a place to come at night, and they do come regularly. By building his inn and mill, Gardag not only has eased the work and increased the wealth of Denderdale's peasants, but he also has given them the time and the facility to make a tightly bonded community of the Dale.

Most nights at the *Yellow Rose* you may hear one farmer tell how satisfied he is with the new wagon he bought from Segie Melloka in Torside last summer. Another will smugly claim that he took time out to talk with the seed peddler from Impiltur that everyone else was ignoring last spring, and he'll swear that his beer radishes this summer will be a foot and a half/half a meter long!

That's how things are in the *Yellow Rose* about 335 nights year. On the other 30, just about everyone is there. Even the kids peek through the windows and slits in opened doors. Why? About 25 of those 30 nights are the evenings when the peddlers or the salesmen or the men from the pork and cattle markets stop in town, all still events of great importance in tiny Denderdale, although they might convince visiting adventurers that going to bed early is a good cure for the yawning.

And what about the other five nights of the year? These are the genuine Realms-shaking events in Denderdale, the nights when adventurers or other strangers actually do come to town, and no one misses a chance to hear the fantastic tales that are told of places and events that are far beyond the imagination of the local Dalesmen.

These things are Gardag's gift to Denderdale in return for the peasants' perseverance and unwavering faith in Ilmater. He asks little in return – only 5% of the grain he mills and a small token for the drink and food that's consumed in the *Yellow Rose*, just enough to keep the inn and mill running well and food on his own table.

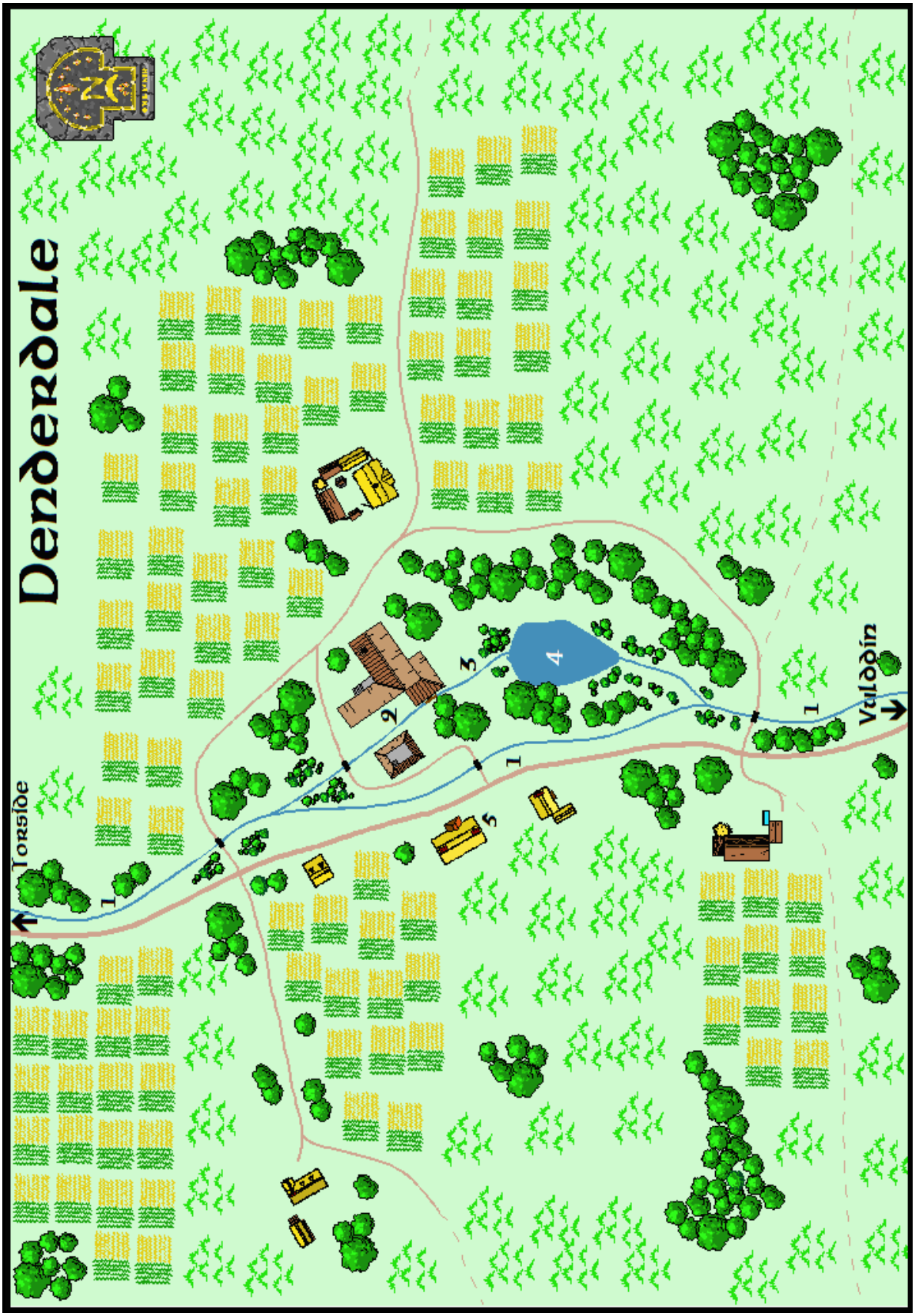
In the Year of the Shadows (1358 DR), a bad omen for all but Gardag apparently, he married Friggh Rundlsdóttir, the daughter of a farmer in northeastern Denderdale. After the marriage, Friggh's 10-year-older brother Harald Rundlssonur took over the operation of the *Yellow Rose Mill* to free Gardag and Friggh to operate the inn and raise their two children. When they get older, Gardag hopes one child will take over the inn and another will live happily ever after as Denderdale's miller.

There are no temples or shrines as such in Denderdale, but most Dalesmen consider the *Yellow Rose Inn* to be a *de facto* shrine because of Gardag's frequent speeches on the wonder that is Ilmater and the virtue of perseverance.

Friggh is a devout worshipper of Chauntea and maintains the area around the mill stream and the mill pond south of the *Yellow Rose Mill* as though it were a druidic grove dedicated to Chauntea, and local Dalesmen do indeed stop and nod their heads there to pay tribute to the great mother.

When necessary, the peasants of Denderdale are prepared to defend themselves under the leadership of Gardag, who's well-trained with a long sword, spear, long bow and war hammer (he also is quite effective in applying the wooden hammer he uses to tap beer barrels as a war hammer.) The farmers of Denderdale can fight quite well with pitchforks and manure forks, matching with them the damage a hobgoblin can do with a short sword.

However, Denderdale politically is a part of the County of Vulddin, which also extends militia protection to the thorp. Once a year, the baron's tax collectors visit Denderdale, to exact a modest payment used to help finance the militia.



Denderdale

Map of Denderdale

1 - Lazy Creek.

2 - Yellow Rose Mill. Harald Rundlssonur, human male, AL: NG, Exp 6, grinds the local wheat, rye and spelt into flour, he hammers meal out of oats and he presses oil from sunflower and thistle seeds. He employs a journeyman and an apprentice.

3 - Millstream.

4 - Mill pond.

5 - Yellow Rose Tavern and Inn. Keeper Gardag Hlindsson, human male, AL: LG, War 14, has four small single rooms above the tavern, at 4 silver shiners. When guests come, his wife Friggh will make hot meals at prices ranging from 3 to 5 shiners, depending on what's available at the time. Supply caravans heading to the Dender's Valley Logging Camp drop off barrels of Freemen's Lager from Vulddin, which Gardag sells at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Gardag and his family live on a small farm just south of the tavern.

Torside

Based Upon the Creation of Dr. Jeffrey David Bray

Hamlet, Conventional, AL: NG, 100 gp limit. Assets: 750 gp. Population: about 180; Mixed, 177 humans, 3 half green-elves, Authority figures: Count Báldr Játssonur, human male, AL: N, Aris 8, Ftr 8, Count of Vulddin; Boyar Katrin Dologon, human female, AL: LG, fighter lvl 6; Important characters: Högnar Rundalfsrungur: **Human male, AL: N, Druid of Silvanus, lvl 6; Heafyng Woldstad, human male, AL: LN, thief lvl 5, miller; Hastor Raspoke: human male, AL: LN, Wizard 13; Mosbry *Doc* Prosal, human male, AL: CG, wizard 3; Heckelraun (Impilturian Wizard Dendelbrar), human male, AL:NG, Abjurer 16, disguised as Exp 3; Local guard; 2 War 5 (officers), 15 War 1-3 (horseback); 15 1-3 (foot - slings). Taxation type: Benevolent.**

Torside is a somewhat unusual village. Among other things, it's drawn a small but strange collection of residents, many of whom are not native to the Great Dale. The local political leadership, as it were, has a Rashemi background.

The hamlet lies on Dender's Creek at the foot of a hill called the Tor in southern Dender's Valley north of the Trade Route. The hamlet proper has about 70 residents, but the total population comes to about 180, mostly human, when the abbey and the scattered farms of the surrounding area are included.

The hill, the Tor, rises from the surrounding plain south of the fringe of Rawlinswood. To the southwest of the village, a wooden bridge the width of two wagons crosses Dender's Creek. A dozen or so stone buildings with shingled wooden roofs stand below the hill in the late morning sun. Five are larger and better built than the simple farmhouses.

Torside has a general store, a wainwright's shop, a smithy, a tavern, a small monastery of Helm and a mill. The *Abbey of the Vigilant One* already makes Torside unusual, because Helm has drawn relatively little of the Dalesmen's attention over the years, although the church of Helm certainly has shown a greater interest in the Great Dale, viewing it as the frontier to evil domains that must be kept under their loyal and true watch. The abbey was built in response to Harbet Gall's beckoning of dragons into the Great Dale.

Almost all of the buildings in Torside except the abbey are southwest of the hill, north of the road, and east of the stream. The abbey is on the southeast flank of the hill. The small businesses were able to develop because Torside is the gateway to the hunting and logging areas of Rawlinswood in Dender's Valley.

Nominally, the hamlet is a part of the County of Vulddin, and the militia based in Vulddin has the overall responsibility for Torside's defense. The county's tax collectors also come once a year to be paid the nominal fees assessed to help pay for the militia.

The real law and order in Torside, as well as rulership on those rare occasions when it is necessary, are in the hands of the hamlet's elected *boyar*, currently Katrin Dologon, wife of the tavernkeeper Azov.

The title *boyar* came into being centuries ago, when a Rashemi refugee took on this position and used the term from his own language to describe himself. The word *boyar* quickly became a part of the local dialect, although it is not used elsewhere in the Dale.

In modern Torside the *boyar* has the last word in all issues dealing with the hamlet. Two guard officers named Merith and Antonin assist her. Among her duties, she is captain of a local guard of 30 peasant warriors who serve as horsemen and sling shooters. The mounted guardsmen have leather armor, short composite bows, spears and footmen's maces. The sling shooters wear leather armor and fight with slings, daggers and spears.

Only one person in Torside seems to be gainfully unemployed. A middle-aged man named Hastor Raspoke roams from here to there, never doing anything except for giving unsolicited advice and useless facts. He spends his days by the roadside shops and his evenings in the *Ghost*.

The *Abbey of the Vigilant One* is interested first and foremost in the doings of the lich Harbet Gall and his evil church of *Herne the Hunter* as well as his Kront cell of the Cult of the Dragons and the wyrms the cult has drawn into the area. Members of the *Temple of the Noble Hand* in the Vastan city of Tsurlagol financed and originally manned the monastery.

The monastery also keeps an ear open for news from the domain of the Nentyarch and an eye on the shadowy eaves of Rawlinswood to the west of Dender's Valley, which are said to be the border of the Nentyarch's sphere of influence. The monastery in Torside is the only known temple or shrine to Helm in the Great Dale.

Because of the growing presence of the Nentyarch in Rawlinswood, fewer hunters than in times past venture into the forests of Dender's Valley these days. Occasional adventurers have replaced to some extent the trade that the hunt once brought to the village. The adventurers use Dender's Valley and Torside as a launching point for expeditions into the forest to find lost treasure of Narfell and the earlier Mal T'unan green elves. It should be noted that relatively few adventurers who enter the forest domain east or west of the logging camp ever are seen again, and those who are often turn up on the slave farms south of Kront in Ashanath.

There also are those adventurers who come to Torside, welcome at first but soon shunned, because they make clear that their goal is to seek lost treasure upon the forbidden Tor. Villagers believe that a ghost upon the Tor inflicts intruders with a contagious wasting disease, and they close their doors to any adventurers who ascend the Tor, to avoid being infected. Such adventurers actually become anathema as soon as their intentions are made clear, for the villagers prefer that the ghost of the Tor – who does not leave the hill – be left there in peace.

The Tor rises nearly 100 feet/30m above the plain, making it a significant landmark with a commanding view of the countryside for miles/kilometers around. Atop the hill is a ring of stone 50 feet/15m in diameter, partially obscured by soil and weeds.

The ring looks as though it may be the remnant of a tower from ages past, with only the foundation remaining. Any dwarf, gnome, engineer or stonemason can easily see that the stones of the village buildings are the same type as those which form the ring upon the hill. Villagers say that the stones used to construct their buildings were taken from a shattered tower atop the Tor. Only the ring remains today.

Ancient Narfell left its tracks upon Torside, at least in the construction of the tower atop the Tor. Whether the tower served the military purpose claimed for it in the legend of Dender, or whether it served a mage or something else is a matter unknown to modern sages. One can only speculate.

If the Mal T'unan green elves occupied or used the site of today's Torside, the traces they may have left behind vanished long ago or have not yet been rediscovered. The history of the early Turami in Torside – if indeed they were there at all – also is lost. The current settlement evolved from one developed by the Narfelli in or about -850 DR.

Modern Torside grew from the Narfelli ruins. The Narfelli appear to have built on this site because it offers the only ford in these parts over Dender's Creek. The stream is difficult to cross in this area, which forced roving peddlers and travelers to slow down and make a careful fording. Torside also drew adventurers and researchers seeking to explore the Narfelli ruins on the Tor. The ruins also occasionally concealed bandits who made raids or demanded tolls.

Old merchants logs report that a guard post first was established beneath the Tor to protect merchants. Eventually, services supplied by current day businesses arose to take advantage of the unavoidable delay experienced by travelers and their wagons. Farmers began to bring their produce to the village to barter with the traveling merchants.

Some 150 years ago, a bridge was built at the ford, facilitating the crossing. In 20-year cycles, however, extensive repairs of the simple bridge have been necessary, forcing caravans to cross the ford again, until the sturdy and modern covered bridge of today was constructed 90 years ago.

The Legend of the Tor

Those who build or camp upon the Tor contract a wasting disease that will eventually kill them.

Such is the dark warning villagers give to those who would ascend the mysterious hill above the village. Those who indeed are afflicted will remain on the hill in the ring of stones until they perish, and they will fight forcibly against their removal.

Villagers claim that the cause of this affliction is a ghost of a princess of Narfell who haunts the ring of stones. They make no effort to determine the cause of the haunting, because the ghost does not leave the hilltop, and the villagers are not foolish enough to look for trouble. The priests of Helm also have decided to leave the ghost in peace because it poses no threat beyond the top of the Tor itself, and the priests wish to keep the good will of the villagers.

In addition, there are indications that whatever evil may be in the hill wards off other evil, just as like magnetic poles repel one another.

The villagers tell the following story:

In the waning days of the two great empires of Narfell and Raumathar, a Narfelli princess had a love affair with Raumathari war duke. The two were discovered by her people. The penalty for this act was death, because such relations were considered to be treason. He was to be crushed under a pile of stones and she was to be walled into a tower to starve. The Narfelli were powerful in magic. They created a magically fiendish way to execute the death sentences.

The war duke's personal effects (including an item that could whisk him away) were placed in a magical chest just beyond his reach and then the stones were piled upon him. Atop this pile of stones, the tower that was to be the tomb of the starved princess was magically created, and she was sealed into the tower.

The magic was so designed that it took a half of a day for the weight of the stones to settle and crush the life from the war duke. He cursed the Narfelli to become as barbarous as their deeds. When the princess starved some time later, she too invoked a dying curse: Narfell and Raumathar would be destroyed as surely as she and her lover were. With her dying breath, a bolt from the sky shattered the tower and the empires locked into a war that assured their mutual destruction.

The princess still haunts the top of Tor, which also is her lover's cairn, in an attempt to be reunited with his spirit, but the ancient Narfelli magic will not let his ghost pass on to the lands of the dead, and the war duke's spirit still lies trapped beneath the Tor. Therefore, the princess has become a member of the restless dead, fixed upon exacting revenge from all who live. Her ghostly touch spreads the contagious wasting disease, and it's best that anyone who enters her deadly embrace not leave the hill.

What Really Happened:

As with most yarns of ancient times spun by village peasants in Faerûn, the tale of the Narfelli princess and the Raumathari war duke well may have some historical truth within it. However, it is difficult to understand how the mostly illiterate Dalesmen who settled the Torside of today could reconstruct such a detailed piece of local history from the ruins of a Narfelli settlement that had fallen more than a millennium ago. Most sages, therefore, dismiss this tale of sorrow with a grin and a wave of the hand, considering it to be a pure invention that has been embellished with details in the retelling over the years.

Historical fact, known to Game Masters but unknown to most sages, is that the Tor served as a Narfelli military outpost, and it was destroyed in a battle with Unther, not Raumathar, long ago. The hill is not a burial mound at all. It was raised by earth elementals who were summoned by Narfelli sorcerers. Although the tower was destroyed, the chambers below remain partially intact.

It was rumored even before the fall of Narfell that the lowest chambers of the Tor outpost touched on passages to the sunless lands. The purported ghost of the princess actually is an imprisoned succubus who was bound by an Untheric mage to the ring of stones atop the Tor. The mage intended the bound succubus as a nasty surprise to greet the Narfelli whenever they returned to rebuild the tower – which they never did.

The succubus appears when someone attempts to build upon the Tor or when one camps overnight with weapons in his or her possession. The succubus has no treasure, and subsequent visitors have removed those treasures lost by its victims already.

The succubus was brought to the Tor with a no longer available 10th level Narfelli spell that created a physical channel to the Abyss. The spell was terminated by the Narfelli archmage incorrectly, and a thin path of the channel remains within the Tor, although it has been capped magically. Nonetheless, the near and direct evil of the abyss is the same force that has repelled the Hunters of Herne and even dragons over the years.

There is an ancient dungeon of uncertain origin beneath the Tor, but its entrance is well hidden. Whatever may inhabit the dungeon lets the village in peace, and the villagers want nothing other than to return the favor. Much the same as with the *ghost* atop the Tor, the villagers are afraid that adventurers who seek out the dungeon are likely only to bring trouble to the village, although an adventurer who really gains a villager's trust may learn where its hidden entrance is.

The details of this dungeon are outside the scope and purpose of this module. It reportedly has roughly 30 chambers on four levels. Rumor has it inhabited by such creatures as a carrion crawler, green slime, yellow mold, violet fungi, shriekers, skeletons, shadows, an iron cobra and a stone guardian. Coins, magical weapons and other items allegedly were stashed in the dungeon by figures from a forgotten past.

Adventure Hooks in Torside

- **The Tor.** PCs who trouble the Tor risk the wrath of the villagers, as noted above, and they may lead to an encounter with the succubus.

- **Dungeon.** See the description above. If this hook is used, the Game Master needs to design the dungeon him- or herself.

Torside
after the design
of Dr. Jeffrey David Bray
Silvanus Shrine
The Tor
Denderdale
Denderdale
1
2
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9
10

Torside

Map of Torside

1 - Smithy. This rambling, three-wing structure is next to the stream. One wing holds the forge, one the shop and stable and the third the smith's home. The smith, Kristof Hamfir, human male, AL: NG, Exp 3, Ftr 1, is aided by two teenaged apprentices. Hamfir is married but has no children. He makes farm implements and horseshoes. He also can repair weapons and armor but prefers not to. Hamfir is an unusually gregarious smith. He can talk an ear off of a statue. Any subject is fine with him, and he mixes facts, rumors, myths, legends and speculation in a steady fabric of conversation. He is a veteran of the Horde campaign and was decorated by *King Ason of Cormire* for his service. The only thing that will shut him up is mention of his lack of children. This bothers him and his wife Elna greatly. Sometimes he slows down his work if someone really is interesting to talk to. Hastor Raspoke spends much of his time in the smithy, because Hamfir is more receptive to him than general store owner Mekal Navartov is. Hamfir is in his late 30s and looks much like a typical smith. He worships Chauntea openly and Gond privately.

2 - Wainwright: The wagon maker is Segie Melloka, human male, AL: LN, Exp 3. He is aided by a journeyman named Wim of the Wood, half-elf male, AL: N, Ftr 2/Rogue 2. Melloka is the only businessman in Torside who prefers coins to barter. He makes a decent living by building and repairing wagons for Dender's Mill as well as those of local farmers. He also deals in draft horses and sells weapons, sometimes to locals but more often to adventurers who head into Rawlinswood or who attempt to investigate the Tor. He usually has the following weapons available: Spears, long swords, daggers, hand axes and maces. He asks for 250% of the *PHB* price, but he can be haggled down to 150%, at which point he tells the customer to take it or leave it. Melloka is an unusual type among the peasants of the Great Dale; he is consumed with the idea of getting rich. How he plans to do that in a sparsely populated area like Dender's Valley remains his secret. He decided to open his wainwright shop in Torside, because there were no other skilled wrights in the area. He offers weapons and horses to travelers at outrageous prices, knowing he is one of the few sources for both. Melloka does offer his wares and services to locals at much more reasonable prices; he knows he might be driven out of town or at least out of business if he applied his usurious methods to them. Melloka knows everyone outside of Vulddin who lives with within a day's ride, including all of the farmers of Denderdale, so he isn't fooled by anyone falsely claiming to live near Torside. Melloka pays lip service to Chauntea, but the only god he ever worshipped was Waukeen. Wim is a half-elf of green elf descent. His appearance is predominantly human, and when his ears are covered, he passes easily for one. His skills are such that Melloka trusts him completely with wagon repairs. Wim is friendly, even to strangers, and will talk of his boyhood under the trees of Rawlinswood. His human mother thought he should have a skill in the world of men and thus, here he is. What he doesn't tell is that he is an agent of the Nentyarch. His skills make him the perfect spy. And he deals frequently with the druid Högnar Rundalfsrungur in the logging camp, gleaning information which makes its way to Dun Tharos. Högnar is unaware of Wim's dual role. Wim reports all that he sees and hears to Rhabdys. He worships Silvanus openly and Mask privately.

3 – General Store. This two-story building is along the road. It is owned and operated by Mekal Navartov, human male, AL: NG, Com 2, a Rashemi refugee, who is helped out by his wife and three children. With the exception of arrows and daggers, one can find neither arms nor armor here. When bartering in the general store, prices are equivalent to those in the *PHB*. If one wishes to pay with coins, the prices rise to 120% of the *PHB* prices, however. Only Impilturian coins are accepted. Storage and living chambers are in the second story (European 1st floor). The store has been in family ownership for two centuries. Navartov is not a big talker, but if one can get him to open up, he knows many legends and tales of the Dender's Valley area as well as the local history. Now in his 40's, Navartov is letting his muscular frame run to fat, and his nose is showing his fondness for beer. Navartov is friendly and gracious, but he reveals little of himself to non-friends. He worships Shaundakul and also worshipped Waukeen before the Time of Troubles.

4 - Ghost in the Ring Tavern. The *Ghost in the Ring* is one of the three two-story buildings in Torside. It is set back from the road against the southwestern foot of the Tor. Azov Navartov, husband of the village Boyar, Katrin, runs the tavern. The mage Hastor Rospoke, human male, AL: LN, wizard lvl 13, also lives in the inn. Katrin and Azov are Rashemi-descendant natives of Dender's Valley who adventured with some success, exploring ruins in Lethyr Forest. They decided to retire early before their luck ran out, buying the tavern from the previous owner who left Torside to head west. To keep her skills honed, Katrin Navartov trained the guard while her husband ran the tavern. She was elected captain and boyar by vote of the village after her predecessor was slain while on patrol.

Due to their experiences as adventurers, the Dologons are less conservative than most villagers when dealing with strangers. They tolerate no monkey business in either the tavern or the village, and they usually have the power to enforce their will. Katrin is an attractive brunette, taller than most men. She is a tolerant person, never rash in her actions. At times, Katrin takes a week to make a decision if she feels it's necessary to think things out. However, she also can act quickly if the situation demands it. Dologon is a boisterous, happy man with dark hair and a mustache. Only rarely does a frown cross his face. He is very proud that his wife is boyar, although he has to take much good-natured ribbing from the locals. The couple worships Tyr, Helm and Chauntea. The *Ghost* has a cellar and stables. The Dologons' daughter is the only barmaid. Their son handles the other chores. An older woman from outside works as cleaning lady. Four guest rooms are available, but the price must be negotiated. Dologon prefers barter and services over coins. Dologon also offers food, but only cold dishes (sausage, cheese butter and bread) to unexpected visitors. When he has long-term guests or when he expects visitors, he buys venison or boar from the hunters or even slaughters a steer and then offers warm food as well. Loggers getting supplies from Vulddin deliver barrels of Freemen's Lager to Dologon. Most evenings, the *Ghost* is largely empty and quiet, with only a band of locals showing up to drink beer and play cards at their permanently reserved table. This situation changes dramatically, and the mood gets loud and rowdy, on those occasions when loggers are due with their wagons of timber from their forest camp to the north on the edge of Rawlinswood. Dologon knows when timber wagons are due to arrive at Dender's Mill, and he sees to it in advance that there is a sufficient supply of venison, boar or beef. The loggers usually make a tent camp on the river, when they bring timber to the sawmill. Only those who make the regular supply run take rooms in the tavern. The resident wizard, Hastor Raspoke, often hangs out during the day at the smithy. He spends most evenings in the *Ghost*. He always has an obscure fact that he throws in at unusual times and will barge into every conversation he overhears in order to stimulate more conversation, because his ears are open for information. He can be annoying, but he is non-offensive, and the locals tolerate him, partly because he buys frequent rounds for the house, a generous act that few others in Torside can afford. When people ask about the source of his wealth, he says only that he practiced his trade in the South and was able to retire early. Raspoke rooms at the *Ghost,* paying in lump sums, always three years in advance. Raspoke's secret is, that he's a Red Wizard on the run. At some point, Raspoke stepped on the wrong Thayan toes, and the former Zulkir of Alteration, Maligor, who later fell in one of his own plots (see the TSR Novel *Red Magic* by Jean Rabe), attacked Raspoke in a spell battle that ended with Raspoke being cursed and teleported away from Thay. His curse prevents him from casting spells, but it also has an unintended side effect. Not only can he neither memorize nor cast spells, but he also is unaffected by magic. This side effect acts as though a permanent anti-magic shell were in effect around Raspoke. Extra-planar creatures, golems and such are unable to enter this zone. Only artifacts and Raspoke's staff of the mage (for reasons he does not comprehend) function near him and can affect him. Once Raspoke became fully aware of the scope of this side effect, he stopped running and settled down in Torside, where he thought he could escape notice and pursue his goal. That is to travel through Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest in search of ancient Narfelli ruins. Research Raspoke did in Thay has led him to conclude that certain specific ruins, whose general locations are known to him, contain items of substantial magical power. He also believes that one such item within Dun Tharos' area of influence may have the ability to restore his access to the weave and its magic. Raspoke has survived by being cautious. He knows that he and his staff alone are no match for the Nentyarch, and he is attempting to negotiate. Raspoke has carefully entered parts of the wood under the Nentyarch's control several times, and after four years of effort, he finally succeeded in making contact with servants of the mysterious druid-mage. Raspoke informed them that he is willing to bind himself into any reasonable service the Nentyarch may wish of him, if the Nentyarch will grant him access to a certain ruin. He also has said he is willing to perform the service for the Nentyarch before this access is granted to him, should the Nentyarch demand that. At present, he is waiting for an answer. He will do nothing to recruit adventurers to aid him on his quest, but when adventurers return from Rawlinswood, a relatively rare event, he makes a point of being in the *Ghost in the Ring* to listen closely to whatever tales they may tell of their adventure. Raspoke has let his hair grow over his tattoos. Although he is fairly certain no one from Thay is seeking him or even thinking about him, he does disguise himself to look like a local. His hair and mustache are dark brown. He has brown eyes and is about 50 years old. Raspoke has hidden a chest full of gems and coins somewhere south of the village. A simple poison needle trap protects it.

5 - Abbey of the Vigilant One. The monastery is dedicated to Helm. The abbey is relatively small. Its construction was limited due to a general lack of building material in the Torside area and the difficulty and expense of importing construction material from the West. The abbey has a chapel, cells, meditation room, abbot's chamber, paladins' chambers and storage rooms in the cellar and an outdoor jousting court. There also are holding cells for imprisoning the occasional intruder or visitor who needs to be restrained. There is a lookout platform on the roof. The priests and paladins of Helm organize patrols in the area surrounding Torside. The abbess is Merith Aballin, human female, AL: LG, cleric (Helm) 12. She was sent from Helm's temple in Tsurlagol in the Vast to hold the watch in the Eastern Dale and to help build a following for Helm's faith in the Great Dale, a task that has succeeded to date only in the Torside area. Even the peasants of nearby Denderdale look upon the priests of Helm with suspicion. Aballin is aided by one of the first Dalesmen to convert to Helm's religion, Prior Antonin Bokala, human male, AL: LN, cleric of Helm, lvl 3, a Rashemi descendant. There also are four other human clergy in the abbey, three of them male and one female, and four male paladins are in its service.

6 – Dender's Mill. This rather large complex has two waterwheels on Dender's Creek, and each drives a different mill operation. The main branch is a sawmill, which also is the only significant business producing goods that are transported out of Torside. With help from the druids of Silvanus, the mill's loggers thin areas on the fertile fringes of Rawlinswood where the trees stand too thick for the well-being of the forest. The wood from Dender's Mill has a reputation of being of the finest construction quality. It is sold in Damara and Impiltur. The second, smaller milling operation grinds grain into flour and presses vegetable oil out of seeds, but only in quantities adequate to serve the farmers of the Torside area. The owner of the mill is Heafvyng Woldstad, human male, AL: LN, Rogue 5/Exp 6, a native of Torside. Heafvyng also owns the lumber camp to the North. He and his family and two apprentice millers live in the large house that is a part of the mill complex. Woldstad, a master miller, runs the sawmill. Lars Gorsbyrstyng (human male, AL:LG, Exp 4) also a master miller as well as Woldstad's assistant, runs the grain and oil mill. There are two journeymen and four apprentices working in the sawmill. A journeyman and two apprentices work in the grain and oil mill. All are locals who live in houses in the village. Woldstad's family is believed to have lived in Dender’s Valley since the first immigration of Turami into the Dale, and Woldstad claims that the Dender whose name the valley, the creek and the mill bear was one of his ancestors. Most sages think this could be partly true. The walls of the grain mill are indeed ancient and are believed to go back to the occupation by Narfell and perhaps even earlier. However, sages in Impiltur who have researched the precious little of the Dale's history that has been recorded believe that all native Turami descendants within Dender’s Valley were slaughtered during the time of the Narfelli occupation, and they think it is more likely that Woldstad is a descendant of the survivors of a Narfelli miller. In any case, Woldstad's father, grandfather and ancestors before them all have run the mill. Gorsbyrstyng is the son of a farming family that has lived for several generations in Torside. He learned the miller's trade in Dender's Mill, where he was an apprentice under Woldstad 's father and a journeymen under Woldstad, before becoming a master miller and succeeding the late Valstnar Hogardsstad upon his retirement.

7 - Dender's Mill Storage Houses.

8 - Dender's Creek.

9 - Doc's Hut. One passes Prosal's hut on the way to the Shrine of Nature of Chauntea and Silvanus. Mobry *Doc* Prosal, human male, AL: CG, wizard 3, lives here. Prosal is the local hedge wizard, although no one but the boyar knows this. He is Torside's expert on medicinal cures, herbs and midwifery. He likes his solitude in his little hut, where he makes his medicines and grows his herbs. He has a good deal of communication with the druids Rhabdys and Eileani on a professional level. He is well respected by the locals, because he can heal without druidic magic (sometimes he cheats), and he is willing to aid any person or animal that needs his help. Prosal is somewhat insecure and craves the respect of the local people. He left his magical studies because he thought he was a failure after it took him three years to get to reach the third level as a mage, although he's certain that magic is his life's true calling. Prosal feels threatened by the priests of Helm, and he will go out of his way to disparage their *physicking* skills. He never initiates a fight. If forced to defend himself, he tries to use only use a sleep spell. Prosal is in his 40s and has light hair and brown eyes.

10 - Heckelraun's House: The Impilturian archwizard Dendelbrar, disguised as the scholar Heckelraun, lives together with the members of his Impilturian expedition in this house. For more details on Heckelraun and his expedition, see the general description of Dender's Valley above. The NPC descriptions of the party can be found under *Dendelbrar's Expedition* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide.* The leaders of the expedition are Dendelbrar (a.k.a. *Heckelraun),* human male, AL: NG, abjurer, 16, and Kethylnyr, a member of the Wand of Impiltur from Ilmwatch, human male, AL :NG, transmuter 14. He disguises himself as a researcher from the Ministry of Agriculture in Dilpur, allegedly named Githunbrar. The party also includes genuine specialists who use their own names: Tarthunraun, human male AL: NG, Exp 15, and Bethelnyr, human male AL: LG, Exp 13, from the ministry in Dilpur, and Baltambrar, human male AL:LG, Exp 14, from the university in Lyrabar. Four warriors of the Sword of Impiltur protect the expedition, all disguised as mercenary guards. The commander is Sir Nendelbraun, human male, AL: LG, Paladin of Torm, lvl 12. His men are Kathfaeril, human male AL: CG, War 10, Dethred, human female AL: NG, War 8, Truggh, human male AL: CG, War 8, and Radabas, human male, AL :CG, War 6. To keep from drawing attention, the wizards go under their fictitious names. Dendelbrar and the other members of his group tell the locals that they're from the school of agriculture in Impilturian Lyrabar and are in Dender's Valley to study the unusual weather there and its effects upon plant life. They explain their observations in the vicinity of the Tor by saying they think that the hill plays an important role in affecting weather patterns. "*Heckelraun*" and his expedition bought a large farm in Torside and hired local help to convert all of the buildings into housing. Most members of the expedition take an active part in village life and are accepted almost as if they are natives. The paladin of Torm and the tough warriors of the Sword of Impiltur who are with the expedition, ostensibly mercenaries hired to protect the researchers during their work, are welcome in Torside as a valuable strengthening of the hamlet's defense. Although the people of Torside have been spared the ravages of the Dale's civil war, they did have to fight for their lives in the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR), when Tuigan riders reached the hamlet and needed to be driven off. Since that time, they have learned to be more concerned about their defense. Dendelbrar is well aware of the villagers' superstitions about the Tor. He and his other magic users do need to ascend the hill at times to conduct experiments, but they always do so under the cover of invisibility. To date, no one in Torside seems to suspect the expedition of being more than it is.

Locations Beyond the map

Shrine to Silvanus and Chauntea. This shrine is dedicated to both powers, and each has a druid in the Torside area to oversee the needs of the shrine and the folk who worship one or both of the nature gods. It also serves the logging camp to the north and the supervising druid Högnar Rundalfsrungur, human male, AL: N, lvl 6 Druid of Silvanus, there. In the shrine are a single, small hut surrounded by a garden and five oak trees. Eileani of Chauntea is the druidess, human female, AL: N, Druid of Chauntea 2. The shrine is about half a mile/1km north of Torside on the east bank of Dender's Creek. On the way to the shrine, one passes two farms and a small hut. The resident supervising druid of the Tellerth Circle in the Dender's Valley Logging Camp is a druid with a will to fight and an even stronger will to preserve the balance of nature. Rundalfsrungur belongs to the faction of the Tellerth Circle that is suspicious of the Nentyarch and ready to oppose him, suspecting him of using black magic but not able to substantiate this at present. Rundalfsrungur and his loggers already have heard of sabre-toothed tigers attacking hunters. Rundalfsrungur is well are aware that no tigers are native to the forest, and he is personally convinced that the tigers are evil creatures conjured is some way by the Nentyarch. In truth, the tigers were Malarite agents of Harbet Gall who had been polymorphed by the Nentyarch with *K'Ahlob's Transmogrifier* (see *Artifacts* in the *NJ Campaign Guide*). Rundalfsrungur likes his work, and he sees proof daily that he and the men he supervises indeed are doing much to bring the magically influenced forest of Dender's Valley back to a healthy condition in balance with the true nature of the valley. The loggers in the camp north of Torside also like and respect Rundalfsrungur, who often works at their sides. However, neither Rundalfsrungur nor the loggers have much use for the occasional adventurers who pass through their camp seeking lost treasures in Rawlinswood. The druid Rhabdys, human male, AL: N, Druid of Silvanus 4, serves Silvanus, and the druidess Eileani serves Chauntea. Rhabdys also is a member of the Tellerth Circle of western Rawlinswood. He was sent to Torside to tend the Shrine of Nature. In recent years he has become convinced that the Nentyarch may be the savior of druidic ideals in the Dale, and he has been serving secretly – without the circle's permission - as a contact for the Nentyarch, relaying information gathered by Wim back to Dun Tharos by carrier pigeon. Rhabdys also sends the same info back to his own circle.

The excitement of being a double agent has been addictive. The circle suspects nothing, but the Nentyarch is fully aware that Rhabdys serves two masters. Even if the carrier pigeons were not useful, Rhabdys would raise them. He loves them and he hopes to assume pigeon form when he gains more experience and druidic power. He is in his late 20s and is handsome. His hair is blond and eyes are a deep green. Rhabdys really likes Eileani. He will come to her aid at all costs. Eileani is about 20 years old. She has dark hair and dark eyes. She is originally from Uthmere, but her parents moved to this area to begin lives as farmers. Eileani quickly realized she had a green thumb and became an initiate of an older druid, no longer alive, who preceded her. She is in love with Rhabdys, but she thinks her attention is for naught. Like Rhabdys, she is a member of the Tellerth Circle. She has no affiliation with any power group other than her druidic circle.

Riggh (Haunted Ruin)

Former Hamlet in the County of Vulddin, abandoned ruin, AL: NE, Population 22 spectres (night only).

The ruins of Riggh have not been mapped.

Today's daytime visitor to Riggh usually will find only the heavily overgrown foundation stones where peasant farmers once lived and perhaps laughed from time to time.

Old tales that are passed on from generation to generation in Dender's Valley claim that Riggh once was quite similar to Denderdale. It was home to one of the more popular taverns and inns east of Riggstad, an inn called the *Night Eagle* that was among other things a favorite place to celebrate marriages with a fancy (by peasant standards) bridal chamber.

The last fall of Riggh came in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), when the Hunters of Herne, who long had occupied it, burned the hamlet before abandoning it, retreated across Dender's Creek and finally burned the bridge To Skarlshofn after crossing it. Unfortunately, they left 22 of their own men behind, trapped in the burning buildings.

Although there is good farm soil in and around Riggh, and summer weeds grow high, strong and proud, this corner of Denderdale draws no new settlers. The 22 Hunters of Herne who were burned to death there haunt it as spectres, still hatefully angered at the senseless deaths they suffered. If given the choice, the first target will be those who wear the Gallist badge with eagle's head and claw. Their second choice are those who wear the oak leaf and acorn of the Freemen. However, they're also happy to obligingly slay any other living, intelligent beings who cross their nocturnal paths.

The 22 spectres are active only in the nighttime hours of darkness. Daytime encounters, if any, would be with a druid or wild animals. However, prying adventurers could easily get into trouble in the daytime too. The spectres of the Hunters of Herne haunt the buried but still partially accessible cellars of farmhouses in Riggh by day. Those who have visited the thorp in the daytime say that entrances to ancient cellars can be found among the ruins, but no one who has returned has ever claimed to have investigated what is in them.

Bezentil

Large town, Nonstandard (theocratic), AL: CE, 3,000 gp limit. Assets: 375,000 gp. Population: 2,500; Mixed, 98% human, 2% other, Authority figures: Huntmaster Skith Tsornagar, human male, AL: CE, Cleric (Malar) 14. Important characters: Ranger Tedbur Orinssonur, human male, AL: NE, ranger (Herne the Hunter) 12, confidante of Skith Tsornagar and Gallist spy; Reaver Lord Drómi Bloodred, human male, AL: CN, Cleric (Garagos) 12, Ftr 6; 6 Talons of Malar (58 at hunt time), human male and female, AL: CE, Priest (Malar) 1-12; 4 Huntlords (24 at hunt time), human male and female, AL: CE, Cleric (Malar) 1-8; 50 rangers of Malar, human male and female, AL: NE, 1-12; 500 Malarite Hunters, human male and female, AL: CE, War or Ftr, 1-6, 400 Warriors of Garagos, human male and female, AL: CN and CE, Ftr or War 1-12; 12 Malarite Masters Blacksmiths (forge the *True Talons of Malar*), human male, AL: NE, Exp 4-10. Watch: See Malarite Hunters above. Taxation type: Corrupt. Accepted coinage: Impilturian, Theskan and anything else the seller recognizes.

Impilturian sages tell that Bezentil once was the southern jewel of the great Narfelli Empire and that the circular wall that stands in ruins today were modeled on the original construction of the year -851 DR. What documentation there is of Bezentil in its original form is hidden from most eyes in the royal library in Impilturian Lyrabar. However, those who have seen what is written there say the old circular walled city was built and then rebuilt again by the Narfelli and resurrected twice more by the Dalesmen.

When the Narfelli-Raumathari conflict was in its later stages, the goddess Mystryl already had fallen and Mystra had arisen to place her firm limit upon the use of the mightiest of magicks. Nevertheless, both sides in the conflagration were in possession of magical items that still unleashed spells of the now forbidden levels. Many of these items functioned, albeit erratically.

The Raumathari had an artifact, a magical Imaskari staff that was capable of unleashing tremendous destruction. Despite the staff's instability, Raumathar hit Narfell with eight devastating blasts from it between the Year of the Eight Lightnings (-288 DR) and the Year of the Gems Aflame (-279 DR).

Two of the blasts struck in the Great Dale, the first hitting the northeastern corner of Rawlinswood and destroying a large part of the forest in magical fire. The next blast hit Bezentil in the Year of the Shattered Portals (-283 DR), causing a tremendous flash of light, after which the city simply vanished, according to old tales.

Bezentil had been a strategically critical city for Narfell. The empire wasted no time in rebuilding. By the Year of the Impudent Kin (-280 DR), the second incarnation of Bezentil stood where the old city had been obliterated but fate was not generous with Bezentil.

The second city of Bezentil survived a mere 130 years. In the Year of Recompense (-150 DR), in the final, mighty exchange of warring blows between Narfell and Raumathar, Bezentil's circular wall and all that it contained were leveled. Nothing remained of the proud city except ashes and rubble, a fate that was shared by many other cities, villages and towns on both sides of the Narfelli-Raumathari border.

Seven years later, in the Year of the Bright Lamplight (-143 DR), the third incarnation of Bezentil stood where the first two had fallen, but in a much more modest form. The post-Narfelli Bezentil was built by Turami-born Dalesmen of modest means, and the small town that replaced the great old city was a simple settlement. All that had been inherited from the Narfelli was the concept of a round town inside a circular wall.

The third Bezentil grew again into a city. It was attacked often with severe damage, and it changed hands frequently after the outbreak of the religious civil war, but no foe succeeded in totally destroying it again until the severe dragon attacks in the Year of the Dracorage (1018 DR).

It is said that much of the city wall had been breached and not a single building stood intact within Bezentil after the dragons had finished with it. Nevertheless, the fourth and still surviving incarnation of Bezentil began arising from the ashes and rubble two years later, in the Year of the Smoldering Spells (1020 DR), and once more as a round town in a circular wall.

The fourth circular wall now is a patchwork. What it encircles is to a great extent dilapidated, and much of it is in ruin. Reaver Lord Drómi, the cleric general who heads the 400 strong troop loyal to Garagos in Bezentil, once laughingly remarked that these things are merely a part of *"the colorful history of Bezentil."* Few Dalesmen would disagree, particularly if one adds that the color of the tale is blood red.

Many of the Great Dale's most famous legends were written in Bezentil. There the famed paladin of Helm from Torside, Sir Nandwulf, slew the mighty blue dragon Tarnestdopolis, who had laid much of the Dale to waste. Bezentil also was the city where Nandwulf and several of his fellow paladins forfeited their lives in battle against the dracolich Nargustrandir.

Sir Nandwulf had been dead only briefly, when the greatest of all Bezentil's legends was written, when the Ilmatari St. Selimbrar returned with his 80 serfs from an age past, and the saint destroyed Nargustrandir while his serfs moved down the entire host of the marauding Gallist Reavers of Garagos.

It also was over the skies of Bezentil that the famed *Battle of Dragons* took place. A black, a blue and a red dragon in service to Gall's Kront Dragon Cult cell clashed in a rivalrous battle, leaving the black wyrm dead and the red and blue taking to flight severely injured, but also leaving much of Bezentil in rubble and ash.

The Battle of the Dragons, which took place in the Year of the Raging Flame (1255 DR), marked the beginning of Bezentil's great demise. Much of the damage sustained in that battle remains today. Moreover, the town never again rose to the population levels it had reached at that time.

Before Bezentil was born, the Narfelli had overrun the Turami settlement of Kront on the Lake of Tears in Ashanath in the year -908 DR. The empire had built a huge military base there, much larger than the small, ring-walled city that stands on the lakeshore today.

Lake Ashane was the southernmost front in the Narfelli-Raumathari conflagration. Narfell held the land of Ashane on the western shore, while the Raumathari controlled the eastern shore, now the land of Rashemen. Narfell had armed Kront to the teeth with weapons and sorcery, but Kront was isolated from the settlements that supported it, thus, the Narfelli began building a secondary ring-walled support bastion on a site heretofore unsettled by the Dalesmen, and they named it Bezentil.

Impilturian sages believe Bezentil's first incarnation was the most magnificent Narfelli city in the south, exceeding even Impilturian Lyrabar in riches and magic. The Narfelli emperor vested one of his high nobles with the title Duke of Bezentil and granted him a duchy that is said to have been the rich, southern breadbasket of Narfell.

Construction of the city itself was completed by the Narfelli in -851 DR. According to Impilturian experts on Narfell, the duchy included not only Bezentil but also Vulddin, Denderdale, Torside, Riggh, Skarlshofn, Ulfshofn, Gurshofn and Auststad. The emperor gave his new duke a two-fold mission: To produce needed food for southern Narfell and to be the backbone of support and for supply of the imperial margrave who held the genuine front against Raumathar, the March of Ashanath, as Narfell called it, with its seat in Kront.

The Impilturians believe that the first Bezentil grew and prospered, untouched by the ravages of war, until it was extinguished in a flash of light by the mighty Imaskari staff of Raumathar in the Year of the Shattered Portals (-283 DR). The second incarnation of Bezentil, the sages claim, was at the same time tougher and more modest.

They claim that a new duke was appointed by the Narfelli emperor and the duchy itself was reunited around the ducal seat, the second Bezentil, but the luxury, glory and beauty of old Bezentil had vanished forever. The new Bezentil began as a small town that concentrated upon support of the warriors and wizards in Kront and upon agricultural production.

In those days, most of the fields and meadows around Bezentil were tilled or grazed, and the largest Narfelli mill in the southern reach of the empire, the ducal mill, which was destroyed centuries ago, was built north of town on Dender's Creek to grind the grain and press oil from seeds. At the time when the second incarnation was leveled in the mutual destruction of Narfell and Raumathar, it is believed that Bezentil already had grown back into a regional city of respectable size.

After the Dalesmen rebuilt upon the Narfelli ruins, Bezentil assumed much more modest proportions. Oral tradition and reports written in the 11h century by Impilturian traders who traveled through the Great Dale say it had grown from a town back into a small city, but that ended during the rage of dragons, when Bezentil suffered its third total destruction. For the past three and a half centuries, it has been nothing more than a dilapidated border town that many of its native sons had fled.

The Freemen managed to hold Bezentil from its fourth reconstruction in the Year of the Smoldering Spells (1020 DR) until Gall's Dragon Cult cell launched a massive dragon attack upon the town in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR). About 90% of the town lay in ruin and ashes. What remained of Bezentil had fallen in the hands of the Gallist Hunters of Herne. Many Dalesmen consider the haphazard reconstruction that followed to be Bezentil's fifth incarnation.

The Gallists had few resources available to rebuild Bezentil. Twenty-two years passed from the devastation until they announced that reconstruction had been completed in the Year of Storms (1310 DR). However, the Bezentil of that year bore little resemblance to its predecessors. Piles of rubble stood (and still stand today) at many locations where buildings once were. Many of the structures that were restored were done so shabbily. The town wall was open to two large breaches in the south.

Indeed, the leaders of the Freemen's militia remarked several times during Bezentil's 70 years in Gallist hands that they could have retaken the town without suffering overwhelming losses, but what had become Bezentil had neither the material nor the strategic value to justify the blood that would be shed in taking it back.

So the situation remained until the Year of Shadows (1358 DR), when the avatar of Malar came to Bezentil and claimed the town for his own. When the gods were allowed to return to their homes on the planes later in the same year, Malar did not return Bezentil to Harbet Gall, who has served him in the guise of Herne the Hunter. Instead he turned the town over to his own high priest, Huntmaster Skith Tsornagar, human male, AL: CE, Cleric (Malar) 14, with instructions to lead the Divine Den temple the Beastlord had established there and to make Bezentil the center of the true Malarite church in Faerûn.

In his first years in that office, Tsornagar was highly ambitious and for a brief period even successful. First, he launched a hunt to eliminate the Mucklestones Druids and damaged them so badly that it took several years for them to regain their strength.

Then Tsornagar launched his ill-fated *Ultimate Hunt*, in which he promised to hunt down and destroy the mighty Nentyarch of Rawlinswood. He led a large host in a march upon Dun Tharos, but only Tsornagar himself and a few others survived the Nentyarch's overwhelming victory.

In Bezentil, Tsornagar tore down the rickety buildings of the town center, clearing everything on both sides of the central ring except for the *Divine Den* temple, which Malar's avatar had built. With the Mucklestones druids out of battle at the time, Tsornagar was able to bring in stone enough to reconstruct the town center.

Tsornagar already had removed parts of the provisional wooden palisade town wall the Gallists had built on the south edge of Bezentil and started replacing them with a new stone wall when the Mucklestones Druids began regaining their power and forcing Tsornagar to vacate the quarries near the ruins of Fortress Narder.

In the matter of the wall, the Huntlord had acted somewhat precipitously. He had torn down the heavy timber palisade wall of the Gallists on Bezentil's south side and had given it to the town's laborers to saw and split for firewood, a task that they fulfilled with haste before Tsornagar might change his mind.

Unexpectedly, Tsornagar found himself without two large sections of wall in the South, without both the huge wooden beams of the old wall and the new stone needed to build a new wall. He considered forcing local laborers to gather the stones the Gallists had collected in earlier times from the ruins and then scattered over the plain outside to retard horsemen, but most of these stones were too irregular in shape to use for a wall.

As a result, his workers were forced to fell timber from the perimeter of Lethyr Forest, where the Mucklestones Druids seldom go, to replace the Gallists' strong palisade wall in the south with a new palisade wall that was thinner and weaker, because his lumberjacks could not fell timber in the heart of Lethyr, where the tall, huge trees stand.

Under Tsornagar, most of Bezentil is left to its own devices. Basically, that means that the residents have to fend for themselves, by hook or by crook, and that they slip slowly but steadily into deeper poverty. Neither the Huntlord nor his followers have any interest in the town itself, beyond its function as their headquarters and their conscription of the locals for labor.

Most honest and upstanding families who survived the devastation of the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR) fled the town. Those who still live in it today often are fugitives from elsewhere who have no place else to go or they are profiteering scum that tries to cash in wherever the carrion crows of war feed.

There is no city government and there are no laws in Bezentil. When there is a dispute, the parties are left to themselves to settle it. When there is a fight, the winner wins and the loser loses. If a dispute or a fight becomes heated enough to irritate the Malarites, they usually simply slay all parties involved, lending the problem a quick and ultimate solution.

The Malarite hunters who serve Tsornagar perform watch duty, but that has little to do with law enforcement. They simply see to it that nothing gets out of hand in a manner that will damage the church's interests. When they encounter problems that are detrimental to Malar's church, swords are drawn and the problem usually is liquidated. Prisoners whom the Malarite hunters take alive are held until the next Great Hunt and then turned loose as prey.

There is one unwritten law in Bezentil that can result in an unpleasant death for anyone who violates it. Anyone who kills, injures, robs or even threatens an outside merchant or peddler who comes to Bezentil usually can count him- or herself a dead man. This de facto protection also is extended to other strangers, at least until it becomes clear that they are of no use or value to Bezentil.

The town cannot survive without the traders and peddlers who bring clothing, food and other wares into it for sale. If Bezentil were to gain the reputation of being dangerous to peddlers, these folk would stop coming and the town would die. For that reason, almost anyone from the watch to petty thieves will do whatever they can to see that the traveling merchants stay safe when they're in town.

However, if a stranger makes it obvious that he or she is of no value to Bezentil, he or she can be walking on thin ice. There are low level assassins operating in Bezentil who make their living by selling human prey to the Divine Den for the semi-annual Great Hunts, an occupation made possible only because the Malarites consider kidnappings in town to be below their dignity in Bezentil.

Tsornagar leads two Great Hunts yearly in the Great Dale. The most dangerous, the Spring Hunt, takes place in Tarsakh each year. It draws hunters from all corners of Faerûn. Despite and even because of the trouble and danger the Mucklestones Druids pose for the massed hunters, the Spring Hunt begins at the ruins of Fortress Narder, on the Mucklestones' home turf. All members of the Mucklestones Druids also are declared prey by Tsornagar.

The hunters have to survive contact not only with the Mucklestones Druids but also with a band of 500 former Zhentish orcs who fled Thesk to make their home in the wood. These orcs were part of the Cormyte King Azoun's crusade against the Tuigan Horde in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR). They stayed behind as an army of occupation in Thesk after the crusade but eventually were pushed out as the Theskans recovered their strength.

The second Great Hunt takes place in Marpenoth. The human prey is secondary, included only for religious purposes, that is, to honor Malar. The Marpenoth hunt takes place in the no man's land of southwestern Lethyr Forest, alternating locations. One year, the hunt is staged between the Eth and the Flam, the next between the Flam and Spear Creek. During this hunt, the participants also can have sporting encounters with rangers of the Freemen, the militia of Ethdale or Nyth or a ferocious hobgoblin clan that wanders nomadically through these parts of Lethyr.

The main purpose of the Marpenoth hunt is to provide Bezentil with a year's ration of meat. The hunt begins in late Marpenoth, when night temperatures always fall below the freezing point, which retards spoilage. The hunt's bag is brought back to the Divine Den, which is well equipped to process it. Part of the ground floor of the complex serves as a slaughterhouse. The first dungeon level has facilities equipped to make sausages, smoke boar hams and pack boar in venison in brine.

A lower dungeon level is kept through magic at a consistent temperature of 15℉/-10℃. Freshly butche red meat from the hunt's bag is kept frozen on this level and retrieved throughout the rest of the year as needed. Private persons buy meat from the temple. The temple, the hunters' lodge and the barracks messes simply withdraw from the reserves when meat is needed.

Because almost no grain, crops, sheep or cattle are raised in the Bezentil area, anyone who wants to live in the town and isn't directly affiliated with the Malarites needs a regular source of income. Anything one needs from firewood to clothing, food, drink, tools, supplies, etc., needs to be purchased. Peddlers come regularly to Bezentil and set up their wagons in the streets to sell their wares.

Peddlers come from both war fronts, from Vulddin in the Free Dale and from Skarlshofn and Gurshofn in the Gallist region. The peddlers from Vulddin usually bring in textiles, leather items, tools and a wide variety of other wares they have purchased for which they can find a market in Bezentil. Those from Skarlshofn are more inclined to bring grain, winter barley, hops for the brewery and linen.

Bezentil has a very strong military and para-military presence. The Barracks complexes north of the Divine Den house 500 Malarite Hunters, all trained warriors, fighters and rangers loyal to the Beastlord. These men and women are responsible for maintaining the watch in Bezentil. They always are in town except during the semi-annual Great Hunts, when 50 of them stay behind to command the city's defense.

Just north of those barracks are the quarters for the 50 rangers of Malar who serve Tsornagar and for guest hunters who come from other parts of Faerûn to take part in the semi-annual Great Hunts. Most of the time, these buildings are naerly empty. The guests come to Bezentil only twice a year, and the majority of the rangers usually are out in southeastern Lethyr Forest, hunting the orc band that has moved in there and the Mucklestones Druids. South of the Divine Den are the barracks of Tsornagar's main defensive force, 400 warriors of the church of Garagos. They are headed by Reaver Lord Drómi, human male, AL: CN, cleric (Garagos) 12, Ftr 6.

When a PC party approaches Bezentil, it sees some rather curious sights. The landscape around the town is littered with many broken stone bricks. All of them were removed from the city and town ruins and scattered over fallow land that once was fertile farming soil. The druids and monks of Chauntea consider this deed to be criminal. The scattered stones were intended to act somewhat like caltrops, making it difficult for enemy cavalry or foot soldiers to storm Bezentil's walls.

The circular town wall is a patchwork affair, changing from formidable stone with strong stone towers suddenly to a palisade wall of thin pine trunks protected by wooden watchtowers, them returning to stone for a short stretch, etc. The eastern and western gates still are of metal-plated massive wood with strong towers to either side. The east and west gates are open during daylight hours. The south gate always is closed.

However, the Trade Route no longer runs through Bezentil. It has been detoured along the outside of the north town wall. In the middle of the north wall, the wooden palisade Hernestönna wall begins running northward to Dender's Creek. There is a gate that can be used to close the Trade Route at the Hernestönna, a remnant of the days of Gallist rule, but since the Year of Shadows (1358 DR), when Malar put the town into his church's hands, the Hernestönna gate has remained open permanently without guards.

The Bezentil watch takes no interest in those who want to bypass the town rather than entering it, going in either direction. If travelers elect to camp on the former farm fields along the north wall outside of town, the watch usually will not interfere, but the men in the wall's watch towers will keep a close eye upon them.

Almost anyone can enter Bezentil, and with luck, most can leave the town freely again. Unlike in the Gallist areas, there are no travel restrictions in Bezentil. Guards do man the eastern and western gate. Those who wish to enter through one of them in the daylight hours will be asked to identify themselves and state their business in Bezentil, but it's seldom that a guard will take interest in the answers he or she hears.

It's dangerous for a visitor to quarrel with a follower of Malar, and just as dangerous to be alone in town and get drunk enough to pass out if one hasn't brought anything to town to sell and isn't buying something to take out of town. Visitors in both categories have a tendency to disappear and then reappear later as prey in a Great Hunt. Bezentil is a hard town, but one can do business there.

The population of Bezentil is largely male. Most females in town practice a profession that's ancient but honored in Bezentil, and they do it in their own homes. There are no festhalls or bordellos in Bezentil. Children are relatively rare in town. Today's Bezentil town is dedicated to the hunt, not to the procreation of the human race.

While most of the Malarites can be found year round in Bezentil, except during the two Great Hunts, Tsornagar, as Malar's highest priest in the Realms, as his top followers often are away, conducting and taking part in hunts and other church activities in distant places. For the last seven years, Tsornagar and his Talons and Huntlords have been operating quietly and secretly, building the Malarite church and using their secluded stronghold in the Great Dale to organize hunts throughout Faerûn and particularly in the Vilhon Reach and the distant North, northeast of Waterdeep.

When Tsornagar was absent on his unsuccessful hunt of the Nentyarch several years ago, a fiasco that nearly cost him his life, a plot was engaged behind the scenes, one of which he still remains unaware. During this time, representatives of the House of Steel temple to Garagos in Westgate met secretly with Reaver Lord Drómi Bloodred of the Garagos temple in Bezentil, and together they forged plans that bring the Bezentil temple under the priestess Chalass the Cruel of Westgate. With these discussions, the Bezentil garrison of Reavers and warriors became apart of Chalass' plans to expand the church of Garagos into Damara and Thay.

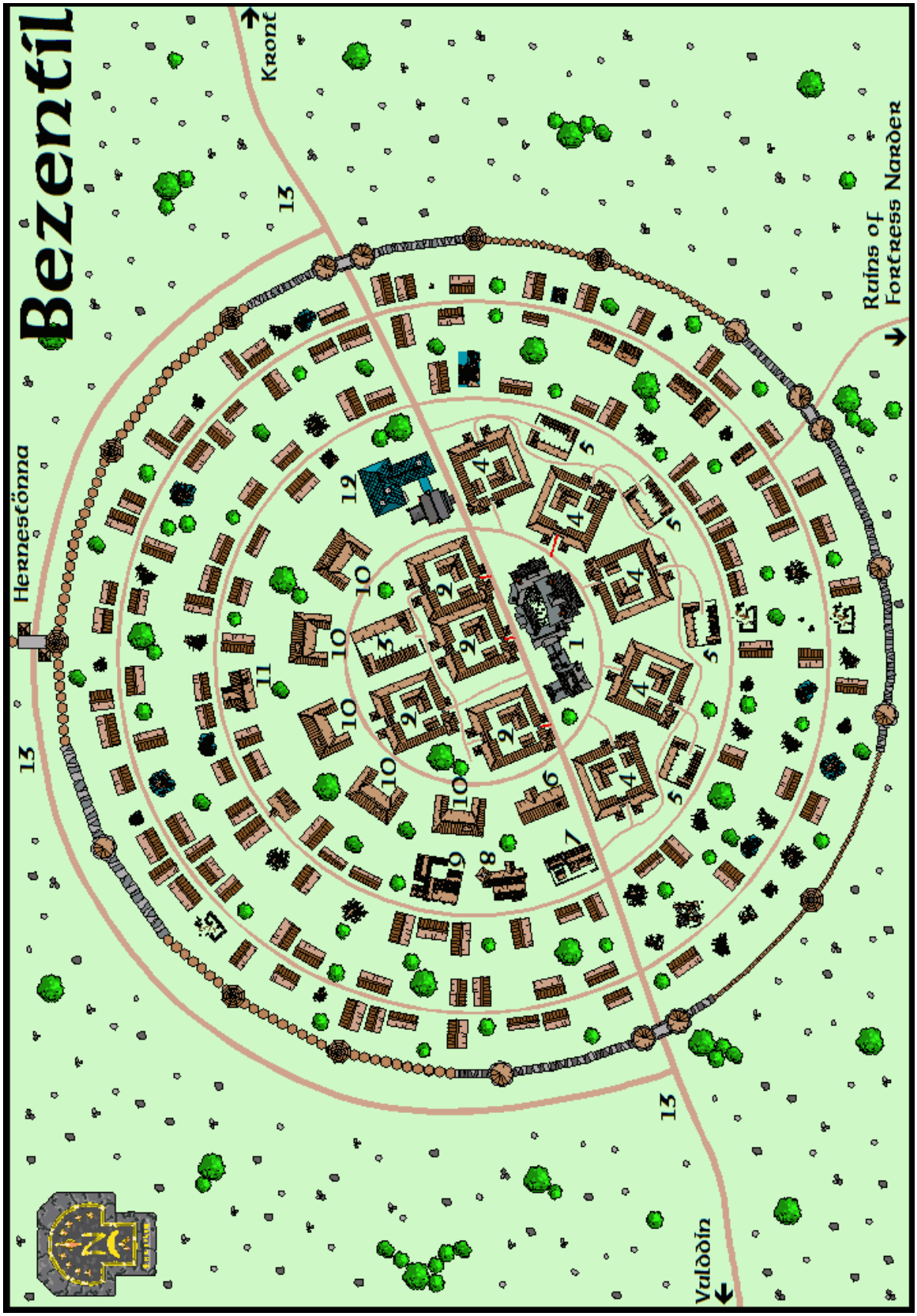
Tsornagar believes that Drómi and the 400 men under his command are loyal to him. The truth is, they are biding their time in Bezentil, training new Reavers and warriors of Garagos there, but when the time is right, Drómi and his 400 men plan to ride out of Bezentil and go on to Damara.

Adventure Hooks in Bezentil

- **Gallist Spy.** Ranger Tedbur Orinssonur, human male, AL: NE, ranger (Herne the Hunter) lvl 12, is a close aide and confidante of Skith Tsornagar, but first and foremost, he really is a Hunter of Herne who spies for Harbet Gall. In most campaigns, this fact probably will have little effect upon the PC party. However, those PCs who are bearing the red sigylls in the *Northern Journey* adventure may have some serious problems if Orinssonur becomes aware that they are in town. He has been alerted to the tale of the sigyll bearers and has orders from Nighthawk Tower to attempt to see to it that they are destroyed if they reach Bezentil, provided he can do so without blowing his cover. At first, he will try to hire the town's low-level assassins (Rogue 5, Assassin 2) to do the PCs in. After that he will make whatever attempts he can to liquidate them as long as they do not involve Tsornagar becoming aware. If Tsornagar discovers that Orinssonur is trying to kill someone, he will not be opposed to the idea, but he will want to know why. Tsornagar is acutely aware that killing the wrong person sometimes can cause a succeeding series of problems, and before he will give an assassination his blessing, he wants to analyze what those subsequent problems might be so that he can weigh whether the cost of the assassination is greater than the price to Malar's church of letting the target live.

- **Harper Spy.** Harnold Quirt, human male, AL: NG (NE), Wizard 6, Ftr 4, a native of Mistledale, is Bezentil's resident Harper agent and keeper of the Bezentil Orphan Tavern. He has been alerted by Storm Silverhand to the mission of *Northern Journey* adventure PCs bearing the red sigylls and will do what he can to help them if he becomes aware of their presence in Bezentil.

- **Kidnapped.** If the PCs managed to prove themselves as being of no value to Bezentil, and if they get good and drunk, they might wake up in manacles and irons in a dungeon beneath almost any unmarked building on the Bezentil map. They'll be kept there until the next Great Hunt, when they'll be sold to the Divine Den to serve as prey. Their captor(s) will be (a) low level assassin(s) (Rogue 5, Assassin 2).


Bezentil
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Kront
Ruins of Fortress Narder
Valodin
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Bezentil

Map of Bezentil

1 - The Divine Den. This is the Malarite temple of Skith Tsornagar and the principal temple of Malar in Faerûn. At normal times, it also houses 10 other priests and clerics of the Beastlord, but the six-story complex also is capable of housing the more than 100 priests and clerics who come to the semi-annual Great Hunts in the Great Dale. The ground floor and dungeon levels have a slaughterhouse and meat processing facilities. The two upper floors house Tsornagar's hunting museum, which is open only to recognized members of the Beastlord's faith.

2 - Barracks of the Malarite Warriors.

3 - Stables of the Malarite Warriors.

4 - Barracks of the Warriors of Garagos.

5 - Stables of the Warriors of Garagos.

6 - Hunters Lodge. This large tavern, with a public room and a beer cellar, can accommodate more than 200 guests. The upper story has rooms where guests can go who have made special arrangements with the serving girls. Most nights, the lodge is full. The only hitch is, to gain admittance, one must bear the red claw of Malar. This is a magical tattoo, and it is checked at the door. Only the clerics of the Divine Den, the Malarite Warriors and the Malarite Rangers bear the magical tattoo. It was offered too to the warriors of Garagos, but Reaver Lord Drómi turned down the offer. There are no exceptions to the admission rules. To get into the Hunters Lodge, the PCs will have to gain magical tattoos in some manner. The maturbordh in the lodge, with its fine selection of venison and boar, is the best food available in Bezentil. It costs 6 silver shiners. Mauberg's Oak Whisky is served at 1 gold taler per shot/0.1 liter glass. Local Red Claw Lager beer costs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. The lodge also accepts coins from Thesk, Waterdeep, Baldur's Gate, Cormyr, the Dragon Coast, Sembia, Procampur, Ravens Bluff, Tantras, Rashemen, Telflamm and Thay, as well as Damaran bloodstone bars. Employees are trained to recognize genuine coins from these mints. The lodge is owned by the Divine Den and run by employees of the den, who are relatively well paid. The manager is Harnul Kaden, human male, AL: NE, Exp 6, a worshipper of Malar from Neverwinter in the distant Northwest.

7 - Piotrs Smithy. Piotr Rodionovich Nazkoi, human male, AL: NE, Exp 8, is a master blacksmith who's wanted for murder in Rashemen. He killed both his wife and her lover there, after catching them together. Nazkoi is well-liked in Bezentil, although some people have taken note of the fact that it's a good idea to be careful of his quick temper. When he fled Rashemen on a small boat, before his deed was discovered, he took with him Nikolai Sergeivich Tolzin, human male, AL: N, Exp 3, the young master weaponsmith and armor maker who had worked for him in Thasunta. Together, they employ a journeyman in each of the three smithing trades and four apprentices. It should be noted that the warriors of Malar and Garagos as well as the rangers of Malar usually do no business in the smithy. They have their own smiths in their barracks complexes.

8 - Red Claw Brewery. For centuries, regardless of whether it was in Gallist or Freemen's hands, the brewery was known as the *Eastern Gate Brewery*. In the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR), longtime brewmaster Nangur Thóridhssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 5, changed the name at the strong urging of Malarite priests, who informed him that this was Skith Tsornagar's wish. The beer has not changed since Thóridhssonur inherited it from his father in the Year of the Spur (1348 DR). He brews a golden lager of middle to good quality, surprisingly good in comparison to the quality of other things offered in Bezentil.

9 - Border Inn. The only inn within Bezentil has been in the ownership of current innkeeper Taleg Oggssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 3, since it was rebuilt in the Year of the Whelm (1290 DR). The previous inn, destroyed in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), also had belonged to the family, which has remained in Bezentil and operated a hostelry, regardless of who was in power. Oggssonur has the same problem that many other property owners in the border town do; he has a difficult time finding materials with which to repair his inn. As a result, the hostelry is somewhat rundown, and many of the guest rooms tend to be a bit drafty, which is balanced in part by the generous supply of firewood supplied to guests and the thick feather quilts on the bed.

The 14 single rooms cost 4 silver shiners. The six doubles cost 6 shiners for a double occupancy or 5 shiners when used by a person alone. Oggssonur provides the best maturbordh he can, but it certainly is below the standard set by many inns in the Western Dale. It costs four shiners. The only drink in the house is Red Claw Lager, at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. According to an unwritten law in Bezentil, it can be deadly to kill, injure or rob guests in the inn, therefore, overnight guests are - surprisingly - relatively secure here. Oggssonur's public room draws a good cross section of traffic, but moods in Bezentil tend to be dark. Happy evenings are rare in the Border Inn - or anywhere else in Bezentil for that matter.

10 - Barracks of the Rangers of Herne. Outside of the two Great Hunt seasons, these buildings usually are relatively empty. Most are intended for guest hunters from elsewhere, who come to Bezentil twice yearly. However, the rangers of Malar who patrol Lethyr Forest for Skith Tsornagar also dwell there, when they are in town.

11 - Bezentil Orphan Tavern. The only tavern in town tends to draw residents and visitors of some means who are not a part of the Malarite establishment. That can be quite a cross section. The tavernkeeper and owner is Harnold Quirt, human male, AL: NG (NE), Wizard 6, Ftr 4, a native of Mistledale who is Bezentil's resident Harper agent. He carries a periapt that disguises his neutral good alignment as neutral evil. Quirt's job is to keep a close eye upon doings in Bezentil and to telepathically report to Shadowdale, interfering only when he receives instructions to do so. Because his clientele tends to be outside of the ranks of Malar worshippers, he needs to use his eyes and ears more outside of the tavern than within it to gain the news that the old sage Elminster and his neighbor, Storm Silverhand, want to receive. The *Orphan* sells only Red Claw Lager, at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard.

12 - The Smiths of the Hunt. This substantial forge and smithy belongs to the Divine Den. Within it, the priests of Malar work together with the 12 Malar-worshipping blacksmiths to forge the magical *True Talons of Malar* used by the faith's ranking priests. (For more information on the *True Talons,* see the entry for Malar in *Faiths & Avatars* by Julia Martin with Eric L. Boyd, TSR - 1996, available as an ESD download from RPG Now.)

13 - The Trade Route.

E. Rawlinswood

Damaran Tellerth is outside of the geographical bounds of the Great Dale, but it gave the name to the druids of Silvanus who control much of western Rawlinswood. The Kingdom of Damara nominally claims all of Rawlinswood northwest of the Lench or Sidewinder River, although no Damaran king ever actually has tried to asset rule there. The main grove of the Tellerth Druids Circle, however, is in the part of the forest claimed by Damara, within the wood southeast of Tellerth.

Only twice have humans attempted to settle northwest of the Lench. The druids have their groves within the wood, and Freemen once settled a thorp on the Lench Narrows, using their native name for the narrows, *Lenchengi*. The settlement was destroyed in a dragon attack in the Year of the Last Enclave (1114 DR). Lenchbugar later leveled the ruins and turned the village site into grazing land.

Another thorp on the southeastern bank of the Lench, Lenchstigur, was destroyed in the same dragon attack but never rebuilt. Lenchbugar, just upstream from Lenchengi on the southeastern bank of the river, survived the dragon attack with some damage and continues to provide a home to Freemen today.

In the earlier 11th century, the Gallists made a strong move into the area of Rawlinswood between the Lench and the Soleine, building the village of Great Boar and the hamlets of Kilstad, Tarkstad, Tining and Veidarheim. One of Gall's own dragons destroyed Tarkstad, Tining and Veidarheim in the Year of the Last Enclave (1114 DR). None of the three ever has been rebuilt, although Gall has planned futilely on more than one occasion to reclaim them.

Great Boar and Kilstad are closed villages that are tolerated by the Freemen and the Tellerth Druids on the conditions that the Hunters of Herne who live there violate none of the restrictions imposed by the druids and their rangers. There also is a limited amount of trade between Great Boar and Kilstad on the one side and the Freemen's settlements downstream.

Local nobility appointed by Gall, in both cases True Druids of Herne the Hunter rules the Gallists in Great Boar and Kilstad. Within their areas, they continue to conduct their Malarite rituals, including their Great Hunts with human prey. They also carefully guard their own settlements to see that none of their own dissatisfied villagers escape to the West. These things, however, do not violate the restrictions set by the Tellerth Druids.

The residents of both settlements maintain their faith, isolated in western Rawlinswood but convinced that the avatar of Herne the Hunter in the East one day will succeed in bringing all of the Great Dale under his thumb. When that day comes, they believe, Gall will honor their loyalty, and they will be the dominators of those who now dominate them.

The Soleine Valley is the Freemen's land as far as Kilstad. The areas beyond the hamlet to the Northeast tend to be dangerous. Rangers of the Freemen patrol these areas without difficulty, but they encounter an increasingly growing number of hobgoblins there, all apparently in the Nentyarch's service. The hobgoblins do not attack the druids and rangers of the Tellerth Circle or Tumblingstars, but others who go into these areas seldom return. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the Nentyarch is sealing off the rest of the wood north of Great Boar and Kilstad against new human incursions.

Tumblingstars is a druids' and rangers grove at the Tumblingstars Waterfall, where the Uth emerges roaring from its deep underground ways. The druids and rangers there serve Eldath rather than Silvanus and Mielikki, but both groups work closely together, and the Tumblingstars enclave is generally considered to be a part of the Tellerth Circle.

East and southeast of Tumblingstars one finds a second area where Gall and later the Malarite High Huntmaster Skith Tsornagar had made large incursions. Hnútar is the only traditional Freemen's settlement in this part of the woods. In the early 11th century, Gallist forces made a strong move into this area, building the thorps of Mugh, Tangetsjódur and Tils as well as the hamlet of Zieth. But the Freemen finally drove them back northward between the Year of the Dogged Search (1051 DR) and the Year of Lashing and Torment (1053 DR).

In those battles, Mugh, Tangetsjódur and Tils were destroyed and Zieth surrendered to the Freemen. Since that time, Freemen who govern it have occupied Zieth. The population remains for the most part loyal to the teachings of Herne the Hunter, but it abides by the restrictions of the occupying Freemen.

There are no true druids of Herne in Zieth. Those who were there were sentenced to death and slain by the Freemen after the town surrendered in the Year of the Dogged Search (1051 DR). The Gallists have made plans in the past to rebuild Mugh and Tils or to reclaim Zieth but no actual attempts have been undertaken.

In the Year of the Snow Winds (1335 DR), the Hunters of Herne did succeed in reclaiming Tangetsjódur and rebuilding a part of it as a small forest outpost, but the Nentyarch destroyed it four years later in the Year of the Weeping Moon (1339 DR). In more recent years, Tsornagar and his Malarite followers in Bezentil also attempted to reclaim the thorp, but they too were driven off or destroyed by the Nentyarch. The ruins probably should be counted now as being a part of the Nentyarch's territory.

For purposes of this section, all of Rawlinswood from Merchants Run to the Neck at Dender's Valley is covered. The Neck itself and the Dender Valley Logging Camp are covered in Part C, *The Trade Route*. The Gallist forest settlements east of the Neck are described in Part I, *The Eastern Dale.*

Tellerth Druids Grove

Thorp, Nonstandard (theocratic), AL: N, 0 gp limit*. Assets: Varies - 60 to 400 gp, dependent upon the number of circle members present. Population Varies from 12-100; Mixed human and half-elf, proportion varies. Authority figures: Great Druid Righan Eikensson, human male, AL: N, druid (Silvanus) 19. Important characters: Ranger of the Circle N'uluar, half-elf male, AL: NG, ranger (Mielikki) 18. Taxation: None. * There is nothing for sale in the druids grove.

Tellerth, on the northwestern edge of Rawlinswood, is in the Barony of Polten. According to official royal Damaran maps, the corner of Rawlinswood northwest of the Lench or Sidewinder river also belongs to the Duchy of Soravia, although one must quickly note that no duke and no Damaran king ever has done anything to assert that claim.

Few who have lived in this part of the wood would consider themselves Damaran, and that includes the Tellerth Druids, who see themselves as Freemen of the Great Dale and nothing else. The Tellerth Druid Circle is a huge organization that includes about 20 to 30 druids of Silvanus and some 80 to 100 rangers of Mielikki.

The exact numbers fluctuate. Being a member of the Tellerth circle is a dangerous occupation. Some die in the woods. Novice druids and rangers come to the circle's grove to join its ranks, and veteran druids and rangers from other parts of Faerûn at times answer their deities' calls and travel to the Dale to offer the Great Druid their services.

The circle's grove is just inside the northwestern corner of Rawlinswood, not far from the settlement of Tellerth in the Damaran Barony of Polten. Nonetheless, it is not easy to find. Confusing trails crisscross the wood in this area, and druidic magic protects the location from those whose spirits and souls are not attuned to the teachings of Silvanus or Mielikki.

The grove is not the home of its druids and rangers but rather their base. The members of the circle are spread out across Rawlinswood southeastward to Hnútar, Zieth and the ruins of Tils and Mugh, and their area of influence extends then northeastward to the Neck of Dender's Valley and the logging camp there.

Under orders from the Great Druid, they stay out of the areas claimed by the mysterious Nentyarch, which includes Dun Tharos, T'uluar, Kjarr, Kro Tharos, Mal Nu'ill and now apparently also the ruins of Tangetsjódur. The Nentyarch's hobgoblins also have been seen in the ruins of Lenchstigur and Tining, and it may be that the Nentyarch is beginning to claim these sites too.

Rangers of the Freemen patrol these areas without difficulty, but they encounter an increasingly growing number of hobgoblins there, all apparently in the Nentyarch's service. The hobgoblins do not attack the druids and rangers of the Tellerth Circle or Tumblingstars, but others who go into these areas seldom return. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the Nentyarch is sealing off the rest of the wood south of the Lench and north of Great Boar and Kilstad against new human incursions.

All members of the Tellerth circle belong to a special unit of the Freemen's militia, and they wear the oak-leaf-and-acorn badge of the Freemen. However, they do not belong to the militia's organized regiments. Their commander is Great Druid Rughan Eikensson, who works directly with the militia's command in Uthmere.

The approaches to the Tellerth grove are well watched and guarded, so it is unlikely that a PC party will reach the grove's center unobserved. The druids and rangers are likely to detect the presence of visitors, even if they are invisible. However, if a PC party should enter the grove's center at a time when neither a druid nor a ranger is afoot in it, it is doubtful that its members will see little more than the center of the grove.

That means that the party would find Oak Father's Lodge, the small shrine to Silvanus and Mielikki, the outdoor gathering place used during the warm season and a small pond. The Tellerth circle long has been associated with the surviving half-elves of Rawlinswood who have green elven blood in them, and they taught members of the circle centuries ago how to build and live in nearly invisible tree houses high in the crowns of the grove's tall oaks.

The grove stands at a point where seven different forest trails converge. Three of them lead to Tellerth, Lenchbugar and the site where Lenchengi once stood. Just north of the convergence point is Oak Father's Lodge, an interesting wooden structure with a thatched roof. The lodge is above all an all-purpose building for the circle, which includes the druids' community kitchen along with a dining hall for cold and rainy weather and the druids' brewery. The druids brew stout top-fermented ale that uses pine as gruit, a brew much different from most found elsewhere in the Great Dale.

The lodge's main rooms are in cellars that run to some depth beneath the main building. There, the druids and their rangers store supplies, food, ale, magical spell components, weapons and all else they need to live and to sustain their operations.

The joint shrine to Silvanus and Mielikki, just west of the trails' convergence point, is, on the other hand, nothing more than it seems to be, namely a simple shrine. South of the lodge and the convergence is a small clearing with a large fire pit and several tables where those who are staying in the grove eat outdoors during fair weather in the warm season. That's about all that meets the eye.

The rest is high above, the Great Druid's tree home and 15 other tree houses for the other druids and rangers who may be visiting the grove at any particular time. In all, the first time visitor, even after taking in the tree houses above, probably will be surprised to see just how small the grove of the legendary and powerful Tellerth Circle is.

However, those who understand the circle also will understand why the grove itself is so modest in size. It is not the job of the main body of Tellerth Circle druids and rangers to tend to the grove. Their place, indeed their home, is out in Rawlinswood itself where their work is, not in the grove, which is their home base, rather than their home.

The work of the circle is manifold. Above all, it is the task of the druids and their rangers to protect and care for their area of the forest. In older times, this meant keeping a tight tab on the number of hunters and loggers who entered Rawlinswood, to see to it that the balance of nature remained protected and preserved.

With the ecological upheaval caused by the melt of the southern tip of the Great Glacier more than three centuries ago, the Tellerth druids now find themselves in the curious position of having to encourage Dalesmen to come into some parts of the wood to hunt and log. This is necessary merely to stem the rampant growth of trees and the unbridled procreation of wildlife caused by the temperature changes and through other environmental consequences of the melt.

Particularly affected is an area bordered by Merchants Run on the west and the western edge of Rawlinswood, the west bank of the Soleine and the west shore of the Easting Reach north of the Impilturian border. With the blessing of the druids, the west flank of Rawlinswood to a point about 15 miles/25 km south of Uthving is used intensively.

The Tellerth Circle also has taken on the responsibility for overseeing what happens in Great Boar and Kilstad, two closed villages in western Rawlinswood that are tolerated by the Freemen and the Tellerth Druids on the conditions that the Hunters of Herne who live there violate none of the restrictions imposed by the druids and their rangers.

When the other Gallist settlements in western Rawlinswood fell, Great Boar and Kilstad survived, although they had become totally isolated deep within enemy territory. The Freemen could have waged war and liquidated both settlements, but the true druid barons of Great Boar and Kilstad exercise restraint, withdrawing their followers into the confines of their settlements rather than continuing to wage what would have been a suicidal war against the Freemen.

The two villages became a dilemma for the Great Druid of the Tellerth Circle at that time. He felt it was his followers' duty to protect the balance of nature in the forest, not to wage war against the Gallists for the sake of waging war. With the environmental chaos caused by the melting of the glacier's tip, he recognized that the two Gallist villages could make a positive contribution to helping restore the balance to the forest, therefore, he urged the Freemen to allow him to negotiate with the true druid barons of Herne the Hunter who ruled the villages.

They reached an agreement, still binding today, that determines how much the two Gallist villages may take in a hunt and where they may hunt and likewise how much they may log and where they may fell trees. The Gallists are not to attack or take other hostile actions against the druids or rangers of the Tellerth or Tumblingstars circles or any member of the Freemen's militia.

The Great Druid was not willing to interfere in the Gallists' Great Hunt, as long as the hunt met the conditions demanded by the druids. It was his opinion that moral questions regarding the hunting of human prey were outside the scope of the teachings of Silvanus. The situation with the Great Hunt has become a very delicate matter, and more often than not, the prey of the Gallists in Great Boar and Kilstad is rescued.

The druids of the Tellerth Circle are under orders by the Great Druid not to interfere in the Great Hunt, as are the druids and rangers of Eldath in the Tumbling Stars circle. However, the rangers of Mielikki always have rejected this order and refused to obey it because it is an issue of the faith of Silvanus and not binding upon members of their own faith. Likewise, the Freemen's militia will interfere quickly with a Great Hunt, rescuing human prey and at times even arresting Gallist hunters on charges of attempted murder.

Local nobility appointed by Gall, in both cases True Druids of Herne the Hunter, rules the Gallists in Great Boar and Kilstad. Within their areas, they continue to conduct their Malarite rituals, including their Great Hunts with human prey. They also carefully guard their own settlements to see that none of their dissatisfied villagers escapes to the West. These things, however, do not violate the restrictions set by the Tellerth Druids.

Nonetheless, the residents of both Gallist villages maintain their faith in Herne the Hunter. They are isolated in western Rawlinswood, but they are convinced that the avatar of Herne one day will succeed in bringing all of the Great Dale under his thumb. When that day comes, they believe, Gall will honor their loyalty, and they will be the dominators of those who now dominate them.

Tumblingstars is a druids' and rangers grove at the Tumblingstars Waterfall, where the Uth emerges roaring from its deep underground ways. The druids and rangers there serve Eldath rather than Silvanus and Mielikki. Both groups work closely together. People who view the two circles from the outside generally consider the Tumblingstars enclave to be a part of the Tellerth Circle.

The Tellerth Circle maintains ties with the distant Emerald Enclave of the Vilhon Reach, where the Tumbling Stars druids of Eldath are closely affiliated with the more peace-minded Lyon's Oak druids of Silvanus in Impiltur.

Adventure Hooks in the Tellerth Grove

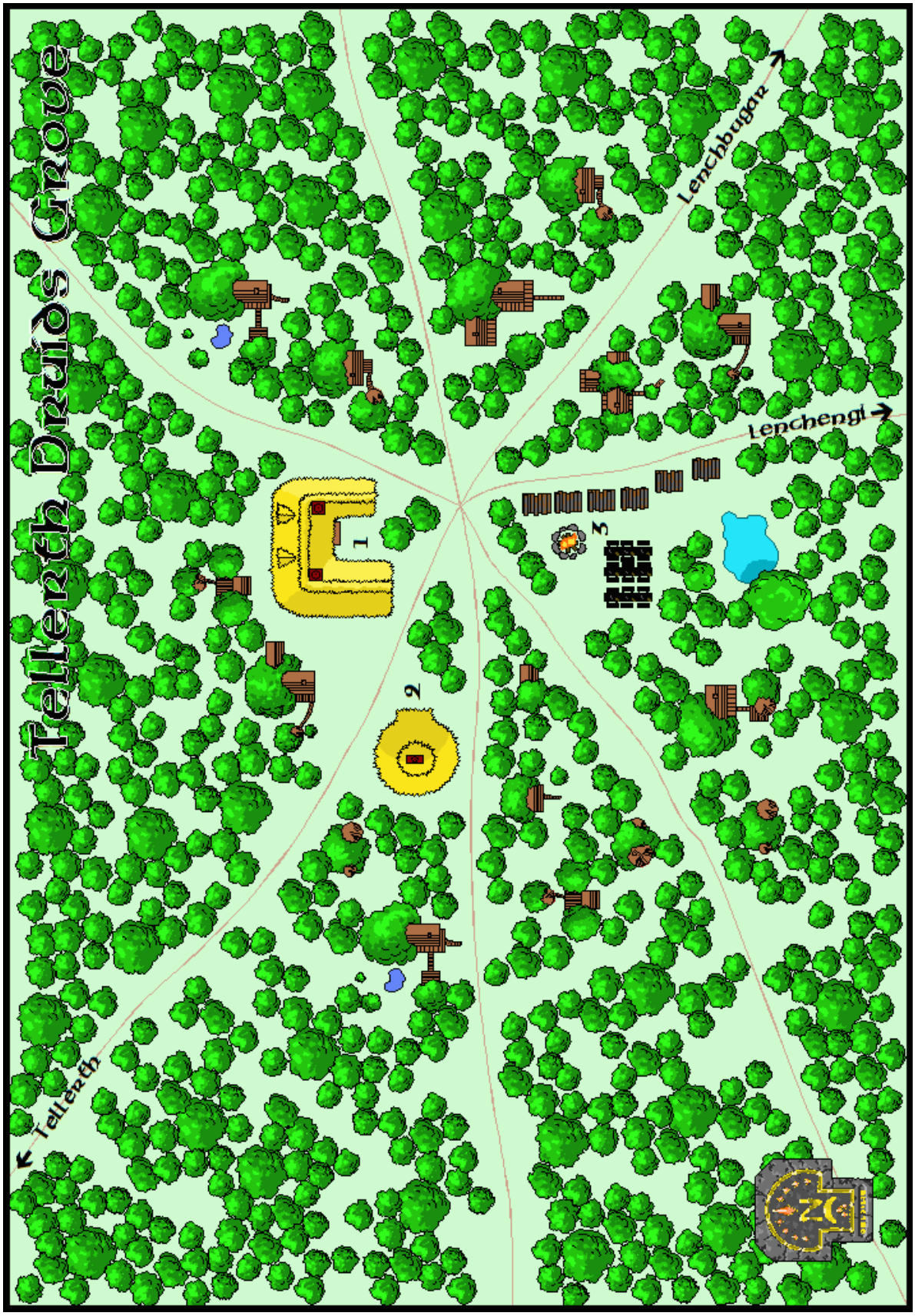
- **The Way Out.** The Tellerth Druids will not look in a friendly manner upon a PC party entering their part of the wood. The situations with both the Gallists in Great Boar and Kilstad and with the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos are very delicate affairs. The last thing the druids want is for adventurers to be bumbling around in the forest making trouble with one or both of these factions. This also will go for PC parties in the *Northern Journey* adventure. The PCs' sigylls and the mission behind them will be of little interest to the Tellerth Circle. The druids and the rangers will not help the PCs and will do their best to usher them out of Rawlinswood as expeditiously as possible.

Map of the Tellerth Grove

1 - Oak Father's Lodge. See the descriptive information farther above.

2 - Joint Shrine to Silvanus and Mielikki.

3 - Outdoor Summer Dining Area and Firewood Supply.



Tellerth Druids Grove

Lenchengí and Lenchstígur (Ruíns)

Ruins, Unoccupied, AL: N, 0 gp limit. Assets: None. Population: None. Authority figures: Tellerth Circle Druids and Great Druid Righan Eikensson, human male, AL: N, druid (Silvanus) 19, and in Lenchstigur, the Nentyarch, human male, Al: N(E), sorcerer 18, druid (Silvanus) 8. Important characters: None. Taxation type: None.

These sites have not been mapped.

The tale of these two Freemen's thorps is brief in the telling. It begins in the Year of the Breaking Ice (991 DR), when migrant druids from the Emerald Enclave in the Vilhon Reach traveled slowly over the melting swamplands where Ilmwatch and the Merchants Run stand today, following the old Lench from the point where it emptied into the tundra northeastward into the forest.

They established their first groves in Lenchengi in the Year of the Gaping Sky (999 DR) and Lenchstígur in the Year of the Heavenly Rock (1002 DR).

For reasons not explained to others – many sages speculate it was divine guidance - the Emerald Enclave of Silvanus on the island of Ilighôn had sent this band of younger druids into the icy northwestern corner of Rawlinswood. Rangers of Mielikki accompanied them. It was their task to research the impacts of the melting glacier and, where necessary, to deal with them.

In the Year of the Rose (1098 DR) the new druidic circle which had come to be known as the Tellerth druids had made clear that it would welcome settlement and a certain amount of logging, hunting and fishing in the warmed valley of the Lench, which flowed down from the Giantspires through Rawlinswood. The druids abandoned their groves in Lenchengi and Lenchstigur, and young, non-inheriting Dalesmen as well as other immigrants were quick to claim them.

In mid-Kythorn of that year, the main immigration into the Lench Valley occurred, when Ilmatari priests from the Vilhon Reach led a group of some 200 persecuted refugees from their homeland up the valley to a point about halfway between Lenchengi - *Lench Narrows* in Turami - and Lenchstigur - *Lench Cascades*.

They stopped in a river valley where the Lench makes a large bend through natural meadows beneath the forest and built a farming village there which gradually came to be known as Lenchbugar - *Lench Bend* in the old Turami tongue.

Unlike the smaller river thorps of Lenchengi and Lenchstigur, the new village was walled. There was peace in western Rawlinswood, but it always was tenuous. The settlers who built Lenchbugar thought it would be wise to protect themselves against the hobgoblins to the north and the forest enclaves to the south, where evil men worshipped Herne the Hunter.

Both Lenchengi and Lenchstigur were destroyed in a Gallist dragon attack in the Year of the Last Enclave (1114 DR), and neither ever was rebuilt. Lenchbugar, which survived the dragon attacks and continues to provide a home to Freemen today, later leveled the ruins of Lenchengi and turned the fallen settlement's site into grazing land. Nothing at all remains of the thorp that once stood there except for a few foundation stones, although the site still is called Lenchengi.

Some of the Dalesmen who built the fallen thorp of Lenchstigur used wood to construct their houses and farms, while others brought in stone brick from the Giantspires. Parts of some of the walls and even cellars of Lenchstigur still stand today, although they are overgrown with wild ivy and trees.

Until recently, the site of Lenchstigur had simply been unclaimed land, but today, the ruins are patrolled ever more often by hobgoblins in the service of the Nentyarch, and it appears that the Nentyarch may now view Lenchstigur as being a part of his domain and therefore closed to intruders.

Lenchbugar

Hamlet, Nonstandard (theocratic), AL: NG, 100 gp limit. Assets: 1,050 gp. Population: 210, 100% human. Authority figure: Alderman Duridh Tangello, human male, AL: NG, Com 4, Exp 1. Other important persons: Painbearer Nurien Telesto, human male, AL: LG, Cleric (Ilmater) 4; Runan Turschulli, human male, AL: LG, Adept 12; 8 non-combatant Ilmatari monks, Adept 1-2; Brother Nemenes, human male, AL: NG, Exp 9 (miller) and Brother Gambrinus, human male, AL: LG, Exp 7 (brewmaster), both non-combatant monks of Chauntea. Watch: 24 local farmers and residents, War 1-2 and Com 1-3. Taxation: None, but there are tithes for Ilmater's temple and a percentile fee for the services of the Riverside Agricultural Cooperative.

Towards the end of the 11th Century, the Tellerth Druids moved into their new base grove southeast of Tellerth, freeing their two smaller groves on the Lench for settlement by humans and opening the upper Lench Valley to a limited level of migration. Of the three settlements that were established, only Lenchbugar - *Lench Bend* in the old Turami tongue - survived.

In mid-Kythorn of the Year of the Rose (1098 DR), the main immigration into the Lench Valley occurred, when a small group of Ilmatari priests from the Vilhon Reach led a group of some 200 persecuted refugees from their homeland up the valley to a point about halfway between Lenchengi - *Lench Narrows* in Turami - and Lenchstigur - *Lench Cascades*. They stopped in a river valley where the Lench makes a large bend through natural meadows beneath the forest and built a farming village there which gradually came to be known as Lenchbugar.

Unlike the smaller river thorps of Lenchengi and Lenchstigur, the new village was walled. There was peace in western Rawlinswood, but it always was tenuous. The settlers who built Lenchbugar thought it would be wise to protect themselves against the hobgoblins to the northeast and the forest enclaves to the south, where evil men worshipped Herne the Hunter.

The greatest threat ever faced in Lenchbugar, however, came not from Hobgoblins or the Hunters of Herne but rather from the blue dragon Drayshtrohmistipoles, a wyrm who worked with the Gallist Dragon Cult cell in Kront. The dragon's attack came in the Year of the Last Enclave (1114 DR), and it spelled an end to the neighboring settlements of Lenchengi and Lenchstigur.

Lenchbugar survived but with substantial damage. A group of three archmagi from Impilturian Lyrabar who had been seeking the ruins of a Narfelli tower that a map in the royal library showed to be just east of the river bend at Lenchbugar were in the hamlet at the time of the dragon's attack. Their spells sent the dragon back to its lair severely wounded, before it could destroy Lenchbugar.

The survivors from Lenchengi came to Lenchbugar and remained there. The ruins of their own hamlet later were leveled and turned into farm fields. In a sense, Lenchbugar now runs all of the way from the hamlet's center to the site where Lenchengi once stood, because Lenchbugar's farms straddle both sides of the river in that direction. Some other farms also lead upstream from Lenchbugar for about a mile/1.5 km.

Like the rest of the northwestern corner Rawlinswood northwest of the Lench, the mill and brewery island of Lenchbugar are shown as being a part of the Damaran Duchy of Soravia on royal Impilturian maps, along with the farms north of the river. However, no Damaran king and no Soravian duke ever has tried to assert the claim made by the maps. The main part of the hamlet is on the south bank of the Lench. Therefore it is not shown as being Damaran.

Lenchbugar probably is the place in the Great Dale where PC groups are least likely to be. Some parties may choose to go treasure hunting in the hobgoblin-infested Giantspires, some may choose the Lench Valley as a route to reach the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos, and some may attempt to reach the Eastern Dale by following the northern edge of Rawlinswood. But others are unlikely to ever see Lenchbugar.

The small river hamlet is extremely isolated from the rest of the Great Dale. Most Dalesmen will not have heard of Lenchbugar, except in Lenchford, where some residents of Lenchbugar come several times a year to buy supplies. They travel downstream on river rafts, which also bear draught horses. On the return trip, the horses walk back upstream, harnessed to the rafts, which they draw back to Lenchbugar.

On those rare occasions when outsiders do make their way to Lenchbugar, the locals will tend to treat them with friendly caution as long as the outsiders are not hostile. If major trouble breaks out in Lenchbugar, the hamlet has a semaphore tower where a fire can be lit that quickly will draw any druids or rangers of the Tellerth Circle who happen to be in the vicinity. The Ilmatari have powders which will cause the signal fires to burn with a colored flame at night or to produce thick, colored smoke during the day. Red is the signal for help, yellow the signal to warn that danger is moving through the forest.

Lenchbugar is a lost and somewhat idyllic enclave in the Great Dale. The hamlet remains first and foremost an Ilmatari settlement, having a small monastery there. Most residents of the hamlet worship Ilmater, Chauntea, Silvanus and Mielikki. Since the era of the dragon attacks in the 12th century, it has been left to live in peace for the most part. Nonetheless, there is a bit of worry in the hamlet over the Nentyarch's hobgoblins in the ruins of Lenchstigur.

The people of Lenchbugar are aware of the Nentyarch, because the druids and rangers of the Tellerth Circle, who visit Lenchbugar regularly, have given them some information about him. On several occasions, hunters and fishermen who have gone upstream have been kept from proceeding up the Lench trail past the ruins of Lenchstigur.

Hobgoblins in the ruins have turned them back and warned them to go no further. Not looking for a fight, the men of Lenchbugar have turned back, and there have been no conflicts yet, but there are many who worry that the Nentyarch's followers may begin moving downstream and closing more areas, cutting the hamlet off from some of its important hunting and fishing grounds.

The largest facility in Lenchbugar is the Riverside Agricultural Cooperative, a combination cheese dairy, flour and vegetable oil mill, granary, brewery and malting house run by the monks of Chauntea. The monks run the operation on a cooperative basis. Farmers pay the mill in terms of harvest credits. The cooperative in turn sells surpluses in Lenchford, to be able to pay its own costs.

The Speckled Trout Tavern has two modest rooms free above the public room, but beyond these, visitors must arrange for accommodations in the homes of locals. The temple of Ilmater will help travelers find a place to stay for the night, if asked.

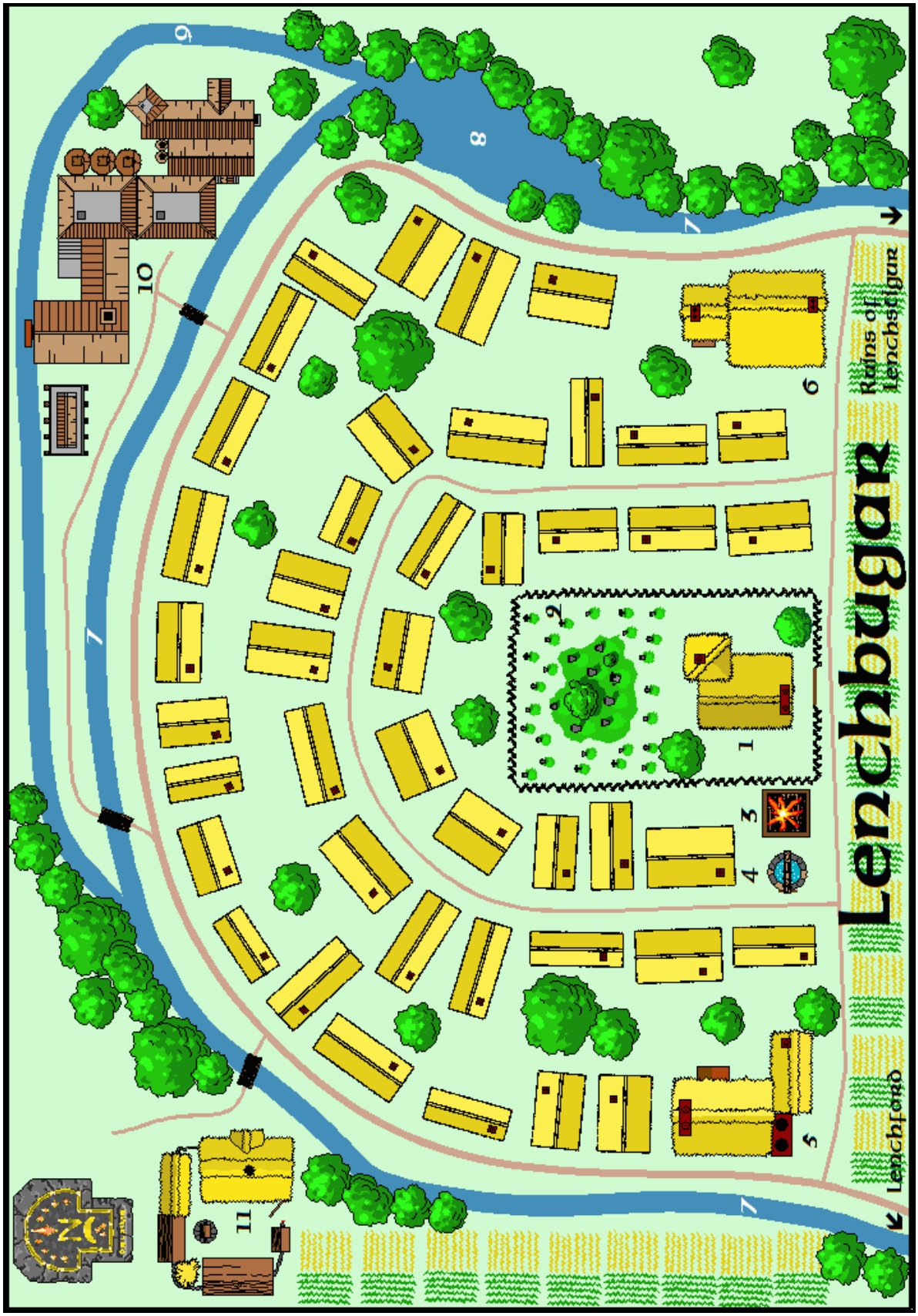
The buildings of the agricultural cooperative are made of wood with wooden shingle roofs. All other buildings in Lenchbugar are wooden with thatched roofs.

The hamlet is ruled, as it were, by an alderman who is elected by voice vote in a public meeting every three years. Legal problems are rare in Lenchbugar. When there is trouble, Alderman Duridh Tangello, human male, AL: NG, Com 4, will swear in three locals as jurors and try the accused.

If visitors who come to Lenchbugar commit crimes or misdeeds but are too powerful for the locals to be able to hold them, and they refuse to stand trial, the villagers will not sacrifice their lives to arrest the culprits. However, the Ilmatari will burn a signal fire that flames or smokes yellow, which will call members of the Tellerth Circle to the village, and these will hunt down the evildoers mercilessly.

Adventure Hooks in Lenchbugar

PCs, should they head through this out of the way hamlet, usually will find little source of adventure there, unless, of course, they make trouble in the village and bring their own adventure hook into being. Other than that, hearing rumors about the Nentyarch from the locals or genuine news about the Nentyarch from visiting members of the Tellerth Circle are likely to be the most interesting things that will happen in Lenchbugar.



Lenchbugar

Map of Lenchbugar

1 - House of the Tearful River. Temple and Monastery of the church of Ilmater. The temple's priest is Painbearer Nurien Telesto, human male, AL: LG, Cleric (Ilmater) 4. The monastery is training 8 young monks as adepts, with the idea that they will later be sent to Damara to the Monastery of the Yellow Rose. Their teacher is Runan Turschulli, human male, AL: LG, a senior monk from the Vilhon Reach, Adept 12.

2 - Cemetery.

3 - Signal Semaphore Tower.

4 - Public Well.

5 - Rasbul Zzaletto, Blacksmith. Zzaletto, human male, AL: NG, Exp 2, is a master blacksmith who deals solely in tools, farm implements and horseshoeing. He employs a journeyman and two apprentices.

6 - Speckled Trout Tavern. Part-time Tavernkeeper and fulltime farmer Nargo Fanessi, human male, AL: NG, Com 2, never married. He has run the Speckled Trout since his father died. The only menu items normally available are a pan-fried rainbow trout platter with fried, spiced potatoes at 5 silver shiners and his own, homemade cold cut sausage with rye bread from the cooperative's bakery, served with a dill pickle and homemade butter on a bread board. It costs 2 shiners. The main fare, however, is the local cooperative's nameless ale, at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. The *Trout* is about 75% full most evenings. Local farmers like to gather there. They pay in barter. When druids of Silvanus or rangers of Mielikki are in town, they spend their evenings in the *Trout* and stay in the two modest rooms upstairs, which costs 3 shiners a night. The *Trout* is not open during the day.

7 - The Lench.

8 - Mill Pond.

9 - Millstream.

10 - Riverside Agricultural Cooperative. This facility is the cheese dairy, flour and vegetable oil mill, granary, bakery, brewery and malting house for all of greater Lenchbugar, meaning the entire farmlands from the site of old Lenchengi to a mile/1.5 km upstream from the hamlet. The head of the cooperative, which is run by the church of Chauntea, is Brother Nemenes, human male, AL: NG, Exp 9, a non-combatant monk of Chauntea who is a master miller. His part of the coop employs a journeyman miller, three apprentices and five laborers. Brother Gambrinus, human male, AL:LG, Exp 7, a brewmaster and non-combatant monk of Chauntea, runs the brewery and malting house. His operation employs a journeyman brewer, two apprentices and two laborers. Gambrinus brews a light, young, top-fermented ale that uses oak leaves as gruit. His ale is unique in the Dale. Locals can fill their tankards at the brewery for a barter value of 3 copper bites. There is a sizeable shrine to Chauntea in the complex that is visited several times a year by wandering druids of her faith. Brothers Nemenes and Gambrinus have lodgings in the complex, and there are guest quarters for visiting druids of the faith.

11 - Alderman's Farm. Alderman Duridh Tangello, human male, AL: NG, Com 4, Exp 1, owns the largest farm in Lenchbugar. He grazes beef and dairy cattle, raises crops and breeds draught horses for sale.

Off the Map - Lenchbugar Transport. Wainwright Kessul Tangpetti, human male, AL: N, Exp 4, makes not only wagons and sleds but also has river rafts in his product line. He employs a journeyman wainwright and three apprentices. His shop is about a mile/1.5 km downstream from the village center.

Great Boar

Village, Nonstandard (theocratic), AL: NE, 100 gp limit. Assets: 420 gp. Population: 210, 100% human. Authority figure: Druid Baroness Nanna Módursdóttir, human female, AL: NE, druidess (True Druid of Herne) 8. Other important persons: Watch Comander Telur Heburdssonur, AL: NE, Ranger (Hunter of Herne) 9. Watch: 50 local farmers and residents, Rgr (Hunter of Herne) 1-5, War 1-3 and Com 1-3. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: only Impilturian coins and Damaran bloodstone bars, barter preferred.

When the Hunters of Herne and their Gallist druids made their briefly successful march into western Rawlinswood in the 11th century, Great Boar was intended to serve only as a winter camp for troops who planned to march on in conquest after the spring thaws.

Great Boar stands at the bend of a large ravine that once was the bed of a river. The stream vanished in a series of medium earthquakes that shook western Rawlinswood after the melt of the Great Glacier's southern tip. An interesting combination of geographical and climatological factors made Great Boar a good place for the Gallists to hide in the winter while also giving them some defensive advantages. The Gallists' advance was braked by catastrophic weather in the Year of the Tempest (1027 DR), and most of the following year had to be spent repairing storm damages in already taken areas.

In spring of the Year of Bold Strides (1029 DR), the Hunters of Herne at last emerged from hiding and sent 250 men back onto their path of conquest, but almost all of them died at the Lench, canceling Harbet Gall's plans. As a result, Great Boar slowly grew into a village, although it never had been intended to be a permanent settlement.

The vanished river that once flowed through Great Boar came upstream from the site of the now ruined hamlet of Tarkstad, but the earthquakes already had caused the collapse and closure of the river valley about halfway between Great Boar and Tarkstad, some 5 miles/8 km east of Great Boar.

The river appears to have flowed on from the site of Great Boar through Rawlinswood east of Timbertown, but the southern river valley too was closed halfway between Great Boar and Timbertown, about 7 miles/11 km south of Great Boar.

All that remains of the river bed now is the 12-mile/19-km long ravine that bends sharply southward at Great Boar. Many of the same factors that made it a good hiding place three and a half centuries ago contribute now to the hardship of those who eke out their living there.

Great Boar is easily accessible only by the road that once led from Timbertown to Tarkstad. The road ends for all purposes now in Great Boar. The eastern leg of the road to the ruins of Tarkstad has become overgrown and has dwindled into little more than a footpath.

The first winter camp of the Gallists stood in the southeastern corner of the ravine. Entry from that side is extremely difficult because of cliffs just above the village to the southeast. It's easier to enter the ravine from the northwestern side, but at the bottom, one encounters a thin, swampy stretch where some water still rises and more of it collects.

There are pockets of quicksand and deep beds of slimy muck all over in the swampy bed. Because the southwestern end of the ravine is closed, water that collects in it cannot flow out. Instead, it flows in a snail's pace trickle to the southwestern end of the ravine some distance from the village, where soils are both sandier and rockier, allowing the water to percolate slowly back into the ground.

On most days, there is an inversion over the ravine that causes thick fog to collect in it. This had the advantage in the early days of concealing the war camp below from eyes looking down from above. The inversion also keeps smoke from rising out of the ravine, which made the Gallist winter camp more difficult to spot.

The air inside the ravine within about 50 feet/15 m of the ground upward tends to drift slowly up the ravine to the northeast, which moves enough of the smoke out of Great Boar into unsettled areas to make winter life possible. But the concentrations of smoke in the months when wood must be burned to heat still is strong enough to cause health problems for many.

Likewise, the almost daily concentrations of fog make it impossible to grow crops in the ravine. These must be raised in fields that have been cultivated on higher levels outside of town. In years with heavy snow and a late thaw or in those with heavy summer rains, enough water can collect in the swampy bottom of the ravine to stand there stagnant for months on end, which also can cause heavy infestations of gnats and mosquitoes.

There is little reason to live in Great Boar other than the fact that its residents are not allowed to leave. As in Gallist settlements in the Eastern Dale, villagers may travel out of town only with permission from the druid baron.

The surroundings are well patrolled by ranger Hunters of Herne, who will try to apprehend those who attempt to escape Great Boar. The watch keeps an eye upon farmers working in fields outside of the village, and in the hours of darkness, the watch patrols the village with vicious dogs in tow. Anyone brought to the druid baron who is accused of having tried to escape the village usually is locked in the dungeon beneath the temple and then turned loose as prey in the next Great Hunt.

In a still controversial peace agreement reached in the Year of Bold Strides (1029 DR), the Freemen and the Tellerth Druids, seeking to end war and bloodshed in Rawlinswood, agreed to tolerate the existence of Gallist Great Boar and Kilstad. The Gallists had to agree to agree to conditions that the Hunters of Herne who live there violate none of the restrictions imposed by the druids and their rangers.

In return, the druids of Silvanus and the Freemen agreed not to interfere in the internal affairs of the two Gallist enclaves. The rangers of Mielikki within the Tellerth Circle were not a part of the discussions that led to the final agreement, and they have consistently refused to abide by some of its terms, although they technically are in violation of orders from both their High Druid and the military command of the Freemen in Uthmere. However, neither of these two sides is willing to cause a conflict with the rangers of Mielikki for the sake of the Gallists.

Under the terms of the agreements reached, both Great Boar and Kilstad must limit woodcutting and hunting to the areas and amounts specified by the Tellerth Druids. Both settlements have been granted an area of legal sovereignty within a three-mile/5-km radius of the settlement's limits. Within this area, the Gallists may make and enforce their own laws and they may deny entry to anyone who does not wear the oak-leaf-and-acorn badge of the Freemen.

Anyone who does wear that badge has free access to the entire area including the village of Great Boar and the hamlet of Kilstad. That access includes a right to purchase food, drink and lodging. In practice, regular units of the Freemen never enter the legal domains of Great Boar and Kilstad, and the druids of the Tellerth Circle seldom ever enter the village or hamlet proper, but the rangers of Mielikki do so regularly.

The peace agreement does not deny the Gallists the right to conduct their annual Great Hunts. However, the hunts seldom are successful, because the rangers of Mielikki, regardless of what the peace agreement may or may not say, will not tolerate the hunting of humans or other sentient prey and will interfere with the hunt, attempting to rescue any such prey and often succeeding.

This situation is extremely volatile, because the peace agreement bars the Gallists from attacking anyone wearing the Freemen's badge for any reason other than self defense. They also are quite aware that a violation of this stipulation doubtless would result in the total occupation of their settlement by the Freemen and the hanging or exile of the Gallist druids and rangers there, much as was the case in Zieth farther to the south.

The Gallists do have legal recourse. They can file legal complaints with both the high druid and the command of the Freemen, and in the case of the Great Hunt, they already have done both, but the complaints never have been acted upon.

Another volatile situation is the rangers' aiding of escapees. Under the terms of the peace agreement, the rangers really are not allowed to aid any escapee who is within 3 miles/5 km of Great Boar or Kilstad. In practice, the rangers will not help anyone escape who still is within the village or hamlet, nor will they free someone within the 3-mile/5-km zone who is clearly under the control of the watch.

On the other hand, if someone has succeeded in escaping the village or hamlet itself and is not under control of the watch, the rangers will give them immediate protection and usher them to safety, refusing to turn the escapee over to the watch if it catches up with them within the 3-mile/5-km zone.

The Gallists have little alternative but to accept the rangers' breaches of the agreements. Neither the high druid nor the militia command has reacted to their complaints. The two Gallist settlements would be smashed if it came to warfare with the Freemen, and even if that were not so certain, neither Great Boar nor Kilstad can survive without some trade with Timbertown and Uthving.

The peace agreement does permit such travel and trade. Gallist merchants come to Timbertown from Great Boar and to Uthving from Kilstad. The merchants usually are hand-picked by the druid barons, trusted followers who would not be inclined to desert to the free West.

Wood, meat and textiles from Great Boar traditionally have been brought by wagon or sled to Timbertown, where they are exchanged for materials and tools needed in Great Boar. Particularly critical is the need for flour. Great Boar has no grain mill.

Most residents of Great Boar and Kilstad maintain their faith. They are isolated in western Rawlinswood, but they are convinced that the avatar of Herne the Hunter in the East one day will succeed in bringing all of the Great Dale under his thumb. When that day comes, they believe, Herne and Gall will honor their loyalty, and they will be the dominators of those who now dominate them.

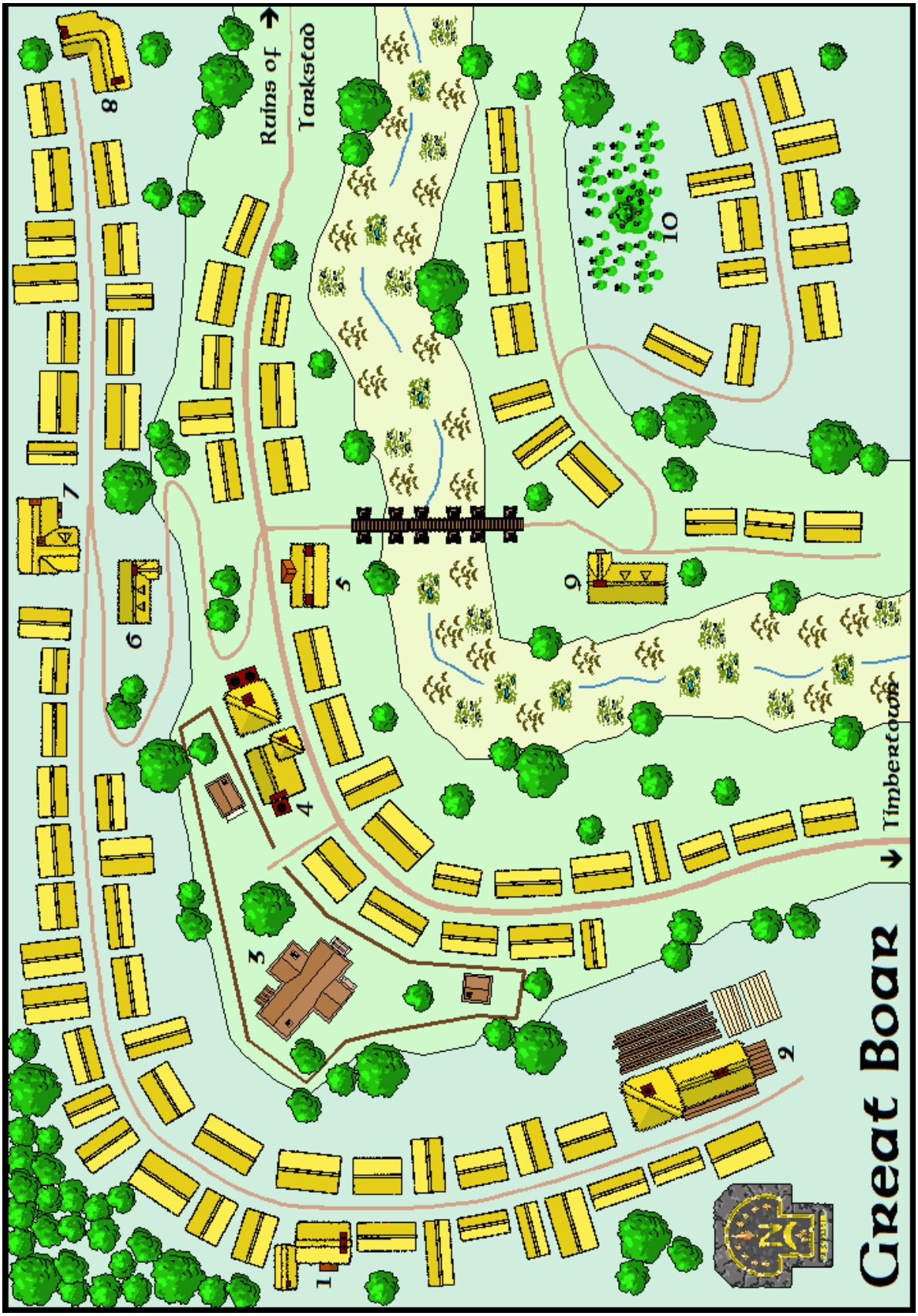
The druid baroness of Great Boar, Nanna Módursdóttir, human female, AL: NE, druidess (True Druid of Herne) 8, is relatively autonomous. Messages from the Gallist headquarters in Kront come seldom and only in a roundabout way, being delivered by covert Gallist agents in the West to the village traders who travel to Timbertown and then being brought back to Módursdóttir.

The baroness has the additional title of *Stag of the Enclaves* and is senior to the ruling druid baron of Kilstad. This does not mean that the baroness of Great Boar also rules over the baron of Kilstad, but when the baron there makes a decision of major importance, passes a death sentence or sentences a prisoner to be prey in the Great Hunt, the baron of Great Boar must review the decision before it takes effect.

Such cases are rare, and it is even more rare when Módursdóttir does not uphold the decisions of the baron of Kilstad.

Adventure Hooks in Great Boar

- **Survival.** Anyone who enters Great Boar without wearing the oak-leaf-and-acorn badge of the Freemen is more or less free game. The patrolling druids and rangers of the Freemen are not allowed to interfere and will not do so inside of the village. Before entering the village, any party has a 90% chance of being intercepted by rangers of Mielikki and being strongly warned against going to Great Boar. If any member(s) of a PC party wear(s) the badge of the Freemen, he, she or they will be stopped from entering Great Boar, unless they can produce written orders allowing them to go there. Current orders are that only members of authorized patrols are allowed to enter the 3-mile/5-km zone. Once a party enters Great Boar, the watch will attempt to determine who and what the PCs are and whether the village has anything to gain through their presence. If the watch is uncertain, the PCs will be taken to the castle to be questioned by the druidess or her aides. Under some circumstances, PC parties well may find themselves chained to the dungeon wall, waiting to be prey in the next Great Hunt. While the Tellerth Circle will not aid the PCs while they're in Great Boar, they well may aid the village if a high-powered PC party comes to Great Boar and begins tearing it up. The rangers are charged with maintaining the peace, and stopping a PC group from waging its own private war could fall into that category. In such a case, the rangers would try to capture the PCs and then take them back to Uthmere for a military trial.



Great Boar

Map of Great Boar

1 - Wainwright. The master, Tundlur Dardhissonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 2, makes farm and logging wagons and sleds. He employs a journeyman wainwright and three apprentices.

2 - Community Sawmill. The mill is under the direct control of the baron druidess although it is run by master sawyer Gradur Narbungssonur, human male, AL: LE, Exp 3, Rgr 4 (retired). A treadmill driven by four oxen powers the mill's saws. Narbungssonur employs a journeyman sawyer, two apprentices and two laborers.

3 - Baron's Castle. This complex has a small temple to Herne the Hunter in the south corner of the grounds and stables in the northeastern corner. Druid Baroness Nanna lives in the castle, which also houses the village administration and the watch. The village dungeon is beneath the castle.

4 - Communal Brewhouse. This facility also is under the direct control of the baroness. In practice, the Deep Ravine Inn and the Hunter's Rest Tavern, both of which brew their own light lagers, share it.

5 - Smithy. Blacksmith Thondur Darbudhssonur, human male, AL: LE, Exp 2, is the owner. He works only with tools, farm implements, horseshoeing and the like. He employs a journeyman and two apprentices.

6 - Hunters Rest Tavern. A retired ranger Hunter of Herne, Namur Dordhurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr (Hunter of Herne) 6, owns and runs this watering hole, which is considered in Great Boar to be the private turf of the ranger Hunters of Herne. Other locals don't enter the tavern, and the visiting Freemen rangers of Mielikki obey orders to stay out of it. If outsiders, including PCs, enter the tavern and are captured or slain, the Freemen will not be interested in their lot. Dordhurssonur brews his own weak, light lager in the communal brewhouse. It costs 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. He also serves a bread board with local cold cut sausage, rye bread, a dill pickle and horseradish for 2 silver shiners.

7 - Deep Ravine Inn. The only overnight guests here usually are visiting rangers of Mielikki. The six single rooms are somewhat drafty and rundown. They cost four silver shiners a night. The innkeeper is Erna Nidhursdóttir, human female, AL: NE, Com 1. Her live-in companion, Fangar Snarfurssonur, human male, AL: NE, retired Rgr (Hunter of Herne) 4, brews the mediocre light lager the inn serves, using the communal brewhouse. The beer costs 3 copper bites a quart/liter tankard. Usually only a single entrée is offered each day, depending what the slaughterhouse is offering. The meals range in price from 4 to 6 silver shiners. Everything's edible, but the idea of gourmet dining is one whose time remains in the far distant future, as far as the Deep Ravine is concerned.

8 - Communal Slaughterhouse and Tannery. The baroness controls this facility too. The master butcher is Júndhur Orfyngssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 3. He employs a journeyman, two apprentices and three laborers. The master tanner is Kylda Sipingsdóttir, human female, AL: LE, Exp 4. She employs a journeyman, three apprentices and four laborers.

9 - Communal Trade House. The baroness controls this facility too. Wares produced in Great Boar are sold here, as well as those staples brought back by the village's traders from Timbertown. The storekeeper is Tardhus Vegnurssonur, AL: N, Com 2. He employs two laborers.

10 - Cemetery.

Kilstad

Hamlet, Nonstandard (theocratic), AL: NE, 100 gp limit. Assets: 900 gp. Population: 180, 100% human. Authority figure: Druid Baron Nardhur Tinglssonur, human male, AL: NE, druid (True Druid of Herne) 5. Other important persons: Watch Comander Rungur Ondyngssonur, AL: NE, Ranger (Hunter of Herne) 6. Watch: 20 local farmers and residents, Rgr (Hunter of Herne) 1-3, War 1-3 and Com 1-3. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: only Impilturian coins and Damaran bloodstone bars, barter preferred.

The tale of Kilstad is much the same as that of Great Boar (above). The same systems are used in both Gallist enclaves to rule and to keep the population from escaping. In the earlier 11th century, the Gallists made a strong move into the area of Rawlinswood between the Lench and the Soleine, building the village of Great Boar and the hamlets of Kilstad, Tarkstad, Tining and Veidarheim.

One of Gall's own dragons destroyed Tarkstad, Tining and Veidarheim in the Year of the Last Enclave (1114 DR). None of the three ever has been rebuilt, although Gall has planned futilely on more than one occasion to reclaim them. Only Kilstad and Great Boar survived.

Both are closed settlements that are tolerated by the Freemen and the Tellerth Druids on the conditions that the Hunters of Herne who live there violate none of the restrictions imposed by the druids and their rangers. There is a limited amount of trade between Kilstad and the Freemen's town of Uthving downstream.

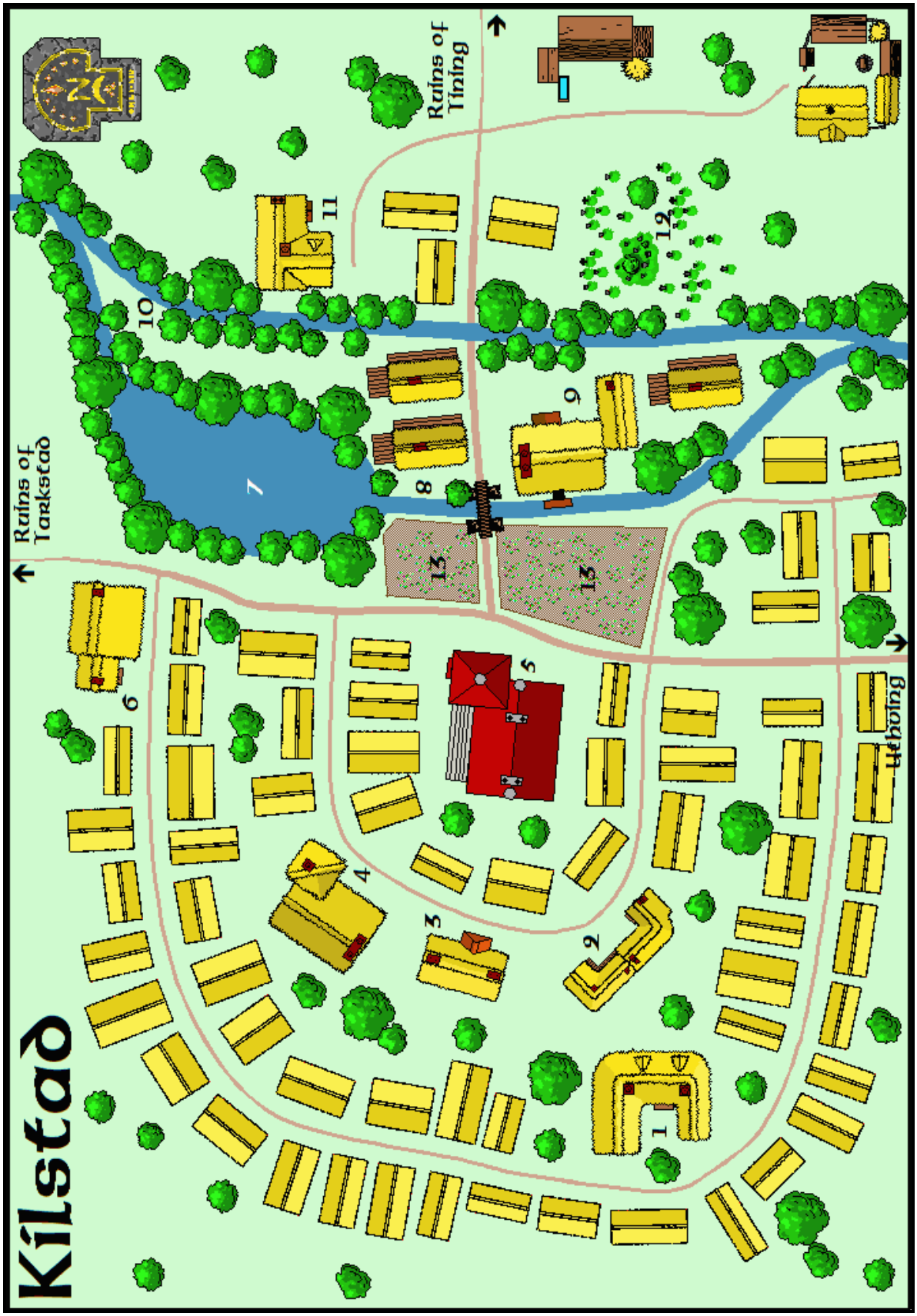
Kilstad differs from Great Boar in that it is substantially smaller. The hamlet also has the advantage of being on the banks of the Soleine River, which gives it water power to drive its mill and makes it possible for the village traders who do business with the Freemen to transport their wares downstream on rafts.

Because Kilstad is small and the number of evil Gallist rangers serving it is limited, the chance of the Gallists starting a conflict is minimal. Not only the Freemen but also a high level PC party could substantially damage the hamlet. If a PC party does so, however, it still can expect to be hunted down by the Freemen, because Kilstad is protected under a peace agreement. Because Freemen rangers of Mielikki had hindered the Great Hunts of Kilstad for more than a decade, Druid Baron Nardhur has suspended them since the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR).

Adventure Hooks in Kilstad

- **Survival.** The hook of the same name under the entry for Great Boar still is valid for Kilstad. However, moves by the locals against PC parties who do not threaten them are unlikely in Kilstad. The people in the hamlet are interested first and foremost in their own survival. They are not inclined to do things that will bring trouble to them, and with the last three Great Hunts suspended, they have no religious need for sentient prey.

- **The Nentyarch.** Both villagers and hunters from Uthving have disappeared in the last year along the former road, now a foot trail that leads from Kilstad to the ruins of Tining and Veidarheim. Some blame the folk of Kilstad, who in this case are innocent, and some blame the Nentyarch, whose hobgoblin patrols have begun exploring the two ruins and slain the intruders after being attacked by them.


Kilstad
Ruins of Tarkstad
Ruins of Tiring
Utbolng
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Kilstad

Map of Kílstad

1 - Gildur's Transport. Gildur Handulssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 3, a master wainwright, builds wagon, sleds and river rafts. He employs a journeyman and two apprentices.

2 - Soleine Smithy. Hrundur Tanglssonur, human male, AL: LE, Exp 3, is a master blacksmith. He does no work with weapons or armor. He employs a journeyman and two apprentices.

3 - Golden Drops Tavern. No beer is brewed in Kilstad, but tavernkeeper Jandur Rubyngssonur, human male, AL: N, Com 3, serves simple wines from Uthving that are bought for him by the Gallist traders who travel there on the village's behalf. He serves the wines in half-pint/0.25 liter wine chalices at prices ranging from 6 copper bites to 1 silver shiner. He serves his wine direct from the barrel. Depending upon what's available at the moment, Rubyngssonur also offers local sausage, cheese, horseradish and rye bread on a bread board at 2 silver shiners and various small warm entrées at 4 to 6 shiners. The tavern has two small guest rooms on the third story that cost 4 shiners a night. The Golden Drops is open only evenings.

4 - Kilstad Granary. A community facility under Druid Baron Nardhur's control. The manager is Fylja Darbursdóttir, human female, AL: LE, Com 2.

5 - Baronial Castle. The castle is home to Druid Baron Nardhur, the watch and the hamlet's administration. A small dungeon beneath the castle holds prisoners, including a number sentenced to be prey in the now suspended Great Hunts.

6 - General Store. Druid Baron Nardhur controls this communal facility. Hanna Jarkursdóttir, human female, AL: N, Com 2, runs it for him. The store sells local wares and merchandise brought to Kilstad by its traders. Most locals pay in barter.

7 - Mill Pond.

8 - Millstream.

9 - Kilstad Mill. Druid Baron Nardhur controls this communal facility. Master miller Wuldur Garnudssonur, human male, AL: LE, Exp 3, runs it for him. He employs a journeyman, two apprentices and two laborers. The mill grinds various flours and presses vegetable oil.

10 - Soleine River.

11 - Great Stag Slaughterhouse and Tannery. Druid Baron Nardhur controls this communal facility. Master butcher Kundur Oggurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 2, and master tanner Äga Ingvisdóttir, human female, AL: LE, Exp 3, run it for the baron. The operation employs a journeyman butcher, an apprentice butcher, a journeyman tanner, two apprentice tanners and three laborers. In their homes during the cold season, the villagers work the leather that is produced by the tannery.

12 - Cemetery.

13 - Baronial Gardens. The former druid baroness Väina Lemminsdóttir planted these gardens. They have been maintained since.

Tarkstad, Tíning, Veídarheím, Mugh and Tíls (Ruíns)

Ruins of Hamlets, No government, control uncertain, AL: N, 0 gp limit. Assets: 0 gp. Population: 0. Authority figure: None.

These ruins have not been mapped.

All five of these ruins have largely reverted to forest. Adventurers wandering through the sites of these hamlets will find occasional foundation stones and pits where cellars once were. They also may find remnants of tombstones where graveyards once were. When these settlements still stood, most of the construction was of wood. It has rotted and vanished, leaving only those few things that were made of stone. Hobgoblins in the service of the Nentyarch visit Veidarheim, Tarkstad and Tining frequently. The Nentyarch does not appear to have fully incorporated these ruins into his domain yet, although it may be only a matter of time. Several hunting guides who have led paying hunting parties into these areas have vanished without trace. There has been no sign yet of the Nentyarch's minions in the ruins of Mugh or Tils. The Freemen's militia from Hnútar patrols these areas regularly.

Tumbling Stars Waterfalls

Thorp, Nonstandard (theocratic), AL: N, 0 gp limit*. Assets: Varies - 24 to 60 gp, dependent upon the number of circle members present. Population: Varies from 12-30; Mixed human and half-elf, proportion varies. Authority figures: Great Druid Tálas Niluel, half-elf male, AL: N, druid (Eldath) 16. Important characters: Nesmun Ta'lann, half-elf male, AL: NG, ranger (Eldath) 14. Taxation type: None. * There is nothing for sale in the druids grove.

Relatively few eyes have seen this strange and scattered druids' settlement since the native Mal T'unan green elves left the forest. The reason so few have seen the beautiful series of woodland Uth springs and gentle waterfalls is the protective magic of the goddess Eldath herself.

The Tumbling Stars Waterfalls are among the secret sacred springs of Eldath that flow quietly and unnoticed at several locations in Faerûn. All bring their magical cleansing powers into Toril's greater bodies of water. Not even the other deities of Faerûn have noticed the quiet work the goddess does through such springs, and were they to become aware of it, one can be sure that such deities as Talona and Talos would do all in their power to destroy them, which could threaten life everywhere.

The waters of the sacred springs have a strong cleansing magic that neutralizes poisons and degrades pollutants wherever they flow. The Tumbling Stars springs feed the Uth, which flows into Easting Reach, cleansing the waters of the Inner Sea as far as the Dragon Reach.

The pacifist druids and rangers tend the many springs of Tumbling Stars, but they do not protect them as such. The goddess does that through her magic. It is almost impossible for anyone to find his or her way there, if the goddess does not wish them to reach the springs.

There are eight main springs and countless other seasonal springs that bring water at times into often dry creeks flowing through the woodlands. All of them flow together within the Tumbling Stars area to form the healing Uth River. The springs all bubble out of forested hillside, flowing quickly downstream and forming more than 100 small waterfalls whose waters sparkle with sunshine during the day and with starlight at night, giving them their name.

The falls were the holy center of the Mal T'unan green elves who once ruled Auldgloam, before its division into Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest. The half-elves who descended from the Mal T'unan still tend this holy place, serving Eldath there. The Mal T'unan gave the name Tumbling Stars to the springs and the falls. It later was translated into old Turami - *Staulaststjarna* - and then into common.

A thick magical ring of heavy fog that has a depth of about 1,500 feet/500 m protects the outer perimeter of the Tumbling Stars area, roughly corresponding to the border of the Tumbling Stars map.

Any non-evilly-aligned creature who enters the fog must make a skill check for Intuit Direction against DC 30, or he or she will become hopelessly lost. A check with a score between 30 and 34 will lead the creature out of the fog again but *away* from the falls. Only with a score of 35 or higher will one find the way. For evilly aligned creatures, the difficulty class increases to 35 and 40 respectively.

Those who fail the skill check wander hopelessly in the fog for 6 hours, at which time they can make a another check with penalty of 5 to the score, and such checks continue then every six hours. Characters who wander lost in the fog will come occasionally upon skeletons of men and hobgoblins. Both Hunters of Herne and hobgoblins of the Nentyarch have attempted to see what's beyond the fog, have become lost within it and have starved before finding their way out again.

For those using *AD&D 2nd Edition* rules, a saving throw vs. paralysis with a penalty of 10 is required. After six hours, that penalty increases to 15. For evilly-aligned creatures, the penalties are 15 and 20 respectively.

Those who do succeed in penetrating the fog and enter the Tumbling Stars area but do so bringing evil or evil intentions with them must save for Will against DC 30, or the cleansing air above the springs will terrify them and send them fleeing back into the fog. Under 2E rules a save for paralysis at a penalty of 10 is required.

Some of the curious have attempted to follow the Uth northward into the Tumbling Stars area. The ring of fog is so thick in the south that one must remain within one yard/meter of the riverbank to see it. The fog also dampens all sound in that area, making it impossible to follow the river by listening to it, once one is more than 10 feet/3m from the riverbank.

The river cuts deeply through the land at the point where the southern fog ring crosses it, following the stream at a height of 20 feet/6m. Eldath's magic will cause the bank to cave in once every 1d6 minutes, if intruders walk along it. A character can jump to the side and avoid falling with the bank with a successful savings throw for Reflex at a penalty of 3. In a 2E campaign, adjudicate the jump with a dexterity check at a penalty of 3.

Those who fall with a cave-in sustain 2d6 hp falling damage and 1d6 hp damage from falling soil. They then must make a skill check for swimming against DC 20 to avoid drowning and to reach the shore. Under 2E rules, use a non-weapon proficiency check for swimming with a penalty of 2.

If one reaches the bank, one needs to make a climbing check against DC 25, or the ravine wall will cave in again anew at a height of 10 feet/3 m, with 1d6 hp falling damage and 1d4 hp damage from falling soil, putting the creature back into the water again.

The Game Master needs to keep track of how deeply into the fog ring that character who has fallen has proceeded. The ring has a depth of 1,500 feet/500 m. If a character falls into the Uth, it will wash him or her downstream at a rate 50 feet/15 m per round. If the character is washed out of the fog ring to the south, the river broadens there and the banks become lower. Outside of the fog ring, the character can leave the river with normal checks.

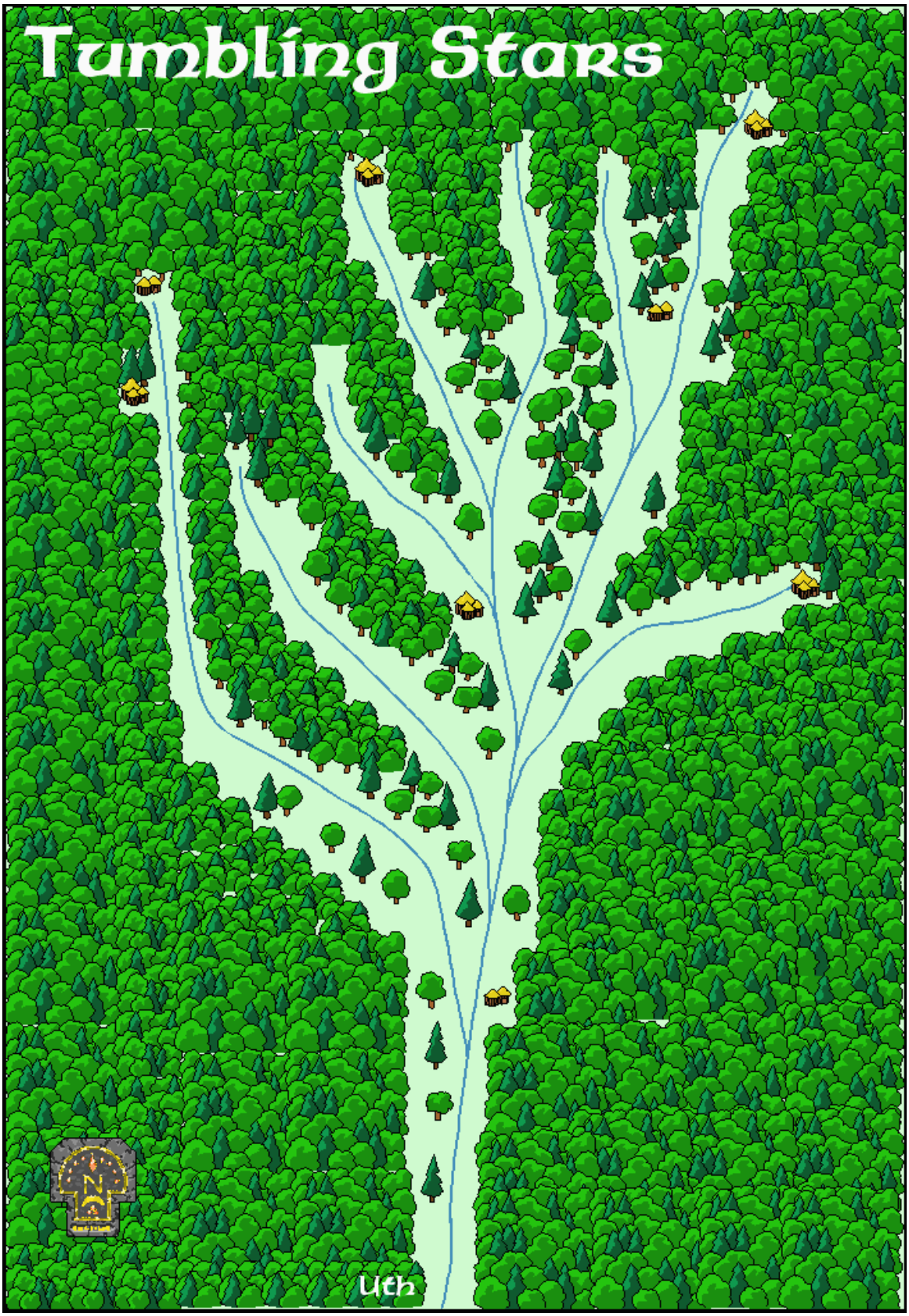
The protective magic does not affect druids and rangers of the Tellerth Circle of Silvanus. They can leave and enter the Tumbling Stars area at will. Both the Tellerth and Tumbling Stars circle members perceive only thin fog and can see through it with ease.

Inside of the fog ring, adventurers will find only one great treasure, the spring water itself. Beyond the spring, one finds wilderness and eight forest huts used by the Tumbling Stars druids and rangers. There are a total of eight druids and 22 rangers, but all 30 of them are seldom within the fog ring at the same time. The druids and rangers also tend most of the Uth Valley downstream nearly to Uthving.

The powers of the spring waters are great indeed, and many members of the two druids' circles and their rangers carry potions of spring water with them. Water taken directly at any of the eight main springs has the combined powers of the spells *Heal, Heal Mount, Create Water, Neutralize Poison, Purify Food and Drink* and *Remove Disease*. The potion can achieve *any* or *all* of these effects. The circle calls the potion the *Water of Eldath*.

Tumbling Stars Adventure Hook

There is but one adventure hook, bit it is substantial: Getting in and out of the Tumbling Stars area.


Tumbling Stars
N
Uth

Zieth

Hamlet, Nonstandard (occupation forces), AL: N(E), 100 gp limit. Assets: 1850 gp. Population: 150 + 220 militiamen, local folk 100% human. Authority figures: Captain N'emuel Lugrasonnur, half-elf male, AL: NG, Ftr 8, Commander, Company C, and Captain Regar Ingvissonur, human male, AL: LG, Ftr 8, Commander Company D, 4th Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment, Freemen's militia. Taxation type: Benevolent. Accepted coinage: Only Impilturian coins and Damaran bloodstone bars, barter preferred.

In its brief prime as a Gallist enclave three centuries ago, Zieth was a small village of more than 500. Today it boasts less than 400, and more than half of the residents are members of the Freemen's militia who still serve as an occupational force in the Gallist enclave.

The non-military side of Zieth is slowly dwindling out of existence. When its young come of age, many tend to abandon the Gallist faith of Herne the Hunter and depart to begin a new existence as Freemen of the western or Central Dale. The leave Zieth, even though they have neither true druids nor rangers of Herne to oppress them, as in the enclaves of Great Boar and Kilstad to the West. There is no a Great Hunt in Zieth nor is there even a local desire for one.

The militia commanders who govern the occupied town rule it benevolently. They also see to it that Herne-worshipping parents are kept from exercising some of the harsher tenets of their faith upon their children. By and large, the folk of Zieth live much the same as Western Dalesmen do, with the exception that they are not allowed to leave the Zieth area without permission from the militia command.

Today's Zieth only nominally worships Herne the Hunter. The conquering Freemen's militia hanged the last True Druids of Herne in Zieth when they occupied the settlement in the Year of the Dogged Search (1051 DR). Since that time, the settlers have had no religious teaching from True Druids or the ranger Hunters of Herne.

As a result, their religion is somewhat estranged from the teachings of Harbet Gall in the Eastern Dale, becoming the result of what has been handed down within families over the past three centuries. Many residents of Zieth still believe as their fathers did before them that the druids of Silvanus are evil folk who had left their ancestors to starve in an earlier age.

Local folk who maintain a shrine in honor of Herne the Hunter see him as a benevolent god of the hunt who understands that man too has his place in the scheme of things and who insists that humans not be starved merely to maintain a high population of wild animals. Little more is left of the tenets of Herne's religion in Zieth.

In the early 11th century, Gallist forces invaded the previously unsettled area of Rawlinswood around Zieth, building the thorps of Mugh, Tangetsjódur and Tils as well as the hamlet of Zieth. However, the Freemen finally drove them back northward between the Year of the Dogged Search (1051 DR) and the Year of Lashing and Torment (1053 DR).

When the Freemen reached Zieth, they were surprised. The leaders of the village surrendered and agreed to be ruled by an occupational council of the Freemen, turning over their single true druid of Herne and two rangers who reported to the Gallist command in Tangetsjódur to the victors. They summarily executed their prisoners by hanging. Without further bloodshed, Zieth was spared but occupied. An occupation council and guard was established in Zieth, and the remaining attackers returned home for the winter.

For many years, locals called the area surrounding Zieth *the Ruinlands*, and the name was fitting. Three roads lead out of the hamlet, and each of them led to the ruin and desolation of other Gallist enclaves - the remnants of Tangetsjódur to the north, the rubble that once was Tils to the east and the ruins of Mugh to the south, en route to the Freemen's enclave of Hnútar. Of the four Gallist settlements, only Zieth had surrendered and escaped destruction.

The name *Ruinlands* has fallen out of use. It has little meaning to the current generation in Zieth. Only hunters and loggers ever follow the trails to the north and east. Those who may have made it as far as the site of Tangetsjódur have never returned; the ruins appear to be in the firm hands of the Nentyarch who tolerates no guests from Zieth.

Those who have gone eastward may have passed through Tils without noticing it. The trees, shrubs and moss have reclaimed it. Only a few moss-covered foundation stones and the old stone bridge across the Auststraumur remain. The deserted bridge leads only to more forest.

It's easy to see where Mugh was, because the center of the Gallist thorp was at the crossroads. Here the road from Zieth continues on to the connecting road between Karlshofn and Riggstad on the Trade Route and to the road that once connected Hnútar with Tils.

The part of the road that leads on to Hnútar still is well maintained and frequently used, but its continuation beyond the crossroads to the ruins of Tils soon dwindles into a narrow forest path. Of Mugh itself, even less remains than of Tils. It is simply a crossroads in Rawlinswood.

Farming, hunting, logging, woodcarving and some textiles are the main products of the occupied Zieth today, although the locals' greatest single source of income is the garrison of the Freemen's militia. As much as possible, the locals trade with the militia and provide it with those needs that can be produced locally.

The Tellerth Druids and the local commanders of the occupational forces have agreed to permit controlled logging and hunting in some areas of Rawlinswood where the forest grows thick or where game is abundant. Most men and women in the hamlet farm from spring until harvest time. After that, the men tend to be in the forest, logging or hunting, the elderly among them working instead at woodcarving, while the women spend the cold months at their spinning wheels and looms.

They earn no riches from their labor. Zieth is a simple and poor hamlet. With the exception of a few larger structures such as the garrison, the mills, etc., the buildings are almost all half-timbered structures with thatch roofs. The mills, just below the source of the Auststraumur, are limited in their production by the uneven water flow, despite a dam and construction of a large millpond that can become nearly empty in dry times.

Zieth is a borderline area for most kinds of farming. The locals can grow enough food crops to take care of their own basic needs, but their fields are reserved largely for the production of grains and flax. The hamlet does have a small mill, but the settlement is just below the source of the Auststraumur. There is too little water flow in Zieth to power a mill that could take care of more than local needs.

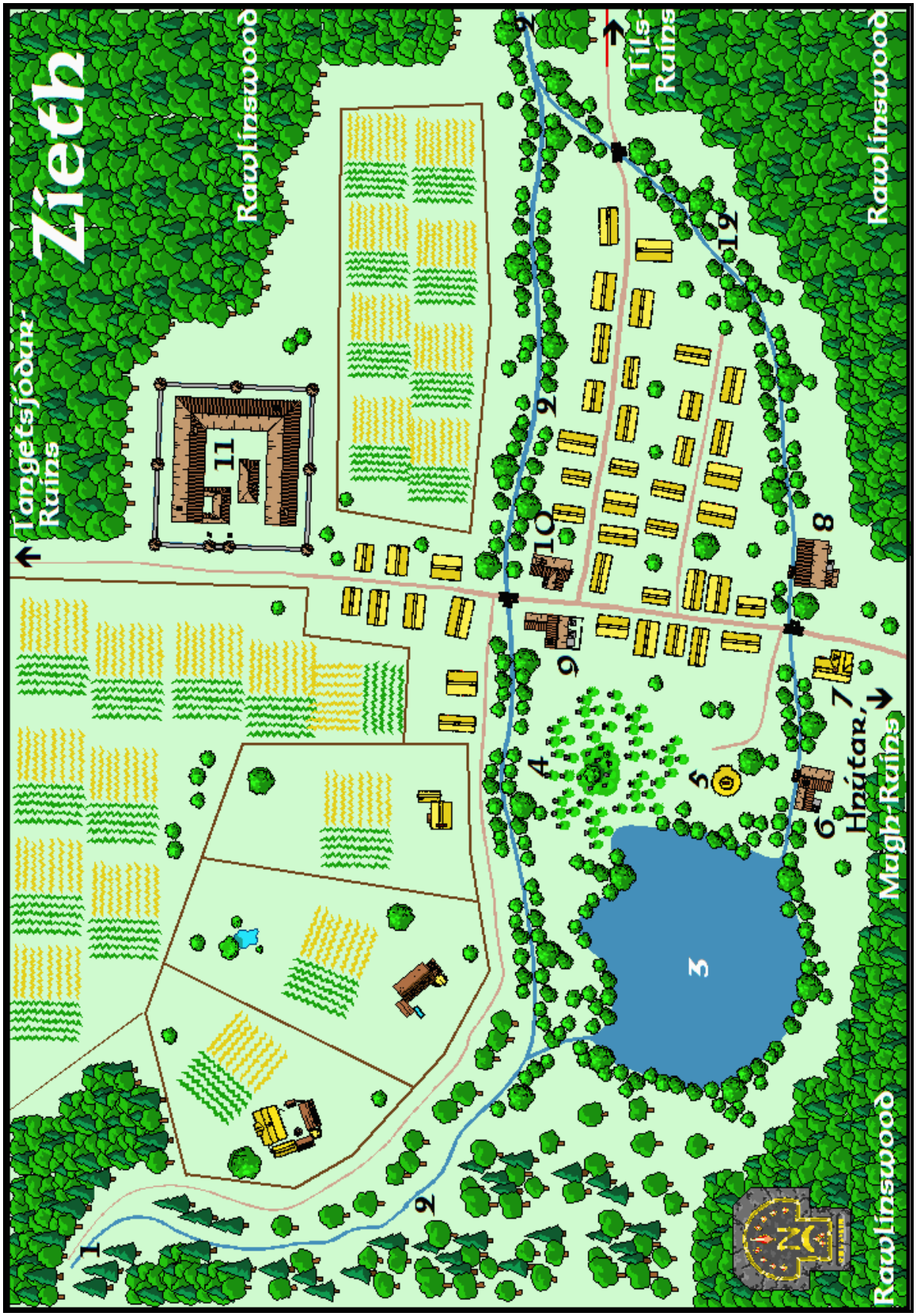
In truth, the Freemen have come to look upon Zieth more as a defense outpost than as an occupied hamlet, although one remains aware that perhaps two-thirds of the 150 civilians there still believe in Herne the Hunter in their own fashion. The militia is not 220 strong in Zieth to keep the local population in rein, but rather to be part of a strong borderlands defense against any attacks that might by launched by the true Gallist strongholds in the East.

The occupational government in Zieth prohibits True Druids and rangers of Herne from entering the hamlet under penalty of death. That does not mean that no True Druids or rangers of Herne have tried to enter the hamlet covertly in the last 321 years, but the few who have come either have had to flee again in short order or have met their end on the garrison's gallows.

Within a few decades after the Freemen's occupation, many residents of Zieth came to understand that life was more livable and prosperous under the occupational forces than it had been under the True Druids, and from that time on, whenever a druid or ranger of Herne slipped into the hamlet, word soon found its way to the garrison. It did not take long before these Gallist agents learned to keep their distance from Zieth. They have done so long enough now that no living native of Zieth ever has knowingly seen a True Druid of Herne or a ranger Hunter of Herne.

Adventure Hook in Zieth

- **The Nentyarch.** The few woodsmen and hunters from Zieth who have gone north in Rawlinswood beyond the lands allotted to them by the Tellerth druids have vanished without trace. Some blame the Nentyarch, whose hobgoblin patrols have begun exploring the wood less than 10 miles/15 km north of Zieth. The Nentyarch already has drawn the next Gallist ruin to the north, Tangetsjódur, into domain. Zieth is, of course, another good springboard for adventurers who want to enter the Nentyarch's part of the forest.


Zieth
Tangetsjódur-Ruins
Rawlinswood
Til's-Ruins
Rawlinswood
Hnátar, Magh-Ruins
Rawlinswood
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Zieth

Map of Zieth

1 - Source of the Auststraumur. After heavy rains, the springs here can bubble up throughout a nearly circular area with a diameter of about 30 feet/9m. In dry season, the water can bubble slowly out of a single source, turning the young Auststraumur into nothing more than a thin trickle. More than two centuries ago, Gallists succeeded in poisoning the springs, but the Tellerth Druids restored them quickly. Since that time, the Freemen's militia keeps a watch at the springs.

2 - Auststraumur River.

3 - Mill Pond.

4 - Cemetery.

5 - Shrine to Herne the Hunter. Unmanned. Maintained by local worshippers.

6 - Ledyng Furgutssonur's Grain Mill. Locals bring grain and seed to Master Miller Furgutssonur, human male, AL:N, Exp 2, who mills the flour and presses oil from the seeds for them. In payment, he keeps 10% of what he mills and presses. He employs a journeyman and two apprentice millers.

7 - Narda Larfilsdóttir's Textiles. Larfilsdóttir, human female, AL: N, Com 2, buys textiles made by Zieth's women during the winter months and resells them to traders. She employs two seamstresses and two salesmen.

8 - Henruk Targudssonur's Sawmill. Master Sawyer Targudssonur, human male, AL: LE, Exp 2, produces lumber from wood purchased from the local loggers. He employs a journeyman sawyer and three apprentices.

9 - Rugar Reghardssonur Butcher. Master Butcher Reghardssonur, human male, AL:LN, Exp 5, buys the extra deer and boar bagged by local hunters and also does their private butchering for them. As the purveyor to the local garrison, he is the most successful and prosperous merchant in Zieth. His shop sells some fresh meats as well as its own sausages and meat specialties that have been smoked or packed in brine.

10 - Ruinlands Inn. Although the folk of Zieth no longer refer to their area as the Ruinlands, the inn has retained the name it was given some 300 years ago. Proprietor and Innkeeper Durgul Andarssonur, human male, AL:LN, Com 1, a dour and pessimistic type, will tell anyone who asks that he thinks the name still applies, and not only for Zieth but for the entire Great Dale. In truth, among all the residents of the hamlet, only Butcher Reghardssonur has less reason than Andarssonur to be dour. The innkeeper has a modest income, in comparison to others of his profession in the western and Central Dale, but he is one of few in Zieth who has an income at all. Most of the hamlet lives on barter. Andarssonur does business both in barter and in hard Impilturian cash. Merchants and tradesmen from other parts of the Dale travel frequently to Zieth to do business with the garrison, and relatives of militiamen stationed there also visit at times. They pay their bills with Impilturian coin. Andarssonur knows this, but will quickly remark that most who come to do business at the garrison prefer to take their lodgings in Hnútar, if possible. The innkeeper will not mention that his own accommodations are sub-par or that it may be understandable that many western and Central Dalesmen are reluctant to spend the night in a hamlet that worships Herne the Hunter. Those who do cast their overnight lot with Andarssonur pay him two silver shiners for a simple single room that shows its 300-year age and its long overdue need for remodeling. The rooms do keep one safe from rain and snow, and the fireplace in each room keep guests warm, but on cold nights, guests they must ask Andarssonur for additional firewood. He provides only pine and spruce, which means one must get up several times during the night to add more wood to the fire. Nothing a guest can do short of magic will stem the drafts that blow through all eight guest rooms. The inn's public room also has its own way of doing business. Any guest who wants warm food needs to order it by 3 p.m., so that Andarssonur's cook still can buy meat from the butcher. The only people who usually eat in the inn are hotel guests. Ansarssonur could have garrison business, if he made more effort, but the militiamen who have tried the fare at the Ruinlands will say quickly that the rations in their own mess are of better quality.

Warm meals, if ordered on time, usually run from 3 to 5 shiners. Breadboards with cold cuts always are available at 1 shiner. The only beverages offered are local fruit juices at 2 copper bites a glass and the nameless house ale at 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. Andarssonur's ale, a top ferment of barley malt with spruce gruit, is drinkable but nothing to draw acclaim. Still, there are some from other parts of the Dale who praise the brew, claiming it's primitive and the way ale should be. These remarks refer to ale as it was made in other parts of the Dale before any of the remark makers were born. Before hops began being planted, brewers sought other types of gruit to keep their beers and ales from turning sour. Most brewmasters in today's Dale use hops extract, but Anarssonur isn't interested in paying for it and therefore uses spruce gruit, as in days of yore.

11 - Garrison. Home to Companies C & D, 4th Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, with 200 company troops and a support unit of 20.

12 - Millstream.

F. The Nentyarch's Domain

The Nentyarch works from the old Narfelli fortress Dun Tharos in north central Rawlinswood. It is difficult to define the boundaries of his domain. They are charted only by knowledge of the areas where his followers, mostly green elves and hobgoblins, have warned off, driven off or destroyed intruders.

The northern boundary of his domain appears to begin in the West in the ruins of Lenchstigur and continue eastward across the northern edge of Rawlinswood to Dender's Valley. The western boundary runs approximately from the ruins of Lenchstigur to the ruins of Tarkstad. In the West, the southern border begins near the site of Tarkstad then runs southeasterly, passing north of Tumblingstars and crossing easterly, north of Zieth to Dender's Valley, but these boundaries are imprecise.

It appears that the Nentyarch has taken control of the ruins of Tangetsjódur, and it also appears likely the ruins and Tarkstad, Tining and Veidarheim are falling into his domain. The central part of his domain is around Dun Tharos, however.

Within this main sphere of influence one finds not only the ruins of the Gallist outpost Kjarr and the green elven settlement of Mal Nu'ill, but also the illusory ruins of the green elven settlements of Kro Tharos and T'uluar. Ancient elven magic disguises both of these sites. They appear to be long overgrown ruins, but in truth, the green elves who follow the Nentyarch still have tree house settlements there.

If you're running the *Northern Journey* campaign more or less by the book, your PC group will be in considerably greater danger in the Nentyarch's domain than in any previous location within *NJ*. Those Game Masters using the *D&D 3E* rules will be offering the PCs their first encounter with an epic level foe (per *Epic Level Handbook*). No previous opponent has been as powerful as Cynric Evenhand. That's particularly the case in a *D&D 3E* campaign. Your PCs well may want to take on the Nentyarch – some might argue that no group worth its salt would do otherwise – but they will have only a miniscule chance of escaping transmogrification, if you run things right.

What to do? If you're running the *NJ* campaign, Szarkh Gortth will be waiting in the wings to bring a new group of substitute for characters with red sigylls onto Harbet Gall's trail. In other campaigns, it's up to you as the Game Master to decide what to do next. In a campaign just as in the real world, one must pay the penalty for taking on a foe who's several numbers too big for them. Of course, if your PCs are smart, they may convince the Nentyarch to hear them out. If …

The Nentyarch is a danger not only because of his epic level but also because he possesses considerable ancient Narfelli magic. Despite the immense danger he poses, there are possibilities to encounter Cynric Evenhand and to depart unscathed. PC groups traveling within the Nentyarch's domain can expect encounters with his hobgoblins. The followers of the Nentyarch will warn the PCs to leave the Nentyarch's domain. If they refuse or pretend to do so and then double back, the hobgoblins will do their best to bring the PCs unharmed to their leader.

If the PCs kill the hobgoblins, followers that are more powerful will come to take them. The more the PCs resist, the stronger the Nentyarch's determination will be to take them. If the PCs kill or injure followers of the Nentyarch, their chances of leaving Dun Tharos without being transmogrified and bound into the Nentyarch's service will diminish substantially.

Regardless of what story the PCs tell after such an encounter, the Nentyarch will be listening only to hear whether they are a benefit or a detriment to Rawlinswood. In the later case, he will transmogrify them into hobgoblins and bind them into his service. If he perceives that the PCs are neither good nor bad for Rawlinswood, he probably also will transmogrify them on the simple grounds that they have seen too much of his domain, and they are up to nothing useful in it anyway.

If any of the PCs are genuine members of the Freemen's militia and bear the oak-leaf-and-acorn badge, the Nentyarch will give them much more leeway, but that will end abruptly as soon as there is the slightest transgression.

A claim by the PCs that they are out to destroy Harbet Gall will not be sufficient to impress the Nentyarch. However, he will be impressed if he thinks the PCs are serious and they have a genuine chance to destroy Gall. That could be the case if they tell the full tale of the red sigylls in an *NJ* campaign. In this case, it is most likely that he will have the PCs ushered posthaste out of his domain and set in an easterly direction.

Another method to minimize the danger of an encounter with the Nentyarch is to *seek* a meeting with him. Should the PCs encounter the Nentyarch's followers within Rawlinswood and tell them they wish to meet with the Nentyarch, his followers will tell them the Nentyarch himself will decide whether he wishes to meet with the PCs.

They will take your adventurers to Kro Tharos, Mal Nu'ill or T'uluar, whichever is nearest, and tell them to camp there until they return. They will warn the PCs not to hunt or roam more than 3 miles/5 km from the camping spot. If the PCs violate these condition, they will be hunted down as foes. Although they may not detect who is watching them, they will sense that they are under constant observation. Green elves who serve the Nentyarch live hidden in the trees above these illusory ruins, and they will watch the PCs' camp closely.

Within 1d6 days, the ranger Yngi Tifilsdóttir or the fighter Darturugh Henselssonur will come with a group of transmogrified hobgoblins to bring one of three responses from the Nentyarch:

- He refuses to meet with the PCs. They will be warned again to leave his domain immediately.
- The Nentyarch wishes more information before he decides whether to meet the PCs. If they agree, another 1d6 days of waiting begins, and the PCs remain where they are.
- The Nentyarch agrees to meet with the PCs. They are taken to Dun Tharos.

Sooner or later, the Nentyarch either will consent or refuse to meet the PCs. If he refuses and the PCs disregard the admonition to leave his domain, they will be hunted down and taken to Dun Tharos as prisoners. There their chances of escaping transmogrification will be slight.

If the Nentyarch agrees to meet the PCs, they are under his protection. They will be kept as guests in the Dun Tharos castle complex until the Nentyarch ends his meeting with them. If the PCs take no hostile actions while they are in Dun Tharos, the Nentyarch will guarantee their safety.

In most campaigns, the PCs will be making a fatal error if they attempt to engage the Nentyarch in mortal combat. The Nentyarch is an epic level character with one of the more dangerous artifacts in the Realms. He should be able to make quick work of PCs who have the levels recommended for this accessory.

If the PCs are taken to Dun Tharos as prisoners, they will be held in the cells beneath the hobgoblin barracks until the Nentyarch has been informed of their capture and has made his first decisions regarding their fate. If circumstances lead the Nentyarch to consider sparing the PCs transmogrification, they will be housed as guests in the castle building.

However, they will be warned not to trespass where they are not wanted within Dun Tharos and also be warned not to go outside the fortress' walls. Violators will have a difficult time convincing the Nentyarch to continue tolerating them.

Narfellí Magíc

The Nentyarch is in possession and command of 10th level Narfelli magic. Only the Nentyarch uses such spells within his domain. The rules generally follow the guidelines Ed Greenwood set down for 10th level spells in the FR accessory *Secrets of the Magister* (WotC - 2000). This accessory can be purchased as an ESD download from http://www.rpgnow.com.

The Nentyarch does not require a second caster; the spirit in the transmogrifier fulfills this requirement. Likewise, because of the high artifact power of the spirit, the Nentyarch does not have an 85% chance of losing an experience level, although he still will lose 2d6 hit points through the use of such magic and also diminish his current arsenal of magic by 1d4 spells for the day.

It may be that Mystra or Azuth are prepared to inflict *Feeblemindedness* upon the Nentyarch if he abuses 10th level magic, but they have not done so to date. There also is much 10th level magic in place in Dun Tharos, mostly to guard and protect. If such permanent 10th level magic is triggered, there is a 15% chance it will fail and cause a random wild magic result according to the table below.

Roll 1d20. Odd-numbered rolls are bad luck, even good luck. Involuntary save means the character must make a save to win the benefit. When one character in the group is affected, use 1d20 throws to determine who the beneficiary or victim is. These effects may seem extreme, but please remember that the spells that fail and cause them also are extremely powerful.

Wild Magic Results for in-place 10th level Narfelli Magic in Dun Tharos (1d20)

0	All living beings within 10 feet/3m are totally healed and permanently gain 1d10 + 10 hp. Involuntary save for Fortitude DC 35.	10	One member of the party cannot be wounded for 1d10+10 days.
1	All living beings within 10 feet/3m are slain. Save for Fortitude DC 35 to avoid damage.	11	One member of the party suffers maximum damage from all wounds for 1d10+10 days.
2	One member of the party is elevated to epic character level 21. No save.	12	One member of the party succeeds in all skill checks for 1d10+10 days.
3	One member of the party is reduced by 50% of his/her levels. No save.	13	One member of the party fails in all skill checks for 1d10+10 days.
4	One wizard or sorcerer in the party gains one 10th level Narfelli spell, and he or she can use it once a day as a bonus spell. See *New Spells* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. The Game Master chooses which Narfelli spell is gained.	14	One member of the party permanently gains an additional feat of the Game Master's choice.
5	One wizard or sorcerer in the party loses his or her most powerful spell, as determined by the Game Master, and he or she never can learn it again.	15	One member of the party permanently loses an additional feat of the Game Master's choice.
6	One member of the party gains full immunity to a certain school of spells. The school is determined by the Game Master.	16	The party is immediately gated to the next goal it is trying to reach.
7	One member of the party loses the ability to save against a certain school of spells. The school is determined by the Game Master.	17	The party is immediately gated to Riggstad.
8	One member of the party gains a powerful magical item from the Game MasterG, as determined by the Game Master.	18	Every member of the party gains one character level. Involuntary save at DC 30.
9	One member of the party loses his or her most powerful magical item from the Game MasterG, as determined by the Game Master.	19	Every member of the party loses one character level. Save at DC 30.

Please note that within the limits of the *Northern Journey* campaign, the only 10th level spells are ancient Netherese, Narfelli, Raumathari and Imaskari magicks. The ancient Narfelli spells can be found only in Impiltur, the Great Dale and Rashemen. Who may have access to 10th level Raumathari or Imaskari spells and where these spells are is not defined and is left up to the Game Master.

The only magic users in the *Northern Journey* campaign who have access to 10th level Narfelli spells are the Impilturian Queen Sambryl in Lyrabar, the Archwand Daerthnur in Ilmwatch, his aide Aboadus Glira, also in Ilmwatch, the Nentyarch in Dun Tharos and the Iron Throne wizardess Shandaril in Damaran Heliogabalus. Queen Sambryl never has worked a 10th level spell. It is unknown whether Daerthnur, Glira or Shandaril have done so. The Nentyarch has used 10th level spells.

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More on the current access to 10th level Netherese spells from the *Northern Journey* standpoint will be made available in the sequel to *NJ, In the Land of the Lich Lords*.

The following Narfelli spells protect various points within Dun Tharos. These spells should not be available elsewhere in your campaign, with the possible exception of Queen Sambryl's library in Lyrabar and Daerthnur's library in Ilmwatch, both in Impiltur. These spells are defined in the section *New Spells* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

- **Advanced Maze**.
- **Annihilation**.
- **Cage of Repulsion**.
- **Dweomer Shield.**
- **Major Paralysis**.
- **Major Power Word, Kill**.
- **Mental Door**.
- **War Shield**
- **Wizard Shield**.

Dun Tharos

Castle Fortress, Nonstandard (druidic wizard dictator), AL: N(E), Gp limit: virtually unlimited. Assets: Beyond Assessment. Population: 220, various creatures: 5 human, 90 green elves, 6 treants, 12 centaurs, 100-200 transmogrified hobgoblins (number varies constantly), 2-20 sabre-tooth tigers (number varies constantly), 1 stone golem. Authority figure: The Nentyarch (Cynric Evenhand), human male, AL: N(E), epic level sorcerer 23, druid (Silvanus) 8. Others: Tulunyr, human male, AL:N, Conjurer 11; Yngi Tifilsdóttir, human female, AL:N, ranger (Mielikki) 10; Darturugh Henselssonur, human male, AL:LN, fighter 13; Nuthla Xibbig, human female, druidess (Silvanus) 7. Taxation: None. Accepted coinage: N/A.

Dun Tharos today is the partially restored ruin of the hidden forest castle complex built by the Narfelli epic Arch-Transmuter K'Ahlob in the Year of the Shattered Havens and the Year of the Toiling (-208 and -207 DR). Those things K'Ahlob left behind in Dun Tharos make it clear that he was the master of several 10th level spells. That is no mean feat, considering that Dun Tharos was erected a century and a half after the fall of Netheril and Mystra's ban on 10th level magic. Like many Narfelli and Raumathari wizards and sorcerers, K'Ahlob apparently was willing to take the risks of continuing to work such spells.

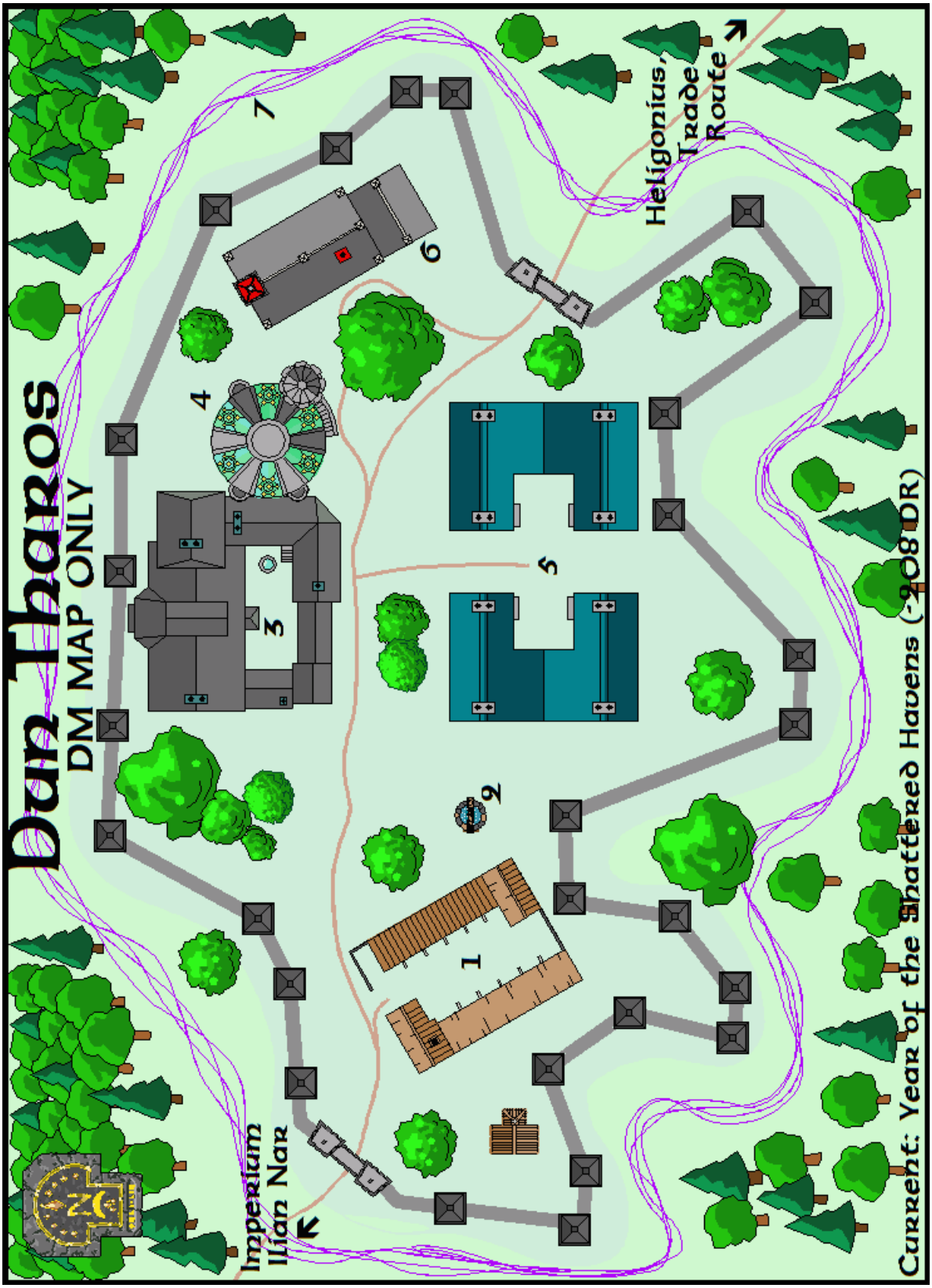
The fortress K'Ahlob left behind was a virtual treasury of forbidden magic. He created the transmogrifier artifact, and his invention devoured him, just as it appears to have begun doing to the Nentyarch today. Some sages believe that K'Ahlob may have been second only to the legendary Kiriagoth among the wizards of latter day Narfell. When the final conflagration in the war with Raumathar came, it well may be that no other wizard's retreat was so heavily endowed with powerful items of Narfelli and captured Raumathari magic as K'Ahlob's Dun Tharos.

Be that as it may, the great epic wizard grew ever more oblivious to his magical treasury. His focus had narrowed upon his artifact, his transmogrifier, and his soul slowly merged with his invention, leaving on one unknown day nothing more of the mage than his lifeless body, surrounded with a great treasury of magic. The mightiest item of them all was the transmogrifier. However, no one remained in the empty halls of Dun Tharos to use these works.

There is no living witness in Faerûn who can tell your PCs this tale. No scribe recorded these events in a text that still might be found in the Royal Impilturian Library in Lyrabar. K'Ahlob and Dun Tharos simply were forgotten in the time after the fall of Narfell and Raumathar.

Cynric Evenhand, who began calling himself the Nentyarch after claiming the ruins of Dun Tharos, knows most of this tale. He does not know that K'Ahlob's soul merged with the spirit in the transmogrifier, nor does he know how he passed from life. He knows only that he found K'Ahlob's lifeless body, preserved as though he had just died, together with the transmogrifier. K'Ahlob did not document the manner in which he was being absorbed into the transmogrifier's spirit, and he well may have been oblivious to this process just as the Nentyarch is today. Cynric Evenhand feels as though he has faded somewhat, that his spirit has gotten thinner. He attributes this to his exercise of magic.

To better understand Dun Tharos of today, it helps to take a look at what the castle fortress was in K'Ahlob's final days, what parts of the complex the Nentyarch has explored already and what still remains to be investigated.



Dun Tharos in the Year of the Shattered Havens (-208 DR)

Aerial map, Year of the Shattered Havens (-208 DR)

Our first Dun Tharos map for the Game Master shows an aerial view of the fortress in the Year of the Shattered Havens.

1 - Stables.

2 - Well.

3 - Main castle building. In K'Ahlob's first years in Dun Tharos, the castle building bustled with servants, cooks, and the like. As K'Ahlob became more entranced with the transmogrifier, he turned it upon those who served him. Long before his soul's merger with the spirit in the transmogrifier, the castle building had for all intents and purposes been abandoned.

4 - K'Ahlob's Tower. In his latter years, K'Ahlob spent most of his time here, together with the transmogrifier and his tomes, learning. Although the wizard was unaware of it, he was learning not only for himself but also for the spirit within the transmogrifier. Narfelli magic permeates the walls of the tower, preserving all things within including the most important tomes from a huge library on Narfelli magic. K'Ahlob made his home in his final years on the top level of the tower in his laboratory, together with the transmogrifier. He was little concerned about trespassers entering the tower. It has no doors. The walls are permeated with 10th level magic that repels all other magic one might work upon them. The only means to enter the tower is through an epic level spell K'Ahlob invented and called *Mental Door*. The spell has been inscribed in one of K'Ahlob's spellbooks, but it is inside the tower.

5 - Barracks. The barracks originally were built to house the Narfelli soldiers who were sent to serve K'Ahlob. However, after he had transmogrified all of the humans in Dun Tharos, they became the housing for transmogrified hobgoblins.

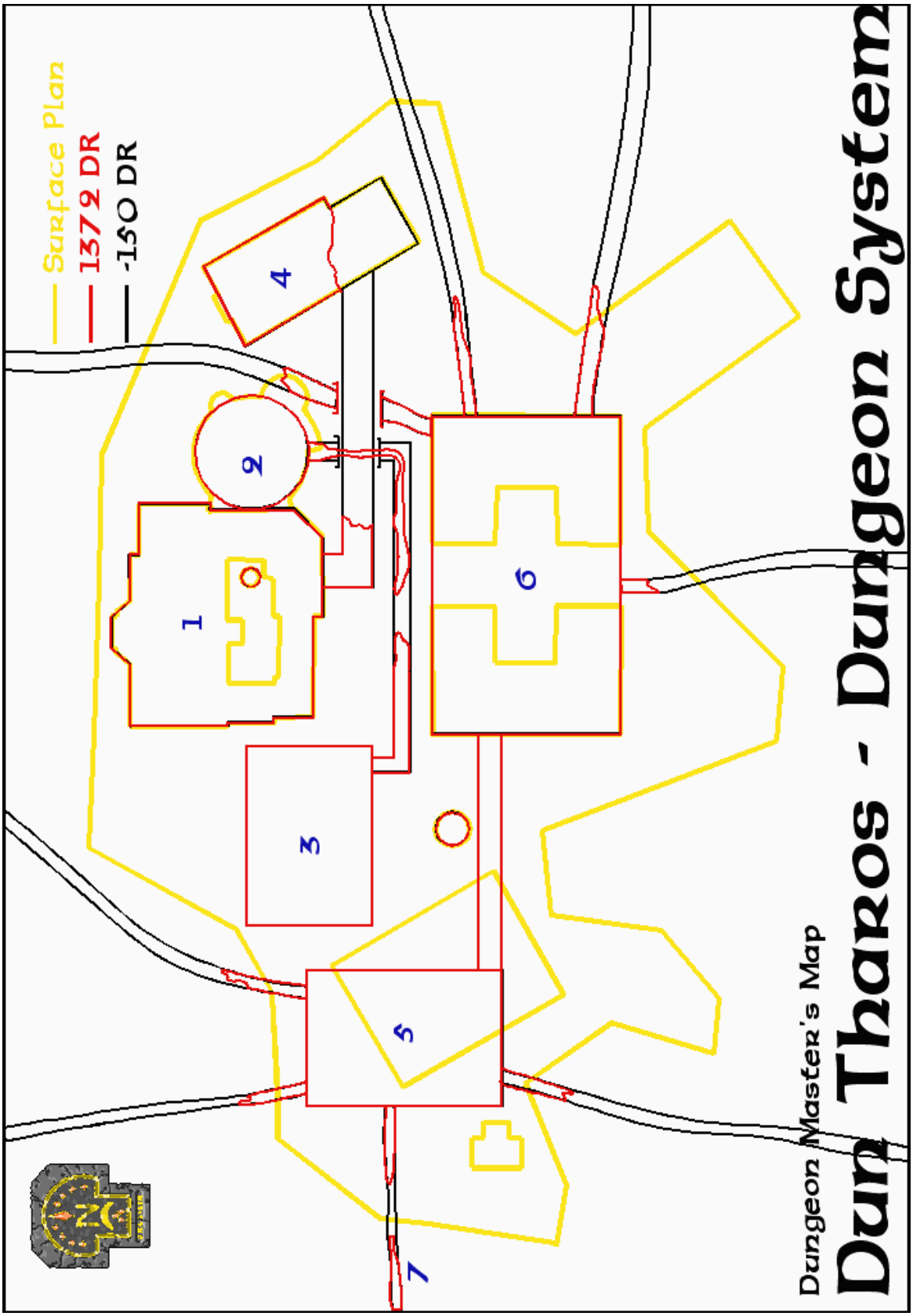
6 - K'Ahlob's Library. This building was filled with the Narfelli tomes on magic, spellbooks and the like that K'Ahlob had ceased to use. All tomes dealing with spells of levels 8 through 10 were stored in the cellar. The surface level of the library was destroyed on the last day of K'Ahlob's life. On that day, the Narfelli emperor's delegation arrived to force K'Ahlob to return to Heligonius to serve the empire in the war against Raumathar. Only one epic archmage from Heligonius managed to penetrate the *Cage of Repulsion* protecting Dun Tharos (see No. 7). K'Ahlob, together with the transmogrifier, waited for him inside the gate. The mage knew of the transmogrifier and the fate that awaited him if he failed to destroy K'Ahlob. He threw an explosive spell of no longer known origin at K'Ahlob, but K'Ahlob deflected it. The spell hit the library and blew it to smithereens. Only the cellar remained. K'Ahlob then activated the transmogrifier, which at K'Ahlob's command turned the opposing wizard into a stone elemental. K'Ahlob captured the elemental and bound into an inert stone golem he had made a few years earlier. The stone elemental's spirit animates the golem.

7 - Cage of Repulsion - The interwoven purple force lines outside of the wall were just one of the mighty magical defenses K'Ahlob has worked to protect Dun Tharos. The force lines maintained a 10th level *Cage of Repulsion*. This rare Narfelli spell wrapped Dun Tharos both below and above ground in a large magical container of a shape conceived by the caster. It arched both upwards and into the earth to a distance of 150 feet/45 m from the surface. The cage repelled any living being who attempted to penetrate it against the caster's will.

Map: The Dungeon Levels

This map shows the dungeon system of Dun Tharos in black on the day Narfell and Raumathar destroyed one another in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR). It shows the dungeon system today in red. The yellow outline shows the position of the surface buildings and the wall in relation to the subterranean level.

There are dungeon areas that still are intact, which the Nentyarch has not yet discovered and explored. As the map shows, most passages have caved in at various points.



Dungeon System

1 - Cellars, Castle Building. K'Ahlob used this area for storage. Cynric Evenhand discovered a dank and moldy cellar, mostly empty. There were rotten remnants of shelving in the cellar, along with some dangerous molds and a few smaller dungeon monsters in the categories tiny and diminutive. He also discovered and opened the magical secret door in the south wall but followed the passage only as far as the cave-in. The door is detectable only with magic. The second level spell *Knock* for wizards and sorcerers is adequate to open it. The conjurer Tulunyr, the ranger Yngi Tifilsdóttir, the fighter Darturugh Henselssonur and the druidess Nuthla Xibbig since have cleaned the cellar and use it for storage. The cellar is separately mapped.

2 - Tower, Cellar level. K'Ahlob used the passage leading from this room to go to his transmutation laboratory (No. 3). See the full description under *Nentyarch's Tower*. Cynric Evenhand has explored it to the first cave-in.

3 - Transmutation Laboratory. Before coming under the strong influence of the transmogrifier, K'Ahlob used this hidden chamber to perform transmutation experiments. There is a stone table in the middle of the room, to which a human-sized creature could be manacled. Three inanimate skeletons are chained to the west wall. Along the north wall is a bookcase containing every spell of the school transmutation in the *D&D Player's Handbook* and in the *Epic Level Handbook*. The epic level spells are so thoroughly documented that a caster who can use epic level spells can learn these spells through study. Cynric Evenhand is unaware of this chamber.

4 - Remnants of the Library Cellar. The northwest part of the cellar still is intact but completely buried. A large collection of Narfelli spells of levels 9 and 10 still are in good condition in this room. Cynric Evenhand is unaware of this chamber.

5 - Armory. This chamber contains a good supply of chain mail and weapons suited for hobgoblins. Cynric Evenhand has explored this room and its outer passages to the point where they have caved in. His hobgoblins use it as their armory.

6 - Barracks cellar. Empty prisoner cells and the hobgoblins' supply center are here.

7 - Outer passages. These passages all lead to points where troops could secretly emerge in the forest. Please note that if any of these passages are cleared, they remain protected by the *Cage of Repulsion.*

K'Ahlob's Departure

The fates of all Narfell and Raumathar were sealed on that day in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR) when the two empires unleashed devastation upon one another. Ironically, Dun Tharos, the sanctuary of the Narfelli Arch-Transmuter K'Ahlob, survived the conflagration unscathed. Nonetheless, the fates of two Narfelli high wizards who met in Dun Tharos also were sealed that day, although in an entirely different manner from those of their compatriots.

K'Ahlob never had become aware that a spirit inhabited his transmogrifier, a spirit that gradually attempted and eventually succeeded in absorbing K'Ahlob's soul into itself. K'Ahlob was aware of the transmogrifier's manipulations, but he interpreted them to be a split personality that was unpleasantly growing within himself, one he attempted to resist.

Had K'Ahlob known the nature of his enemy, it is conceivable that he might have defeated the spirit in the transmogrifier. K'Ahlob was a transmuter of immense power. However, the Narfelli emperor wanted K'Ahlob to return to Heligonius to aid him, and he was willing to force his return. This decision set the stage for K'Ahlob's fall.

The emperor sent a powerful delegation to Dun Tharos, to bring K'Ahlob back, regardless of what means were necessary. With help from the spirit of the transmogrifier, K'Ahlob had grown more powerful than any in Heligonius had imagined. Only one of the wizards in the emperor's delegation, an epic level Arch-Conjurer named Targ L'unat, penetrated the *Cage of Repulsion* that K'Ahlob had shaped to protect Dun Tharos.

L'unat knew what the transmogrifier was. When he found K'Ahlob and the transmogrifier waiting for him inside the gate to the fortress, L'unat had to act quickly to preserve his life in his own form. He made the snap decision to destroy K'Ahlob and preserve the transmogrifier. L'unat threw his most powerful Narfelli spell at K'Ahlob, a destructive 9th level spell explosive spell.

However, K'Ahlob deflected the spell. It hit and destroyed his library building, which K'Ahlob no longer used. K'Ahlob activated the transmogrifier and turned L'unat into a stone elemental. To do that, K'Ahlob needed to win a difficult mental battle with the spirit in the transmogrifier, although K'Ahlob thought he was fighting only his own split personality.

The spirit of the transmogrifier knew what K'Ahlob's goal was; K'Ahlob wanted to use L'unat's soul to empower a stone golem K'Ahlob had constructed a few years earlier. The spirit also was totally opposed to this goal, recognizing it as a corruption of the transmogrifier. It had been made only to transmogrify life forms. The misuse of the transmogrifier to animate a golem, even indirectly, could corrupt the transmogrifier and make it unstable.

In the first round between K'Ahlob and the transmogrifier's spirit, K'Ahlob's will was the stronger. The transmogrifier did indeed turn L'unat into a stone elemental. K'Ahlob used his Epic Rod of Rulership to take immediate control of the transmogrified L'unat and forced his victim into the inert stone golem, at last animating it.

However, K'Ahlob made his critical error at that time. The struggle with the spirit in the transmogrifier, the defeat and transmogrification of L'Unat and the animation of the golem had left K'Ahlob exhausted. Had he avoided the transmogrifier until he had recouped his strength, K'Ahlob might have mastered his artifact with time, so great was his power.

Instead, K'Ahlob placed the newly animated stone golem on guard and took the transmogrifier with him back into his tower. The archwizard had just turned to go to his bed, when the transmogrifier activated itself. The spirit in the artifact perceived K'Ahlob as a danger that was bent to corrupt and pervert the artifact, and it knew that K'Ahlob was becoming too powerful for it to master.

With K'Ahlob's back turned to it, the transmogrifier turned its magic upon K'Ahlob, drawing the weary Arch-Transmuter's soul into itself, merging K'Ahlob's soul into its own spirit. K'Ahlob's body fell lifeless to the floor, where Cynric Evenhand found it centuries later, still fully preserved.

Thus, time came to an eternal stop for the mighty K'Ahlob. The spirit within the transmogrifier erased K'Ahlob's identity. The wizard's soul became an expansion of the transmogrifier's own spirit, melded completely into its own identity.

Although K'Ahlob's clock had stopped forever, another still was ticking madly, racing toward fate. On that day, the great final battle between Narfell and Raumathar had broken out. The destructive bolts of this war of total devastation spared Dun Tharos, but the poisons that filled the air over old Narfell and lost Raumathar wafted deep into Rawlinswood and into the fortress.

K'Ahlob's transmogrified hobgoblins and other minions fled in panic into the forest where most soon died, their lungs exploding from the poisonous air. Within the walls of Dun Tharos, the strengthened spirit within the transmogrifier asserted control over K'Ahlob's stone golem, ordered it to destroy all invaders and then began a patient wait that lasted nearly 1,500 years, until another properly powerful, living wizard would come to it in lost Dun Tharos.

The forest and nature then became master of Dun Tharos. With the passing years, the courtyard of the fortress reverted to forest, while moss began to blanket the remaining buildings of Dun Tharos. Twisting vines arose from the earth to wend their way over the outer wall and then, with time, up the sides of the castle and K'Ahlob's tower.

In the first years after K'Ahlob's fall, the *Cage of Repulsion* continued to protect Dun Tharos from intruders. However, K'Ahlob had used 10th level magic to shape this magical defense, and the new goddess of magic, Mystra, had made such magic unstable.

With time, the large bubble of the magical cage began to break up into three smaller bubbles. These still hover about the walls of Dun Tharos, but there are large breaches now in this defense. In the intervening years, some intruders did manage to circumvent these bubbles of magic and enter Dun Tharos. However, K'Ahlob's many magical defenses and the stone golem destroyed all but one of them.

The exception was a hobgoblin named Dirghin Rednose. He was the grandfather of Tark Rednose, who a century and a half later would lead 80,000 hobgoblins in an attack upon Impiltur. The defenses of Dun Tharos could have destroyed Dirghin Rednose easily, but the spirit of the transmogrifier held them back. It spurred in Rednose a hobgoblin with a strong capacity for magic. Such a creature was a novelty for the spirit. It wanted to examine Rednose mentally.

Rednose was too frightened to stay long in Dun Tharos. He by no means searched the fey fortress long enough to find the transmogrifier. Rednose simply grabbed a few books to prove he had been in Dun Tharos, turned tail and fled the ancient fortress posthaste. By the time that the transmogrifier's spirit realized that Rednose was fleeing with no intention of returning, it was too late. Rednose was beyond the reach of Dun Tharos' magic. The books Rednose took were spellbooks.

They turned out to be a serious curse for the settlements of Merchants Run and Impiltur. Through the stolen spellbooks, sorcerous talents were awakened within the hobgoblins of the Giantspires, a factor that helped give the hobgoblins the courage they needed to invade Impiltur many years later.

Cynric's Arrival

In the years after Rednose's entry into Dun Tharos, the spirit within the transmogrifier waited patiently for the *right* person to approach Dun Tharos, a person who was fit to work in partnership with the transmogrifier. In the early 1330s DR, a druid of Silvanus named Cynric Evenhand began working in parts of Rawlinswood near Dun Tharos. He drew the attention of the transmogrifier's spirit. It detected within the young druid an extraordinary but fully undeveloped potential for sorcerous magic. The spirit wished to draw Evenhand to Dun Tharos. It began telepathically sending thoughts into the druid's mind.

Evenhand began developing a natural talent for lesser sorcerous spells. His interest for such magic began with time to outweigh his devotion to druidic tenets, which in turn caused problems for him within the Tellerth druidic circle. In the Year of the Wanderer (1338 DR), both he and the high druid of the circle, Righan Eikensson, came to the mutual conclusion that there no longer was room for Evenhand in the grove. His dabbling in magic was alien to the other druids, and their conservative and dogmatic brand of druidism had become alien to him.

With his druidic powers still intact and his arcane powers growing, Cynric ignored the warnings of the other druids. He set off alone, across the Lench and into the northern part of central Rawlinswood, searching for ancient ruins of the Narfelli, the green elves that had been a matter of legend and the truth behind the tales of hidden arcane treasures.

His travels brought Evenhand to the settlements of the green elves near Dun Tharos, which had been disguised through illusion as ancient ruins. His strange combination of druidic and arcane powers made Evenhand immune to such illusions. He saw T'uluar, Kro Tharos and Mal Nu'ill for what they were, small settlements of tree dwellings of the Mal T'unan green elves

The elves cautiously accepted Evenhand after learning of his druidic beliefs. They were in dire straits in their attempts to stem the tide of Herne's Hunters, who were invading the old elven woodland. At last, they tested Evenhand's mettle, hoping he would prove to be the strong ally they needed. They showed him the way to Dun Tharos.

The transmogrifier's spirit sensed the coming of the druid it had chosen a few years earlier. It lowered all of the mighty defenses of Dun Tharos, to let Cynric Evenhand pass. It was a clouded and misty day. The air in Rawlinswood was still and dank.

A combination of smells permeated Evenhand's nose, all of them familiar and yet each more concentrated than he had known them. He smelled the fresh scent of living fir, pine and spruce, the dark scent of shadowed moss and the sweet but consuming odor of fungi that were busy dissimilating the dead leaves and branches upon the forest floor.

The sorcerer-druid was awed as he came upon the great stone wall surrounding Dun Tharos, which then as now was covered with vines climbing over a thick layer of moss.. At first, he thought the walls consisted solely of vines. He walked through the tall trees and came to the castle and other structures that still stood, all also blanketed in moss and covered with vines.

Cynric Evenhand did not merely feel safe in Dun Tharos. He felt welcome in the ancient fortress, even at home there. While Evenhand studied his new home, the spirit within the transmogrifier began measuring the druid-sorcerer's abilities, to fathom how deep his capacity for learning was. Then it began slowly filling Evenhand with knowledge.

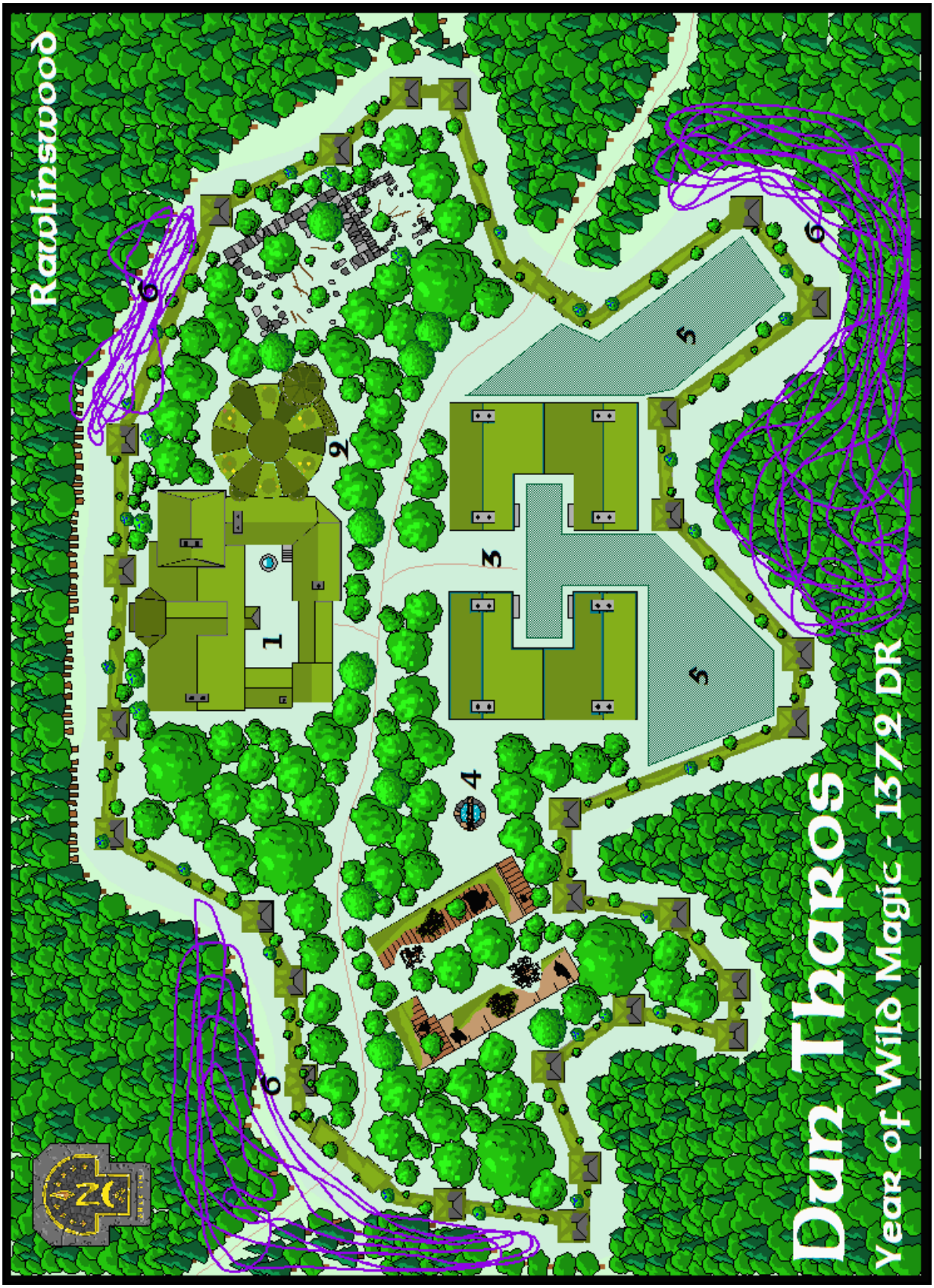
Within days, Cynric Evenhand gained control of the magic protection surrounding Dun Tharos. It was not difficult; the spirit had yielded it to him, along with an understanding of the magic's nature. The spirit also filled Evenhand with knowledge of the *Mental Door* K'Ahlob had built into his tower and the secret one must know to open the door.

The transmogrifier's spirit drew Evenhand to K'Ahlob's spell books and magical items. It helped him understand how to learn the spells and use the items. It was the natural thing for the spirit to do. It already had assimilated all of K'Ahlob together with his knowledge. It intended to develop Cynric to his fullest and then assimilate him too. Finally, it opened Evenhand's mind to the secrets of its own usage.

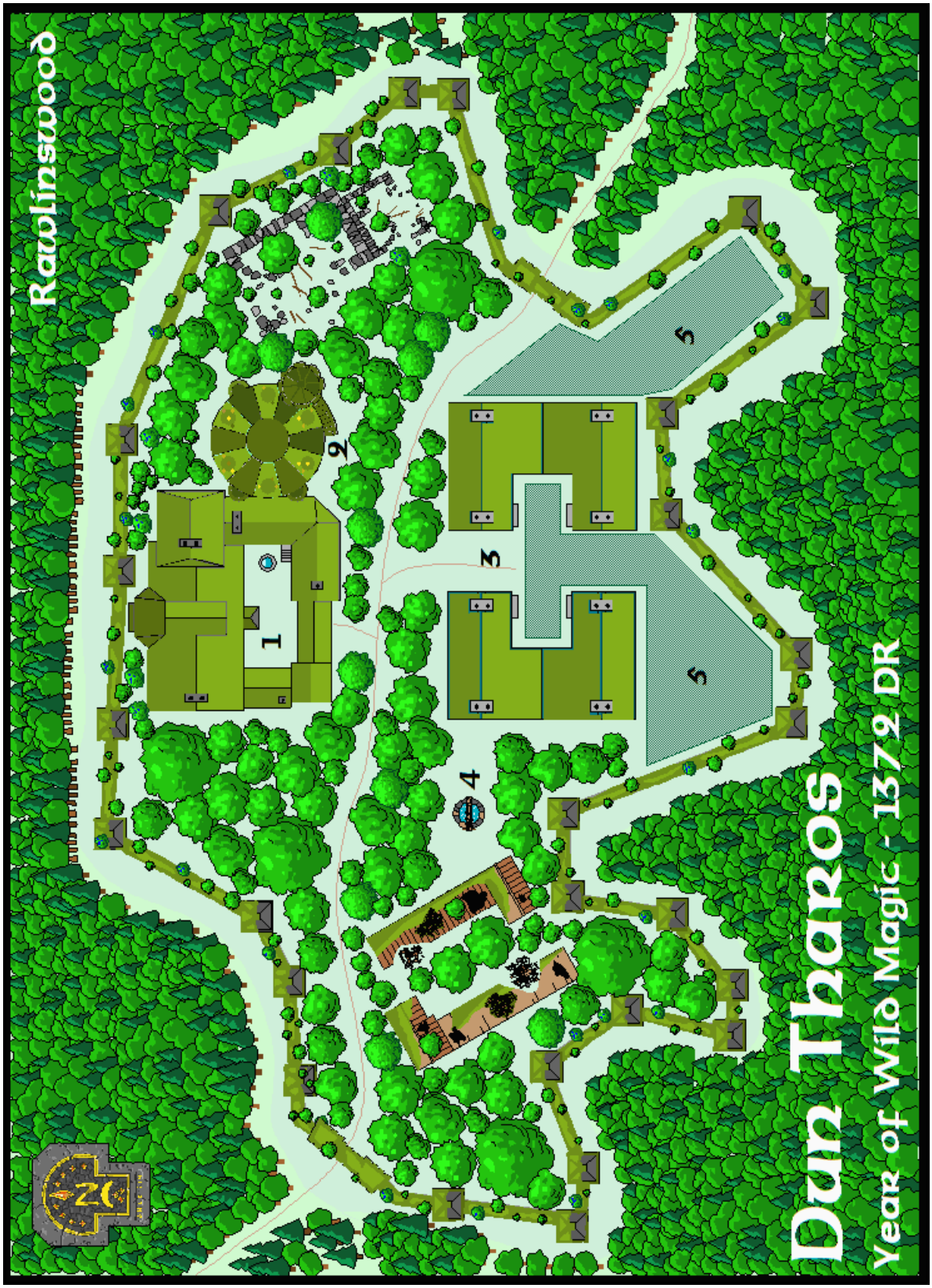
In the Year of the Weeping Moon (1339 DR), Evenhand proclaimed himself the Nentyarch of Dun Tharos. In that year, he had mastered the transmogrifier to such an extent that he was able to turn the descendants of K'Ahlob's hobgoblin guards, who lived as a wild tribe in the forest, into green elves, doubling the size of the Mal T'unan enclave that had supported him.

In the same year, the Nentyarch unleashed his new and powerful magic upon the intruders into his domain. He and his green elves, although greatly outnumbered, attacked Kjarr, and the Nentyarch used the transmogrifier to turn Harbet Gall's warriors into hobgoblins. He also wielded K'Ahlob's rod of rulership and used it to order the transmogrified hobgoblins to tear the hamlet apart, laying it in total ruin.

The map of Dun Tharos in the current Year of Wild Magic (1372 DR) shows the Nentyarch's fortress as it is today and also as it looked upon the day 34 years ago when Cynric Evenhand first entered it. Please note that the outer wall and the buildings are shown more clearly on the maps than they really can be seen. Everything that is green is blanketed in moss and the walls also are covered in vines. We chose to use sharp contours showing what is beneath the moss and vines to give the Game Master a better picture of the true layout of Dun Tharos.



Dun Tharos today – Game Master's Map



Dun Tharos today – Players' Map

Encounters in the Nentyarch's Domain

For statistics on encounters in Dun Tharos, please see *Great Dale - Encounters in the Nentyarch's Domain,* under *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*. For information on 10th level Narfelli spells used by the Nentyarch, please see *New Spells* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

Map, current Year of Wild Magic

1 - K'Ahlob's Castle. The Castle is one of three buildings in Dun Tharos that has been made useable again, although all three are far from being what one would call restored. The conjurer Tulunyr, the ranger Yngi Tifilsdóttir, the fighter Darturugh Henselssonur and the druidess Nuthla Xibbig maintain quarters in the castle. The building is mapped separately.

2 - The Nentyarch's Tower. This structure also has been made useable again. This area is open to and used by only the Nentyarch and the Transmogrifier. It has been mapped separately.

3 - Hobgoblin Barracks. A widely varying number of transmogrified hobgoblins can be found here at any time. The number can range from half a dozen to 200.

4 - Well.

5 - Training Grounds for the Hobgoblins.

6 - Remnants of K'Ahlob's Cage of Repulsion. The force lines of K'Ahlob's magic have shifted and concentrated themselves upon three locations over the years.

Dun Tharos Castle

The Nentyarch seldom enters the castle building except to eat regular mails with those of his followers who are in the castle at the time. It's the home base of Tulunyr, Yngi Tifilsdóttir, Darturugh Henselssonur and Nuthla Xibbig. It also serves as the place where the Nentyarch's followers meet to discuss problems. In addition, the rare intruder who is treated by the Nentyarch as a guest finds simple accommodations there.

The castle is by no means typical. When the Nentyarch found it, the castle had spent more than a millennium buried under moss. Although the stone walls remained sound, the furnishings were worthless. The new occupants view the castle as a shelter, not as a noble building. It is crudely furnished. Outside of the tower, there is little in the castle that will interest most PC groups. The castle has many windows and all have been repaired. Most windows have double shutters.

Provisions are simple. The green elves who support the Nentyarch bring most to the castle, although Tulunyr, Tifilsdóttir, Henselssonur and Xibbig also bring some supplies to Dun Tharos when they make one of their rare visits to the Trade Route.

Dun Tharos Castle Dungeon

1 - Stairway. The open stairwell leads upwards into the kitchen storage area on the ground floor.

2 - Storage room. The inhabitants store grain, wine and other staples here as well as extra equipment. The room also contains two weapon racks that are filled with swords, spears and the like.

3 - Cold storage. When a stag or boar is taken in the hunt, it hangs in this room after the slaughter.

Game Master's note: The inhabitants of the castle seldom enter the rest of the dungeon level, except for Tulunyr, who has access to room 8.

4 - Large cellar. This area remains in much the same condition as on the day more than three decades ago when the Nentyarch first explored it. It's mostly empty, with rotting rubble here and there.

5 - Black ooze. This monster can be found anywhere in this room, including on the floor, the walls or the ceiling.

6 - Well shaft.

7 - Secret door. Only the Nentyarch has discovered this door to date. See the master dungeon map.

8 - Tower cellar. Tulunyr is the sole occupant of the castle's tower, which probably was K'Ahlob's original tower, until he built the larger tower adjacent to the castle. The spiral staircase on this level is protected by a permanent version of the 10th level Narfelli spell *Annihilation*. The chamber contains small piles of magical items and three chests with magical items (all Game Master's choice).

Dun Tharos Castle Ground Floor

1 - Foyer.

2 - Staircase. The stairway leads upward to a landing on the second story (European 1st floor).

3 - Conference room. The tables are the crude but serviceable work of green elves.

4 - Guard room with weapon rack.

5 - Tulunyr's library. The door to this room is the only entrance to Conjurer Tulunyr's tower. The Nentyarch gave Tulunyr a scroll with the 9th level Narfelli spell *Advanced Maze* to protect his tower. (See *New Spells* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*). Anyone not named by Tulunyr as having access to the tower but who attempts to unlock or otherwise tamper with the door automatically falls victim to this spell. The door is locked with a permanent *Arcane Lock* spell. It and the permanent *Advanced Maze* spell will allow only Tulunyr, the Nentyarch, Tifilsdóttir, Henselssonur and Xibbig to pass. However, anyone can pass if accompanied by Tulunyr. These and the other levels of Tulunyr's tower are the best refurbished in the castle. Tulunyr is a meticulous person with a bent for cleanliness. The room contains two bookshelves with tomes on magic (no spells) and spellbooks containing 75% of all spells from levels 0 to 6 in the *D&D Player's Handbook* (Game Master's choice), except for enchantment and illusion, which Tulunyr cannot learn. There also is a chest containing 30 scrolls with various spells (Game Master's choice).

6 - Spiral staircase to Tulunyr's chamber.

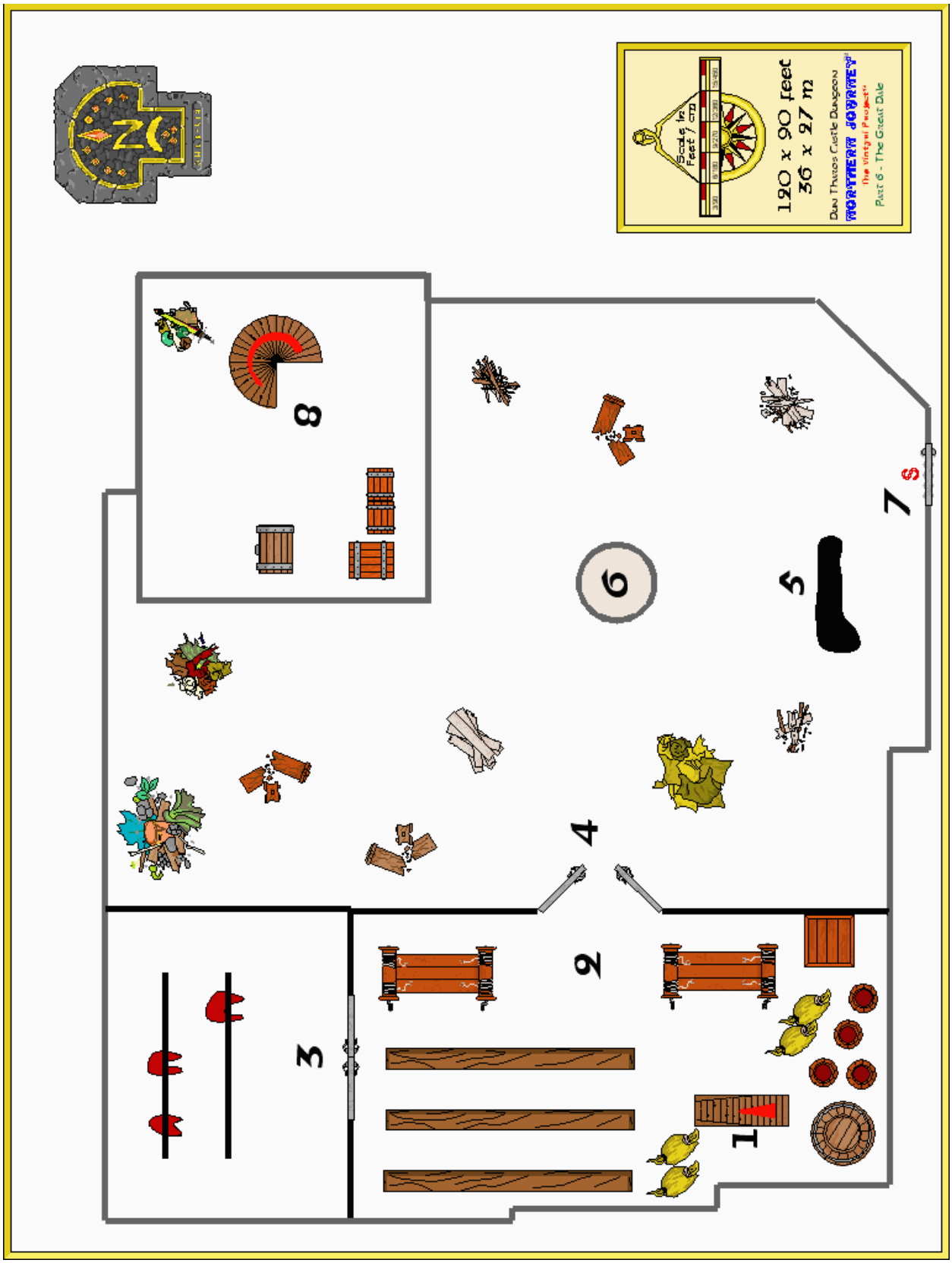
7 - Courtyard with well.

8 - Kitchen. The residents have no servants. They do their own cooking. The Nentyarch does not cook, but his followers always provide meals for him.

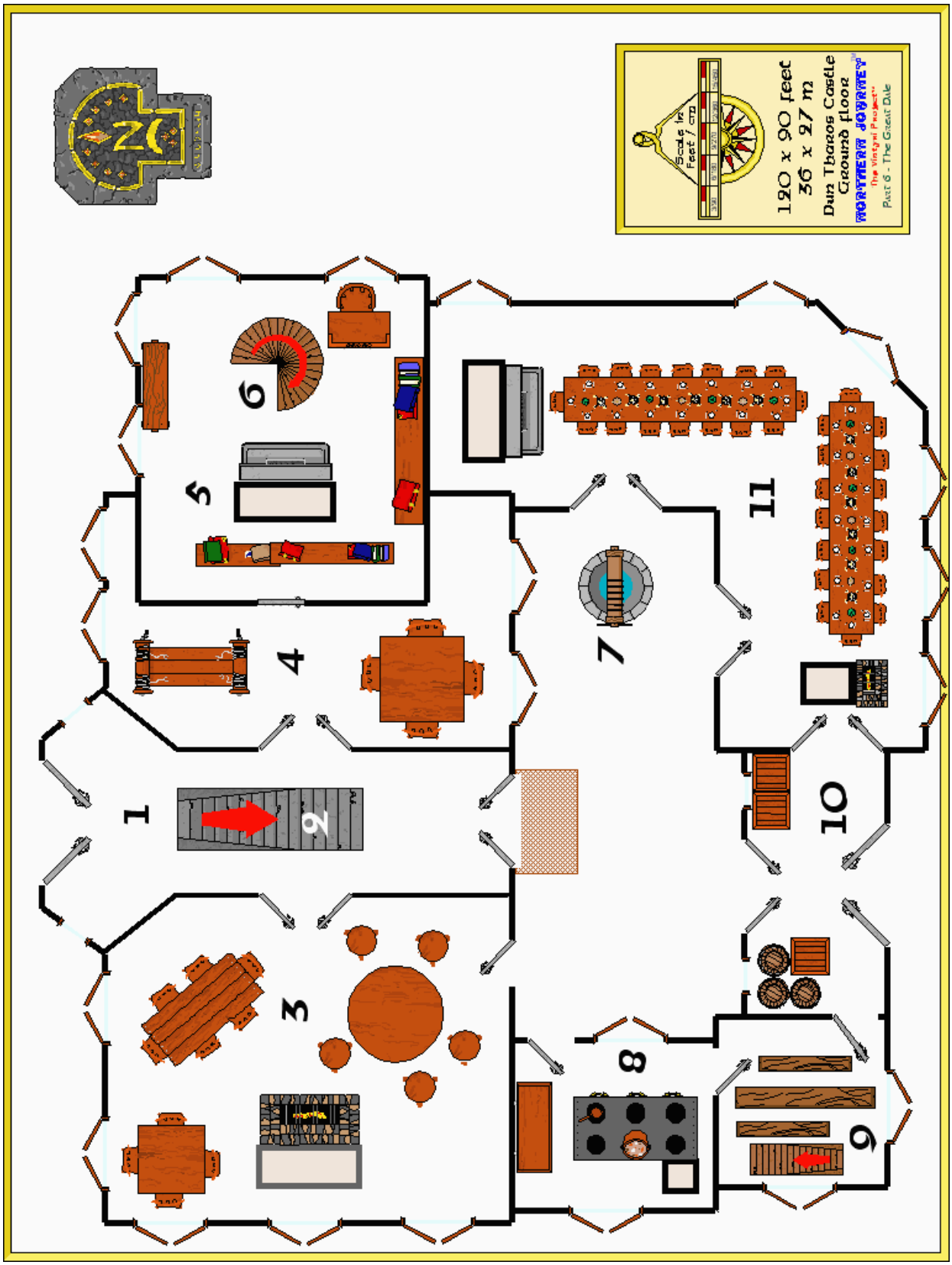
9 - Kitchen storage and stairway to the cellar.

10 - Rear kitchen entry and storage area.

11 - Dining hall.

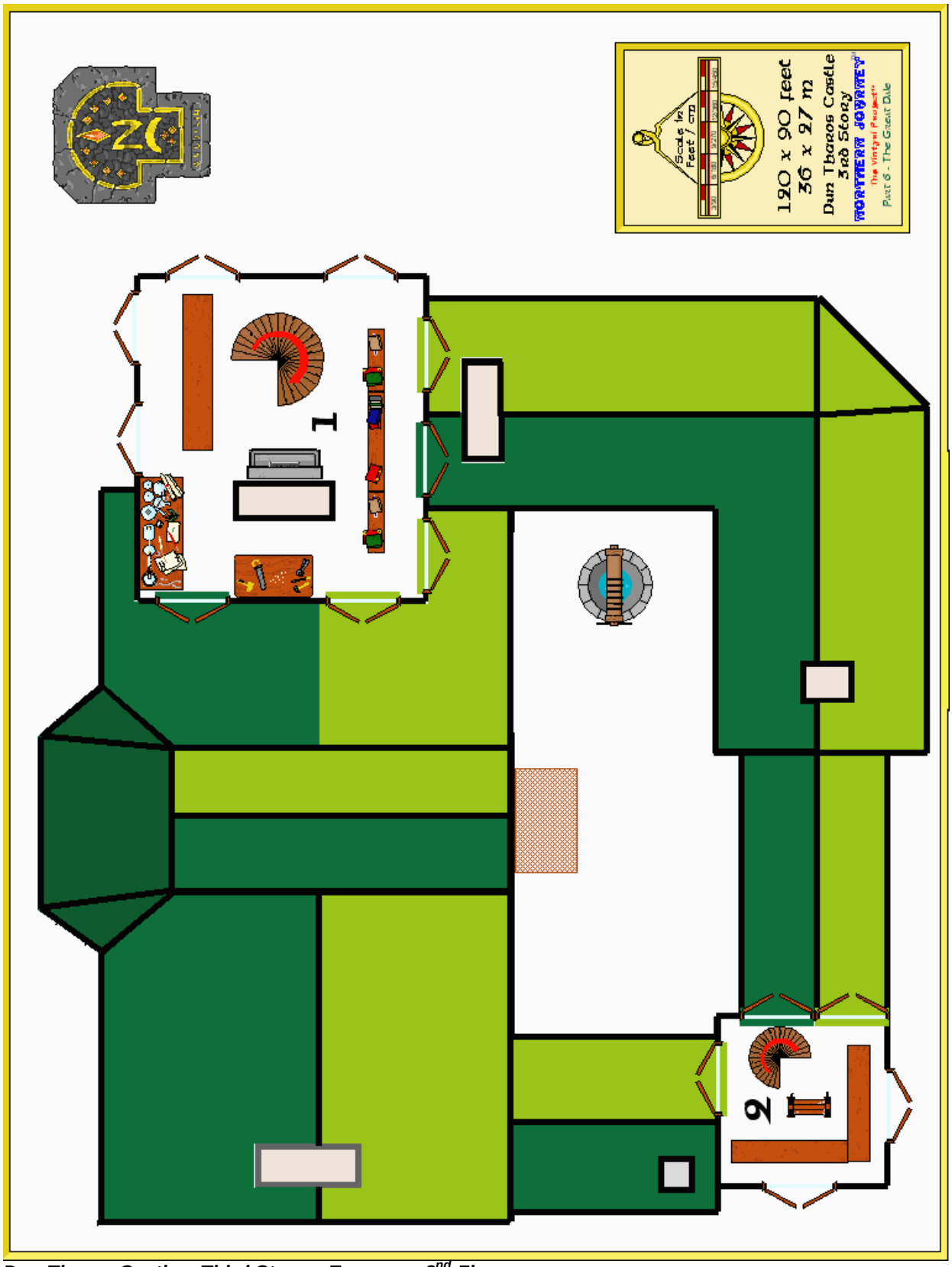


Dun Tharos Castle – Dungeon Level

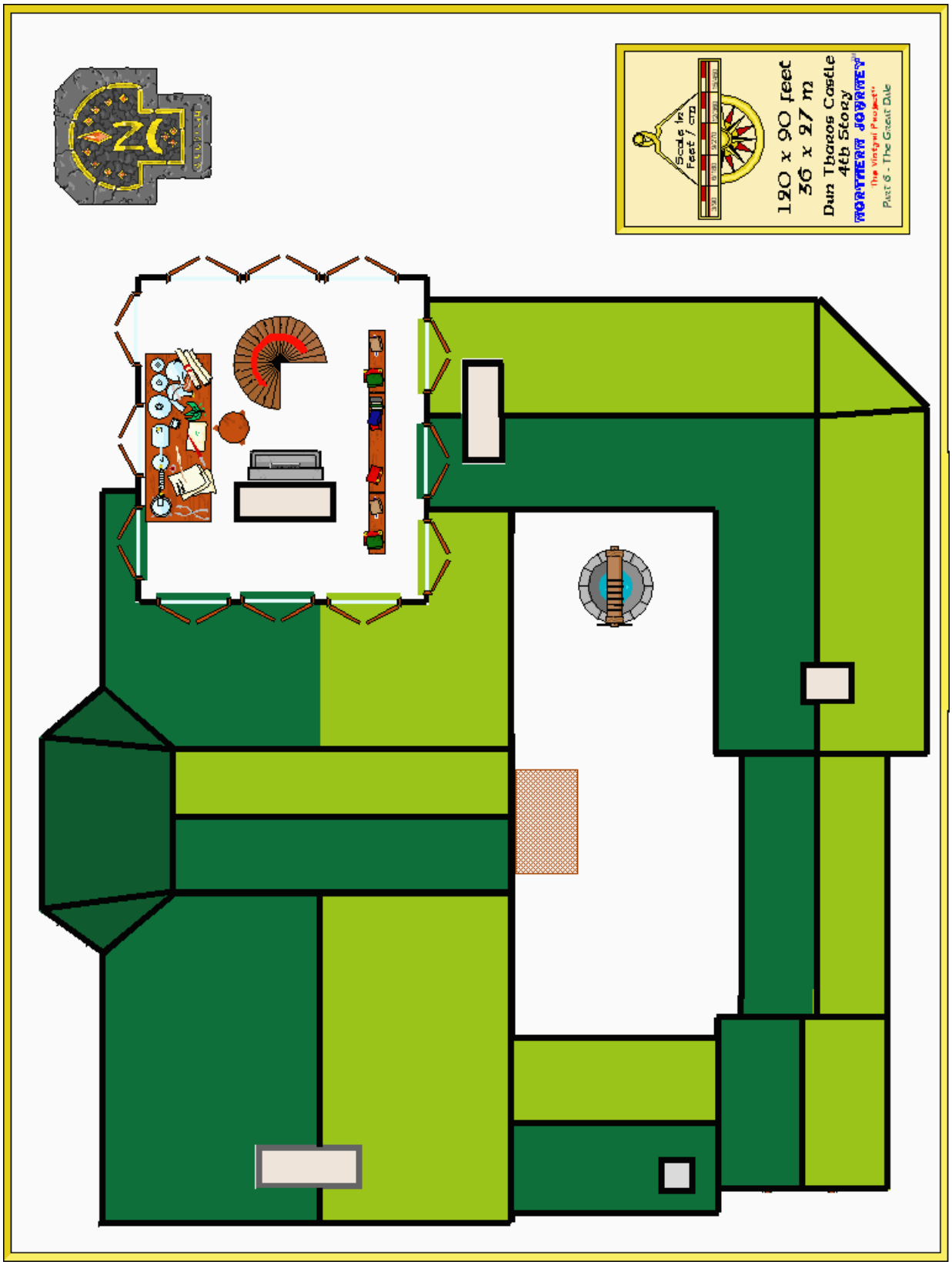


Dun Tharos Castle – Ground Floor

Dun Tharos Castle – Second Story – European 1st Floor



Dun Tharos Castle – Third Story – European 2nd Floor



Dun Tharos Castle – Fourth Story – European 3rd Floor

Dun Tharos Castle 2nd Story (European 1st floor)

1 - Foyer.

2 - Staircase. The stairway leads downward to a landing on the ground floor.

3 - Empty passages.

4 - Chamber of Yngi Tifilsdóttir. Tifilsdóttir is in the forest much more than in Dun Tharos. She uses this room infrequently. The ranger keeps nothing of particular value in it when she's away. The room has a fireplace, chimney, wooden table with six chairs, bed, dresser and two closets.

5 - Chamber of Darturugh Henselssonur. This chamber along with the outlook tower on the next story is home to the fighter. When he isn't in service to the Nentyarch, he usually can be found here on the watch. The room has a fireplace, chimney, bed, closet, table with four chairs and dresser.

6 - Chamber of Nutha Xibbig. The druidess comes to Dun Tharos only when she has urgent business with her colleagues or the Nentyarch. She spends perhaps 15 to 20 nights a year in this austere and unheated room. It contains nothing of value when she's absent. The room has a bed, a double closet, a stool and a small chest.

7- Bedchamber of Tulunyr. This level of Tulunyr's tower holds his living quarters. The only entrance is on the ground floor. The spiral staircase on this level is protected by a permanent version of the 8th level Narfelli spell *Major Paralysis* and a permanent version of the *PHB* spell *Alarm*. Together, they give Tulunyr ample time to deal with any intruder who passes his protections on the ground floor. Tulunyr seldom leaves Dun Tharos. He usually can be found in the tower. This level contains a bed, a chimney, a large dresser with stool, a double closet, a desk with chair and a table with four chairs. Tulunyr keeps nothing of value on this level, but their may be parchments in the desk that are of interest.

8 - First guest chamber. The chamber probably is unoccupied when and if the PCs reach Dun Tharos, but that is for the Game Master to decide. The room contains a fireplace, a chimney, three bunk beds, four closets and five stools. There is nothing of value in this chamber unless the Game Master has placed it there.

9 - Second guest chamber. The chamber probably is unoccupied when and if the PCs reach Dun Tharos, but that is for the Game Master to decide. The room contains a fireplace, a chimney, three bunk beds, four closets and a table with a chair and two stools. There is nothing of value in this chamber unless the Game Master has placed it there.

Dun Tharos Castle 3rd Story (European 2nd floor)

Only the towers of Tulunyr and Henselssonur have rooms on this level.

1- Laboratory of Tulunyr. This level of Tulunyr's tower houses the wizard's lab. The only entrance is on the ground floor. The spiral staircase on this level is protected by a permanent version of the 8th level Narfelli spell *Major Paralysis* and a permanent version of the *PHB* spell *Alarm*. Together, they give Tulunyr ample time to deal with any intruder who passes his protections on the ground floor. Tulunyr seldom leaves Dun Tharos. He usually can be found in the tower. This level contains a fireplace and chimney, laboratory table, a workbench, a shelf rack with spell components and other materials and a bookshelf with tomes on magic and two spellbooks with spells used in laboratory experiments (Game Master's choice).

2 - Watchtower of Darturugh Henselssonur. This chamber along with the chamber one story below is home to the fighter. When he isn't in service to the Nentyarch, he usually can be found here on the watch. The room has a two benches and a weapons rack.

Dun Tharos Castle 4th Story (European 3rd floor)

Only the Tulunyr's tower has a room on this level.

Tulunyr's Observation Deck. This room has triple windows in all four directions, each double shuttered. The only entrance is on the ground floor. The spiral staircase on this level is protected by a permanent version of the 8th level Narfelli spell *Major Paralysis* and a permanent version of the *PHB* spell *Alarm*. Together, they give Tulunyr ample time to deal with any intruder who passes his protections on the ground floor. Tulunyr seldom leaves Dun Tharos. He usually can be found in the tower. This level contains a fireplace and chimney, a large laboratory table with stool and a bookshelf with tomes on magic and two spellbooks with spells used in laboratory experiments (Game Master's choice) and material components.

Nentyarch's Tower

K'Ahlob's stone golem patrols the grounds outside of the tower. The Nentyarch lives together with the transmogrifier in K'Ahlob's ancient tower next to the castle. He seldom allows anyone into the tower. Those who do gain entry are his close allies, most often Jonas Sabin and Bronwyn, when they make their infrequent visits from Impilturian Ilmwatch. The Nentyarch also has asked Tulunyr, Tifilsdóttir, Henselssonur and Xibbig into the tower, but such visits are rare. The Nentyarch usually communicates with the four while dining with them in the castle.

The tower would radiate magic, were it not for the fact that the magic conceals itself. K'Ahlob and the spirit of the transmogrifier succeeded in weaving and interweaving a number of 10th level Narfelli spells into the very essence of the tower, despite the risks involved in violating Mystra's ban. These spells also conceal all of the tower's magic from any attempt to detect it with other spells.

The Nentyarch is not yet able to deactivate the magic shielding his tower. These spells were the work of K'Ahlob and the transmogrifier. Although Cynric Evenhand has advanced rapidly into the epic levels of sorcery, he has not yet mastered the complex and complicated spell work that would be necessary to unravel K'Ahlob's dweomers. On the other hand, the Nentyarch also has no interest in doing so. He relies upon K'Ahlob's protective magic.

The tower's shielding magic is closely linked to the Nentyarch's mind and the spirit of the transmogrifier. At any time that one or more of the interwoven spells are on the verge of being released, both the Nentyarch and the transmogrifier receive a clear mental image of the action that is about to activate a dweomer. Both are capable of mentally canceling the spell effect.

The transmogrifier's link to the magic is considerably stronger than that of the Nentyarch. In fact, the transmogrifier could annul a command by the Nentyarch to cancel a spell effect, causing it to be unleashed. The transmogrifier never has used this ability to date, and the Nentyarch is unaware of it.

The tower has no entrance, and the windows do not exist in a physical sense. A 10th level spell created by K'Ahlob called *Mental Door* is woven into the essence of the tower. The person who controls this spell can magically enter the castle. The Nentyarch believes he controls the spell, but that is not quite correct. The transmogrifier has taken control of it. The controller can mentally pass the use of the *Mental Door* on to another, and it has done this with the Nentyarch.

The secret of the spell *Mental Door* is within one of K'Ahlob's spellbooks in the tower, but the Nentyarch has not yet discovered it. However, if he were to find it, he doubtless would be able to do little to wrest control of the spell from the transmogrifier. Because *Mental Door* is a 10th level Narfelli spell, the Nentyarch needs another mage to help him cast it successfully. In this case, he could not rely upon the spirit in the transmogrifier, and Tulunyr can cast no spells above level 6.

The Nentyarch has protected most rooms in the chamber with permanent *Major Paralysis* spells and the threshold to each level on the stairway is protected with a permanent *Major Power Word, Kill* spell. Evenhand is not able to cast such spells on his own; he used K'Ahlob's scrolls. Other magic from K'Ahlob's time also remains, but the Nentyarch has not yet found the necessary spells to implement them, nor has he found any other documentation for them.

The tower has no genuine windows. Where windows appear to be, the stone walls are transparent. Light passes through the transparent stone just as it would through glass. Another magical effect maintains the temperature in the tower at an even 75°F/24°C, re gardless of what the outdoor temperature is. It also lets fresh air circulate into the tower as an open window would, but wind, heat and cold are blocked. The last magical effect causes any or all chambers of the tower to be illuminated when the Nentyarch wishes. He also can determine the strength of the illumination. No source of light is visible.

If the Game Master requires an explanation for these effects or wants rules for interfering with them, he will need to invent his own. From our viewpoint, these are simply ancient Narfelli magic. Its secrets are lost at present, but it certainly is magic of the now forbidden 10th level.

Nentyarch's Tower - Dungeon

(See floor plan.) Within a three-quarter-circle one finds 10 bookcases holding a wealth of magical tomes and spellbooks that K'Ahlob collected during his lifetime. The precise contents are left up to the Game Master. The remaining quarter circle is stacked with treasure including many magical items, coins and gems. The latter are the most coveted by the Nentyarch, because he needs the gems to power the transmogrifier.

Nentyarch's Tower - Ground Floor

1 - Banquet Hall. The Nentyarch has used this room only a few times in his more than 30 years in Dun Tharos. When he has used it, it's been as a conference room, not for banquets.

2 - Nentyarch's Chamber. This austere room is the chamber of Cynric Evenhand. It contains a bed, a dresser, a simple wooden table with six wooden chairs, a closet and four potted plants. Intruders will find nothing of value here.

3 - The Nentyarch's Druid Grove. K'Ahlob had a kitchen and food storage area in this part of the tower. The Nentyarch tore these rooms out and also the ceiling and the rooms above on the second story (European 1st floor). He converted the area into his druid grove. The Nentyarch has brought small water and land animals and birds are into this area, but they cannot leave it without his help.

Nentyarch's Tower - Second Story (European First Floor)

In K'Ahlob's time, this level served as guest housing. The Nentyarch has destroyed half of it and abandoned the rest, although he still maintains a permanent *Major Power Word, Kill* trap at the landing to the staircase and *Major Paralysis* traps at the two room entrances.

1 - Former guest rooms. One will find only junk in these rooms. They were guest rooms in K'Ahlob's time, but the Nentyarch has closed and abandoned them. All that remains in both rooms are broken furniture and junk left from K'Ahlob's time.

2 - Former guest rooms. This area no longer exists. K'Ahlob had two more guest rooms here. The Nentyarch had the center wall and the floor removed, and the door openings were walled shut. This space now is the upper half of the druid grove, Nr. 3 on the ground floor.

Nentyarch's Tower - Third Story (European Second Floor)

This is where one is most likely to find the Nentyarch and the transmogrifier during waking hours. Cynric Evenhand spends long hours here meditating, studying Narfelli magic and working arcane experiments. More than 30 years ago, he found the transmogrifier and the corpse of K'Ahlob here, between points 3 and 4.

1 - Desk. High level arcane material often is open on the desktop.

2 - Sorcerer's lab. Cynric Evenhand spends considerable time trying to develop new spells. Expensive paraphernalia is atop the workbench. Beneath are drawers filled with components.

3 - Chests with gems. These precious stones are used to empower the transmogrifier.

4 - Scrying pool.

5 - K'Ahlob's Throne. Cynric Evenhand sometimes sits long hours here and meditates.

6 - K'Ahlob's scrolls. K'Ahlob left a collection of more than 700 magical scrolls behind. They're kept here. The spells are Game Master's choice.

7 - Wash basin.

8 - Bookshelves. Contain Narfelli spellbooks and tomes on magic.

Nentyarch's Tower - Fourth Story (European Third Floor)

In the time before K'Ahlob had finished the transmogrifier (in Dungeon System Map Location No. 3), he used this level of the tower for his magical experiments in the transmutation of humans and elves into other life forms. After mastering the transmogrifier, he simply abandoned this tower level, no longer having use for it. In doing so, he left seven potential victims locked in to starve. The Nentyarch explored this area more than 30 years ago and removed the spellbooks from it, but he has not entered it since that time. As in K'Ahlob's later years, this level is not in use.

1 - Holding Cells. The keys to these cells hang of the wall just above the number 1 on the floor plan, but the PCs will not need them. When the Nentyarch explored this area, he opened the cell doors and left them open. Except for the death trap on the landing of the staircase, there are no dangers in this area. Each cell contains a dilapidated bed and an inanimate skeleton. If the PCs examine the skeletons and have the ability to make such determinations, they will find that these are the skeletons of the following creatures from left to right: Human male, human female, human male, elf female, human male, elf male.

2 - Teleport. This permanent teleport stage was used by K'Ahlob to teleport himself to and from a secret location he once had used in Heligonius, the capital of ancient Narfell. The magic of the teleport stage was corrupted when Heligonius was eradicated during the mutual destruction of Narfell and Raumathar. Any PC (or other being) who steps onto the teleport stage must make a save for Will at DC 30 (2nd Edition: Save against magic with a penalty of 2), or he or she will be teleported to a random location elsewhere in the Realms and out of the adventure. Use the rules in the *PHB* to determine more about the teleportation result. 3rd Editon campaigns always roll for *False Destination*. If the result is *Similar Area*, the PC arrives undamaged in the area chosen by the Game Master, otherwise the rules for *Mishap* take effect. 2nd Edition campaigns always use the table entry for *Never Seen,* with the results relating to the destination determined by the Game Master. Each teleported being lands in an entirely different place from the others.

3 - Bookshelf. The Nentyarch long ago removed the spellbooks and scrolls that K'Ahlob had stored here. All that remains are journals reporting the nature and results of his transmutation experiments upon humans and elves as well as the equipment he used and the spell components.

4 - Work Bench. K'Ahlob chained his victims to this stone work bench. His last victim remains upon the bench as an inanimate skeleton. If the PCs are capable of making such determinations and attempt to do so, they will find that this is the skeleton of a female elf.

5 - Magic Circles. The Game Master can decide how K'Ahlob used these circles and what powers or effects they still have today, if any.

Nentyarch's Tower - Fifth Story (European Fourth Floor)

The Nentyarch often can be found on this level. If they are able to do so, the PCs will detect strong magic of the schools Transmutation and Divination, but they will not be able to better identify the magic, because Narfelli enchantments of the 10th level were used. This top tower level has three basic magical abilities. One of them has to do with the *Seer's Disk* (No. 3). The other are additional enchantments upon the transparent stone that serves as windows. The window stones will allow spells and projectiles to pass outward through the wall, but they will let no non-magic projectiles through them. If attempts are made to send magic through the stone windows, the DC in most cases will be 40. The windows stones also have scrying magic that is easy to command and use, but PCs would have to come upon the idea that it is there before they can command it. Anyone peering out through a window (not just spell users) can concentrate on any area within 25 miles/40 km of the tower and view the site as though one were 30 feet/9m from and 50 feet/15 m above the site. This magic is most effective in daylight. An attempt to peer into an unilluminated area at night will show only darkness. The magic also cannot show more in fog than one would see if one actually were at the viewpoint.

1 - Brass rail.

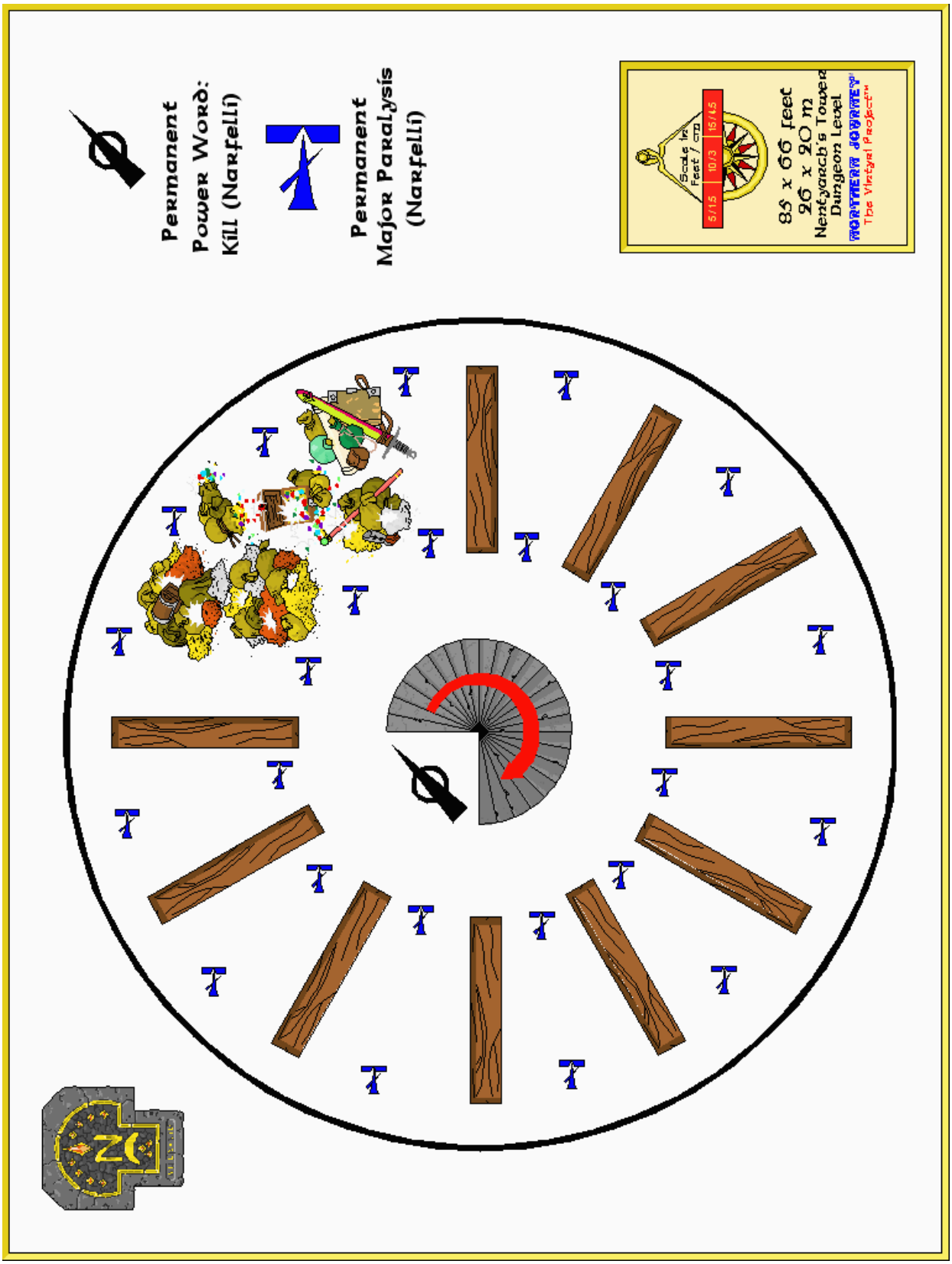
2 - Circular wooden bench.

3 - Seer's Disk. This is a wooden disk 6 feet/2m in diameter with constantly flashing magical red light upon its surface. Up to five persons can step onto the disk and with a mental command order it to whisk to any point within this tower level. The disk does have one irritating secondary effect: If more than one person is upon the disk and it receives simultaneous contradicting orders from its passengers, it whisks immediately to a point exactly 2 yards/meters over the center of the stairs. There it will immediately flip over and dump all passengers onto the stairs or the magically protected landing. Those who fall on the landing can set the death magic there off. To determine who lands on the landing see the table below. Those dumped may check for dexterity to suffer normal falling damage. If they fail, they sustain double damage. The distance between floors is 10 feet/3 m. This means that each passenger falls 1d10 + 6 feet or 1d3 + 2 m, individually rolled.

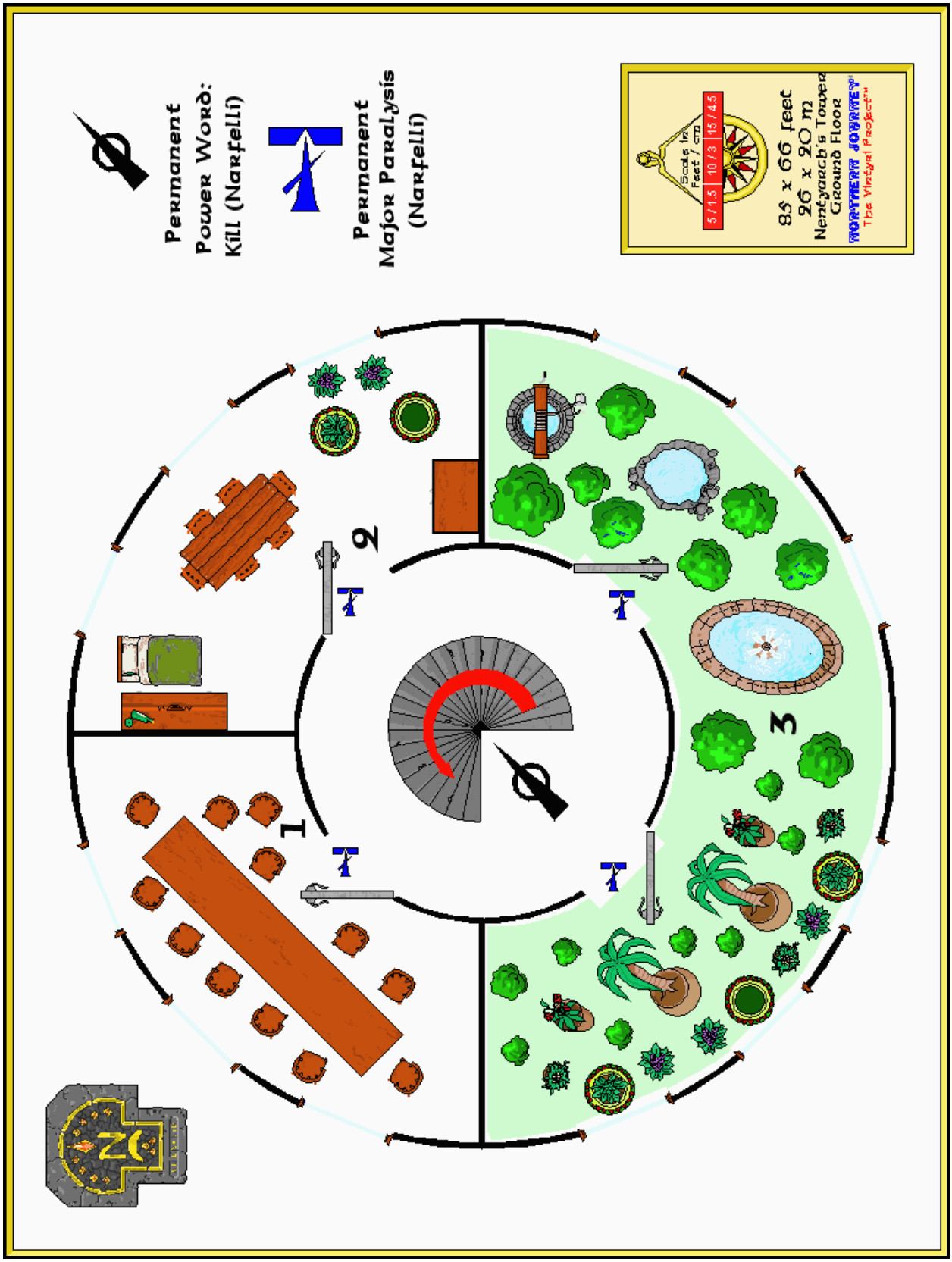
Chances of Falling onto the Landing

Number of Persons on the Disk	Chance
1	25% (1-25 on d100)
2	12% each (1-12 on d100) individually rolled.
3	33% (1-33 on d100)*
4	67% (1-67 on d100)*
5	100%*

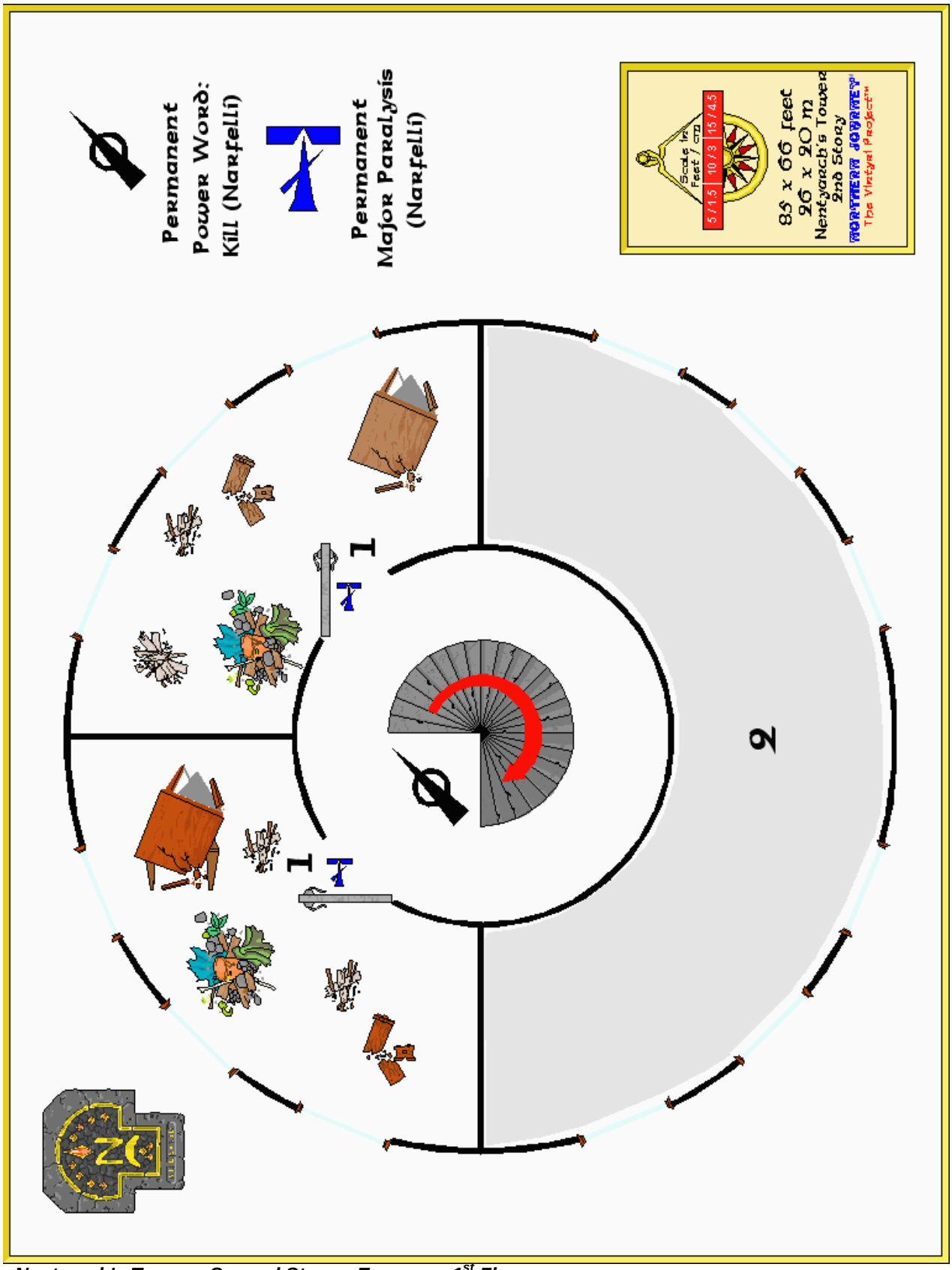
* When three people are on the disk and there is a fall onto the landing, 1 person will fall onto the landing and the death trap. If four persons are on the disk and there is a fall onto the landing, there is a 75% chance only one will fall onto the landing. If five persons are on the disk, there is a 60% chance only one will fall onto the landing. Each being on the disk rolls 1d20 to determine who falls onto the landing and the death trap. Those with the lowest rolls lose.



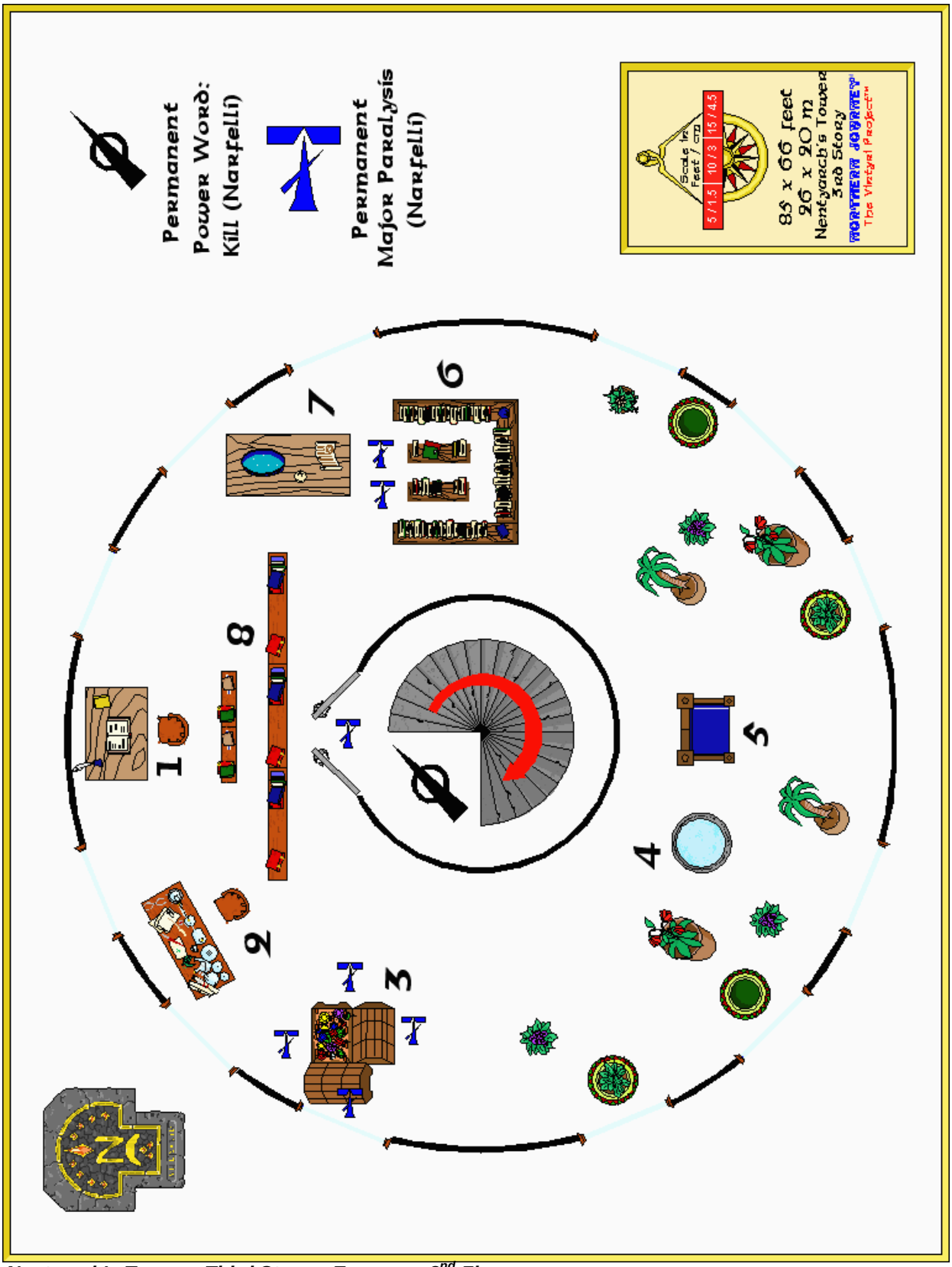
Nentyarch's Tower - Dungeon



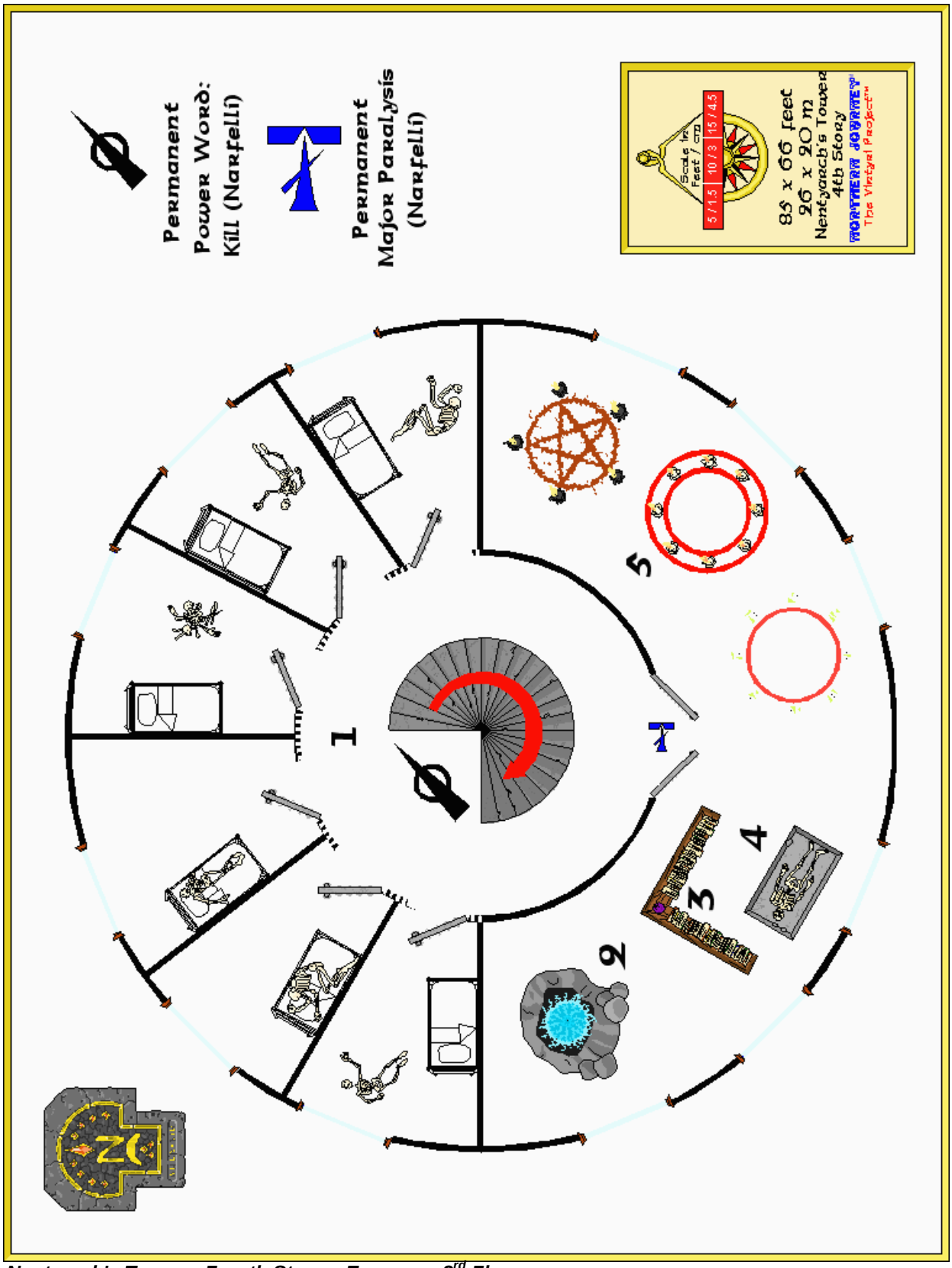
Nentyarch's Tower – Ground Floor



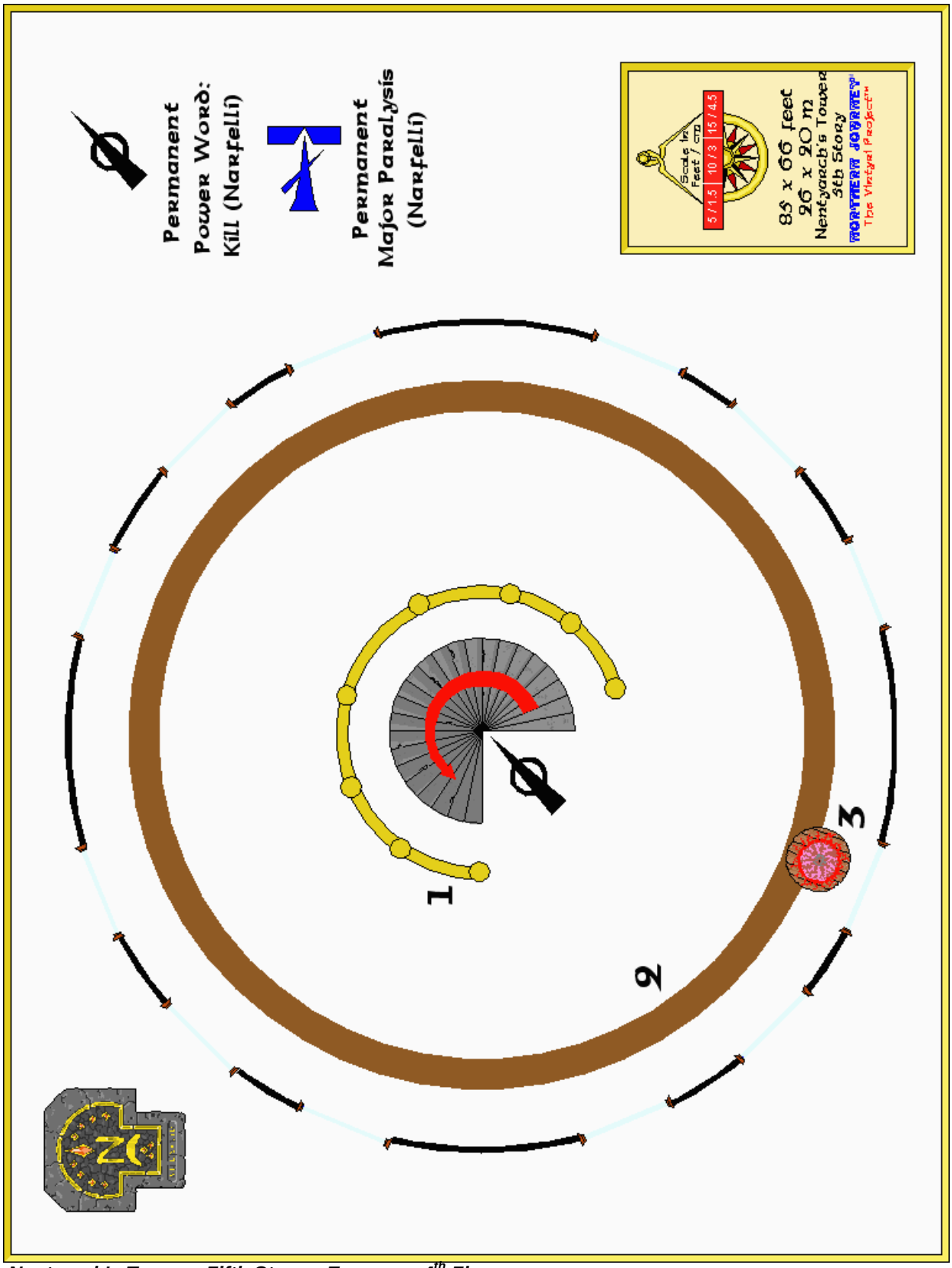
Nentyarch's Tower – Second Story – European 1st Floor



Nentyarch's Tower – Third Story – European 2nd Floor



Nentyarch's Tower – Fourth Story – European 3rd Floor



Nentyarch's Tower – Fifth Story – European 4th Floor

Kro Tharos, Mal Nu'ill and T'uluar (Illusory Ruins)

Kro Tharos

Thorp, Nonstandard (green elven commune under wizard-druid dictator), AL: N, Gp limit: 0 gp. Assets: Almost none. Population: 5 green elves. Authority figures: The Nentyarch (Cynric Evenhand), human male, AL: N(E), epic level sorcerer 23, druid (Silvanus) 8 in Dun Tharos, Nana Tal'Luan, green elf female, AL: N, ranger 15, enclave leader. Taxation: None. Accepted coinage: N/A.

Mal Nu'ill

Thorp and Ruin, Nonstandard (green elven commune under wizard-druid dictator), AL: N, Gp limit: 0 gp. Assets: Almost none. Population: 5 green elves. Authority figures: The Nentyarch (Cynric Evenhand), human male, AL: N(E), epic level sorcerer 23, druid (Silvanus) 8 in Dun Tharos, Ha'an Ku'Lanur, green elf male, AL: N, ranger 5, enclave leader. Taxation: None. Accepted coinage: N/A.

T'uluar

Thorp, Nonstandard (green elven commune under wizard-druid dictator), AL: N, Gp limit: 0 gp. Assets: Almost none. Population: 5 green elves. Authority figures: The Nentyarch (Cynric Evenhand), human male, AL: N(E), epic level sorcerer 23, druid (Silvanus) 8 in Dun Tharos, Uar'th Lin'tarin, green elf male, AL: N, ranger 10, enclave leader. Taxation: None. Accepted coinage: N/A.

These three settlements are grouped here because of their almost identical natures. All three are protected by ancient 10th level Mal T'unan magic that creates an illusory image of ancient ruins and green elven ghosts who haunt these ruins.

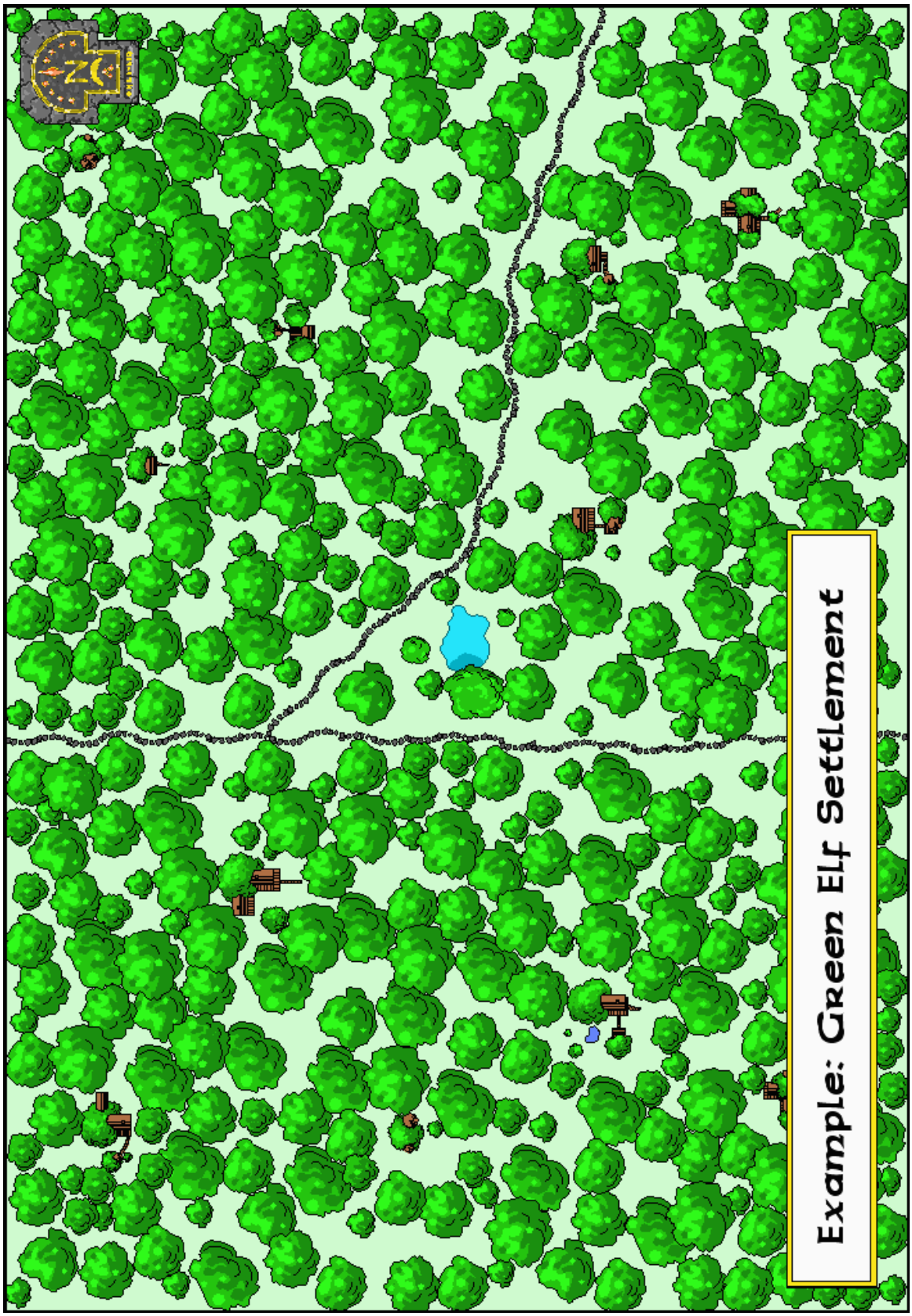
Only those who interact with the illusions and specifically doubt their reality are entitled to save for Will at DC 40. A successful save dispels the illusion in the eyes of the viewer who succeeded in the saving throw. What one really finds then is forest and - if a really close examination is made - the hidden shelters of green elves in the trees above. Those who do not make a savings throw or who fail at it see the ruins and must deal with the ghosts as if they are real. Because the ghosts are illusions, a priest can create only the illusion of turning them, and an opponent can achieve only the illusion of destroying them. In both cases, seemingly destroyed or turned ghosts will return after one day. In each of the three sites, intruders will encounter 18 illusory ghosts.

> **ILLUSORY GHOST (3E):** Medium Sized Undead (Incorporeal), Hit Dice 5d12 (44 hp). Initiative +5 (+1 Dex, +1 Improved Initiative), Speed: Fly: 30 feet (perfect). Armor class: 12 (+1 dex, +1 deflection). Attacks: incorporeal touch +6 melee or longsword (+6 melee). Damage: Incorporeal touch 1d4 (1d4+3 vs. incorporeal). Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft. Special attacks: Manifestation, corrupting touch, malevolence. Special qualities: Undead, incorporeal, +4 turn resistance, rejuvenation. Saves: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2. Abilities: Str 16, Dex 13, Con: NA, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12. Skils: Climb +11, Hide +9, Listen +11, Ride +9, Seach +8, Spot +11. Feats: Blindfight, cleave, improved initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus: Long sword. The Will save against an illusory ghost is at DC 16.
>
> **ILLUSORY GHOST (2E):** AC: 0 (half corporeal) or 8 (ethereal). Move: 9. TW: 10. HP: 66. ETW0: 11. Attacks: Touch. Damage: Victim ages 10d4 years. Special attacks: Panic and aging upon sight, Magic Jar. Special defenses: Ethereal. Size: M, 5-6 feet/150-180 cm. Morale: Special. XP Value: 7,000.

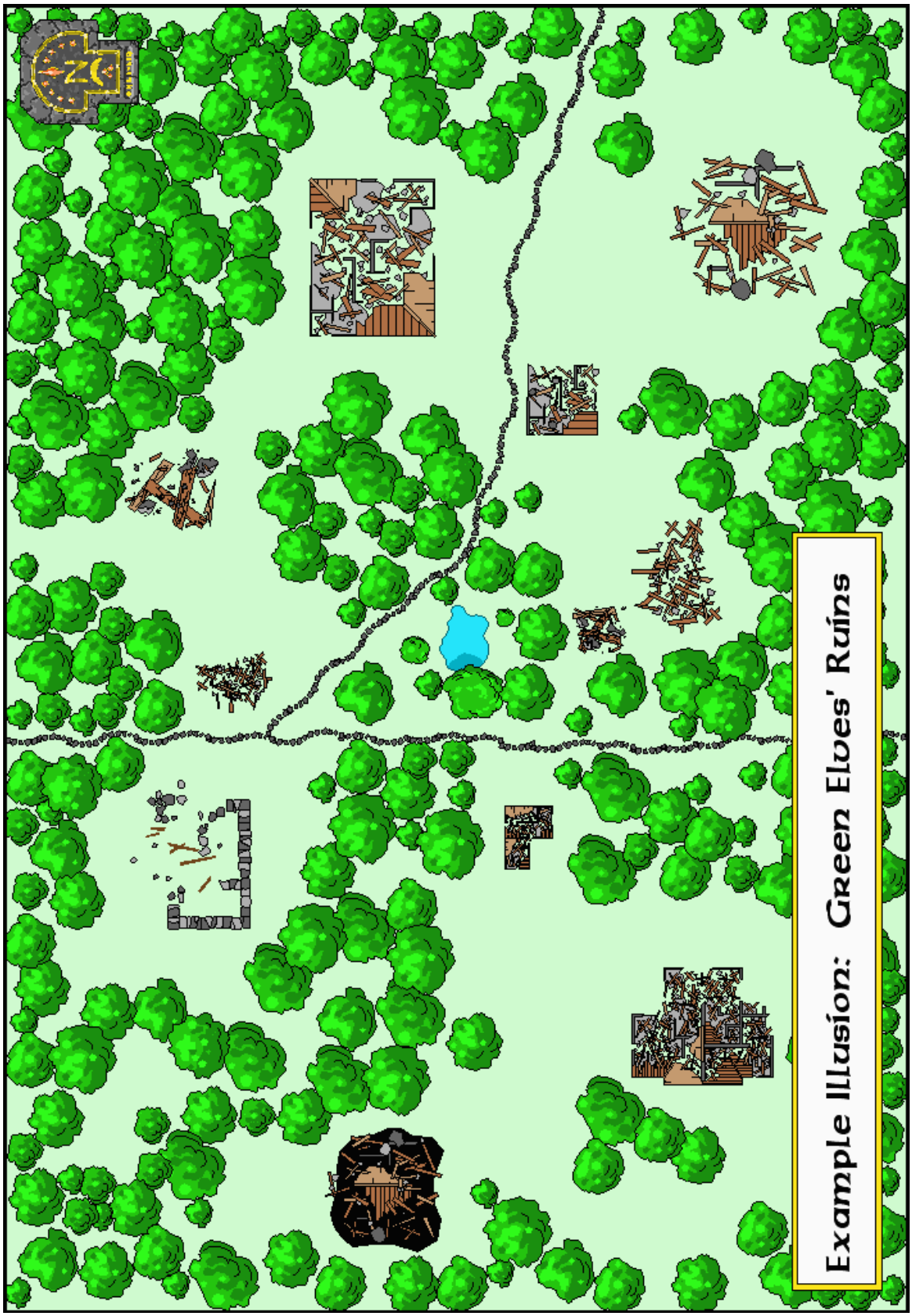
It is not possible to describe these sites specifically, because both the disguised reality and the illusory disguise constantly change. The Mal T'unan descendant green elves who populate the surroundings build provisional tree houses, moving them regularly. They build no permanent structures. Rather than using wells, they bring fresh forest stream water to their settlements in waterskins. The illusion also regularly changes the position and appearances of the ruins it creates, making the seemingly abandoned settlement look different each time it is visited.

As a result, we can provide only sample maps to give the Game Master an idea how the illusions in one of the three settlements might look at any time and how the reality in Kro Tharos or T'uluar could look at anytime. If the illusions in Mal Nu'ill are dispelled, one will see only an area roughly 150 feet/45 m in diameter where there is evidence of a forest fire, with small saplings, now five to 10 feet/150 to 300 cm high, beginning to reforest the site.

In the Year of the Sword (1365 DR), Malarite followers of Skith Tsornagar in Bezentil managed to set the forest afire where Mal Nu'ill had stood. Today, Uar'th Lin'tarin and his small band of rangers maintain their treehouse settlement on the outskirts of the site, where the older trees still stand.



Elven Settlement - Reality



Elven Settlement - Illusion

G. Lethyr Forest

Large parts of Lethyr Forest are known mostly only to druids and rangers, who sometimes report that the isolated parts of the wood are home to ancient treants with little tolerance for human incursion, dryads and various types of woodland monsters. They also speak of many ancient overgrown ruins of the Mal T'unan green elves who once made Lethyr Forest and Rawlinswood their home at a time when both forests were one and known as Auldgloam.

Little is known of these areas. Their further development is left to the individual Game Master's imagination. The populated areas of Lethyr forest tend to run through its center, where Harbet Gall's Hunters of Herne cut a road in the early 11th century, and along its edges. The eastern part of Lethyr Forest, northeast of Sudhofn, is something of a no man's land, with the battle-ready Mucklestones Druids being the strongest power there.

The westernmost settlement in Lethyr Forest is Mauberg's Oak, in a forest glade atop the Mauberg between the village of Mauberg and New Sarshel. The churches of Chauntea and Ilmater, who maintain temples to both gods, operate the double monastery jointly. Priests of Ilmater and non-combatant monks of both faiths are trained in the monasteries there.

Nearby are also large groves and glades consecrated to Silvanus and Mielikki. *Mauberg's Oak* is dedicated to the four of the gods most frequently worshipped along the western stretch of the Trade Route. The monks of Chauntea operate their own barley-malting house and one of Faerûn's largest distilleries for malt whisky, fruit wines and schnapps in Faerûn.

In the Year of the Staff (1366 DR), the brothers substantially expanded their malting house. Since then, they also run the only malt whisky distillery east of the Dragon Reach. The beer and ale they brew is consumed for the most part within the Great Dale, but the excellent fruit wines, schnapps and whiskies bring high prices and are exported from Uthmere and New Sarshel to points all around western Faerûn.

Unknown to the brothers, the Iron Throne is their principal exporter. The Throne reaps the greatest profit of all from the brothers' work, but the monastery too has substantial earnings which are funneled back into supporting the towns, villages and settlements along the Trade Route.

The priests and monks of Ilmater came to the Mauberg only relatively recently, in the Year of the Helm (1362 DR). With help from the Dalesmen, monks of the *Disciples of St. Sollars the Twice-Martyred* who traveled to Mauberg's Oak from the Monastery of the Yellow Rose above Damara rebuilt an ancient elven forest fortress on the southern fringe of the glade into a monastery with facilities to care for the ill and the wounded. Special attention is given to the healing of Silvanus' druids and Mielikki's rangers who are injured or wounded in their seemingly unending clashes with the huntsmen of *Herne* inside of Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest.

Another important goal behind the monks' journey to the Mauberg was to spirit valuable writings that deal with genealogical trees within Damara and in the region surrounding the Inner Sea out of the country. The monks were convinced that more than one ruler of Damara's baronies were commoners making false claims of noble lineage.

In the peace of the Mauberg, they were able to prove and document that their theories were correct, making a critical contribution to the series of events that led to the overthrow of several evil barons in Damara and the eventual coronation in the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR) of Sir Gareth Dragonsbane, himself a paladin of Ilmater in the *Order of the Golden Cup,* as king of Damara (see the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* and Segment No.7, *Bloodstone*). They now are investigating whether members of other nobilities within the area surrounding the Sea of Fallen Stars may be imposters.

The Mauberg drops steeply downward to the Akarnfljót River, which has its source on the southeastern foot of the Mauberg and then flows into Easting Reach at New Sarshel. The river marks part of the boundary between the *"civilized"* Dale in western Lethyr Forest and no man's land.

The eastern part of that boundary is the foot trail from Mauberg's Oak to Leifrskross, Veidarsudur and Spearmouthdale. The woodland path, used rarely today and then usually only by druids and rangers, once was a major Narfelli road cutting through the forest and linking the western Trade Route with the Golden Way where Theskan Phsant now stands.

The stretch of the road from Veststad to Mauberg and Mauberg's Oak is maintained and still is in full use, as is the southeastern leg from Leifrskross to Phsant, but the segment from Mauberg's Oak to Leifrskross fell out of use after the Gallists captured Leifrskross and Spearmouthdale and built Veidarsudur some 350 years ago. The forest has reclaimed most of this stretch of the road. All that remains is a narrow foot trail.

South of the trail and south of the Akarnfljót, Lethyr forest is for the most part still untamed wilderness tread usually only by druids and rangers of both the Freemen and the Hunters of Herne. Neither side controls this territory, except for the lower Eth and Flam agricultural valleys, which are firmly in the hands of the Freemen. The upper valleys of both rivers, where the forest's canopy edges toward the river banks, remain dangerous, not only because of woodland monsters but also because the druids and rangers of Herne have hunted humans who have attempted to settle there.

The southwestern leg of the wood still has respectable populations of treants and dryads and also a variety of woodland monsters. Particularly dangerous is a large band of up to 500 nomadic hobgoblins. The tribe camps at various locations within the wood, and it often seems to disappear completely at times. The hobgoblins are enemies of both sides in the civil war. They occasionally launch attacks in the Freemen's agricultural lands on the lower Eth and Flam as well as against the Gallists' Leifrskross, Veidarsudur and, on two occasions, even Spearmouthdale.

How the hobgoblins came to this part of the forest is uncertain. It appears that they have been there for less than three centuries, which tends to substantiate the theory of some that they were deserters from the host that attacked Impiltur and was defeated by Imphras I in the Year of the Dawndance (1095 DR). However, it seems unlikely that the hobgoblins would have fled around the northern end of Easting Reach and then headed south again over miles and miles of open land into Lethyr Forest without a single tale, song or parchment mentioning such an event.

More likely is the theory that some branches of the old gnome delves beneath Rawlinswood reached far south beneath Lethyr as well. It could be that the connecting tunnels have caved in or that they simply have not yet been found. This theory also would explain how the hobgoblins seem to manage to vanish now and then.

Central Lethyr Forest has been firmly in the grip of Harbet Gall's followers since their conquests some 350 years ago, when they cleared a large swatch of the forest and built the heavily-patrolled road between Bridhh and Mettledale. The road marks the northeastern boundary of the Gallists' territory. It ends in the southwest at the Leth and along the trail and road from Mauberg's Oak to Spearmouthdale.

Leifrskross, Spearmouthdale and Nyldyng were Freemen's settlements with long-standing traditions, going back more than 2,500 years to the pre-Narfelli times when Turami immigrants first settled the Dale. When the Hunters of Herne conquered Leifrskross and Spearmouthdale, they destroyed the small thorp of Nyldyng, which never has been rebuilt. Little remains to be seen of the settlement, which has been reclaimed by the wood.

After their conquests, Gall's followers built the hunting hamlet of Veidarsudur and the walled forest town of Herneburg, both of which still stand and serve the Hunters of Herne today. They also constructed the roadside thorp of Sudhofn, which was destroyed twice by the Mucklestones Druids. All that one finds now on the site of Sudhofn are remnants of a few ruins and a fortified way station built by the Hunters of Herne in the Year of Spilled Blood (1315 DR).

Hunting is the main occupation in Leifrskross, Veidarsudur and Herneburg, but 200 of the latter town's residents are fighters and warriors who not only patrol the road between Bridhh and Mettledale but also are responsible for the general defense of all the Gallists' central Lethyr settlements.

The area is a dangerous place to be, particularly for any connected with the Freemen or their druid or ranger allies. If a stranger is encountered by the Hunters of Herne in this part of the forest, and he or she survives the encounter, some fancy talking may be necessary to avoid being thrown into a pen until prey is needed for the next Great Hunt.

Even more dangerous is the northeastern part of Rawlinswood, northeast of the road connecting Bridhh and Mettledale. This area often has been contested, and through most of its history and in the present, it has been dominated by the Mucklestones Druids but not truly controlled by anyone.

For centuries, the Narfelli, the Hunters of Herne and later High Huntmaster Skith Tsornagar and his Malarite followers in Bezentil have attempted to drive the Mucklestones Druids from this part of the forest, often with a modicum of success. There have been many times when one could count on one's fingers the number of surviving Mucklestones Druids, but they are a very resilient group and always have returned to reclaim this part of the wood.

There are only three important sites within this part of the wood. There is no reality left to the ancient green elven village of Mal K'ustan. It was devastated by the Narfelli and then totally destroyed in the war between Raumathar and Narfell. All that remains is the site where the elven settlement stood.

However, with time that site has become enshrouded with ever more magic. It is the home goal of the Mucklestones Druids in the forest, and it contains their magical escape gate to the astral plane. A magic upon the site conjures illusory memory fragments of old Mal K'ustan.

Since after the Time of Troubles, Mal K'ustan also is protected by ancient elven magic which helps the site elude intruders. When outsiders come within sight of the position of old Mal K'ustan, they can make it out, but they cannot reach it. Instead, it appears to continually move away from the intruders.

Fortress Narder was built by the Narfelli, destroyed in the war with Raumathar, rebuilt by Harbet Gall and later abandoned by him after many attacks and sieges by the Mucklestones Druids. Large sections of the outer defensive wall and sections of many of the internal structures still stand, but they are highly instable and cave in easily. Above Fortress Narder to the southeast are small quarries and iron mines that were worked in the past by the Gallists and the Malarites of Bezentil but later abandoned by both because of Mucklestones attacks.

There is one other element of substantial strength in the eastern forest, a band of some 1,500 renegade Zhentish orcs from King Azoun's crusade who remained in Thesk in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR). They sought and found sanctuary in eastern Lethyr Forest.

To date, the Mucklestones Druids have not acted against the orcs, partly because they are doing little to threaten the forest's balance and partly because the orcs frequently attack and harry the Hunters of Herne. They make regular raids on supply caravans riding the Tears Creek Valley between Mettledale and Kront. They also raid supply caravans coming from Tammar in Thesk to Mettledale.

The orcs are nomadic in their patterns. Their base camp, however, is at the site of elven Mal D'aan, which had been abandoned by the green elves nearly two millennia ago. The ruins were destroyed in the Narfelli-Raumathari war some 1,500 years ago. There is no evidence on the surface of Mal D'aan to indicate that elves ever were there. But the Mucklestones Druids claim some abandoned or lost elven items can be found by digging there.

Lethyr Forest is one of the more dangerous areas of the Great Dale. No one rules most parts of it, but it's filled with many dangerous people and creatures. Most of them don't have the least bit of trust in anyone or anything else they come across in the great wood (usually with good reason). Therefore, most of the wood's denizens - be they good or evil - tend to shoot first and ask questions later. There is a strip of evil semi-civilization through the center of the wood, but the rest is a dark unknown to most Dalesmen, woodland of dark and ancient legend where they dare not go.

This is not to say that it is unpopulated, however. In the unsettled parts of Lethyr Forest, one will find:

- Bands of rangers serving the Freemen of the Dale and bands of evil rangers known as the Hunters of Herne. Both are ready and willing to slay each other and any other sentient beings they spot in the wood.

- Some 1,500 renegade Zhentish orcs who had been a part of King Azoun's crusade in Thesk in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR) and then sought and found sanctuary in Lethyr Forest. They too are quick to slay anything that they consider a threat, which includes most sentient and some non-sentient beings.

- A band of 500 nomadic hobgoblins of uncertain origin, no less willing than anyone else to attack and slay other sentient beings.

- The Mucklestones Druids, who are quick to eradicate the Hunters of Herne or anyone whom they suspect of being allied with the Gallists.

- Occasional parties of foolish hunters or adventurers who have not yet been destroyed by any of the groups already named.

These elements of the forest are well known. Adventurers out to gather information can hear tales in just about any tavern or inn bordering the forest - not all of them true - about any or all of these elements. Nevertheless, there's a lot more to Lethyr Forest than that.

Lethyr has a higher than average population of treants who shepherd the great and ancient trees of the forest. Not all of the trees they shepherd are good, in fact, some of them are downright evil, and that includes *black trees* (s. *Monsters of Faerûn*). One also may encounter dryads. In eastern Lethyr Forest, there still remain some *green warders* (s. *Monsters of Faerûn*) who apparently now serve the Mucklestones Druids.

If a PC group manages to avoid sentient enemies, that's no guarantee that they won't encounter equally dangerous bears who are seeking a meal or wild boar insanely protecting their young. There are other strange creatures in the forest as well.

As a source, we suggest not only the *D&D Monster Manual* core book, but also the d20® publication *Minions Rebirth* by Greg Dent from *Bastion Press* (2002). You'll find all the details on this and other Bastion products in Internet at http://www.bastionpress.com. From the *Monster Manual* we suggest the *Assassin Vine* and the *Roper*. From *Minions Rebirth* we suggest the *Death's Bloom* mushroom. In those areas of Lethyr Forest that were destroyed during battles, some of the fascinating *Ebants* and *Stranglebarks* from *Minions Rebirth* are certain to be found.

Wet areas of the forest are almost certain to be home to *Snatch Toads* (*Minions Rebirth*). In areas where the Mucklestones Druids are strong, there also are *Owdi* (*Minions Rebirth*). *Slithervines* (*Minions Rebirth*) are found in the deep interior of Lethyr Forest. In its darker parts, one also may encounter *Ebon Spiders* (*Minions Rebirth*). Finally, *Amberjurons* (*Minions Rebirth*) also are in the wood.

Lethyr Forest not only is the home of such creatures, animals and plant forms, but it's also a treasure chest of valuable herbs that can aid and in some cases save the lives of your PCs (as well as their enemies.) Your authority in this field is the d20 accessory *Alchemy & Herbalists* an outstanding work by Steven E. Schend (2001), also from Bastion Press. No campaign that involves nature, forests or druids should be without this book.

We have, of course, mentioned a number of foes, monsters and other possible threats from the realm of forest life. Just where in Lethyr Forest are these delights lurking? When it's not more closely defined in the text, we'll leave that decision up to you, the Game Master.

Large parts of Lethyr Forest are known mostly only to druids and rangers. From them come the reports that the isolated parts of the wood are home to ancient treants with little tolerance for human incursion, treants with evil ebants in their flocks. They also tell of dryads and various types of woodland monsters. They speak too of ancient overgrown ruins of the Mal T'unan green elves who once made Lethyr Forest and Rawlinswood their home at a time when both forests were one and known as Auldgloam.

Little is known of western Lethyr Forest. It is simultaneously a no man's land and everyone's land. The Freemen, the druids of Silvanus, the rangers of Mielikki, the true druids of Herne, the Hunters of Herne and the animals and monsters of Lethyr Forest clash frequently in this purportedly beautiful but deadly leg of the wood. The detailed development of this part of the forest is left up to the individual Game Master's imagination.

Outside of Mauberg's Oak, described under *The Trade Route*, the populated areas of Lethyr forest tend to run through its center, where Harbet Gall's Hunters of Herne cut a road in the early 11th century, and along its edges. The eastern part of Lethyr Forest, northeast of Sudhofn, is something of a no man's land, with the battle-ready Mucklestones Druids being the strongest power there.

The westernmost settlement in Lethyr Forest is Mauberg's Oak atop a mountain called the Mauberg. Its south slope drops steeply downward to the Akarnfljót River, which has its source on the southeastern foot of the Mauberg and then flows into Easting Reach at New Sarshel. The river marks part of the boundary between the *"civilized"* Dale in western Lethyr Forest and no man's land.

The eastern part of that boundary is the foot trail from Mauberg's Oak to Leifrskross, Veidarsudur and Spearmouthdale. The woodland path, used rarely today and then usually only by druids and rangers, once was a Turami forest trail and later a major Narfelli road cutting through the forest and linking the western Trade Route with the Golden Way where Theskan Phsant now stands.

This road from Mauberg's Oak to Leifrskross fell out of use after the Gallists captured Leifrskross and Spearmouthdale and built Veidarsudur nearly 400 years ago. In the intervening years, the forest reclaimed most of this stretch. All that remains is a narrow foot trail that is used mainly by Freemen rangers and Hunters of Herne who try to track and slay one another.

The most-used road is the stretch from Briddh to Spearmouthdale, running over the ruins of Rublshofn and then through Herneburg, Leifrskross and Veidarsudur. This is the main bridge between the Gallist east and the Golden Way. There is a second road too, but it is slowly slipping out of the Gallist grip.

When Gall boldly overran central Lethyr Forest nearly 400 years ago, his minions cut two roads through the forest and attempted to claim what lay between them as their own domain. The second road leads from Briddh over the ruins of Sudhofn to Mettledale. The Hunters of Herne still maintain a heavily fortified outpost in the ruins of Sudhofn, but they have considerable difficulty controlling the road.

The Mucklestones Druids have gained in strength since the Time of Troubles. They frequently cross this second road and make raids in the Gallist domain, harassing even Leifrskross and Veidarsudur as well as the woodlands surrounding fortified Herneburg. The Mucklestones' activity is beginning to escalate from harassment into a genuine threat for the Gallists.

As a result, the road over Sudhofn is used almost exclusively for large Gallist caravans traveling between Briddh and Mettledale. These caravans always are well guarded by large contingents of warriors of Garagos from Fortress Clymph under the command of Hunters of Herne. Guarded caravans are, of course, not immune to sapper attacks from the Mucklestones Druids, but the Mucklestones units need to evade the Gallist ranger scouts, then hit and run and finally elude the pursuing Gallist rangers.

If more than one or two Mucklestones Druids attacks, the chances are slim that all of the sappers will elude the Hunters of Herne. For such attacks with such dangers, the Mucklestones Druids cannot afford to risk high-level spell users, although they will use up a potent scroll now and then.

However, the end result is that most Mucklestones attacks against Gallist caravans are irritations rather than devastations. A wagon may burn, a few Gallists may be slain, etc., but from a practical Gallist viewpoint, the losses are tolerable.

Attacking the caravans also is not a priority matter for the Mucklestones Druids. Even if they would succeed in deterring the Gallists from sending more caravans to Mettledale over the old East Road, the wares still would reach the settlement over the Leifrskross Road, where the Mucklestones cannot risk making such attacks.

The Mucklestones Druids hope eventually to drive the Gallists from Herneburg, Leifrskross and Veidarsudur, and they are making a bit of progress in this direction. They know that they need only make the Eastern Dale's costs of sustaining these settlements higher than the profits they bring. Harbet Gall is short on resources. He would not be able to afford to maintain the three forests settlements if the Mucklestones Druids' successes reach a certain level.

Things have reached the point where the warriors and rangers of Sudhofn's ruins can leave their compound only in numbers. When no Gallist movements are planned on the east road, there are no more small guard patrols. The Mucklestones Druids can ambush these too easily. When a patrol leaves the outpost, it usually is large in number, and it achieves the intended effect; it drives the sappers of the Mucklestones Druids back into hiding until the patrol returns home.

This does not keep the enemy from returning, but it makes it impossible for the Mucklestones Druids to establish or hold any position in the Gallist domain. They always must remain on the move there. As a result, their attacks usually have only small individual effects.

Nonetheless, this is becoming a growing problem for the Gallist druid barons and commanders. The attacks' effects may be small, but they are cumulative. Gallist wares are being destroyed, the Gallist settlements are being damaged and Gallists are being killed. The Mucklestones Druids, on the other hand, are sustaining only minor damage and few losses.

At the time your PCs reach this area - if they go there at all - the east road will have reverted to a no man's land. If one were to draw an imaginary line from Briddh to the source of Spear Creek, everything between that line and the east road is contested territory where the Gallists still have the upper hand. What lies west of that line up to the west road still is under Gallist control, although the Mucklestones Druids manage to slip into it, make quick hits against their enemy and then vanish into the eastern forests again.

The hobgoblin and orc tribes of Lethyr Forest make a detour around the central Gallist settlements. They are seldom to be found in the area between the east and west woods. Both tribes know that this is an area poised for battle and defense. They have little to gain by joining the humans' battles and much to lose. If the orcs or hobgoblins are encountered, they usually will be found in the northern part of the domain, south of Briddh and Rublshofn, attempting to cross quickly from the western forest into the eastern part or vice versa.

However, if the Gallists were to abandon central Lethyr Forest, one well can imagine that any or all of the fixtures and forces within wood might converge in this area and battle one another until it was conquered by one side or another. On the other hand, it also might just become another part of western Lethyr Forest, where no one is in control and everyone always is ready to fight anyone else.

Whatever the future may hold, life in this Gallist domain is the life of the residents in the three settlements as well as in the outpost of Sudhofn, along with the lives of those who attack them. The warriors of Garagos and the Hunters of Herne are virtual prisoners in Sudhofn.

The thorp itself was destroyed by the Mucklestones Druids 62 years ago. It never was rebuilt. On the contrary, the Gallists leveled most of what was there, cleared a circular area roughly 1,000 feet/300 m in diameter, built a wooden palisade wall around it and a stockade within. The troops stationed there must rely upon supplies from Mettledale. They dare enter the surrounding forest only in large patrols.

Herneburg, Leifrskross and Veidarsudur serve too as bases for Harbet Gall's fighting men, but without the warriors of Garagos stationed in Sudhofn. Respectable contingents of Hunter of Herne rangers are stationed in the settlements, and most adult settlers have been trained for combat as warriors of levels 1 to 3.

The men outnumber the women three to one in the villages, and few of the women who are there play the role of wife and mother. They prefer what some consider to be men's pursuits, doing hard work, hunting or logging. Most of the women are trained warriors, and many of the rangers also are female, although they wear no skirts. Among the few exceptions, of course, are the ladies who work in the bordellos or who pump beer in the inns and taverns.

Life is hard in central Lethyr Forest, but the Dalesmen who live there tend to prefer it that way. They hunt hard, they fight hard and they're hard drinkers, being able to enjoy a drunken night in a tavern just as well as any adventurer in other parts of the Realms. Most Dalesmen in this part of the forest take great joy in seeking a good fight, and they never have trouble finding one.

Many settlers in central Lethyr Forest earn more than other Dalesmen. The meat, leather goods, raw timber, wood products and crafted items that they send southward to Thesk and points beyond command a good price, one higher than that demanded for grain, dried vegetables and some textiles that the settlers buy from the Theskans.

Hunting and logging are the main occupations in Leifrskross, Veidarsudur and Herneburg. However, the three settlements also have their share of artisans, most of them woodcarvers. Moreover, 200 of Herneburg's residents are fighters and warriors who not only patrol the road between Bridhh and Mettledale but also are responsible for the general defense of all of the Gallists' central Lethyr settlements.

The northeastern part of Rawlinswood, northeast of the road connecting Bridhh and Mettledale, is the most dangerous area of all. This area often has been contested, and through most of its history and in the present, it has been dominated by the Mucklestones Druids but not truly controlled by anyone.

The Mucklestones Druids have their secret sanctuary in this area, and from it, they exercise more power than any other faction, although it is nowhere near enough to control eastern Lethyr Forest. Nevertheless, the Mucklestones Druids' power has grown to be adequate to keep any other faction from taking control or even from occupying any part of the northeastern wood for more than a short time.

The Freemen are a rarity in the eastern wood, if indeed they ever go there at all. This is Mucklestones turf, not theirs, and they have no wish to contest that. Harbet Gall has abandoned most attempts to assert himself in this part of the wood, at least for the time being. Skith Tsornagar, Malar's high priest in Bezentil, has been less wise. He keeps repeating the mistake of sending most of his hunters into the eastern wood, a mission from which more than a few seldom return.

There are only three important sites within eastern Lethyr Forest. One is site of the ancient green elven village of Mal K'ustan, although there is no reality left to it. Mal K'ustan was devastated by the Narfelli and then totally destroyed in the war between Raumathar and Narfell. All that remains is the site where the elven settlement stood.

However, with time that site has become enshrouded with ever more magic. It is the home goal of the Mucklestones Druids in the forest, and it contains their magical escape gate to the astral plane. A magic upon the site conjures illusory memory fragments of old Mal K'ustan.

Since after the Time of Troubles, Mal K'ustan also is protected by ancient elven magic which helps the site elude intruders. When outsiders come within sight of the position of old Mal K'ustan, they can make it out, but they cannot reach it. Instead, it appears to continually move away from the intruders.

Fortress Narder was built by the Narfelli, destroyed in the war with Raumathar, rebuilt by Harbet Gall and later abandoned by him after many attacks and sieges by the Mucklestones Druids. Gall abandoned it, and Skith Tsornagar's followers moved in, but they too soon were gone.

Large sections of the fortress's outer defensive wall and sections of many of the internal structures still stand, but they are highly instable and cave in easily. Above Fortress Narder to the southeast are small quarries and iron mines that were worked in the past by the Gallists and the Malarites of Bezentil but later abandoned by both because of Mucklestones attacks.

There is one other element of substantial strength in the eastern forest: A band of some 1,500 renegade Zhentish orcs who were a part of King Azoun's crusade in Thesk in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR) sought and found sanctuary in eastern Lethyr Forest. The orcs are nomadic. Their camps arise and are dismantled again within a few days time. They consider the eastern forest to be their new homeland, but they often can be found in the western part of the forest rather than at home.

To date, the Mucklestones Druids have not acted against the orcs, partly because the orcs are doing little to threaten the forest's balance and partly because the orcs frequently attack and harry the Hunters of Herne. They make regular raids on supply caravans riding the Tears Creek Valley between Mettledale and Kront. They also raid supply caravans coming from Tammar in Thesk to Mettledale.

The orcs' base camp, however, is at the site of elven Mal D'aan, which had been abandoned by the green elves nearly two millennia ago. The ruins were destroyed in the Narfelli-Raumathari war some 1,500 years ago. There is no evidence on the surface of Mal D'aan to indicate that elves ever were there. However, the Mucklestones Druids claim some abandoned or lost elven items can be found by digging there.

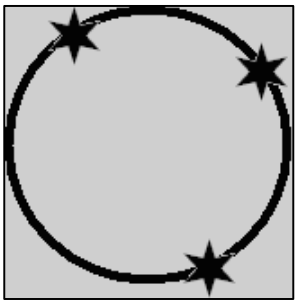
The hobgoblin host of the west seldom dares to enter the eastern part of the wood. The Mucklestones Druids consider hobgoblins to be fully out of their element in eastern Lethyr Forest. For that reason, they attempt to expel and even slay the hobgoblins, if they enter Mucklestones' territory.

Herneburg

Small town, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 400 gp limit*. Assets: 22,000 gp. Population: 900 + 200 warriors, 100% human. Authority figures: True Druidess Lurga Tindalsdóttir, human female AL: NE, Druidess (Herne) 10, Druid Countess of Herneburg; Darath Vidurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Ranger (Hunter of Herne) 14, commander of the Hunters Barracks. Others: Circle of the Black Stars - Dendal Heeby, human male, AL: NE, Diviner 14; Jebh Strauch, human male, AL: CE, diviner 12, fighter 6, and Ronald Dummsfield, AL: NE, Cleric 12 (Priest of Mask - no Telflamm affiliation), Diviner 8; Sister Tanja Hebardsdóttir, human female, AL: NG, Druidess (Chauntea) 4; Tarsk Nurdulssonur, human male, AL; LE, Cleric (Priest of Iyachtu Xvim) 1. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized.

*** Low gp-limit due to limited monetary resources.**

Of the three settlements between Briddh and Spearmouthdale, Herneburg is the best defended and the most productive. It also is the settlement that is most difficult for outsiders to infiltrate. Two reasons are the well-fortified wall that surrounds the town and the well-trained contingent of warriors that defend it. A third is the *Circle of Black Stars* - a group of three diviners who magically observe what occurs in the Herneburg area. Another is the Druidess of Chauntea, Tanja Hebardsdóttir.



Before discussing the inner workings of the town, one should understand the secretive *Circle of Black Stars* and the impact of the druidess' work in Herneburg. Heeby, Strauch and Dummsfeld are covert agents of the Iron Throne who work only for and report directly to Shandaril in Damaran Heliogabalus. Not even Nordolf Gilding in New Sarshel is aware of them or their Throne affiliation.

The three diviners from Sembian Ordulin arrived in Herneburg in the Year of the Sword (1365 DR) with a proposal. Heeby, the leader of the circle, told Druid Countess Tindalsdóttir that the group was seeking an isolated and protected site where it could conduct its magical experiments without being disturbed.

If the countess would agree to allow the Sembians to erect their tower in the center of Herneburg, they said, they would use magical scrying services to help defend the town and to control whether suspect visitors are legitimate. The countess agreed, the circle built its tower, and it has been operating in Herneburg since the Year of the Shield (1367 DR).

The trio really is operating a covert spying operation for the Iron Throne. After a few skeptical years in which the druid countess thought she was watching the Sembians closely, she has become convinced that they serve her faithfully, according to the pact that they forged. She in turn sees to it that they are not disturbed except when they are needed, as she has agreed to.

In truth, the Sembian magi expend almost none of their resources on the defense of Herneburg. When intruders are caught and the druidess count wishes help in testing their truthfulness or alignment, Dummsfield will work the spells she needs. Tindalsdóttir believes that the magicians constantly scry the Herneburg area to seek out invisible or otherwise hidden intruders.

They really do much less. Shandaril had anticipated the demand for such services and had supplied the trio with a large number of scrolls that the magi have worked in place on the farmlands outside of the town walls. When a magically disguised intruder attempts to cross the fields, an alarm sounds in the circle's tower. Only then does one of the diviners take time out to determine where the creature is who set off the alarm.

From the Sembians' point of view, their service is minimal. From the viewpoint of the druid countess, the circle has effectively kept the Mucklestones Druids out of the town and its surrounding farmlands. After a few sapper attacks in which Mucklestones members were caught, the druids learned that Herneburg has managed to protect itself with magic.

The druidess of Chauntea poses another problem. The Tellerth Druids, the Tumblingstars Druids and even the True Druids of Herne stop short of destroying the enemy's fields or its crops. They all appreciate how scarce food can be in the Great Dale. Its destruction violates their own moral standards.

The Mucklestones Druids are a hard lot. They never have shared this scruple. Destroying the fields and harvests of the Gallists has been among the Mucklestones' favorite weapons. However … the Mucklestones Druids are devoted servants of Silvanus, Rillifane and Mielikki. To destroy the work of Chauntea and one of her druidesses is clearly against the tenets of their faith. L'arana Lunwinsdóttir has forbidden her band from doing anything to damage the farm fields surrounding Herneburg, because Tanja Hebardsdóttir tends them.

Hunting is the main occupation. However, 200 of the latter town's residents are militarily organized warriors and rangers, most of them from elsewhere, who are assigned to Hunters Barracks, the Gallist garrison in Herneburg. They patrol the road between Bridhh and Spearmouthdale and are responsible for the general defense of all the Gallists' central Lethyr settlements.

Their commander, Darath Vidurssonur, is a brutal and aggressive turncoat Freeman from Gylving who goes beyond the scope of his mission, bringing him into conflict with the druid countess, who has made a formal but still unanswered complaint against Vidurssonur with the Gallist administration in Kront.

Vidurssonur has orders from Kront to defend the road from Rublshofn to Spearmouthdale and to defend the settlements of Herneburg, Leifrskross and Veidarsudur, but he goes several unauthorized steps further. Several times a year, he sends mostly unsuccessful sapper squads up the trail to his former hometown with orders to bring back slaves.

In most cases, his Hunters of Herne rangers are cut off by Freemen rangers before the reach the Trade Route. Some groups have penetrated Gylving and been slain in battles there, battles which took a toll among the Freemen as well and caused damage. The Freemen are getting tired of these sapper raids. There is a large faction urging their commanders to stage a large march through the wood, to conquer Herneburg, Leifrskross, Veidarsudur and Spearmouthdale.

Strategically, the Freemen no doubt could conquer central Lethyr Forest. The Gallists in central Lethyr Forest are isolated. Their legions in the east hardly could be mobilized for a march into Lethyr Forest. Moreover, were they to stage such a march, much of the Eastern Dale would be left with inadequate defenses.

However, a decision by the Freemen to march into the central forest would pose certain problems too. To do so, General Friedhleif Skjöldurssonur in Uthmere would have to draw off substantial troops from his own defense of the Central Dale, which could be tantamount to inviting attacks from the warriors of Garagos in the ruins of Fortress Clymph and from the Dragon Cult's host of undead at Tower Threespires.

In addition, the Freemen would have to calculate on suffering severe losses in the conquest of well-fortified Herneburg. Moreover, after conquering the road to Spearmouthdale, the Freemen would need to occupy it, which would result in a troop drain to defend territory that at present is of little strategic value to the defense of the populated Central and Western Dale.

On the other hand, if Vidurssonur keeps sending sappers against Gylving, Skjöldurssonur will have to act. He is pondering the idea of attempting to recruit high-level volunteer magi from Impiltur to aid in such a mission. His prospects there would not be bad, if he were to promise the magi the ruins of the tower of the Circle of Black Stars as booty.

Druid Countess Tindalsdóttir is afraid that Skjöldurssonur may make just such a move, which is the heart of her protest in Kront. She has argued that Herneburg would fall easily to a dedicated attack from the Freemen. If Herneburg falls, both Leifrskross and Veidarsudur both would eventually fall to the Mucklestones Druids, leaving Spearmouthdale open and ill defended.

Hunters Barracks counts for 200 of the 1,100 humans who live within Herneburg's walls. The other 900 are hunters or merchants first and farmers second. The land surrounding Herneburg's walls were cleared shortly after the original settlement was built as a purely defensive measure. Only in the last century or so have the town's counts begun attempting to farm the open land.

Until the arrival of the Circle of Black Stars and of Tanja Hebardsdóttir, the druidess of Chauntea, farming on the outskirts of Herneburg was a marginal operation in the best years and a failure in most years. Many a good farming season came to naught when the Mucklestones Druids would use their magic to set them ablaze shortly before the harvest.

That threat now has been banned. The magic of the Circle has made it difficult for the Mucklestones Druids to near the town. Even more important, the presence of the druidess of Chauntea has brought a complete end to the Mucklestones' devastation of crops.

Hebardsdóttir came to Herneburg as a captive, taken in a successful raid upon Gylving, where she had been working. The Gallists have developed a special and successful approach in modern times for druids of Chauntea whom they capture. They are not enslaved, like other prisoners, nor do they become prey in a Great Hunt. Rather, they are taken to a Gallist area where farms are poor and freed there to practice their druidic arts anew. Such use of Chauntea's druids has resulted in a remarkable improvement in harvests in Spearmouthdale, Mettledale, upon the slave farm in Kront and in other locations within the Eastern Dale.

Like the other residents of Herneburg, Hebardsdóttir needs a permit to leave the town. It is unlikely that she would be granted one, should she apply. Under the druidess' guiding hand, the farms outside of Herneburg's wall also have improved, but Hebardsdóttir has told the druid countess that these improvements are only short term.

No milk or slaughter animals are raised in Herneburg. Hebardsdóttir has told Tindalsdóttir that Herneburg must begin raising swine, cows and cattle if it intends to keep its farmlands fertile. Their manure, she says, is integral to the natural restoration of the farmed soil. The druid countess and the druidess are pondering how best to solve this problem.

To a great extent, Herneburg is a communal town. It was built by Gallist forces, not by settlers. As a result, most money-making ventures belong to the Church of Herne and are under the control and virtual ownership of the ruling count or countess. Substantial properties fall into this category.

The northeastern corner of Herneburg is the business center of the town. Because of the intense processing of natural wares there, vile-smelling and to some extent poisonous fumes pour out of the chimneys and smokestacks. The northeastern corner was chosen purposely, because the prevailing wind comes from the southwest.

The processing plants are among the main targets of the Mucklestones Druids, although they have succeeded in causing only minor damage to them. They are protected by permanent magical spells worked from scrolls brought in from Tower Threespires. The worst offender, the tannery, is built of imported stone. Most parts of the tannery are impervious to flames, making it difficult for the Mucklestones Druids to cause any substantial damage.

If Skjöldurssonur decides to make such a move, he will not attempt to conquer and occupy Herneburg but rather will seek to destroy the town totally, employing high-powered magic to help reach his goal without sustaining heavy losses. A few more sapper attacks upon Gylving are all that are necessary to push him in this direction.

In this section of town, one finds a combination slaughterhouse, smokehouse, meat-packing house and rendering plant, a leather works, a brewery, a grain mail, granaries and the tannery. Below them to the southwest is the town center, with the druid countess' grove and lodge in the middle, surrounded by the town hall, a tavern, a bordello, Hunter Barracks, the Darkwood Inn, public stalls, a horse market, a large general store and the complex of the Circle of Black Stars. All of these except the tavern and the magi' complex are in the hands of the druid countess.

The townspeople who work in these places as well as the farmers who raise crops outside the town wall are laborers in the pay of the countess. However, there is a limited degree of private enterprise in Herneburg beyond the *Running Boar* tavern. Many of the townspeople are talented woodcarvers whose artisanship is treasured outside of the Dale. The Freemen block the transportation of all woodenwares from the Gallist areas into the Central and Western Dale.

Some woodcarvings from Herneburg are smuggled into the Central Dale through Briddh, but the main market of the artisans is on the Golden Way in Thesk, where merchants and peddlers buy woodcarvings from the Gallist forest settlements.

This is where town hall gets its slice of the artisans' profits. As in most Gallist areas, there is no freedom of movement in Herneburg. Anyone wishing to travel out of town must apply for permission to do so at Town Hall. Except for those who serve the interests of the countess elsewhere, such permits are difficult to obtain. Thus, the artisans of Herneburg are unable to sell their woodcarvings personally on the Golden Way. Instead, they must send their wares southward with trading caravans operated by the druid countess. Her merchants collect a fee of 50% of the profits for the woodcarvings they sell.

When an artisan turns a woodcarving over to the countess' merchants for resale, he or she determines the asking price and the minimum price that is negotiable. The merchants retain 50% of what they receive as commission. They are not allowed to sell for less than the minimum price set by the artisan. However, for competitive reasons, the artisans of Herneburg must demand less for their work than they believe it is worth.

The women of Herneburg, unlike their counterparts in much of the Eastern Dale, do not spend the cold months working at the loom, partly because flax is unavailable in central Lethyr Forest. Therefore, women usually do the same work as men, hunting in spring and summer, logging in fall and early winter and then woodcarving in the months when the deep cold of the Great Glacier in the north settles in upon the Great Dale.

Most of the adults in Herneburg hunt in the warm months and fell timber later in the year. When they hunt successfully, they can choose between keeping or turning over all or part of their bag. They are paid pound wise for the part of the bag they turn over to the countess' slaughterhouse.

The countess understands that her people need to eat, and for that reason, the townsmen may decide what part of their bag they keep for their own use. The private sale of a hunter's own bag is strictly prohibited. Anyone caught at black market meat sales will find him- or herself in deep trouble, often as prey in a Great Hunt.

The town stages a Great Hunt in Eleasias of each year. The prey can be varied. Humans may be hunted, or half elves, but goblins or orcs are just as likely to be the prey. According to Gallist law, only criminals from the town's own ranks or captured intruders may be used as human prey. Because both are relatively rare in Herneburg, the hunt often has to settle for goblinoids instead.

A second Great Hunt also occurs in Marpenoth of each year, but it is off limits to the folk of Herneburg. This is the Marpenoth Great Hunt organized by Skith Tsornagar and his Malarites in Bezentil. The hunt marches from Bezentil along the northern fringe of the forest to Bridhh and then onward to the ruins of Rublshofn and past Herneburg to Leifrskross.

Countess Tindalsdóttir is a devoted druid of Herne the Hunter. With the exception of a few elite troops who keep an eye upon the intruders, she will not allow her folk to be in the wood when Tsornagar's hunt passes through the Herneburg area. The town gates are closed. Locals are not allowed to leave the town, and Tsornagar's followers are not allowed to enter, nor is anyone else unknown to the watch.

Since the partial opening of Briddh to trade from the Central and Western Dale, caravan traffic through Herneburg has increased substantially. Traders en route to the Golden Way always stop in Herneburg and peddle their wares there to those who have the right price, substantially increasing the selection of wares available to the townsmen. One of their best customers is the druid countess, who has become virtually addicted to the fine red wines of Uthmere, which wood traders bring to her and sell at a proud price.

Some traders who pass through Herneburg on the way back to Briddh will buy woodcarvings from local artisans, hoping to smuggle them into the Central and Western Dale, but these are few in number. Most of the trade that passes through Herneburg originates either in the western and Central Dale or in distant places with access to the Golden way.

The increased trade started with merchants leading heavy wagons with loads of timber southward. These merchants began taking along goods not available in Herneburg, Leifrskross or Veidarsudur that they acquired in the Free Dale, to sell and barter them in the Gallist enclaves.

Merchants have no difficulty traveling to or through Herneburg. However, to do so, a merchant must buy a travel permit. One can acquire these at the Hunter's Rest Temple in Briddh or from the Southern Dale Trading Coster office in Phsant or Tammar on the Golden Way in Thesk.

Anyone entering the Gallist areas in central Lethyr Forest without a permit risks his or her life in doing so. One must have an exceptionally good reason for such an action, one that convinces the Gallists and appears to be to their own benefit.

Occasionally, foolish adventurers will tell their Gallist captors that they have urgent matters to discuss with Countess Tindalsdóttir or with one of the two druid barons in Leifrskross or Veidarsudur. Such a claim is likely to gain the adventurers an audience with the countess or the baron they name, but if they fail to come up with a good yarn to tell, the captured adventurers should plan on being prey in the next Great Hunt.

One of the most recent arrivals in Herneburg is Tarsk Nurdulssonur, a fugitive from Vulddin on the Trade Route in the Freemen's domain. Nurdulssonur was recruited as a Gallist spy there but after a year had to flee over the Gallist border because the militia had found out what he was doing, or so Nurdulssonur tells the story.

The truth is, Nurdulssonur fled and left a few traces behind that led the militia to discover that he was a spy *after* he already was gone. His entire career as a Gallist spy was orchestrated to make it easy for him to migrate credibly into the Gallist domain in central Lethyr Forest. In reality, Nurdulssonur is a first level priest of Iyachtu Xvim who is serving both his church and the Zhentarim as a covert agent in Herneburg.

Adventure Hooks in Herneburg

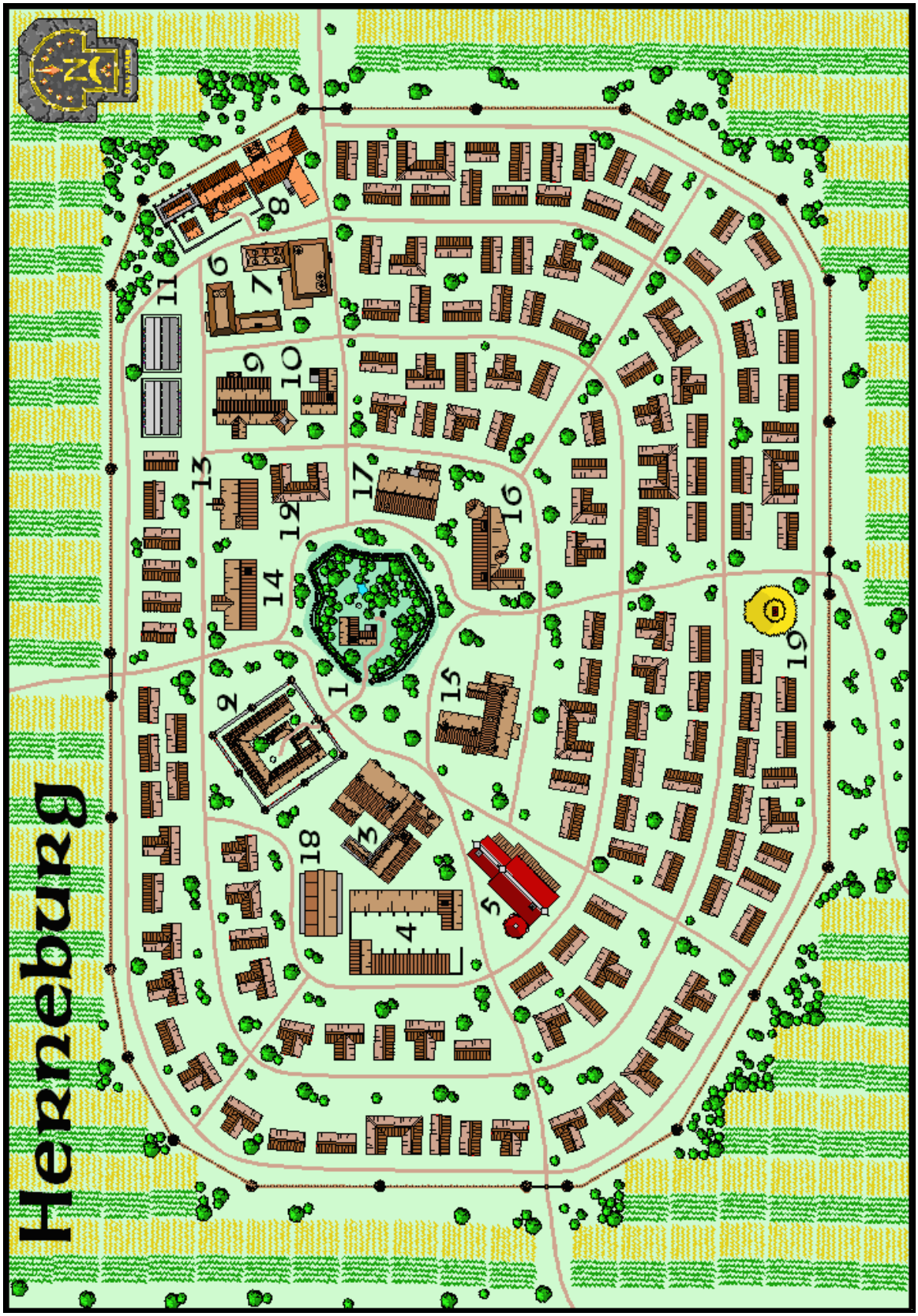
The main adventure hook in Herneburg, should your PCs decide to go there, is simply getting in and out again alive.

- **Sigylls discovered.** This hook applies only to campaigns running the *Northern Journey* adventure. By the time the PCs reach Herneburg, all Gallist leaders will have been warned that a group of sigyll bearers are moving eastward. The orders from Kront are to liquidate the sigyll bearers immediately. A mere upward slip of a sleeve could betray your PC group. Anyone who sees one of the sigylls is likely to report it. Once the druid countess learns that the sigyll bearers are in Herneburg, she will do her best to eliminate them.

- **Circle of Black Stars I.** The magi of the circle may magically determine who your PCs really are.

- **Circle of Black Stars II.** The magi of the circle have an expensive complex. Their tower and support buildings are made of baked clay brick that was transported by heavy wagons from Phsant in Thesk. Theskan architects designed the complex, and Theskan stonemasons built it. However, the circle's tower is seriously flawed. The keystone was not properly set. A strong bolt of magic fired into the keystone will cause the immediate collapse of the entire tower. The racial trait of any dwarf will detect this flaw with a successful check against DC 10 in *D&D 3E* or with a roll of 1-3 on 1d6 in *AD&D 2E*. A 3E character with the skill *Craft: Stonemasonry* also will find the flaw with a check against DC 20. A 2E character with the non-weapon proficiency *Stonemason* will find it with a normal proficiency check.

- **Circle of Black Stars III.** The PCs uncover the magi's Iron Throne connection.



Herneburg

Map of Herneburg

1 - The Countess' Grove. The grove is surrounded by a wooden fence and hedge 6 feet/180 cm high. Within it is the modest lodge where Druid Countess Lurga Tindalsdóttir lives. This is her private residence and not a governmental building or a substitute castle. The governmental seat is the town hall (No. 12). The countess seldom has visitors of any kind within her grove.

2 - Hunter Barracks. The garrison of the military troops, 200 strong.

3 - Darkwood Inn. The town's only hostelry is under the direct control of the druid countess. Without a permit from town hall, locals are prohibited from offering accommodations to visitors. Strangers in Herneburg usually are required to lodge at the inn. The manager is Nenth Tarbitssonur, human male, AL: N, Com 4, a native of Herneburg. The inn, which often does a decent business, has 16 single rooms at 8 silver shiners a night and 6 doubles at 7 shiners per person. The rooms are comfortable but a touch drafty in winter. The maturbordh costs 7 shiners per person. Meat entrees are limited to boar and venison cuts. The only drink is the local Antler Brau beer at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard.

4 - Public stalls. The only accommodations for riding and draft horses of visitors. The stall fee is 1 shiner per horse per night. The stalls are under the control of the druid countess.

5 - Circle of Black Stars. The Sembian magi have a palatial residence with a private stall in the northeast wing. The tower is 60 feet/18 m high.

6 - Herneburg Leather Works. This is another operation under the control of the countess. Articles manufactured here are made of deer and boar hides from the tannery. The works produces most imaginable leather items from saddles to aprons.

7 - Slaughterhouse, smokehouse, rendering and meatpacking plant. Under control of the druid countess. All saleable meat from the hunt is processed here.

8 - Tannery. Hides of deer and boar taken in the hunt are tanned here. The tannery is under the control of the druid countess.

9 - Antler Brau Brewery. Under the direct control of the countess. There are occasional times when no beer is available, because of delays in bringing in barley malt from the malting house in Spearmouthdale. Brewmaster Gundar Darnudhssonur, human male, AL: N(E), Exp 2, brews a top fermented dark ale with spruce gruit.

10 - Herneburg Grain Mail. The small treadmill makes flour of the wheat and rye grown outside the town wall. Three draft horses turn the treadmill. The complex is under control of the druid countess. The miller is a local, Poki Laburdhssonur, human male, AL: LN, Exp 1.

11 - Town granaries. Under the control of the countess. Beneath the granaries are two levels of storage cellars.

12 - Town Hall. The town administrator and key deputy of the druid countess is Ergardh Dethlssonur, human male, AL: NE, War 8, Ari 8. His staff includes three clerks, two tax appraisers, four accountants and a town watch of six, which performs police duties. The leader of the watch is Constable Jarnhand Garfyngssonur, human male, AL: LE, War 9. The town jail is in the dungeon beneath Town Hall. When the druid countess has administrative duties to perform, she works in an office here. However, she spends most of her time in her grove. For most folks seeking an audience with the countess, the buck will stop at Dethlssonur.

13 - Running Boar Tavern. This sometimes rowdy beer hall is owned by Karl *Stub* Reghadssonur, AL: NE, Rgr 10, a retired Hunter of Herne ranger. Reghadssonur was severely wounded in a forest ambush by the Mucklestones Druids and has been haunted by nightmares ever since. He is just slightly deranged and can become a bit rabid at times. The *Boar* offers a small bread board with cervala sausage, which is similar to salami but made from venison and boar. It comes with two slices of brown rye bread from the Herneburg Provisions (No. 15) bakery and a respectable portion of horseradish, at 2 silver shiners per serving. The only drink is Antler Brau at 3 copper bites per liter/quart tankard. On any given night, the patrons will be about 90% fighters and rangers from Hunters Barracks. Many of them always are open to a good barroom brawl. They will fight among each other, but if a brawl occurs involving strangers, all patrons from the garrison will fight together against the strangers, even if they were fighting each other only moments earlier. The watch makes a detour around the *Boar*. It will not involve itself in troubles there. If a stranger is killed in a brawl, the watch will pick the body up from the street the next day and transport it unceremoniously to the town burying grounds on the edge of the forest east of town (not shown on the map).

14 - Herne's Horns Bordello. Another operation under the druid countess' control. The madame is Narga Gyflsdóttir, human female, AL: CN, Exp 5. Four ladies and four gentlemen are in her employ. Gyflsdóttir also is one of the working girls. Prices are negotiated, based upon services rendered.

15 - Herneburg Provisions. The town store and bakery. Most provisions and wares of various sorts that townsmen and the troops from Hunter Barracks need can be purchased here at prices averaging 5% more than those in the *PHB*. The manager is Lyda Durvidhssdóttir, human female, AL: N(E), Exp 2. The baker is Rotvald Laregssonur, human male, AL: LN, Exp 4.

16 - Herneburg Weapons and Armor. This smithy specializes in producing weapons of middle quality, repairing them and making light metal armor of middle quality (leather armor is available at the leather works, with metal parts made here). No masterworks are made in this smithy. The master weaponsmith is Durald Thigardhssonur, human male, AL: LE, Exp 3. The master armor maker is Seth Fathel, human male, AL: NE, Exp 2, a fugitive murderer from Damaran Trailsend. Because of the costs of metal imports, prices run 25% above those in the *PHB*. The smithy employs three journeymen and two apprentices. The smithy is under the control of the druid countess.

17 - Herneburg Smithy. Master blacksmith Teadh Rublssonur, human male, AL: N(E), Exp 4, and his two journeymen and three apprentices produce and repair all of the farm implements and other non-combat metal goods used in Herneburg. Because of the costs of metal imports, prices run 25% above those in the *PHB*. The smithy is under the control of the druid countess.

18 - Herneburg Steeds. Riding and draft horses, donkeys and mules are sold here. Prices run 20% above those in the *PHB*. The stable is under the control of the druid countess. The stable manager is Farghn Jandlssonur, human male, AL: NE, hunter of Herne rgr 13 (retired), a former member of the troops in Hunters Barracks. He employs three apprentices.

19 - Mother's Circle Shrine. The shrine to Chauntea is home to druidess Tanja Hebardsdóttir.

Leifrskross

Village, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 100 gp limit*. Assets: 2050 gp. Population: 350 + 60 militiamen, local folk 100% human. Authority figures: True Druid Nenthul Reginssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 4, Druid Baron of Leifrskross; Wurgardh Rikhassonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 8, commander of the village watch. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized.

*** Low gp-limit due to limited monetary resources.**

Leifrskross was once an important crossroads on the Dalesmen's main road from the Trade Route to the Golden Way in modern Thesk, a road that probably carried heavy traffic already in Turami times and without doubt in the Narfelli age.

The arm of the crossing that pointed to the northwest in modern Gylving's direction vanished long before the Gallists came to the village. Where it led in the age of the Turami or the Narfelli is a riddle today, as is much else that has to do with Leifrskross. At same earlier time in history, it was considerably larger than the small forest village it is today. The forests beyond Leifrskross still betray mounds where walls and foundations once stood, probably Narfelli in origin.

The crossroads was further reduced from a a traffic triangle to a turn in the road after the Gallist conquest. The arm to the northwest, leading to Mauberg's Oak, was cut off after the Year of the Three Signs (1010 DR), when the Hunters of Herne overran Leifrskross and absorbed it into the domain they control to this day in central Lethyr Forest. Since that time, Leifrskross has been little more than a hunter's and logger's outpost along the outermost zig of the zigzag road from Briddh to Spearmouthdale.

In its near four centuries under the Gallists, Leifrskross has been a dour forest village. The population is predominantly male. Most woman who are there tend to live like the men for the hunt or for their duty as ranger guards to protect the Theskan Trail, as the Gallists call the road. Those who don't are seamstresses at *Lethyr Mantles*.

Like Herneburg and Veidarsudur, Leifrskross is a communal village. All business facilities belong to the church of Herne the Hunter and are under the control of the local druid baron. The largest business in Leifrskross is *Lethyr Mantles*. Furs taken by hunters in Leifrskross, Herneburg, Veidarsudur and Spearmouthdale all are sent to Lethyr Mantles, to be made into fur coats and other apparel for the cold season.

The Gallist settlements are the first market for these wares. The folk of central Lethyr Forest need to be self-sufficient. However, the products that aren't needed at home are sent on to the Golden Way where they are sold in lots to buyers at the markets and taken on then for resale in distant lands.

Another important product of Leifrskross for those who live there is the village's specialty sausage. These are made of venison, boar or a combination of the two. The local meat packing plant makes a wide variety of smoked sausage, hard and middle soft. All meat that isn't consumed in town goes into the sausage production, and the sausage is taken over Spearmouthdale to Thesk and then on into the world. Sausage sales help pay for grains, flour, produce and similar food items that the forest village can't produce on its own.

As in other Gallist areas, villagers are not allowed to leave town without permission from the druid baron, which is difficult to get. Anyone caught fleeing the town can expect to be prey in the annual Great Hunt in Flamerule. However, fleeing refugees from Leifrskross are a rarity. In the first place, most folk in Leifrskross are dedicated Gallists. However, even the few who might wish to flee know better. The chances of fleeing the forest village and making it safely to Thesk or the Freemen's territories are about nil.

In Marpenoth of each year, Druid Baron Reginssonur closes the village during the Malarite Great Hunt staged by Skith Tsornagar of Bezentil. The Malarite hunt uses the cleared forest areas of the village's logging operations south of Leifrskross as a major staging area for its hunt.

The villagers of Leifrskross have a constant battle for survival. They lack Herneburg's magical protection. Instead, they must rely on their weapons and their limited spells to keep the sappers of the Mucklestones Druids at bay. This defense is not always successful, as the ruins of several burned out buildings show.

PCs coming to Leifrskross can expect the same scrutiny and problems as in Herneburg, albeit lesser in degree. There are no high-powered opponents to challenge them in the village.

Adventure Hook in Leifrskross

- **Sigylls Discovered.** See the hook of the same name under *Herneburg*.

The Map of Leifrskross

1 - Lethyr Mantles. This is the biggest business in Leifrskross. It is under the direct control of the druid baron. Furs from all of the Gallist settlements of central Lethyr Forest are brought to the village, to be made into coats, hats and other types of winter apparel.

2 - Leifrsbrau Inn. The only visitors who spend the night in Leifrskross are merchants coming to examine wares they're considering buying. Such merchants are rare. Most sales take place in Thesk. Therefore, the inn has few rooms - six singles at 6 silver shiners a night and four doubles at 5 shiners per person per night. The rooms are spartan but comfortable. *Leifrsbrau,* which is under the control of the druid baron, is the village's only inn, only restaurant, only tavern and only brewery. The manager is Targh Dilfyngssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 2. The brewmaster is Njard Gurbetssonur, human male, AL: N(E), Exp 3. Gurbetssonur admits openly that he can brew a better ale than the *Leifrsbrau* that he offers, but his talents are crimped by the quality of barley malt brought in from Thesk. *Leifrsbrau* isn't one of the Realms' best ales, but it's more than passable, a light top ferment with spruce gruit. Dinner business at the inn is too unsteady to warrant a maturbordh. However, Dilfyngssonur does offer an excellent house board with a good and abundant selection of the village's best sausages along with a dill pickle and local rye bread for 3 shiners. A quart/liter tankard of *Leifrsbrau* costs 3 copper bites. The public room is relatively full most evenings, with about 65% of the customers coming from the garrison and the others being locals. In contrast to Herneburg, the customers from the garrison are looking for a happy evening rather than a fight. They get all the fighting they need when they're on duty.

3 - Crossroads Sausage Works. *Crossroads* sausages are one of the few Gallist products that have earned a solid reputation far beyond the boundaries of the Great Dale. They're also a popular black market item in well-to-do houses in Uthmere, Uthving and New Sarshel in the Western Dale. The success of this combination slaughterhouse, meat-packing plant, sausage factory and rendering plant was a highly talented master butcher named Hardh Firgyngssonur, who died in the Year of the Worm (1356 DR). Firgyngssonur's excellent recipes made the sausage works what it is today. The plant is under the control of the druid baron. Since the death of Firgyngssonur, his son, Urudh Hardhssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 7, has been running the plant and maintaining his father's tradition. The sausage works makes it sausage of boar and venison, seasoned with unusual but delicious combinations of herbs that are a closely guarded secret.

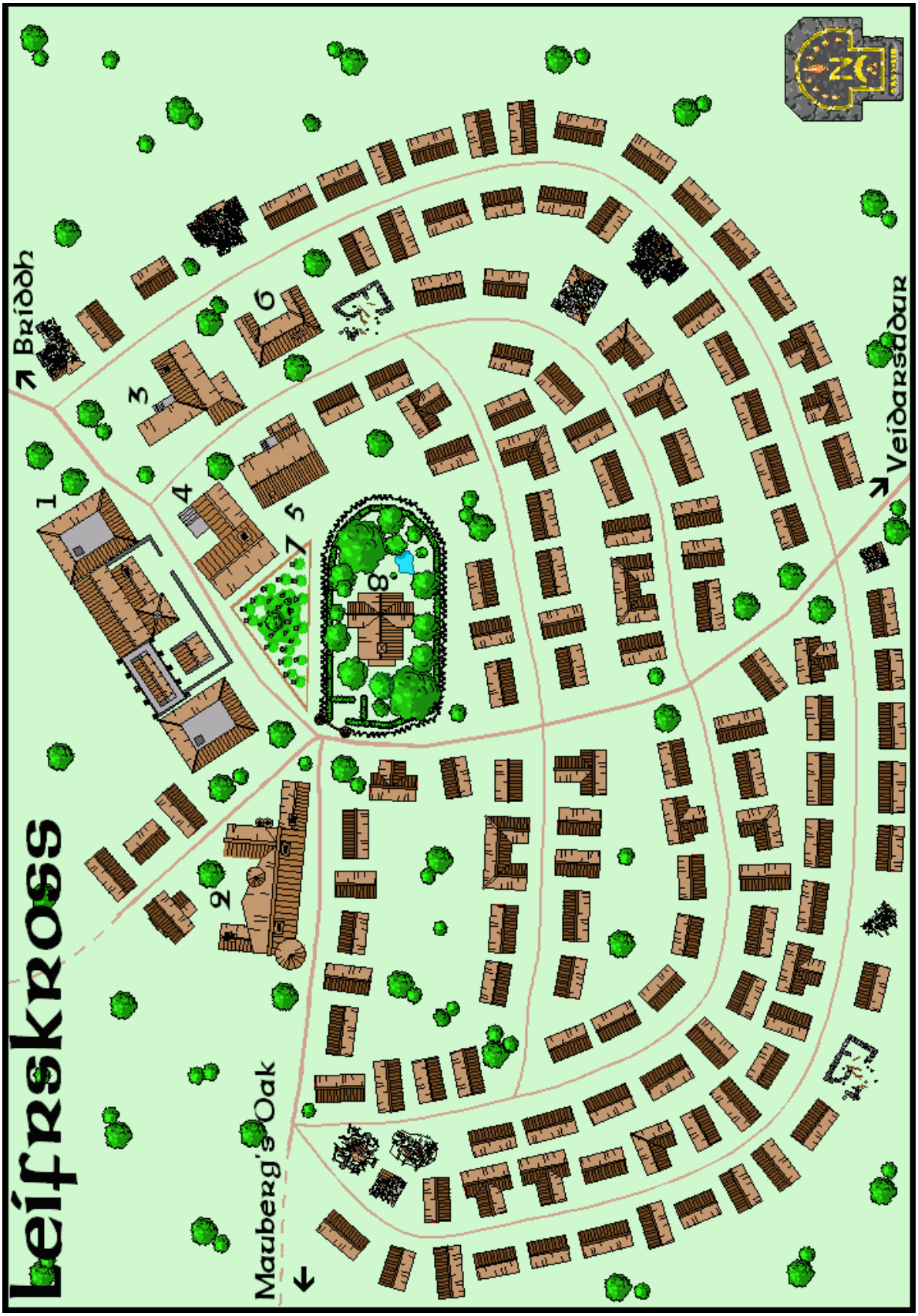
4 - Leifrskross Provisions. The store is under the direct control of the druid baron. The manager is Mardha Thórgsdóttir, human female, AL: N, Com 6. Food and other necessities for the villagers are sold here, although most items are of only marginal interest to adventurers. The store also has a small bakery run by master baker Lunda Tifilsdóttor, human female, AL: N(E), Exp 3. Prices average 10% above those in the *PHB*.

5 - Village Smithy. The smithy is under the direct control of the druid baron. The master smith is Kandur Vigardhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 7 (Blacksmith 3, Weaponsmith 2, armor maker 2). He has two journeymen and two apprentices. The quality of work with weapons and armor is middle low to low.

6 - Garrison. 60 Hunters of Herne make their bed here, but no more than 20 usually will be present at any given time. The rest are riding patrol somewhere.

7 - Village Cemetery.

8 - The Druid Baron's Grove. Druid Baron Nenthul Reginssonur makes his home here. His lodge also houses the small village administration. The dungeon and jail, however, are beneath the garrison (No. 6).



Leifrskross

Veídarsudur

Hamlet, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 50 gp limit*. Assets: 375 gp. Population: 130 + 20 militiamen, local folk 100% human. Authority figures: True Druid Ingvyng Darthungssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 3, Druid Baron of Veidarsudur; Lept Lukurssonur, human male, AL: NE, (Hunter of Herne) Rgr 4, commander of the village watch. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, Theskan and bloodstone bars.

*** Low gp-limit due to limited monetary resources.**

In most respects, Veidarsudur is a miniature replica of Leifrskross. The Gallists built it nearly 400 years ago as a military outpost and trade station. It has developed into little more since. The local, low-level druid baron plays no significant role in Gallist schemes. The hamlet has one advantage over the other Gallist settlements in central Lethyr Forest: The Mucklestones Druids pay less attention to Veidarsudur, simply because its strategic value to the Gallists is minimal.

Veidarsudur takes part in the annual Great Hunt each year in Flamerule. The Malarite Great Hunt from Bezentil in Marpenoth does not bother the hamlet severely. Skith Tsornagar's hunters make their last staging area south of Leifrskross. A few members of his hunt venture into the Veidarsudur area, but if they're obnoxious - which they often are - the local rangers usually ambush and slay them.

Hunting is the main occupation in Veidarsudur, followed by logging. The hamlet has a sawmill powered by draft horses on a treadmill and a slaughterhouse and meatpacking plant where export quality sausage is made. Furs taken in Veidarsudur are worked in Leifrskross.

Almost everyone in Veidarsudur except for the barracks' troops hunts in the hunting season, logs in early winter and works in the sawmill or meat plant when the two are in production. Except for private housing, everything in the communal hamlet is under the druid baron's control.

Adventure Hook in Veídarsudur

- **Sigylls Discovered.** See the hook of the same name under *Herneburg*.

The Map of Veídarsudur

1 - Herne's Lodge. A modest tavern controlled by the druid baron. The tavernkeeper is Krahloc Jarbudhssonur, human male, AL: NE, retired Rgr 5 (Hunter of Herne). All that the house offers is a breadboard with local sausage, bread from Spearmouthdale and horseradish at 3 silver shiners. The beer is either Antlerbrau ale from Leifrskross or Grain Belt Lager from Spearmouthdale, whatever happens to be available. It sells for four copper bites per quart/liter tankard. If acceptable visitors are stuck because of weather, they can unroll their sleeping bags in the unheated loft. If merchants or others who are viewed as friends of the hamlet get stuck, the druid baron will arrange for them to be put up in private accommodations.

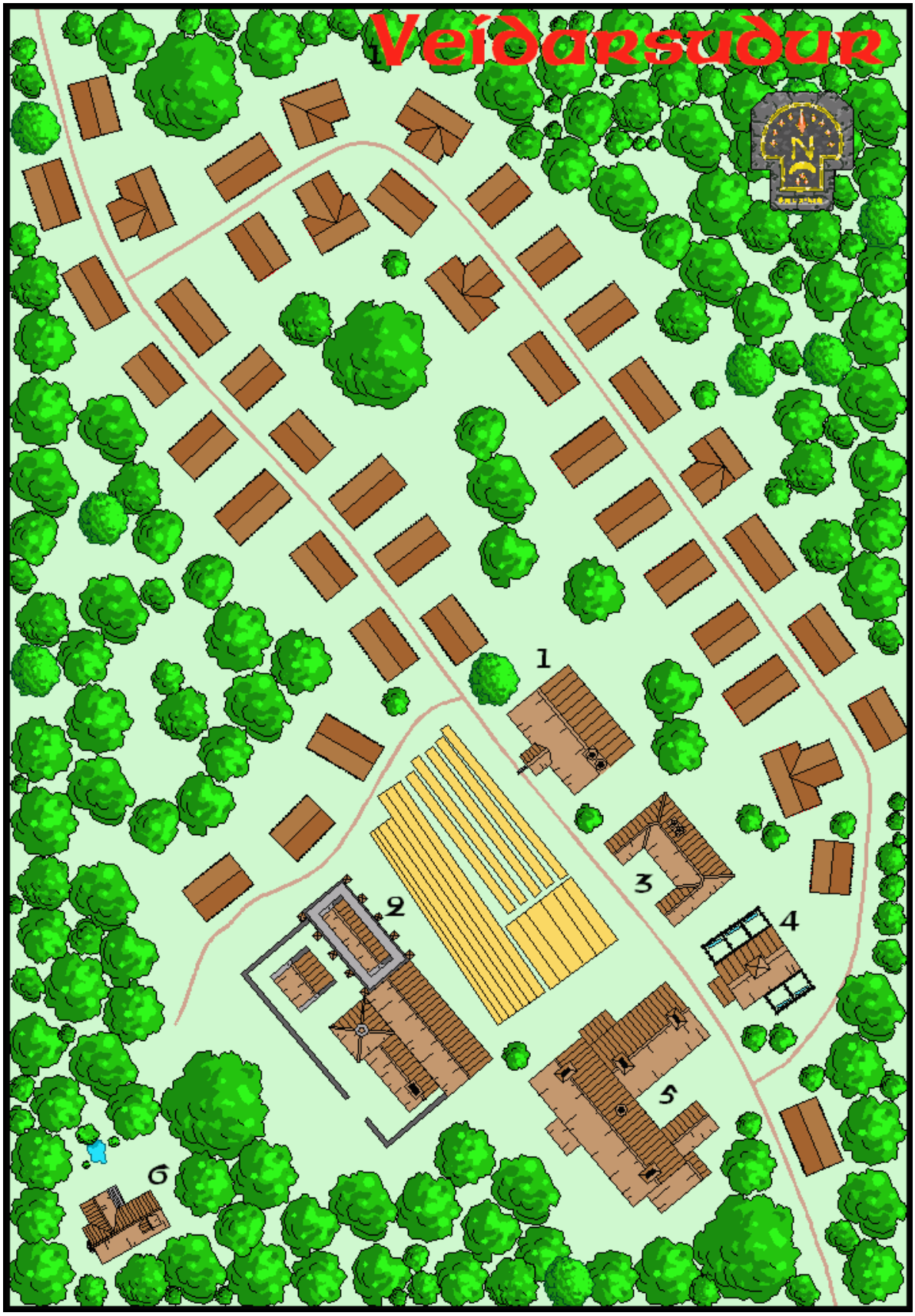
2 - South Mill. Sawmill. The plant is under the control of the druid baron. The master sawyer is Tuomas Drughssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 4.

3 - Barracks. 20 Gallist combat rangers and warriors are stationed here. They are under the command of Hunters Barracks in Herneburg. The local commander is Ernsdh Hufurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 5, Hunter of Herne.

4 - Barracks Stall.

5 - South Meats. Boar and venison from the hunt are butchered and made into a variety of export quality sausages, which provide a main source of the hamlet's income. The sausage is sold on the markets in Thesk. The plant is under the control of the druid baron. The master butcher is Lars Henrikssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 4.

6 - Grove of the Druid Baron. Ingvyng Darthungssonur lives here and rules Veidarsudur from the grove, but he does not dispense local justice. When intruders are captured, they are taken to Spearmouthdale to have their cases settled.



Veidarsudur

Nyldyng

Ruin, Nonstandard. The ruin has not been mapped.

If your PCs venture to the site of this Freemen's settled, which was destroyed by the Gallists nearly four centuries ago, they'll find only green mounds that cover what remains of old foundations and the like. However, if your PCs have the means to detect such things and they use them, they also will find a location where magic emanations radiate from beneath the ground.

A reclusive mage lived in a small tower in Nyldyng, and it stood on the spot where the magic radiates. The entire tower collapsed, with the mage in it, when the True Druids of Herne attacked Nyldyng with an earthquake spell. The tower's dungeon is buried but still intact. After 6d6 + 36 hours of excavating, the PCs can succeed in opening the buried dungeon.

In it they will find:

- Four potions *Cure Serious Wounds*.
- A *Ring of Protection +2*.
- A *Rod of Enemy Detection*.
- A *Staff of Frost*
- A *Wand of Daylight*.
- Two *Wondrous Items* of the Game Master's choice.
- 10 Scrolls of the Game Master's choice.

Sudhofn

Thorp, Nonstandard (druidic military), AL: NE, Gp limit: see below*. Assets: see below*. Population: 80 militiamen, 100% human. Authority figures: Rotating commanders - Human male and female, AL: NE, Rangers (Hunters of Herne), levels 9-10. Others: 6 Non-commissioned officers, human male and female, Rangers (Herne) levels 5-7, 73 Fighters and Warriors of Garagos, human male and female, , AL: LN, N, CN, LE, NE or CE, levels 1-4; 1 human male or female, AL: LN, N, CN, LE, NE or CE, military cook of Garagos, Exp 1 Taxation type: None. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, Theskan and bloodstone bars.

*** This is a military garrison. Nothing is sold and most assets are the personal belongings of men and women on temporary duty there.**

After the Mucklestones Druids destroyed the village of Sudhofn twice, the Gallists gave up on reestablishing it. Instead, in the Year of the Spilled Blood (1315 DR), they cleared much of land where the site was and built a fortified outpost to watch their east road and to curb Mucklestones activity.

Within the Gallist realm, service in Sudhofn is considered misery duty. For that reason, twice a month, 50% of the force serving there is rotated, and that includes the commanders. No one serves more than a month uninterrupted in the outpost, not even those assigned there as punishment.

A commander and six non-commissioned officers head the duty force. All are ranger Hunters of Herne from Herneburg. The ground soldiers are fighters and warriors of Garagos, dispatched from the ruins of Fortress Clymph in the Eastern Dale.

Sudhofn is isolated and dangerous. Except when they ride out in large patrols, the men are confined to the outpost, locked within its massive wooden walls. When they do ride out on patrol, sapper attacks from the Mucklestones Druids usually claim a life or two and leave a few more men wounded. No priests, clerics or druids are stationed in Sudhofn. The dead are buried, not raised. The wounded must heal on their own. The commanders reserve their limited supply of healing potions for themselves, their NCOs and the severely wounded.

To a certain extent, Sudhofn always is at the mercy of the Mucklestones Druids. Most men who have served more than one or two tours of duty there are well aware that the Mucklestones Druids could attack and destroy the outpost if they wished to, although their costs would be high. They do not know why the Mucklestones have held back, but this does not give them any false sense of security. They believe that the devastation of Sudhofn and the deaths of most of them could come at anytime.

The reason that the Mucklestones Druids have not destroyed the outpost is simple. Such destruction would be of limited strategic value and would cost many of their own lives. They intend to fight a war of attrition against the Gallists, wearing them down with losses. They believe they are on a slow road of success that eventually will cause the Gallists to abandon not only Sudhofn but also Herneburg, Leifrskross and Veidarsudur.

Should that one day come to pass, Spearmouthdale would fall easily, and Mettledale might then prove too costly to the Gallists for them to maintain. The goal of the druids is to drive the Gallists entirely from Lethyr Forest and the southern Dale. They may eventually succeed.

The fact that the Mucklestones Druids have stopped short of the outpost's total destruction makes it an interesting campaign object. Although it would be heavily outnumbered, a PC group of the levels suggested for this segment, equipped with the necessary spells, *could* conquer or destroy this outpost.

The only magic available to the outpost's defenders, other than the seven rangers' spells, are the following, all locked in chests in the commander's chambers:

- 12 Potions *Cure Serious Wounds*.
- 8 scrolls *Entangle*.
- 8 scrolls *Summon Nature's Ally II*.
- 12 scrolls *Sleep*.

When any of these items are exhausted, a report is made when a patrol reaches Mettledale. The next commander assigned to the outpost is given replacement potions and spells. If the outpost comes under attack and manages to get a message off to Mettledale, the settlement will send help in two days time.

Adventure Hooks in Sudhofn

- Conquering and/or destroying the outpost.
- Escaping the outpost after being captured.

Floor Plans Sudhofn

Sudhofn Outpost (Aerial View): The thumbnail in the upper right hand corner shows the lay of the land. Everything is kept clear within a radius of 500 feet/150 m. In Kythorn and late Eleint, slaves are brought in from Mettledale to mow with scythes. The hay is transported on wagons back to Mettledale. This keeps a relatively open free fire zone for the outpost. The moat remains filled with stagnant water through druidic magic. It surrounds the outpost. There is no bridge. A bridge that can be assembled and disassembled lies on the grounds just outside the outpost. Whenever patrols ride out, they assemble it and leave it in place until they return. This is an ideal time to launch an attack. Half of the outpost's force usually departs when a patrol is under way. The wooden fortress has no dungeon level except for the *Hole* with a door on the first floor (explained below).

Ground Floor:

1 - Massive Wooden Gate with banded iron reinforcements. A portcullis can be dropped when the gate is closed, further reinforcing it. The normal position of the portcullis is closed. Because the gate opens inward, the portcullis cannot be dropped when the gate is open. To do so would cause damage to both. The kind and degree of the damage is uncertain. The gate is opened only when patrols or replacements ride in and out.

- 2 - The *Gauntlet*. **The passage gained its nickname because fighters in the inner walls can shoot arrows at intruders. The inner walls also are the entryways to the gate towers.**

3 - Massive Wooden Door with banded iron reinforcements. The door can be barred from within with a heavy metal bar. Small metal shutters also can close the arrow slits.

4 - Gate Towers. The spiral stairway begins on the ground floor. Weapon racks with long bows and arrows also are on this level.

5 - Massive Wooden Gate with banded iron reinforcements. This is a duplicate of the first gate but without a portcullis. Heavy metal bars usually seal it. The gate is opened only when patrols or replacements ride in and out.

6 - Kitchen. The Reavers of Garagos supply their own soldier cooks, who also cook for the Hunters of Herne who command them. The kitchen is off limits except when patrols use it as a passage. The heavy wooden door with metal banding usually is barred by the cooks. The door is locked when the kitchen is not in use.

7 - Stairwell.

8 - The *Hole*. The metal door in the floor opens unto the *Hole*, a cylindrical shaft 20 feet/6 m deep. When prisoners are taken, they are forced to climb down a rope into the hole, where they stay until they are brought to Mettledale. There is no ladder, although someone with a good climbing skill could scale the wall slowly. However, the iron door is locked with a chain on the upper side. Food is thrown down to the prisoners.

9 - Office of the Outpost Commander. Nothing of value is in the desk.

10 - Chamber of the Office Commander. Most commanders take their meals here. The chests contain the potions and scrolls listed above. When a commander is on patrol, he usually takes 6 potions *Cure Serious Wounds*, three scrolls *Sleep*, three scrolls *Snare* and three scrolls *Summon Nature's Ally II* with him.

11- Mess Hall. The warriors of Garagos dine here.

12 - NCO Quarters. The six Hunter of Herne rangers room here. All beds are double bunks. Nothing of particular value is stored in the room. The rangers usually dine here.

13 - Ballista Towers. The spiral stairway begins on the ground floor. There are arrow slits on this level. Weapon racks with long bows and arrows also are on this level.

Second Story:

1 - Portcullis and Oil Walk. The portcullis can be raised and lowered here. There are three openings in the walk through which soldiers can pour boiling oil onto intruders.

2 - Gate Towers. The spiral stairway continues on to the next level. In each tower is a stove for boiling oil along with four cauldrons and three barrels filled with lamp oil.

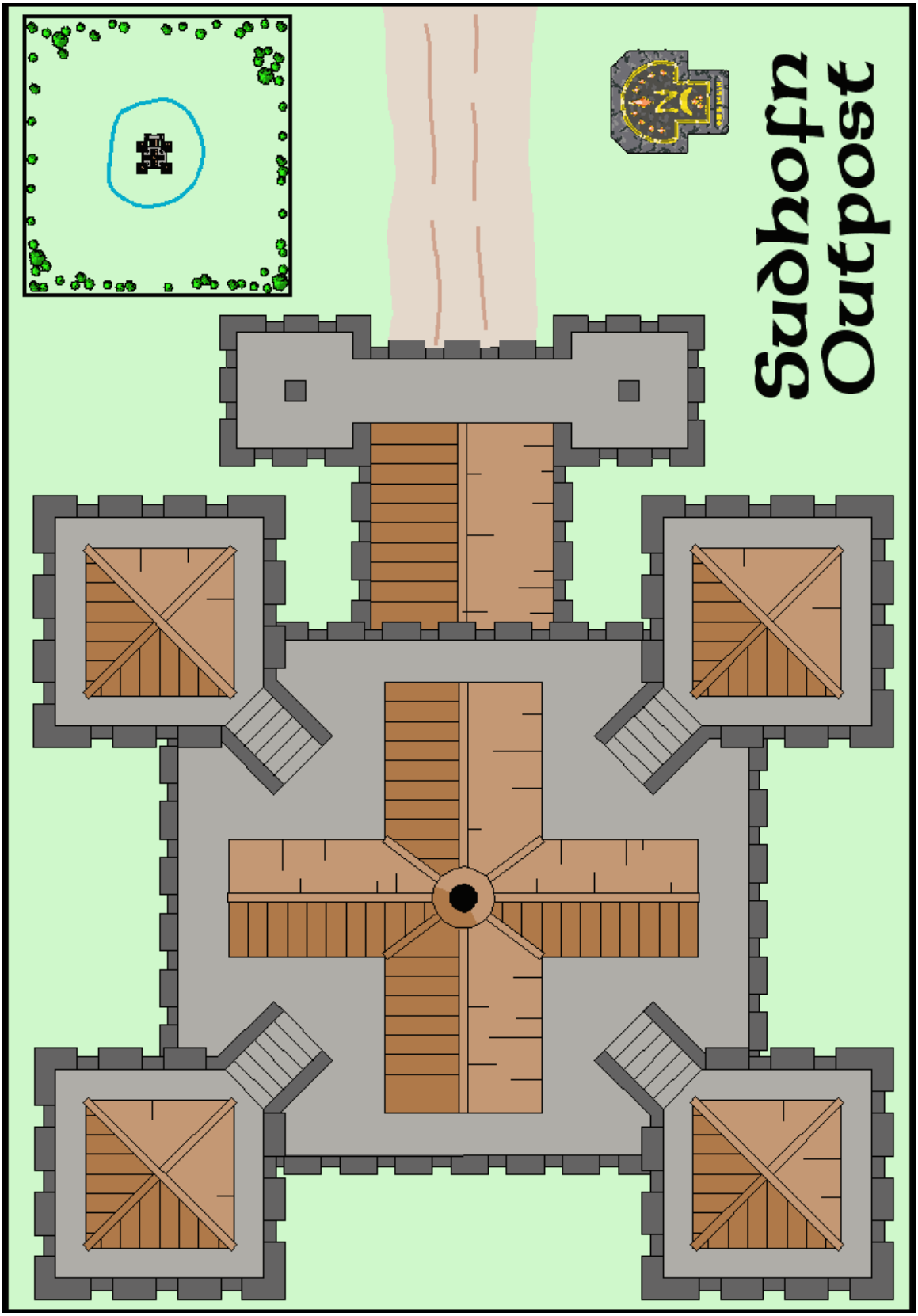
3. Ballista Towers. The spiral stairway continues on to the next level. There are arrow slits on this level.

4 - Barracks of the Warriors of Garagos. All beds are double bunks. The closets contain the warriors' personal items, most of them worthless to adventurers. After the mess hall closes, a barrel of beer is brought to the long table.

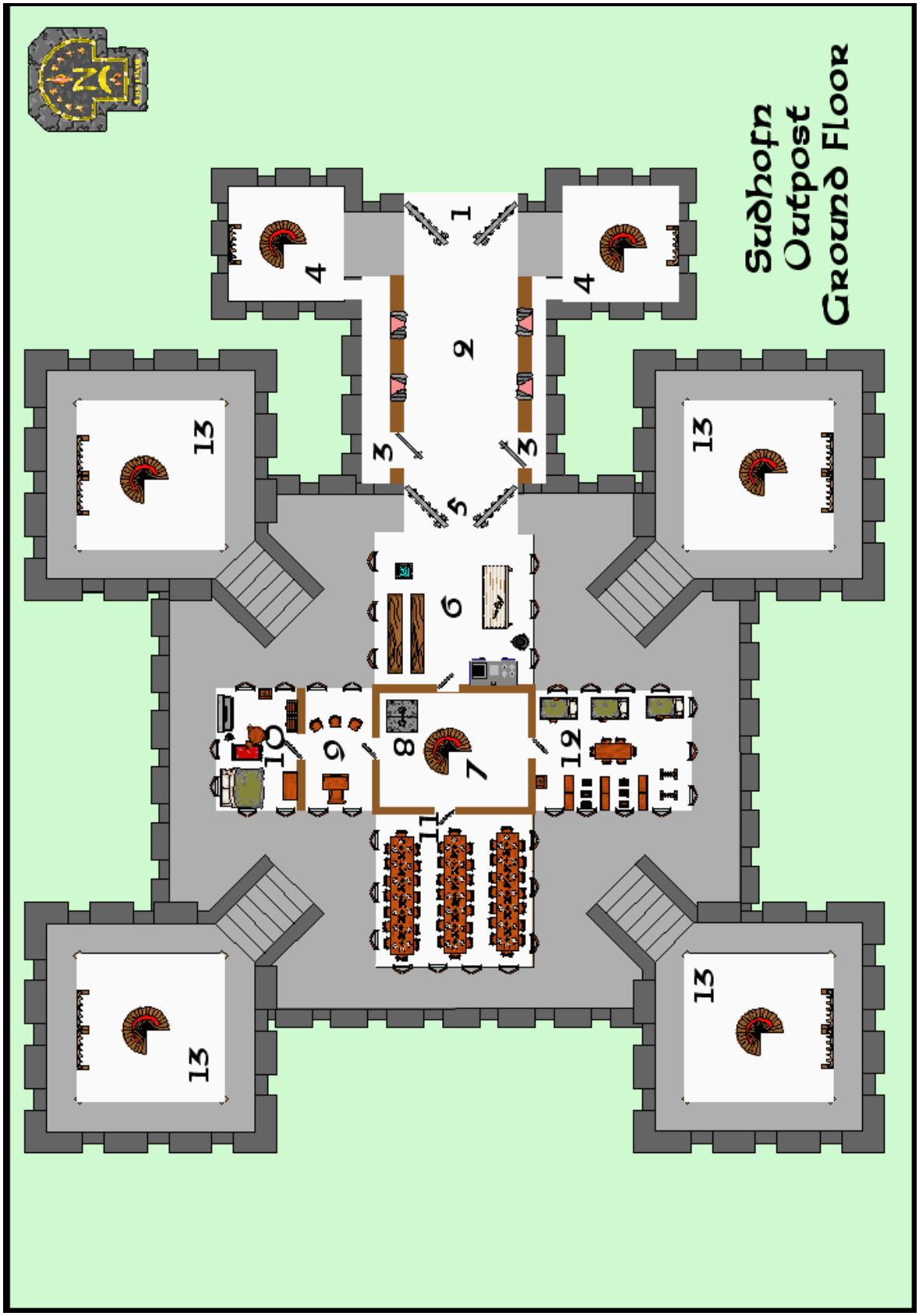
Third Story:

1 - Ballista Towers. Each tower has nine mounted ballistae and a supply of 200 bolts per tower.

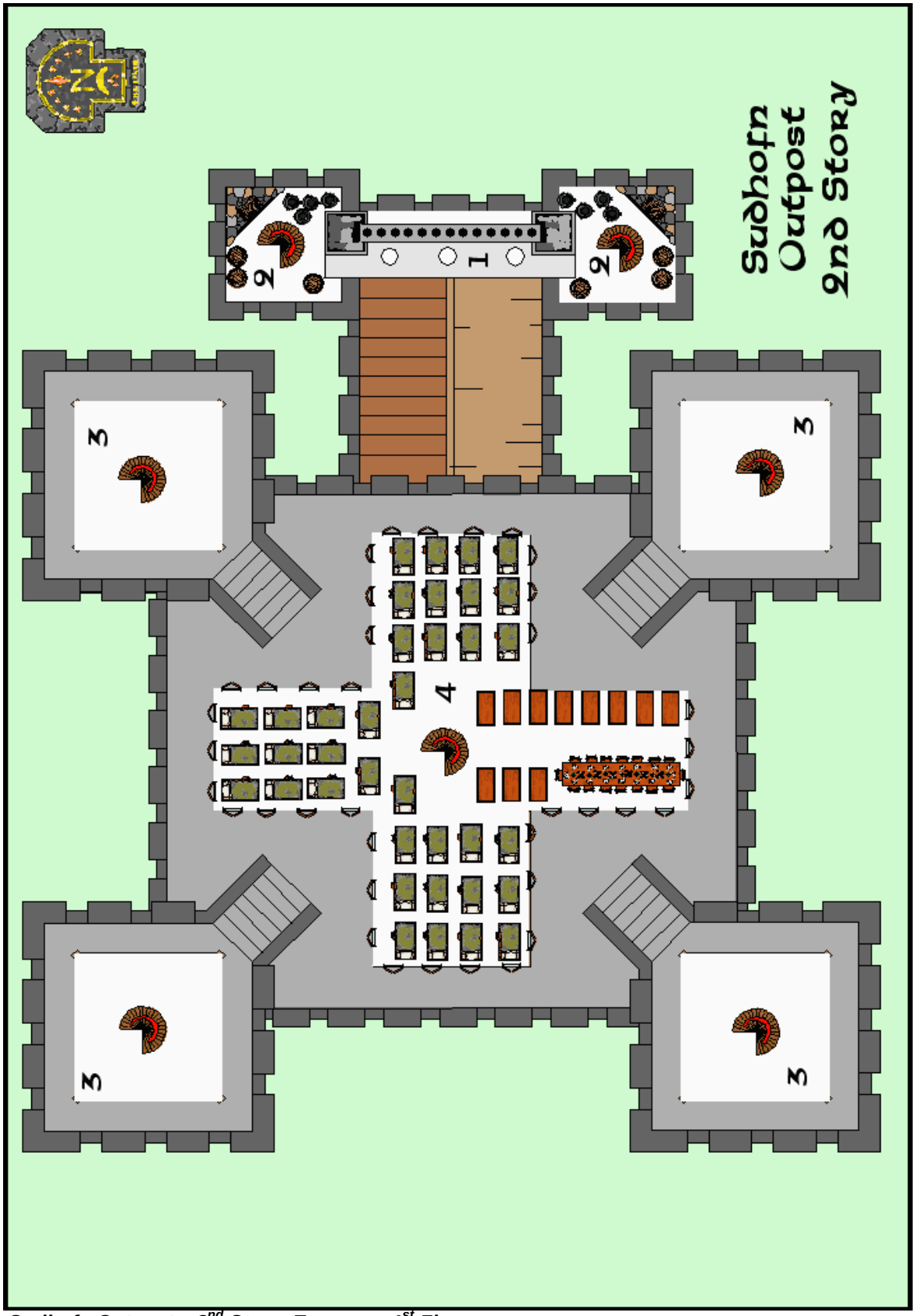
2 - Gate Towers. Defenders here use bows, arrows, crossbows and bolts.



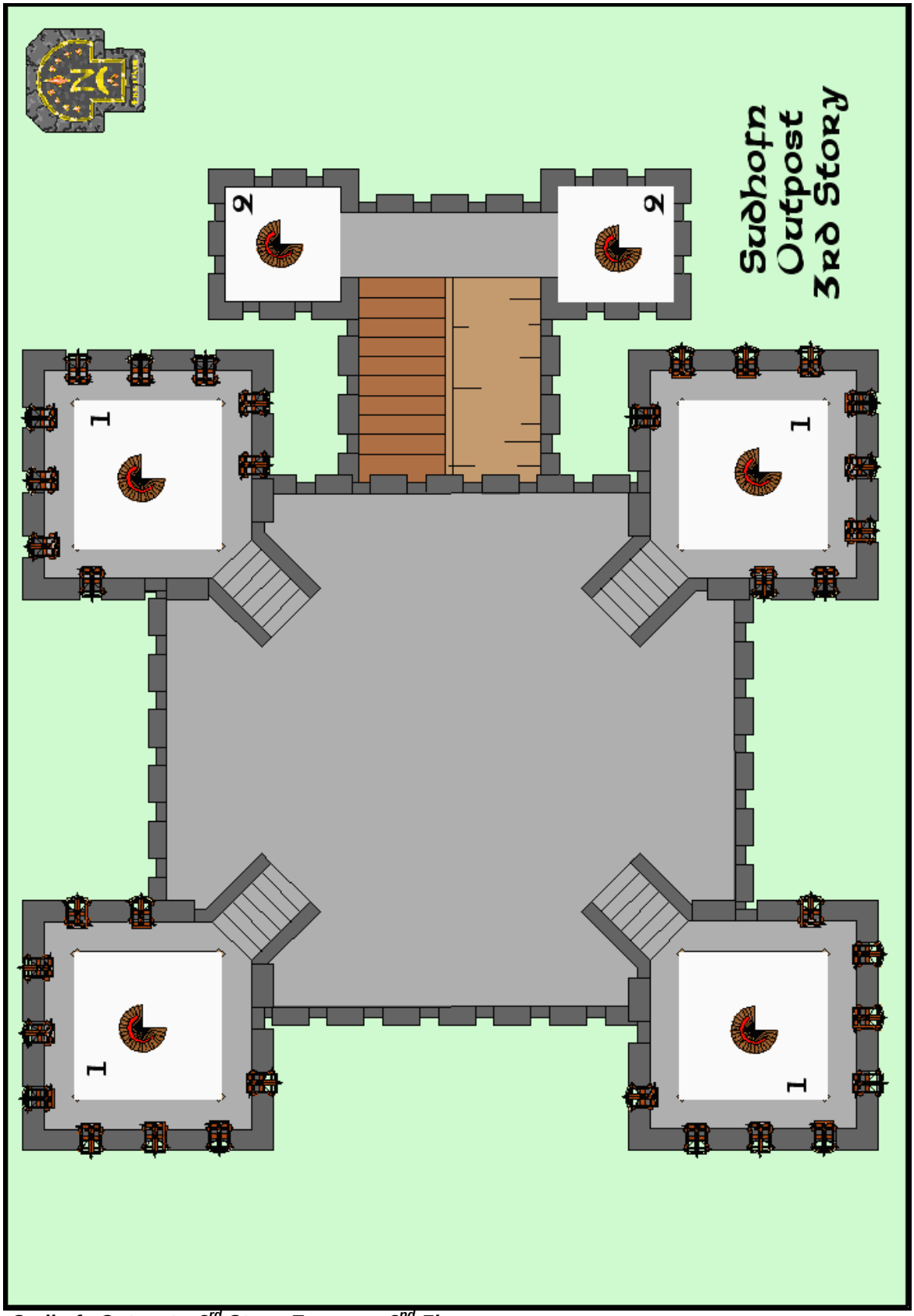
Sudhofn Outpost



Sudhofn Outpost – Ground Floor



Sudhofn Outpost – 2nd Story, European 1st Floor



Sudhofn Outpost – 3rd Story, European 2nd Floor

Fortress Narder Ruins

Ruin, Nonstandard, AL: none, Gp limit: none. Assets: none. Population: none. Authority figures: none.

Be it the mighty Narfelli, the evil Hunters of Herne or the bloodthirsty followers of Malar, many a man in the tale of Fortress Narder has encountered that which has come between him and the deed of his hand and the hope of his heart.

All of those who have attempted to inhabit this bastion in the ancient elven wood have met with disaster. After only 51 years, most of the fortress and all of its Narfelli inhabitants were wiped out in the mutual annihilation of Raumathar and Narfell. The Gallists finished rebuilding parts of it in the Year of the Pillaged Crypt (1005 DR). Gall's men had had fallen the trees within a mile/1,500m of the fortress' walls, making it difficult for the Mucklestones Druids to come near enough to attack effectively and also providing open land which Gall's people could farm.

By the end of the first year, Gall had moved 1,500 of his followers from the Eastern Dale into the fortress. It should have been a decisive move toward his wresting control of eastern Lethyr Forest from the troublesome Mucklestones Druids. His soldiers there were far too many in number for the fighting druids. With thick Gallist patrols, they were driven deep into the wood, out of attack range.

However, Gall had overestimated his success. He grew overconfident. In a mere four years after populating the fortress, he made his great but only party successful move into central Lethyr Forest, sending an army 1,200 strong to conquer Spearmouthdale, Mettledale and the central strip of the wood, south of Briddh.

The attack, in the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR), succeeded in achieving those goals, but with only 300 people left in Fortress Narder, the Mucklestones Druids made quick work of the newly rebuilt outpost, beginning with a siege. Once it was in full effect, the druids began pounding the fortress with spells. *Call Lightning, Earthquake, Insect Plague* and *Elemental Swarm* were their main weapons.

The lightning and earthquake spells were the most effective, with localized earthquakes causing great rents in the stone walls. Lightning spells sent many of the wooden buildings up in flames. The Gallists held out for two days before fleeing northward in an armed retreat to Gurshofn and the Trade Route. The druids allowed them to flee and then completed their destruction of the fortress. The fires have long since expired, but the ruins remain today as they were then, except that they have become overgrown with brush, vines, moss and trees.

Gall was forced to abandon the ruins. His forces could hold either Fortress Narder or the central wood against the Mucklestones Druids, but not both. Central Lethyr Forest was more valuable to him. Nevertheless, with the fall of Fortress Narder, he also lost access to the iron mines and stone quarries near the ruins. Since that time, most construction in Gallist areas is of wood, due to a lack of other resources.

After the Time of Troubles, Skith Tsornagar and his Malarite church in Bezentil succeeded in driving the Mucklestones Druids from the area around the ruins. They did not rebuild the fortress, but they did and still do use the ruins as a staging area. They also began using the quarries briefly, but soon were driven from both the ruins and quarries by the Mucklestones Druids.

When the Malarites use the ruins as a staging area for their Great Hunts, they now pay a price in lives. The Mucklestones Druids inevitably make hit-and-run attacks against the Malarites, but the hunters seldom succeed in bagging an elusive member of the Mucklestones Clan.

Adventure Hooks in the Ruins of Fortress Narder

- **Mucklestones Attack.** When anyone shows up in the ruins of Fortress Narder, the Mucklestones Druids attack now and ask questions later. The PCs will be no exception.

- **Narfelli Treasure.** It appears that no one ever has done serious excavation for Narfelli treasure in the ruins of the fortress. If the PCs do so at the locations shown on the map, they can find a large stash of old Narfelli coins and another stash of powerful Narfelli magic items that were in the fortress' dungeons at the time it was destroyed in the war with Raumathar.

Maps of Fortress Narder and the Ruins

1. Narfelli Times

To run a campaign element in the ruins well, one needs to know what once stood where only remnants remain today. This helps in determining what, if anything, your PCs may find when going through the ruins or - even more important - excavating beneath them.

The Narfelli era at Fortress Narder was brief. The fortress was completed in the Year of Fiendish Gambols (-201 DR) and destroyed in the war with Raumathar in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR), a mere 51 years. Only a small part of the tale of those years is known. A Narfelli mage named J'uhndar, who was based in what now is Impilturian Lyrabar, wrote the only surviving story of the Narfelli outpost.

J'uhndar visited Fortress Narder in the Year of the Bloody Hazard (-154 DR), four years before its fall, and reported what he saw in his journal. He also made a sketch of the fortress. These documents are in the archive of the Royal Impilturian Library in Lyrabar.

From J'uhndar's journal, we learn that Fortress Narder served as a high-powered defensive outpost against Raumathar. In a double barracks, 800 elite Narfelli soldiers were stationed. There also were three palaces with magi's towers. The journal suggests that there were 10-12 magi in each palace, and that each palace was devoted to a different school of magic, but J'uhndar revealed no deeper secrets.

1 - Command Post. The castle complex appears to have been something of a mini-fortress inside the fortress. The command post was a last refuge for all occupants of the fortress in time of attack. J'uhndar claimed there were large granaries beneath it. He believed that the command outpost was so thoroughly protected by high-level magic that nothing could harm it. The Raumathari apparently proved him wrong.

2 - Cavalry Stalls.

3 - Barns.

4 - Military Barracks.

5 - Magi's Palaces.

2. Gallist Reconstruction (1005-1009 DR).

After the fall of Narfell, Fortress Narder lay in ruin for 1,151 years. When the Gallists began surveying it in the Year of the Awakening (1001 DR), They found the foundations of the outer wall, the northwestern stables, the northern barn, the command post, the western barracks and the northwestern magi's palace. These were buried under thick vines, moss, grass, weeds, trees and a thick layer of humus produced by composting plants over more than 1,000 sleepy years.

Many of the stone bricks that the Narfelli had used to construct these and other structures also were scattered over the site and beyond its perimeters, suggesting that explosions had occurred as the fortress fell. Where the other buildings had stood, the Gallists had found only overgrown craters similar to those that small bombs would cause today.

Old tales passed on in the Eastern Dale claim that powerful Dragon Cult magi were key figures in the restoration of the fortress. At that time, Harbet Gall's first alliance with the cult was only two years old. It well may be that he wanted the cultist's to have their power base at some distance from his own, to make possible treachery on the cultists' part more difficult.

The old tales say the leader of the cult magi pursued old Narfelli lore with fervor. It was at his insistence that as much of the fortress as possible be rebuilt upon the model of the old Narfelli outpost. Thus, the scattered stones of the Narfelli fortress were collected and used to rebuild the wall, based upon the style of the foundations.

New buildings on the sites mentioned farther above were built upon the Narfelli foundations, with the architects guessing to some extent what had stood above ground several centuries earlier. The cultists had no access to and knew nothing of the map in J'uhndar's journal, which was locked away in the Lyrabar library. Therefore, they could not insist that the remaining areas of the fortress be rebuilt upon the Narfelli model.

This eliminated a potential conflict of some magnitude between Gall and the cultists. Gall intended to make of the ruins a fortified village. The original Narfelli compound had been generous with space. If the entire fortress had been rebuilt upon the Narfelli model, Gall's plans to build a village of 1,500 in the ruins would have been foiled.

There was conflict on another matter, but Gall finally overruled the cultists. They insisted that to preserve what they believed to have been the inherent Narfelli magic of the fortress, it must be rebuilt of native stone, as the Narfelli had done.

The Gallists had discovered the old Narfelli stone quarry near the fortress, but it would have taken several years to put the quarry back into operation and to produce the quantities of stone needed to reconstruct the buildings upon which the cultists had insisted.

Gall was preparing for his march upon Spearmouthdale, Mettledale and central Lethyr Forest. He was in a hurry and refused to tolerate such a delay. Over the cultists' objections, he sent his warriors to drive the Mucklestones Druids from the vicinity of the ruins. His men then cleared all the trees within a wide radius of the ruins and used the timber to rebuild and expand the fortress. Only the outer walls continued to be of stone.

In the end, the Gallists had built a much more crowded Fortress Narder than the Narfelli had known, and the land surrounding the forest was dotted with 400 farms as well as fields and pasture. In and around the fortress, some 1,500 Gallists were resettled from the Eastern Dale.

1 - Military stalls.

2 - Military corral.

3 - Barn.

4 - Barracks.

5 - Dragon Cultists' Lodge and Tower.

6 - Safehouse and Granary. Above ground, the four stories of this building were able to house temporarily all of the outlying farmers and their families in time of attack or siege. In the cellar level, the Gallists had built two stories of grain and food storage cellars.

7 - Officers' Barracks.

8 - Commanding Druid's Lodge and Grove.

3. Today's Ruins.

Gallist Fortress Narder had stood a mere four years. In the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR), Gall drew off most of his soldiers from Fortress Narder to make his march upon central Lethyr Forest. With the defenders gone, the Mucklestones Druids began a merciless attack upon the fortress including earthquake and lightning spells. The occupants at last fled back into the Eastern Dale, taking with them what valuables they could. The druids destroyed what remained.

If vines and moss are cleared, adventurers will find the ruins shown on the map. If they thoroughly clear the ruins, they also will find foundations of most of the other buildings shown on the map of the Gallist reconstruction. It is doubtful that excavations will open the PCs' way to lost Gallist treasures because the Gallists were able to take their possessions with them when they fled.

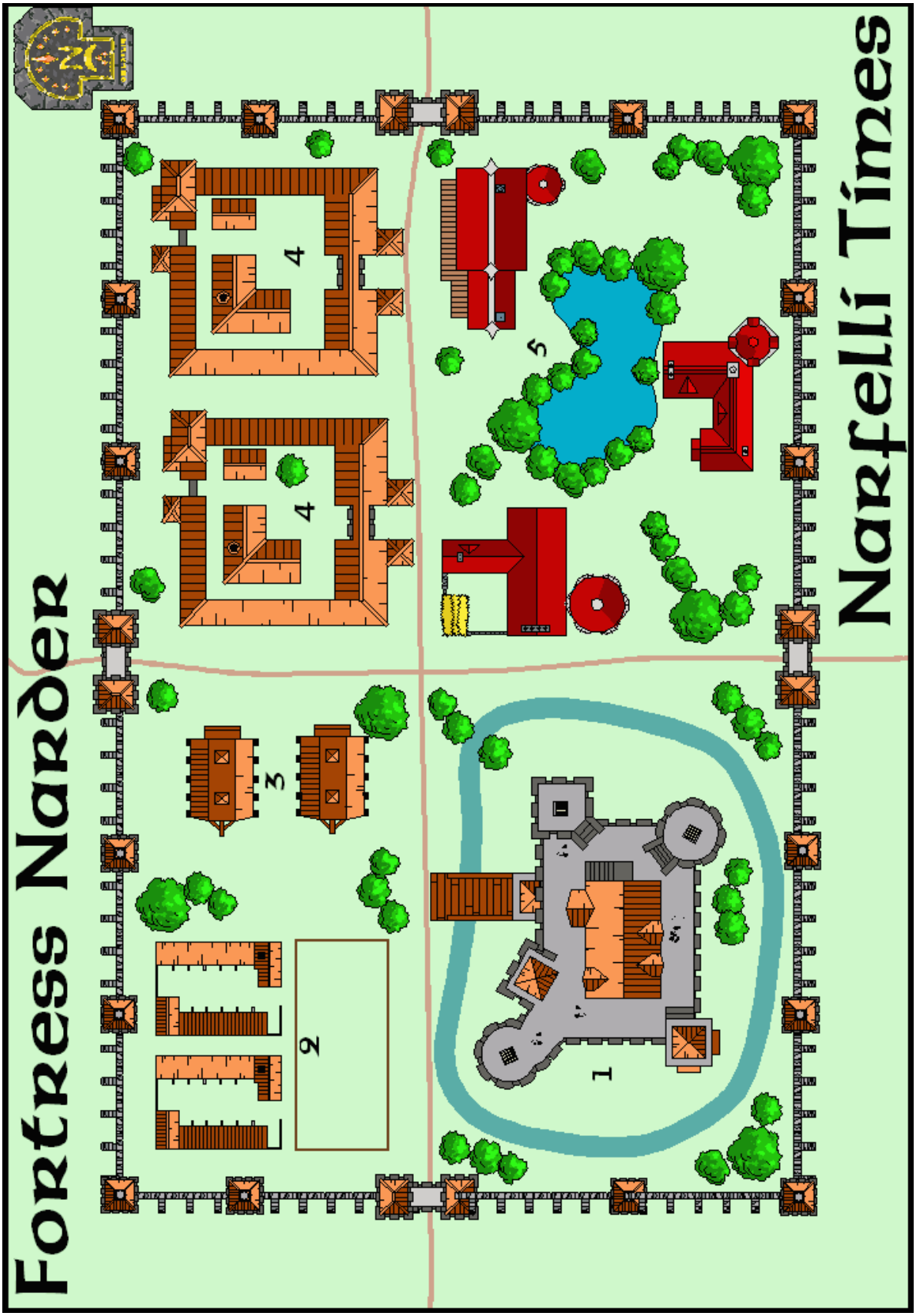
However, it seems unlikely that the cultist magi were able to thoroughly seek the Narfelli magic they had hoped to find in the ruins. Gall was preparing for war, the cultist magi had been impressed into his service, and it is doubtful that they were left much time for their research plans.

In battles where cultist magi serving Gall have fallen in the past three centuries, there are no known instances of slain cult magi in Gall's domain being found with items of Narfelli magic. This suggests that whatever magic the Narfelli may have left behind in the fall of Fortress Narder probably still is there today.

One site where a powerful stash of Narfelli magic can be found within 10 feet/3 m of the surface is shown on the map. The content of this stash is left up to the Game Master. The game master also should feel free to locate more Narfelli magical stashes at other points within the ruins.

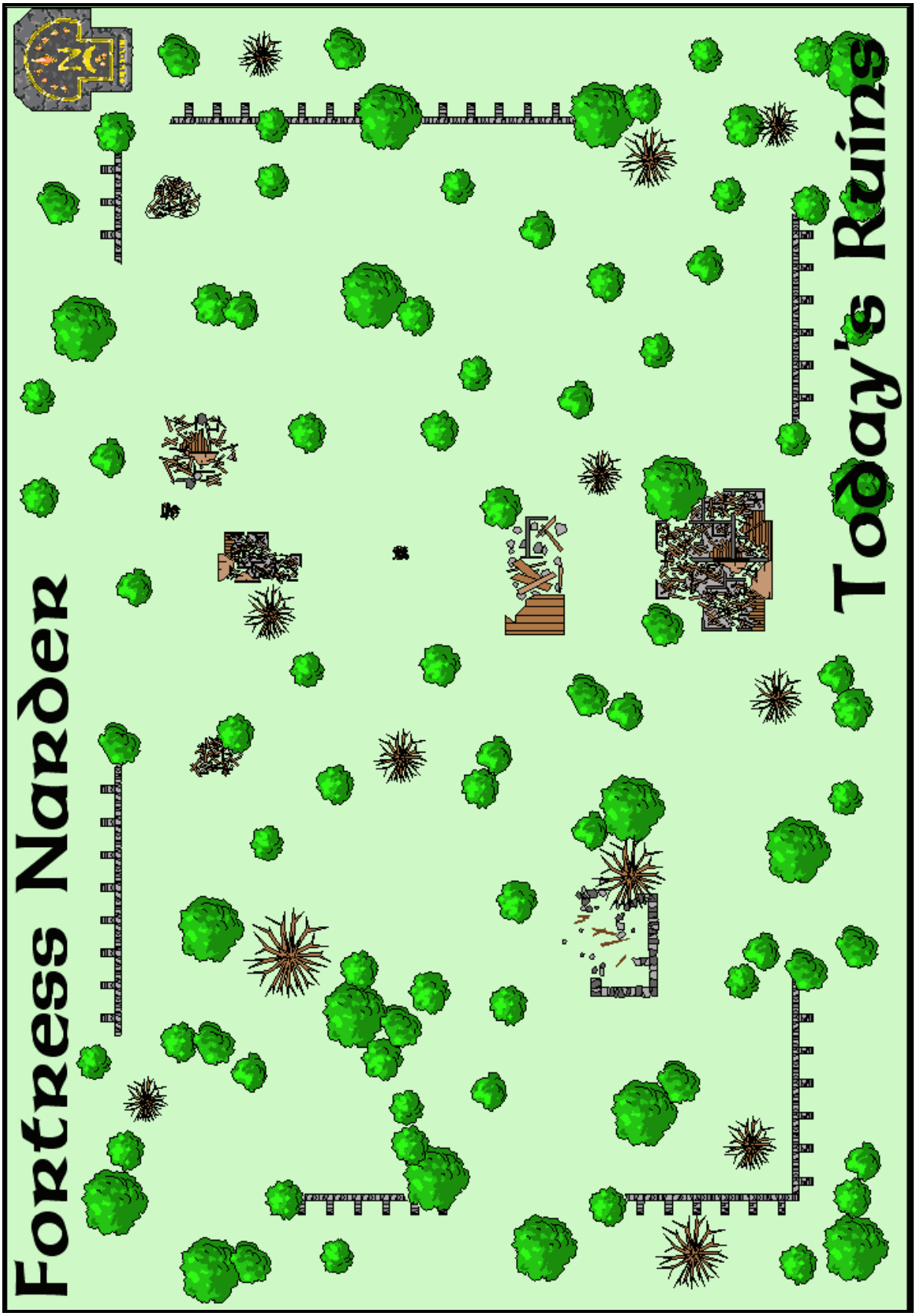
The map intentionally shows the clear outlines of all of the known ruins, but this is not what the PCs will see upon first examining the site. Everything that is shown can be seen at first only as green lumps on the surface, lumps which do not look quite like natural soil formations. Vines, weeds, moss and grass cover everything.

The PCs also will find tracks and trails suggesting that the site is visited with some frequency. Skith Tsornagar of Bezentil uses it twice a year for his Malarite Great Hunt, and the Mucklestones Druids come here often. They will not tolerate the PCs' use of the site, which will make it extremely difficult for them to search successfully for Narfelli magic.



Fortress Narder in Narfelli times

Fortress Narder under the Gallists



Today's ruins of Fortress Narder

Mucklestones (Mal K'ustan)

Ruin, Nonstandard, AL: none, Gp limit: none. Assets: none. Population: none. Authority figures: none.

NOTE: Mal K'ustan has not been mapped.

We've already mentioned that the name *Mucklestones* is nothing more or less than the bastardization of Mal K'ustan in the Narfelli tongue. The ruins of the Mal T'unan green elven settlement ceased to exist in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR). Mal K'ustan was utterly destroyed in an attack by the Raumathari during the great and conclusive war between Narfell and Raumathar. And yet … something remains of Mal K'ustan, even today.

There are several well-hidden secrets in the Bloodstone Lands about the vanished Mal T'unan tribe. Some ancient elves elsewhere in the Realms still may recall it, but there are few persons indeed who know that Mal K'ustan in its time was Faerûn's greatest center of worship of Rillifane Rallathil. The site where the elven village once stood and nestled in the crowns of the high trees was and still is hallowed ground. That may explain in part why the foes of the Mal T'unan and of their successors find little but failure at this site.

Here the Mal K'ustan clan made its home. When the Mal T'unan tribe left its beloved Auldgloam, only the Mal K'ustan remained in the southern part of the old wood now known as Lethyr Forest. Some rangers and druids of other tribes also settled in the northern part we call Rawlinswood today, in what we now consider to be the domain of the Nentyarch. Nonetheless, one can say for all intents and purposes that the Mal T'unan vanished from the Great Dale's history.

Not so the hallowed nature of Mal K'ustan. Even after the Raumathari had blasted every trace of it to oblivion, the spirit of Rillifane remained where Mal K'ustan had been. Today still, any follower of the elven Leaflord will be cured of all his or her wounds, healed of all illnesses of body and mind and find the deadliest of poisons purged from his or her body if he or she enters the spot where Mal K'ustan stood.

The Mucklestones Druids say that Rillifane's worshippers even will be cured of lycanthropy when they set foot upon the soil of Mal K'ustan. Those who have been made undead, they claim, will return to life. And a follower who has no foot to set upon the soil will find lost limbs restored.

Such magic, if it indeed exists, is mighty indeed for Rillifane's followers. But there is more. With time, Mal K'ustan has become enshrouded with ever more magic. No one dwells today where Mal K'ustan stood, but the site is the homing point of the Mucklestones Druids in the forest. It contains their magical escape gate to the astral plane.

Another magic upon the site conjures illusory memory fragments of old Mal K'ustan. Those who near the site but are not one of the Mucklestones Druids believe they still see the ruins of the old settlement there. Nevertheless, they cannot reach them. Old Mal K'ustan appears to continually move away from the intruders, drawing them like a magnet from their goal.

There is no saving spell or countermagic that will help the beholder pass this illusion and come to the true site of Mal K'ustan. However, the Mucklestones Druids say that devoted worshippers of Rillifane who have the Branched One's true interests at heart will not see the illusion and will be able to reach Mal K'ustan. They will not, however, be able to enter the Mucklestones Druids' astral sanctuary, which is barred to those who are not members of the band, unless one of the Mucklestones members accompanies them.

The gate to the Astral Plane was a gift to the Mucklestones Druids from the great epic Narfelli archmage Kiriagoth the Occularum. To help protect the green elves against his own corrupt folk, he gave the high druidess at that time, Lady L'un tul D'arit, a magical Narfelli object of great might and power that he had taken from the emperor's court conjurer in Heligonius, the *Amulet of the Astral Vault* (see *New Magic Items* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*).

The amulet remains in the possession of the Mucklestones today. They still use it to escape the Gallists and the Malarite hunters of Skith Tsornagar. The current bearer is Haspar Eriksbrodir, the half-elven great druid who leads the Mucklestones Druids.

Less than a decade has passed since the site also began to appear as an illusion of ancient ruins that elude intruders and draw them ever away from the true Mal K'ustan site.

In the Year of the Wave (1364 DR), Tsornagar succeeded in trapping the Mucklestones member in their astral sanctuary. They found help in the following Year of the Sword (1365 DR) in a half elven Harper agent named Parthanus, a sorcerer-ranger, who had learned of their plight while he was in Thesk.

Thousands of years earlier, one of Parthanus' ancestors had been an elven king, the ruler of a tiny woodland monarchy in the distant North where the Tortured Lands are today. The ancestor king possessed a family artifact that shielded the kingdom from the eyes of monsters and encroaching humans.

Known then as the *Stone of the Elf King*, the artifact had the ability to delude the minds of outsiders who attempted to enter the kingdom. The borders of the elven lands were easy to see. The enhanced growth within the tiny monarchy of the fair folk fostered a forest of taller and healthier trees than grew elsewhere in the surrounding countryside.

Nonetheless, although all could see the forest, none could quite find it. As one approached the borders of the woodland kingdom, they seemed to shift and be ever just a bit more distant than they had seemed to be a moment earlier. No one from the mightiest mage to the lowest goblin had succeeded in defeating the stone's magic.

What other properties and effects the artifact has no longer are known. Parthanus' father had been the last full-blooded elf of the ancient king's line. When his father died, the half-elf took possession of the stone and, like his ancestors before him, he used the stone's own power to keep it hidden in the woodland in the Tortured Lands where his family's kingdom had been in days of yore.

After learning of the Mucklestones Druids' woes, Parthanus decided to again use the stone, this time to protect the ruins of ancient Mal K'ustan. Thus, he was able to help the druids end their woes late in the Year of the Sword (1365 DR), when he returned to Thesk from the North.

Mal D'aan Site

Small town (military camp), Nonstandard (orc dictator), AL: (C)N, Gp limit: 800 gp when full, otherwise 100 gp. Assets: 60,000 gp when full, otherwise 1,500 gp. Population: 1,500 orcs when full, otherwise 300 orcs. Authority figures: Taxation: none. Currency accepted: Any recognized as genuine.

The green elven settlement of Mal D'aan ceased to exist nearly 2,000 years ago, when the Mal T'unan abandoned it in the Year of the Unknown Fates (-561 DR). Most of the tribe migrated out of ancient Auldgloam at that time, to a destination or fate that has never been determined.

There is no historical evidence to suggest that the Narfelli or anyone else until modern times ever made use of Mal D'aan, although the half-elves of Mal T'unan descent remember to this date where the settlement stood and take pains to visit it now and then in reverence.

Mal D'aan stood just below a small, flat outcropping of rock on somewhat high ground, and this seems to be what drew the current occupants to Mal D'aan. The site today is in the hands of a renegade orc tribe of 1,500 that calls it self the Beast Crushers, a reference to the followers of Malar from Bezentil who stage hunts in the forest and at the same time end up being hunted by the orcs.

The Beast Crushers were a part of the troops that Zhentil Keep sent to help King Azoun IV of Cormyr in his crusade against the Tuigan Horde in Thesk in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR). Orc General Gurddh and his followers had gotten a good taste of civilization and self-sufficiency during the crusade as well as learning to appreciate the respect of humans. Gurddh and his warriors acquitted themselves well in the war against the Tuigan, and Azoun honored them for their deeds.

That may seem to be no more than an ordinary person would expect, but it was extraordinary for Gurddh and his troop. In Zhentil Keep, they had been abused, scorned and dealt with as though they were the lowest of the Zhentilar. In Thesk, they were treated with the respect, and they were honored by a great king among men. It is hardly surprising then that they had no desire to return to the keep.

After the last of the battles against the Tuigan had ended in victory, Gurddh and his men simply deserted. They had intended to claim and settle a part of devastated Thesk, but once they did that, they had little idea what to do with themselves there. The orcs were warriors and hunters, not farmers and merchants. Before the first snows of winter had fallen in the Year of the Turret, the orcs had abandoned their ramshackle Theskan settlements and migrated as a unit into eastern Lethyr Forest.

There they found the hunters of the Malarite priest Skith Tsornagar, who begun to hunt the orcs, unaware that they were combating a disciplined army 1,500 strong. They soon became the hunted and remain that today. The Mucklestones Druids too kept a wary eye upon the orcs but did not interfere with them at first, watching them instead.

To date, the Mucklestones Druids have left the orcs in peace. One reason for this, no doubt, is that the orcs are the enemies of their enemy. The orcs slay Malarites. Another, however, is the orcs' relationship to Lethyr Forest. They use all of Lethyr except for the fortified Gallist central portion, which they tend to cross quickly. They have become nomadic forest hunters, which makes it possible for them to hunt sufficiently to feed themselves and take what wood they need without threatening the balance in any single area.

The only permanent base of the Beast Crushers is - ironically - the site of ancient Mal D'aan. In the coldest months of the year, when the entire tribe returns home, it makes a large encampment upon the rocky forest outcroppings above Mal D'aan, where the main part of the tribe camps for the winter. The site of Mal D'aan is in a forest glen below that is difficult to enter, accessible only through narrow and twisting paths.

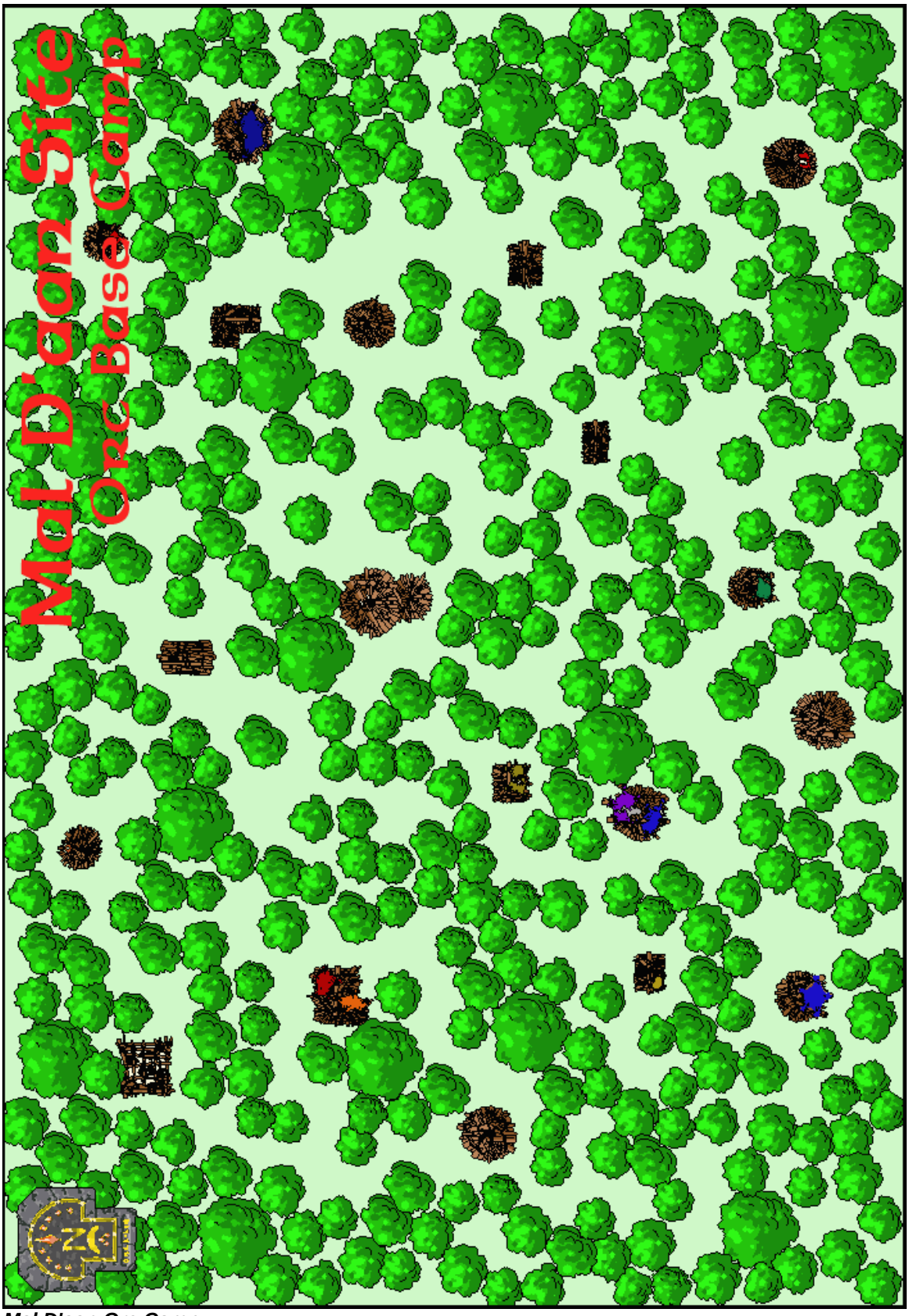
For just that reason, Gurddh chose the site of Mal D'aan for his permanent base camp. Without other deterrents, it is difficult enough to enter Mal D'aan. Gurddh's men have enhanced those dangers with a large number of the kinds of traps that only orcs build along all of the trails to their forest camp.

The Malarites know that something is in the Mal D'aan area, but those groups of Bezentil hunters who have attempted to enter the area never have returned to report what they may have found there.

Neither the Game Master nor his players should underestimate the Beast Crushers. They remain a disciplined and intelligent army quite capable of using advanced strategies against and laying effective traps for their enemy. In their dozen years in Lethyr Forest, many of the orcs have come to learn much about the lore of the woodland. The number of keen orc rangers in Gurddh's host is respectable and on the rise. Most of the orcs, however, are highly trained warriors and fighters, with some shamans among the ranks.

When Gurddh leads his men into the western part of the forest, he expects anyone he encounters to be his enemy. There the orcs have been attacked by Freemen, Hunters of Herne and bands of hobgoblins with equal ferocity. Nonetheless, when the losses are counted, there usually are fewer on the orc side, and it is the Freemen, Hunters of Herne and hobgoblins who retreat, not the orcs.

The map shows the general layout of the base camp where Mal D'aan once stood. The larger hut near the center of the map is General Gurddh's quarters.



Mal D'aan Orc Camp

H. The Southern Dale

This term describes the lands at the edge of Lethyr Forest north of the Golden Way and west of Ashanath. The only populated areas of the southern Dale are Mettledale and Spearmouthdale, both loyal to the lich Harbet Gall and his church of *Herne the Hunter*.

Upon the first glimpse, both settlements seem similar. There is farming in both Mettledale and Spearmouthdale, although the soil in this area is less fertile than along the Trade Route. But the two walled enclaves serve entirely different purposes within the Gallist economy.

The village of Spearmouthdale is the Gallist region's economic tie to the Golden Way, and it acts as a mercantile funnel to bring goods to the Golden Way in Thesk, generating income that is funneled back into the region of Herne's Hunters.

The main wares that are handled by the merchants of Spearmouthdale are hides, furs and boar and deer meat smoked or packed in brine. These are produced not only in Spearmouthdale but also in the forest settlements of Veidarsudur and Leifrskross to the northwest.

The Dalesmen in these areas are hunters or merchants first and farmers second. However, the plain south of Spearmouthdale is the breadbasket of the central Lethyr Gallist region, producing foods for the forest settlements, including Herneburg. Slaves do the farm work under the whip. Some are descendants of the neutral villagers who originally settled the two dales, but most are captives who are taken as slaves in the Flam Valley.

The small town of Mettledale has a more domestic orientation. The soil of Tears Creek Valley is nearly as fertile as some of the better stretches along the Trade Route, and the Gallists farm it intensely. Mettledale is second in agricultural production only to the fields south of Kront within the Gallist regions. As in Kront and Spearmouthdale, slaves under the whip do most of the farm labor.

Mettledale also is a key hunting area, with boar and deer the main prey, but most meats that is packed and smoked there is sent back into the Gallist regions of the Dale. There is a certain amount of surplus production each year that is taken to Theskan Tammar on the Golden Way and sold there, but most trade with Tammar brings wares into rather than out of Mettledale.

Travelers avoid these dales because of their reputation as forest valleys of dark evil. Both dales are far off the beaten path, and a traveler is not likely to reach them unintentionally. It is said that outsiders who have wandered into the Southern Dale have not returned but rather have found themselves under the whip and in chains as enslaved farmhands.

As part of their unholy rites to *Herne*, the huntsmen of Mettledale and Spearmouthdale conduct annual spring and autumn hunts of human prey. The huntsmen of Mettledale have used druids as their prey (although they have yet to claim the body of a Mucklestones Druid). For many years, the Mucklestones Druids have been turning the tables. The huntsmen have become the hunted, and the wily and militant Mucklestones druids have strung and hung several south Dalesmen's heads from trees on the edge of the wood. The huntsmen of Spearmouthdale have used the peasant farmers who have settled the Flam Valley as their ritual prey, but the farmers are slowly learning to defend themselves.

For all practical purposes, however, one must view both Spearmouthdale and Mettledale as strategically unstable. Nothing underlines that as much as the degree to which the Iron Throne and High Tyrannar Fzoul Chembryl in Zhentil Keep have their eye upon them.

Mettledale and Spearmouthdale have a tremendous potential for development, one that hardly will be realized as long as they remain in the hands of the Hunters of Herne. For the Gallists, the two settlements produce farming goods in surplus, making the sale of nonperishable food items to distant customers possible, and they serve as funnels to bring timber and other Gallist commodities to the Theskan markets of Phsant and Tammar.

The only other connection the Gallists have is the somewhat dangerous Tuigan Retreat from Kront in Ashanath to Theskan Two Stars. The merchants of Spearmouthdale deal mainly in hides, furs and boar and deer meat smoked or packed in brine. These are produced not only in Spearmouthdale but also in the forest settlements of Veidarsudur and Leifrskross to the northwest.

The small town of Mettledale has a somewhat more domestic orientation. The soil of Tears Creek Valley is more fertile than some of the better stretches along the Trade Route, and the Gallists farm it intensely. Mettledale is second in agricultural production only to the fields south of Kront within the Gallist regions. As in Kront and Spearmouthdale, slaves under the whip do most of the farm labor.

Mettledale also is a key hunting area, with boar and deer the main prey, but most meat that is packed and smoked there goes back into the Gallist regions of the Dale. A certain amount of surplus food production goes onto the market in Tammar, but most trade with Tammar brings wares into rather than out of Mettledale.

The Iron Throne is looking very closely at Thesk, Ashanath and the Southern Dale. Behind the scenes, Chembryl in Zhentil Keep, who manipulates the Throne and profits from it, is entertaining the same thoughts.

The Tuigan Horde devastated Thesk, but the heavy east-west mercantile traffic that passes through Thesk on the Golden Way generates considerable income. As a result, Thesk was able to recuperate quickly from the Tuigan invasion and spring back to its feet. In the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), after the Tuigan defeat, the Iron Throne became quite active, albeit covertly, in the reconstruction of Thesk.

The Throne does not rule Thesk, but its leaders and many of the leading merchants in Thesk are under the strong influence of the Throne, although most of them are unaware of it. Because Thesk is a merchant oriented land, it is a nation after the Throne's own heart, in some respects a primitive frontier version of the Throne's homeland, Sembia.

The Throne's main opponent in Thesk is the church of Mask, steered by the House of the Master's Shadow in independent Telflamm on the coast to the West. Here is where Chembryl is playing a strong hand. He is leaving the development of Thesk's markets up to the Throne, but the Throne is paying considerable money to covert organizations to track down and slay the Shadowmasters of Telflamm who are attempting to operate in Thesk.

The Throne does not appear to realize that the agents it has set upon the Shadowmasters' trail are highly disciplined Xvimist assassin monks in Chembryl's service. Nor does the Throne appear to realize that a sizeable religious war is brewing in the region, one between the churches of Xvim and Mask. That, of course, is Chembryl's goal. He seeks to destroy the House of the Master's Shadow and the Shadowmasters with the long-range goal of merging Telflamm into Thesk and bringing all of Thesk under the Throne's thumb.

One reason why the Throne has not taken proper cognizance of this operation is the highly covert manner in which it is being conducted. There is no visible evidence of the Xvimists or the Zhentarim being active in Thesk. The Throne is getting reports from its agents that there are rumbles among the Shadowmasters that the Xvimists are out to eliminate them. Instead of perceiving the truth in these claims, the Throne is patting its own back, believing itself to be the Shadowmasters' key foe and thinking its covert operations have managed to disguise this and erroneously bring the Xvimists under suspicion.

Another reason is that the Throne is focusing much more intently upon the lands north of Thesk than upon Telflamm. The Throne sees the coastal city as a rat's nest that would be extremely difficult to eradicate. Instead, the Throne hopes it can make the Shadowmasters' ventures into Thesk so expensive for them that Mask's church will focus upon other goals in the long run and cause only little trouble in Thesk.

What interests the Throne most are the fertile agricultural lands of Thesk, the Great Dale and Ashanath between the Golden Way and the eaves of Lethyr Forest. The Throne is pondering how it can arrange for the conquest of all of the lands between the Flam in the west, the eaves of Lethyr Forest in the north, the path of an ancient and unused trail from Tammar to Kront in the east (not mapped) and the Golden Way in the south.

The plan specifically includes the Gallist settlements of Spearmouthdale and Mettledale. The post-conquest goal of the Throne would be the annexation of this area into Thesk, which would rule and develop it under the strong covert influence of the Throne.

In strategic theory, little would stand in the way of the Throne's plans. The Throne also would have no difficulty finding and financing the military force necessary to make the conquest, even if it would be unaware that many of the key members of the conquering force would be in the covert service of the Zhentarim. Except for the conquest of Spearmouthdale and Mettledale, the fighting would be limited to eliminating the populations of bulettes and ankhegs in the still fallow lands with agricultural potential.

The enlarged Thesk that the Throne envisions doubtless could grow quickly into one of Faerûn's more prosperous nations. Agricultural development of the fallow lands between the Golden Way and Lethyr Forest would create the Realms' greatest breadbasket east of the Sea of Fallen Stars and west of distant Kara-Tur.

The one thing that stands in the Throne's way is its own fear of Harbet Gall. The Throne knows that Gall's strength in Lethyr Forest is inadequate to defend Mettledale and Spearmouthdale from the conquering force the Throne envisions. Nor would Gall be able to send troops from the Eastern Dale into the fray. That would leave his main front open to the Freemen of the west.

Therein is the crux of the Throne's problem. The conquest of Spearmouthdale and Mettledale well could drive Gall into a desperate retaliation of unknown dimension. Were Gall to lose the southern Dale, he would forfeit his major trade connections to the outside world. The Trade Route westward is closed to him. Furthermore, if the two settlements fall, Sudhofn, Herneburg, Leifrskross and Veidarsudur would be cut off and isolated between the Freemen in the north and Thesk in the south.

The Throne's agents are aware of the host of undead being raised for Gall by his Dragon Cult enclave in Tower Threespires. The Throne also is learning that Gall again has dragons in his service in the east, and that he is building ties to the Church of Tiamat. However, the Throne cannot calculate the extent to which Gall could set magical forces against an enlarged Thesk, nor can it assess Gall's potential for setting dragons upon Thesk.

The Throne wants to build an agricultural belt that will reap profits rather than waging a war against dragons, necromancy and other magic. For this reason, it continues to stay its hand in the southern Dale. Were Gall to fall, however, one can be certain that the Throne would mobilize quickly to being the southern Dale and its fertile fields under Theskan control, before the Freemen of the western and Central Dale could claim it.

Until such a day comes, the southern Dale will continue to remain far off the beaten path. Travelers who have no business to conduct in Mettledale or Spearmouthdale avoid them. They have a reputation as forest valleys of dark evil. It is widely known that some outsiders who have wandered into the southern Dale have not returned but rather have found themselves under the whip and in chains as enslaved farmhands.

The Hunters of Herne in Mettledale and Spearmouthdale conduct annual spring and autumn Great Hunts with human prey. The huntsmen of Mettledale have used captured Freemen as their prey (although they have yet to claim the body of a Mucklestones Druid).

For many years, the Mucklestones Druids have been turning the tables. The huntsmen of Mettledale have become the hunted, and the wily and militant Mucklestones druids have strung and hung several south Dalesmen's heads from trees on the edge of the wood.

The huntsmen of Spearmouthdale have used captured peasant farmers who settled in the Flam Valley as their ritual prey, but the farmers are slowly learning to defend themselves.

Spearmouthdale

Village, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 400 gp limit*. Assets: 17,800 gp. Population: 790 + 100 militiamen, local folk 100% human. (In addition: 300 slaves, mostly human). Authority figures: True Druid Angvúl Gaburdhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 5, Druid Baron of Spearmouthdale; Lyngvi Tuburdhssonur, human male, AL: NE, (Hunter of Herne) Rgr 10, commander of the village watch; Brother Lars Gylfyngssonur, AL: NG, Cleric (Chauntea) 5. Others: Militia of 35 Hunter of Herne Rangers, human male and female, AL: NE, lvls 1-4, and 65 Warriors, human male and female, AL: various neutral and evil, War 1-4. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, old Theskan and bloodstone bars.

*** High gp-limit due to above average trade.**

Spearmouthdale goes back to the age of Turami. The village served as a settlement on a Narfelli trade route and even managed to survive the conflagration of the Narfelli-Raumathari war. However, after more than 1,000 years of independence, it fell in the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR) to the Gallists, who have ruled it since. The current local ruler is True Druid Baron Angvúl Gaburdhssonur, who was born and raised in Spearmouthdale.

No enemy power attacks Spearmouthdale regularly, so the Gallist enclave is relatively secure. The village is harassed at times by the Mucklestones Druids, who also cause some damage to the far-spreading farm fields outside the walls. The hobgoblins of Lethyr Forest attempt to cause problems in the area at times, but the Hunters of Herne usually succeed in driving them off.

A more serious threat is the host of 1,500 orcs led by General Gurddh, based at the site of the old Mal T'unan green elven settlement Mal D'aan. However, Spearmouthdale could be spared this trouble. It is caused solely by the local ruler, Druid Baron Gaburdhssonur. General Gurddh and his followers have no interest in pursuing war with Spearmouthdale or any other settlement outside of Lethyr Forest, which they consider to be their domain.

However, the druid baron has concluded that orcs have no place in the natural balance of things within Lethyr Forest. Therefore, he offers a reward for heads of orcs that his hunters bring in, and he makes orcs the prey for one of the village's two annual Great Hunts. While Gurddh is not interested in and of itself in waging war upon Spearmouthdale, he is an experienced, strategically sharp campaigner, an appellation that hardly could be applied to the druid baron.

Anytime the Hunters of Herne go after orcs, Gurddh sees to it that they pay several times over the price they exact from the orcs. When the orcs are tracked down in the druid baron's Great Hunt, they inevitably turn the tables on the Gallists, hunting the hunters. The body count at the end of these Great Hunts usually averages 3 to 1 in the orcs' favor. Indeed, were it not for additional men from elsewhere who join in the Great Hunt, the toll would eventually lead to Spearmouthdale dying out.

When the Hunters of Herne have become particularly aggressive, Gurddh also has laid siege upon the Village. In the Year of the Gauntlet (1369 DR), his Beast Crushers even managed to take advantage of a dry spell to burn about half of Spearmouthdale's crops before the harvest, but the druid baron has yet to learn his lesson.

Many of the Hunter of Herne rangers who serve Druid Baron Gaburdhssonur have learned that lesson, but their attempts to enlighten the baron have been in vain so far, even when they point out that the Beast Crushers, whose base camp is closer to Mettledale than Spearmouthdale, do not bother Mettledale. The druid baron there understands that he is wisest to co-exist in peace with the Beast Crushers.

Spearmouthdale is an industrious, hard-working village. Most of the population is involved in hunting or logging or they process the raw materials that others in Spearmouthdale as well as Herneburg, Leifrskross and Veidarsudur deliver. Farming, of course, is the biggest business of all in the village, but the farms are worked mostly by slaves who live under the whip.

The slaves are kidnapped and captured freemen, local lawbreakers whose crimes did not warrant being sentenced to serve as prey in a Great Hunt, nosy adventurers and other intruders who had no business being in the area and the like. The slaves are fed well and housed adequately and with sufficient winter heating, but those who are laggard at their work taste the whip of their overseers. They are careful not to cause serious damage to the slaves, however, because they are a work force vital to the economy of Spearmouthdale.

When a slave becomes so rebellious that he or she no longer is of value as a farm laborer, he or she is slowly tortured to death as an example to others. Slaves who become too ill or infirm to work usually are quietly slain and buried.

One captive, Brother Lars Gylfyngssonur, a priest of Chauntea, enjoys thestatus of a partially free man. The Gallists have learned that their farms are more productive when a member of Chauntea's clergy watches over them and the slaves who work them. They also allow Gylfyngssonur to heal whipped slaves, simply because with healing, they can return more quickly to work. Gylfyngssonur is allowed to live in and maintain a small shrine to the goddess within the village walls and may go free as he wishes, as long as he does not attempt to leave Spearmouthdale.

In this sense, he enjoys about the same degree of freedom as others who live in Spearmouthdale or most other Gallist settlements. Locals may leave the village only with permission from the druid baron, and that usually is granted only to the village's traders, who travel to Thesk, and to closely controlled parties of hunters and loggers who go into Lethyr Forest.

Anyone who tries to escape the village can expect the druid baron to sentence him or her to be prey in a Great Hunt. However, escape attempts are rare. There really is nowhere for locals in Spearmouthdale to flee. Both Thesk and the domains of the Freemen are far removed. Moreover, a villager who would be inclined to flee into Lethyr Forest would be more frightened of the Mucklestones Druids than of the Hunters of Herne who would pursue him.

As a result, most villagers have come to terms with their lot. Theirs is a life of hard work with low rewards, but those who tow the Gallist line can know moments of lighthearted fund and even joy at times.

Few villagers reap the advantages of having their own private property. Most of Spearmouthdale including the poor but adequate housing there belongs to the church of Herne and is controlled by the druid baron. Those who are higher in the druid baron's estimation - the majority - live in newer, wood frame houses with wood-shingled roofs. Those who have a lesser stand in the baron's eyes usually are relegated to the older and less comfortable thatch buildings that still stand within Spearmouthdale's walls.

Spearmouthdale not only is a center for hunting and agriculture but also an important dispatching and receiving station for wares coming from and going to distant points that one can reach over the Golden Way, points as remote as Kara-Tur in the east and Waterdeep,Neverwinter or even Calimshan in the west. To qualify as a trader who is allowed to leave the village to do business on the Golden Way, one must be affiliated with the Southern Dale Trading Coster, an organization that reports directly to Gallist headquarters in Kront.

Southern Dale Trading is the Gallist umbrella organization for all outside commerce, including not only the trade that passes through Spearmouthdale but also the caravans that travel over Mettledale to Tammar, those that go from Kront past the slave farms to Theskan Two Stars and the trade teams that deal with the Nar barbarians at the trade fair in Bildoobaris.

Interestingly, Southern Dale Trading is the only Gallist operation that the Iron Throne has succeeded in infiltrating. The head of the coster in Kront, Tweevis Harnby (human male, AL: NE, Exp 16, Rog 3) is a native of Sembian Yhaunn who has been in service to the Gallists for 15 years. In that time, he has arranged to have his own people running the other coster offices in the Gallist part of the Dale.

His man in Spearmouthdale in Tarnal Karg (human male, AL: NE, Exp 8, Rog 8), a native of Sembian Urmlaspyr. Under certain circumstances, Karg could play an important role in your PCs' lives. If the PCs are in imminent danger of being captured by the Hunters of Herne and they have a substantial amount of gold or other valuables at their disposal, they could bribe Karg to smuggle them into Thesk in caravan wagons. Neither the druid baron nor anyone else in Spearmouthdale has the right to inspect the coster's wagons. Karg and his operation report directly to Kront, which is far over the druid baron's head.

Surprising as it may seem, there is some night life in the village. Locals tend to congregate in the Stag's Leap Tavern. They aren't very interested in outsiders and tend to avoid them. This makes the Stag's Leap friendly and hospitable for locals but boring for strangers.

The Roaring Boar Inn, on the other hand, tends to be anything but boring. There almost always are people from elsewhere in Spearmouthdale negotiating business deals. Most are above board, some are under the table, but almost all of them are negotiated in the Roaring Boar. The public room at the inn also is popular with higher ranking officers from the garrison, which sometime can bring news to open ears. And the serving wenches are happy to do after-hours business.

The slaves' stockade, which house an average of 300 captive laborers of both sexes at any given time, are inside the garrison compound. Because Spearmouthdale seldom has to worry about any serious attacks from outside, security the compound has become surprisingly lax.

Adventure Hooks in Spearmouthdale

- **Getting In and Out:** Without being slain or enslaved, that is. This can be an adventure in its own right, if the PCs enter the Spearmouthdale with no ostensible reason for being there. If you're running the *Northern Journey* adventure, the situation is even more treacherous. By the time the PC party reaches Spearmouthdale, the druid baron will have received a description of their sigylls from Kront, along with orders to slay them, regardless what the cost.

- **Freeing slaves:** The PCs may be inclined to free some or all of the 300 slaves held in the stockade. It may even be that they have a plan of the slave stockade from a friend or relative of a slave (included here). PCs of the proper level with higher level talents for backstabbing, the ability to turn invisible, etc., could even pull it off, if only a few slaves are to be freed. The possibilities for this hook are detailed below in the descriptions of the slave stockade.

Map of Spearmouthdale

1 - Garrison. The 100 Hunter of Herne rangers and warriors are stationed here to serve as a local militia.

2 - Slave Stockade. Further detailed below.

3 - Spear Creek Flour and Oil. The local mill is under the direct control of the druid baron. The miller is Thórad Neflungssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 4. Two journeymen and two apprentices work for him. The mill grinds flour and hammers vegetable oil from seeds. The steady flow of Spear Creek makes it possible for the mill to use a bottom driven waterwheel without a millpond and race.

4 - South Lethyr Sawmill. The rather sizeable mill produces lumber for export. The mill is under the direct control of the druid baron. The master sawyer is Gildor Heldarssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 6. Four journeymen and four apprentices work for him. The steady flow of Spear Creek makes it possible for the mill to use a bottom driven waterwheel without a millpond and race.

5 - Stag's Leap Tavern. The only private business in Spearmouthdale, the tavern is run by retired Hunter of Herne ranger Tarad Furghsbrodir, human male, AL: NE, lvl 9. This is the favorite nightspot for locals. The customers do not like visitors intruding here and will show them a cold shoulder. Furghsbrodir usually suggests that strangers try the public room of the inn instead. He serves local Grain Belt Lager beer at 3 copper kernels or bites per quart/liter tankard. He also serves a vesper board with local cold sausage, bread from the village bakery and horseradish at 2 silver rings or shiners per serving.

6 - Golden Sheaf Bakery. The regional bakery specializes in heavy rye and mixed breads that can survive the journey to Veidarsudur and Leifrskross without going stale. It is under the control of the druid baron. The master baker is Tarda Nargolsdóttir, human female, AL: N, Exp 6. She employs three journeymen and two apprentices.

7 - Southern Dale Trading Coster Office. This operation, which is under Kront's control rather than that of the druid baron, is headed in Spearmouthdale by Tarnal Karg (human male, AL: NE, Exp 8, Rog 8), a native of Sembian Urmlaspyr and a covert agent of the Iron Throne. Southern Dale is responsible for conducting all trade with the markets of the Golden Way in Thesk. The merchants and traders of Spearmouthdale who are allowed to travel into Thesk work for the coster.

8 - Southern Dale Trading Coster Warehouses. The warehouses are watched around the clock by two guards each, human male or female, various neutral and evil alignments, War lvls 1-4.

9 - Grain Belt Brewery. This operation is under the control of the druid baron. The brewmaster in Tanghr Harbudssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 4. He employs four journeymen and four apprentices. The orange-golden bottom fermented lager beer Harbudssonur brews also is served in Veidarsudur.

10 - Grain Belt Malting House. This is a subordinate part of the brewery operation. The master malt maker, who works for Harbudssonur, is Tamh Firgolssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 3. The barley malt produced here is used to brew Grain Belt lager. The main product, however, is malt extract, which is sold to other breweries and to merchants on the Golden Way, who sell it to whisky distilleries.

11 - Roaring Boar Inn. The hostelry is under the direct control of the druid baron. The innkeeper is Gurn Joragssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 4. It has 14 singles at 9 silver rings or shiners a night, two doubles at 8 silver rings or shiners and two suites at 2 gold rings or talers. The rooms are simple and spartan but comfortable. The only drink served in the local public room is Grain Belt lager at 3 copper kernels or bites per quart/liter tankard. Meals - all venison and wild boar entrées - range from 6 silver rings or shiners to more than a gold ring or taler.

12 - Central Lethyr Meat Packing. Despite the name, no meat is packed here. All the boar and venison that is butchered in the plant either is sold locally or made into sausage, most of it for export. The plant is under the direct control of the druid baron. The master butcher is Hieml Sebudssonur, human male, AL: LE, Exp 8. Six journeymen and an equal number of apprentices work for him.

13 - Public Stalls. Most of the stalls are used by horses of the militia. Travelers staying at the Roaring Boar can use the inn's stalls. Others pay a stall fee of three copper kernels or bites a night.

14 - Village Administration, Regional Court and Dungeon. These facilities run the druid baron's local government and administer justice for both Spearmouthdale and Veidarsudur. The local justice is a junior True Druid of Herne, Tiadh Dargolssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid 1. The cells in the cellar dungeon are mostly empty. Dargolssonur sentences most criminals either to be prey in a Great Hunt or to a term as slaves in the local stockade.

15 - South Dale Wagons. The wagon works is under control of the druid baron. The master wainwright is Dividh Karlssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 6. The shop builds wagons for the slave farm, heavy duty caravan wagons and sleds for the same purposes. It also takes contracts for private wagons and sleds, but these seldom are needed in Spearmouthdale. Four journeymen and three apprentices work in the wagon works.

16 - Spearmouthdale Smithy. The shop is under the control of the druid baron. The master smith is Narg mac Tark, dwarf male, AL: LE, Ftr 9, Exp 14, a master smith and fugitive from Earthfast City above Impiltur. His clan wants him for the murder of his brother in the Year of the Banner (1368 DR). Mac Tark fled as far as Phsant, where he met traders from Spearmouthdale on the Golden Way and asked them to offer his services to the druid baron as a smith. A bit later, merchants returning to Phsant passed on that Tuburdhssonur had accepted the offer and would provide mac Tark with a smithy. Mac Tark accompanied the merchants back to Spearmouthdale and was placed over Rughad Jundurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 4, as new village master smith. Jundurssonur resents mac Tark but to date has had little choice but to accept his lot. Mac Tark has assigned him to supervising the four apprentices. Mac Tark himself works with the two journeyman smiths. The dwarf has two expert levels as a weaponsmith (not a master) and 12 expert levels (master) as a blacksmith.

17 - Shrine to Chauntea. The simple thatch hut also is the residence of the captured priest of Chauntea, Brother Lars Gylfyngssonur, AL: NG, Cleric 5. Gylfyngssonur will offer intruders secret aid but will not risk his life to do so.

18 - Druid Baron's Grove. True Druid Baron Angvúl Gaburdhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 5, lives here. He does not use his modest house or grove for political business.

Slave Stockade in Spearmouthdale

This set of maps accompanies the adventure hook *Freeing Slaves* above, although it will be just as useful and doubtless even necessary should your PCs be captured by the Hunters of Herne and enslaved.

The Gallists operate three slave camps, this camp in Spearmouthdale, a somewhat larger camp in Mettledale and the largest, south of Kront in Ashanath. All the camps use similar systems for keeping the slaves, but each of the three is progressively harder to crack, in the sequence that they're listed above.

Before going into physical details of the camp, it is important to know what happens when a new captive is brought into the camp and what routines the slaves go through on a day-to-day basis. By the time the new slaves have been brought within the wall of the Spearmouthdale garrison, they usually have been bound, sometimes with rope but in most cases with iron shackles.

Entering Slavery

See the floor plan entitled *Spearmouthdale Slave Barracks, Ground Floor.* New slaves are brought into the guard room, the fore room shown on the plan. Usually one guard is seated on a chair behind the counter when the room is entered. The slave is directed to seat him- or herself on one of the benches to the left. At least one of the guards who brought the slave here remains to guard him or her. If more than one slave is brought in, one guard will wait for every two slaves.

The guard behind the counter will leave his post and go into the village to get one of the journeymen at the Spearmouthdale Smithy, then return with him to the slave stockade. At this point, please see No. 3 on the floor plan entitled *Spearmouthdale Slave Barracks, Dungeon Level*. The smith will fire up the small forge in the dungeon so that the new slave(s) can be outfitted in iron. During this time, the slave is forced to wait on the bench above. No one will give him or her any information. If the forge is cold, the wait will last one to two hours.

The slave then is led into the foyer of the ground floor of the stockade (No. 5 of the ground floor plan). A guard will open the metal dungeon doors (No. 3) and order the slave down the stairs (Dungeon plan No. 1). The slave is marched through the torture and execution chamber. This is an intentional psychological maneuver to remind slaves what awaits them if they cause trouble. They see this chamber regularly.

Following the map, the slave passes a rack on the right, two whipping posts with whips and behind them a headsman's block with axe, an iron maiden on the left and an X-shaped torture frame with manacles to the right and then a gallows to the right. Although the threat is there, only slaves sentenced to die by torture must endure the worst of these devices. The Gallists value slave labor and do not waste it. The only place where slaves usually are punished is at one of the whipping posts.

After passing through the torture and execution chamber the new slave turns to the right and enters the smithy, where a journeyman smith awaits him or her. Behind the smithy the slave can see the cold bath, where he or she and his fellow slaves will be bathed every few days. If the slave has been bound, the guard will cut or remove the bonds. If the slave has been shackled or manacled, the smith will remove these.

The slave is ordered to undress completely, to bathe and then to don special trousers that button on the outer flags of the legs. This makes its possible for the slave to remove the trousers after the smith has riveted him or her into ankle manacles.

The smith then will select two ankle manacles and two wrist manacles, each made of heavy iron, that fit closely to the slave's size. He places the manacles on the slave one at a time. The slave is forced to place each ankle or wrist on the anvil, one at a time, and the smith seals the manacles with red-hot rivets. He douses these immediately with water to avoid burning the slave.

The smith then uses his tongs to draw a heavy chain about 20 inches/50 cm long from the forge. Only the end links, which are open, are red hot. These links are fitted into smaller chain-sized rings on the ankle manacles, hammered shut and doused. The manacle on the left ankle has a second vertical ring facing toward the front of the foot that is used to lock the slave in place at night.

There also is a ring on each wrist manacle, but nothing is fastened to them at this time. They can be used to bind the slave's wrists to other objects such as the whipping posts at some other time. Once the smith is finished with the slave, he or she has free movement of the arms, but the chain binding the two ankle manacles hobbles the slave by limiting the speed with which he or she can move. It is long enough to allow the slave to walk at a moderate tempo, but he or she cannot run. Most newly manacled slaves tend to trip over the chain in the first few days, until they learn to walk with the manacles.

Once the slave is outfitted in iron, he or she will be taken to a bunk place on the ground floor or one of the two upper stories, and his or her dreary life as a Gallist thrall has begun.

The Life of a Slave

The slave stockades of Spearmouthdale are large thatch buildings with a dungeon, as already described, a ground floor and two upper stories. These upper stories are identical to the ground floor except that there is no guard's fore room above (please see the floor plan entitled *Spearmouthdale Slave Barracks, Upper Floors.*)

Each night, at 9 p.m. / 21:00 from Eleasias until the end of Tarsakh and at 10 p.m. / 22:00 in the remaining warmer months, all slaves are ordered to lay on their backs on their bunk place. Long metal rods are then run through the extra rings on the left ankle manacles of a row of slaves, and the rods are locked in place, firmly binding the slaves to their bunks. These rods are removed the next morning at 6 a.m. / 6:00 from Eleasias to the end of Tarsakh and at 5 a.m. / 5:00 the rest of the year.

When the slaves work on the farms outside the village wall, they are well guard by militiamen armed with crossbows. When they are in the stockade outside of sleeping hours they are free to move between the three floors. They cannot enter the guardroom, because the door to it is kept locked, as is the door to the dungeon.

Once every three days, in rotation, the slaves are taken in groups into the dungeon, marching through the torture and execution chamber and the smithy and into the bath. They are fed at the long tables on their own levels. There is room for 64 slaves on each story, but the actual population usually averages 50.

Dungeon Plan

1 - Stone stairway.

2 - Execution and Torture Chamber.

3 - Smithy.

4 - Bath.

Ground Floor Plan

1 - Guard room.

2 - Armored Guard Rooms. In times of trouble, up to five guards can sit in these rooms and fire crossbow bolts out at intruders.

3 - Dungeon door.

4 - Toilets.

5 - Stockade stairs. Connects the ground floor with the two upper stories. These stairs do not lead into the dungeon.

6 - Bunks with Locking Rods. The bunks, made of wood, are raised 16 cm / 40 cm above the floor. There are no mattresses, but the slaves are provided with adequate blankets.

7 - Dining Tables.

8 - Serving Tables and Oven. The oven heats the stockade in the cold season.

Upper Floors Plan

The same as 4 to 8 on the ground floor plan. Note that there are no dungeon doors.

Freeing the Slaves

Any PC group's chances of success in freeing slaves will depend in part on how many slaves they try to free. If they go about it intelligently, PCs of the levels suggested for this segment of the *NJ* adventure should have good chances of being able to free certain select slaves. However, any attempt to free all 300 probably will run into serious problems.

There are two basic ways to free the slaves:

- **Liberate them when they're working the farm fields.** Such an operation probably would be extremely difficult. Several hundred Hunter of Herne rangers soon would be down on the PCs, unless, of course, they choose to free a few slaves and then are able to teleport out.

- **Liberate them from the stockade.** This operation could succeed with little trouble, if conducted intelligently and in the middle of the night.

When the slaves are working the fields, there's one warrior guard with a crossbow for every 10 slaves, or a total of about 30 armed warriors. The fields all can be viewed from the watchtowers on the city wall, so a liberation action would cause a quick alarm and a quick reaction from the Hunters of Herne. The PCs' chances to flee successfully once the alarm has been sounded are poor. The chances of any unarmed and manacled slaves they are trying to free would be much worse.

However, Spearmouthdale has gotten used to not having to face attacks or intrigues from within. The guards in the towers along the village wall still keep a vigilant watch outwards, but the guarding of the militia compound and the slave stockade has grown quite lax.

The best time to free slaves is in the middle of the night, when they're all locked in place and the guards, as always, assume that there are no intruders in the village because no alarm has been sounded from the 30-foot/9 m stone wall that surrounds Spearmouthdale.

The inner wall that encloses the militia compound and slave stockade stands only 10 feet/3 m high. It is without watch towers; the Gallists do not worry that the slaves, who are locked in with the metal bar through their leg irons, will escape over the wall. The guards certainly aren't worried that anyone in the village will try to climb into the compound. As a result, most PC groups should have an easy time entering the compound.

After that, preparation will count. The best preparation can be made when you, the Game Master, have an NPC who is a former slave in the compound, perhaps an escapee, draw a floor plan for the PCs (one is included in the following pages). Perhaps he will give the PCs the plan in exchange for their agreement to try to free some particular slave. The map will give the PCs all they need to make a plan that should work.

If the PC group enters through the guardroom, it will have to disable the single guard there quickly, before he or she sounds the alarm. The same is true for the two guards in the gate towers to the compound, if the PCs for some reason do not climb the wall.

If the guard in the slave stockade is not disabled, and the PCs make noise while liberating slaves, there is a 95% chance that the guard will go into the stockade and investigate before sounding the alarm and a 5% chance that he or she will sound the alarm automatically.

There are quite a number of means PCs can use to get in and out of the slave stockade, not limited to *Passwall, Invisibility, Teleport* etc. The guards are of low enough level to make *Sleep, Hold Person*, etc. worthwhile too. The PCs should have no trouble disabling the guards, if that's their goal. The important point, however, is to keep the alarm from being sounded. If the PCs wish to free slaves, they need to unlock the bar that holds their leg irons in place. The guard has the key. Only a smith with forge can free them of their manacles. Each set of wrist and iron ankles takes 1d4 + 6 rounds for a qualified smith to remove.

Suggested Guard Statistics

For D&D 3E:

- **Guard**, human male or female, War 3, CR:2, Medium-size humanoid (human), HD 3d8+3 (17 hp), Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +5 melee, or +4 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2; AL NE; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 9. Languages Spoken: Common. Possessions on person: 15 gold rings in gear and coins. Height: (5 ft., 11 in. tall).

- *Skills and feats:* Craft +5, Handle animal +3, Hide +1, Listen +3, Move silently +1, Ride +6, Spot +5; Alertness, Endurance, Point blank shot, Quick draw, Rapid shot.

For AD&D 2E:

- **Guard**, human male or female, Ftr 2, Medium-size humanoid (human), HD 2d10 (16 hp), THAC0: 19, AC: 10; AL NE; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 9. Languages Spoken: Common. Possessions on person: 15 gold rings in gear and coins. Height: (5 ft., 11 in. tall).

Escaping Spearmouthdale

This is the point where things might get interesting. As long as the PCs don't try to free all of the slaves or large numbers of them, getting out of the compound should be no more difficult than getting in. However, getting out of Spearmouthdale is more difficult.

Anything the PCs do inside of the slave stockade will be discovered at 4 a.m. / 4:00 the next day, when there is a change of guard. At that point, a general alarm will be sounded. Within 1d10 + 20 minutes, troops will pour out of the garrison and begin searching all of the buildings in Spearmouthdale except Nos. 1, 2, 7, 8 and 18. South Dale Trading Costers is outside of their jurisdiction, and they are prohibited from searching anything that belongs to it. Not even the Druid Baron can authorize such a search. Tarnal Karg will not grant such permission.

Searches are prohibited because South Dale Trading is corrupt, does black marketing and has enough clout high up to be protected from the *"lower-downs,"* including the druid baron and his men.

If your PCs plan in advance, a character, particularly a rogue with the skill *Gather Information* in D&D 3E or the non-weapon proficiency *Street Sense* in AD&D 2E, should be able to learn that Karg can be bribed to smuggle freed slaves and anyone else who are Hunters of Herne may be seeking to Phsant on the Golden Way. He charges 5 platinum marks per person to be smuggled. The Hunters of Herne may not and will not search his wagons or sleds.

If the PCs take a limited number of freed slaves with them, Karg will bring them to Phsant, as guaranteed. The only danger is an attack by the Mucklestones Druids, but they too will free the slaves.

Mucklestones Fireworks

This scenario is more likely in Mettledale then in Spearmouthdale, but it's possible in Spearmouthdale too. It's been a long time since the Mucklestones Druids have made any strong attack on Spearmouthdale. It ´could be that they suddenly let loose with both barrels - through coincidence - at the same time the PCs are freeing slaves. If you want to stage this idea really well, your PCs could even have had an encounter with the Mucklestones Druids and have made a plan to stage these two events simultaneously. There's nothing to speak against the idea.

The idea that your PCs in concert with the Mucklestones Druids actually overthrow the Gallists and liberate Spearmouthdale will not destroy the Great Dale setting as we're offering it here in any way, nor will it damage a *Northern Journey* campaign that is using our story line. Liberating Spearmouthdale can and should be an exhilarating experience for your players.

This idea did not arise from our project group but rather from a campaign being run by playtester Game Master Pierre Larteu in France. He made a concerted liberation of Spearmouthdale by his PCs and the Mucklestones Druids a part of his campaign in the Great Dale, and his players loved it. They liberated Spearmouthdale in his campaign and then invited Theskans to come in and take the place over, because both his players and the Mucklestones Druids wanted to move on.

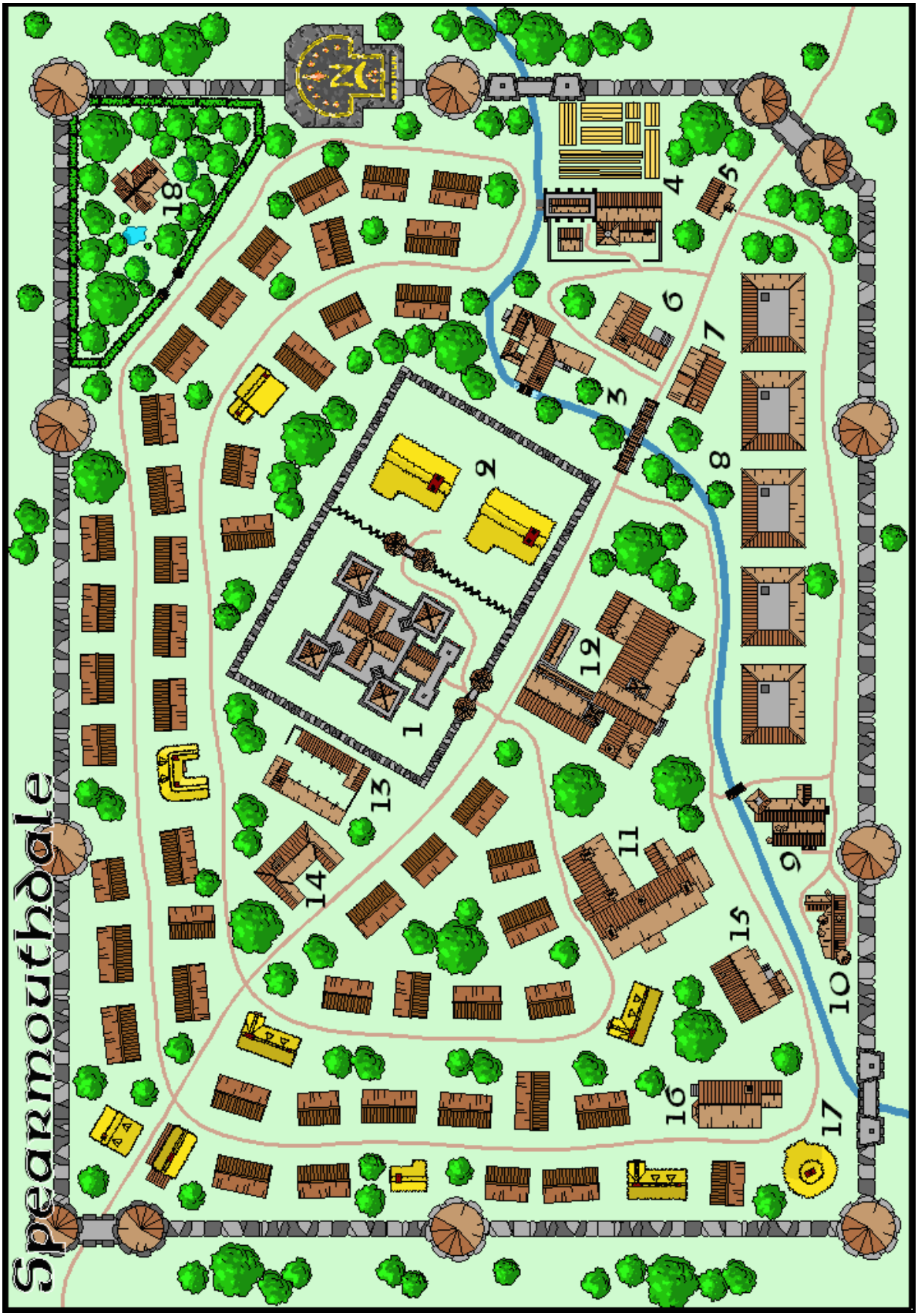
Theskans took them up quickly on the offer, but those Theskans who arrived were Iron Throne operatives. In his campaign, Spearmouthdale now has been officially annexed into Thesk, but the people really in control are the Iron Throne. From there, the PCs and the Mucklestones Druids went on and did the same thing to Mettledale.

Taking Mettledale was more difficult in Pierre's campaigns. Both his PC group and the PCs sustained some serious losses before succeeding and about 25% of the slaves in Mettledale were slain in the battles before the Gallist regime fell. Mettledale had received word in Pierre's campaign about what had happened, and the town had tightened its defense carefully.

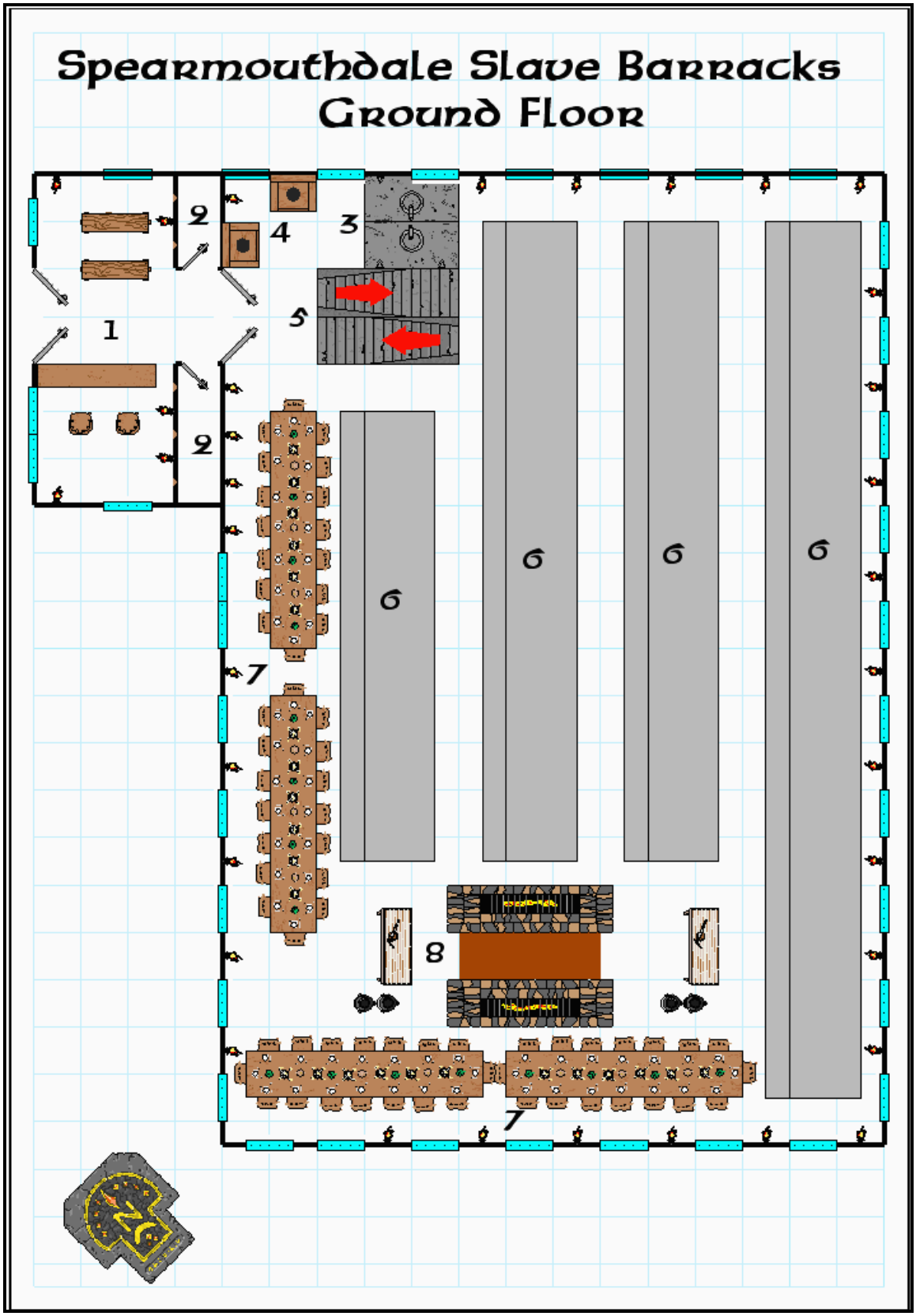
Pierre is not running the *Northern Journey* campaign but rather his own adventure in the Great Dale. His PCs have as their goal liberating the entire Great Dale and bringing it under the Freemen's control. His PCs are encountering not only resistance from the Gallists they want to counter but also from Twilight Hall Harpers in the Dale, who would like to see Gall eliminated but are not in favor of seeing a strong central government of the Freemen ruling the entire Great Dale and Ashanath.

Pierre reported to us that his PCs were unanimous in saying that the liberation of Spearmouthdale and Mettledale was the high point of their entire Great Dale campaign to date. Based on that report, we passed Pierre's ideas on to other playtesting Game Masters. At least two of them tried it and reported back to us that their PCs too thought that the liberation of Spearmouthdale and Mettledale were the highpoints of their Great Dale campaigns to date.

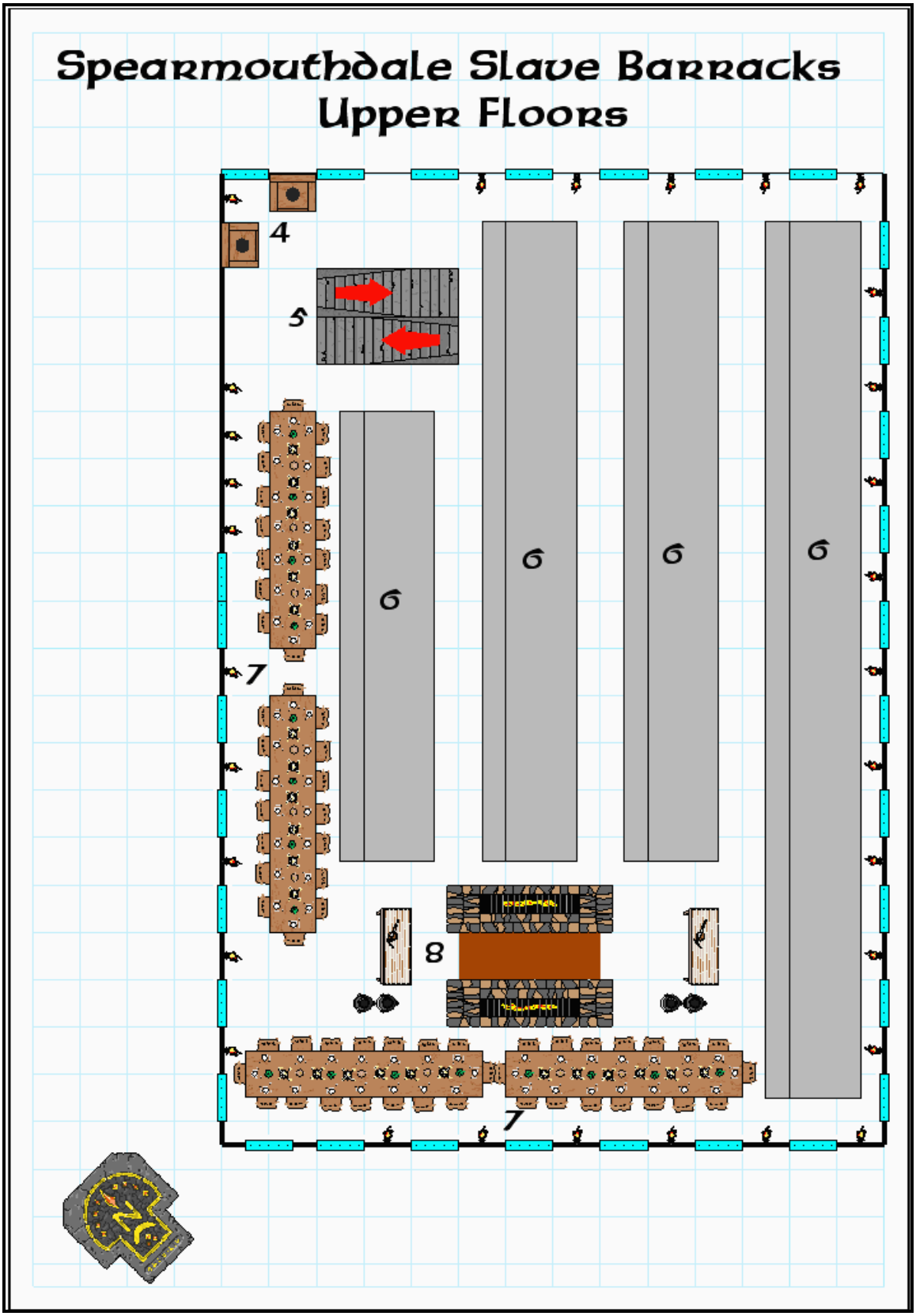
Liberating Spearmouthdale and/or Mettledale is a particularly good way for a Game Master to let his or her PCs have an overwhelmingly good success experience. Because of the slave stockades in both towns, overthrowing the Gallist rulers there can be a very rewarding campaign experience in and of itself. As a Game Master, you can afford to let it happen, knowing that the loss of Spearmouthdale and/or Mettledale will not necessarily make it easier for the PCs to beat the Gallists anywhere else in the Great Dale.



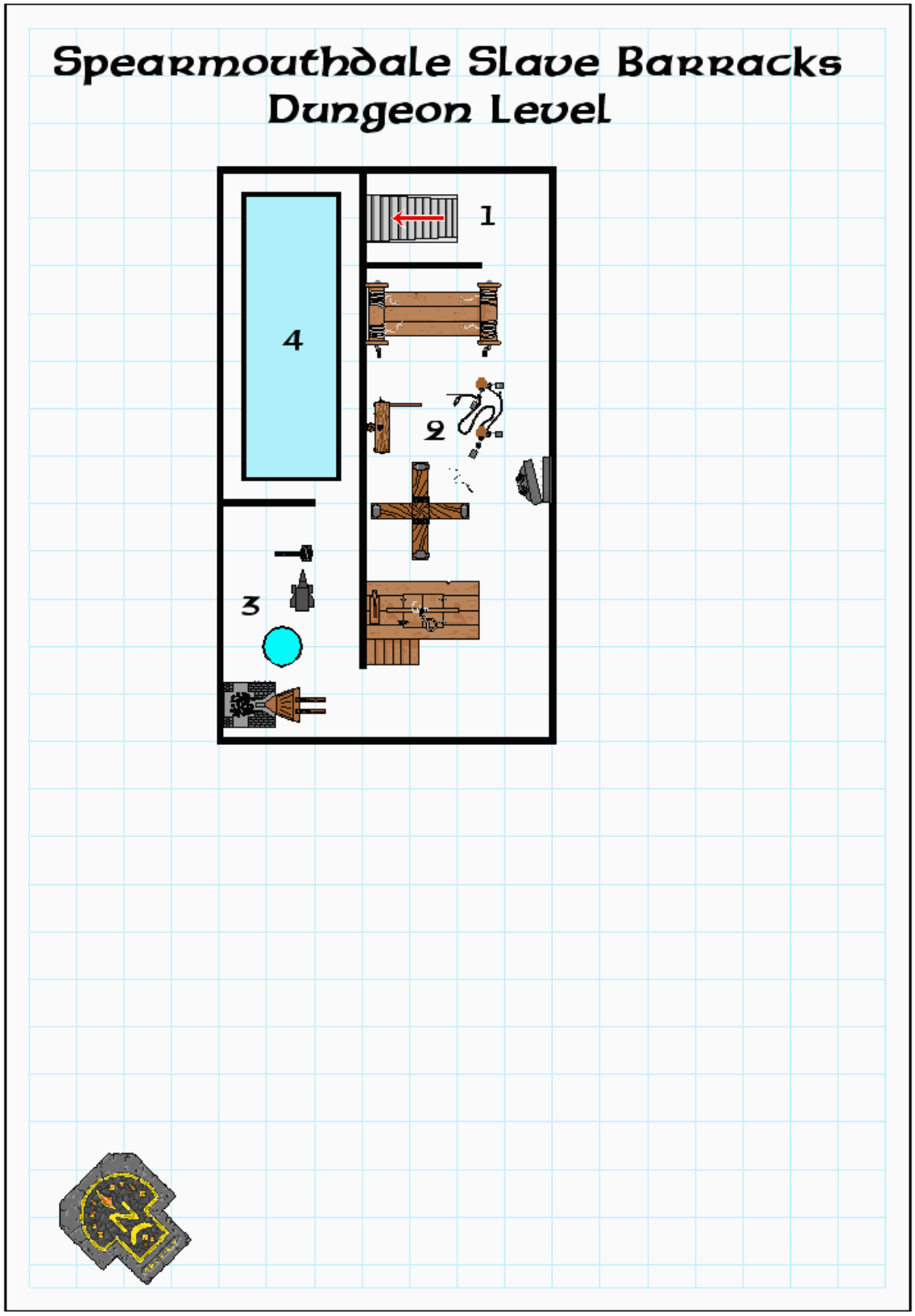
Spearmouthdale



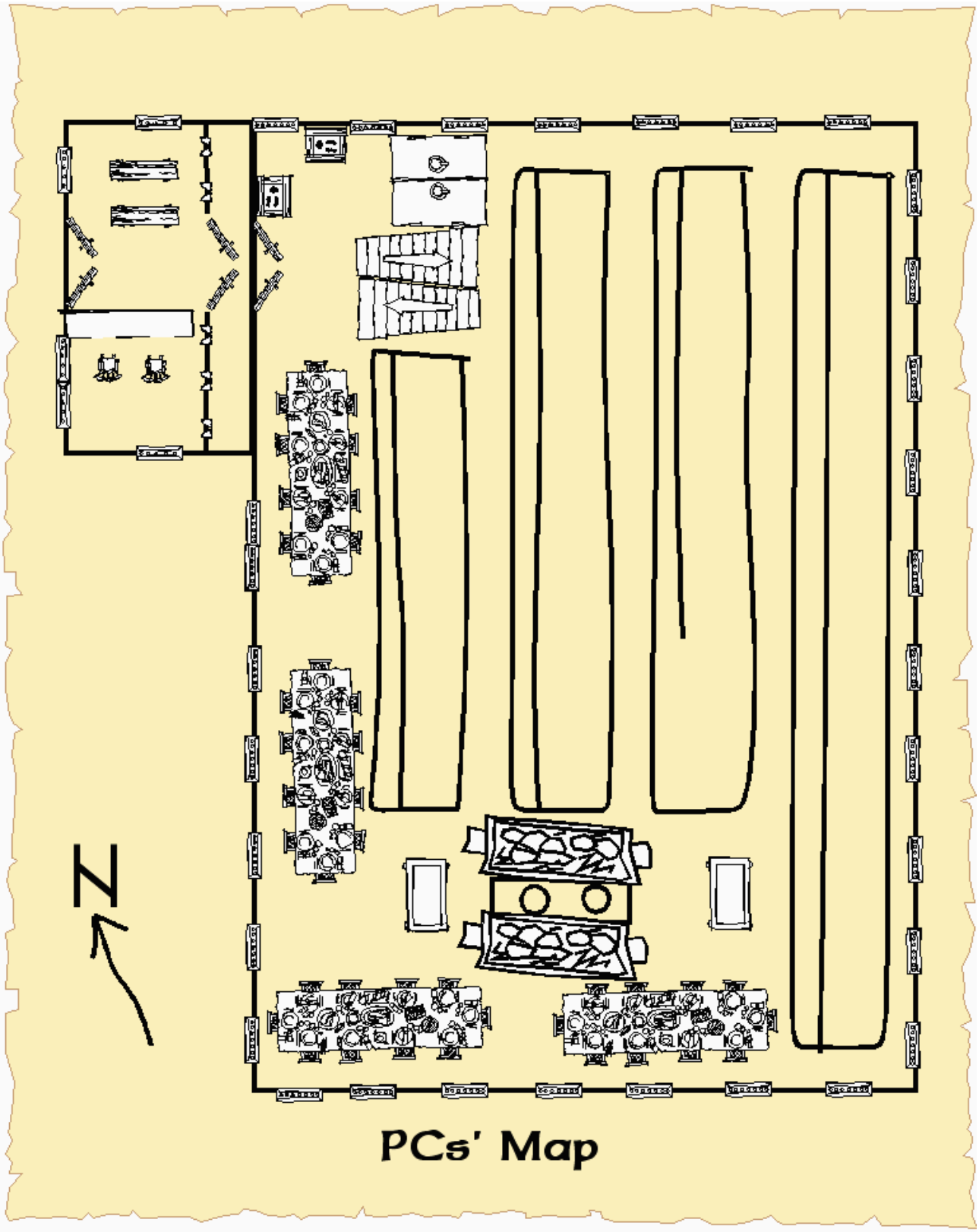
Spearmouthdale – Ground Floor, Slave Barracks



Spearmouthdale – Upper Floors, Slave Barracks



Spearmouthdale – Dungeon, Slave Barracks



Spearmouthdale – Players' Map

Mettledale

Small town, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 1,600 gp limit*. Assets: 96,000 gp. Population: 1,200 (900 + 300 militiamen), local folk 100% human. (In addition: 500 slaves, mostly human). Authority figures: True Druid Karfyng Tagardsbrodir, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 9, Druid Baron of Mettledale; Gundar Narfissonur, human male, AL: NE, (Hunter of Herne) Rgr 12, commander of the village watch; Giba Flannery, Wizard; human female, AL:CE, Wiz 16; Kendlar Tibing, human male, AL: NE, Wizard 17; Brother Nils Helmardhssonur, AL: NG, Cleric (Chauntea) 6. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, Theskan and bloodstone bars.

*** High gp-limit due to above average trade.**

At first glance, Mettledale seems to be simply a larger version of Spearmouthdale. When one takes a more thorough look, however, one begins to see some more substantial differences, not the least among them, the presence of magic.

Although Mettledale serves many of the same purposes for the Gallist domain as Spearmouthdale, it lies directly on the border to enemy territory - the enemy in this case being the Mucklestones Druids. When the men of Mettledale go into Lethyr Forest on the hunt, a few of them always return as corpses. When a heavily guarded caravan comes to Mettledale, it too brings dead with it - always.

In the summer, when the farm crops in the fields outside of town look promising, they may suddenly be blighted by Mucklestones druidic magic. In autumn, shortly before the town's slaves go out to harvest the remaining crops, parts of the fields will begin to suffer from rot, again the work of the Mucklestones Druids.

Relatively healthy human men and women populate Mettledale, like most other Gallist settlements. Unlike most Gallist settlements in the Eastern Dale, however, Mettledale has very few children, a trait it shares with the Lethyr Forest parts of the Gallist domain in Herneburg, Leifrskross and Veidarsudur. One who awakens each day knowing that an act of violence may make it one's last day has little motivation to build a family. One who knows that a child may be slain just as easily has even less motivation.

The low birth rate in Mettledale is a cause of serious concern to Druid Baron Tagardsbrodir, but he has no practical solution to the problem. The Mucklestones Druids inflict no mass slaughter upon the town, but they do cause a number of deaths each year. The death rate in Mettledale is four times as high as the birth rate. The population is slowly but steadily dwindling.

The folk of Mettledale are hard people, in most cases childless. Both the men and the women are hunters and loggers for the most part. Almost every adult in Mettledale has been trained to fight, hunt and fell trees. Most have at least the first level as warriors and many are low-level rangers. In the coldest months, when logging is finished, many of the Dalesmen and -women produce fine wood carvings, items which have found an especially open market in Shou-Lung in the East. In a D&D 3E game, there's an 80% chance that any native of Mettledale will have at least four ranks in the skill *Craft* as a wood carver.

This combination of training, a high state of vigilance, stronger security and the presence of magic make Mettledale more dangerous for intruders than Spearmouthdale. Militarily, 300 ranger Hunters of Herne and Gallist warriors are stationed in the local garrison. Their job is to guard the logging operations and the hunts that begin in Mettledale, as well as to guard caravans traveling between the town and Briddh on the treacherous road that passes the Sudhofn fortification.

The soil of Tears Creek Valley outside the town walls is nearly as fertile as the better land in the Freemen's territory along the Trade Route. The Gallists use their slave labor to farm it intensely. Within the Gallist regions, Mettledale is second in agricultural production only to the fields south of Kront.

No cattle or other livestock are raised for slaughter in Mettledale. Boar and deer brought in by hunters are the town's sole source of meat. The hunters' bag is slaughtered by Mettledale Meat Packing, where the meat is made into smoked sausage. Most of it goes back into the Gallist regions of the Dale. The rest goes to Theskan Tammar on the Golden Way and is sold. Trout caught in Tears Creek supplant the sausage diet, but the catch is too small to be suited for export.

As part of the unholy rites to *Herne*, the druid baron stages annual spring and autumn hunts of human prey. The huntsmen of Mettledale consider other druids to be their main prey (although they have yet to claim the body of a Mucklestones Druid). For many years, the Mucklestones Druids have been turning the tables. The huntsmen have become the hunted, and the wily and militant Mucklestones druids have strung and hung several south Dalesmen's heads from trees on the edge of the wood.

The druid baron has issued orders to the townsmen not to aggravate the former Zhent orcs who live nomadically in the wood. As a result, the orcs do not trouble Mettledale either. He would gladly come to the same understanding with the roaming hobgoblin tribe, but the hobgoblins have not been interested to date. They attack the town about once every two years.

The majority of the townsmen in Mettledale are devout worshippers of Herne the Hunter. Like most Dalesmen, they lead hard lives and know how to celebrate hard too. Nights in the Hunters Hearth are loud and spirited although seldom violent.

The Dalesmen have come to terms with the fact that they are more or less locked within the town's walls when they're not on logging or hunting teams. It's not a matter of serious concern to them. They spend considerable time hunting and logging in the forest, and they really have no other place to which they would go.

Life in Mettledale is better than that in Herneburg, Veidarsudur or Leifrskross. The more distant Eastern Dale is poorer, and the Freemen of the Central and Western Dale are anathema to the townsmen. Thesk and its way of life are alien to them.

However, the mood does chill whenever caravans traveling to or from the Eastern Dale are in town. The warriors of Garagos who guard the caravans are troublemakers, and the druid baron's justice is inclined to ignore them when they make trouble short of murder.

The caravans serve the largest business in Mettledale, the Southern Dale Trading Coster, which is the Gallist umbrella organization for all outside commerce. The coster has been infiltrated and is being manipulated by the Sembian Iron Throne. The head of the coster in Kront, Tweevis Harnby (human male, AL: NE, Exp 16, Rog 3) is a native of Sembian Yhaunn who has been in service to the Gallists for 15 years. In that time, he has arranged to have his own people running the other coster offices in the Gallist part of the Dale.

His man in Mettledale is Kenan Dorth (human male, AL: NE, Exp 11, Rog 9), a native of Sembian Saerloon. It is unlikely, but under certain circumstances, Dorth could play an important role in your PCs' lives. If the PCs are in imminent danger of being captured by the Hunters of Herne and they have a substantial amount of gold or other valuables at their disposal, they could bribe Dorth to smuggle them into Thesk in caravan wagons, but they need some form of security to prevent Dorth from betraying them.

Neither the druid baron nor anyone else in Mettledale has the right to inspect the coster's wagons. Dorth and his operation report directly to Kront, which is far over the druid baron's head. However, Dorth does not make a regular trade of freeing people being sought by the baron. A reputation of being a double dealer would not trouble him in such matters.

Another potential problem for PC groups in Mettledale is the presence of two resident wizards who command substantial power. Giba Flannery, a 16th level wizardess who fled Damara, serves the druid baron and will use her high level magic against PCs, if that is required. Kendlar Tibing, a 17th level covert Iron Throne wizard from Sembian Ordulin, is in the service of the South Dale Trading Coster. He will ignore PC groups unless they make problems for the coster or the Throne.

Night life in the village is in the Hunter's Hearth Tavern. The customers there aren't very interested in outsiders and tend to avoid them. This makes the Hearth friendly and hospitable for locals but boring for strangers. More details can be found under the map description.

Adventure Hooks in Mettledale

- **Getting In and Out:** See the same hook under Spearmouthdale.

- **Freeing slaves:** As in Spearmouthdale, the PCs may be inclined to free some or all of the 500 slaves held in the stockade. The situation is similar to that in Spearmouthdale, but it is much riskier here. Mettledale is an alert town. Getting slaves out of the stockade and out of the town are much more difficult than in Spearmouthdale. The possibilities for this hook are detailed below in the descriptions of the slave stockade.

Map of Mettledale

1 - Tears Creek. The creek flows through guarded, barred grates in the town's east and west walls. There is a space of 6 inches/15 cm between the bars. When the weather permits, torches illuminate the grates through the night hours. To bend the bars, a PC must make a strength check against DC 20 in *D&D 3E* and a Bend Bars check in *AD&D 2E*.

2 - Mill Race.

3 - Millpond.

4 - Lethyr Meadows Mill. As in most mills in the Great Dale, a millstone grinds the flour and a water-driven hammer stomps vegetable oil from seeds. The mill is under the control of the druid baron. The master miller in his service is Durgadh Handarssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 6. He employs two journeyman millers and three apprentices.

5 - Tears Creek Sawmill. This operation also is under the druid baron's control. The master sawyer is Narda Gundyngsdóttir, human female, AL: NE, Exp 6. She employs three journeymen millers and seven apprentices.

6 - Mettledale Meat Packing. The slaughterhouse and meat packing plant produces sausage of venison and boar meat, much of it intended for export into the Eastern Dale and to the Golden Way in Thesk for sale on more distant markets.

7 - Militia Training Grounds.

8 - Stalls of the Militia.

9 - Slave Stockades.

10 - Militia Garrison.

11 - Eastway Inn. The hostelry is under the direct control of the druid baron. The innkeeper is Lunda Tindlsdóttir, human female, AL:N, Exp 1. The Eastway has 12 single rooms at 6 silver shiners or silver rings per night and four doubles at 5 shiners or silver rings per person per night. The inn suffers somewhat from inadequate maintenance. Some rooms tend to be drafty. Food at the inn is nourishing but uninspiring. The maturbordh cost 5 shiners or silver rings per person. The only drink is the locally brewed Green Spruce ale at 3 copper bites or kernels per quart/liter tankard. The inn's huge public room can hold up to 250 people. It is the favorite watering hole of the militia. On most evenings, 100 or more militiamen and -women can be found there. When warriors of Garagos from Fortress Clymph are on caravan duty in Mettledale, they have their revels in the Eastway. On such nights, most locals stay home. Brother Nils Helmardhssonur, the cleric of Chauntea, rooms in the inn.

12 - Eastway Inn Stables. The stable fee is 5 copper bites or kernels for guests staying at the inn and a silver shiner or ring for non-guests.

13 - Giba Flannery, Wizard. Flannery. human female, AL:CE, Wiz 16, is an expatriate wizard from Heliogabalus in Damara who fled her land in Zhengyi's time and accepted a Gallist offer to settle in Mettledale. She is guaranteed her privacy in return for her commitment to use her magic anytime the town or the baronial government is threatened. Druid Baron Tagardsbrodir understands that he may call upon her only when a threat becomes more than he and the militia can handle.

14 - Green Spruce Brewery. The combination brewery and malting house is under the control of the druid baron. His brewmaster is Tarní Nigardhsdóttir, human female, AL:N, Exp 3. She produces a mediocre light, top-fermented ale with spruce gruit.

15 - Mettledale Bakery. This facility is under the control of the druid baron. The master baker is Tifla Hudulsdóttir, human female, AL: NE, Exp 3. She employs two journeymen, three apprentices and six laborers. The bakery makes fresh rye and wheat breads and also hard breads that last for several weeks.

16 - Kardas Nandlssonur, Blacksmith. Nandlssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 2, makes and repairs farm implements, machine parts, tools and the like. He does not work with weapons or armor. He employs a journeyman and two apprentices. His smithy is his own and is not under the druid baron's control.

17 - Tuomas Väinassonur, Wainwright. The wagon works is under the direct control of the druid baron. It produces wagons and sleds for agriculture and the militia. Master wainwright Väinassonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 4, employs three journeyman and five apprentices.

18 - Kendlar Tibing, Wizard. Tibing, human male, AL: NE, Wizard 17, a native of Sembian Ordulin, is an Iron Throne agent in the service of Southern Dale Trading. He is seldom seen by the townsmen and does not interfere in day-to-day affairs. His task is the protection of Southern Dale's interests in all of central Lethyr Forest. It is rumored that the Iron Throne has provided Tibing with an extensive arsenal of magical objects, some of them purportedly of high power.

19 - Southern Dale Trading Coster Office. This operation, which is under Kront's control rather than that of the druid baron, is headed in Mettledale by Kenan Dorth (human male, AL: NE, Exp 11, Rog 9), a native of Sembian Saerloon and a covert agent of the Iron Throne. Southern Dale is responsible for conducting all trade with the markets of the Golden Way in Thesk. The merchants and traders of Mettledale who are allowed to travel into Thesk work for the coster.

20 - Southern Dale Trading Coster Warehouses. The warehouses are watched around the clock by two guards each, human male or female, various neutral and evil alignments, War lvls 1-4.

21 - Southern Dale Trading Coster Wagon Hall. The costers stores its caravan wagons here. Two guards, human male or female, various neutral and evil alignments, War lvls 1-4, watch the hall around the clock.

22 - Southern Dale Trading Coster Stalls. The draft horses that draw the coster's caravan wagons are kept here. Two guards, human male or female, various neutral and evil alignments, War lvls 1-4, watch the stalls around the clock.

23 - Manse of Druid Baron Tagardsbrodir. The baron houses himself in a woody grove atop a small hill in the middle of the town. The town administration, as it were, also is housed in the manse. The grove is enclosed in a wooden fence 10 feet/3 m high. The entry to the grove is open, but there is a small guard tower to each side, and there always is a guard in each tower (human male or female, AL: all evil, Ftr lvls 2-4).

24 - Baron's Gardens. Druid Baron Tagardsbrodir is a nearly fanatical flower gardener. Next to the large flowerbed is his greenhouse, where Tagardsbrodir can be found much of the time.

25 - Hunter's Hearth Tavern. Duran Kefilssonur, human male, AL: NG, Wiz 14, is the private owner of the Hunter's Hearth. Unknown to anyone else in Mettledale, he also is a covert agent of the Harpers. In Mettledale, the Harpers are interested above all in the activities of the Southern Dale Trading Coster, which they know has been infiltrated by the Iron Throne. The Hunter's Hearth is the place where the locals hang out in Mettledale, which makes it a good listening post for the Harpers.

It also is where Kenan Dorth, head of the coster in Mettledale (see No. 19), spends most nights. The locals who frequent the Hearth are not open to strangers. If outsiders enter the tavern and ask if a few empty seats at an occupied table are free, the answer invariably will be no. Although he doesn't show it openly, Kefilssonur always is glad to have strangers show up because they bring news and information. He and his waitress, Marga Rugardhsdóttir, human female, AL: NG, Ftr 8, are secretly married. When it's necessary to gain information for the Harpers, both of them will provide after hours services for travelers. Kefilssonur had planned to brew his own house lager when he first opened the hearth, but a few strong-arm threats from the druid baron's men convinced him it would be wiser to serve Green Spruce ale from the baron's brewery instead. A quart/liter tankard costs three copper bites or kernels. Kefilssonur also serves a breadboard for a silver shiner or ring with slices from the round rye loaves of the local bakery and cold cuts from the local meat packing plant. If a PC group comes to town and gets in trouble, it's doubtful that there will be much help from Kefilssonur or his wife. They will do all possible to avoid jeopardizing their cover as Harper agents. If you're running the *Northern Journey* adventure, Kefilssonur will have learned a bit about the sigyll bearers from Harper agents and will know that the Harpers are friendly to the group, but he still will not jeopardize his cover to help the PCs, although he will offer them other secret help, if possible. The Iron Throne is a much bigger problem in the Harpers' eyes than the sigyll bearers are.

26 - Mettledale Provisions. The store is under the direct control of the druid baron. His storekeeper is Kanda Mandulsdóttir, human female, AL: N, Exp 1. It serves as a general store for locals and has a wide variety of supplies for loggers and hunters as well as all of the household needs of townsmen. Prices average 5% above those in the PHB.

Slave Stockade in Mettledale

The stockade buildings in Mettledale are identical to those in Spearmouthdale. See the section of the same name under *Spearmouthdale*. However, Mettledale is much more security conscious than Spearmouthdale. Any attempts to free slaves in Mettledale will encounter resistance from alert and determined guards.

Entering Slavery

Under *Spearmouthdale,* see the floor plan entitled *Spearmouthdale Slave Barracks, Ground Floor.* When new slaves are brought into the guardroom in Mettledale, two guards usually will be seated on a chair behind the counter when the room is entered, rather than one guard, as in Spearmouthdale..

Only one guard behind the counter in Mettledale will leave his post and go into the village to get one of the journeymen at the Nandlssonur's smithy, then return with him to the slave stockade.

The Life of a Slave

See the section of the same name under *Spearmouthdale*.

Freeing the Slaves

See the section of the same name under *Spearmouthdale*.

When the slaves are working the fields in Mettledale, there's one warrior guard with a crossbow for every 10 slaves, or a total of about 50 armed warriors. The fields all can be viewed from the watchtowers on the city wall, so a liberation action would cause a quick alarm and a quick reaction from the Hunters of Herne. The PCs' chances to flee successfully once the alarm has been sounded are poor. The chances of any unarmed and manacled slaves they are trying to free would be much worse.

Mettledale, unlike Spearmouthdale, must at times face attacks or intrigues from within. The guards in the towers along the village wall keep a vigilant watch outwards, and those guarding the militia compound and the slave stockades are just as vigilant.

The best time to free slaves is in the middle of the night, when they're all locked in place but the guards nonetheless remain vigilant. Four guards (see statistics below) constantly march upon watch around the stockades, all separated with an equal distance from each other.

The Gallists in Mettledale do not worry that the slaves, who are locked in with a metal bar through their leg irons, will escape over the wall on their own. However, they do watch to see that no one will try to climb into the compound to free slaves. The entire militia compound including the slave barracks is surrounded by a stone wall 20 feet/6 m high. During daylight hours, six guards, separated by from one another by an equal distance, patrol the wall inside the compound and six outside of the wall. At night, that increases to two patrols of 12 guards each (see statistics below).

If the PC group enters a stockade building through the guardroom, it will have to disable both guards there quickly, before one of them sounds the alarm.

Suggested Guard Statistics

For D&D 3E:

- **Guard**, human male or female, War 3, CR:2, Medium-size humanoid (human), HD 3d8+3 (17 hp), Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +5 melee, or +4 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2; AL NE; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 9. Languages Spoken: Common. Possessions on person: 15 gold rings in gear and coins. Height: (5 ft., 11 in. tall).

- *Skills and feats:* Craft +5, Handle animal +3, Hide +1, Listen +3, Move silently +1, Ride +6, Spot +5; Alertness, Endurance, Point blank shot, Quick draw, Rapid shot.

For AD&D 2E:

- **Guard**, human male or female, Ftr 2, Medium-size humanoid (human), HD 2d10 (16 hp), THAC0: 19, AC: 10; AL NE; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 9. Languages Spoken: Common. Possessions on person: 15 gold rings in gear and coins. Height: (5 ft., 11 in. tall).

Escaping Spearmouthdale

See the section of the same name under *Spearmouthdale*.

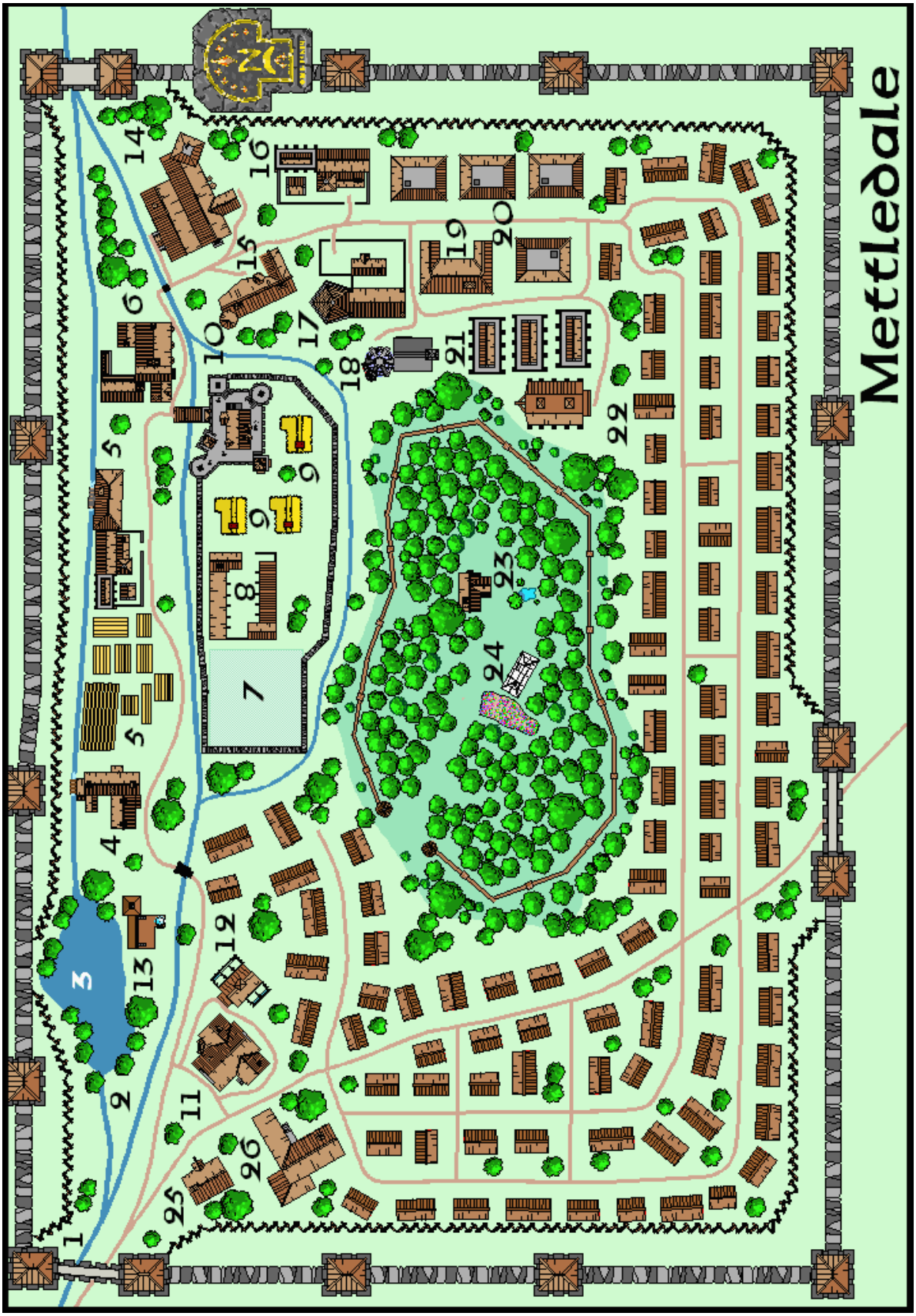
This is the point where things might get interesting. As long as the PCs don't try to free all of the slaves or large numbers of them, getting out of the compound should be no more difficult than getting in. However, getting out of Spearmouthdale is more difficult.

Anything the PCs do inside of the slave stockade will be discovered at 4 a.m. / 4:00 the next day, when there is a change of guard. At that point, a general alarm will be sounded. Within 1d10 + 20 minutes, troops will pour out of the garrison and begin searching all of the buildings in Spearmouthdale except Nos. 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24.

The South Dale Trading Coster is outside of their jurisdiction, and they are prohibited from searching anything that belongs to it. Not even the Druid Baron can authorize such a search. Kenan Dorth will not grant such permission. Searches are prohibited because South Dale Trading is corrupt, does black marketing and has enough clout high up to be protected from the *"lower-downs,"* including the druid baron and his men.

Mucklestones Fireworks

See the section of the same name under *Spearmouthdale*. This scenario is more likely in Mettledale then in Spearmouthdale.


Mettledale
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Mettledale

I. The Eastern Dale

The shadow of evil sits upon this part of the Great Dale. Like the fumes of the fell brew in a witches' cauldron, the threats that arise from it keep the peace-loving Western Dale uncertain and poised for defense. The Eastern Dale is the domain of the Malarite and Tiamatist cleric lich Harbet Gall, who continues to forge one new plan after another to bring the Western Dale into his claws, even though some 600 years of failure and plans gone awry have been his legacy since he first set his beast's eyes upon the Dale.

Gall has been for the most part inactive since the Time of Trouble, but there is little doubt that his cauldron now is brewing a worse concoction than ever has been the case before in the long history of civil war in the Great Dale. Among the ingredients in Gall's brew are the enraged hunting spirit of Malar, the dragon magic of the goddess Tiamat, the madness of the Dragon Cult and the blood thirst of the Reavers of Garagos.

Of this the Freemen of the Central and Western Dale are certain: They have no doubt that the evil cloud arising from the lich's cauldron will waft westward over the Dale. What troubles them is that they do not know how Gall will strike and therefore are uncertain what defenses to prepare. And so the Eastern Dale remains to them a dark and certain but also masked threat.

Although the Freemen remain unaware of this, Gall has forged a bond with Tiamat's avatar Kargmelchina in Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain over Damara and Vaasa. Tower Threespires, east of Bezentil in the Eastern Dale, has become one of the most powerful enclaves of the pro-Tiamatist faction of the Dragon Cult in the Realms.

Urgrath Hurddh, the high Wearer of the Purple who serves Gall as head of the so-called Kront cell of the cult, holed up in Tower Threespires, is one of the mightier arch necromancers in the Realms. In and beneath the ruins of Auststad east of Bezentil, Hurddh commands one of the greatest Faerûnian armies of undead outside of Thay.

The fury of his undead is held in rein only by Gall's orders that they not yet move upon the Freemen, but Hurddh and his followers continue to raise skeletons from ancient and more recent battlefields throughout the Eastern Dale. Hurddh's only setback to date is the continuing refusal of the High Huntmaster of Malar, Skith Tsornagar in Bezentil, to allow him to raise the fallen of the two battles of Bezentil.

Hurddh has appealed several times directly to Harbet Gall to break Tsornagar's ban, but Gall is reluctant to do so. Malar personally chose Tsornagar as his Faerûnian high priest after the Time of Troubles, and Gall is not willing to defy Malar by overruling Tsornagar in this matter. The lich is quite aware through his own service as a cleric of Malar that the Beastlord has little interest for undeath or necromancy. Malar seeks only the hot blood of the hunt’s living prey and the kill at its end.

The bastions and concentrations of evil power are among the key elements that differentiate the Eastern Dale from its neighboring settlements to the West. One who travels through the Eastern Dale also will quickly note substantial differences in the population itself.

Most towns, villages and other settlements of the Eastern Dale have predominantly male populations. Women make up only a bit more than a third of the population in most settlements. There are children and young people, but far fewer of them than in the settlements of the Western Dale. Most Eastern Dalesmen one encounters have reached their at least their 30th birthday already.

Western Dalesmen tend to be strong but good spirited, hard-working pioneer types. The folk of the Eastern Dale also are strong and hard working, but they are a stern and dour folk, most of them true believers in the teachings of Herne the Hunter and bound to his religious yoke, which drives them into lives where the ultimate reward is the hunt, the kill and the smell of fresh blood. Great hunts with human prey take place at least once a year in each settlement of the Eastern Dale, and most healthy men of the East have participated in such hunts.

The landscape and vegetation of the Eastern Dale also vary from those of the West. Harbet Gall's domain has the poorest land in the Dale. The harsh winds of Narfell blow westward down the Trade Route into the Eastern Dale, limiting the kinds of crops that can be grown successfully and populating the forests more with enduring varieties of pine, fir, spruce and larch than with hardwood deciduous trees.

The soil in the Eastern Dale often has more in common with the barren grasslands of Narfell north of Kront than with the fertile farming lands found in the forest-sheltered valley west of Bezentil or in Ashanath on the Lake of Tears south of Kront. In an earlier age, before the civil war began, the Eastern Dale is believed to have been an area where wild horses still rode the land and tamers of the Turami and later Narfelli races rounded them up, broke them and sold them.

Traditionally, hunters, horse breeders and shepherds populated the Eastern Dale in later times. The shepherds are long gone now. Horse breeding has been revived by Tuigan deserters who now serve Harbet Gall and raise magnificent steeds on the grass plains south of Dender's Creek between Ulfshofn and Kront. Thay is the main market for the Tuigan steeds. The traditional huntsmen of the Eastern Dale remain, but they have succumbed to the evil religion of *Herne the Hunter* led by Harbet Gall.

The Eastern Dale these days is populated mostly by evil huntsmen rangers and druids along with magi, priests and fighters from other parts of Faerûn who serve Harbet Gall in his role as a Keeper of the Secret Hoard in the Cult of the Dragon. The horse breeders are deserters from the Tuigan Horde who had been taken as prisoners of war more than a decade ago and now serve Gall. And there is the church of Malar in Bezentil.

The Hunters of Herne kill the wildlife of the forests and capture and enslave Western Dalesmen, when possible. The fortunate captives work on the slave farms south of Kront in Ashanath or in Mettledale. The less fortunate entertain the huntsmen as human prey in wild and brutal hunts in eastern Rawlinswood and eastern Lethyr Forest.

In the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), the Tuigan Horde overran Ashanath on its way southward to Thesk, where the horde at last was defeated by the united crusade led by Cormyr's King Azoun IV. The Tuigan Khahan and his horsemen already were licking bitter wounds from the beating they took at the hands of the Rashemi when they reached Ashanath, and they were desperate, both for refuge and for food.

Gall sent 1,000 bloodthirsty warriors from the partial ruins of Fortress Clymph, led by berserking Reavers of Garagos, into Ashanath to drive the Tuigan out, but the horse raiders had and maintained the upper hand from the start. Gall also sent powerful wizards of the Dragon Cult into Ashanath to combat the invaders, and despite a chaotic plan, they achieved a small modicum of success.

Had the wizards been better spread out over Ashanath, it might have been possible that they would have inflicted more damage upon the already weakened Tuigan and forced the Khahan to reach an agreement, but Gall had concentrated his magi in a relatively small area, and the Tuigan raiders simply circumvented them, slaying the warriors of Garagos and then riding on and burning most of Kront to the ground, plundering the bins and cellars of the slave farms south of Kront and butchering many of the slaves there before burning the farms.

With relatively little damage to his own men, the Khahan simply continued southward over the road now known as the *Tuigan Retreat*, well stocked with Gall's supplies, as he began his fatal encounter with the western troops under Azoun's command.

Gall's magi and warriors managed to cut off only the last 500 of the Khahan's fleeing horsemen, slaying 300 of them before reaching an agreement under which the remaining Tuigan – all terrified of the magic being wielded against them – agreed to leave Ashanath and the Eastern Dale and ride westward down the Trade Route toward Uthmere.

The Western Dalesmen were and always are well prepared for an unsuspected attack from the East. Most of the 200 Tuigan raiders fell before the wall of Vulddin, then controlled by the Freemen. Those who circumvented the fortified city fell in Ganglhofn, and a few also died in Torside.

The Tuigan invasion left Gall's military flank devastated. The fighting men among his own followers are for the most part evil rangers, men of the wood and wilderness who are best in individual combat but ill suited and untrained for large scale military operations. The worshippers of Garagos in the partial ruins of Fortress Clymph were the lich's only true army, but the host was reduced to a strength of about 200.

As the new decade began in the Year of the Maidens (1361 DR), Harbet Gall found that fate again had dealt him a poor hand, and he would have to play his cards with care and skill to avoid a defeat that would threaten his already weakened resources. Many times over a period of six centuries, the lich had moved precipitously against his foe in the West, only to gain a stalemate or even worse defeat in the end.

He was not interested in repeating this bitter lesson from his own history, nor did he think he could afford to fail again. His resources had been depleted while the threats to his domain had grown. His minions had suffered only defeat at the hands of the mysterious Nentyarch, whom Gall decided should be avoided for the time being.

The lich at first spent considerable time isolated in Nighthawk Tower, pondering his situation, while events in his Eastern Dale and Ashanath followed their own course, steered largely by the true druids of Herne and the Reavers of Garagos who followed Gall, and to a lesser extent also by his rival, the Malarite High Huntmaster Skith Tsornagar in Bezentil.

Tower Threespires, where the Kront Dragon Cult cell made its home, was largely empty. Gall had sent most of its members out into Faerûn in search of dragons, and they would not return until the decade's end. Beginning in the Year of the Sword (1365 DR), Gall himself had begun traveling in disguised forms to distant lands to seek other religions he might serve along with the church of Malar, but he returned without answers in the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR).

In this last year of the decade, the answer Gall had been seeking was brought to him by his foremost Wearer of the Purple in the Kront Cell of the Dragon Cult, the arch necromancer and Keeper of the Secret Hoard Urgrath Hurddh. Hurddh and many of the other Kront cell's members returned to Tower Threespires in mid-year, bringing with them the gospel of a new religion that was dividing the Dragon Cult in many parts of Faerûn. Hurddh had aligned himself with the church of the Untheric dragon goddess Tiamat, who was rising in the Faerûnian pantheon.

Gall, who had become wary of dragons and the alliances one forms with them, reluctantly agreed to align the Kront cell with the Tiamatist faction. He felt that he really had no choice in the matter; Hurddh and the other cult members in Tower Threespires already had made that decision for themselves. But Gall himself took no immediate steps to embrace the dragon queen's church.

With the return of Hurddh and his followers, Gall's power had been strengthened, but this too, he saw, could become a weakness. His Kront cell was one of the strongest Tiamatist cult factions within the Realms. By winter of the Years of the Tankard (1370 DR) and of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), Hurddh had risen a formidable army of undead that certainly would pose a grave threat to the Freemen of the West, if sent against them.

However, Gall did not think that Hurddh's undead were powerful enough to defeat the Freemen. They only would deal them severe damage while meeting their own destruction. The lich had no great reserves to send in to claim victory while the Freemen still were licking their wounds. To send Hurddh's undead westward would be another in 600 years of battles that ended in losses to both sides without winning another inch of new soil in the Dale for Gall, and the lich already was resolved to avoid repeating such mistakes.

After pondering the situation for a time, Gall came to the conclusion early in the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR) that Tiamat was a goddess whom he could serve as a cleric without offending Malar. He consulted with priests of Tiamat who had come to Tower Threespires to give him information on the church. For several months, Gall prayed to the dragon queen for acceptance as one of her clerics, but he received no answer.

Only in Kythorn of that year did the goddess at last respond, coming in person in the form of her Kargmelchina avatar from Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain to Nighthawk Tower. There they forged an alliance that both thought would serve their purposes well.

These negotiations set the stage for the current state of events in the Eastern Dale and Ashanath. Within days after their meeting, a large band of draconians led by three vampire dragons in hybrid form began descending the mountains to cross Damara by night and reach Rawlinswood, with the intention of traveling through it to the ruins of Auststad. The group went unnoticed until it was spotted by rangers in southern Damara, but not a single member of the small host has emerged from the Rawlinswood to date.

A tenday later, a band of four vampire dragons flew from the ruins of Castle Perilous in Vaasa, heading toward Rawlinswood. Many heard their thunderous passing in the night, and several Damarans spotted them in their early morning flight as they began to cross Rawlinswood, but they too disappeared over the forest.

Gall attributes these disappearances correctly to the Nentyarch in central Rawlinswood. Using magical devices, he has communicated with Kargmelchina in Castle Dragonblood, and both have come to the conclusion that it is better for the time being to send her servants by another route into the Eastern Dale rather than confronting the unknown powers of the Nentyarch, perhaps without need, for they have the impression that his interests are focused mainly upon central Rawlinswood.

They now have begun sending draconians under the command of vampire dragons across Damara, along the foothills of the Giantspires and into eastern Rawlinswood, to the ruins of Veidarhofn, where a reception encampment for arriving draconians has been established.

As your adventurers reach the Great Dale in the Year of the Wild Magic (1372 DR), they'll find things as follows in the Eastern Dale - if they reach it and manage to survive there:

Traveling from the Central Dale, Bezentil marks the borderline between West and East, being no part of the former but not quite a part of the latter either. Modern day Bezentil is the main center of Malarite worship in the Realms, and it is in the firm grip of High Huntmaster Skith Tsornagar, Harbet Gall's rival for the attention of Malar.

Just about anyone can enter Bezentil, and many manage to leave the town alive again. However, it's dangerous to quarrel with a follower of Malar, and just as dangerous to be alone in town and get drunk enough to pass out. Visitors in both categories have a tendency to disappear. They disappear into a dungeon, where they're kept until it's time for the next Great Hunt, when they're turned loose as prey.

Bezentil is a hard town, but one can do business there. Fighting is not a crime, often not even cause for raising an eyebrow. The safest way to enter is as a peddler or merchant bringing wares to sell that the town needs or wants. An unwritten but widely understood law of Skith Tsornagar is that such visitors are to be left in peace, so that they can and do return to do more business.

The population of Bezentil is largely male. Most females in town practice a profession that's ancient but honored in Bezentil. Children are relatively rare. The walled town is dedicated to the hunt, not procreation of the human race.

Structurally, the town offers its own evidence that it's been attacked, destroyed and rebuilt again and again. The number of crumbling and dangerous ruins gives one a picture of Bezentil in the time when the town still was a city.

In the years after the Time of Troubles, Tsornagar did succeed in rebuilding several parts of the old stone city wall, until the Mucklestones Druids again cut off access to the quarries in Lethyr Forest. The rest still is a wooden palisade wall. The Malarite temple, the Divine Den, and a number of other newer buildings also are of stone, but most other still useable structures are made of wood.

The south wall of Bezentil nears the eaves of Lethyr Forest. The Trade Route no longer runs through the town but rather bypasses it along the foot of the northern wall. On the northern edge of the wall, the Hernestönna, a long wooden palisade wall, begins its run to Dender's Creek farther to the Northwest. To travel beyond Bezentil, one must pass through a guarded gate in the Hernestönna.

The border wall delineates rather clearly the line between the Freemen's and the Gallists' areas in the East. The Hernestönna ends at the creek, but about six miles/10 km west of the wall's end, on the creek's north bank where there once was a bridge between Riggh and Skarlshofn, the Skarlstönna begins, a second palisade wall that runs to the edge of Rawlinswood, ending about 100 yards/meters inside the forest.

The area to the east of Bezentil that includes Skarlshofn, Gurshofn and Ulfshofn is responsible for feeding itself, the town of Bezentil, Fortress Clymph and, in part, Tower Threespires. This area has lived in relative peace since the turn of the century, but both Gurshofn and Ulfshofn have been plagued lately by mild cases of vampire bites.

No resident of the two settlements has died of vampire bites, and none has become a vampire, but there is little doubt what the source of the bite marks on the victims' throats is. Unknown to the Dalesmen, a vampire dragon controls a detachment of draconians in Ulfshofn, and it is responsible for the bites.

Skarlshofn was totally destroyed in earlier battles and rebuilt less than a century ago. All the structures are made of timber from eastern Rawlinswood. Skarlshofn is a farming hamlet of less than 400, with a meat packing operation as its only significant commercial operation. It is protected by a dozen warriors from Fortress Clymph and also has a detachment of eight draconians. To date, no one ever has explained the role of the draconians to the residents, who resent the monsters, largely because they consider themselves to be above the humans who populate the hamlet.

There have been minor conflicts between the local true druid, warriors and rangers on the one side and draconians on the other, but there have been no deaths or serious injuries on either side. The druid baron has sent a warning to Nighthawk Tower that the draconians will be destroyed if they are not brought under control, but there has been no response from Harbet Gall to date.

The first loyal Gallist settlements on the Trade Route beyond Bezentil are the farming hamlet of Gurshofn, which is under the rule of the druid baron of Ulfshofn, and the village of Ulfshofn itself. They were totally destroyed in fires set by the Mucklestones Druids in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR). Both were reconstructed with wood, Ulfshofn in the Year of the Stag (1304 DR) and Gurshofn in the Year of the Mace (1307 DR).

Together with Skarlshofn, the settlements of Ulfshofn and Gurshofn form the western breadbasket of the Gallist territories. The village and the two hamlets are the easternmost areas along the Trade Route with soils that still are fertile enough and weather still mild enough to allow profitable farming, although the agricultural quality of this area already is well below that of the Freemen's holdings west of Bezentil.

The triangular stretch of meadow and farm fields surrounding Skarlshofn, south of Rawlinswood, east of the Skarlstönna and north of Dender's Creek have the most fertile soil. These areas are planted in seasonal crops, potatoes and some grains.

The area north of the Trade Route and south of Dender's Creek between Gurshofn and Ulfshofn is planted in grains. The area south of the Trade Route between Gurshofn and Ulfshofn serves as range land, to graze the cattle of Ulfshofn. A large grain and oil mill, named Hernesmylla, stands on Dender's Creek north of Gurshofn and mills the grain produced by farmers of the three settlements.

Gurshofn is a small hamlet of about 200. To date, it has been spared the burden of housing draconians, but about half a dozen warriors from Fortress Clymph, who stay in a watch house in the hamlet, usually guard it. Gurshofn's residents are almost exclusively grain farmers.

The village of Ulfshofn is home to about 800 grain farmers and has small commercial facilities necessary to support itself and neighboring Gurshofn. Ulfshofn is protected by a detachment of 20 warriors from Fortress Clymph. An abandoned granary on the eastern edge of the village also houses a detachment of 12 draconians who are under the command of a vampire dragon. The draconians have had little contact with the villagers to date. They have not seen the vampire dragon and are unaware of its presence there. However, many villagers are alarmed over a series of non-fatal vampire bites suffered in the night by sleeping residents.

The stretch along the north side of the Trade Route east of Ulfshofn is the grazing land of the Tuigan. The last significant drop in the flow of Dender's Creek is a small waterfall east of the ruins of Auststad and the confluence with the Kaldurfljót. The drop from there to the creek's mouth on the Lake of Tears north of Kront is minimal.

Whenever the water runs high, the creek tends to spread out over a wide flood plain that reaches nearly to the Trade Route in the south and the wall of Kront in the east. The flood problem compounds after the confluence with the Kaldurfljót, where the plain north of the Trade Route turns into permanent swamp.

Tuigan horse breeders, who raise riding stock both for the Eastern Dale and for trade, use the windblown grasslands north of the Trade Route between Ulfshofn and Kront. In early autumn, horses are driven down the road called the Tuigan Retreat to Theskan Two Stars on the Golden Way where they are sold at market. The main bidders are from Thay.

The ruins of Fortress Clymph are just within the southern loop of Rawlinswood east of Skarlshofn. The fortress once was a huge and formidable Narfelli outpost, but it was destroyed in the ultimate battle between Narfell and Raumathar. All that stood after the conflagration were the foundations of the many buildings and in many places the footings of the once mighty stone walls, which still can be found under layers of moss today.

In the Year of the Meddling Avatar (988 DR) the Gallist Kront cell of the Dragon Cult rebuilt some parts of the fortress and used them as their stronghold but abandoned it in the Year of the Grueling Story (1055 DR). Parts of it were reopened as a temple to Garagos in the Year of the Private Tears (1204 DR), and it became a training base for Garagos-worshipping warriors in the years that followed.

Beasts of the Nentyarch devastated the rebuilt portions of the fortress in the Year of the Boot (1343 DR), and these were partially restored by the followers of Garagos beginning in the Year of the Harp (1355 DR). A large number of warriors were destroyed in battles with the Tuigan Horde five years later, in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR).

Today, what's left of Fortress Clymph is the home base for the approximately 350 Reavers and warrior followers of Garagos in the Eastern Dale, but only 200 of them at the most can be found within the fortress at any given time. There are no draconians or vampire dragons stationed in the fortress. The Reavers of Garagos and the members of the Dragon Cult have little use for one another, and Gall does his best to keep them apart from one another.

The road leading northwesterly out of Skarlshofn is the gateway to the Gallist settlements of eastern Rawlinswood. The leg of the forest east of the Freemen's Dender's Valley Logging Camp is relatively safe for those who are followers of Herne the Hunter. Over the centuries, the Gallist rangers have eliminated most of the monsters that once laired in this part of the forest.

Deer and boar are hunted intensely in this part of the forest, to such an extent that even the true druids of Herne are becoming concerned over dwindling game populations. Much of the bag taken by the ranger hunters is taken to Skarlshofn, where the meats are packed in brine for transportation to more distant destinations. Pelts and skins are taken on to Ulfshofn on the Trade Route, where they are made into furs and tanned hides.

When one follows the road to the northwest out of Skarlshofn, the first destination is the village of Kars, established in the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR) as a Gallist defensive outpost. In the three and a half centuries since then, the village has managed to escape the ravages of dragons and war that have been the fate of many of its neighbors.

Over the years, Kars has turned into a village of about 600 farmers, hunters and loggers, much the same in makeup as the other settlements of northeastern Rawlinswood. The loggers of Kars have been pushing the forest's edge ever farther to the North, making room for continually more wheat, rye and barley fields. Crop farming in Kars is limited to serving the village's own necessities.

Kars is governed by a druid baron and protected by about two dozen warriors from Fortress Clymph. There also is a contingent of 30 draconians and one vampire dragon stationed in the ruins of an old and small forest keep which the draconians are rebuilding. As in some other parts of the Eastern Dale, there has been a series of non-fatal nighttime vampire bites recently in Kars, but the location of the vampire is unknown.

There were skirmishes between the draconians and warriors in the first days after the draconians arrived in Kars, but the druid baron quickly brought the situation under control. The draconians seldom leave their compound, and when they do, it usually only is in groups of two, to secure supplies.

Roads lead out of Kars to the ruins of Veidarhofn in the northwest and Nordhofn to the northeast. The draconian outpost is at the edge of town directly on the road to Veidarhofn. The draconians refuse to let anyone pass beyond the village in this direction without special authorization. The druid baron upholds their closure of the road to Veidarhofn.

The hunting and logging hamlet of Nordhofn was established two years before Kars, in the Year of the Bold Barbarian (1007 DR). It also has escaped damage from dragons and war. Nordhofn too was built as a part of the northern Gallist defensive system. Today it is home to some 250 hunters and loggers and their families. Farming is limited to the grain and crop production necessary to feed the hamlet. There are no draconians or vampire dragons in Nordhofn.

The road through Kars leads on to the farming, hunting and fishing hamlet of Tschedith at the source of the Kaldurfljót stream to the northeast. The Kaldurfljót is rich in trout which are taken by fishermen of Tschedith downstream from the village toward Ashanath. Both Tschedith and the stream's source are in an area that stands some 300 feet/90m higher than most of the forest to the southeast.

Within the first few miles/kilometers beyond the source, several other small forest streams and rivulets flow into the Kaldurfljót, turning it quickly into a small but rushing creek. The Gallist settlers took advantage of this and built a grain mill on the Kaldurfljót 5 miles/8 km southeast of Tschedith as early as the Year of the Tempest (1027 DR), when the former village still was rebuilding after the ravages of the dragon rage.

Harbet Gall established Tschedith in the Year of the Bold Barbarian (1007 DR), both as a hunting village and as a guarded lair for a dragon whom Gall used in his wars against the Freemen. The village was destroyed in the dragon attacks of the Year of the Dracorage (1018 DR). In the years that followed it was little more than a forest encampment for hunters until it was rebuilt as a small thorp in the Year of the Shieldtree (1181 DR).

In the years since, Tschedith has grown back into a large hamlet, housing nearly 400 farmers, hunters and fishermen with some families today. Weather conditions limit farming mostly to grain, which is ground in the mill southeast of the village. Tschedith is governed by a druid baron and protected by a local watch consisting of a dozen local men. No followers of Garagos are stationed there, nor have draconians been stationed in Tschedith to date.

The road out of Tschedith follows the Kaldurfljót to the southeast, providing the entrance to forbidden Nighthawk Tower where Harbet Gall resides, but few villagers take this turn into the dark wood. Following the stream, it continues out of the forest to the plain of Ashanath, where the road bridges the Kaldurfljót and then takes turns to both the north and south. The southern leg leads to Tower Threespires of the Dragon Cult and then to the Trade Route.

The northern leg leads to the remote forest hamlet of Tighofn, established in the Year of the Bold Barbarian (1007 DR), as part of the Gallist defensive web. It's home today to about 200 grain farmers, loggers and hunters, including some family members. The hamlet is governed by a druid baron and protected by residents who take turns serving as militia guards. No draconians have been stationed in Tighofn.

The last site in northeastern Rawlinswood holds the ruins of Veidarhofn, farther up the closed northern road out of Kars. The ruins today are well guarded by draconians. The newcomers from Vaasa kill intruders, regardless of what side they serve.

The ruins of Veidarhofn serve as a reception area for new draconians and vampire dragons being sent into the Eastern Dale by the Kargmelchina avatar of Tiamat in Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain. Unknown even to the true druids of Herne, the draconians are building a dungeon level beneath the ruins, intended to be used in the future to breed new draconians.

Most Dalesmen use the north-south road along the eastern edge of Rawlinswood only to travel between Tschedith and Tighofn. The southern leg lies under the evil cloud of Harbet Gall in Nighthawk Tower and the dragon's cult high Wearer of the Purple, arch necromancer Urgrath Hurddh, in Tower Threespires.

With Gall's blessing, Hurddh has turned the triangle defined by Rawlinswood's southeastern corner, the Kaldurfljót and Dender's Creek into a no man's land of horror. Hurddh and his subordinate cult necromancers have raised a sizeable army of fallen humans as undead skeletons to serve the vampire dragons and draconians being filtered into the Eastern Dale.

Two bridges cross the Kaldurfljót, one connecting the east bank to the road to Tschedith, and the other farther to the south, crossing back to the west side of the stream and leading to Tower Threespires. From this southern bridge and the forest's eave west of it southward, Hurddh's undead roam the land with orders to destroy all intruders. True druids and rangers of Herne have not been excepted from this command.

To date, there have been reports only of skeletons being raised by the necromancers of the cult, but it may be just a matter of time before Hurddh and his followers begin creating more powerful undead as well, if, indeed, they are not already doing so.

The ruins of Auststad are the home today of vampire dragons, draconians and nocturnally wandering skeletons. The hamlet, which dates back to Turami and Narfelli times, was destroyed in a battle with dragons in the Year of the Raging Flame (1255 DR). It never was rebuilt, but the walls of some of the old stone buildings still stand. Today, Auststad is the home of some 100 vampire dragons and draconians. The latter have patched and made makeshift roofs for their shelters.

All that happens in this evil triangle follows the plans and orders that come from a group of three fell towers just beyond the southeastern tip of Rawlinswood. The complex is chilling even to see, built by slaves from pitch-black stone that they quarried under the cruel Qu'encesta Nar tribe in the Firward Mountains.

The thin widows in the towers' upper levels are ornamented with stone chiseled in the shape of dragon talons. Tower Threespires, as it is called, was built for the Kront cell of the Dragon Cult and completed in the Year of the Dragon Altar (1202 DR).

The fortress had been built with three different towers, one facing to the north, one to the southeast and one to the southwest. However, it had stood barely half a century when the top of the southeastern tower was torn off during a battle between two blue dragons in the Year of the Raging Flame (1255 DR). The tower never has been repaired.

Today Urgath Hurddh and the other magi, priests and warriors of the Kront dragon cult cell occupy the tower, commanding the undead below and to some extent perhaps the newly arrived vampire dragons and draconians as well. What Kargmelchina, Gall and Hurddh intend to do with the vampire dragons, the draconians and the army of undead remains an open question. They alone are aware of the vampire dragons, but word of the draconians and the many undead already has spread through the Eastern Dale and into the domain of the Freemen.

Gall’s intentions are a cause of great concern in the Western Dale. The slave farms south of Kront once fed Gall and his minions, but the single farm that still operates is far smaller than the complex that stood before the Khahan and his horsemen rode across Ashanath more than a decade ago, plundering, pillaging and burning. There also are far fewer slaves than had been the case before the Tuigan devastation. But famine is only one of the problems threatening the Eastern Dale.

The mysterious Nentyarch in Rawlinswood also threatens Gall to the northwest. Druids in the Western Dale speculate that Gall may be truly afraid of the Nentyarch. There is no question that he has made several attempts to send both Hunters of Herne and his Dragon Cult servants to Dun Tharos, to spy out this strange being who seems to wield such power, but none who have been sent have returned. Instead Gall's men are confronted with beasts that are not native to Rawlinswood, such as sabre-toothed tigers, coming from the forest to attack them.

The Eastern Dale's defenses also are weak, and if a large foreign force, such as the Sword of Impiltur, were to march upon the Eastern Dale, it surely would fall. Few Dalesmen in the West believe that Harbet Gall will allow this situation to continue. What he will do, they can only speculate.

Some believe that new reinforcements from the Dragon Cult may be on the way, and that Gall plans a new wave of dragon terror over the Western Dale. Others think Gall has played most of the trump cards in his hand, and that his next move may be an all-or-nothing attack upon the Western Dale in which he employs his full magical power as a lich and wagers the life of every hunter and Dragon Cult minion who serves him.

Throughout most of the Great Dale's recent history, the borders between East and West have been fluid, changing dramatically after great battles and shifting slightly after skirmishes. Since the Time of Troubles, however, they have become clearly fixed and unbending, visible to all who approach the frontier of either domain to peer across at the enemy.

As Rawlinswood spreads outward to the north and the south beyond Dender's Valley, it becomes a dark and forbidding border. Few wish to cross it. Most of those who do so never return. The Hunters of Herne and their so-called true druids may slay intruders. Infiltrators may fall as prey in a Great Hunt. They may end their days in chains on the slave farm in Kront in Ashanath on the Lake of Tears. Regardless of their fate, few who cross the border return home.

When the forest dips to its southernmost point west of the hamlet Skarlshofn, a wooden palisade wall arises from the open plain and continues south to Dender's Creek, reaching it at the point where there still are traces of the road that once linked the Gallist hamlet to the ruined village of Riggh. The bridge that spanned the raging creek was destroyed long again. *Skarlstönna* the wall is called - *Skarl's Wall* in the Turami tongue. It is watched by the evil rangers who call themselves the Hunters of Herne.

A few miles farther downstream a second, guarded palisade wall arises at the creek's bank and extends southward to the city wall of Bezentil. It is called *Hernestönna*, or *Herne's Wall* in Turami. A perimeter road bypasses Bezentil about half a mile/500 m to the north. At the point where the perimeter road and the wall meet, the Hunters of Herne maintain a border outpost. There they carefully screen anyone trying to enter the Eastern Dale from the west, and even more carefully screen those trying to enter the Central Dale from the east.

It does no good to attempt to circumvent this gate into Harbet Gall's domain. Those who ride on the Trade Route through Bezentil are intercepted by riding Hunter of Herne rangers at the point where the Trade Route and the perimeter road meet. They then are sent back to the control point.

By such methods, the Gallists have shut in the Eastern Dale. No wall is necessary to the south. Anyone who crosses the Trade Route east of Bezentil has nowhere to go but Lethyr Forest. There one must contend with the Mucklestones Druids and tribes of hobgoblins and orcs, which is just as great a deterrent as a wall.

There are, of course, dangerous ways into the Eastern Dale. Exactly where the narrow stretch of forest in Dender's Valley ends and the Gallist part of Rawlinswood begins is a matter of debate. One can try to slip into eastern Rawlinswood from the forest in Dender's Valley. However, the Gallist rangers maintain heavy patrols along an imaginary line that would extend from the plain of Narfell in the north through the ruins of Veidarhofn and then along the trail from the ruins to Kars and Skarlshofn. Any intruder trying to get beyond the patrolled road would have slim chances of eluding the rangers.

If it were easy to survive by slipping through the no man's land of Lethyr Forest, it would be easier to slip into the Eastern Dale from there and then cross the Trade Route, where one would be in the heart of the Gallist domain. However, it isn't easy to survive slipping through Lethyr Forest.

That notwithstanding, the border closure and the heavy patrols are intended merely to keep people out of the Eastern Dale, although they serve that purpose rather well. The border closure is intended above all to keep young eastern Dalesmen from fleeing.

What kind of folk are these then who live behind a wall of evil ruled by a lich? One must quickly answer that the men and women of the Eastern Dale are unaware that Harbet Gall has traveled the dark road to lichdom. They worship a deity they call Herne the Hunter, and they believe Gall to be Herne's avatar. He does not appear before the Dalesmen in his lich form but rather in the form of a huge, standing stag.

The Dalesmen of the East are a difficult folk to describe. In many ways, they are much the same as the Dalesmen of the West. In their time of youth, they blossom with their love of life and see the harsh rule of their true druid barons and counts as oppression. Many wish nothing more than to flee, and it is to keep them that Harbet Gall has sealed his borders.

The lich knows that with time, their youthful love of life will grow old and wax cold; they will perceive the realities of their own destiny, and their love of young life will yield to bitterness over the cruelties of the enemies they believe surround them.

As in the Freemen's domains, the Dalesmen of the East are a conservative folk of druidic principles. However, the folk of the east has been taught from one generation to the next that the real oppressors are the druids of Silvanus and the rangers of Mielikki in the west, who would deprive them of food and the firewood they need to survive the cold winters of the east.

The Dalesmen of the East do not perceive of themselves as ravagers of wildlife and forest. The church of Herne that they and Harbet Gall have built is different from the church of Malar, which served as its starting point. Eastern Dalesmen do indeed worship the hunt, but they also are conservationists who know they must do their best to maintain the proliferation of animal life in their forests, if future generations too are to honor Herne on the hunt.

Eastern Dalesmen know that their forest is exhaustible, and they replant trees wherever they have done clear-cutting. In this, they certainly would not meet with the approval of the druids of Silvanus, for they replant unwisely. Many stands of hardwoods have vanished from southern Lethyr Forest, to be replaced by a monoculture of spruce or pine.

Such trees produce an early and profitable yield, but when they are planted in monoculture, they lead to the degeneration of the forest. In the Central and Western Dale, one has scorn for such practices, claiming they make *rich fathers and poor sons*.

Perhaps one can best understand the mindset of the mature Eastern Dalesman when one sees how he or she views the world about him or her. That view also is quite strongly shaped through illiteracy, which Harbet Gall has worked hard to maintain among his followers.

For many generations, the Dale has been embroiled in a horrible civil war. Most simple Dalesmen in the east have no personal knowledge of how these battles began, but they have learned from the True Druids of Herne that the Freemen of the West always have been the aggressors, attempting futilely for centuries to force the eastern Dalesmen away from their belief in Herne and back into the fold of Silvanus' followers.

In the name of what they believe to be horrible religious persecution, they and their ancestors have suffered terribly for centuries. In more recent times, there have been tales spread by the true druids of sabretoothed tigers in Rawlinswood - tigers who once were stalwart Dalesmen of the East but were cruelly changed by an evil sorcerer of great power drawn into central Rawlinswood by the druids of Silvanus. The true druids have given this sorcerer a name. They call him the Nentyarch, and they say he serves the Tellerth Circle of Silvanus.

Tales of the cruel Mucklestones Druids in the south, in Lethyr Forest, also are legend in the Eastern Dale. Nevertheless, the true druids tell the simple folk to have faith. They preach that not even a mighty mage like the evil Nentyarch can stand against the avatar of a god like Herne the Hunter. That avatar is among them, in the person of Harbet Gall, the true druids preach. And Gall is preparing for the day of reckoning.

The followers of Herne also have to come to envy what they perceive to be the prosperity of Dalesmen in the west, and they resent them for closing their markets to the East. Many Eastern Dalesmen have an exaggerated picture of prosperity in the west that has grown out of tales told by traders from the East who have seen traders from Uthmere and other locations in the West peddling incredible wares to the Nar tribesmen at Bildoobaris.

The true druids preach that the East could enjoy such prosperity as well, were it not for the West's cruel embargo upon the wood and meat products produced in the Eastern Dale as well as the crafts that eastern artisans produced. Because of the trade blockade at Vulddin, the true druids say, export wares must be routed through Lethyr Forest, where the Mucklestones Druids mercilessly attack caravans, or over the more distant route down the Tuigan Retreat in Ashanath, which substantially diminishes the profits the Eastern Dalesmen can earn.

It is not difficult in view of these things to see how the youthful life and a desire to flee can wax cold and turn a heart bitter with resentment against the cruel deeds of a heartless enemy in the west. That is the mindset of the average Eastern Dalesman. It is bolstered by his faith in Herne the Hunter and his belief that Herne one day will set things right and wreak revenge upon this cruel enemy.

Nonetheless, the Eastern Dalesmen entertain doubts too. There are tales of evil deeds being done in the East by drunken followers of Garagos from the ruins of Fortress Clymph who maintain outposts in the settlements. And many whisper of the host of undead on cleared wasteland surrounding Tower Threespires, undead raised by an evil necromancer there who purportedly serves Herne.

More recently, small units of draconians have been dispatched into various settlements, a move that has horrified many of the Eastern Dalesmen, although the draconians have troubled them little to date. The name *draconian* is unknown in the Eastern Dale. The people call them *dragon-lizardmen*.

In a *Northern Journey* campaign, the draconians have been sent into the settlements by Gall to watch for and attempt to destroy sigyll bearers. In other campaigns, we would suggest that the Game Master use the draconians as well, but instead as an attempt by Hurddh to establish his own strength in the settlements of the Eastern Dale.

The true druids say these things are regrettable, but if the forces of the East do not maintain such hosts to match the power and terror of the dark legions of the west, the East surely will be vanquished when the day of reckoning comes. Thus, most Eastern Dalesmen accept these things too although they do not like them.

It is similar with the Eastern Dale's strict controls upon travel. No one in the Eastern Dale may leave the place where he or she lives unless he or she has a permit, is a member of a combat unit on a mission or is taking part on a hunt or in a logging operation. This requirement too makes it more difficult for anyone to escape the Eastern Dale, but its key purpose is different: It makes it extremely difficult for agents of the Freemen or other organizations to infiltrate the East.

The Dalesmen of the East are required to remain in the hamlet, village or other settlement where they live. If a farmer in Skarlshofn wishes to travel within the Gallist domain, he must apply for a permit to travel from his or her druid baron or count. It is not Gallist policy to make it difficult to obtain such permits. In fact, it usually is easy. The permit system is intended as an identification system rather than a travel hurdle.

Similarly, Eastern Dalesmen may not move from one settlement to another without a permit. This rule helps stabilize the populations of the settlements in the East, but above all, it tightly controls the movement of persons. It is more difficult to obtain a permit to move than a permit to travel. If an Eastern Dalesman wishes to move, he must provide reasonable grounds for the move, and he must obtain a permit from his own druid count or baron and from the druid count or baron who rules over his new home.

The permit system has been highly successful in respect to its goal. Very few spies have succeeded in infiltrating the Eastern Dale. To do so, slipping over the border into the East is merely the first hurdle. Wherever the infiltrator arrives, he or she must show a permit to prove that he or she has a right to travel there. If the infiltrator wishes to remain in a certain settlement, he or she must have a permit from two ruling druid counts or barons.

Such permits can be forged, but anyone who possesses a forged permit is almost certain to be apprehended. If a new person arrives in a settlement with permits to move there, the validity of the permits are checked. It's usually only a question of a few days' time to determine whether the local druid baron or count has issued the permit in question. The local ranger detachment also will be informed of the move and its messengers will inquire whether the original permit is valid.

In some parts of Faerûn, a good spy might be able to melt into the faceless population despite such controls, but the settlements of the Eastern Dale are too small for that to work. A stranger stands out like a sore thumb in the Eastern Dale. An infiltrator stands a chance of success only in the Gallist stronghold of Kront in Ashanath. The true druids have explained to their followers that the permit system was implemented to prevent infiltration and sabotage by agents of the West. The average simple Dalesman has accepted this system too.

Of course, not all men and women in the Eastern Dale are average or simple. There are others:

- In the ruins of Fortress Clymph, or perhaps more accurately, what remains of Fortress Clymph, there still is a contingent of 350 warriors who follow Garagos along with several of his Reaver priests. Warriors from the fortress man the outposts in the settlements and often cause trouble there.

- In the partially ruined Tower Threespires, one finds the epic level arch-necromancer Urgrath Hurddh, a Wearer of the Purple in the Tiamatist faction of the Dragon Cult and - like the Nentyarch - one of three epic level NPCs your players may encounter in this segment. Hurddh and the lower level cult magi who work with him are raising a host of undead to be used in combat against the Freemen. In the tower also are middle level priests of Tiamat who are cult members.

- On the eastern edge of the Dale and Rawlinswood is the darkest enclave in all of the Great Dale, a corner where a permanent darkness broods, blocking all signs of the sun, no matter how strong it may shine elsewhere in the Dale. Within the darkness stands the spire of Nighthawk Tower. No living being dwells there, where the undead lich Harbet Gall abides, although most of his followers believe him to reside in Kront in Ashanath.

Each of these three disparate elements has its own plans and its own goals which it intends to follow and fulfill:

- In Fortress Clymph, Reaver Lord Dargenn secretly has remained a lieutenant of Reaver Lord Drómi in Bezentil, who now ostensibly serves the Malarite high Priest Skith Tsornagar. In fact, when Drómi musters his 400 men in Bezentil to abandon Tsornagar and marches into Damara, he intends to ride to Fortress Clymph, where Dargenn and his 350 warriors and Reavers will abandon both the outpost and Harbet Gall. They intend to ride northward over Kars and the ruins onto the Narfelli Plain. There, in an intended affront they hope will provoke the Nar horsemen into combat, they intend to ride over the Narfelli Plain to Damara in the service of Chalass the Cruel of Westgate, to whom Drómi is loyal.

- Hurddh not only is raising undead but also is drawing vampire dragons and draconians into the Eastern Dale, ostensibly to aid Gall. In truth, he hopes destroy Gall and make the Eastern Dale the beginning of a Tiamatist Cult empire that will expand gradually to the West.

- Gall is attempting to combine divine magics to produce a new spell with which he can destroy Hurddh. He then hopes to take genuine control of the cult cell in Tower Threespires. He wants to develop the tower into the center of the Tiamatist faith for all of Faerûn. With the vampire dragons and draconians he will control, Gall hopes to at last conquer the rest of the Great Dale to the west.

Neither Hurddh nor Gall is aware of the intentions of Reaver Lord Drómi and his followers. Hurddh's magi and the Reavers hate one another; he will be pleased to see them go. How Gall or Skith Tsornagar will react is not yet known.

The tension between Gall and Hurddh already has risen to a high level. Hurddh now has a host of some 800 armed skeletons serving him in the Dead Lands, which reach as far as the ruins of Auststad. He can do no more to increase the size of his host at present, because he can find no more battle dead to raise.

Hurddh wants very much to raise those who fell in the last Battle of Bezentil to serve him. Because so many have fallen near Bezentil, Hurddh believes he could expand his ranks by another 3,000 skeletons, if he could but raise Bezentil's dead. However, Skith Tsornagar has forbidden the cultists from entering the battlefield area.

Hurddh has no doubt that he could defy Tsornagar and successfully raise his host. However, he is aware of the religious and political issues this would pose for Gall. Therefore, he sought Gall's blessing for such a move. Instead, Gall forbade him from doing it, a situation that has led to substantial bitterness between the two supposed allies. To date, Hurddh has done nothing. He is afraid to take on both Tsornagar and Gall.

Gall does not want the dead of Bezentil raised. He does not believe that an army of skeletons is of any particular value. Based upon experiences, he thinks the Freemen will find a new ally capable of destroying such a weak and fragile army. He also does not want to have to deal with Hurddh's undead army himself. He knows the day is approaching when a showdown will take place between him and Hurddh, and that no more than one of them will survive it.

Skarlshofn

Hamlet, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 35 gp limit*. Assets: 500 gp*. Population: 385 (365 + 12 militiamen + 8 draconians), 98% human, 2% draconian. Authority figures: True Druid Kaftr Ningardhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 2, Druid Baron of Skarlshofn; Gilda Nargat, human female, AL: CE, War 3 (Garagos), commander of the militia detachment; Naruk, orc draconian, AL: LE; commander of the draconian detachment. Others: 11 militiamen, human male and female, AL: various, War 1-2 (Garagos); 7 goblin draconians, AL:LE. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, Theskan and bloodstone bars. However, most trade is paid through barter and locally made barter chips. *** Coins and valuables are in very limited supply in Skarlshofn.**

As a border hamlet between the factions in the Great Dale's civil war, Skarlshofn has suffered more than most other settlements anywhere within the Gallist domain. Twice it has been leveled, and twice it has risen again from the ashes. The most recent reconstruction was completed in the Year of the Claw (1299 DR). However, today's hamlet is but a shadow of the large village that once occupied its place north of Dender's Creek.

Skarlshofn - once a part of the fallen Duchy of Bezentil - has been a Gallist enclave for 455 years. For 371 of those years, it was a refuge across the creek for the obstinate village of Riggh, which had been something of a Gallist outpost in what most of the time had been the Freemen's domain. A bridge spanned Dender's Creek between Skarlshofn and Riggh, making Skarlshofn a gateway into the Central and Western Dale as well.

All of that ended 84 years ago during the Second Battle of Bezentil. In the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR), the Hunters of Herne razed Riggh and destroyed the bridge to prevent the Impilturian knight Sir Punumbrar and his troops from conquering them and Skarlshofn. Since that time, Skarlshofn stands cutoff from the West, at the end of the Gallist world.

Skarlshofn is a farming hamlet, and it plays an important role as a part of the Eastern Dale's breadbasket. There is less emphasis upon hunting in Skarlshofn, Ulfshofn and Gurshofn than in most of the rest of the Eastern Dale. Traditionally, this has been because these areas have the Eastern Dale's best farmland. The Gallists do not have slaves enough to work these areas as well as Kront, Spearmouthdale and Mettledale. Therefore, the intensive farming conducted in these areas must be down by the Dalesmen who live there.

The diminished concentration upon hunting has been underlined in recent times by another problem. Even the True Druids of Herne are becoming alarmed over the dwindling game populations in this part of Rawlinswood. This situation has been brought on by years of intensive overhunting by the villagers of Kars, who have been under heavy pressure from their druid baron and Kront to bring in ever greater amounts of deer and boar so that income-producing sausage exports can be increased.

All of Dender's Creek Valley from the Skarlstönna east of Skarlshofn to the beginning of the Tuigan horse range east of Ulfshofn is in intensive farming. About 20% of the land is used to grow flax, which not only is used to make linen but also provides flax seeds from which mills hammer valuable linseed oil. Flax is so predominant in the landscape that the Dalesmen name this part of the valley *Blárakur* or *blue fields* in the common tongue, because of the blue flax flowers that dot the countryside.

Other key crops are wheat, oats and types of vegetables that are suited for cellar storage such as carrots, potatoes, red beets, turnips, black winter radishes, celery root, parsnips, parsley root, salsify and certain cole crops.

Late in the season, the fields grow winter barley, much of which goes to the Eastern Dale's breweries. Winter barley does not make for a good grade of brewer's barley, but the food demands of the Eastern Dale leave its brewmasters with no other choice. North of the farm fields just below the eaves of Rawlinswood, the locals also grow large crops of hops. Skarlshofn hops and hops extract are used in all of the Eastern Dale's breweries that use hops as gruit. Surplus hops are sold on the open market in Bezentil.

In addition to farming, the Dalesmen in Skarlshofn work in the meat packing plant and the weaving mill, both of which are under the control of the druid baron. They make sausage of venison and boar meat taken by the hunters of Kars. They also pack a part of the meat in salt brine for sale on the Golden Way.

In the winter months, many *Skarlshofner*, as they call themselves, also work in the weaving mill, turning flax into linen to clothe the Eastern Dale. However, due to the lack of waterpower, no grain or oil is milled in Skarlshofn. Mill grains are taken instead to the mill in Gurshofn. The pelts from Kars are transported over Skarlshofn to the furrier works in Ulfshofn.

On most nights, the hamlet's single tavern, the *Blue Flower*, draws a good local crowd. The 12-man militia of warriors of Garagos that guards the town was banned by the druid baron from entering the tavern after a few fatal brawls had occurred there. Instead, the druid baron provides a 4-gallon/15-liter barrel of beer from the *Blue Flower* to the warriors' detachment daily. The warriors of Garagos are not local folk but rather soldiers from Fortress Clymph.

Less successful to date are Druid Baron Ningardhssonur's attempts to pacify of a detachment of eight *dragon-lizardmen* (draconians) who were sent to Skarlshofn from Tower Threespires late in the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR). There already have been minor conflicts between locals and the rather arrogant draconians, but there have been no deaths or serious injuries on either side. The druid baron has sent a warning to Kront that the draconians will be destroyed if they are not brought under control, but there has been no response to date.

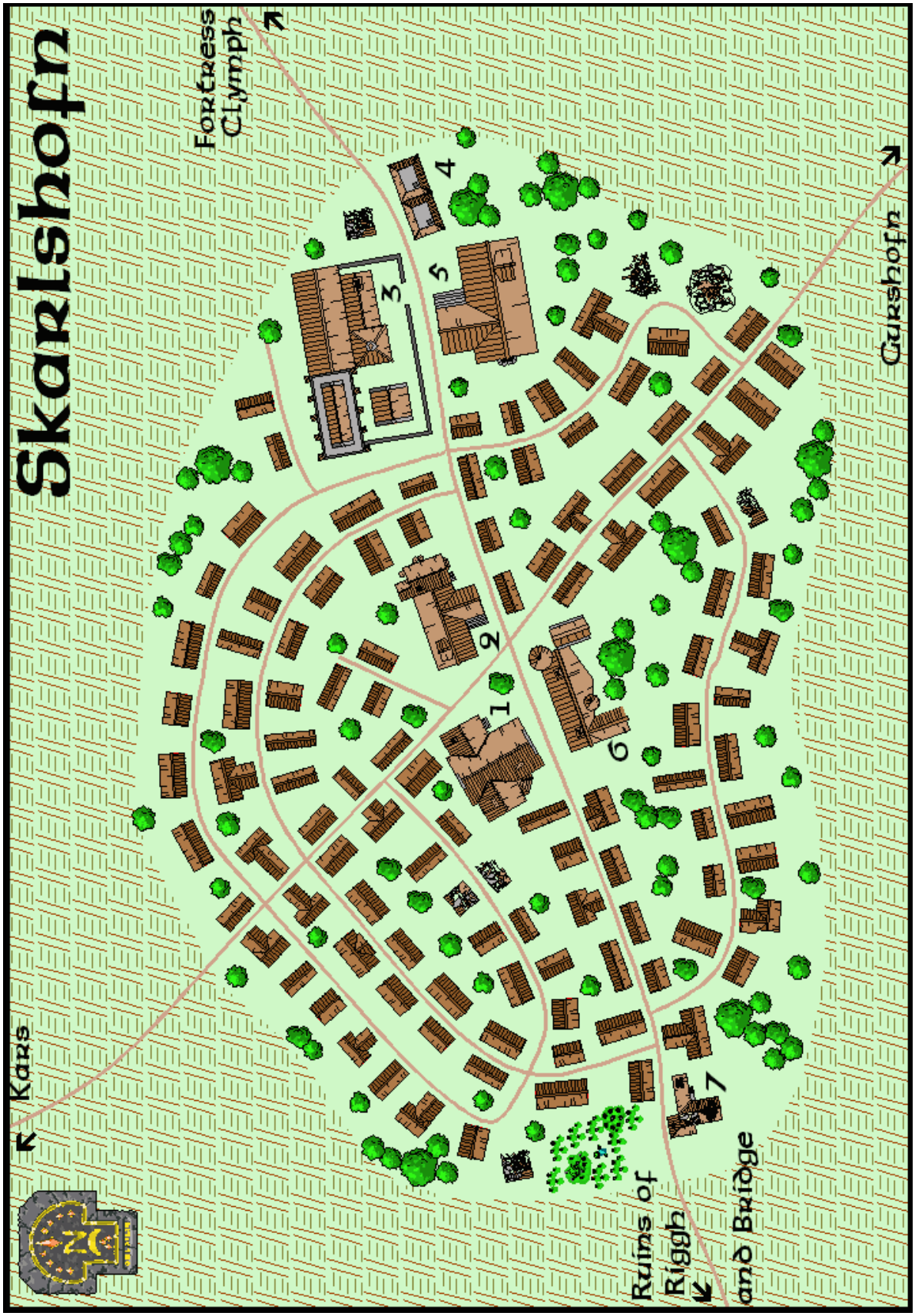
Most folk in Skarlshofn are not surprised. They're not so certain that the dozen warriors of Garagos would accept orders from Ningardhssonur to attack the draconians. They also expect no help from Kront. The druid baron is too low a figure in the church of Herne to have any standing with Harbet Gall, much less to have his ear.

The Skarlshofner seldom travel farther than Kars or Ulfshofn, although a few privileged traders who are in the druid baron's favor do travel to Bezentil to sell their wares in the open city. They bring grain, barley, hops and fine linens. The latter travel on to the Golden Way or are smuggled through Vulddin into the Central and Western Dale.

Adventure Hooks in Skarlshofn

- **Identity -** This hook is valid everywhere in the Eastern Dale. The PCs are strangers, and if they don't have a permit to be where they are, they'll have trouble on their hands.

- **Tangling With Draconians -** This hook is particularly valid in a *Northern Journey* campaign. In that case, the draconians have been sent out by the cult under Gall's orders to find the sigyll bearers and destroy them. PCs of the recommended level will have little difficulty destroying one orc draconian and seven goblin draconians. However, such a battle will make their presence immediately apparent. If they have no permit, the first hook, *Identity*, will immediately go into operation. If it becomes known that the PCs are sigyll bearers, Gall will have the whole Eastern Dale searching for them. If the PCs go into hiding, several contingents of draconians accompanied by vampire dragons will begin combing the Eastern Dale in search of them. Harbet Gall will begin employing all of the fixtures and forces at his command to keep the PCs from reaching Nighthawk Tower. He knows the PCs are bearing a tool that could destroy him. He wants them dead before they can possibly encounter him.


Skarlshofn
Karis
Fortress
Clymph
Curshofn
Ruins of
Riggh
and Bridge
1
2
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7

Skarlshofn

Map of Skarlshofn

1 - Skarlshofn Palace. *Palace* is an exaggeration when applied to this large but relatively simple structure. However, it does describe the function well. This building is the heart of Skarlshofn. The druid baron lives here, although he also maintains a small grove within Rawlinswood north of town. His apartment fills the northeast and central wings on the ground floor. The settlement's administration fills the southwest wing. The second story is under the druid baron's control but is operated for him by storekeeper Nurdh Furgudhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Com 2. Furgudhssonur sells basic household provisions and distributes food from the storage cellars on this level. Most trade is done with barter chips. The fields outside of Skarlshofn are under the druid baron's control, but individuals are allotted certain parts of the fields. They may keep whatever part of their own harvests they wish. The rest they turn in to the baronial cellars and receive barter ships in return. In practice, most folk of the hamlet have formed cooperative groups that plant the fields, tend them and harvest them in groups. The druid baron receives 10% of each harvest as a tithe. The hamlet's dungeon with 10 usually empty cells is below the northeast wing. The rest of the dungeon area is a two-story cellar area where the hamlet's crops are stored, which also is under Furgudhssonur's care.

2 - The Blue Flower Tavern. Tavernkeeper Thórgudh Ulfssonur, human male, AL:N, Com 4, owns the tavern. He makes his own malt of local winter barley and brews his own light bottom fermented beer of moderate quality. He also serves a breadboard with local sausage, local horseradish and several slices from the round loaves of rye bread baked by his wife. The bakery and small brewery take up the northeastern part of the building. The public room, kitchen and a small counter where beer and bread are sold take up the rest of the ground floor. Most locals obtain their bread here, because Ulfssonur is the only one in Skarlshofn with an oven suited for bread baking. Rather than sitting in the common room, many locals also come evenings with ceramic tankards that Ulfssonur fills and then return home with their beer. Locals pay for their fare in barter and with barter chips. When strangers come, which is seldom, Ulfssonur sells his bread board for 1 silver shiner or ring and his beer for 2 copper bites or kernels per quart/liter tankard. Ulfssonur and his family live on the second story. He also has two small and rarely used guest rooms there, but he will offer them at 3 silver shiners or rings per night.

3- Skarlshofn Meat Packing. The druid baron controls this plant. Butcher Nars Darulssonur, human male, AL:NE, Exp 2, runs it for him. There are no guilds or sources of training for masters, journeymen and apprentices in the Eastern Dale. Darulssonur employs four experienced butchers and 12 laborers. The plant makes a variety of sausages from venison and boar meat, and it packs the prime cuts in barrels of salt brine for sale elsewhere.

4 - Skarlshofn Granaries. As with the store in the palace and the storage cellars beneath it, Nurdh Furgudhssonur operates the granaries for the druid baron.

5 - Skarlshofn Flax Mill. Lianh Ningardhsdóttir, human female, AL: NE, Exp 2, runs the flax mill for her brother, the druid baron. It is the largest producer of fine linen in the Great Dale. The best products are taken to Tammar in Thesk to be sold to merchants on the Golden Way.

6 - Militia Barracks. The barracks with stalls in the northwest wing are large enough to house a cavalry detachment of 30 men. At present they house Gilda Nargat and her 11 warriors of Garagos from Fortress Clymph. Their steeds use the stalls.

7 - Draconians Lair. These ramshackle ruins of old farm sheds just south of the cemetery were badly damaged in a sapper attack of Freeman rangers a dozen years ago. There are holes in the roofs and walls, and the building is in danger of collapsing, but none of that seems to disturb the orc draconian Naruk or his 11 goblin draconians. They simply picked the ruin and moved into it in early Nightal of the past year. They appear to be immune to the snow and cold wind that blow into and through the creaking timbers.

Gurshofn

Hamlet, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 35 gp limit*. Assets: 200 gp*. Population: 200 (194 + 6 militiamen), 100% human. Authority figures: True Druid Nurstad Tindlssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 5, Druid Baron of Ulfshofn; Nark Crogl, human male, AL: CE, War 3 (Garagos), commander of the militia detachment. Others: 5 militiamen, human male and female, AL: various, War 1-2 (Garagos). Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, Theskan and bloodstone bars. However, most trade is paid through barter and locally made barter chips. * Coins and valuables are in very limited supply in Skarlshofn.

Gurshofn's tale is not much different from Skarlshofn's story. It is merely shorter. Gurshofn too was a part of the fallen Duchy of Bezentil until the Gallists claimed it 455 years ago. They have held it since, although it was destroyed twice, as was Skarlshofn. It took a few years more, however, to rebuild Gurshofn. Reconstruction was not completed until the Year of the Mace (1307 DR).

Gurshofn is subject to the druid baron of Ulfshofn. There is only one important facility in the hamlet, the huge central grain and oil mill on the north edge of the settlement known as *Hernesmylla - Herne's mill* in the common tongue. The mill serves Ulfshofn, Gurshofn and Skarlshofn.

The hamlet receives few visitors and has no place other than private homes where overnight visitors can be accommodated. The Dender Wash Tavern stands directly on the Trade Route, but it is open only in the evening and caters to locals. Gurshofn Provisions is a small general store that takes care of local needs. Grain is the main crop in the Gurshofn area, and most of what is harvested is milled at the Hernesmylla. Other crops are taken to Ulfshofn to be sold or processed.

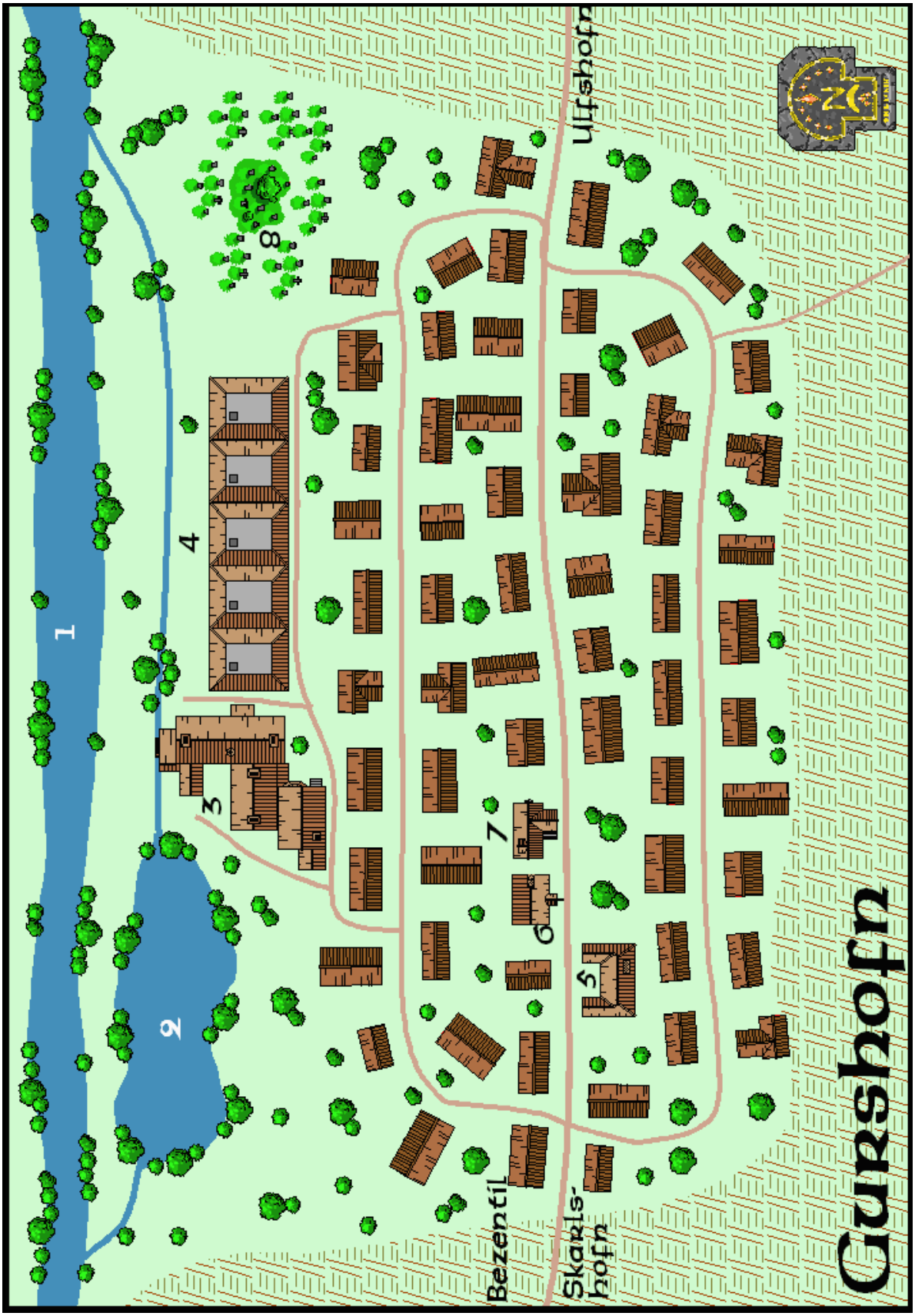
Militarily, the hamlet has a detachment of six warriors of Garagos from Fortress Clymph, but there are no conflicts between the locals and the militia. Nark Crogl, the detachment commander, is a gregarious type, and his charisma keeps the warriors under him in tow. Crogl seeks no trouble with the locals, and his men follow suit. All six of them usually can be found evenings in the Dender Wash, leaving the hamlet unguarded as well.

Because they have no local administration where permits can be obtained, the people of Gurshofn may travel freely between their hamlet and the baronial seat in Ulfshofn. The druid baron's trader in Ulfshofn is Tandas Gardhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rog 2, who can be found evenings in the Dender Wash. Gardhssonur is responsible for bringing wares from the hamlet to market in Bezentil. He selects the locals who accompany caravans and has the authority to issue travel permits for this purpose.

Gurshofn is a peaceful stop on the road that usually is ignored by the Gallist powers-that-be. It also draws little attention from Baron Druid Tindlssonur in Ulfshofn. In fact, the locals would feel blissfully ignored, were it not for the strange bites some folks have been finding on their throats lately. It's generally agreed that the bites bear all the marks of vampirism, but no one who's been bitten has died or become a vampire, which leaves everyone a bit puzzled. Game Masters know that the bites come from a vampire dragon in Ulfshofn.

Adventure Hook in Gurshofn

- **Identity -** This hook is valid everywhere in the Eastern Dale. The PCs are strangers, and if they don't have a permit to be where they are, they'll have trouble on their hands.



Gurshofn

Map of Gurshofn

1 - Dender's Creek.

2 - Millpond on the Millstream.

3 - Hernesmylla. The huge central mill is under the control of the druid baron of Ulfshofn. His miller is Lars Gunnarssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 7. The mill employs three other millers and 10 laborers. All of the flour produced in the baronies of Ulfshofn and Skarlshofn is ground by the large millstone of Hernesmylla. The waterwheel also drives the wooden hammer that pounds oil from Skarlshofn's linseed. In times of threat, a sizeable contingent of Hunters of Herne from Kront usually guards the mill.

4 - Warehouses of Hernesmylla.

5 - Barracks of the Warriors of Garagos.

6 - Dender Wash Tavern. Tavernkeeper Nílla Darglsdóttir, human female, AL: NE, Com 3, the widow of a Hunter of Herne ranger who fell in battle, owns and operates the tavern. She serves Ulfshofner Swampwater lager beer and breadboards with Skarlshofn sausage and her own rye bread. Locals buy bread and have large beer tankards filled for home use at the Dender Wash. Most business is done with barter and barter chips. But Darglsdóttir also sells a quart/liter tankard of beer for 3 copper bites or kernels and a bread board for 1 silver shiner or ring.

7 - Gurshofn Provisions. Tanda Turidhssdóttir, human female, AL: N, Com 1, runs this tiny general store. It sells provisions and household products. The selection is keyed to locals' needs. Should adventurers manage to obtain permits to travel through the Eastern Dale, they will find little of interest here. Almost all business is done in barter and with barter chips issued by the barons of Ulfshofn and Skarlshofn, but Turidhssdóttir will accept payment from strangers in coin, if wished. Depending upon how difficult the wares are for her to obtain, prices fluctuate greatly between 15% under *PHB* to 50% over *PHB*.

8 - Cemetery.

Ulfshofn

Village, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 120 gp limit*. Assets: 200 gp*. Population: 850 (817 + 20 Warriors of Garagos + 12 draconians and 1 vampire dragon), 98% human, 2% vampire dragon and draconian. Authority figures: True Druid Nurstad Tindlssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 5, Druid Baron of Ulfshofn; Sengar, white dragon vampire (very young), AL: CE, 50 hp; Gingurdh Tarkhssonur, human male, AL: CE, War 7 (Garagos), commander of the militia detachment. Others: 31 militiamen, human male and female, AL: various, War 1-2 (Garagos). Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, Theskan and bloodstone bars. However, most trade is paid through barter and locally made barter chips. *** Coins and valuables are in limited supply in Ulfshofn.**

Like Skarlshofn and Gurshofn, Ulfshofn once was a part of the fallen Duchy of Bezentil. For 455 years, it's been a part of the Gallist domain serving as the seat of its own tiny barony. The only other settlement under the rule of the baron druid of Ulfshofn is the hamlet of Gurshofn just to the west of the village.

In various battles, Ulfshofn has been destroyed twice and severely damaged often. Because the eaves of Lethyr Forest begin less than a mile/2 km south of the village, Ulfshofn tends to be the target of sapper attacks from the Mucklestones Druids, the enemy that completely razed the village in the Year of the Roaring Horn (1288 DR).

The focal point of the Mucklestones Druids is Dender Valley Furs & Hides, the biggest industrial operation in this part of the Dale. The tannery and furrier operation was completed and dedicated to Herne the Hunter in the Year of the Stag (1304 DR). In the 68 intervening years, the plant has been hit by Mucklestones lightning blasts more than 50 times, sustaining respectable damage on most of those occasions.

As usual, neither the warriors of Garagos nor the special ranger units of Herne the Hunter who were sent to Ulfshofn to retaliate ever succeeded in capturing the attacking sappers. As a result, Gall ordered Druid Infallible Bödvar Bjarkissonur to go to Ulfshofn in the Year of the Shield (1367 DR) and protect the plant with high level druidic magic.

Bjarkissonur is the highest of Gall's True Druids of Herne at level 19. He is resident in Kront and claims the inflated title *Imperator of the Great Dale and Ashanath*. The Druid Infallible succeeded as far as his goal was concerned. Lightning and other attacks against the plant have been deflected ever since, but they always ricochet, sometimes hitting other buildings and setting them aflame. As a result, there are several burnt out ruins in Ulfshofn.

The village has a number of other aspects that will interest a visitor. Gjúki Gudolfssonur spent several years refurbishing the family inn, knowing that most of the year he would do only moderate business. His customers usually are Gallist emissaries traveling between Kront and the borderlands.

However, in summer, when merchants from Impiltur, the Vast and the Central and Western Dale are allowed to travel through the East to the Nars' 10-day trade fair at Bildoobaris, Gudolfssonur does a booming business at some of the most exorbitant prices charged anywhere in Faerûn. The rich Impilturian merchants, above all, are willing to pay the fees to avoid having to camp, because of the incessant plague of mosquitoes from the swamplands to the east that blanket the Ulfshofn area.

Ulfshofn is about halfway between Vulddin and Kront, so the merchants always spend the night in or near Ulfshofn. Most who travel between the West and Bildoobaris rise early and ride long. In that way, they can cover the ground between Vulddin in the Central Dale and Bildoobaris in Narfell in three days time, with overnight pauses in Ulfshofn and Kront.

Dender's Creek flows rapidly down from it source north of Torside to Ulfshofn, where the plain that leads to Ashanath and the Lake of Tears flattens. From that point, the creek flows ever more slowly as it gradually spreads out over its valley. About a third of the way to Kront, the valley becomes swamp on both sides of the Trade Route. The road is passable only because the ancient Narfelli used their advanced resources to raise it above the flood plain. Their engineering continues to serve its purpose yet today.

The fertile farmlands of the Eastern Dale's most western reaches along the Trade Route end just beyond Ulfshofn's east side. In earlier times when Dender's Creek was a roaring river, the flood plain appears to have begun at that point. Whatever fertile soil once might have been there was washed downstream ages ago, leaving only coarse grasslands upon sandy and stony soil.

Several former Tuigan war prisoners whom the Gallists released from captivity have built horse ranches on the plain east of Ulfshofn. They use the Dender Creek Valley plain north of the creek to graze their horses until the swamp claims the land farther to the east. Some of the magnificent Tuigan steeds are purchased by Hunters of Herne, but most go off over the Golden Way to the markets of Thay, where they bring high prices.

South of the Trade Route, cattle ranchers use the grasslands for grazing. However, this does not mean that beef is on the menus of the villagers. In Eleint, before the first frosts sweep the Eastern Dale, the cattle are driven to Kront for slaughter. Some of the beef feeds the influential Gallists in their center of power there, but most of it is processed and then taken down the Tuigan Retreat to Two Stars to market.

The soils north, south and west of Ulfshofn remain fertile, although they are less productive than those of Skarlshofn and Gurshofn. The farmers of Ulfshofn grow little other than flax and grain. The flax strands are sent to Skarlshofn to be made into linen. The seeds of the flax and a part of the grain harvest are milled in Gurshofn. The rest of the grain is used as feed and as seed for new crops.

Ulfshofn is protected by a detachment of 20 warriors from Fortress Clymph. An abandoned granary on the eastern edge of the village also houses a detachment of 12 draconians who are under the command of a vampire dragon. The draconians have had little contact with the villagers to date. They have not seen the vampire dragon and are unaware of its presence there.

However, many villagers are alarmed over a series of non-fatal vampire bites suffered in the night by sleeping residents. No villager has died of vampire bites yet, and none has become a vampire, but there is little doubt what the source of the bite marks on the victims' throats is.

Adventure Hook in Ulfshofn

- **Identity -** This hook is valid everywhere in the Eastern Dale. The PCs are strangers, and if they don't have a permit to be where they are, they'll have trouble on their hands.

- **Draconians & Vampires** - In the *Northern Journey* adventure, the dragon vampire Sengar and his draconians are in Ulfshofn to watch for the PCs. With no holds barred, they will do their best to destroy them. Even more, as a matter of first priority, they will attempt to alert Tower Threespires to the PCs' presence.

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Ulfshofn

Map of Ulfshofn

A number of ruins are shown on the map. All are the result of attacks by the Mucklestones Druids.

1 - Dender's Creek.

2 - Grove and Residence of True Druid Baron Nurstad Tindlssonur. The building also houses the baronial village administration. The grove is encircled by a wooden wall 10 feet/6 m high.

3 - Tuigan Hose Ranch. Four other similar ranches can be found north of Dender's Creek to the east of the village.

4 - Village Granaries. The storage areas also go two stories deep beneath the buildings.

5 - South Dale Trading Coster Warehouses.

6 - South Dale Trading Coster Wagon Barns.

7 - South Dale Trading Coster Horse Stables.

8 - South Dale Trading Coster Office. Ulfshofn is the dispatching center for the Gallist trading coster from Kront, which already has been infiltrated by the Iron Throne. Wagon teams and caravans going in various directions changes horses here. Goods being transported by the coster also are stored in Ulfshofn until a caravan is mustered to transport them on to their next destination. The head of the coster in Ulfshofn is Darby Tunlod, human male, AL: NE, Exp 3, who secretly is an agent of the Iron Throne. He is a native of Sembian Yhaunn.

9 - Narm Magdurssonur, Blacksmith. Magdurssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 2, is the master smith. The smithy has been in his family for at least six generations. Magdurssonur does all types of blacksmith's work but does not deal with weapons or armor. He employs two journeymen and four apprentices.

10 - Dender Valley Furs & Hides. The combination furrier and tannery plant is under the direct control of the druid baron. The plant manager is Narda Tithlyngsdóttir, human female, AL: NE, Com 3. Furs, pelts and skins from the hunt in Kars, Skarlshofn, Gurshofn and Ulshofn are worked here. Most of the furs are used to make heavy duty winter apparel rather than fine coats. The tannery produces raw leather, much of which is exported, but it also has a leather shop where belts, boots, reins and the like are produced. The plant has a payroll of 150.

11 - Byng Krosbissonur, Wainright. Krosbissonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 3, makes the wagons and sleds used in the Ulfshofn area. He employs three journeymen and three apprentices.

12 - Floodgate Tavern. Tandl Rudgardhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 7, a retired ranger of the Hunters of Herne, runs this lively house. It's the favorite watering hole of other rangers and of the warriors of Garagos. It also draws a reasonable local crowd. The only fare is Rudgardhssonur's home-brewed ale of low middle quality at 3 copper bites or kernels per quart/liter tankard and a breadboard with rye bread, horseradish and sausage at 1 silver shiner or ring.

13 - Granary Ruins - Draconian lair. The old granary was badly damaged in an attack by the Mucklestones Druids in the Year of the Banner (1368 DR). After the new granaries were built the following year, the ruins were abandoned. Late in the Year of the Unstrung Harp, the white dragon vampire Sengar from Auststad and his band of draconians moved into the ruins. The band consists of a troll draconian, an ogre draconian, two hobgoblin draconians, four orc draconians and four goblin draconians. In a *Northern Journey* campaign, their mission is to apprehend the PCs. Sengar keeps his draconians under control. To date, they have not bothered the locals. The villagers are aware that a band of dragon-lizardmen has moved into the old granary's ruins, and they are not pleased about it. However, Sengar has remained hidden from them. No one has linked the series of vampire bites with this house yet.

14 - Militia Training Grounds.

15 - Militia Horse Stalls.

16 - Militia Garrison. In times of trouble, the garrison can hold a detachment of up to 300 men. At present, it houses only the 32-man detachment of warriors of Garagos from Fortress Clymph.

17 - Trade Route Inn. Innkeeper Gjúki Gudolfssonur refurbished the traditional family hostelry over a period of several years, beginning before the Time of Troubles. His investments have made a modest profit. However, the only time of the year when the cash really flows is in summer, when many merchants travel to and from the Bildoobaris trade fair in Narfell. The swampy stretches east of Ulfshofn breed incredible numbers of mosquitoes that fly over the village in a cloud each night. Locals have grown immune to their poison over the years. Many of the merchants from elsewhere however, have learned for the first time in their lives what misery is after camping outdoors in Dender's Creek Valley and awakening the next day with so many bites that they appear to have measles. After such an experience, they're more than happy to pay the exorbitant prices Gudolfssonur charges at trade fair time. During that time, he pays the druid baron to work magic that protects the inn from the pests. The rest of the year, however, Gudolfssonur has only infrequent overnight guests, and most of these are emissaries from other Gallist regions. During trade fair times, he charges 3 gold talers or rings for his 18 single rooms. The eight doubles cost 2 gold talers or rings and 8 silver shiners or rings per person. The rest of the year, a single costs 8 silver shiners or rings and a double 7 silver shiners or rings per person. During trade fair season, the maturbordh offers the best food Gudolfssonur can muster. His mediocre home brewed lager costs a silver shiner or ring per quart/liter tankard. He sells whatever wine he can get at various prices. The rest of the year, his maturbordh offers rather slim pickings, with meat entrées being mainly sausage. He charges 3 silver shiners or rings per serving. The off-season price for his home brew is 3 copper bites or kernels per quart/liter tankard. However, many locals pay in barter and barter chips instead of coin.

18 - Frigga Multhorsdóttir, Provisions. Multhorsdóttir's selection usually is limited to the needs of the villagers and the warriors of Garagos in the garrison. Her prices correspond roughly to those in the PHB, but most payments are in barter rather than in coin.

19 - Trade Route.

20 -Cemetery.

Kars

Village, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 120 gp limit*. Assets: 400 gp*. Population: 900 (600 + 300 Hunter of Herne rangers), 100% human. Authority figures: True Druid Muldyng Daradhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 8, Druid Baron of Ulfshofn; Rurgad, blue dragon vampire (young), AL: CE, 86 hp; Argardh Fandhulssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 17 (Herne), commander of the militia detachment; Village Clerk Narngh Gibardhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 2; Tenat Ragard, human male, AL: CN, War 7 (Garagos), commander of the local detachment. Others: 300 ranger, human male and female, AL: various, Rgr 1-12 (Herne); 30 warriors of Garagos, human male and female, AL: various chaotic, War 1-5. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, Theskan and bloodstone bars. However, most trade is paid through barter and locally made barter chips. *** Coins and valuables are in limited supply in Kars.**

Kars was established nearly four centuries ago as a Gallist defensive outpost. Since then, it has begun developing into a bulwark behind-the-lines settlement as a part of Kront's strategy for bringing the center of the Eastern Dale's population into highly defensible and self-sustaining areas.

This is seen in the continual logging of the parts of Rawlinswood north of the village, in an attempt to make more soil that is arable available for agriculture. The True Druids of Herne were among the key fomenters of this strategy. There are no druids of Silvanus or rangers of Mielikki to oppose them in Eastern Rawlinswood.

The game population in the parts of the forest surrounding Kars and in the southern stretch of Rawlinswood between Kars and Skarlshofn has been badly depleted by overhunting. Druid Baron Muldyng Daradhssonur recognizes this. For more than a year, he has kept these areas off limits to local hunters. Instead, he has attempted to send his hunters into the area of the Veidarhofn ruins and westward toward the Freemen's Dender Valley logging camp. Both attempts have been problematical.

Two hunting forays went into the Veidarhofn area, but no one from either ever has returned. Instead, two lesser magi from the Dragon Cult's outpost in Tower Threespires came to the village and handed the druid baron orders endorsed by Kront ordering the baron to keep his men out of the ruins. Daradhssonur was given no reason. Veidarhofn is off limits because it has become a staging area for dragon vampires and draconians entering the Great Dale, but no villager of Kars knows this, or at least none who still is alive. Other forays into the areas near the Freemen's logging camp have encountered strong resistance from armed fighters protecting the loggers.

The long range solution planned by the true druids of Herne is to clear enough forest around the settlements in eastern Rawlinswood to begin cattle ranching there, replacing much of the venison and boar with beef. This concept does not yet have the blessings of Kront, however, because Harbet Gall is concerned that a reduction of the hunt will cause him to lose yet more esteem in Malar's eyes, and he remains skeptical whether the good graces of Tiamat can compensate for such a loss.

However, even if Gall does not interfere with his druids, they have a serious short range problem: They have to provide adequate meat for the locals and the marketplaces to the south that depend on them. Thus, their only alternative is to risk battle with the Freemen and possibly even with the feared but mysterious Nentyarch of the West.

Kront's plans also would markedly reduce the stands of ancient trees in some parts of eastern Rawlinswood, but there is no one there to oppose such logging actions, unless, of course, the Nentyarch should decide to extend his hand farther eastward.

Although the villagers of Kars have no idea what is happening in the ruins of Veidarhofn to the north, some of them are becoming aware of draconians. An abandoned Gallist outpost in the forest about 2 miles/3 km north of the village houses the dragon vampire Rurgad and his 30 *dragon-lizardmen*, as villagers refer to them. When the draconians first came to the Kars area, there were several run-ins between them and the warriors of Garagos.

The druid baron used his influence to get the problems stopped. The draconians now seldom leave their compound, and when they do, it usually only is in groups of two, to secure supplies. However, if villagers attempt to follow the road to Veidarhofn northward past their compound, they will warn them to turn back and then use violence to enforce those orders, if necessary.

A rash of vampire bites has locals puzzled, because no one has died or been turned into a vampire by them. However, the villagers are aware only of the draconians and do not know of Rurgad, their blue dragon vampire leader.

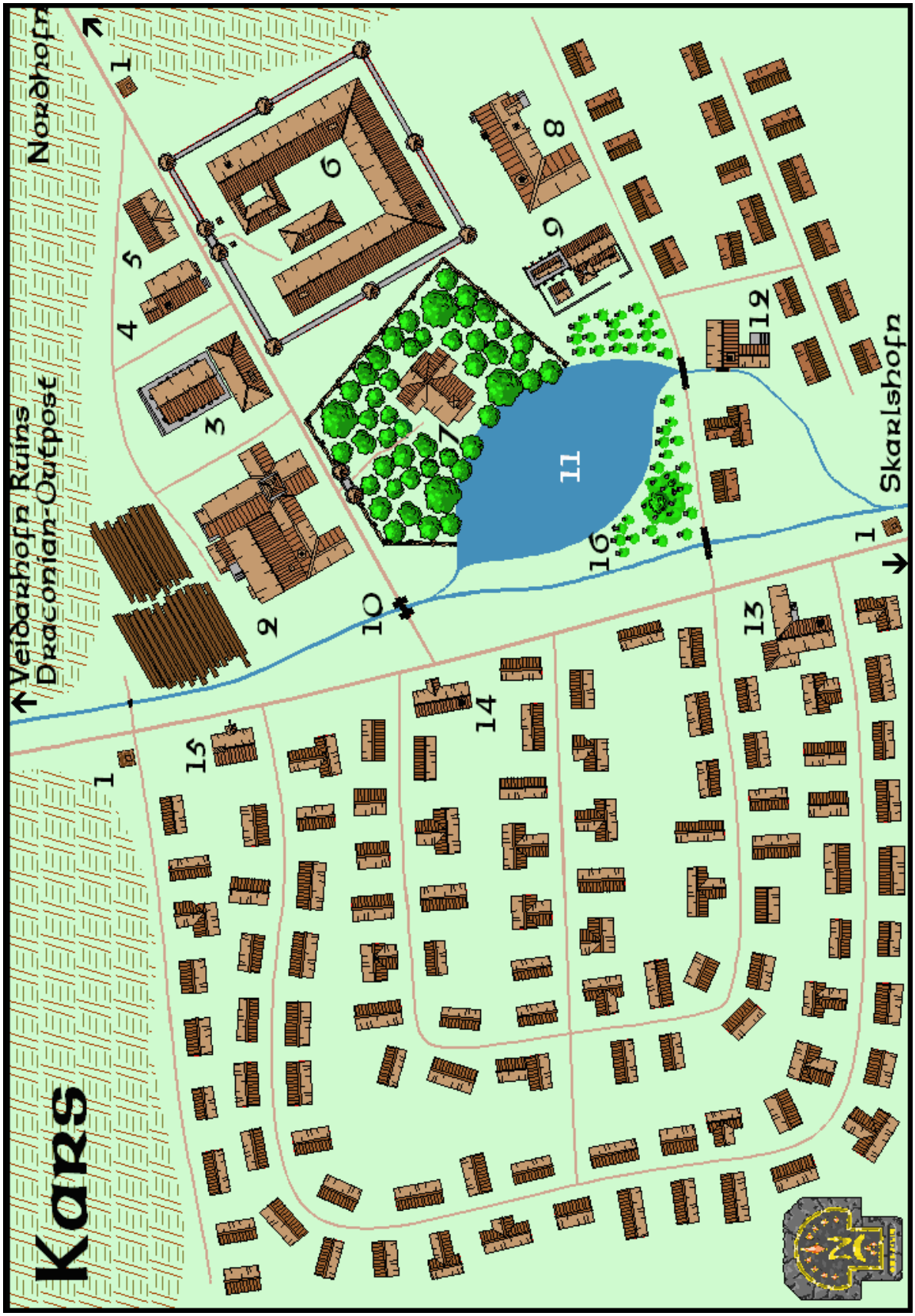
Typical of Dalesmen everywhere, the villagers of Kars are a hardy folk, used to working and fight to guarantee their survival. Most of them have at least the first level as a ranger or a warrior, and almost all of them are devoted followers of Herne the Hunter, a hard deity, perhaps, but one who saved them from death and hunger at the hands of the evil druids of Silvanus.

The current attempts to clear forest to make way for agricultural lands within Rawlinswood give the villagers hope. This is based largely upon their belief that they are secure within Rawlinswood. From their viewpoint, they appear to be so. They know there part of the wood much better than their foes in the West do and would be difficult to defeat there in normal combat. They also are well isolated from the Mucklestones Druids who plague their fellow Dalesmen to the south.

In addition, they feel at the same time bolstered and horrified over the army of undead mustered in their defense at Tower Threespires. They believe any host from the West would fall to this threat. They are terribly wrong. The East would fall to an Impilturian invasion or the magic of the Nentyarch.

Most of the villagers still are occupied with hunting and logging, but more than 130 of them now devote their time primarily to agriculture. Not only timber and meat but also hides and pelts are among the important products of Kars. None of the products of the hunt are processed in the village, however. The meat is sent on to the packing plant in Skarlshofn and the hides and pelts go to the furrier and tannery plant in Ulfshofn.

The druid baron conducts a Great Hunt each year in Marpenoth. Captured Freemen usually serve as prey.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Kars

Map of Kars

1 - Guard Towers (three, one at each entrance to the village).

2 - Kars Lumber Works. The tree trunks felled by the foresters are turned into lumber, most of which is exported. For different saws operate within the works. Kars Creek has too weak a flow to drive such machinery. Each of the four saws is powered its own treadmill, and each treadmill is turned by two oxen. The mill is under the direct control of the druid baron. His master sawyer is Skafl Burgarssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 6. He employs three journeymen sawyers, four apprentices and 12 common laborers.

3 - Kars Slaughterhouse. The slaughterhouse is under the control of the druid baron. The master butcher is Fryla Wulfgardhsdóttir, human female, AL: NE, Exp 4. She employs a journeyman, two apprentices and two common laborers. The slaughterhouse does only slaughtering and bulk meat packing. The venison and boar slaughtered here is sent on to Skarlshofn Meat Packing, where most of the meat is turned into sausage.

4 - Lugar's Provisions. Lugar Nardhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Com 2, runs this general store for villagers and members of the garrison. His stock is limited to things these local customers might need. Because he has delivery problems, certain items will be out of stock from time to time. His prices run about 5% above those in the PHB. Most trade is in barter.

5 - Village Hall. Village Clerk Narngh Gibardhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 2, handles the day-to-day village administrative work for Druid Baron Muldyng Daradhssonur. The three-story Village Hall also is the barracks for the 24 warriors of Garagos who serve as local watches. The dungeon level holds the local jail.

6 - Garrison. The 300 ranger Hunters of Herne stationed here are responsible for defending the Gallist bastion in eastern Rawlinswood. They also lead hunts, which are composed of 10 + 2d20 villagers. The commander is Argardh Fandhulssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 17 (Herne). The dungeon level holds the local jail.

7 - Residence and Grove of Druid Baron Muldyng Daradhssonur.

8 - Andar Poulssonur, Wainwright. Poulssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 3, his two apprentices and three journeymen build wagons and sleds for the lumber works, the garrison and locals.

9 - Kars Tool and Metalworks. The forge and smithy produces most of the metal tools, implements and wagon and sled parts used in the Kars area. The owner is master Blacksmith Wulfgardh Ardhinssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 6. For blacksmith's work, he employs two apprentices and two journeymen. His assistant, Dengar Snarfíssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 2, is a weaponsmith and armor maker of modest ability. He has one journeyman helper.

10 - Kars Creek.

11 - Mill Pond.

12 - Nellasmylla. Master miller Nella Gundlsdóttir, human female, AL: N, Exp 3, owns the small village mill. It produces only enough flour and vegetable oil to take care of local needs. She emplys a journeyman and two apprentice millers.

13 - Northwood Inn. The small hostelry, owned by innkeeper Ketil Haradssonur, human male, AL: NE, Com 2, has only six single rooms, all of them empty most of the time. A single costs three silver shiners or rings per night. The public room tends to be busy evenings. It's the favorite spot for those who spend most of their time hunting. The modest maturbordh costs 3 silver shiners or rings per person. The home brewed beer, a mediocre lager, costs three copper bites or kernels per quart/liter tankard. Almost all trade is in barter.

14 - Lumberjack's Rest. Retired logging team leader Nidl Tenghulssonur, human male, AL: NE, Com 4, built this house. It quickly turned into the favorite watering hole of the village's lumberjacks. Thenghulssonur serves a mediocre home-brewed light ale at 3 copper bites or kernels per quart/liter tankard and a breadboard with cold sausage, rye bread and horseradish at 1 silver shiner or ring. Most trade is in barter.

15 - Rangers' Rest. Retired Hunter of Herne Nardh Galdrssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 10 (Herne), built this tavern, which is the evening hangout for rangers from the local garrison. He serves his own mediocre stout ale brewed with spruce gruit at 3 copper bites or kernels per quart/liter tankard and a bread board with slices of smoked venison and boar on rye bread and a dash of cranberry sauce at 1 silver shiner or ring. Trade is divided between barter and cash.

16 - Cemetery.

Veídarhofn

Thorp, Nonstandard (dragon vampire commander), AL: LE, gp limit: NA*. Assets: NA*. Population: 54 - 5 dragon vampires (9%) and 49 draconians (91%). Authority figure: Red Dragon Vampire Fragostandir, AL: CE, mature adult, camp commander; Rugurnasz, AL: CE, troll draconian, base sergeant. Others: 4 transient dragon vampires (Game Master's choice), 48 transient draconians: 4 troll, 4 ogre, 8 hobgoblin, 16 orc, 16 goblin. Taxation type: NA. Accepted coinage: NA. *** No money is exchanged and no business is done in the ruins of Veidarhofn.**

The human history of Veidarhofn - *Hunter's Court* in old Turami - is brief, claiming only 43 of the 361 years that have passed since its founding in the Year of the Broken Spear (1009 DR). Its first chapter lasted a mere eight years, falling to the wrath of wyrms in the Year of the Dracorage (1018 DR). It was rebuilt by the Hunters of Herne in the Year of the Soft Fogs (1188 DR) but abandoned 34 years later because it was too difficult to defend. Humans returned for a third time in the Year of the Moonfall (1344 DR) to build a small Gallist outpost, but it was destroyed and they were slain or captured by the Nentyarch's beasts and his green elves a year later.

Since the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), the ruins of Veidarhofn have become a no man's land for humans. The draconians who now use the isolated forest clearing as a reception station slay any seen within upon sight, regardless of whether they are Freemen or Gallists.

Kront has issued orders to the druid baron of Kars to keep his men out of the vicinity of Veidarhofn, and he has complied, although he is not certain what is happening there. The occupation of the ruins by draconians and their hidden dragon vampire masters is a result of Harbet Gall's new alliance with the Kargmelchina avatar of Tiamat atop Suncatcher Mountain over Vaasa and Damara.

Gall and Tiamat plan to conquer all of the Great Dale in the Year of the Rogue Dragons (1373 DR), turning the land into a base for her and her avatar. Her long range plan then is to march from the south in the Year of the Bent Blade (1376 DR) and bring all of the so-called Kingdom of Bloodstone - including Damara and Vaasa - under her wing.

Together with Gall in Nighthawk Tower and his strategists in Kront, the Dark Queen is planning a massive strategy of conquest, one that would turn the Trade Route region of the Eastern Dale between Bezentil and Kront into a realm of dragon vampires and draconians.

The human population in the eastern Trade Route settlements and the warriors of Garagos in the remains of Fortress Clymph would be moved into the enclaves of eastern Rawlinswood. Her dragon vampires and draconians then would take over Clymph und be under the command of Urgrath Hurddh, Wearer of the Purple and head of the Tiamatist faction of the Dragon Cult in Tower Threespires.

In a *Northern Journey* campaign, a sigyll-bearing PC group advancing on the Eastern Dale poses a serious threat to Kargmelchina. The PCs' mission - one originally given to them without their knowledge by Kargmelchina and Sammaster - is to destroy Harbet Gall. That was in the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR). Since then, political alliances have shifted within the domains of evil. Erstwhile enemy Harbet Gall has become an important ally of Kargmelchina and Sammaster.

However, all attempts to divert the PCs from their mission have failed. It has become apparent to all in Castle Dragonblood that a third force has begun manipulating the *NJ* PCs and is sending them on toward Nighthawk Tower to liquidate the lich.

Kargmelchina knows that the PCs are indeed capable of destroying Gall with the magic in the sigylls they bear. She gave them the destructive magic. What's more, she and Sammaster are beginning to suspect that the PCs may have come into possession of the *Wand of Orcus* - and that could be fatal for the Kargmelchina avatar.

King Gareth Dragonsbane of Damara gained the wand and used it to successfully destroy an earlier avatar of Tiamat 13 years ago, severely setting back the Dark Queen's plans at that time. He believed that the wand was destroyed then, but as the dragon god Bahamut predicted to him, it has since been restored. In Part 4 of *Northern Journey*, *A Tale of Two Liches,* one can learn how the wand was gained by Cyric, hidden beneath the ruins of Zhentil Keep and then - if applicable - gained by the sigyll bearers.

As a result, an *NJ* PC group also is a key target for ***all*** of the draconians and dragon vampires in the Veidarhofn area and elsewhere in the Eastern Dale. Both Kargmelchina and Harbet Gall want the *NJ* PCs destroyed before the PCs have a chance to destroy them. All of the dragon vampires and draconians have been given the mission of eliminating the PCs. They have excellent descriptions of the red sigylls.

If you are using *The Great Dale* as a campaign setting expansion rather than running the *Northern Journey* adventure, you can simply ignore this aspect and concentrate upon the expansion plans of Kargmelchina and Harbet Gall. As an alternative side element, you can insert the *NJ* sigyll bearers as a group of NPCs who are being driven on eastward to Nighthawk Tower and fate.

Regardless of how one deals with the *NJ* element, the dragon vampires and draconians of Veidarhofn will do their best to liquidate any PC group that comes near to their settlement. They have orders to do so. Kargmelchina and Gall want to keep what is happening in Veidarhofn secret. They want no snoopers looking at events there and returning to other areas to tell tales.

If the PCs travel northward from Kars toward Veidarhofn, they already will have battled the draconians in the outpost in the forest north of the village. If one draconian managed to flee northward and reach Veidarhofn, the dragon vampires will be prepared for the PCs. Physical and magical traps will have been set, ambushes will be ready, etc.

If the PCs approach Veidarhofn from another direction, what will await them depends upon the point at which the draconian command has become aware that the PCs are advancing. It is highly unlikely that a PC party will reach the settlement without the draconians' knowledge. The forest is patrolled, there are watch towers and the dragon vampires fly night patrols over the area.

The draconian settlement serves first and foremost as a reception station for new dragon vampires and draconians being brought into the Dale. Only two creatures are stationed permanently in Veidarhofn: red dragon vampire Fragostandir, the base commander, and his *"sergeant,"* the troll draconian Rugomasz. There always are four other dragon vampires in camp, and these are responsible for 12 draconians each.

When a new contingent of 12 draconians and a dragon vampire arrives from Damara, another team of 13 already in the camp is dispatched on to its final base at Auststad. While in camp, the draconians must work, each patrolling or tunneling.

The current small dungeon is used to house the dragon vampires, but the draconians are now beginning to tunnel out a new dungeon hall on the north end of the complex that will be used as a southern breeding station for more draconians, supplanting the current facility in the ruins of Zhengyi's Castle Perilous in Vaasa. (For more details on the breeding of draconians, see *Northern Journey* Part 7, *Bloodstone*).

Gall and Kargmelchina worry that flying spies may learn too much of their plans, therefore, some of the work is done only at night. Two of the shack complexes the draconians have built to accommodate themselves in Veidarhofn are fakes. One, a construction shack, hides the stairway into the camp dungeon where the dragon vampires lair and where tunneling is being done.

During daytime hours, stone and soil that accumulates from the tunneling is piled up and hidden under a tarpaulin next to the stairs. In a second large shack complex just to the east of the construction shack, a horse team and wagon are kept hidden by day. At night, the team hauls the tailings accumulated during the day as well as the new ones being brought out at night.

At any given time, Fragostandir and three other dragon vampires will be found in their lair in the daytime and about at night. One dragon vampire and a patrol of 12 draconians will be working a six-hour shift patrolling the forest around Veidarhofn. Twelve other draconians will be patrolling the camp. Twelve will be working in the tunnel. The remaining 12 will be sleeping in their shacks, but they will be awake, alert and combat ready within 1d4+1 rounds, if trouble breaks out.

The draconians have built wooden watchtowers 30 feet/9 m high at the trail entrances to Veidarhofn in the north and south. Of the 12 draconians watching the camp, one orc draconian will be in each of the two towers at all times. Each bears a signal horn that produces a blast easily audible within half a mile/one kilometer of the camp.

"Sergeant" Rugumasz sleeps from midnight until 8 in the morning. The rest of the time, he is at his desk in the construction shack. When he sleeps, a transient troll draconian pulls duty for him.

There is no living vegetation within half a mile/500 m of Veidarhofn. The constant presence of dragon vampires has killed every last tree, bush and weed.

Adventure Hook in Veidarhofn

- **Survival:** If your PCs show up in Veidarhofn, every dragon vampire and every draconian there will be fully dedicated to liquidating them. There will be no morale checks and no retreats on the part of the draconians. They will fight until they've all been destroyed or all of the PCs have been destroyed. The dragon vampires will flee if they see no chance of winning, but they then will pursue the PCs and ambush them when possible.

Map of the Veidarhofn Ruins

1 - Watch Towers.

2 - Construction Shack. With dungeon entrance.

Plan of the Construction Shack

1 - Tool shed.

2 - Office with oven. *"Sergeant"* Rugumasz usually sits at the desk to the left (west) side.

3 - Dungeon Stairway.

4 - Tailings under the tarp.

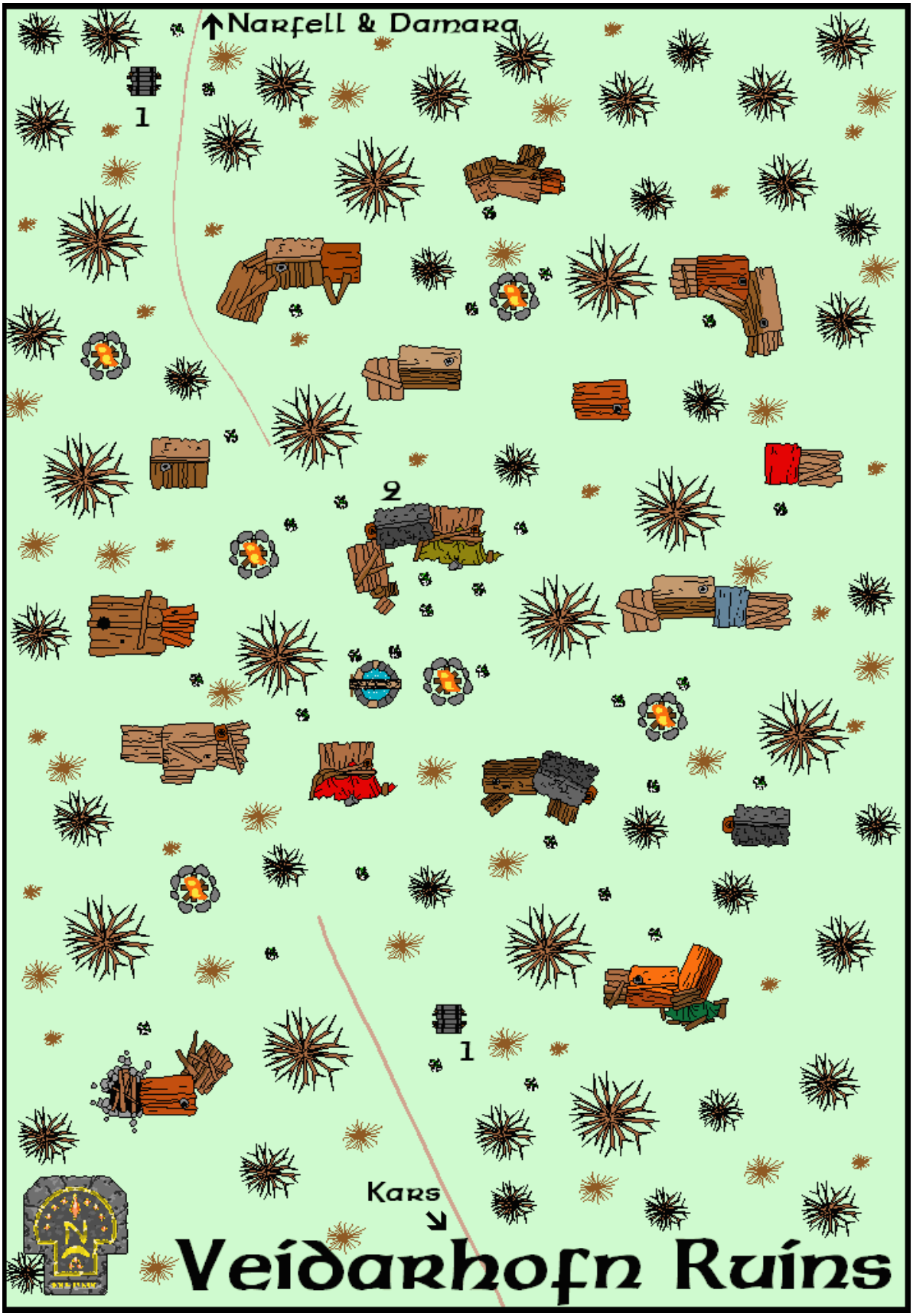
Plan of the Dungeon

1, 3, 4 and 5 - Quarters for Transient Dragon Vampires*.

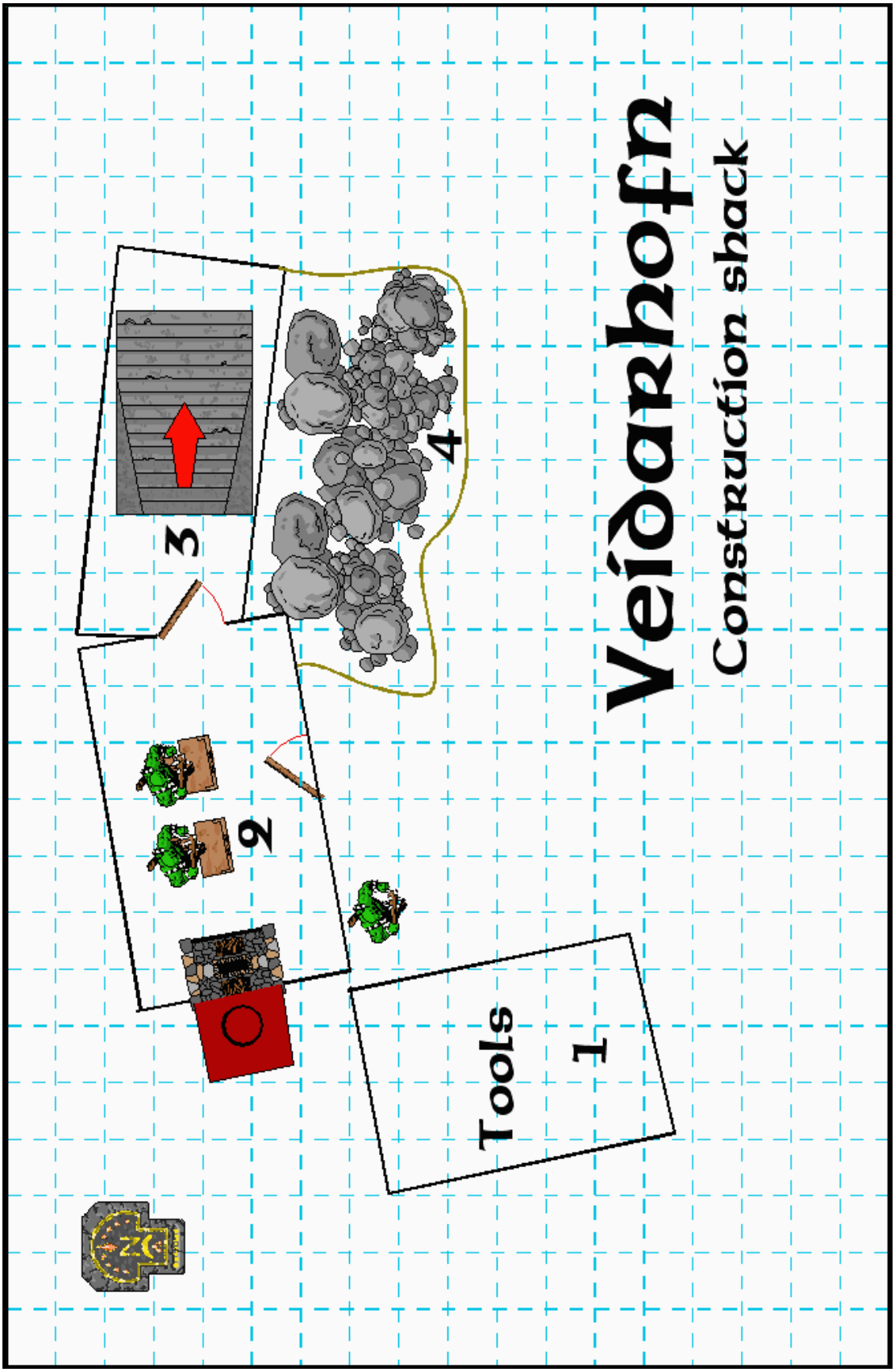
2 - Fragostandir's Chamber*.

6 - Current Construction Area.

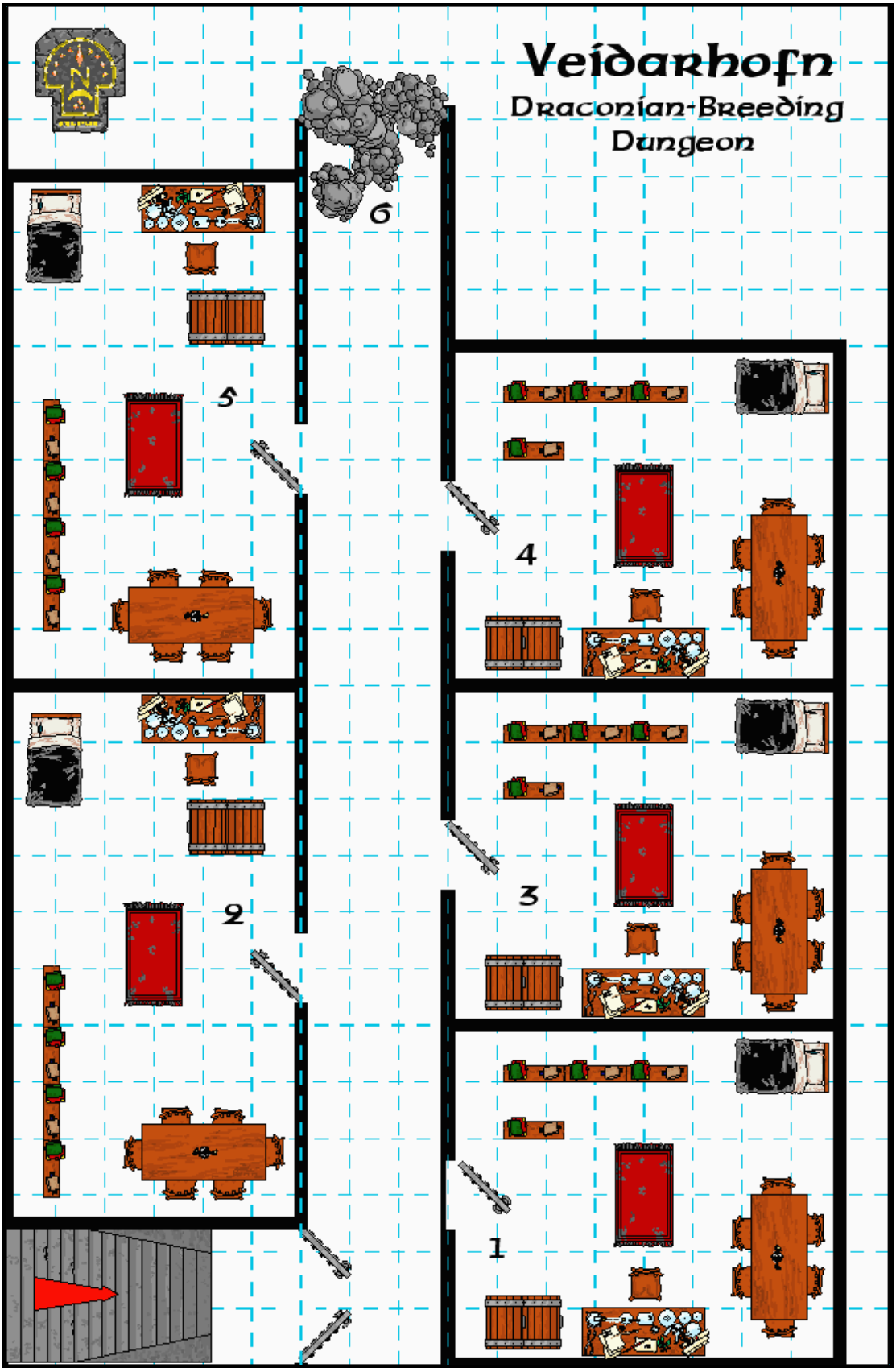
* Each room will contain a substantial supply of magical books on the shelves and magical items and spell components in the chests.



Ruins of Veidarhofn



Veidarhofn Construction Shack



Veidarhofn Dungeon

Nordhofn

Hamlet, Nonstandard (druid baron dictator), AL: NE, gp limit: 50 gp*. Assets: 875 gp*. Population: 350 - 250 civilians and 100 Hunters of Herne, 100% human. Authority figure: Erp Einridissonur, human male, AL: NE, Trued Druid of Herne 3, druid baron of Nordhofn; Hjadhningar Gjalkissonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 6 (Herne), commander of the Hunters of Herne detachment. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Impilturian, but primarily barter and barter chips. *** Coins and items of value are in limited supply in Nordhofn.**

Nordhofn is perhaps the most idyllic settlement in all of the Gallist domain, resembling the hamlets of the Western Dale in many respects. There are no draconians or warriors of Garagos stationed in Nordhofn. The dark aura of evil that emanates from Nighthawk Tower to spread over neighboring Tschedith does not quite reach to Nordhofn. The hamlet is off the beaten path that the oppressive, higher ranking Gallists tend to travel.

Druid Baron Einridissonur is young, weak in power and more interested in pursuing the tenets of Herne's faith than in ruling over his folk with an iron fist. Most of the rest of the Gallist domain tends to ignore Nordhofn, and the Nordhofner do the same for the rest of the domain.

The only important outside interference in the hamlet's affairs in recent years are the orders that have come from Kront to clear large areas of Rawlinswood south of the hamlet to expand agricultural production. Until a year ago, the Gallists were happy to let Nordhofn limit farming to the production of the crops necessary to sustain itself, but as Nighthawk Tower oils the machinery for war, Kront is implementing its own strategies to make enclaves within Rawlinswood into the new breadbasket of the Eastern Dale.

The Nordhofner have a mixed reaction to Kront's decisions. The expansion of the agricultural fields south of the hamlet is seen by most as a commendable decision, but locals fear that Kront will order a substantial migration of outsiders from the Trade Route settlements into Nordhofn in the future, which will end the tranquility the settlement enjoys. The Nordhofner also are unenthused about the beating of war drums to the south, but they know better than to open their mouths on this point.

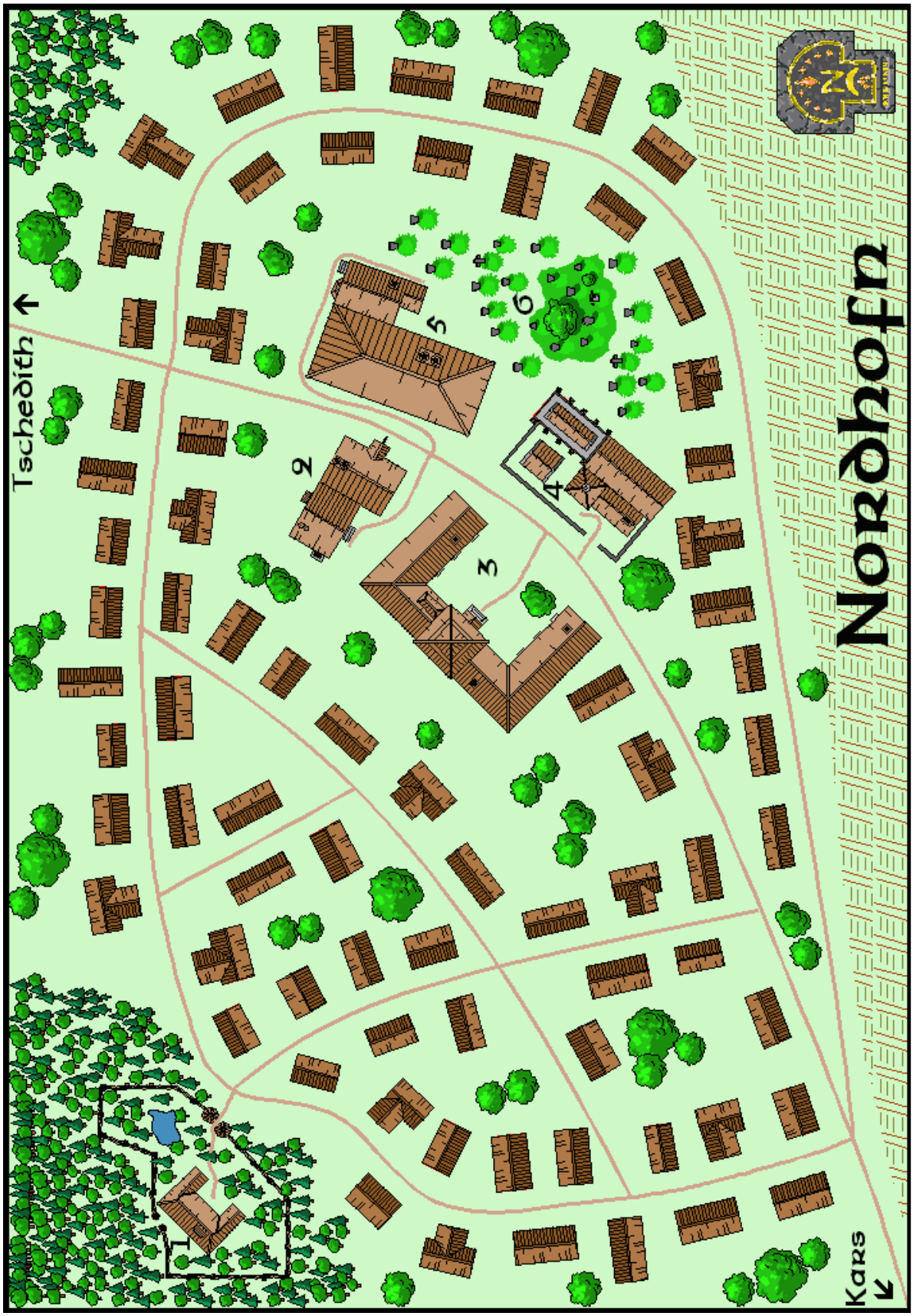
Nordhofn was founded more than 350 years ago. So far, the hamlet has made it unscathed through all wars and dragon attacks. Local folk would prefer to keep things that way. The hamlet has been a good place for people to settle who want to raise families. In contrast to many other settlements, children are abundant here, accounting for half of the civilian population of 250.

There is little in Nordhofn to draw or interest adventurers. The locals lead a rough but proud and somewhat independent peasant life. Those not primarily occupied with hunting and logging work the fields south of the hamlet.

Timber that is felled in Nordhofn is cut raw locally and then sent on to the lumber mill in Kars to be sawed into finished wood. There is no sawmill in the hamlet. The Nordhofner use crosscut saws and muscles to bring timber down to a transportable size. Boar and venison from Nordhofn are packed in the hamlet's plant and then sent to Skarlshofn to be processed or made into sausage. Grain is milled in Tschedith, but most of the local harvest still is consumed within the hamlet itself.

Adventure Hook in Nordhofn

- **Identity -** This hook is valid everywhere in the Eastern Dale. The PCs are strangers, and if they don't have a permit to be where they are, they'll have trouble on their hands.



Nordhofn

Map of Nordhofn

1 - Grove of the Druid Baron. This is a private complex. The hamlet administration is in the garrison (No. 3).

2 - Lumberjack Baugi's. The village tavern is the only nightlife in Nordhofn. Retired lumberjack Baugi Brandssonur, human male, AL: N, Com 3, a retired lumberjack, owns and run the place. The house, open only in the evening, does a good business. Brandssonur offers a breadboard with sausage, rye bread and horseradish at 2 silver shiners. The decent light ale with spruce gruit that he brews out back costs 2 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. In practice, coins seldom are seen in the tavern. Most trade is in barter chips.

3 - Garrison, Hunters of Herne. Commander Hjadhningar Gjalkissonur and his company of 100 Hunter of Herne rangers (human male and female, AL: NE, Rgr 1-4) are stationed here. The building also houses the hamlet administration under the feather of Clerk Osgard Narbulssonur, human male, LE, Exp 2, and, in the dungeon, the usually empty local jail.

4 - Slaughterhouse. This facility is under the control of the druid baron. The master butcher is Nanna Rekksdóttir, human female, AL: N, Exp 4. The slaughterhouse packs boar meat and venison from the hunt for transport to Skarlshofn.

5 - Nordhofn Timber. This facility is under the control of the druid baron. The master sawyer is Áli Hleidrssonurr, human male, AL: NE, Exp 3. Timber is cut in lengths to make it suitable for transport to the sawmill in Kars.

6 - Cemetery.

Tschedith

Hamlet, Nonstandard (druid baron dictator), AL: NE, gp limit: 50 gp*. Assets: 875 gp*. Population: 400, 100% human. Authority figure: Ingvar Vingethórssonur, human male, AL: NE, True Druid of Herne 3, druid baron of Tschedith; Vig Týssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 2 (Herne), commander of the local guard. Others: Local watch, 12 human male and female, AL: N and NE, War 1-2 or Rgr 1. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Impilturian, but primarily barter and barter chips. *** Coins and items of value are in limited supply in Tschedith.**

Tschedith - like Nordhofn - should be one of the more idyllic hamlets of the Eastern Dale. However, dangerous use of Narfelli magic by Harbet Gall in Nighthawk Tower to the south and the tower's own secrets keep the tiny milling and farming settlement under an invisible but permeating cloud of evil that robs the Gallist peasants of the simple joys they could know.

More details on what Gall is doing with the Narfelli *Emperor's Stone Bunlûhn* can be found under the description of Nighthawk Tower farther below. The effects of his dark magic reach just beyond Tschedith to the northwest. The vile effects also come within a few miles of Nordhofn to the west and Tighofn to the north, but do not quite pollute either of these two settlements.

The cloud of evil from Nighthawk Tower cannot be seen, but it can be felt by one and all. A visitor to Tschedith immediately perceives a deep and encompassing sense of utter evil. It reaches into every nook and cranny of the hamlet. Attempts to detect evil are futile, simply because they show everything as being evil. Even a visiting paladin would be shown by the spell to be a creature of evil.

The people of Tschedith have suffered under this cloud since Marpenoth in the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), when Harbet Gall began invoking the powers of *Bunlûhn*. They feel as though they constantly are in the presence of evil and live in fear.

The stone has more far-reaching effects in Tschedith that are beyond the locals' perception. Beings of utter evil are strengthened by the stone's cloud of evil. It gives them a bonus of 1 on all attack, damage and check rolls that they make within the hamlet. Beings of utter good, such as paladins, are weakened by the cloud. It gives them a penalty of 1 on all attack, damage and check rolls that they make. Druids and clerics of evil deities also have a bonus of 1 on all throws used to implement spells, and these have a difficulty class bonus of 1 as well. Druids and clerics of good-aligned deities have a penalty of 1 on such rolls and on difficulty class. Druids and clerics of neutrally aligned deities are not affected.

Before the cloud settled over the hamlet last autumn, the locals could live without the oppressive hand of the ruling druid barons of other Gallist hamlets and villages. No druid baron of Tschedith ever has had to be concerned with locals attempting to flee into the lands of the Freemen. There is no sensible place to which a refugee from Tschedith could flee. Capture would be almost certain, were one to attempt fleeing through Rawlinswood westward. The north and east offer only the inhospitable lands of the barbarian horsemen in Narfell and north Ashanath. To the south is the heart of the Gallist domain.

Tschedith was built just southwest of the source of the Kaldurfljót (old Turami for *Cold Flow*). Because of a sharp drop in the forest's terrain outside of the hamlet, the bountiful waters of the young Kaldurfljót roar impressively toward the southeast just below the village, making for an ideal mill site.

Within the first few miles/kilometers beyond the source, several other small forest streams and rivulets flow into the Kaldurfljót, turning it quickly into a small but rushing creek. The mill, the *Tschedmylla*, 5 miles/8 km southeast of the hamlet, grinds grain and pounds vegetable oil not only for Tschedith but also for Nordhofn and Tighofn.

The Kaldurfljót also teams with trout which supplement the local diet of boar and venison. Trout also are an economic factor. The locals take more fish than they can consume. The remainder are prepared in the local smokehouse, packed in barrels and sold elsewhere.

Tschedith today houses 400 farmers, hunters and fishermen with some families. Weather conditions limit farming mostly to grain. No followers of Garagos are stationed there, nor have draconians been stationed in Tschedith to date.

Adventure Hook in Tschedíth

- **Identity -** This hook is valid everywhere in the Eastern Dale. The PCs are strangers, and if they don't have a permit to be where they are, they'll have trouble on their hands.

Map of Tschedíth

1 - Grove and Manse of the Druid Baron.

2 - Cemetery.

3 - Kaldurfljót.

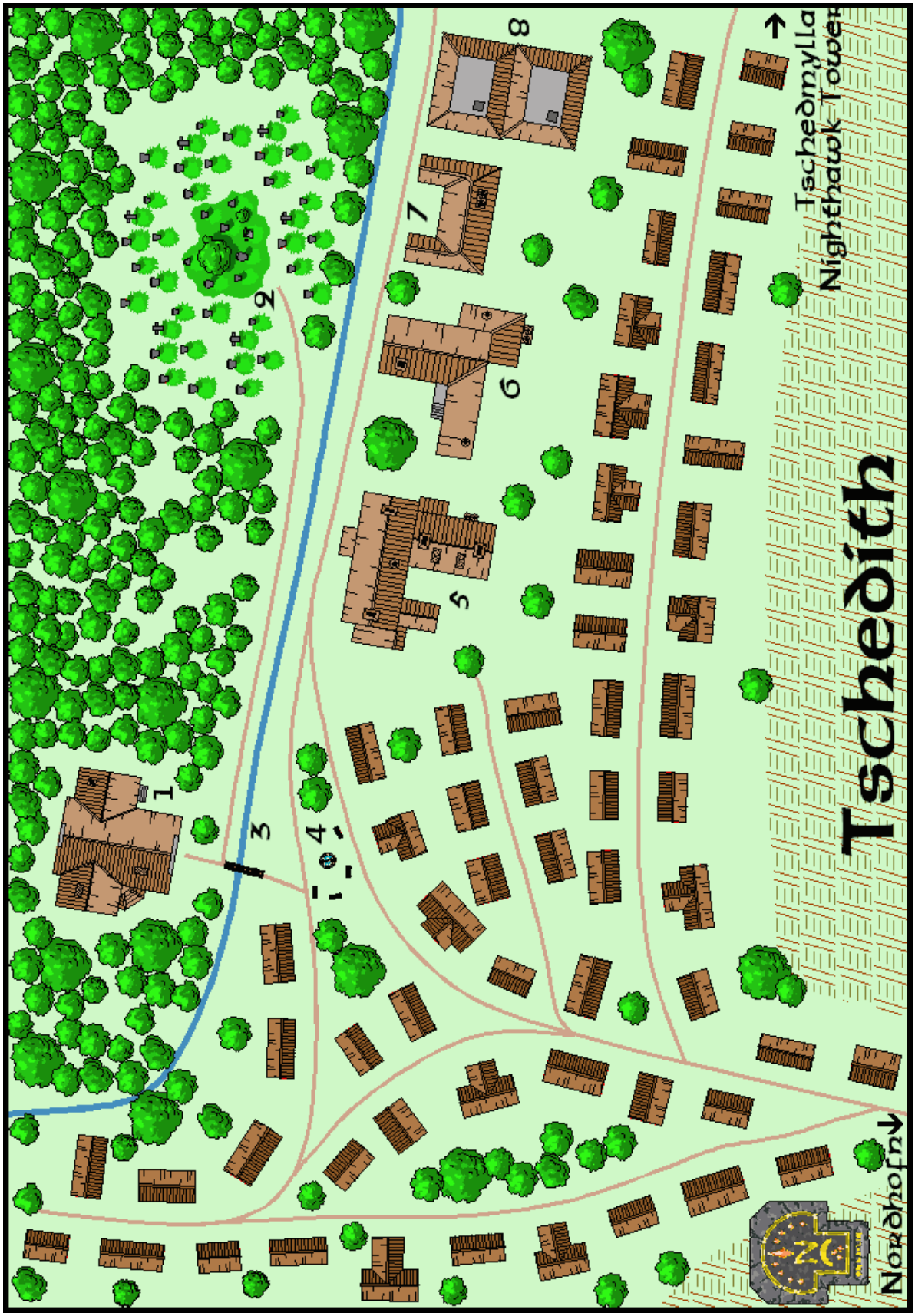
4 - Hamlet Square With Well. A local daytime meeting place with benches.

5 - Slaughterhouse, Smokehouse and Meat Packing. Boar and venison are slaughtered here. The meat either is made into sausage, packed in brine or smoked and sent on to be sold elsewhere. Trout also are smoked and packed for sale in other areas. The master butcher is Lars Vöggssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 3. He employs two journeymen, two apprentices and four laborers.

6 - The Millstream. Thudh Audssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 2, owns the small inn and brewhouse. Guest rooms seldom are occupied at the Millstream, but six small singles are available on the upper floor at 2 silver shiners each. Audssonur serves venison, boar and trout, fresh, smoked or as sausage, at prices ranging from 8 copper bites to 3 silver shiners. His middle quality light ale with spruce gruit costs 2 copper bites per quart/liter tankard. Few coins change hands in the Millstream. Most trade is in barter and barter chips.

7 - Guardhouse. The building houses the local guard detachment, hamlet clerk Kjali Gungnirssonur, human male, AL: LE, Exp 1, and, in the dungeon level, a small jail that usually is unoccupied.

8 - Granaries.


Tschedith
Tschedmylla
Nighthawk Tower
Nordhofn
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Tschedith

Tighofn

Hamlet, Nonstandard (druid baron dictator), AL: NE, gp limit: 50 gp*. Assets: 525 gp*. Population: 210, 100% human. Authority figure: Durathrór Lovarssonur, human male, AL: NE, True Druid of Herne 1, druid baron of Tighofn; Áslaug Heimirssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr 2 (Herne), commander of the local guard. Others: Local watch, 10 human male and female, AL: N and NE, War 1-2 or Rgr 1. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Impilturian, but primarily barter and barter chips. *** Coins and items of value are in limited supply in Tighofn.**

Some people call Tighofn the *Misfits' Village*. The northeastern corner of Harbet Gall's domain is guarded by a strange hamlet comprising Eastern Dalesmen who didn't fit in where they were before, three former Tuigan war prisoners, two Nar barbarians who fled their tribes, a Rashemi hiding from the wrath of the witches and an Earthfast dwarf who fled Impiltur after killing a fellow clansman. Some of the native Dalesmen who live in Tighofn were sent there involuntarily.

Perhaps because they all are outcasts of one sort or another, they've learned to live harmoniously with each other. Some even have children. None of them, however, is hospitable to outsiders, and that includes other Gallists who consider themselves important. But then again, such people seldom visit Tighofn and are less than anxious to return after doing so.

Druid Infallible Bödvar Bjarkissonur in Kront chose wisely in appointing first level Durathrór Lovarssonur as druid baron of Tighofn. The son of a high druid in Kront, Lovarssonur still is learning to be a true druid of Herne. In Tighofn, he learned quickly that the best way to rule is to stay out of the way of the way of local folks and let them go about their work. That gives him plenty of time to study the druidic ways of Herne.

In most Gallist settlements, the druid baron also dispenses justice. According to the letter of Gallist law, Lovarssonur too has that responsibility. He has no opportunity to exercise it however. The Tighofner deal out their own justice. When the offender is a local, he or she may be convinced to pay out a certain number of barter chips to a victim, and it's not unusual in such cases that some unexplained bruises are seen.

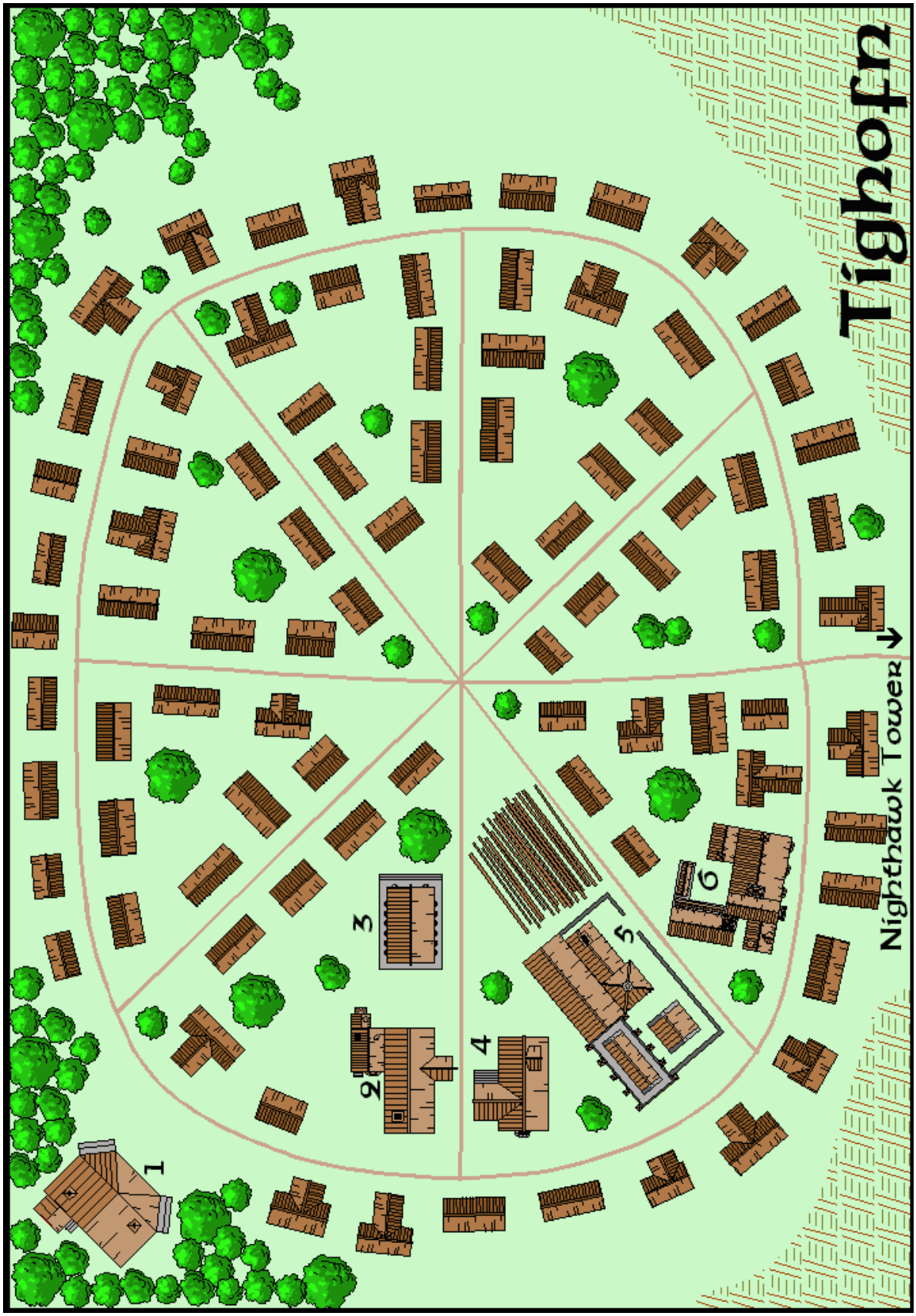
It's a rare day when a Tighofner commits a crime against another Tighofner. A bit more frequently, outsiders may come to the hamlet and violate one or more of its unwritten laws. Both types of cases can be dealt with through the quick organization of a Great Hunt to honor Herne the Hunter.

In the 365 years since its founding, Tighofn never has been conquered or vanquished by a foe, nor has it been attacked by dragons. To date, the hamlet has been lucky enough to have neither draconians nor the warriors of Garagos stationed there.

The main occupations in Tighofn are hunting, logging, farming and weaving linen.

Adventure Hook in Tighofn

- **Identity -** This hook is valid everywhere in the Eastern Dale. The PCs are strangers, and if they don't have a permit to be where they are, they'll have trouble on their hands.



Tighofn

Map of Tighofn

1 - Manse of the Druid Baron.

2 - Smoky's Alehouse. Gerd *"Smoky"* Gymirssonur, human male, AL: NE, Rgr (Herne) 4 retired, runs Tighofn's watering hole and brewery. His dark stout ale costs 2 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard. He also serves a bread board with local cold cuts, horseradish and rye bread for a silver shiner. As usual, most trade is in barter and barter chips rather than coins.

3 - Watch house. The watch is maintained by locals.

4 - Northwood Meat. The slaughterhouse and packing plant is a hamlet facility under the control of the druid baron. The master butcher is Lif Magnissonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 1, War 2. He employs a journeyman and two apprentices.

5 - Northwood Lumber Works. The plant cuts fallen timber into transportable lengths, but no finished lumber is produced here. There is no sawmill. All work is done with two-man crosscut saws. The master sawyer is Högni Yngvissonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 1. He employs a journeyman and two apprentices. When there's heavy work to be done, the hamlet's loggers also join in the sawing.

6 - The Tighofn Works. This conglomerate is a combination wainwright and smithy, the product of a strange but harmonious partnership between Davitt mac Cruagh, dwarf male, AL: LE, Exp 10, Ftr 8, a master smith and fugitive murderer from dwarven Earthfast City above Impiltur, and Khanchak Kublai, human male, AL: CE, Bar 8, Exp 4, a former Tuigan war prisoner who turned artisan. They teamed up a few years after the Time of Troubles and went into business. Together, they produce saws, farm implements, tools, wagon and sleds. They employ a journeyman wainwright, a journeyman carpenter, two journeyman blacksmiths and six apprentices.

Fortress Clymph Ruin

Fortress (Hamlet size), Nonstandard (military outpost), AL: CE, gp limit: 100 gp. Assets: 1,750 gp. Population: 350, 100% human. Authority figure: Reaver Lord Dargenn, human male, AL: CE, Reaver of Garagos (Cleric) 14; Rengul, human male, AL: CE, Ftr 15, commander of the troop. Others: 6 Reavers of Garagos, human male and female, AL: CE, Cleric 11, 9, 6, 5, 5 and 2; 342 Warriors of Garagos, human male and female, AL: CE, War 1-8 and Ftr 1-10. Taxation type: None. Accepted coinage: Impilturian or Theskan.

Game Master's Notes: Game masters who have one the following computer programs - *Campaign Cartographer 2™ Pro* or the free *Campaign Cartographer Printer and Viewer* - can download the plans for Fortress Clymph in the additional CC2 FCW-Format and use them as a base for tin figures. These floor plans are made for a scale of one yard or 1 meter per square. These squares are compatible in scale with the larger 5-foot/150-cm squares used in *D&D 3E*. Because of differences in the steering of printers, there will be variations in scale precision, but in most cases, these will be so minute as to be insignificant in game terms. The *Campaign Cartographer Printer and Viewer* can be downloaded at no cost from the Internet web site of ProFantasy Ltd. in London. The Internet address is: *http://www.profantasy.com*

Fortress Clymph once was among the mighty border outposts of the Narfelli Empire during its centuries of conflict with neighboring Raumathar. The great Narfelli complex bore little resemblance to the Gallist fortress of today. It was larger and held more professionally trained soldiers then today's Reavers and warriors of Garagos. Above all, however, Fortress Clymph was a bastion of high Narfelli war magic where epic level archmagi made spells of the 10th level a part of their daily repertory.

So great was their magical prowess that many continued to use such magic long after the fall of Netheril and in defiance of Mystra's ban, although many Narfelli and Raumathari magi and sorcerers who flaunted the goddess paid dearly for their deeds with their lives.

The great and glorious days of Fortress Clymph ended suddenly in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR), when a rain of Raumathari demonic fire came down upon the outpost, shaking it to its foundations and then blowing it in fragments that flew in all four directions of the heavens. Nothing remained of the fortress but its foundation stones and a secret.

And so things remained for more than 1,100 years. Dust, soil, moss, brush and then trees gradually covered the few foundation stones and their ancient Narfelli secret, until Harbet Gall decided anew to use the largest of Clymph's three hills to house his Dragon Cult followers in the Year of the Meddling Avatar (988 DR). However, in anger, Gall threw the cult out of the partially restored fortress in the Year of the Grueling Story (1055 DR), and it again was abandoned for nearly two centuries.

During that time, one cult mage nearly discovered the great secret, one of the lost *Narfelli Emperor's Stones*. Of Clymph's three hills, those to the south and northeast were used by Narfell's warriors, but the hill to the northwest belonged to borderland battle archmagi who were charged with defending Narfell and attacking Raumathar with their arcane powers (Also see the overhead map *Ruins of Fortress Clymph*).

Because of their high station, the archmagi needed to be in constant communication with the emperor in distant Heligonius to the northeast. Thus, the wizards of Clymph were in possession of one of the eight coveted lesser *Emperor's Stones*. More on these items of great magical power can be found in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

To help game masters better understand what now is on the ancient *Narfelli Archmagi's Hill* of Fortress Clymph, we have provided a special map showing the wizards complex as it was shortly before its destruction in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR). The map details later in this section also give more extensive information on the archmagi' hill in Narfelli times. Some game masters may wish to add to the amount of Narfelli relics remaining on this hill. We hope our map will be an aid in that respect too.

For the purposes of this accessory, one need only understand where the *Narfelli Ritual Stones* stood upon their manmade column on rock and soil (No. 1 on the map of the archmagi's hill) , and where Ratagror's Tower stood (No. 2 on the same map).

Ratagror was the leader of the Narfelli archmagi in Fortress Clymph. As such, he was entrusted by the emperor with one of the nine lesser stones. Although the details are explained in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*, it should be mentioned that the *emperor's stones* are similar in many respects to the famed *Scrying Stones of Myth Drannor*, which now are in the possession of the Impilturian queen.

The *emperor's stones* are a true proof of the high magical arts the Narfelli reached, for they are somewhat more powerful stones than those of Myth Drannor. Furthermore, they were created by Narfelli archmagi working alone, where the Myth Drannor stones were the combined art of dwarf, gnome, man and elf.

When the rain of Raumathari destruction came down upon Fortress Clymph, Ratagror was in his scrying chamber on the fourth story (European third floor) of his tower, in communication with the emperor in Heligonius. The first Raumathari blast blew the walls of all of the fortress' buildings over, causing Ratagror's tower to collapse to the north. The second blast wave caused tremors and small earthquakes to shake the landscape, which brought the tower of the ritual stones tumbling down upon dead Ratagror's fallen tower, burying it.

The third blast wave sent the stones of the remaining buildings flying across the dead and flaming landscape for miles in every direction. Within seconds, Fortress Clymph had become less than a memory. Even the few Narfelli survivors who may have recalled it would not have thought that Ratagror's tower lie buried beneath the rubble. All that remained was its foundation, as was the case with the other structures of the complex. When later generations returned to the Eastern Dale to heal the wounded land, they left the ghosts of Fortress Clymph in peace, for more than 1,000 years.

It was in the Year of the Dogged Search (1051 DR) that a living being for the first time neared the secret of Fortress Clymph. When the magi of Harbet Gall's Kront Dragon Cult cell took occupancy of the partially restored fortress in the Year of the Meddling Avatar (988 DR), they searched magically for traces of any ancient Narfelli magic that might have survived the ancient empire's fall, and they did indeed note weak dweomers atop the archmagi's hill.

A few preliminary excavations were made, but the cultists were not convinced that items of great magic were to be found, and they did not have the resources for deep mining of the hill. They noted their findings in their journal and did nothing further to seek out what might be hidden for the next 63 years.

At that time, Nurûgh, then the leading Wearer of the Purple at Clymph came across the old journal entry and began doing some investigating upon his own. He went to the crown of the ancient Narfelli archmagi's hill secretly and cloaked by invisibility; he had no desire to share what he might find with the magi under him or with other cult members.

Nurûgh saw no way to enter the depths where magic had been described other than mass excavation or a secret entrance, and he saw no likely place for a secret entrance other than the base of Ratagror's tower. Thus, he carefully cut a circle of sod out from the center of the foundation, setting it aside. He intended to cover his work, to avoid drawing the attention of other cult members.

He succeeded in working the secret entrance in such a manner that it remained covered by grass even when Nurûgh was within. The archmage made several forays into the buried ruin of the tower, much of which remained intact, and he found considerable treasure there, both in Narfelli coins and jewels and in magical items of power.

However, there were two positions where Nurûgh detected magic but stayed his hand until had cleared the ruin of other valuables. These are the positions Nos. 3 and 6 on the map *Lost Narfelli Tower Fragments* and the two positions marked as *Magic* on the second hand drawn map.

Nurûgh made his way around these two sites because he sensed that the magic in them was extremely dangerous, and he was uncertain whether his arcane arts were powerful enough to deal with them. At the first site, he had found a pouch of glittering jewels that had been broken open. At the second site, he had found a small wooden box.

After looting all of the other valuables from the ruin, Nurûgh decided to do without the remaining items. His own arsenal of magic had been supplemented beyond his wildest dreams, making him a man of immense wealth. The archmage drew two maps to show him where the remaining items were (these are the hand drawn Fortress Clymph maps included with this accessory), and he hid the maps behind a loose stone in the wall in the granary.

Nurûgh managed to resist the lure of the magic in the tower ruin for several years, although it did indeed attempt to lure him. The broken bag of jewels contained for the most part normal jewels and gems. There were four diamonds with a value of 5,000 gold talers each, a pale blue opal valued at 1,000 gold talers, a translucent star ruby valued at 5,000 gold talers and several pieces of jewelry fashioned from gold and ornamented with small gemstones, with a total value of 10,000 gold talers.

In the middle of these stones and jewelry lay a black opal worth 1,000 gold talers with a rune that permanently works the spell *Power Word, Kill* upon anyone who touches it. This trap later proved to be Nurûgh's bane. But it was not the black opal that called to Nurûgh. The summons went forth from the small wooden box deeper in the ruin.

The tiny box, with dimensions of 9 x 6 x 6 inches/22.5 x 15 x 15 cm, contained what appears to be a clear glass ball. In truth, the ball - 4 inches/10 cm in diameter - is *Gorndûhn,* one of the nine lesser *Narfelli Emperor's Stones.* It seeks a new servant and master to restore its communication with the master stone, which had been in the hands of the Narfelli emperor in fallen Heligonius. However, the stone was not destined to claim Nurûgh as its servant and master.

In these years in the middle of the 11th Century, Gall's dragon Cult followers were becoming restless. Gall had neglected them, and they had been left to their own devices in the restored wing of Fortress Clymph. There were no dragons within or near Gall's domain to whom the cultists could bring Sammaster's gospel, and no orders were issuing from Nighthawk Tower to amend this situation. Some of the Clymph cultists made their protests known in Kront; others - among them Nurûgh - began conspiring to overthrow their lich leader.

Gall did not yield to the cultists' protests. Instead, he raged against them, blaming their own inaction for their status. In the Year of the Grueling Story (1055 DR), the lich banned the lot of them from Fortress Clymph, ordering them to go out into Faerûn and to recruit new dragon blood to come and share in their battles in the Great Dale and Ashanath. Both frightened and humiliated, the cult members fled their stronghold to carry out his orders.

With the cult members banished from it, Fortress Clymph slowly fell into decline and again partial ruin. The Hunters of Herne, who feared and avoided the cult members, also made a wide circle around it. Ironically, members of the Mucklestones Druids began to use it as a safe house during their infrequent raids upon the Gallist settlements north of the Trade Route. However, none found the maps Nurûgh had hidden within the granary.

Nevertheless, *Gorndûhn* was unwilling to wait another millennium to find a new servant and master. Nurûgh was the first intelligent being to come within its grasp since the fall of Narfell. The magic in the stone was crafted to hold its new servant and master when the older no longer could be found.

After being ordered out of Fortress Clymph, Nurûgh and several other members of his cell had chosen to wander northwestward in search of dragons on the Great Glacier, which less than two decades earlier had receded northward, freeing the swamplands that eventually would become Vaasa and Damara. The Damaran Plain had not yet dried at that time, but it was mostly uninhabited, and the cultists could cross it with little fear of being watched by foes.

However, the farther Nurûgh went into the Galena Mountains, the stronger his irrepressible desire had become for the valuables he had left behind in the tower ruin. Early in the Year of the Laughing Dead (1056 DR), Nurûgh deserted his cell and fled back into the Great Dale, using his magic to slip unseen back into the Gallist domain and into abandoned Fortress Clymph and the Narfelli tower ruin.

But luck was with neither Nurûgh nor with the magic of *Gorndûhn* on that fateful day. The archmage crawled as far as the broken bag of gem's and jewels, where the rune *Power Word, Kill* on the black opal claimed his life. The bones of his right hand still rest upon the evilly enchanted stone. No being has entered the tower ruin since. The magic of *Gorndûhn* again waits for a new master and servant to arrive.

Some 150 years after Nurûgh's disappearance, Harbet Gall ordered parts of Fortress Clymph to be reopened and restored as a temple and fortress to Garagos. In the Year of the Private Tears (1204 DR), it became a training base for the Garagos-worshipping warriors who came there in the years that followed, and that is what your PC group will find there today - perhaps along with Nurûgh's treasure maps, the evilly enchanted black opal and *Gorndûhn*.

Today Fortress Clymph is the home base for the approximately 350 Reavers and warrior followers of Garagos in the Eastern Dale, but only 200 of them will be found within the fortress at any given time. There are no draconians or vampire dragons stationed in the fortress. The Reavers of Garagos and the members of the Dragon Cult have little use for one another, and Gall does his best to keep them apart.

If a PC group comes to Fortress Clymph, its members must either claim convincingly to be followers of Garagos, or they must be prepared to fight. With most PC groups, that means taking out 20 to 25 warriors of Garagos per PC. If your party has the recommended levels of 11 to 16, success is conceivable. The Garagos' outpost has little magic, few high level NPCs, is ill prepared for attack (expecting none whatsoever), and it has no nearby allies who will race to its help.

Should the PCs succeed in rummaging through Lord Dargenn's belongings, they are certain to find Nurûgh's treasure maps. One of Dargenn's men found the latter several years ago, when the soldier was working in the granary and accidentally dislodged the stone behind which the papers were hidden. They also will find a few parchments that confirm Dargenn's alliance with Lord Drómi in Bezentil, their service to Chalass the Cruel of Westgate and their eventual intention to desert the Gallists and go to Damara.

Lord Dargenn looked at Nurûgh's maps but never did anything with them. Magic is, after all, of limited interest to the high Blood Reaver of Fortress Clymph. He has the papers stashed away in a drawer of the dresser in his tower chamber, along with a few documents that would betray his Iron Throne affiliation.

The latter would interest both Kront and the Dragon Cult cell in Tower Threespires, but it would have little significance for Dargenn's own followers. Kront also would be interested in the Blood Reavers' intention to desert, although it's questionable whether any substantial action would be undertaken to stop them. Gall no longer believes that the Reavers are important in his strategies.

One clear sign of Gall's growing disinterest in the Reavers was his decision in the Year of the Banner (1368 DR) to stop conscription of young Dalesmen who had been forced into the ranks of Garagos' followers. Since that time, the young men of the Eastern Dale are required to do military service, but they can choose between being trained as ranger Hunters of Herne or as warriors of Garagos. Few choose to go to Fortress Clymph.

Those who are stationed there have found themselves in conflict with mysterious foes from central and western Rawlinswood. The warriors and Reavers of Garagos are unaware of it, but their opponents are servants of the Nentyarch, who also have attacked Fortress Clymph with some success. However, the soldiers do know that the headquarters of their foes are in or near ancient Dun Tharos.

Although a PC group seldom will find more than 200 warrior and Reavers in Fortress Clymph at any given time, 350 of them are stationed there. The remaining 150 are off riding patrol in Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest, with orders to slay anyone who crosses their path and does not wear the herald of the Hunters of Herne.

Until recently, the full strength of the outpost stood at 400, matching Lord Drómi's contingent in Bezentil. However, in Nightal of the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), two platoons - a total of 50 fighting men accompanied by two mid- and lower level Reaver priests - was sent out to battle against the minions of Dun Tharos. There has been no word from the long overdue mission, and Lord Dargenn now lists the two missing platoons as likely casualties.

In mid-Hammer of the current Year of Wild Magic (1372 DR), a large number of winter wolves began besieging the ruins of Fortress Clymph and will continue to do so until mid-Ches. The warriors of Garagos have tried to drive them off, but they have little wit for the ways of creatures of the wild. Most of the wolves easily elude them and vanish into Rawlinswood, only to re-emerge at another place. The Reavers of Garagos suspect the winter wolves were sent to them, but they have no idea who the responsible foe might be.

The ranger Hunters of Herne might be a match for the winter wolves and could succeed with time in killing the beasts or driving them off, but they have made no attempt to do so. Instead, the rangers and the True Druids of Herne have been watching the situation bemused, assuming that the winter wolves are the two platoons of warriors that the Reavers sent off to Dun Tharos, transformed by the Nentyarch and sent back to Fortress Clymph to plague their erstwhile brothers-in-arms. They are correct in this assumption.

The remaining warriors of Garagos in Fortress Clymph are a mixed lot. There still are a few descendants of the Vastans who originally brought the Reaver's faith to the Dale a century and a half ago. There also are some loyal followers of Garagos from Chondath and the Vilhon Reach as well as converts among Tuigan warriors who had been taken prisoner and a few descendants of the Tekumthari tribesmen, Raumvira ancestors of Raumathari survivors, who once entered Gall's service.

The majority of the troop, however, consists of eastern Dalesmen who, mostly because of their brawn, were forced into service in Fortress Clymph through conscription. Once there, some willfully took up Garagos' bloody instruments of war; others - like the captured Freemen in their ranks - were magically brainwashed into the Reaver's service.

Adventure Hooks in Fortress Clymph

- **Survival -** If the PCs simply wander into Fortress Clymph, the Reavers and their warriors will attempt to slay them expeditiously.

- **Conquest -** With a good plan and the right magic, a PC group of the levels recommended for this accessory should be able to liquidate Lord Dargenn and all of his followers and temporarily take over the fortress. How long they can hold it is another question. Such an action would draw the full focus of the eye of Harbet Gall to the fortress. His search for the sigyll bearers in an *NJ* adventure would be concentrated upon the Clymph area, and he would concentrate all of his power to find and destroy them. The concept *all of his power* includes the Hunters of Herne, the True Druids of Herne, the magi of the Dragon Cult in Tower Threespires and all of the draconians and vampire dragons at his disposal.

- **Gorndûhn -** This is a tricky hook, if ever there was one. Should the PCs explore the Narfelli tower ruin, they will have to make saving throws to get past the death magic of the black opal where Nurûgh's bones lie, should they attempt to take the jewels, and then again against the death magic of the rune upon the box that contains the emperor's stone. If they gain the emperor's stone, they have access to its powers, but Harbet Gall, who possesses *Bunlûhn,* also will have access to the PCs. For the full impact that possession of *Gorndûhn* can have upon the PCs, see the description of the *Narfelli Emperor's Stones* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

Maps and Floor Plans of Fortress Clymph

Overland Map: Ruins of Fortress Clymph

No points have been numbered on this map. We are providing it to give the game master a good overview of the landscape surrounding the fortress and to show the three hills upon which the original Narfelli outpost had been constructed.

- The new Gallist era construction is on the easternmost hill. This military fortress is mapped in more detail in separate maps that follow. All of the original Narfelli complex that stood on this hill except for foundation stones were obliterated in the final battle exchanges with Raumathar. There are no Narfelli remnants to be found on this hill nor are their dungeons. The Narfelli had their main military buildings on this hill.

- Except for a few foundation stones and the end of a bridge, there are no Narfelli remnants left on the southernmost hill either, nor are there any Narfelli dungeons here. The Narfelli fortress' headquarters stood on this hill.

- The westernmost hill was known as the Narfelli Archmagi's Hill. The high wizards had a castle complex of their own with the towers of four magi on this hill (separately mapped). All that stood here was obliterated except for buried fragments of the Archdiviner Ratagror's tower. There is nothing else of Narfelli origin here.

All of the mapped site is surrounded by the forested land of Rawlinswood, as seen on the overall map of the Great Dale. If your PC group reaches the ruins of Fortress Clymph after mid-Hammer and before mid-Ches in the Year of the Wild Magic (1372 DR), they will find the entire surrounding grounds besieged by 50 + 5d20 winter wolves.

The wolves usually besiege the fortress by day and by night. However, if the warriors of Garagos mount a serious attack against them in daylight, they will vanish into Rawlinswood and not return until after nightfall. All of the white wolves are former warriors from Fortress Clymph who were transmogrified by the Nentyarch and now are under his control. In mid-Ches of the Year of Wild Magic, he will order the wolves away from Fortress Clymph and send them into the area around Veidarhofn to destroy new draconians coming into the Great Dale from the Damaran Plain.

Fortress Clymph: Aerial Review of the Restored Fortress

1 - Gatehouse (separately mapped).

2 - Rengul's Tower (separately mapped). This is one of two towers originally constructed to outlast sieges and provide for a last strong defense, serving as a traditional European Bergfried. The followers of Garagos use it as a combined watchtower and as the chambers of military commander Rengul.

3 - Watch Towers (separately mapped). Each of the four towers is armed with a ballista.

4 - Granary. This structure has not been mapped. It is simply a huge granary with no secret levels, passages, dungeons, etc.

5 - Castle Building (separately mapped). The simple castle contains the temple to Garagos, the fortress administration and Rengul's command center.

6 - Lord Dargenn's Tower (separately mapped). This is one of two towers originally constructed to outlast sieges and provide for a last strong defense, serving as a traditional European Bergfried. The followers of Garagos use it as a combined watchtower and as the chambers of the high Blood Reaver Lord Dargenn.

7 Barracks with Mess Hall (separately mapped).

Plan: Narfelli Archmagi's Hill

This map is provided only to give the game master a picture of what stood here before the fall. All that remains - buried - is Ratagror's tower (No. 2).

1 - Cult Site. The Royal Impilturian Library in Lyrabar contains plans of other Narfelli sites with large stones arranged in the manner seen here. There is no proven answer to the question of the purpose of these stones. Some educated Impilturian theologians believe these were sites of worship, but most magi who are aware of them ridicule this suggestion. They believe the Narfelli used the stones to focus magic being sent to distant locations - probably battle magic being sent against distant Raumathari targets. In Fortress Clymph, the site was atop a large column or pillar of soil and rock that had been raised to support it. When Ratagror's tower collapsed, the column fell on top of the lower and middle parts of it, burying them and sparing them from obliteration.

2 - Ratagror's Tower. Ratagror, the most powerful Narfelli archmage at Fortress Clymph, was not a battle mage but rather a diviner. Of the four Narfelli archmagi upon this hill, Ratagror is the only one whose name his known. He is mentioned in several old parchments in the library in Lyrabar. Ratagror appears to have been one of Narfell's most important sources of magically gained information on the Raumathari.

3-5 - Towers of the other archmagi. Neither the names of these magi nor their schools are known, but several parchments in Lyrabar make clear that four epic archmagi were stationed here, and each had his or her own tower.

6 - Ratagror's Scrying Pond. Both the pond and its location also are mentioned in parchments in Lyrabar. Ratagror apparently was able to gather a dozen or more people with him about the pond and then use it to call up pictures that all could see of events that were happening at that moment at points in Raumathar.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Gatehouse - Ground Floor

1 - Guard Chambers. Each chamber is manned by three warriors (human male and female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who are armed with long swords, long bows and heavy crossbows. Arrow slits face outward. The ladder leads to the story above.

2 - Metal Gate. Cranks within the gate housing on the ground floor are used to lower and raise the gate. Two guards are required to raise or lower the gate, one at each side where a crank must be turned. The gate usually is kept closed.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Gatehouse - Second Story

1 - Guard chambers. Each chamber is manned by three warriors (human male and female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who are armed with long swords, long bows and heavy crossbows. Arrow slits face outward. The ladders lead to the stories above and below. Each chamber has a stove and several cauldrons of oil which can be boiled and poured down upon intruders.

2 - Gate area. This is the area where oil can be poured onto intruders.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Gatehouse - Third Story

1 - Guard chambers. Each chamber is manned by three warriors (human male and female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who are armed with long swords, long bows and heavy crossbows, but their main weapon is a heavy ballista. The ladder leads to the story below. These chambers are open.

2 - Roof supports. The guard chambers are open. The red clay brick columns support the roof.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Main Towers - Ground Floor

Tower 2 is Rengul's tower, and Tower 6 is Lord Dargenn's. The numbers 2 and 6 correspond to the designations on the map *Fortress Clymph - Aerial View*. The heavy metal doors can seal off both towers. There are two warriors (human male and female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who are armed with long swords, long bows and heavy crossbows on duty in each tower on this level.

1 - Benches.

2 - Weapon Racks.

3 - Spiral Staircase (upward).

Plan: Fortress Clymph Main Towers - 2nd Story

There are three warriors (human male and female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who are armed with long swords, long bows and heavy crossbows on duty in each tower on this level.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Main Towers - 3rd Story

There are two warriors (human male and female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who are armed with long swords, long bows and heavy crossbows on duty in each tower on this level. The main spiral staircase from below ends at this level, and a new, smaller spiral staircase begins leading upwards.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Main Towers - 4th Story (No. 2) Rengul's Tower - Targad's Chamber

This level is the chamber of Rengul's aide, Targad (human male, AL: CE, War 5).

1 - Spiral Staircase from Below. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword, a long bow and a heavy crossbows is duty in the stairway chamber on this level.

2 - Desk.

3 - Wardrobe.

4 - Foot Lockers. Targad has among other things a collection of small weapons such as knives, daggers and darts - all battle booty that he has kept.

5 - Weapon Rack.

6 - Spiral Staircase leading upward.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Main Towers - 4th Story (No. 6) Lord Dargenn's Tower - Zurugha's and Jarnik's Chamber

This level is the chamber of Dargenn's aides, Zurugha (human female, AL: CE, Cle Garagos 5), and Jarnik (human female, AL: CE, Cle Garagos 4).

7 - Spiral Staircase from Below. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword, a long bow and a heavy crossbows is duty in the stairway chamber on this level.

8 - Cabinet With Door.

9 - Footlockers. Zurugha and Jarnik have several scrolls of divine magic, levels 0-3 (Game Master's choice) in their footlockers.

10 - 11 - Wardrobes.

12 - Spiral Staircase leading upward.

13 - Weapon Rack.

14 - Footlockers. These contain parchment, feathers, ink and other clerk's supplies.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Main Towers - 5th Story (No. 2) Rengul's Tower - Rengul's Chamber

1 - Spiral Staircase to Lower Level. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword, a long bow and a heavy crossbows is duty in the stairway chamber on this level.

2 - Weapon Racks.

3 - Footlockers. These contain mainly clothing, but Rengul also has six bloodstone bars hidden here.

4 - Wardrobes.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Main Towers - 5th Story (No. 6) Lord Dargenn's Tower - Dargenn's Chamber

5 - Spiral Staircase to Lower Level. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword, a long bow and a heavy crossbows is duty in the stairway chamber on this level.

6 - Weapon Racks.

7 - Footlockers. These contain mainly clothing, but Dargenn also has 16 scrolls of divine magic, levels 0-7 (Game Master's choice) stored here.

8 - Wardrobe.

9 - Desk and Dresser. Parchments clarifying Dargenn's relationship to Lord Drómi in Bezentil and the hand drawn maps of Ratagror's fallen tower are in the drawers.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Main Towers - 6th Story (No. 2) Rengul's Tower - War Room

Rengul and his military commanders use this chamber to plan battle strategy.

1 - Spiral Staircase to Lower Level. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword, a long bow and a heavy crossbows is duty in the stairway chamber on this level.

2 - Bookshelf. Contains maps and parchments with information on Freemen's units in the West.

3 - Staff Table.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Main Towers - 6th Story (No. 6) Lord Dargenn's Tower – Private Shrine and Staff Chamber

Lord Dargenn has meeting with his leading clerics and with Rengul and his leading officers here.

4 - Spiral Staircase to Lower Level. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword, a long bow and a heavy crossbows is duty in the stairway chamber on this level.

5 - Statue of Garagos.

6 - Red Curtain and Shrine.

7 - Altar. A small cauldron filled with blood stands on the altar.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Dungeon Level

1 - Hidden Door to Temple Altar.

2 - Treasure Room. Lord Dargenn's treasure and valuables donated to the temple by warriors are hidden here. The non-magical treasure has a total value of 25,000 gold talers.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Ground Floor Levels

1 - Wooden Spiral Staircase to Upper Level. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword is on duty here, to screen those who wish to go to the administration a level higher.

2 - Priest's Chair. One junior priest (human male or female, AL: CE, Cle (Garagos) 1-2) always is on duty during daytime hours to tend to the needs of warriors who come to the shrine. A kneeler is on the floor before the priest's chair. Supplicants are expected to make offerings at the altar (7).

3 - Pews.

4 - Statues of Garagos.

5 - Drum used in prayer services.

6 - Ever burning brazier. Powdered blood is scattered on the coals to scent the air.

7 - Altar. A cauldron filled with blood always is upon the altar. There is a secret door beneath the red cloth on the front of the altar that leads to the dungeon level. When the building is closed at night, the priest who is going off duty opens the door and takes the day's offerings to the vault below.

8 - Watchtowers. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword is on duty at the base of each of the four towers.

Plan: Fortress Clymph 2nd Story Levels

1 - Wooden Spiral Staircase to Upper and Lower Levels. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword is on duty here, to screen those who wish to go to another level.

2 - Fortress Administration. Administrative supporters of the church (human male and female, AL: CE, Exp 1) maintain its documents at these desks.

3 - Bookshelves. Administrative documents are archived here.

Watchtowers - Two warriors (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who are armed with a long sword, a long bow and a heavy crossbow are duty in the stairway chamber on this level.

Plan: Fortress Clymph 3rd Story Levels

This level of the castle building houses Lord Dargenn's office. He seldom uses this chamber, coming to it usually only when he has to deal with lesser level warriors or priests whom he does not wish to receive in his chambers in his tower.

1 - Wooden Spiral Staircase to Lower Levels. One warrior (human male or female, AL: CE, War 1-2) who is armed with a long sword is on duty here, to screen those who wish to enter from below.

2 - Lord Dargenn's Desk.

3 - Conference Table.

4 - Bookshelf. Contains documents.

5 - Weapon Rack.

6 - Tower Ballistae. Two warriors each (human male or female, AL: CE, War 3-4) man these weapons.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Barracks - Ground Floor

This level contains the fortress' kitchen and mess halls.

1 - Jakes.

2 - Serving Tables.

3 - Kitchen.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Barracks - 2nd to 7th Stories

Each level can sleep 36 men and women in bunk beds.

1 - Wardrobes.

2 - Jakes.

3 - Weapon Racks.

Plan: Fortress Clymph Barracks Lost Narfellí Tower Fragments

1 - Trap Door and Chute. These were constructed by Nurûgh. They always are hidden under grass and about 2 feet/60 cm of soil.

2 - First Chamber. There is only rubble on this level.

3 - Second Chamber. The PCs will find Nurûgh's skeleton and the broken bag of jewels and gems at this point. The enchanted, deadly black opal is at this location.

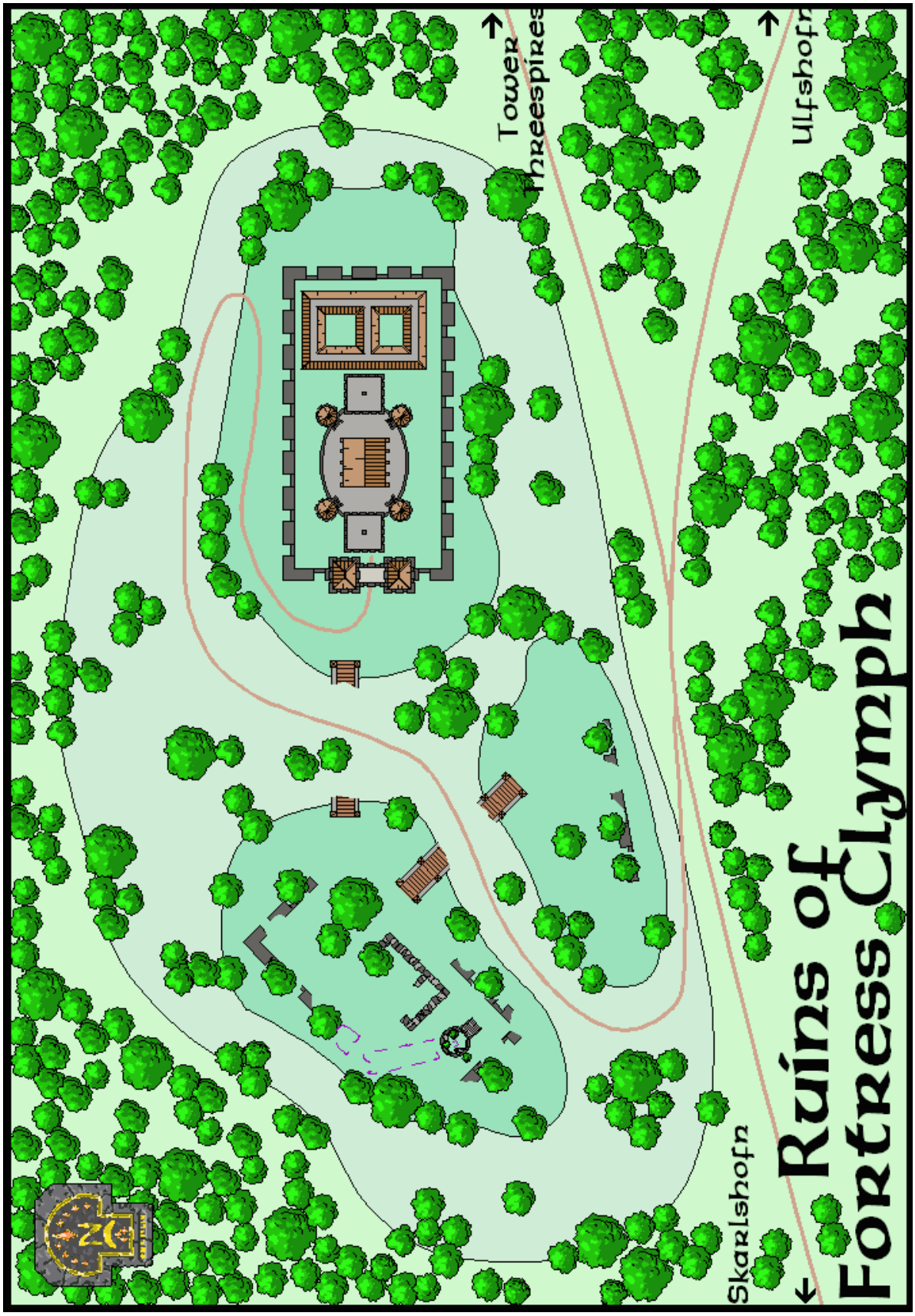
4 - Third Chamber. There is only rubble on this level.

5 - Fourth Chamber. Except for No. 6, there is only rubble on this level. The first chest is open and empty.

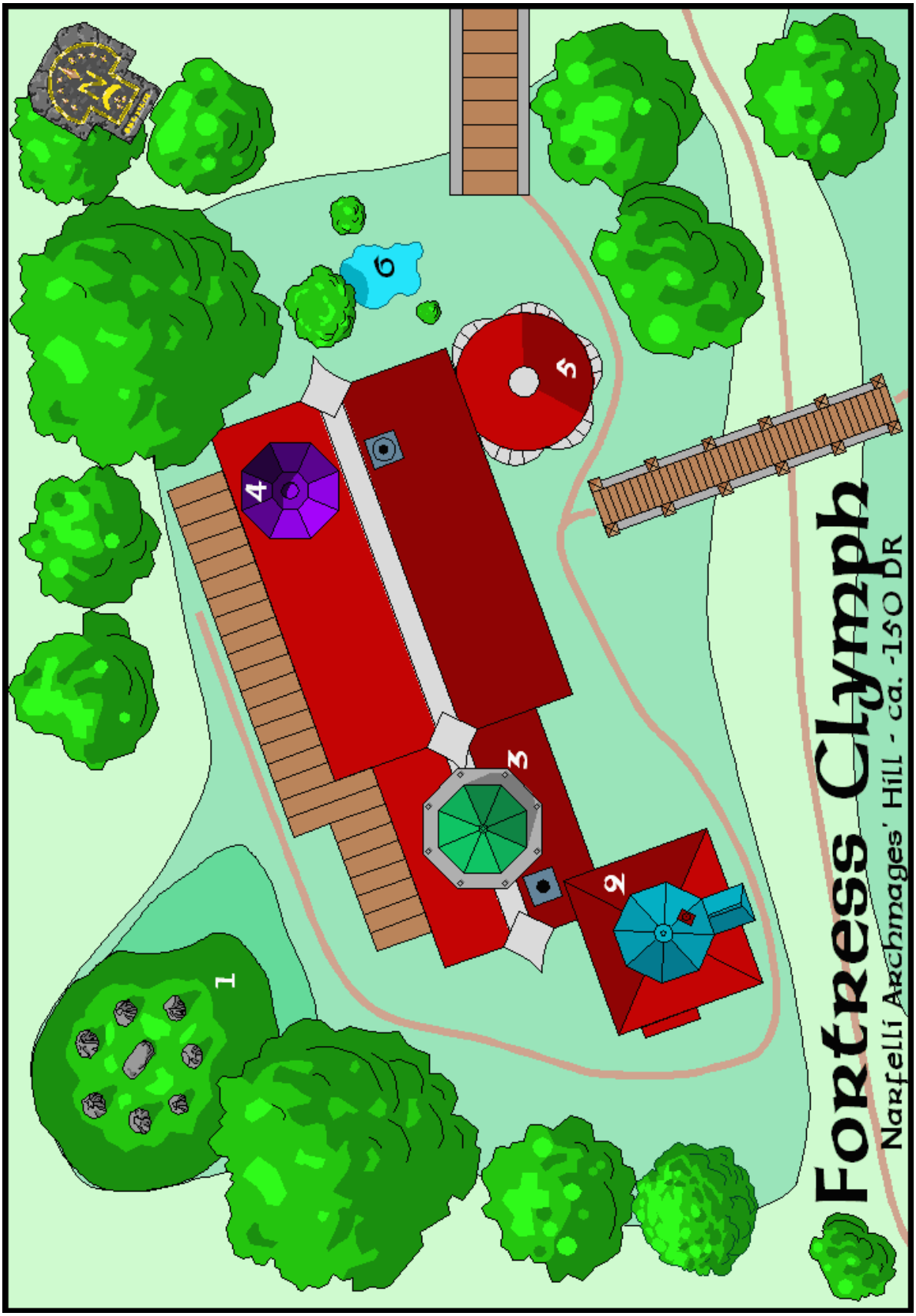
6 - Deadly Box with Gorndûhn. The box still is enchanted with the death rune.

Fortress Clymph Narfellí Ruín - Two Hand Maps

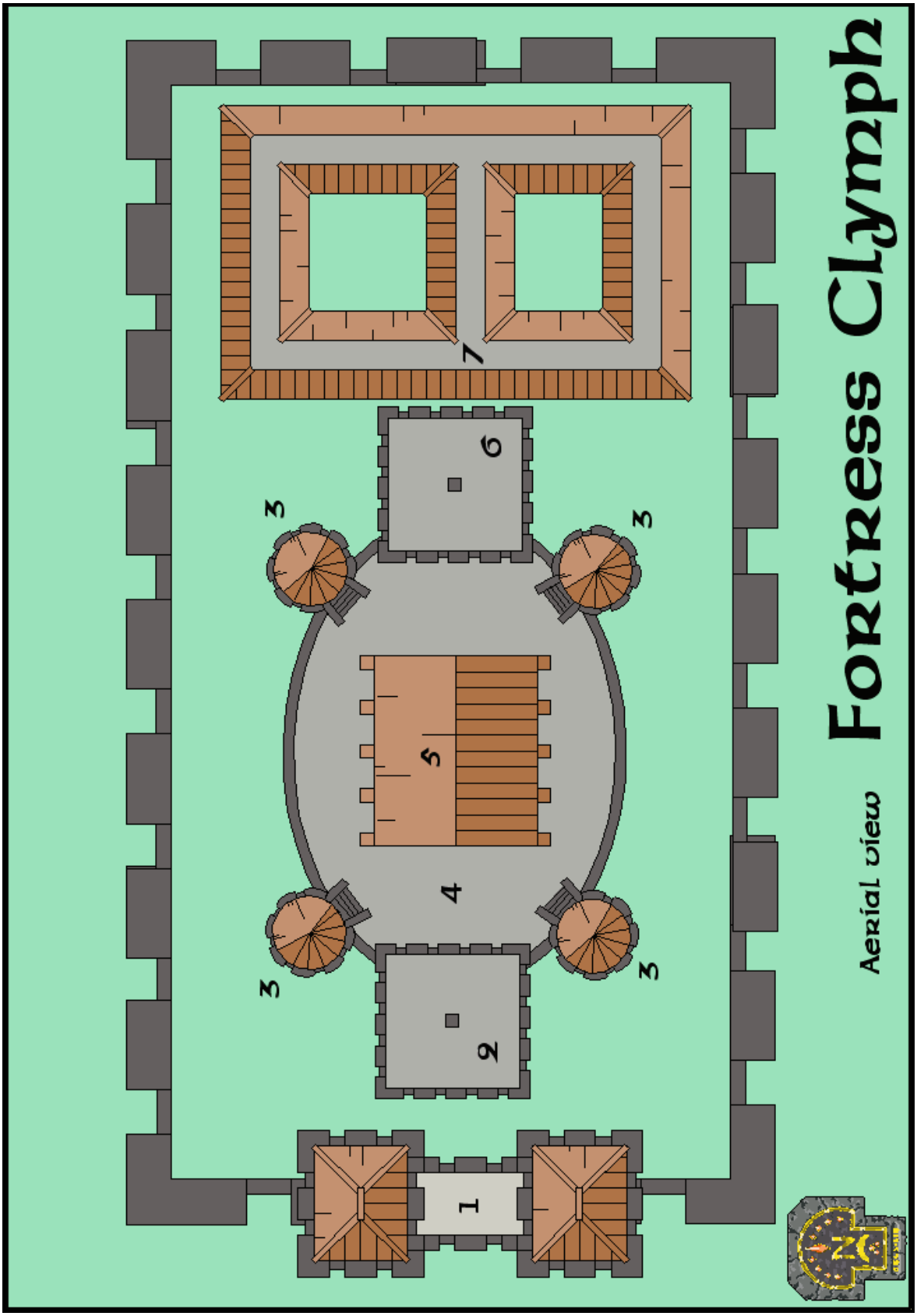
These are Nurûgh's maps, which should be given to the PCs, if they find them in Lord Dargenn's desk.

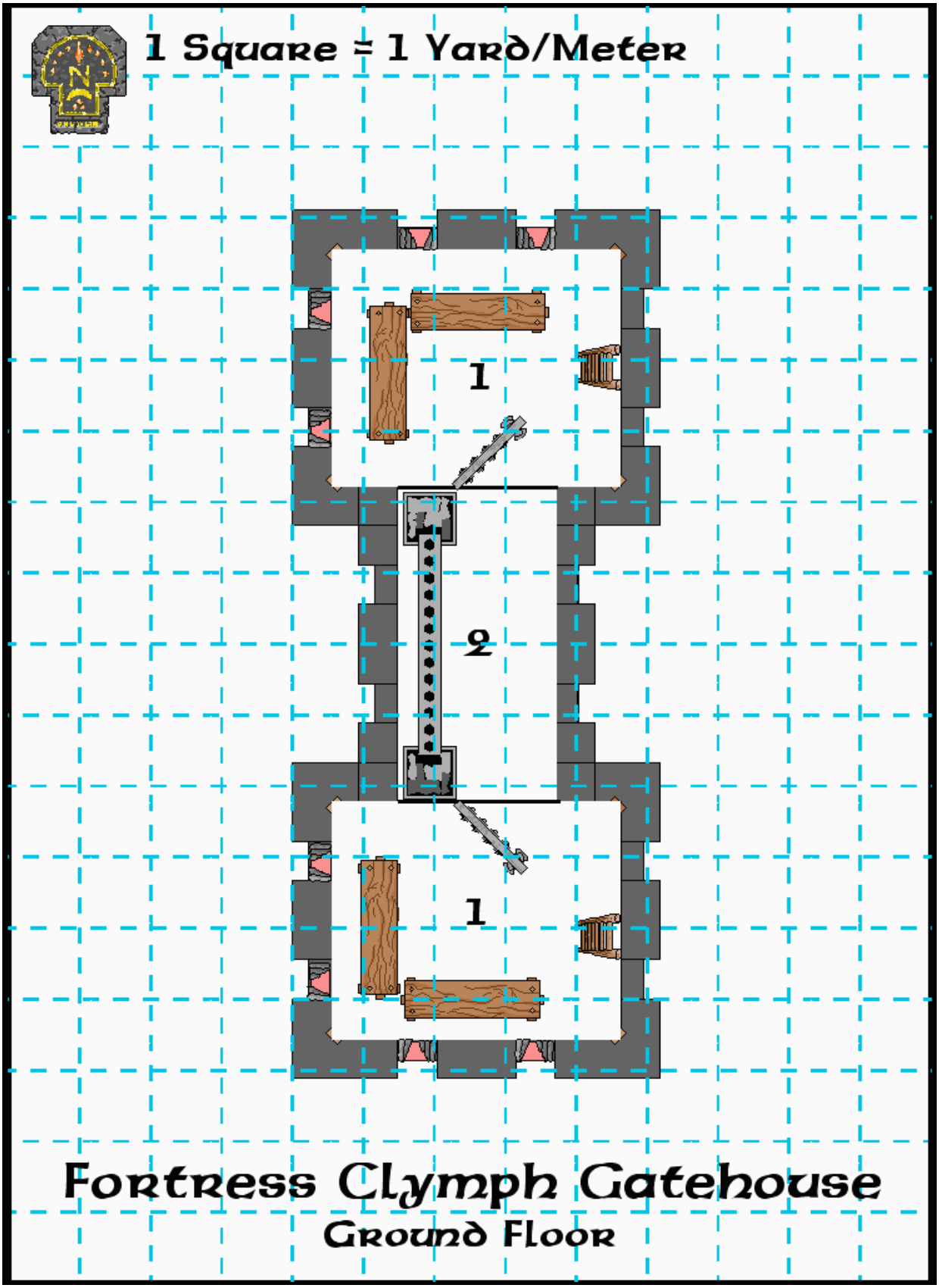


Ruins of Fortress Clymph

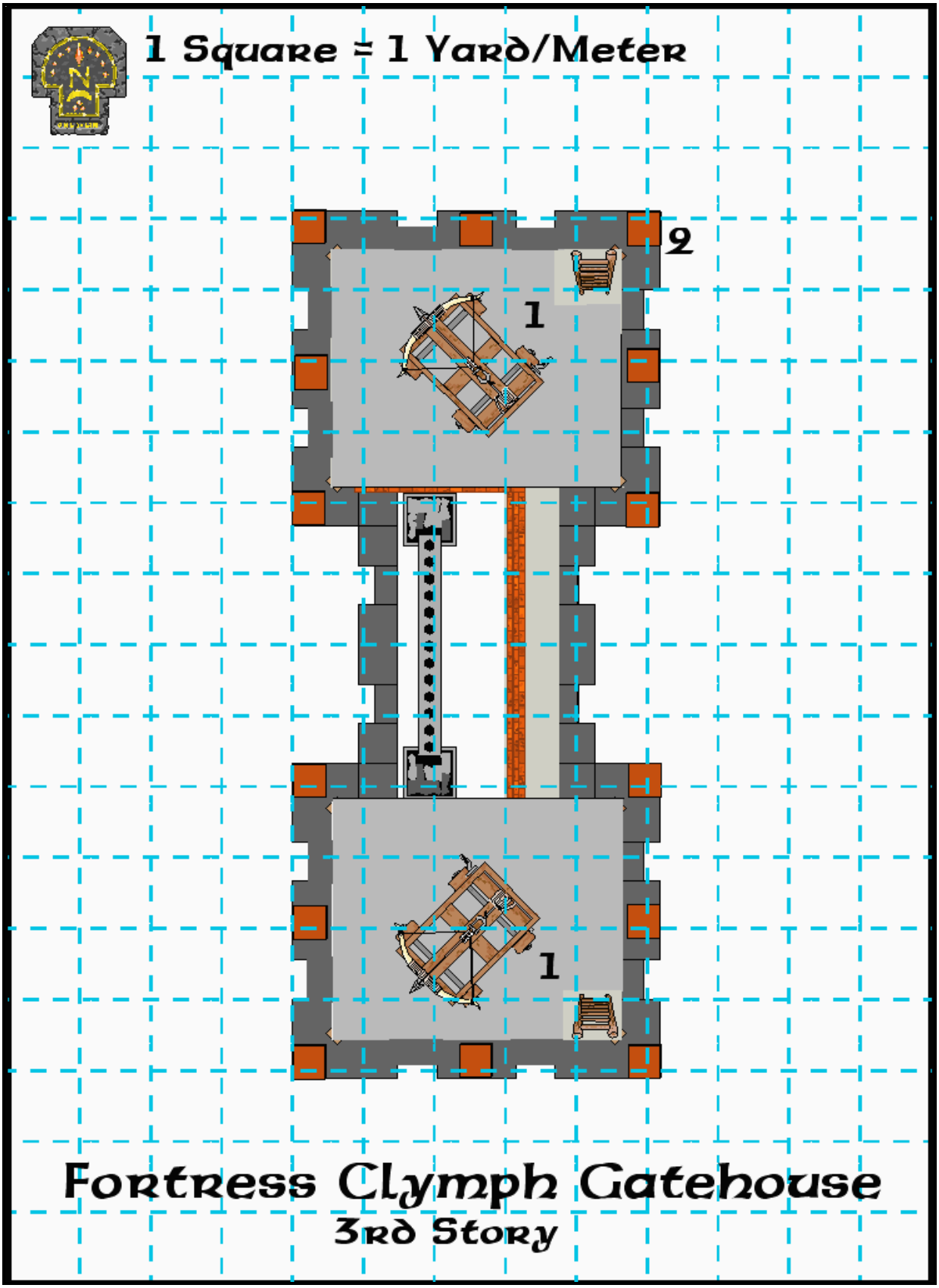


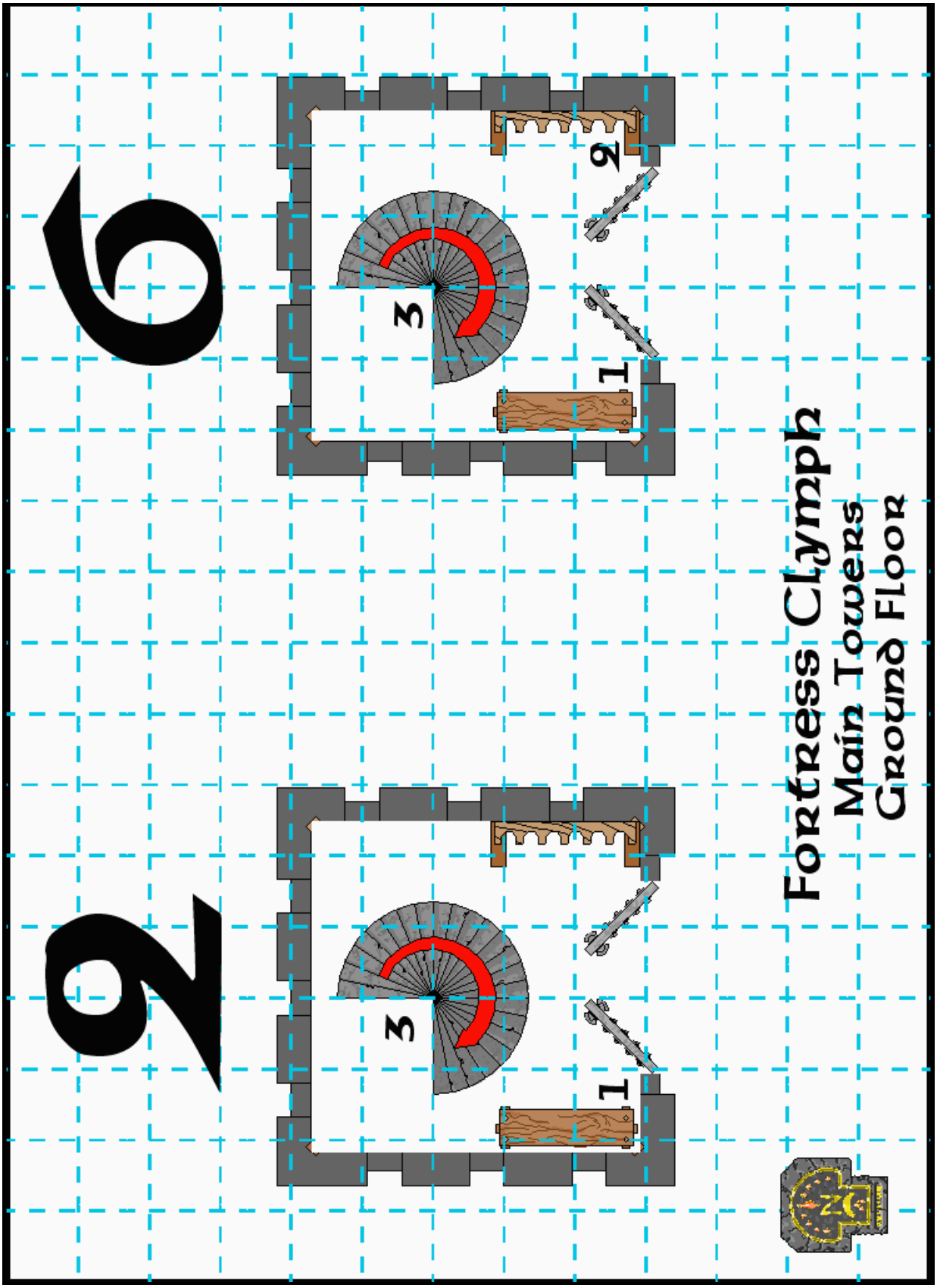
Fortress Clymph – Tower of the Archmagi in Narfelli times

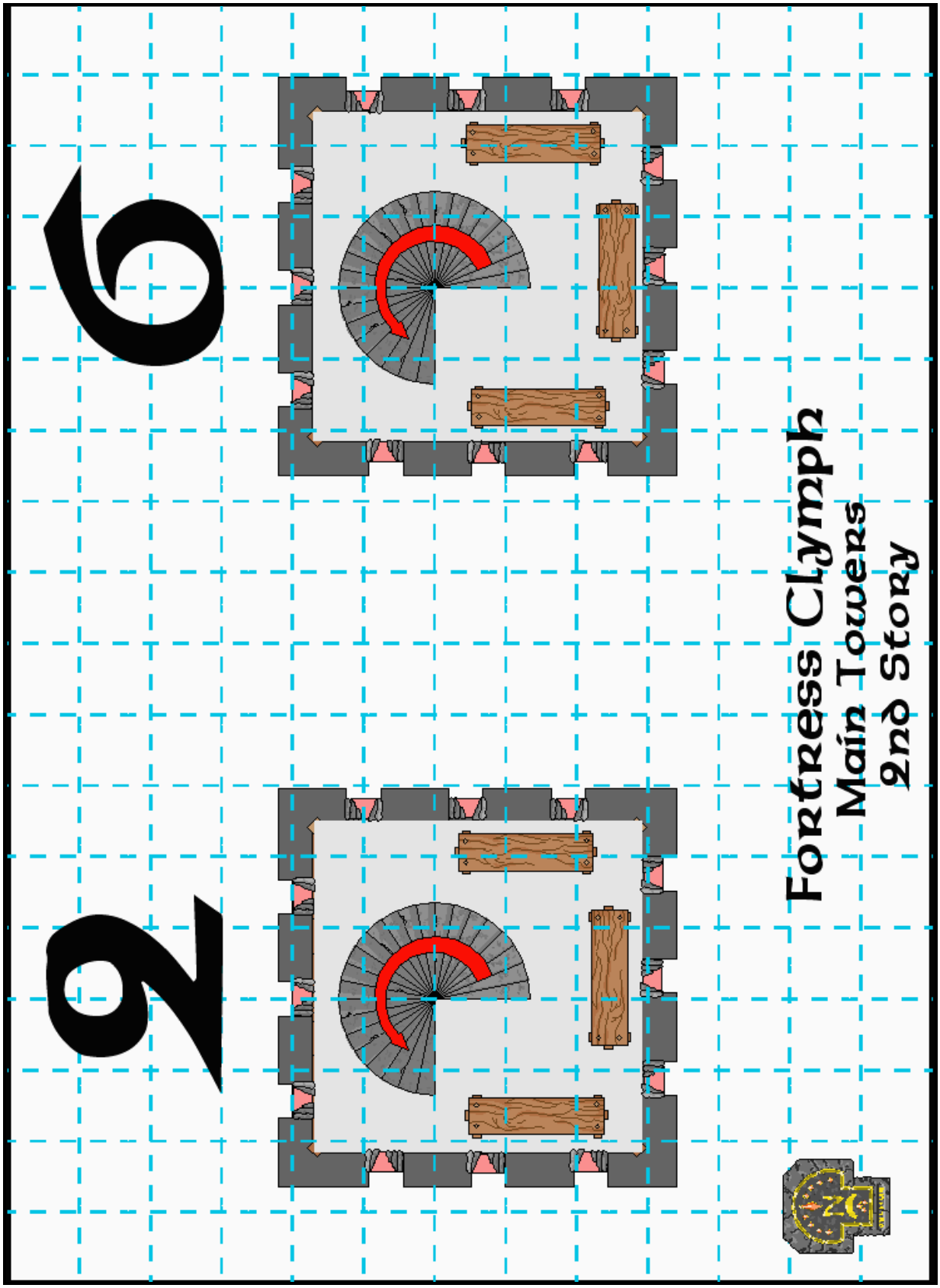

Fortress Clymph
Aerial view
1
2
3
3
3
3
4
5
6
7

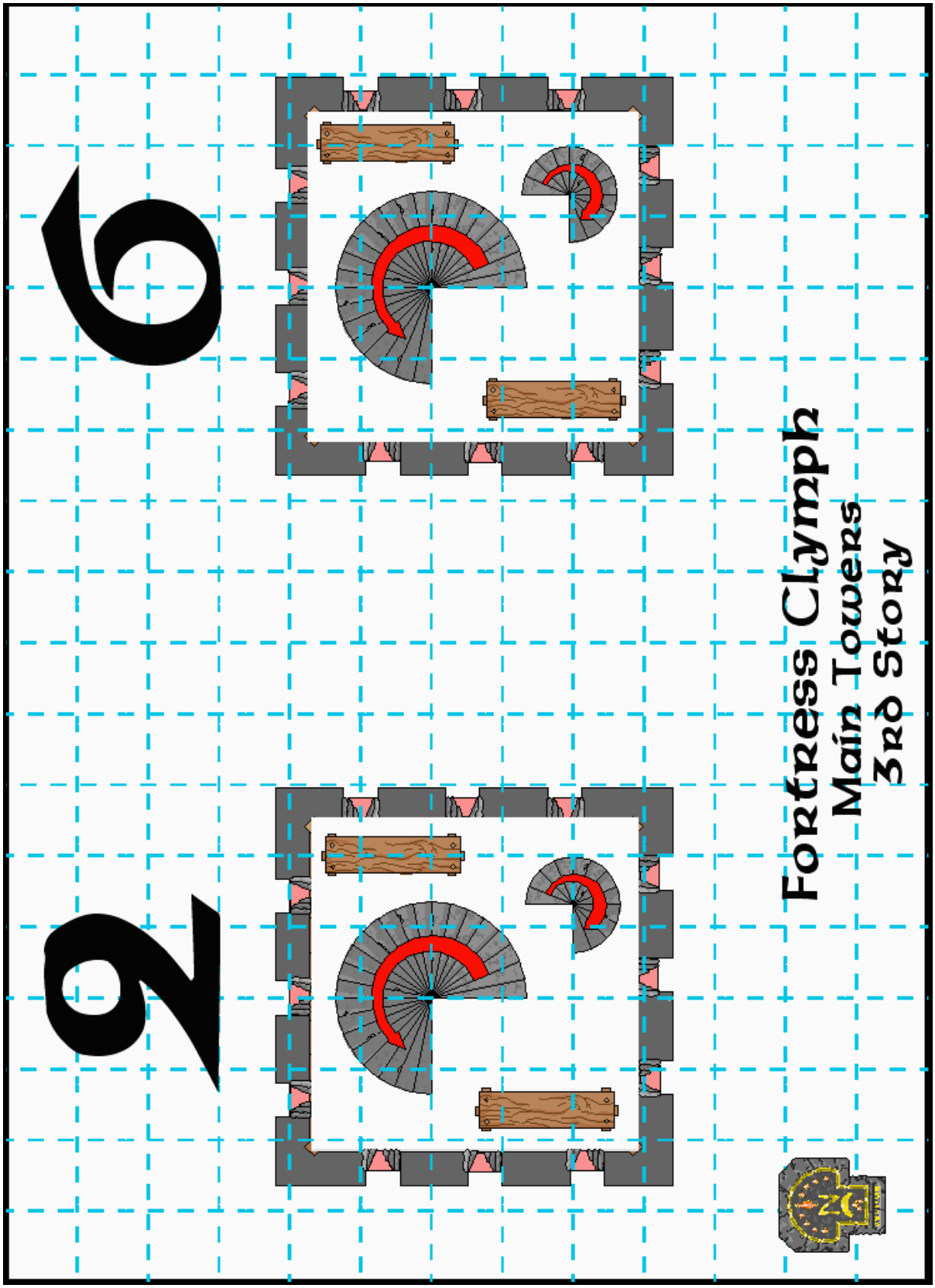

1 Square = 1 Yard/Meter
1
2
1
Fortress Clymph Gatehouse
Ground Floor

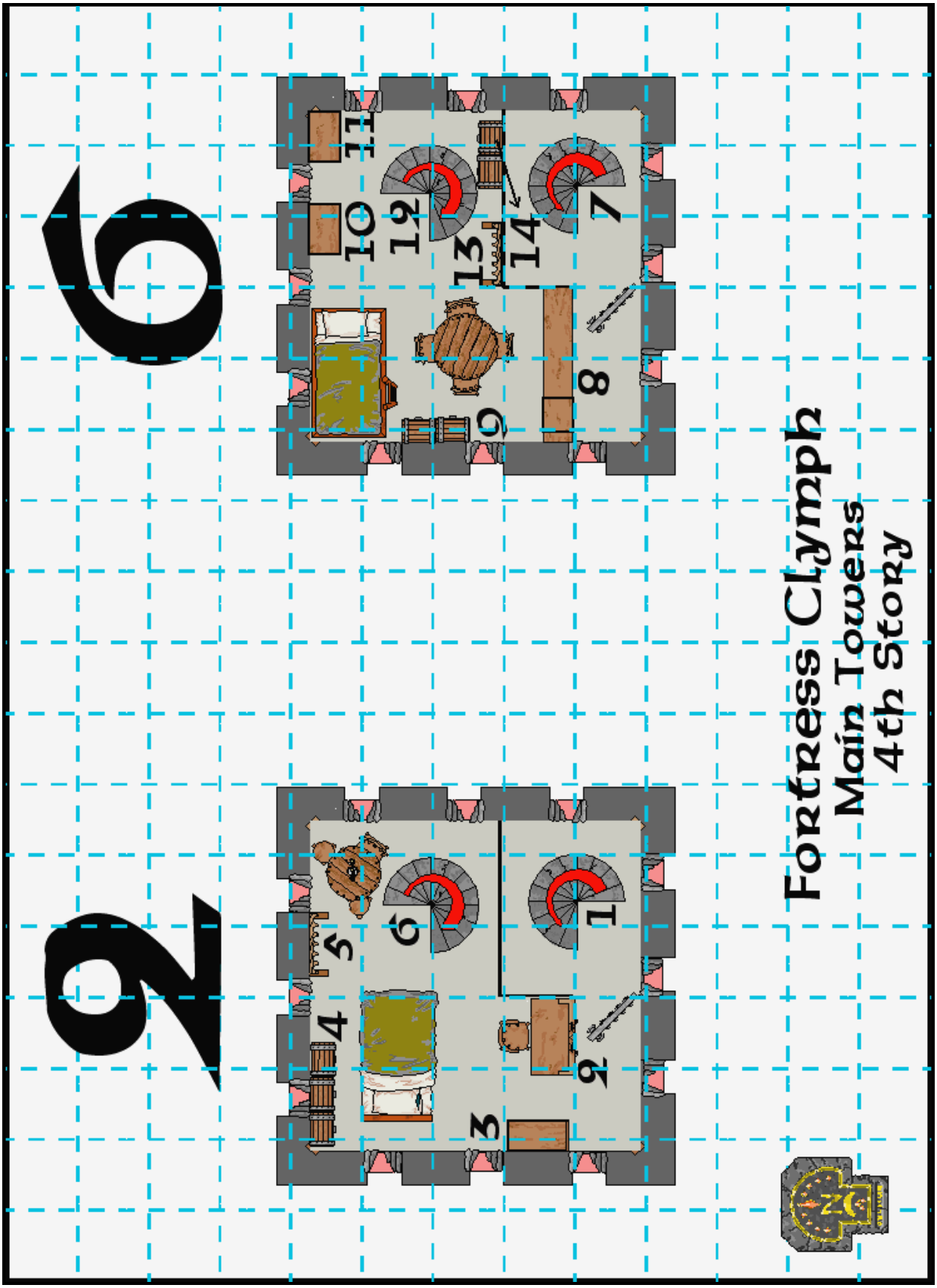
1 Square = 1 Yard/Meter
1
2
3
2
1
Fortress Clymph Gatehouse
2nd Story


1 Square = 1 Yard/Meter
N
9
1
1
Fortress Clymph Gatehouse
3rd Story


6
3
2
1
2
3
1
Fortress Clymph
Main Towers
Ground Floor


Fortress Clymph
Main Towers
2nd Story
2
6


Fortress Clymph
Main Towers
3rd Story
2
6


Fortress Clymph
Main Towers
4th Story
2
6
1
2
3
4
5
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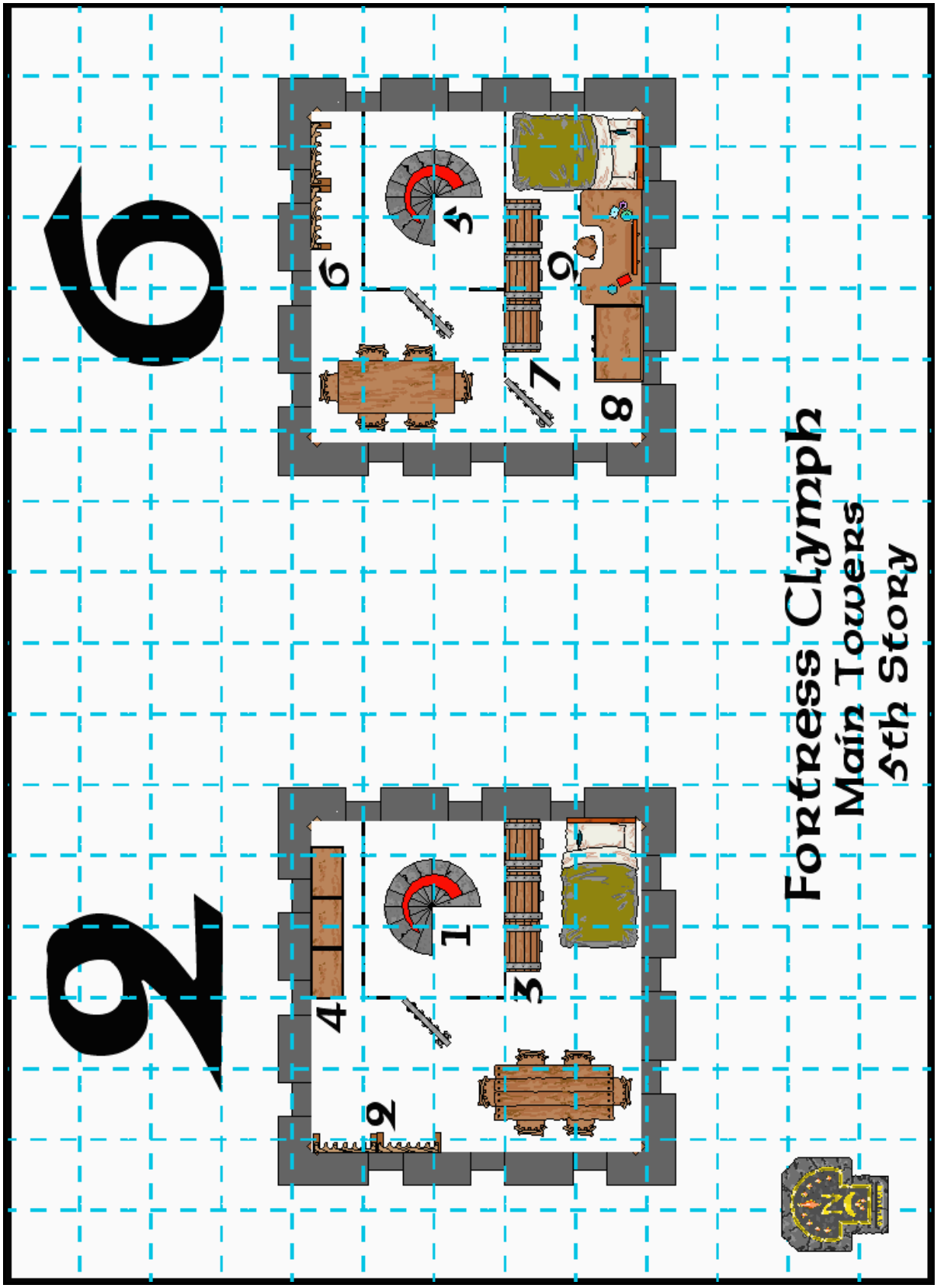
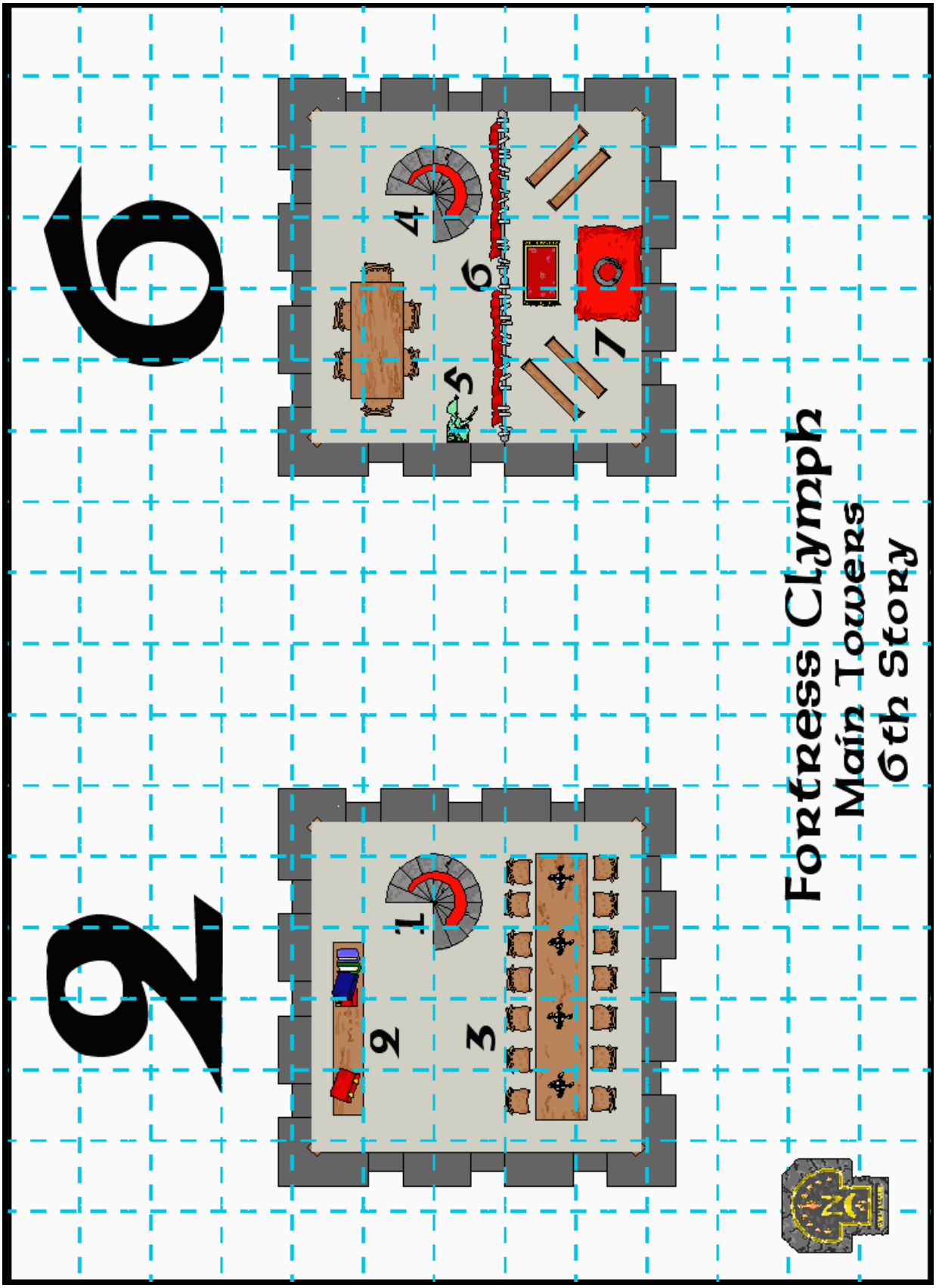
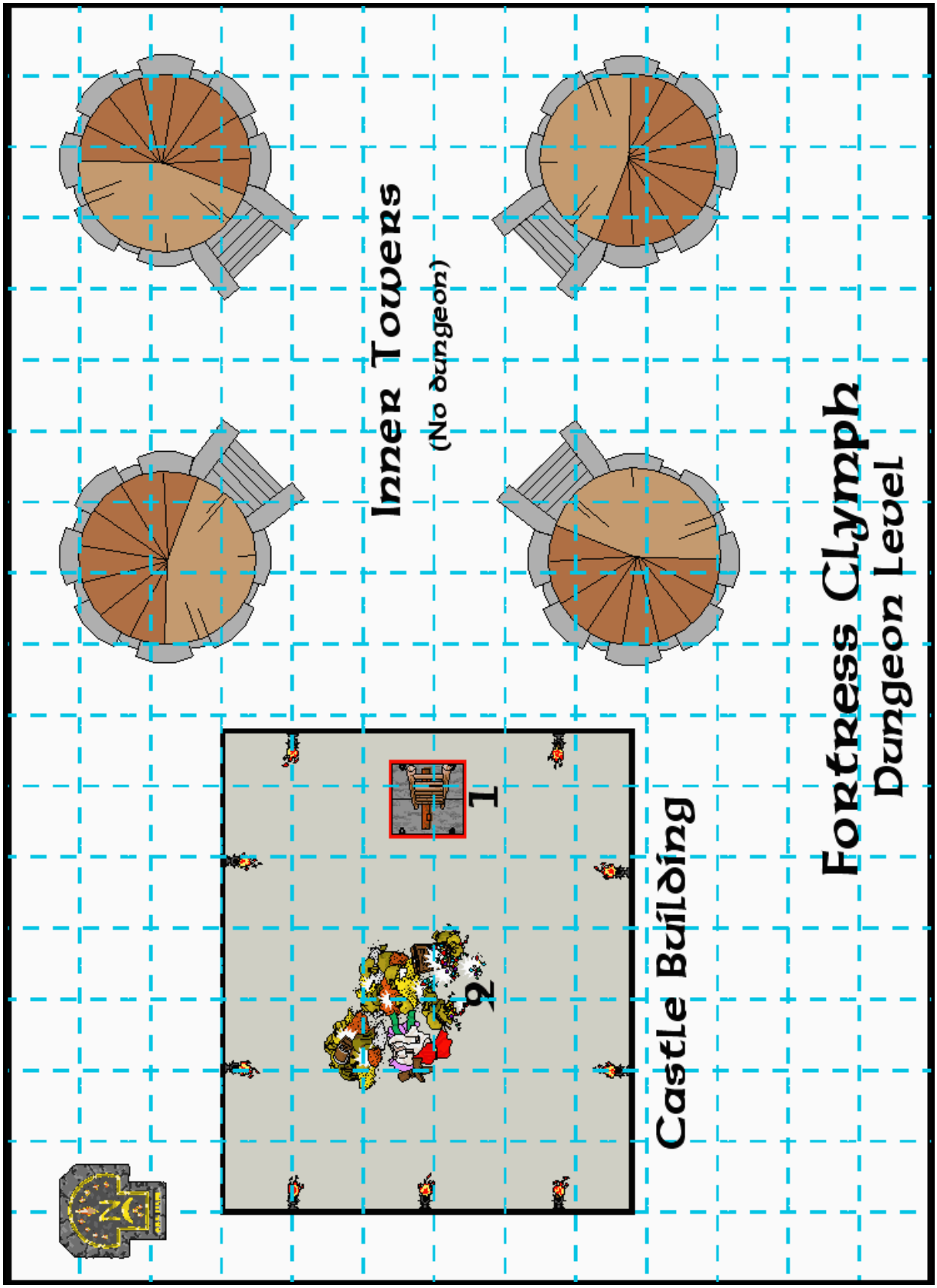
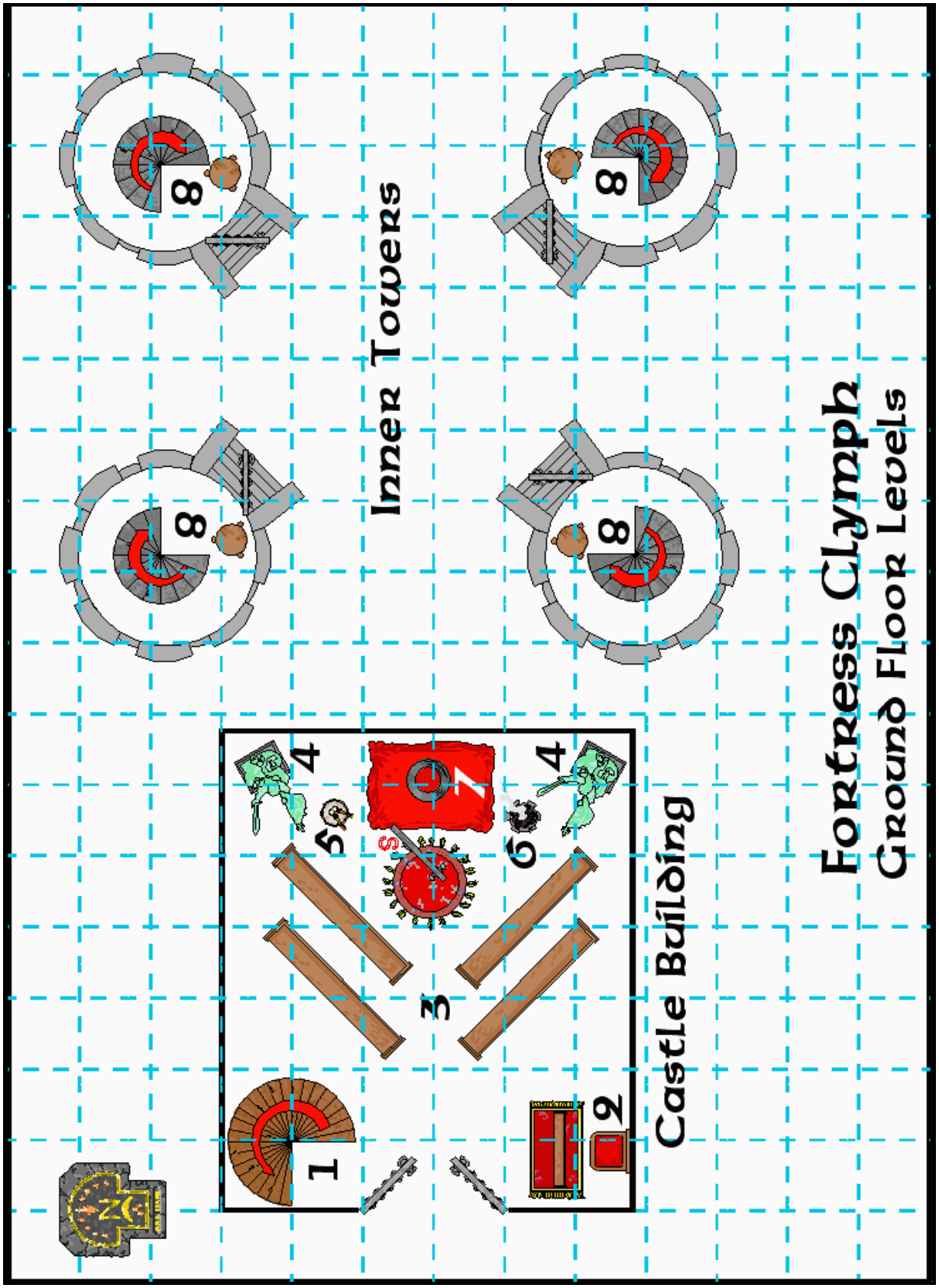
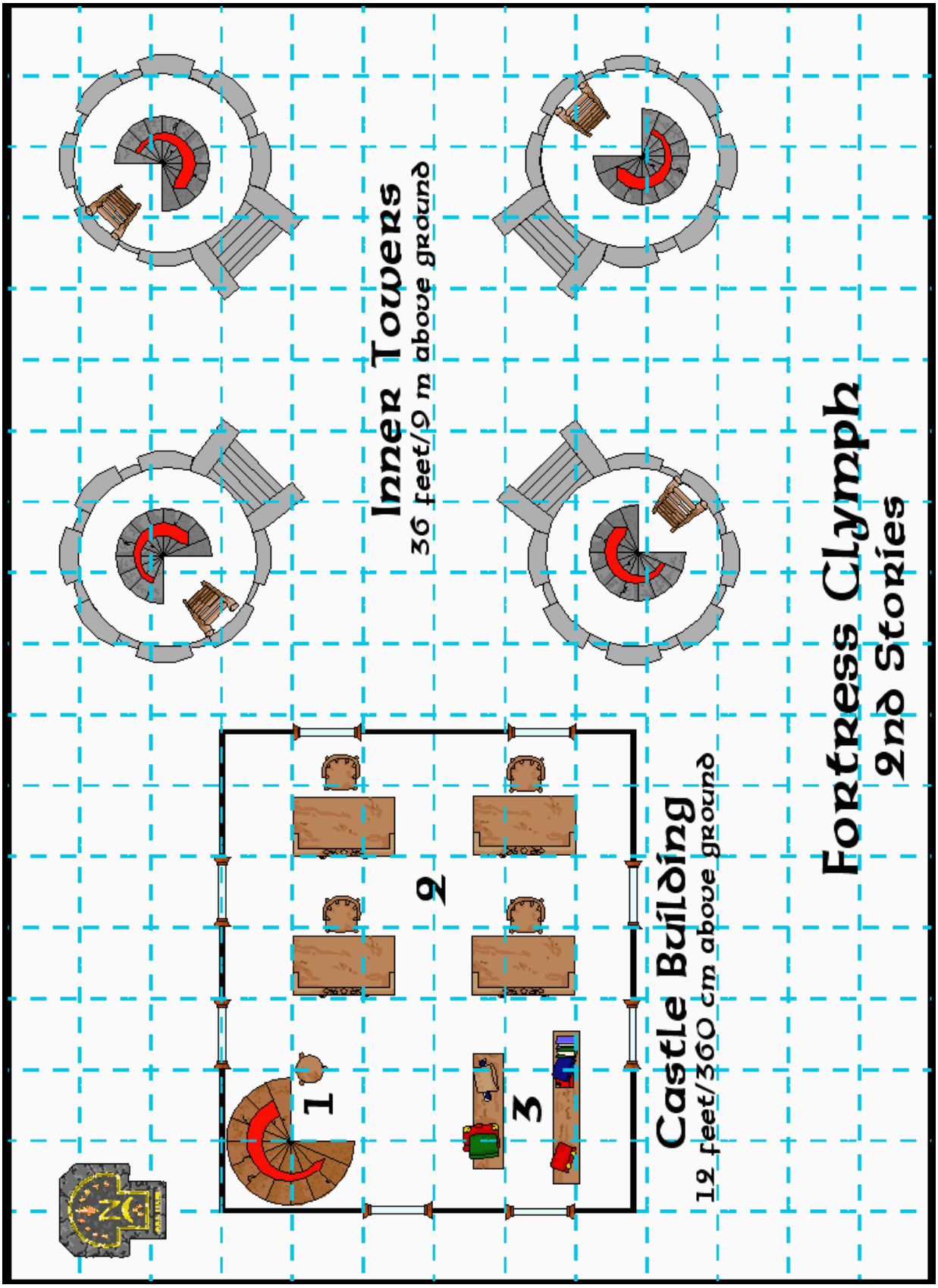
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14

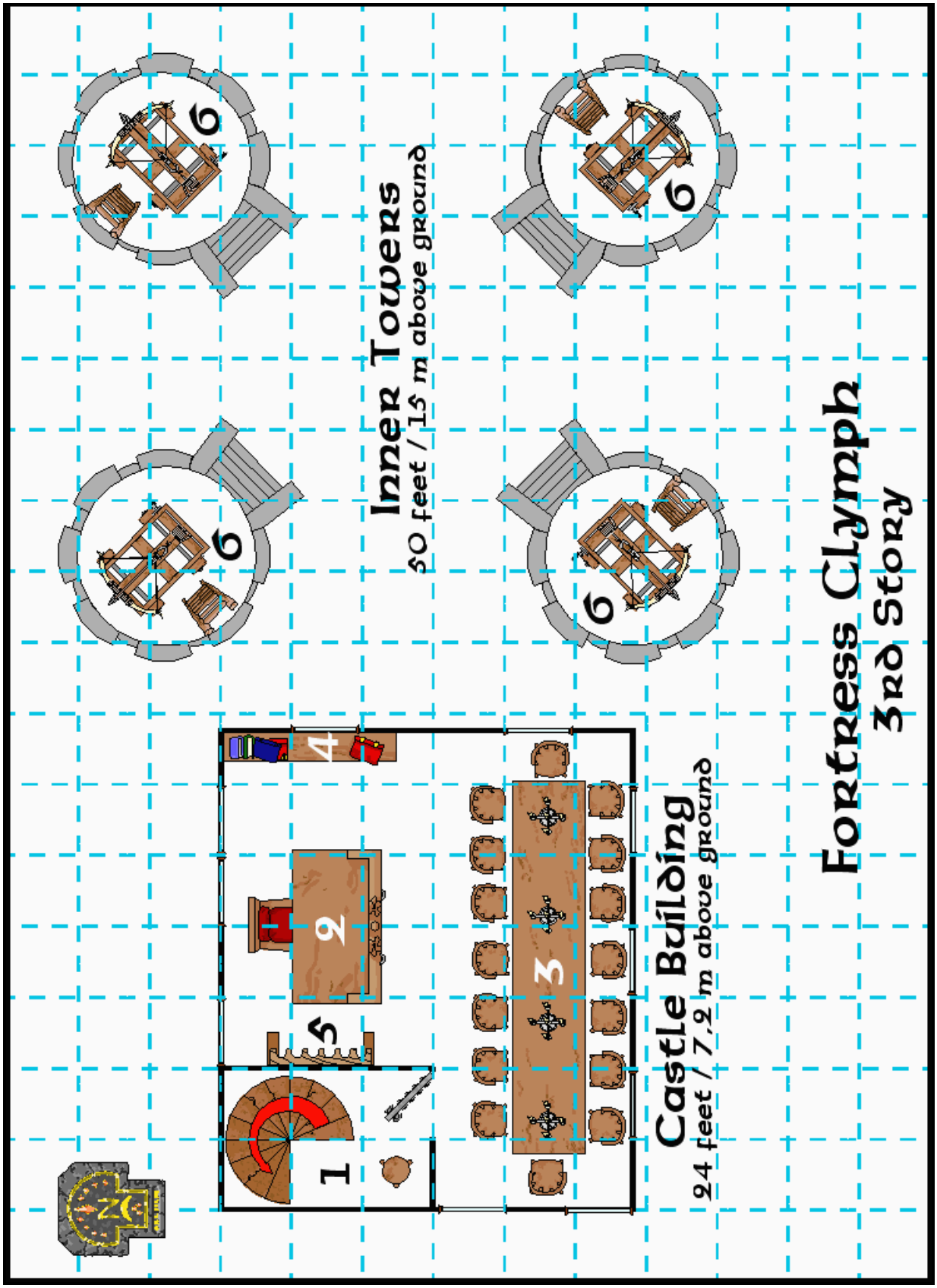

Fortress Clymph
Main Towers
5th Story
2
1
3
4
9
6
5
7
8
9

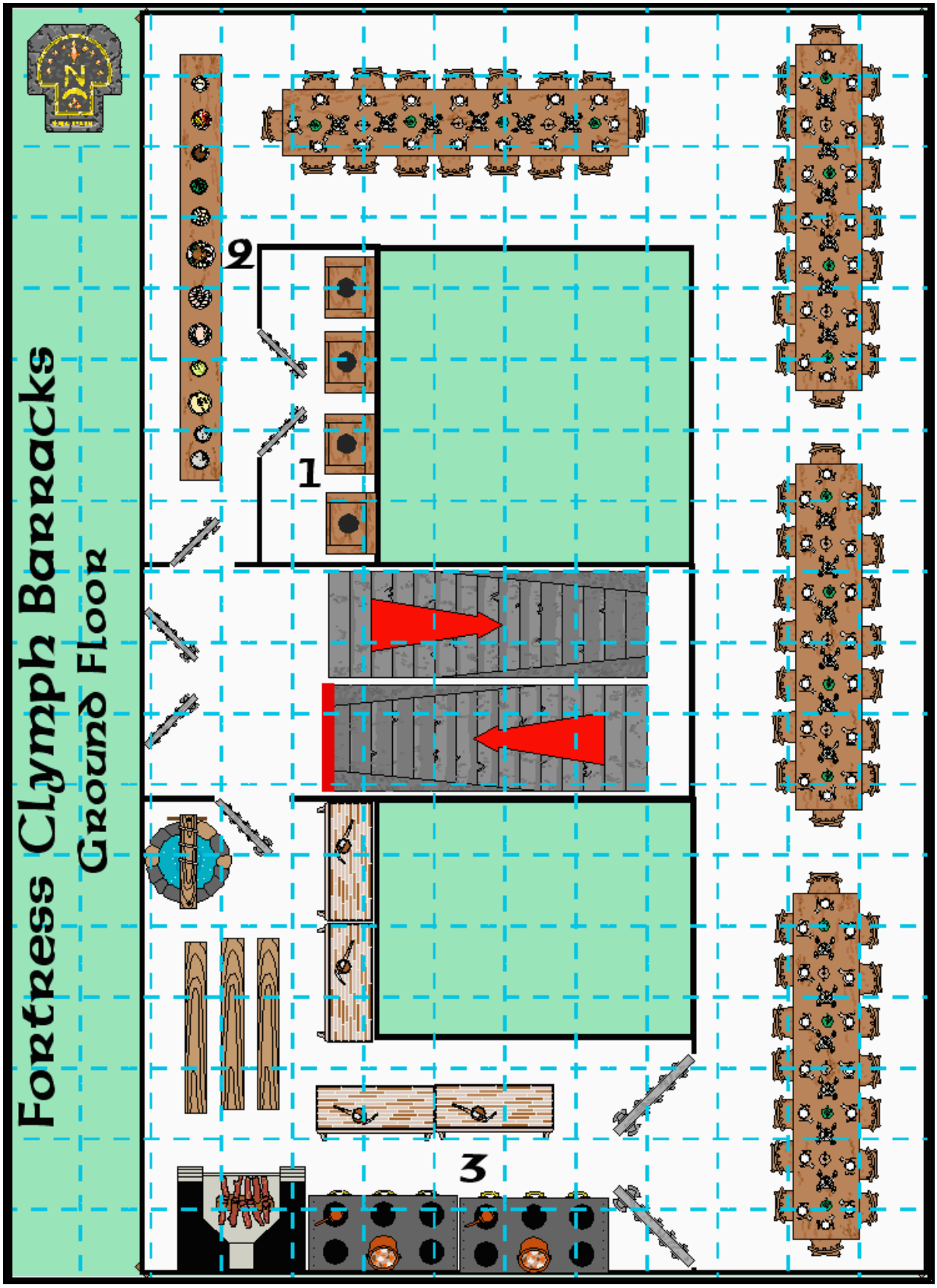

6
4
6
5
7
2
1
9
3
Fortress Clymph
Main Towers
6th Story

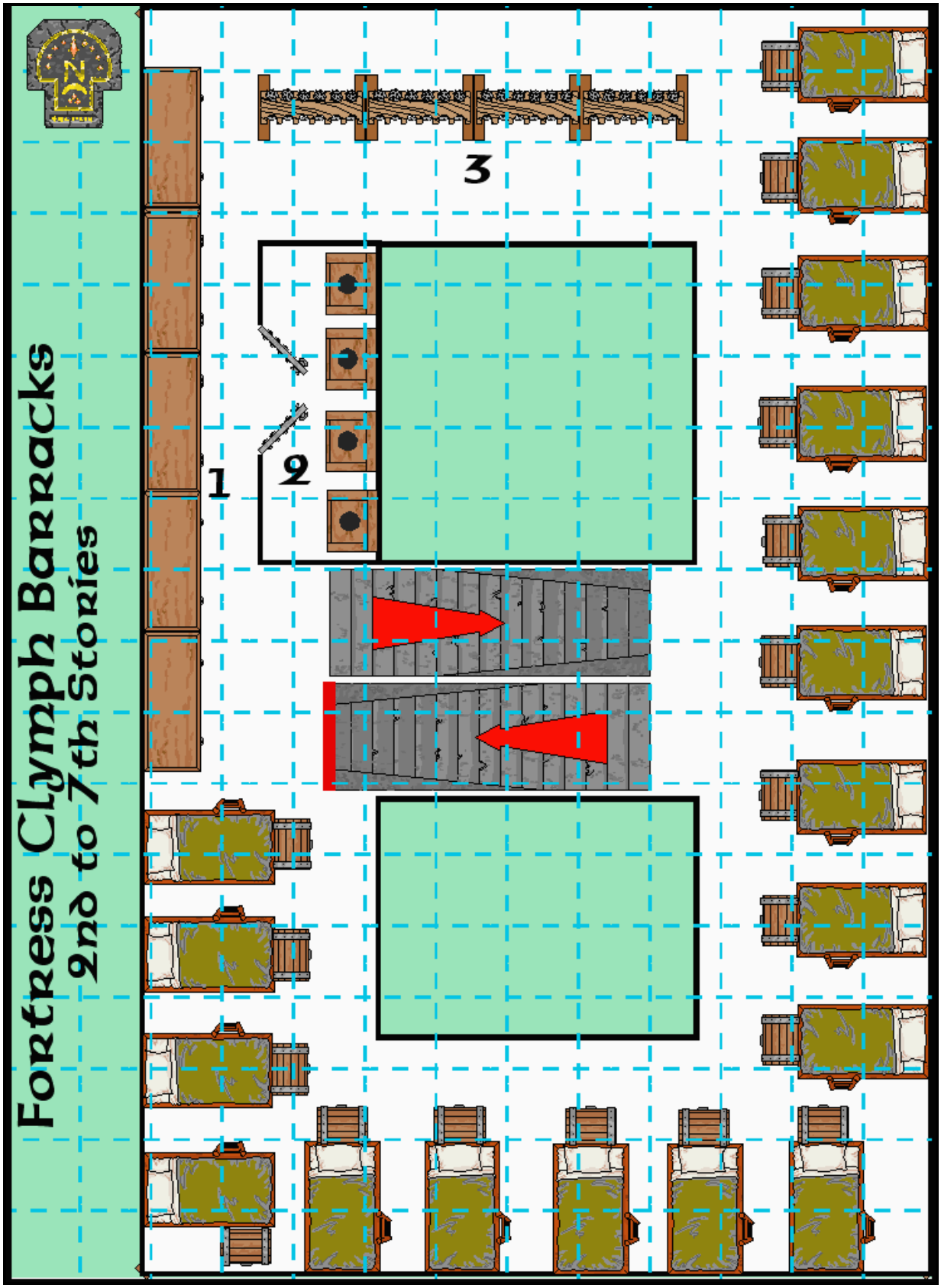

Fortress Clymph
Dungeon Level
Inner Towers
(No dungeon)
Castle Building
1
2

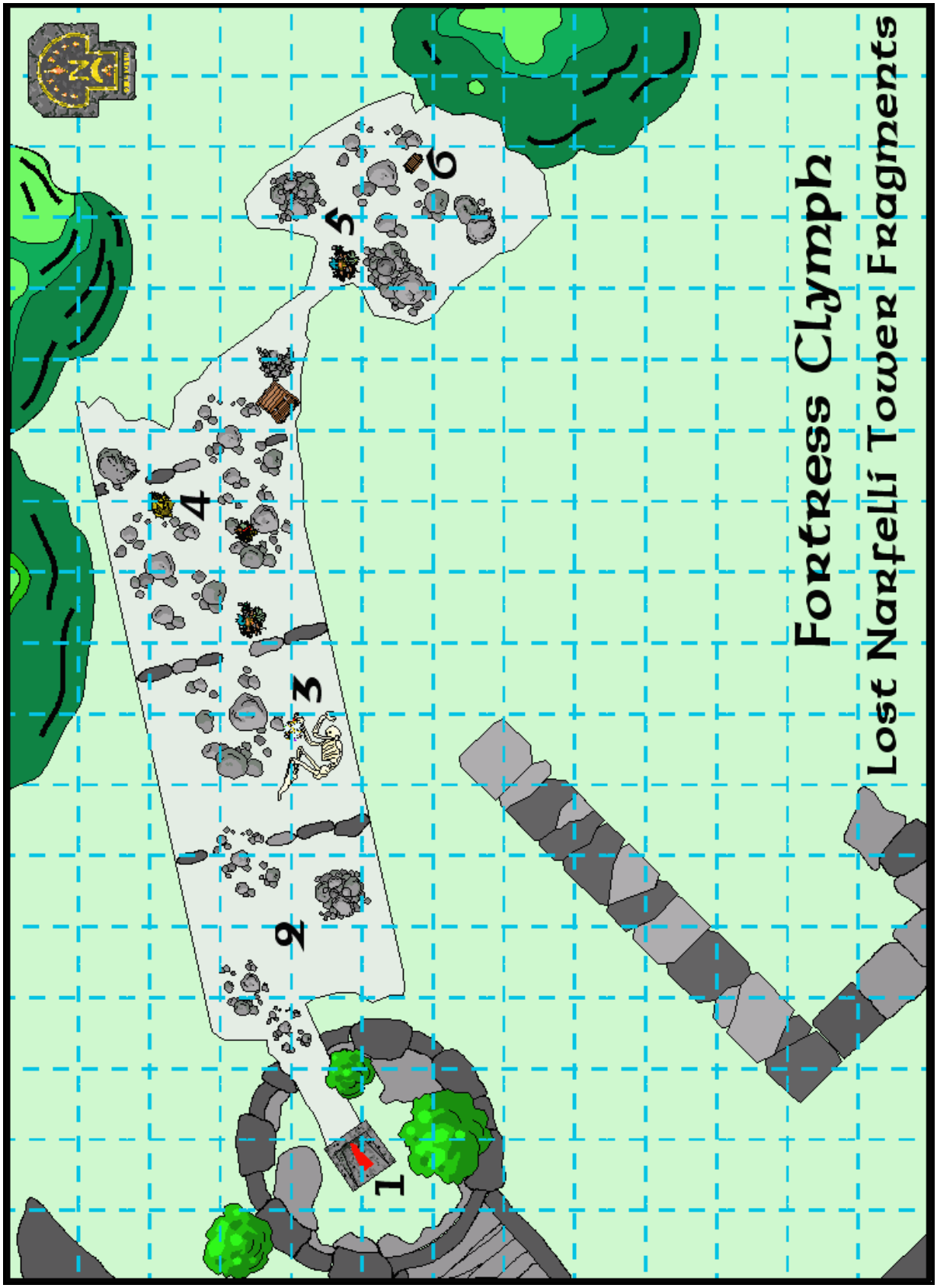

Fortress Clymph
Ground Floor Levels
Inner Towers
Castle Building
8
8
8
8
1
2
3
4
4
5
5
6
7

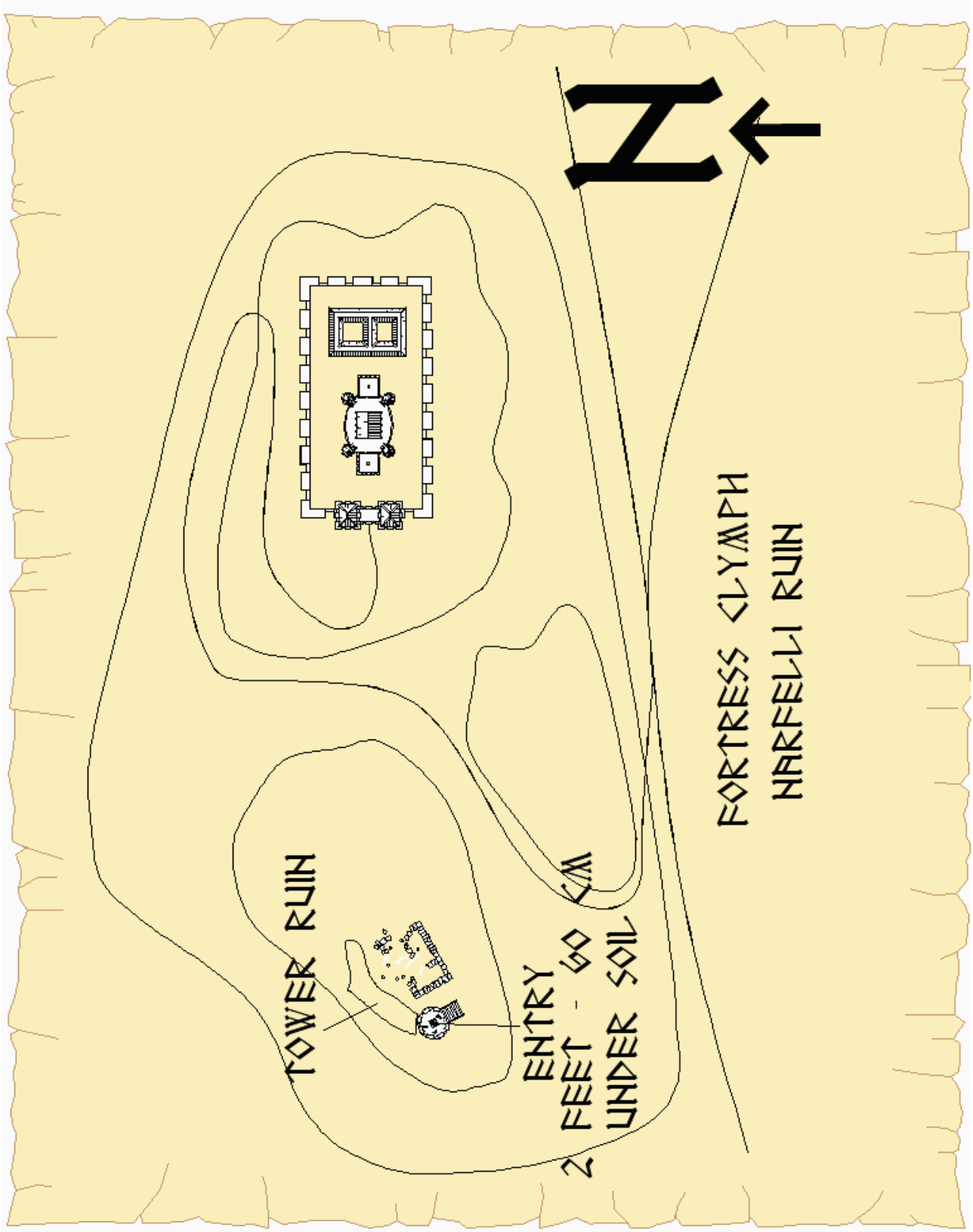

Inner Towers
36 feet/9 m above ground
Castle Building
12 feet/360 cm above ground
1
2
3
Fortress Clymph
2nd Stories


Fortress Clymph
3rd Story
Castle Building
94 feet / 7,2 m above ground
Inner Towers
50 feet / 15 m above ground
1
2
3
4
5
6
6
6
6

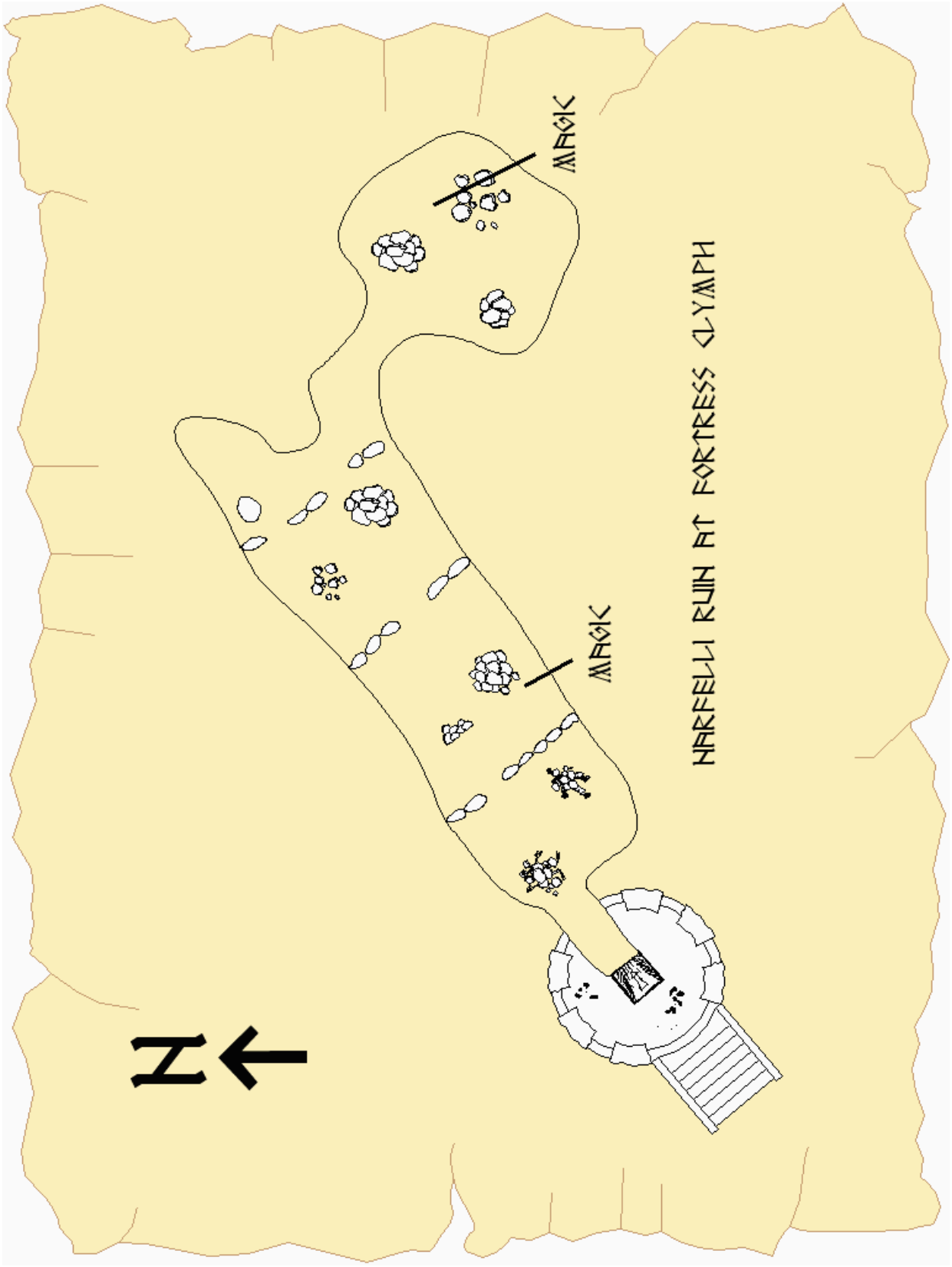

Fortress Clymph Barracks
Ground Floor
N
9
1
3


Fortress Clymph Barracks
2nd to 7th Stories
1
2
3


Fortress Clymph
Lost Narfelli Tower Fragments
1
2
3
4
5
6


N
FORTRESS CLYMPH
HARFELLI RUIN
TOWER RUIN
ENTRY
2 FEET - 90 CM
UNDER SOIL

Hand Map



Hand Map

Tower Threespires

Wizards' thorp, Nonstandard (wizard dictator), AL: LE, gp limit: NA*. Assets: NA*. Living Population: 49 human, about 330 undead skeletons. Authority figure: Urgrath Hurddh, human male, AL: LE, Necromancer 22, Wearer of the Purple and Keeper of the Secret Hoard, Kront cell of the Cult of the Dragon; Meltrika Dahndl, human female, AL:LE, Necromancer 15, Wearer of the Purple; Nehgrath Huhndlûhn, Necromancer 13, Wearer of the Purple; Gülar Traggaths, human male, AL: NE, Conjurer 14; Wearer of the Purple; Tigana Dartth, human female, AL: CE, Illusionist 14; Rágar Dartth, human male, AL: CE, illusionist 12; Záhra Praszzh, human female, AL: LE, Cleric (Tiamat) 13; Nindelbrar, human male, AL: LE, Cleric (Tiamat) 3. Others: 4 Necromancers, human male and female, AL: LE, lvls 3, 5, 6, 6; three conjurers, human male and female, AL: NE, lvls 2, 4, 5; 2 illusionists, human male and female, AL: CE, lvls 2 and 3; 10 Dragon Cult fighters, human male and female, AL: L/NE, lvls 12, 6, 4, 4, 4, 3, 3, 2, 2, 1; 22 Dragon Cult warriors, human male and female, AL: L/NE, lvls 1-3; about 330 undead skeletons; 1 Glabezru (Tanar'ri) demon prisoner, huge outsider, AL: CE, 10d8+40 hit dice; 1 Vrock (Tanar'ri) demon prisoner, large outsider, AL: CE, 8d8+24 hit dice. Taxation type: None. Accepted coinage: Impilturian.

*** Tower Threespires buys and sells nothing from adventurers.**

Game Master's NOTE: For NPC Statistics, see *Tower Threespires* under *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

As your PCs approach Tower Threespires, the feel of evil in the air will be apparent.

Tower Threespires is home to one of Faerûn's most powerful necromancers, the epic level archwizard Urgrath Hurddh, Wearer of the Purple and Keeper of the Secret Hoard in the Tiamatist faction of the Cult of the Dragon.

NORTHERN JOURNEY CAMPAIGN NOTES

These notes are applicable only for game masters who are running the *NJ* campaign with sigyll-bearing PCs.

When your PCs near *Tower Threespires,* its occupants will attempt as inconspicuously as possible to keep the PCs from being harmed.

Urgrath Hurddh believes that the Kargmelchina avatar of Tiamat is making a grave mistake in trying to protect Harbet Gall from them. Hurddh believes that he could take quick control of the Eastern Dale, if Gall were eliminated. Then the former Gallist domain would be firmly in Tiamat's camp.

Hurddh's own ravaging hunger for power is an even mightier factor driving the arch necromancer in this matter.

As a result, if *NJ* PCs are attacked by draconians and/or dragon vampires in the vicinity, Hurddh's cult magi will use their wizardry inconspicuously to keep the adventurers headed toward Nighthawk Tower. Hurddh's undead will make only token attacks.

Kargmelchina and Grafvitnir will not make things easier for the PCs, however. Kargmelchina, who is represented by priests in the Dragon Cult complex, will make a particular effort to turn the PCs back. To resist her commands, each PC must save as follows:

- **D&D 3rd Edition Campaigns:** Save for will, DC 25.
- **AD&D 2nd Edition Campaigns:** Save for breath weapon, penalty of 2.

Grafvitnir, however, knows that the Tower is Tiamat's bastion. He will try to draw the PCs into attacking. To resist his command, the PCs must save as follows:

- **D&D 3rd Edition Campaigns:** Save for will, DC 30.
- **AD&D 2nd Edition Campaigns:** Save for breath weapon, penalty of 4.

He serves Harbet Gall as head of the so-called Kront cell of the cult, although his true goal is to see Gall destroyed, so that he can claim the Eastern Dale for himself.

Gall has forged a bond with Tiamat's avatar Kargmelchina in Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain over Damara and Vaasa. It is a weak bond, held from Tiamat's viewpoint only by the law of convenience. Hurddh, her loyal servant, is doing his best to gnaw through that bond.

Tower Threespires also is the westernmost point in the Gallist domain where the PCs may begin encountering ancient Narfelli magic in enemy hands. Hurddh and the cult magi in his towers have little direct access to the magic of the ancient Narfelli masters. Gall holds a tight rein upon the Narfelli magic that has been found in the Eastern Dale. However, Gall has used Narfelli magic that is under his control to help protect Tower Threespires.

Tower Threespires consists of a central building and three magicians' towers - the Necromancers' Tower to the West, the Conjurers' Tower to the North and the Illusionists' Tower to the East. Until two years ago, the Illusionists' Tower had been called the Diviners' Tower, but the name changed after Hurddh had lost the diviners in his service and a group of illusionists took their place.

The upper half of the Illusionists' Tower is missing. It was destroyed accidentally by two blue dragons in Gall's service in the Year of the Raging Flame (1255 DR). When Gall gained the limited ability to apply the Narfelli protective ward *Ochrana* in the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), he applied the mighty Narfelli protective magic to both his own Nighthawk Tower and the central building and three towers of Tower Threespires. As a result, the ward can absorb high amounts of physical and magical damage, making both sites appear to be indestructible.

In using the Narfelli wards available to him, Gall hoped not so much to avoid fewer accidents with dragons in the future. Rather, he wanted to give himself and his magi's the ability to hold out long against an enemy attacker, who would take all of the damage that Gall or his allies inflicted upon them while appearing to themselves to be unable to cause any damage.

If the PCs approach Tower Threespires, they will see *Ochrana* inscribed into the walls of all three towers and the central building. The ward has the ability to absorb 2,000 hit points damage, magical or physical. Its magical protection prevents any external magic of any type from penetrating the walls. This includes even *Wish* spells, which are of the 9th level and therefore too weak to counter the combination of several 10th level spells the Narfelli magi wove into *Ochrana*.

The wards upon Tower Threespires still can absorb as much as 1,225 hit points. They already have absorbed more than 700 hit points, most of them from attempts by Impilturian magi to scry the location, attempts which have failed to date as a result of the ward's protection.

It should be noted that Gall is unable to renew the wards, should they become exhausted. Nor can he apply them again. He is no mage and is unable to use such magic. Klingszhrâd, a conjurer lich whom Gall controls, implemented the wards. The former Red Wizard of Thay used Narfelli scrolls to implement the wards, but Klingszhrâd was unable to master the 10th level magic behind them. All of the scrolls now have been used and consumed.

Hurddh hopes to see Gall eliminated, but regardless of whether he succeeds in this hope, the arch necromancer is raising a sizeable army of undead in and around Tower Threespires, a host being trained to attack the Central and Western Dale, when the time is ripe. He would like it to march in his own service, but if his time has not yet come when the skeletons are sent forth, he will command them in Gall's service as well.

In addition to more than 300 undead skeletons, Hurddh commands a growing contingent of vampire dragons and draconians stationed in the ruins of Auststad east of Tower Threespires. These are Kargmelchina's servants, not Gall's. In the Great Dale, they will respond at present only to Hurddh's orders, or if Hurddh is unable to command them, to the orders of Tiamat's priestess in Tower Threespires, Záhra Praszzh.

The thick layer of necromantic magic in the area surrounding Tower Threespires has turned it into a barren, nearly lifeless plain. In the Gallist domain, the area is known as the *Dead Lands*. No wild animals can be found in this area, and the only plants that still survive are occasional tufts of hardy grasses and a few small, stubborn, wiry bushes. The *Dead Lands* extend northwest of Tower Threespires into Rawlinswood. All of the trees in this corner of the wood have died as well.

The devastation of the Dead Lands is a cause of growing unrest among many of Gall's True Druids and the Eastern Dalesmen they rule. Several protests have been lodged in Kront. To date, Druid Infallible Bödvar Bjarkissonur has dodged the issue, and Gall has said nothing.

Bjarkissonur would like to approach Gall upon this matter, because he believes that the Dead Lands, if they are allowed to remain, will erode the faith and loyalty of the Eastern Dalesmen. However, he is reluctant to do so, because his lich master becomes ever more insane, and he tends to go easily into a rage that can become deadly.

When a PC group comes within sight of the Dead Lands, it will see a forest of dead trees to the northwest. The rest is a large plain of bare mud with occasional rock outcroppings, tufts of grass and wiry bushes. Many eroded pathways are visible in the mud, caused when topsoil was washed down into Dender's Creek and the Kaldurfljót. The barren landscape is dotted with small, muddy barrows.

During daylight hours, the more than 300 undead skeletons in Hurddh's service take shelter in these barrows. At night, they are upon the surface, taking part in bizarre military drills and the like. The skeletons are not damaged by sunlight, but Hurddh has ordered them to shelter themselves from the sun because his necromantic research has shown that the skeletons gain strength when they are not exposed to the sun's rays. The skeletons will not leave the Dead Lands unless specifically ordered to do so by Hurddh. He will issue no such orders, because Gall has forbidden him to do so until there is a general mobilization.

If a PC group enters the plain, its members immediately will feel the tug of unlife and undeath upon them. Their bodies will recognize that they are in an environment hostile to life. Each time a PC enters the Dead Lands, he or she must make a saving throw or temporarily lose one point of Constitution that is regained within 1d4 hours after leaving the Dead Lands. In a *D&D* 3E campaign, one saves for Fortitude against DC 20. In an *AD&D* 2E campaign, a saving throw against death magic is required.

PCs who enter the Dead Lands after sunrise and before sunset normally will encounter no skeletons. The undead will be in their barrows and will not perceive the PCs' presence. After sunset and before sunrise, the skeletons automatically will sound an alarm and attack any living being found in the Dead Lands who is not accompanied by a cult member from Tower Threespires. The game master should reckon with one attack by 1d4+1 skeletons every 300 feet/90 m, increasing by 1d4 skeletons for every 10 minutes they spend in the Dead Lands.

What is the purpose of Tower Threespires? That depends upon whose purpose one is discussing. Harbet Gall views *his* Dragon Cult cell as the keystone of his strategy to conquer the Great Dale at last, after centuries of failure. The cult's tower is a stronghold of powerful magic that commands both an advance phalanx of undead to invade the West and a growing contingent of vampire dragons and draconians to accompany the bony host, bringing terror and destruction to the enemy.

Gall believes that he has 15 necromancers, conjurers and illusionists in Tower Threespires who are working feverishly to provide him with an army of undead, to bind demons to his cause and to invent new magicks to inflict upon the enemy.

Urgrath Hurddh, who commands the other 14 magi in the tower and their priestess, has similar goals, but first and foremost, Hurddh wants to see Gall destroyed. He intends to replace him. This not only is a goal but also a case of self delusion; Hurddh is the antithesis of the True Druid of Herne, whom the Eastern Dalesmen will follow willingly.

However, the Eastern Dalesmen are conservationists at heart, at least as they understand conservation. To them, Hurddh has blighted forest and land and cursed the area surrounding Tower Threespires with undead. They are puzzled, why Herne the Hunter continues to tolerate them. If Hurddh would attempt to succeed Gall, many Eastern Dalesmen doubtless would defect to the Freemen.

Within Tower Threespires, Hurddh commands six other necromancers in his own tower, four conjurers in the middle tower and four illusionists and a priestess in the damaged eastern tower. He also has a force of 32 fighters and warriors stationed in the central building. These are loyal only to the Kront cell of the Dragon Cult and are not affiliated with the Hunters of Herne. Hurddh also is in command of the cult cell in Kront proper.

Hurddh lives with the other necromancers in the Necromancers' Tower. They concentrate most of their efforts upon research into the creation of new undead forms. Slaves and prisoners obtained from the Hunters of Herne are used in their experiments. These are held in a combination prison and torture chamber in the dungeon beneath the Necromancers' Tower.

The entrance to the tower and its various levels are guarded by warriors of the cult and with the magic of death symbols. The symbols can be deactivated with a password that is changed daily. Each tower has its own passwords. The upper stories of the Necromancers' Tower hold a kitchen and dining room where occupants of all three towers eat, sleeping quarters for Hurddh and his six necromancers, a library and a laboratory.

The top two stories are open only to Urgrath Hurddh. His own chamber is on the eighth story. Death symbols and golems protect this level. The top, ninth story serves as Gall's observation deck. There he is attempting to learn how to use the recently recovered *Narfelli Emperor Stone* named *Undalûhn*.

At extremely high cost and to Harbet Gall's displeasure, Hurddh came into possession of this emperor's stone in early Nightal of the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR). Tower Threespires was built upon the site where the Narfelli Fortress Nardanos once stood. There is no historical record anywhere suggesting that anything of Fortress Nardanos survived the final conflagration between Narfell and Raumathar. One long had assumed that all traces of the fortress and its treasures had vanished forever.

In the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR), two of Hurddh's agents had been sent to the Nars' Bildoobaris Trade Fair, where they found a horse barbarian who was offering a small, locked chest with Narfelli inscriptions. The Nar who was selling it admitted that his attempts to break the chest open all had been in vain. Hurddh's agents bought the chest, paying a small collection of gems for it. They brought it back to Hurddh at Tower Threespires.

With time, Hurddh determined that there were some objects of highly powerful Narfelli magic within the chest, among them a large scrying stone, a scroll with a powerful 10th level object summoning spell and other scrolls that could establish magical cages to contain demons and devils.

The arch necromancer ordered his arch diviner to come from Fire Eye Tower in Kront to Tower Threespires and there to use the Narfelli scrying stone to search the area around Tower Threespires for lost Narfelli artifacts. The arch diviner located a point just northwest of the Necromancers' Tower where an object of great power was buried some 100 feet/30 m deep, but at that point, his use of the forbidden interwoven 10th level Narfelli spells made him feebleminded and then insane. Hurddh had the wizard locked in a dungeon cell, until he was needed for a necromantic experiment.

Hurddh then ordered the three middle level conjurers from the middle tower to use the scroll with the 10th level Narfelli object summoning spell to call the magical object from the depths into the chamber in which they all stood. Two of the conjurers were slain by the 10th level magic. The third survived unscathed. The object they had won was the long lost Emperor's Stone *Undalûhn* of ancient Fortress Nardanos.

The two slain conjurers were replaced by the last other wizards of their school in Fire Eye Tower. Since that time, Hurddh has no more conjurers available to him in Kront. Wearer of the Purple Gülar Traggaths, an arch conjurer of the cult, commands the three junior conjurers in his tower.

Harbet Gall's diviners in Kront learned in the Year of the Unstring Harp (1371 DR) that some of the devils once summoned by Narfell and demons summoned by the Raumathari have been stranded for more than 1,500 years between Faerûn on the material plane and Baator or the Abyss on their own levels, being unable to return to either.

They also determined that there are locations where the protections barring the demons and devils from entering Faerûn have grown thin. Their research made the following specific findings:

- The Abyssal Prince Graz'zt and a company of demons is trapped in a fragment of the Abyss which has become lodged in the depths near the ruins of Zhengyi's Castle Perilous in Vaasa. (More on this matter follows below.)

- A band of Raumathari-summoned demons is trapped between the plains below the southern edge of the Great Glacier in northern Vaasa.

- A large contingent of Narfelli-summoned devils is being kept out of the unsettled lands of eastern Damara by only the thinnest of protections.

- Another contingent of Narfelli-summoned devils that had been sent into Raumathar is trapped beneath the North Country of Rashemen about 60 miles/100 km northeast of Immilmar. The Rashemi witches are aware of this and are using their magic to maintain the bar that prevents the devils from entering the material plane.

Before further examining the work of the conjurers in Tower Threespires, some additional explanation of the presence of Graz'zt and his band of demons beneath the ruins of Castle Perilous is necessary. Graz'zt and his demons were jolted out of the Abyss in the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR) when the Realm of Orcus fell.

They landed on the border of the material plane in the depths near Zhengyi's ruins. The causes were a magical fluke of the Time of Troubles and Graz'zt's overambitiousness. The destruction of the Realm of Orcus at the hands of Sir Gareth Dragonsbane and his companions triggered the events that stranded Graz'zt and his Abyssal layer Azzagrat in no demon's land.

This element will be discussed in more detail in Part 7 *Bloodstone* and the optional eighth part of *Northern Journey,* entitled *In the Land of the Lich Lords*. It is important for game masters to know that there is a path out of Graz'zt's city of Samora in Azzagrat that leads to a gate to the material plane. This gate emerges at a point far removed from Vaasa, in the Greypeak Mountains west of Anauroch in the North.

Game masters who are using this accessory in their own campaigns rather than running the *Northern Journey* adventure may wish to use this gate in connection with Tower Threespires. However, we strongly suggest that *NJ* game masters ***not*** make this gate known at this time. If you intend to use *In the Lands of the Lich Lords* later in your campaign, the discovery of this gate at that time is of critical importance.

Gall has ordered Hurddh to have his conjurers summon and bind demons or devils - but not both - into Gall's service. Hurddh is hoping instead that his conjurers can call and bind a balor or pit fiend and other lesser demons or devils. He wants to turn them against Gall, in the hope that they will destroy his lich master.

To date, the summoning attempts have been baffling Traggaths and Hurddh. The conjurers have succeeded in summoning the Glabrezu Urug'rh and the Vrock Nirig'dn. Both are contained and captive within cages constructed of bars created with Narfelli magic, but Traggaths and his subordinates are not able to take command of these demons, nor can they send them back whence they came. Both the Glabrezu and the Vrock have resisted all attempts to control them.

No one is Tower Threespires is aware of this, but the cause of this problem is the Narfelli protective ward *Ochrana* on the wall of the Conjurers' Tower. The magic of the ward interferes with the Narfelli magic that created the cage bars holding the two demons. This conflict protects the interior of the demons' cages from all magic directed toward them from outside of the cages.

At present, the situation is both fragile and delicate. The two imprisoned demons come from a small band that is stranded beneath the southern edge of the Great Glacier in northern Vaasa. The leader of this band is a Nalfeshnee named Targad'dh. His band consists of 10 Dretches and six Vrocks. With the disappearance of Urug'rh and Nirig'dn, Targad'dh sensed that the wall of power separating him from the material plane had grown thin. However, he is not quite powerful enough to break the barrier.

Hurddh and Traggaths know that the conjurers' inability to bind the two demons is a certain sign that something in their summoning and binding has gone awry, and that this is a signal of grave danger. They are dealing very carefully with the two demons and making no attempts to summon other outsiders at present. Both know better than to take such risks.

However, if a PC group enters the Conjurers' Tower, it easily could tip the tables in the demons' favor. There are two distinct but threatening possibilities:

- Another summoning attempt would weaken the barrier in Vaasa sufficiently for the Nalfeshnee Targad'dh to break it. Targad'dh and his pack then would be let loose upon the marshes of Vaasa. One can imagine that they would move quickly southward and begin inflicting the maximum suffering possible upon Vaasa and Damara. They have been waiting impatiently for 1,500 years for such an opportunity.

- If the Vrock Nirig'dn were to be freed, he would wreak some havoc, but he is not powerful enough to do much more. However, if the Glabrezu Urug'rh were to be freed, he would be able to open a gate immediately to Targad'dh. The Nalfeshnee and his pack then would materialize in the Conjurers' Tower.

The ground floor of the Conjurers' Tower houses the temple to Tiamat. In the dungeon are the temple's treasury and four cells that can hold creatures intended for the conjurers' experiments. The second story contains the chambers of the high priestess of Tiamat Záhra Praszzh and her low level assistant cleric Nindelbrar. The third story contains a library, spell component room and the chambers of Traggaths' three junior conjurers. The fourth story holds Traggaths' chambers and his library and components chambers. The upper three stories house laboratories and demon cages.

The damaged Illusionists' Tower is the least significant of the three. It has no dungeon. Its ground floor is an entrance protected with traps and illusions. The second story houses the Dartths and their two aides, who also are a married couple. The third story houses the illusionists' library and their scrolls. The fourth and last remaining story is the site of the illusionists' laboratories.

Since their return to Tower Threespires, the cultists have not been troubled by attacks, and this has led them to lower their guard somewhat. However, Hurddh and his followers are aware that there is a mysterious power in central Rawlinswood who calls himself the Nentyarch. They know the Nentyarch sent a band of cultists who had gone to attack him nearly 30 years ago back to attack Tower Threespires, with all of them transformed into sabre-toothed tigers.

Hurddh, Gall and Kargmelchina-Tiamat also attribute the disappearance of groups of vampire dragons and draconians en route to the Great Dale to the Nentyarch. None of them know exactly who or what the Nentyarch is, but all three believe he has learned to master Narfelli magic and has come into possession of a substantial amount of such magic.

Both Gall and Kargmelchina-Tiamat have decided to avoid contact with the Nentyarch for the time being, because neither is able to assess his power. Hurddh has reached a similar conclusion, but he also has made a mental note that the Nentyarch seems to leave the forces of the Eastern Dale in peace as long as they stay out of the Nentyarch's domain and do nothing to damage the forest. For this reason, Hurddh has forbidden his undead from entering Rawlinswood. They also may not enter the dead part of the forest that stands in the northwestern corner of the Dead Lands.

Adventure Hooks in Tower Threespires

- **In and Out -** This accessory assumes that the PC group enters the Great Dale somewhere in the West on Easting Reach with levels of 11 and higher and then travels eastwards. By the time the PCs reach Tower Threespires, all members of the group should have levels between 14 and 16. Any PC group that is observed entering the Dead Lands will have almost no chance of survival. The denizens of Tower Threespires not only outnumber the PCs, but many of them also are of equal or higher level. The chief opponent is the epic level necromancer Urgrath Hurddh. A PC group that wants to take on the denizens of Tower Threespires needs plenty of firepower and strong magic, above all magic with which the group can enter unnoticed. Only so can the PCs expect to hold the initiative and perhaps defeat Hurddh and his followers. Magic that can kill the PCs without their ever having met a flesh-and-blood foe protects many parts of the complex. The PCs must be able to detect this magic before they can avoid or deal with it. If they enter the Illusionists' Tower, they need to be able to see through illusions. Properly equipped and properly prepared, your PCs can conquer Tower Threespires. If Hurddh is liquidated, his host of more than 300 undead will vanish beneath the surface, again dead rather than undead. This does not apply, however, to the vampire dragons and draconians in the ruins of Auststad. They must be eliminated separately. The main tool the PCs have is the dragon cultists' own laxity. Hurddh and his followers are nestled deep within the Eastern Dale. They have no reason to expect an attack from within the Dale. Therefore, they have done little to prepare a defense against one. They also are arrogant enough to believe that their magical defenses are adequate to dispatch any intruders. PCs who enter Tower Threespires unseen and who can liquidate foes quickly and quietly may have a chance to eliminate the denizens of Tower Threespires before they realize what is happening to them.

- **Letting the Demon Out of the Box and Into a Can of Worms-** If your PCs become active in the Conjurers' Tower, there is the very strong chance that they will unleash the Glabrezu and Vrock being held there as well as the grave danger that they may open a gate elsewhere to allow demons to enter Faerûn. The PCs will know nothing of the Narfelli magic used to construct the cages that hold the two demons in the tower. Magical experiments well could open the cages and free the two demons. Game masters should adjudicate this matter individually, based upon their own campaigns. The only way to rid the tower of the demons is to use abjurational magic such as the divine spell *Dismissal*. Such an abjuration will not function, however, until the ward upon the tower, *Ochrana*, is deactivated. The denizens of the tower are not aware that *Ochrana* is preventing their successful use of an abjuration, so they cannot inform the PCs of this. Furthermore, the PCs have no knowledge of how to deactivate *Ochrana*. Only Klingszhrâd, the conjurer-lich whom Harbet Gall controls in Nighthawk Tower, knows how to do that. The PCs' only chance of destroying *Ochrana* is to inflict at least 1,225 hit points of damage upon the Tower Threespires complex. At that point, *Ochrana's* protective power would be exhausted and abjuration magic would function again. One should keep in mind that successful abjuration would send the Vrock Nirig'dn and the Glabrezu Urug'rh back to the Abyss and not back to their own demon pack on the northern Vaasan border. However, if the PCs go too far and actually destroy the Conjurers' Tower, the structural link to which the magical Narfelli bars of containment are found would cease to exist and so would the Narfelli containing magic. Urug'rh, were he to be freed, would be able to open a gate immediately to his Nalfeshnee leader Targad'dh, who would materialize with his pack in the Conjurers' Tower. If the PCs take the Conjurers' Tower and then begin their own conjuring experiments, they could shatter the thin barrier keeping Targad'dh and his pack out of Vaasa, because the cult conjurers have opened threads of summoning to Targad'dh's pack that have not been closed. For those planning to run *Bloodstone*, Part 7 of *Northern Journey,* this could mean that the PCs will encounter and have to deal later with the Nalfeshnee and his band when they reach Vaasa. If he were unleashed upon Vaasa, there is no doubt that Targad'dh would start marshaling and enslaving the monsters who still live there. He then would try to build his own empire in Vaasa, which would be a miniature version of Zhengyi's kingdom.

Garb in Tower Threespires

Although the high magi of the Kront cell of the Cult of the Dragon are known as the Wearers of the Purple, this should not be taken to mean that they always wear only purple robes. The term *Wearers of the Purple* began with a Sembian cult branch known as the *Company of the Purple Cloak*. The magi who led this cell did indeed wear purple robes.

When it was founded, the Kront cell at first imitated this practice and used black and purple robes to identify its leading magi, whom also were called Wearers of the Purple, although there was no affiliation with the Sembian branch.

Today's Kront cell still calls its high magi Wearers of the Purple, but the black and purple robes are reserved as a badge of rank for formal ceremonial occasions. Within the Kront cell, colors serve an entirely different purpose. Magi wear robes of a distinct color that represents their school, while priests of Tiamat are dressed in golden robes. The Kront cell's magi wear the following colors:

Necromancer: Black	Enchanter: Yellow*
Abjurer: Brown*	Evoker: Orange*
Conjurer: Purple	Transmuter: Green*
Diviner: Blue	Illusionist: White

* The current Kront cell has no abjurers, enchanters, evokers or transmuters.

On-duty cult members, who serve the Kront cell as warriors, clerks, etc., also wear the colors of the branch they currently are serving. If, for example, a warrior is guarding the Necromancers' Tower on one day, he or she will wear black. If the warrior serves in the Conjurers' Tower on the next day, he or she will wear purple. Clerks usually wear gold, the color of the priests and clerics of Tiamat in the Kront cell.

Maps and Floor Plans for Tower Threespires

Tower Threespires Regional Map

This map shows the area of influence of Tower Threespires and the bounds of the Dead Lands.

Tower Threespires Overland Map

1 - Central Building.

2 - Necromancers' Tower.

3 - Conjurers' Tower.

4 - Illusionists' Tower.

Tower Threespires Central Building - Ground Floor

1 - Doors to storage cellars. Near the doors are two guard, human male or female, AL:LE, Fighter 10.

2 - Counter. Entry is gained by lifting the panel on the right side of the counter.

3 - Clerk's Desk. The clerks who administer Tower Threespires sit here.

4 - Spiral Staircase upwards.

5 - Trapdoor to Treasury. Hidden under a carpet.

Tower Threespires Central Building - Dungeon Level

1 - Treasury. This is the central treasury of the Kront cell of the Dragon Cult. It should contain immense riches. The game master, based upon his campaign's needs, should determine the exact content.

2 - Storage Cellar. Grains, beer, wine, conserves and other supplies for the complete complex are stored here.

Tower Threespires Central Building - 2nd Story (European 1st floor)

The kitchen is on this level. Food for the entire complex except the Necromancers' Tower is prepared here. The necromancers eat separately. Others eat in their quarters.

Tower Threespires Central Building - 3rd to 6th Stories (European 2nd to 5th floors)

The bunk beds of the warriors and fighters are on these stories. Two persons on different shifts use each bed.

Tower Threespires Necromancers' Tower - Ground Floor and Dungeon

1 - Entrance. Guarded by two warriors or fighters.

2 - Foyer. All tiles in this area are protected by permanent death symbols. The password, which is changed daily, must be spoken or thought to prevent the magic from triggering. If the magic is triggered, the spell *Power Word, Kill* is activated against the intruder.

3 - Spiral Staircase upwards.

4 - Statue of Tiamat in Red Dragon Form.

5 - Statue of Herne the Hunter.

6 - Statue of Tiamat in Human Female Form.

7 - Statues of Draconians.

8 - Statues of Tiamat in Green, Blue, Black and White Dragon Forms.

9 - Doors to the Dungeon Level.

10 - Torture Chamber and Four Cells.

Tower Threespires Necromancers' Tower - 2nd and 3rd Stories

1 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

2 - Chamber of Jogath, human male, AL: LE, Necromancer 3.

3 - Chamber of Tarlka, human female, AL LE, Necromancer 5.

4 - Chamber of Gugl, human male, AL: LE, Necromancer 6.

5 - Chamber of Helga, human female, AL: LE, Necromancer 6.

6 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

7 - Kitchen.

8 - Necromancers' Dining Hall.

Tower Threespires Necromancers' Tower - 4th and 5th Stories

1 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

2 - Chamber of Meltrika Dahndl, human female, AL: LE, Necromancer 15, Wearer of the Purple.

3 - Chamber of Nehgrath Huhndlûhn, human male, AL: LE, Necromancer 13, Wearer of the Purple..

Tower Threespires Necromancers' Tower - 6th and 7th Stories

1 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

2 - Library.

3 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

4 - Necromancers' Laboratory.

Tower Threespires Necromancers' Tower - 8th and 9th Stories

1 - Spiral Staircase. The entryway is protected with a symbol that activates the spell *Disintegrate* if the password of the day is not spoken. Small stone and clay golems also are on guard.

2 - Entry to Urgrath Hurddh's Chambers. The area behind the doors is protected with symbols that trigger the spell *Power Word, Kill* when the intruder fails to say the password of the day.

3 - Statue of Tiamat in Female Form.

4 - Statue of Tiamat in Red Dragon Form.

5 - Hurddh's Desk.

6 - Hurddh's Chambers.

7 - Hurddh's Library.

8 - Spiral Staircase. The entryway is protected with a symbol that activates the spell *Disintegrate* if the password of the day is not spoken.

9 - Observation Room.

10 - Emperor's Stone in Case. The wooden case on the table holds *Undalûhn*, the *Narfelli Emperor's Stone* of fallen Fortress Nardanos that recently was retrieved by Hurddh. He spends considerable time on this level alone with the stone, experimenting with it. The arch necromancer has just begun learning to work with the stone. He does not yet know what the powers of *Undalûhn* are, but he already is aware of some effects of using it. He has discovered that his lich master Harbet Gall possesses a similar stone in Nighthawk Tower. When he uses *Undalûhn*, he often can see Gall briefly in the stone, observing him. He has the impression that Gall is displeased that Hurddh has gained an *Emperor's Stone*, but Gall has not yet communicated that displeasure to him. Anytime Hurddh uses *Undalûhn* and notices Gall observing him, the picture of Gall vanishes quickly from the stone. However, Hurddh believes that Gall continues to observe him, even though the lich himself no longer can be seen. Hurddh thinks that *Undalûhn* probably could shield him in like manner from Gall's gaze, but he does not yet know how to bring the stone to do this for him. Most of the time when Hurddh uses the stone, it shows him visions of wasteland, desert or a foreign country. Hurddh believes the latter to be sites within Rashemen, but he is not certain, because he never has been there. He suspects that all of the sites may be in territory that once belonged to Raumathar. When using the stones, Hurddh also often receives a compelling command to contact the emperor in Heligonius. The arch necromancer would like to know much more about this call. He suspects that animate magic sends it out from the master stone, which was held by the Narfelli emperor. He hopes in time that his experiments with *Undalûhn* will lead him to the master stone, which he suspects is buried somewhere beneath the site of Heligonius. He is certain that a great wealth of Narfelli magic lies buried there together with the master stone. Without more help from *Undalûhn*, Hurddh is unable to seek the master stone, because no one alive today knows precisely where Heligonius stood. Many mighty magi have led expeditions into the general area where the Narfelli capital is known to have stood, but none have found the precise site yet, and all have returned empty-handed.

Tower Threespires Conjurers' Tower - Ground Floor and Dungeon

The conjurers share their tower with the clerics of Tiamat, who occupy most of the ground floor and the 2nd story.

1 - Entry room to the Temple of Tiamat. Six guards patrol this room, which contains a statue of Tiamat in the form of a blue dragon and another of her in human female form.

2 - Door to the Dungeon.

3 - Spiral Staircase upward.

4 - The Temple. The temple contains pews, statues of Tiamat in her five chromatic dragon forms and another of her in female form as well as an altar bearing valuable offerings.

5 - Secret Door. The door, in the front face of the altar, leads to a trapdoor that opens onto a ladder that descends into the temple's treasury.

6 - Dungeon. The cells hold prisoners whom the conjurers will use for experiments. The bars of all of the cells contain magical restraints.

7 - Troll's cell.

8 - Giant Ant's cell.

9 - Nur Tar'qasta's cell. Tar'qasta is a captured Nar barbarian horseman of the Dag Nast tribe (human male, AL: LN, Barbarian 8). He has no weapon.

10 - Undoval's cell. Undoval of Tyr is an adventurer priest from Sembia who was captured taking part in an abortive raid upon the Kront slave farms (human male, AL: LG, Cleric (Tyr) 6). His hands are tied and a permanent silence is upon his cell to keep him from using spells. He has no material components or weapon.

12 - Treasury of the Tiamat Temple. It should contain immense riches. The game master, based upon his campaign's needs, should determine the exact content.

Tower Threespires Conjurers' Tower - 2nd and 3rd Stories

1 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

2 - Nindelbrar's Chambers. The junior cleric of Tiamat (human male, AL: LE, Cleric 3) is a fugitive from Impilturian Hlammach. He makes little use of his chamber. His superior in the temple, the high priestess Záhra Praszzh, expects Nindelbrar to bed with her and provides his services on most nights.

3 - Conference Room.

4 - Chambers of Záhra Praszzh. The high priestess of Tiamat, human female, AL: LE, Cleric 12, lives here, at most times with her subordinate Nindelbrar, who is required to supply gigolo services at night.

5 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

6 - Conjurers' Library and Components Chamber.

7 - Tara Nuell's Chamber. Nuell, human female, AL: NE, is a fifth level conjurer.

8 - Norgon Hughm's Chamber. Hughm, human male, AL: NE, is a fourth level conjurer.

9 - Lura Malgor's Chamber. Malgor, human female, AL: NE, is a second level conjurer.

Tower Threespires Conjurers' Tower - 4th and 5th Stories

1 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

2 - Gülar Traggaths Library and Component Chamber. This area is off limits to the lower conjurers without an invitation from Traggaths.

3 - Gülar Traggaths Chamber. The arch conjurer, AL: NE, lvl 14, lives here. He usually commands one of his female subordinates, Nuell or Malgor, to provide him with services through the night.

5 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

6 - 1st Laboratory.

7 - Demon Cage. Contains the Vrock Nirig'dn.

8 - Demon Cage. Empty.

Tower Threespires Conjurers' Tower - 6th and 7th Stories

1 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

2 - 2nd Laboratory.

3 - Demon Cage. Contains the Glabrezu Urug'rh.

4 - Demon Cage. Empty.

5 - Spiral Staircase With Guard.

6 - Scrolls. Contain conjuration and abjuration spells.

7 - 3rd Laboratory.

8 - Demon Cages. Empty.

Tower Threespires Illusionists' Tower - Ground Floor

This was known earlier as the Diviners' Tower. All stories above the fifth were broken off by a dragon years ago and never were repaired. This tower has no dungeon. All the floors of this dungeon have the protection of strong illusions. On each page, the left floor plan shows what really is on the named level. The right shows the illusions that will be seen. All illusions can be dispelled by speaking a password that is changed daily. Other passwords are necessary to use the teleports.

1 - Entryway. Two cult warriors guard the entry. Between the two doors is a magical pit of bubbling lava 6 feet/2 meters square. To its left is a statue of Tiamat **(No. 2)** in her human female form. To its right is a statue of her in her red dragon form **(No. 3)**.

4 - Teleportation Chamber. Nine pits 10 feet/3 m deep, each with a pointed metal impalation post 5 feet/150 cm high in the middle, protect the chamber.

5 - Teleport to and from the 2nd Story.

6 - Teleport to and from the 3rd Story.

7 - Teleport to and from the 4th Story.

8 - Entryway. Guarded by two orc draconians and a very young red dragon. Behind them is a ring of fire spouts, each of which can do 4d8 hp damage.

9 - Chamber of Mists. This chamber is filled with mists that limit visibility to 18 inches/45 cm.

Tower Threespires Illusionists' Tower - 2nd Story

1 - Teleport. This teleport can transport a person with the daily password to and from the ground floor and to any other floor.

2 - Chamber of Tigana and Ragar Dartth. The two Wearers of the Purple are a married couple, both human and AL: CE, female, Illusionist 14, and male, Illusionist 12.

3 - Chamber of Murnard and Natassja Willin. The junior illusionists are a married couple, both human and AL: CE, male, Illusionist 3, and female, Illusionist 2.

4 - Ring of Fire. Causes 8d8 hp damage.

Tower Threespires Illusionists' Tower - 3rd Story

1 - Teleport. This teleport can transport a person with the daily password to and from the ground floor and to any other floor.

2 - Illusionist Spell Scrolls.

3 - Illusionists' Library.

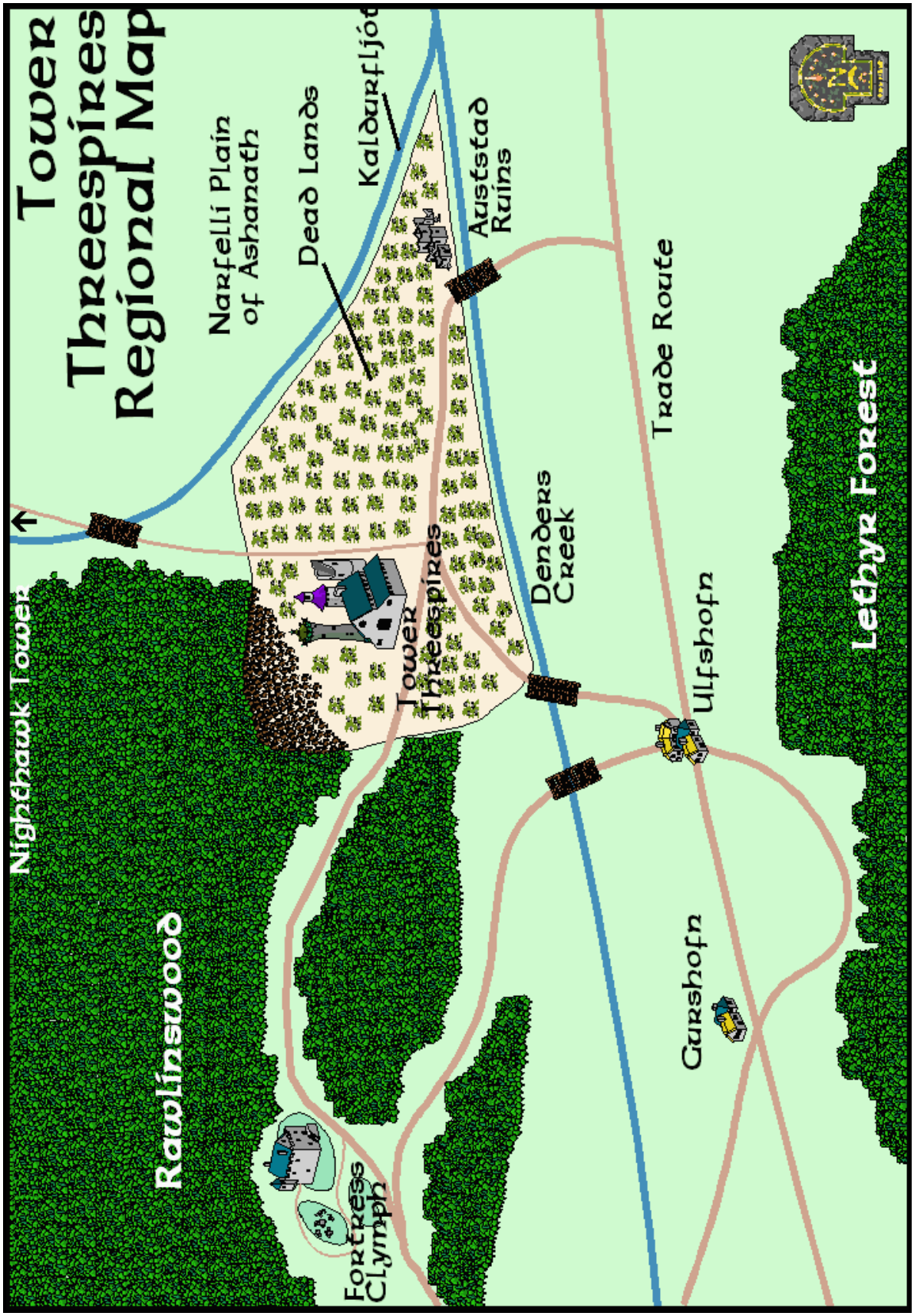
4 - Ring of Fire. Causes 8d8 hp damage.

Tower Threespires Illusionists' Tower - 3rd Story

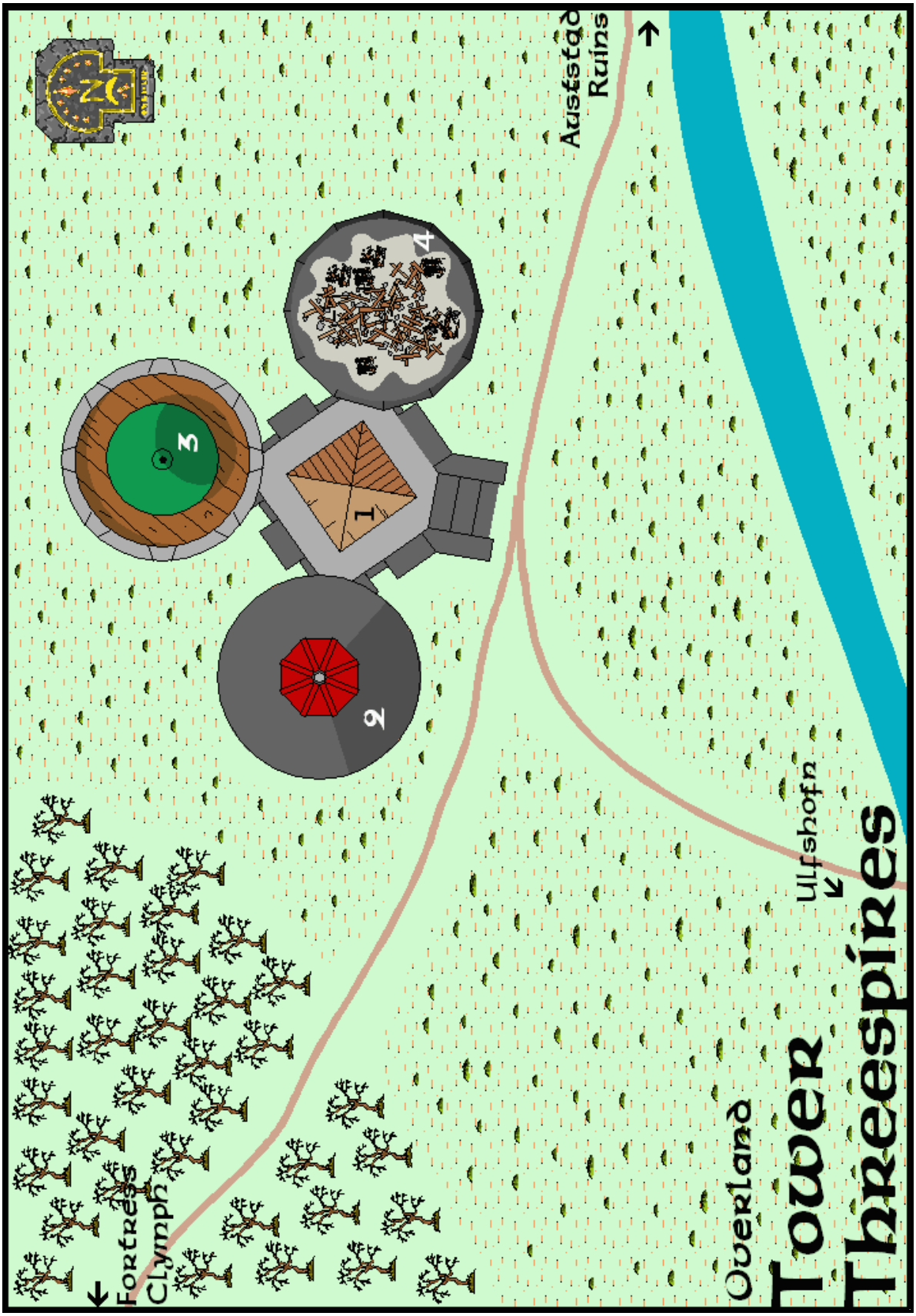
1 - Teleport. This teleport can transport a person with the daily password to and from the ground floor and to any other floor.

2 - Illusionists' Laboratory.

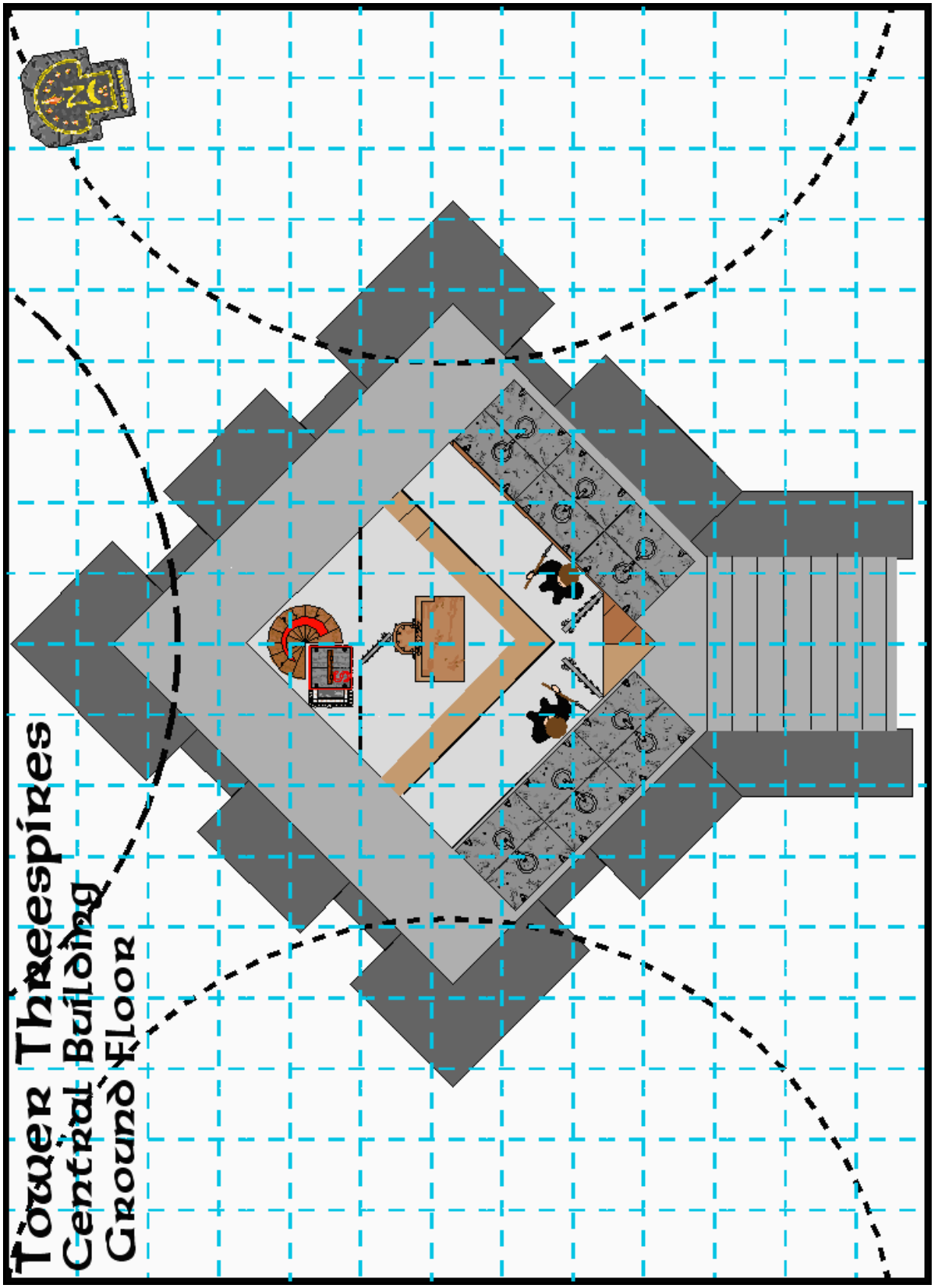
3 - Ring of Fire. Causes 8d8 hp damage.

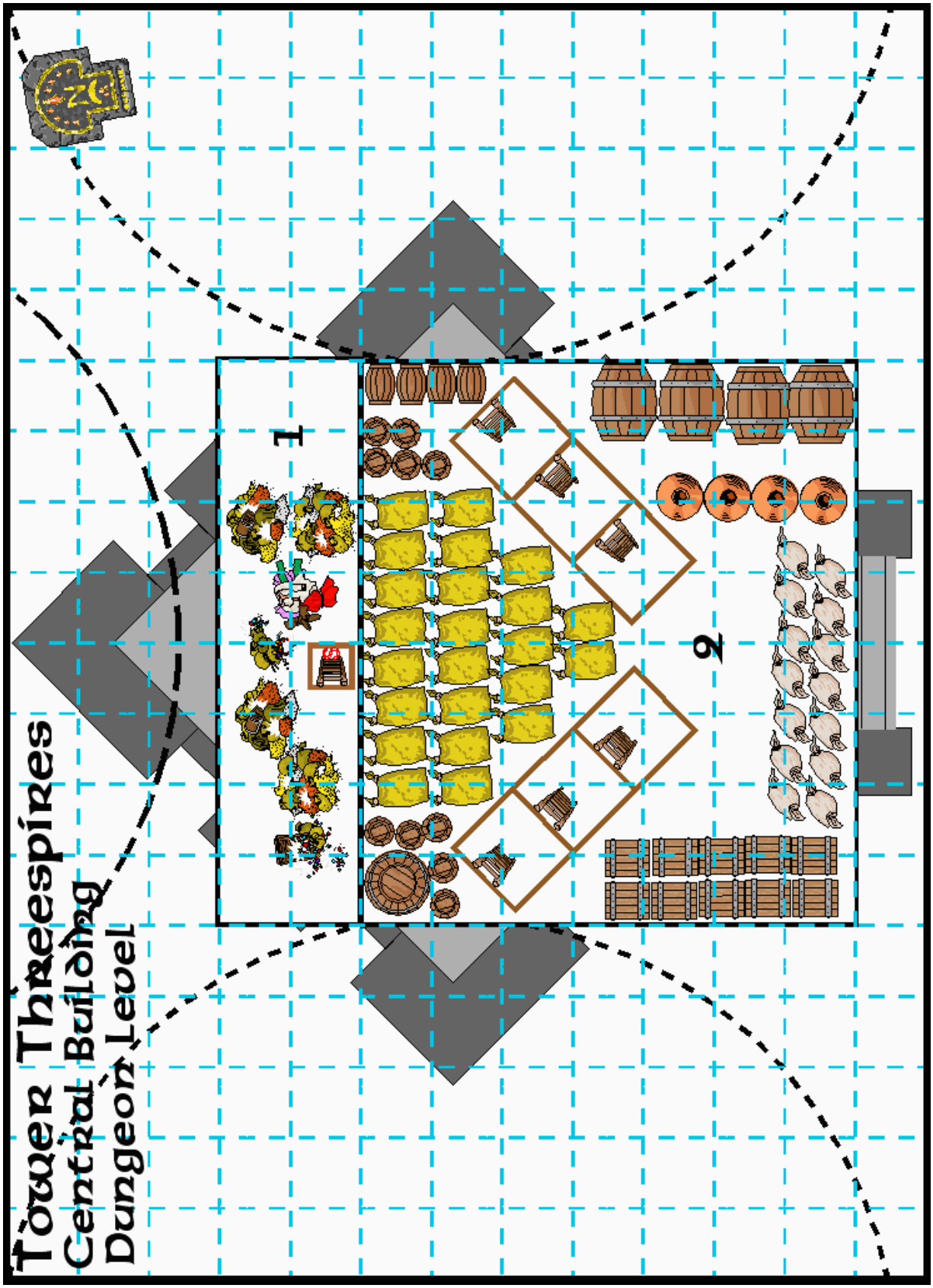


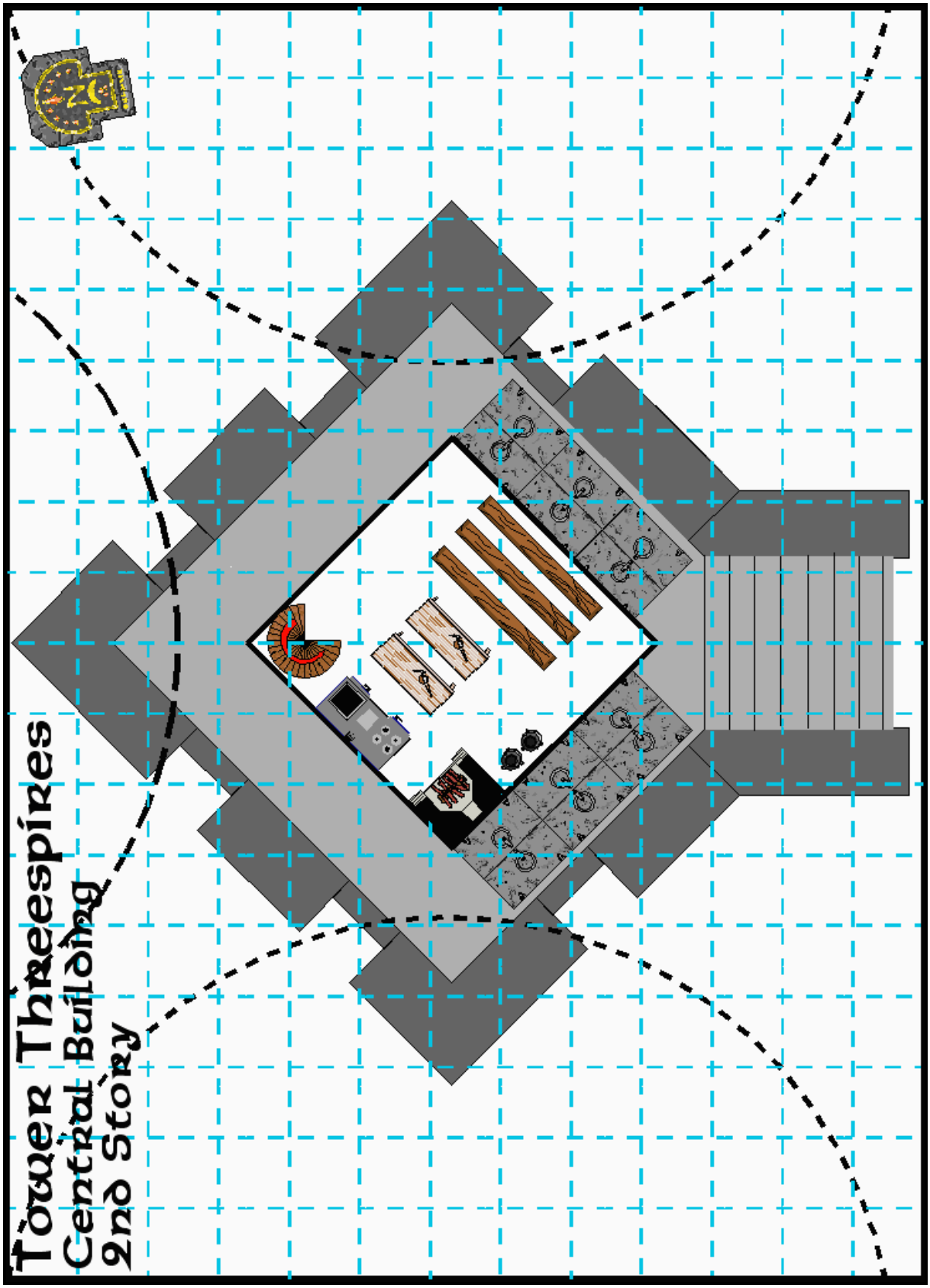
Tower Threespires Area

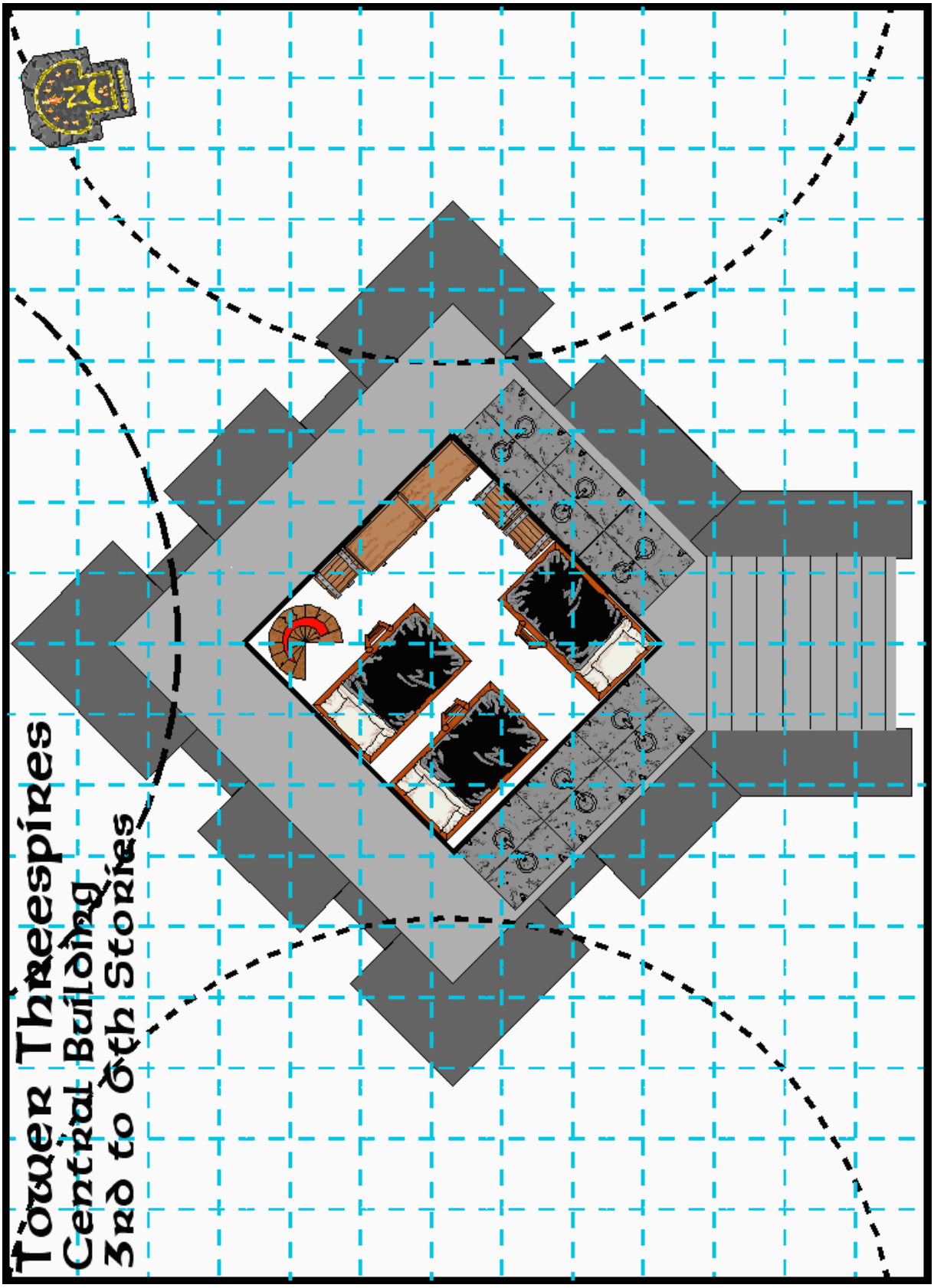


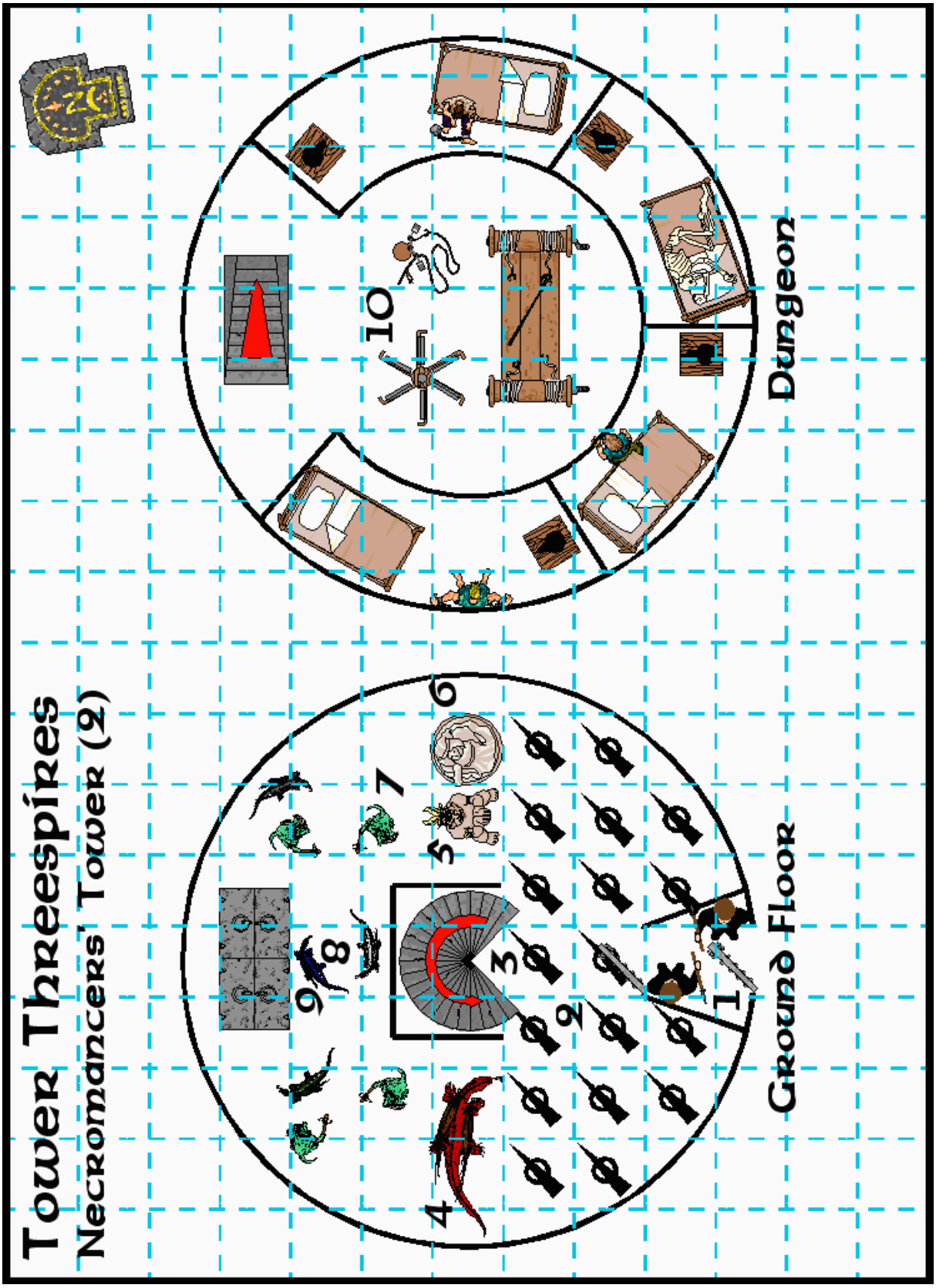
Tower Threespires Overland View


Tower Threespires
Central Building
Ground Floor


Tower Threespires
Central Building
Dungeon Level
1
2


Tower Threespires
Central Building
2nd Story


Tower Threespires
Central Building
3rd to 6th Stories


Tower Threespires
Necromancers' Tower (2)
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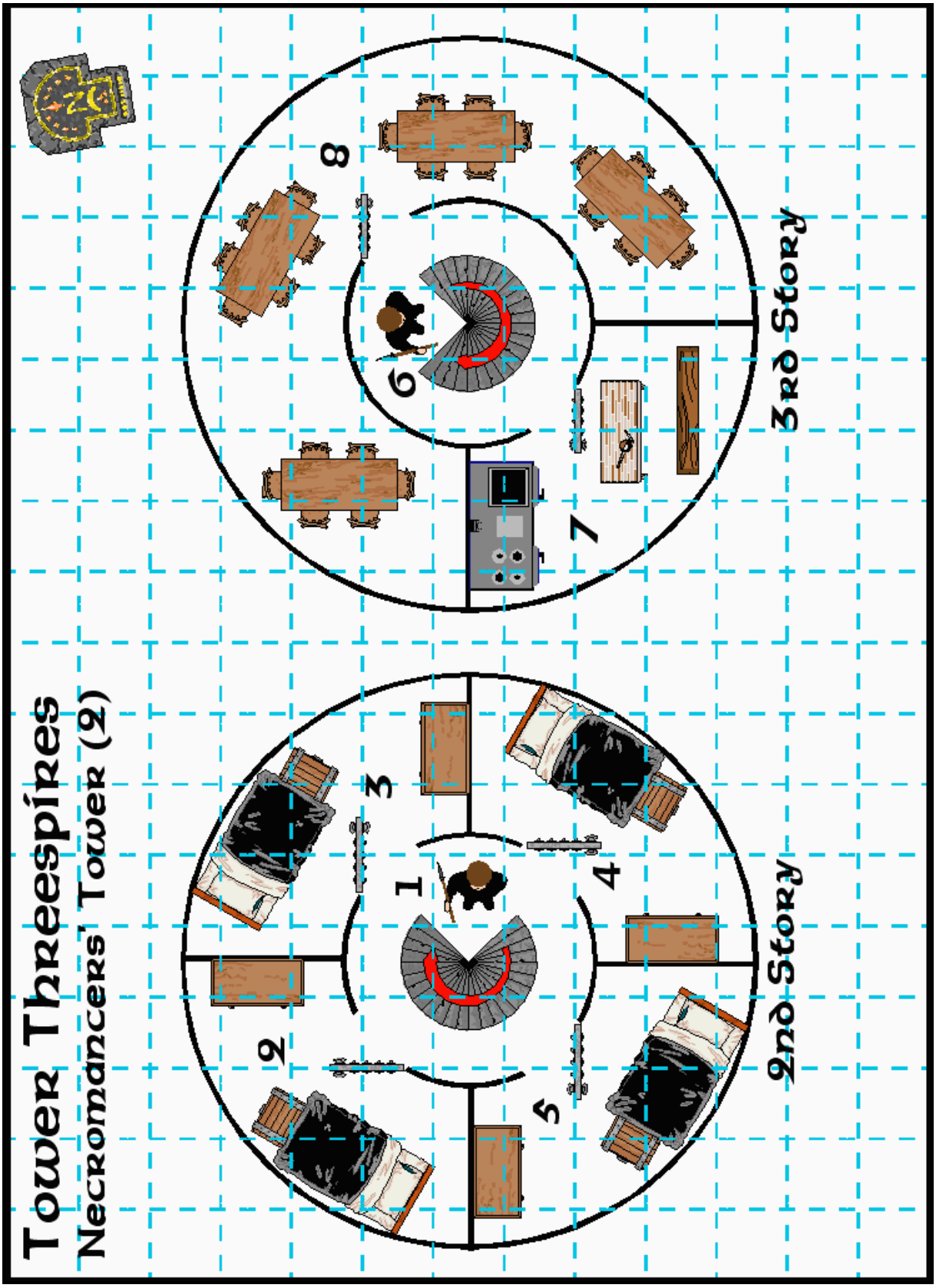
8
9
Ground Floor
10
Dungeon


Tower Threespires
Necromancers' Tower (2)
2nd Story
3rd Story
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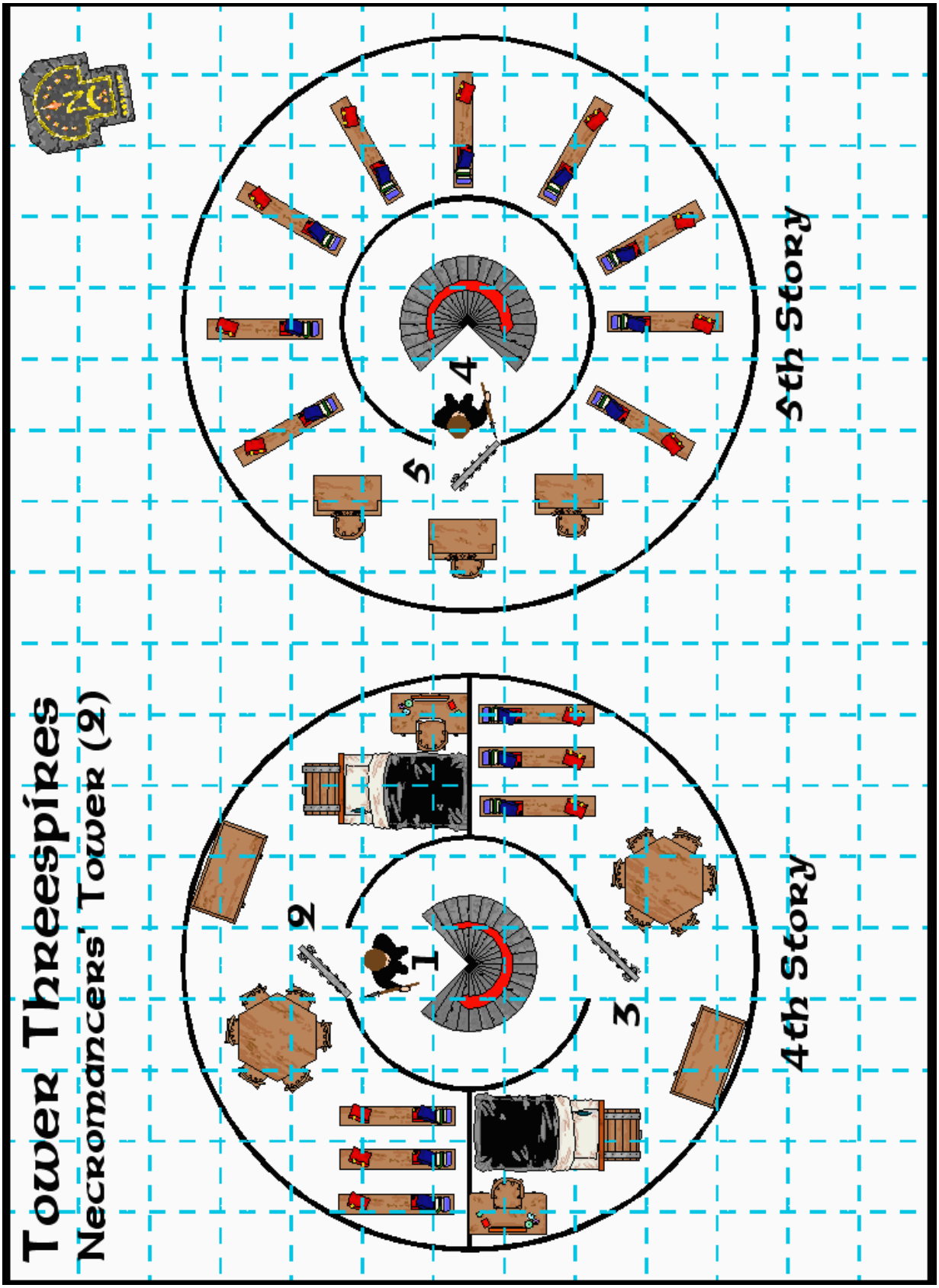
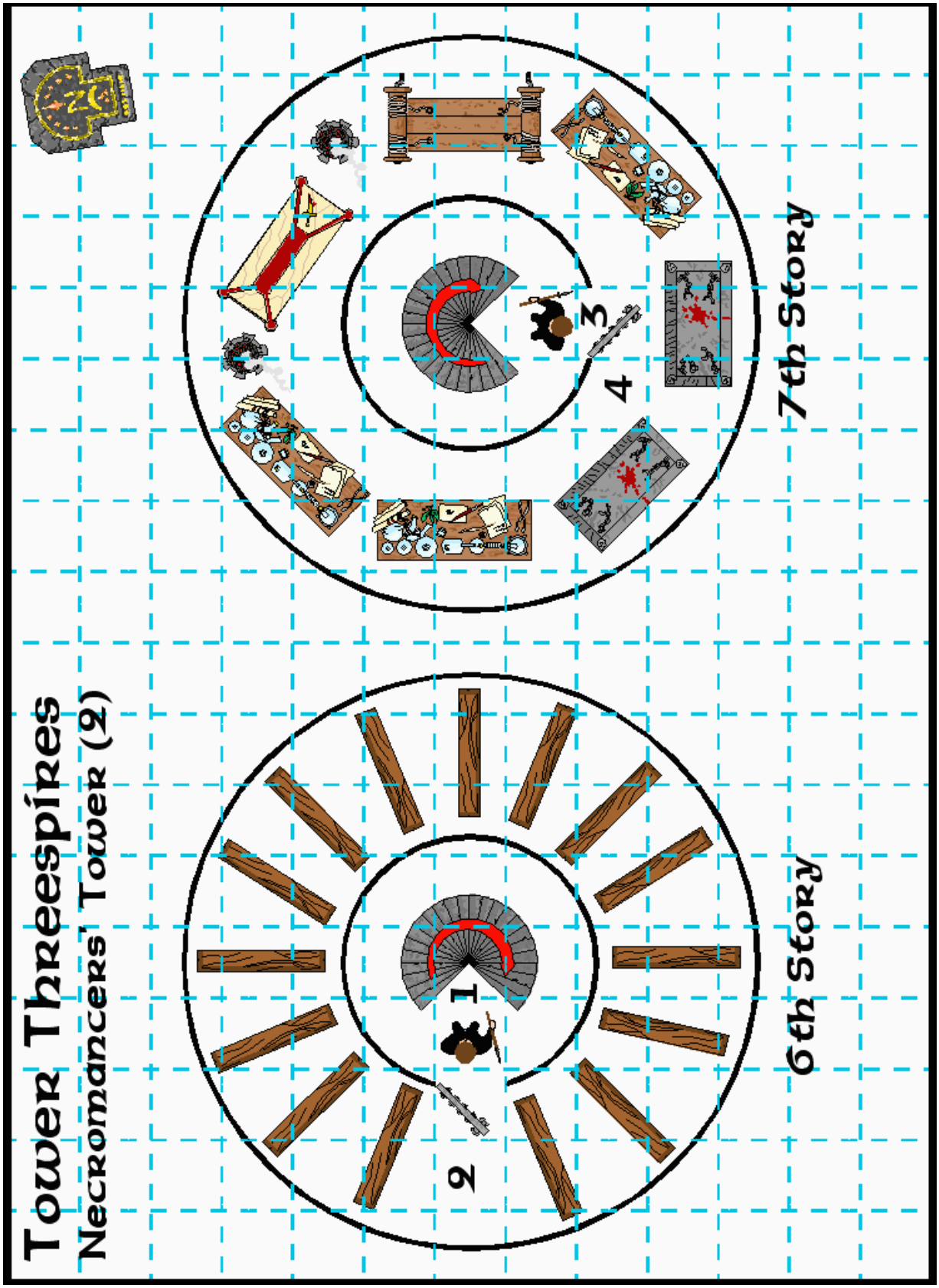
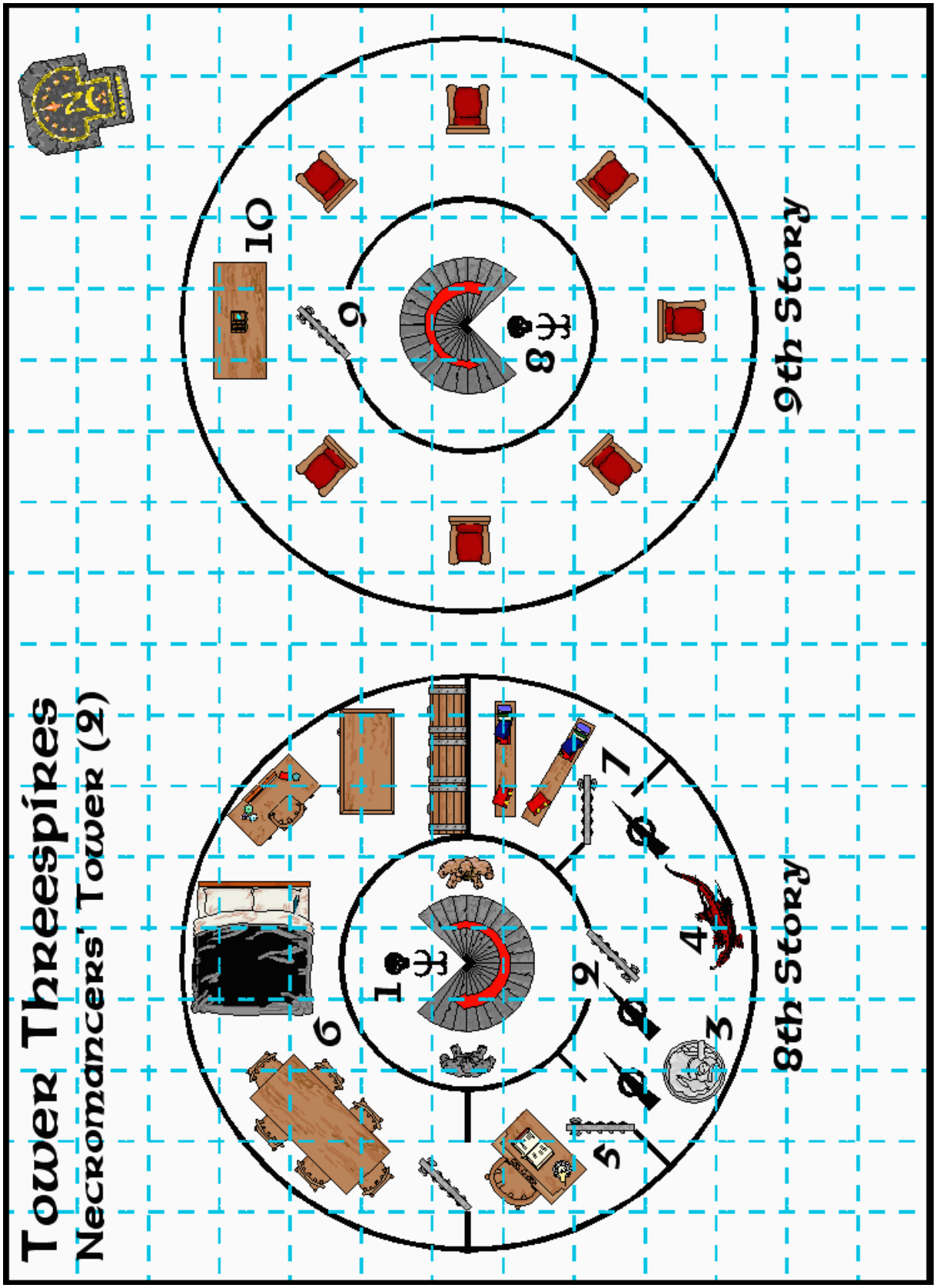

Tower Threespires
Necromancers' Tower (2)
2
1
3
4th Story
5
4
5th Story


Tower Threespires
Necromancers' Tower (2)
1
2
6th Story
3
4
7th Story


Tower Threespires
Necromancers' Tower (2)
8th Story
9th Story
1
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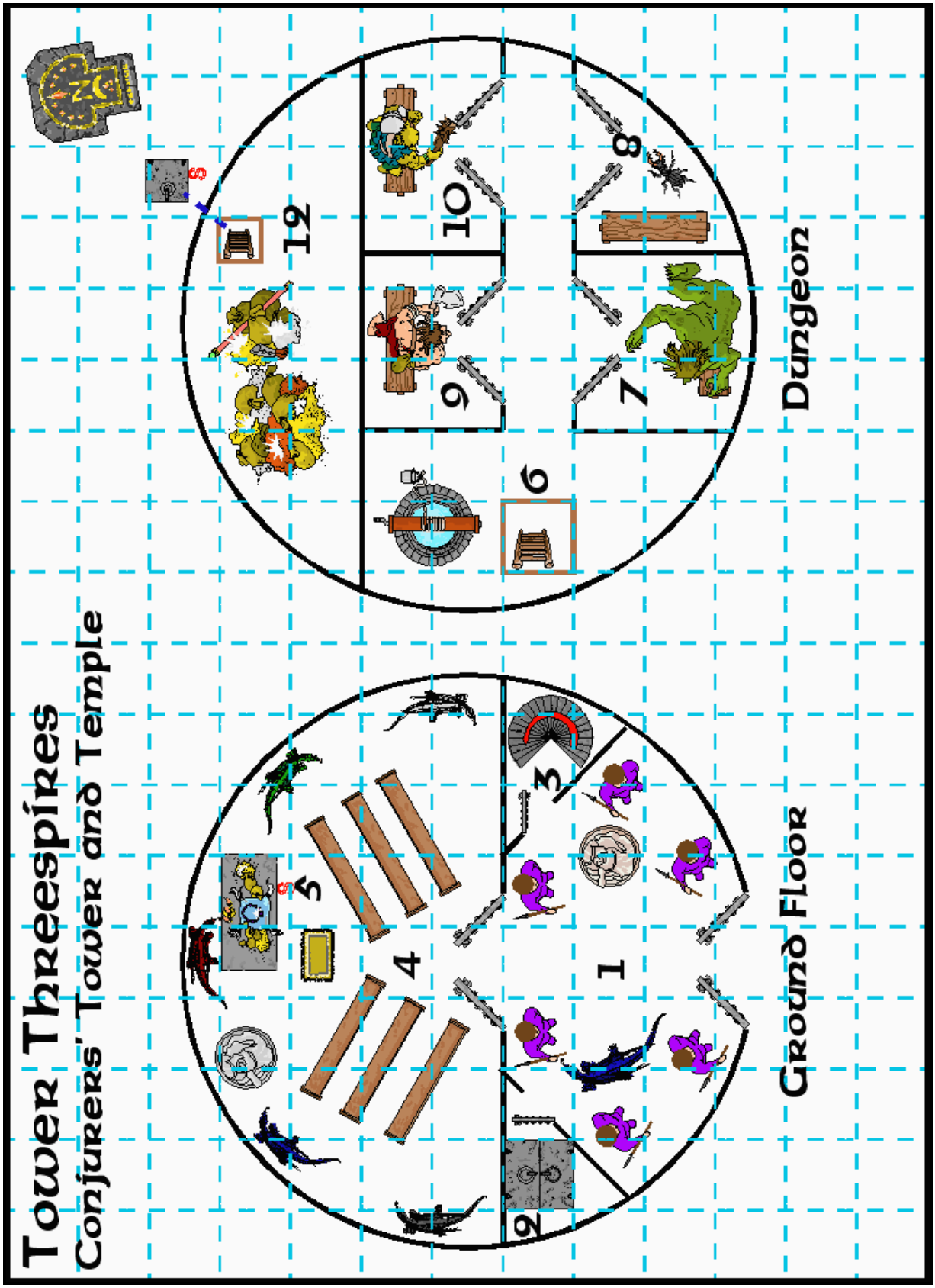
10


Tower Threespires
Conjurers' Tower and Temple
Ground Floor
Dungeon
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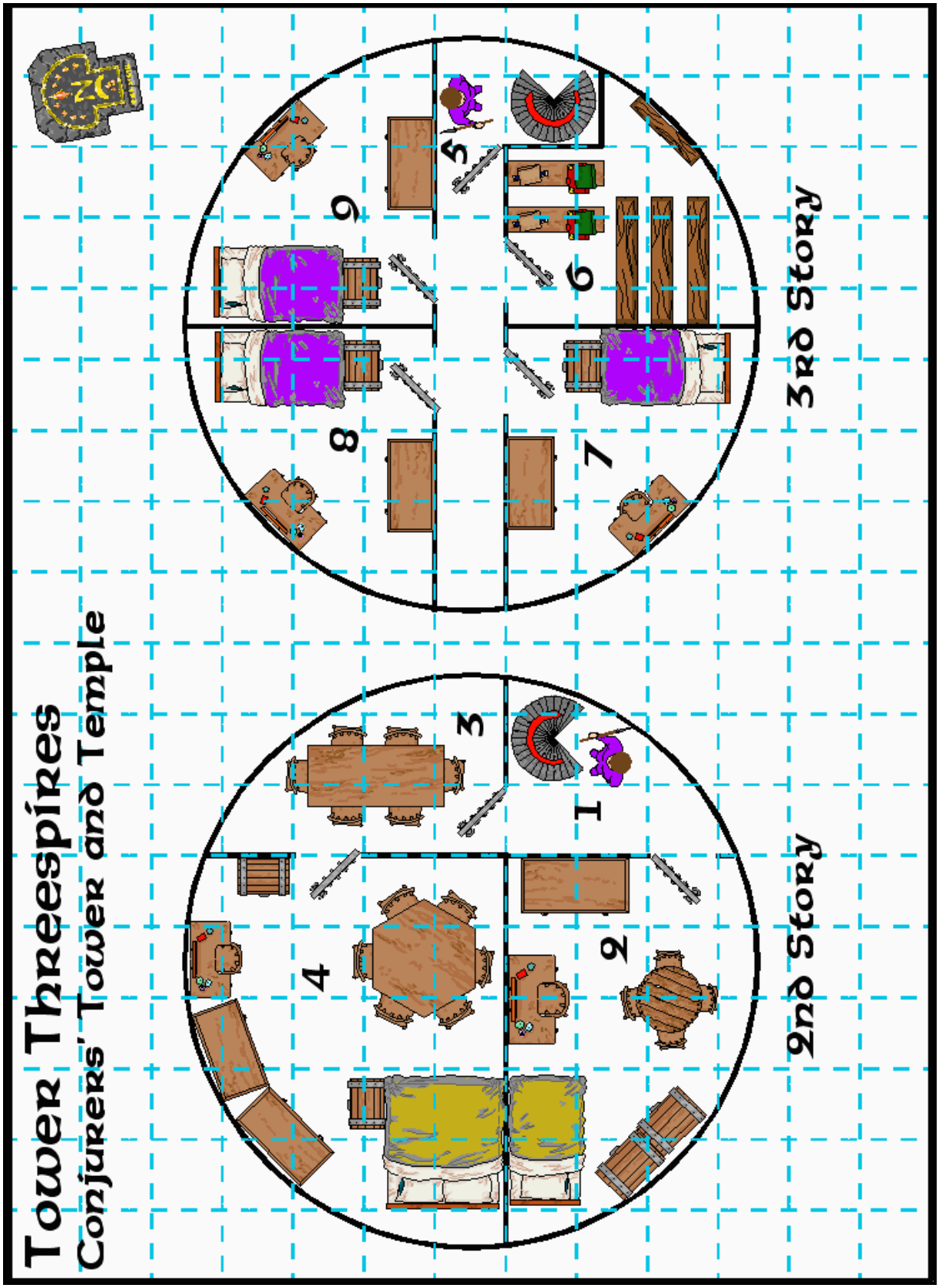
Tower Threespires
Conjurers' Tower and Temple
2nd Story
3rd Story
1
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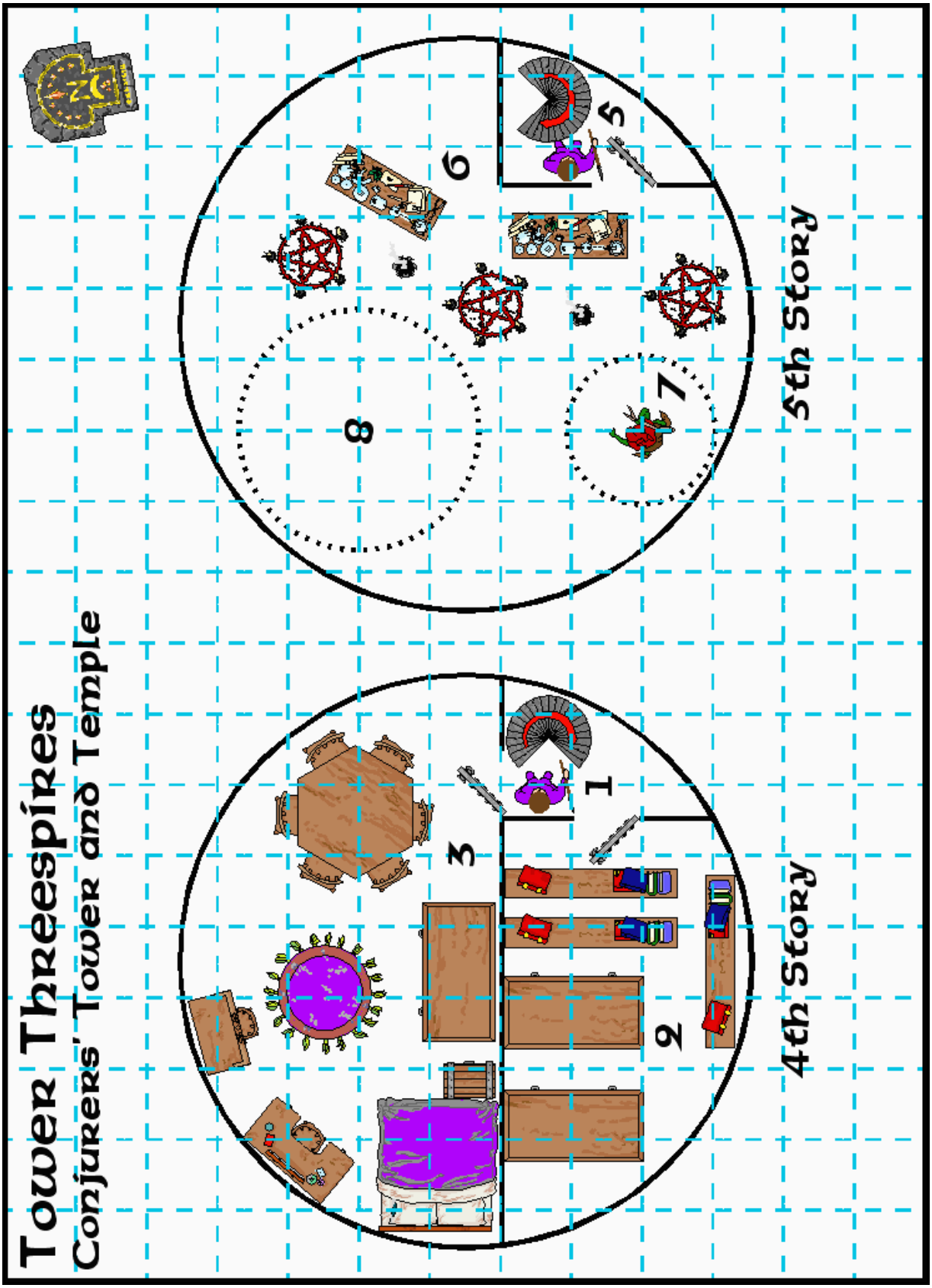
Tower Threespires
Conjurers' Tower and Temple
4th Story
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5th Story
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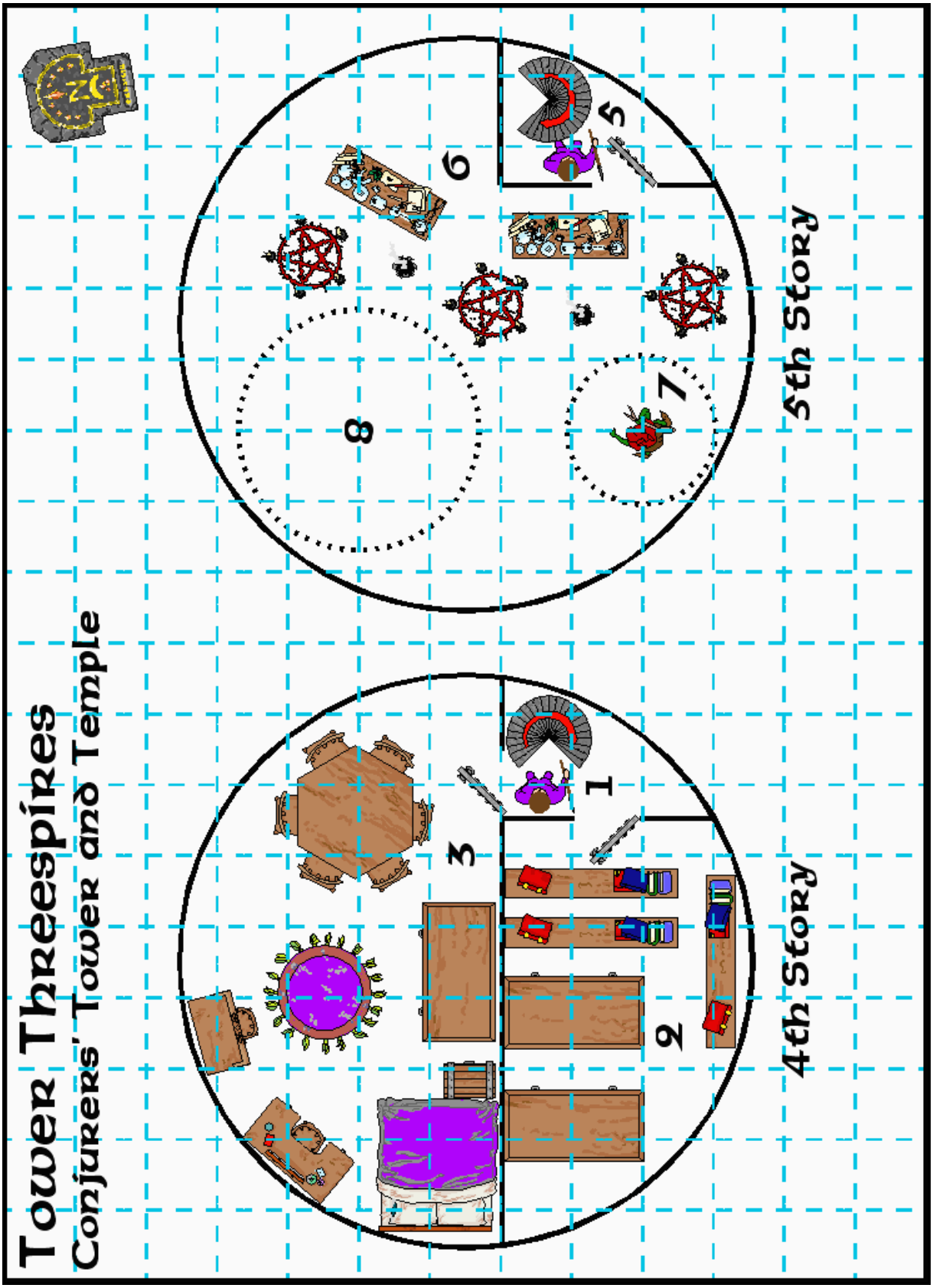
Tower Threespires
Conjurers' Tower and Temple
4th Story
5th Story
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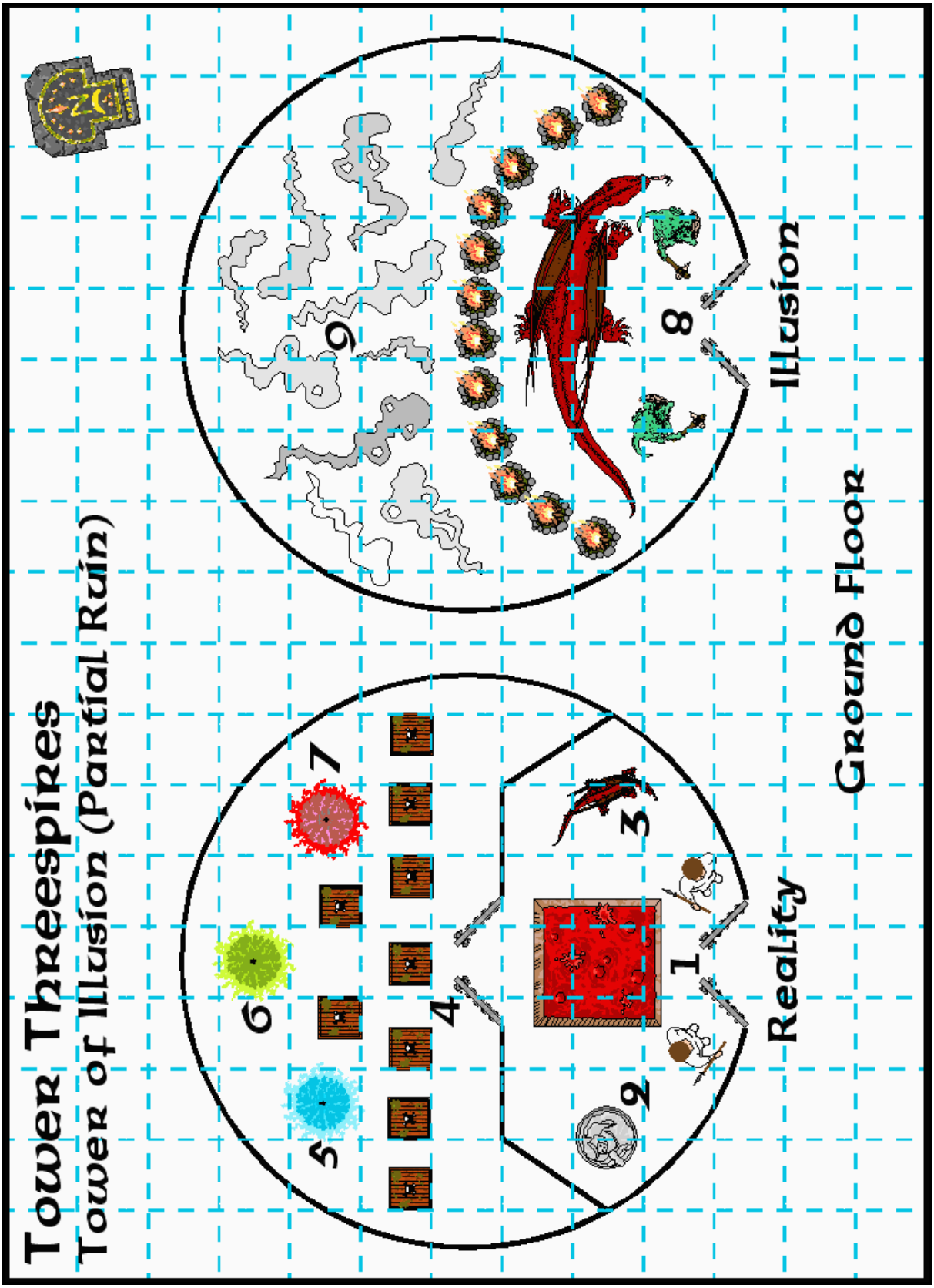
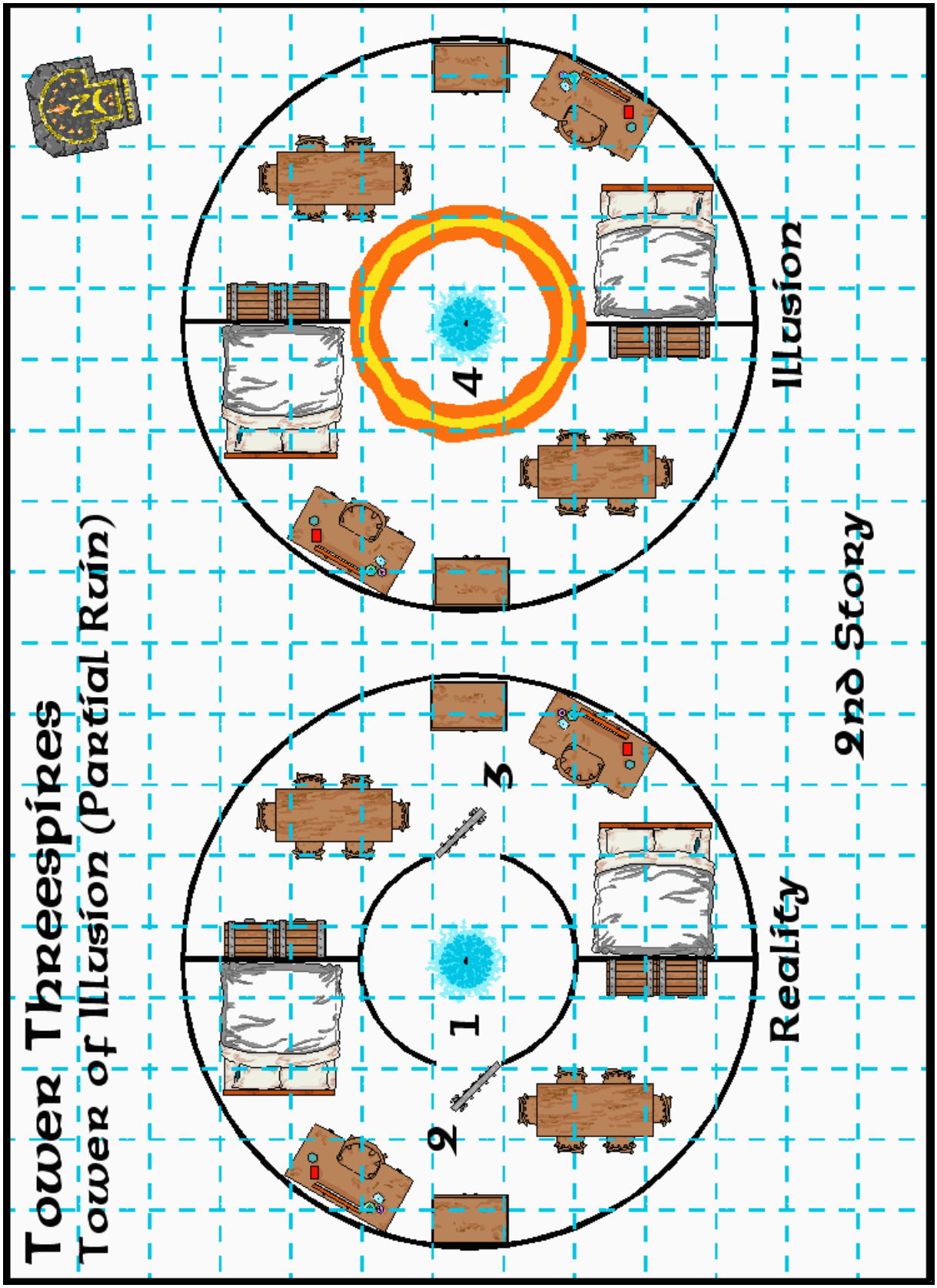
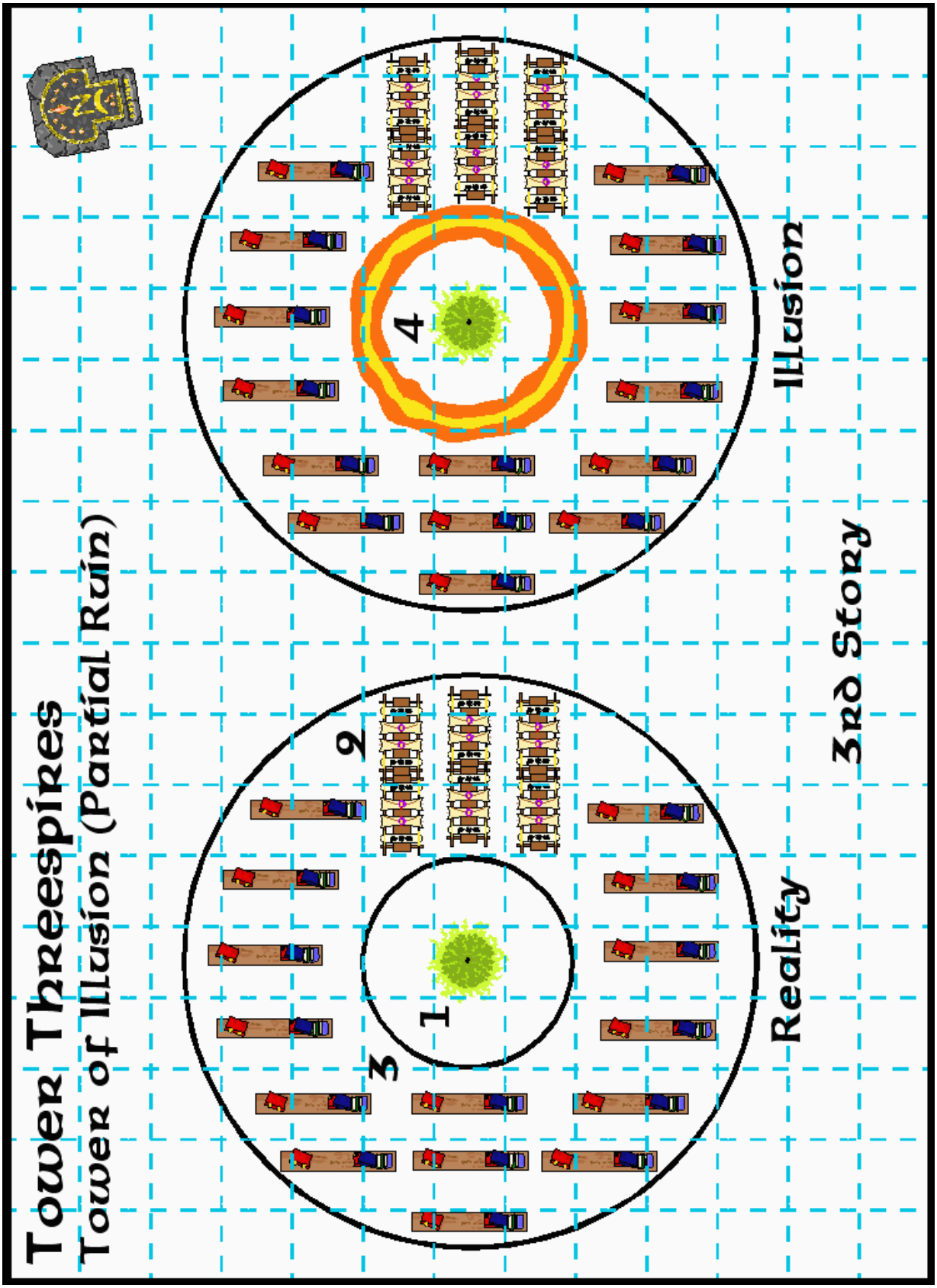
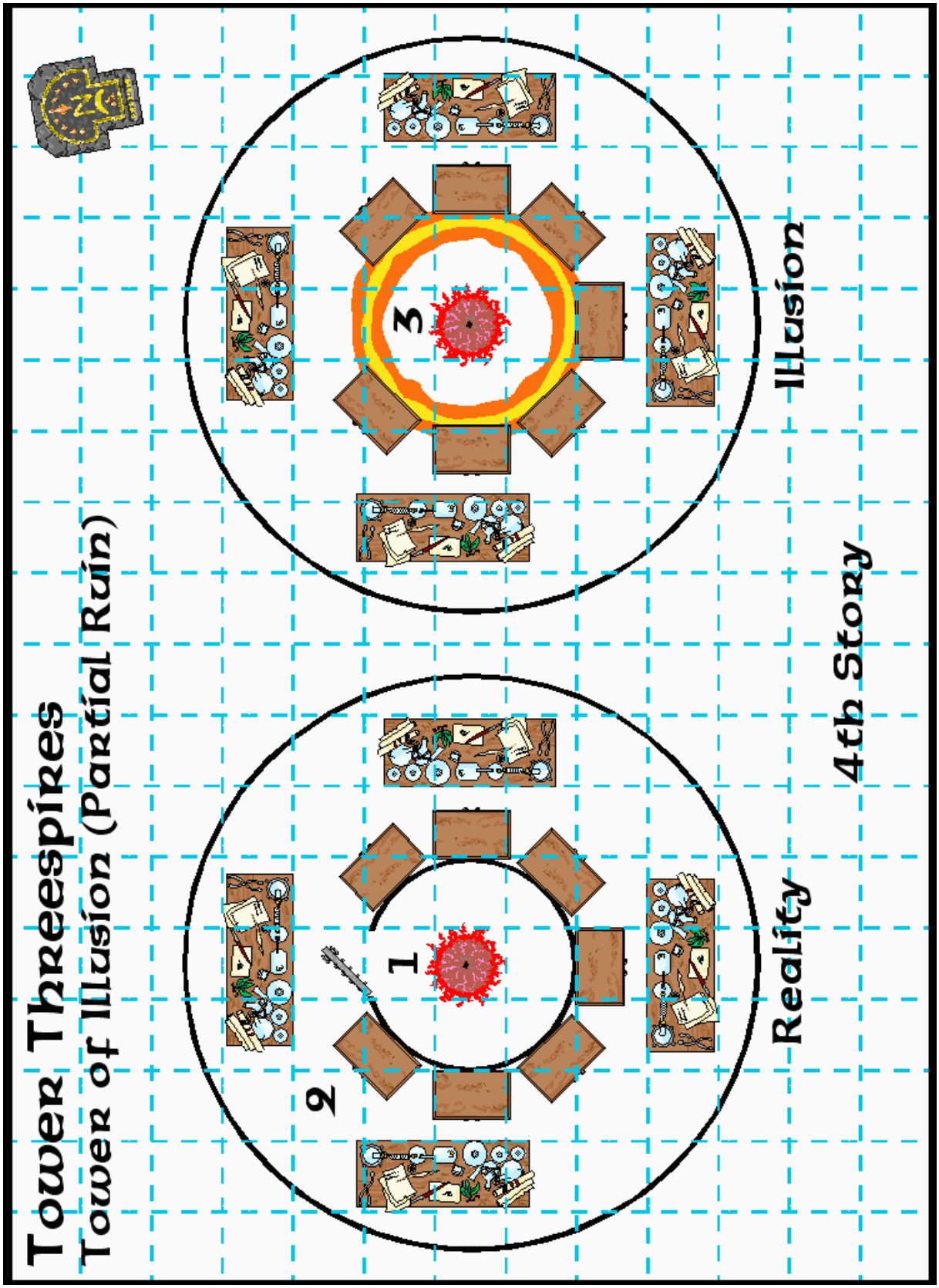

Tower Threespires
Tower of Illusion (Partial Ruin)
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
Reality
Ground Floor
8
9
Illusion


Tower Threespires
Tower of Illusion (Partial Ruin)
1
2
3
4
Reality
Illusion
2nd Story


Tower Threespires
Tower of Illusion (Partial Ruin)
3rd Story
Reality
Illusion
1
2
3
4


Tower Threespires
Tower of Illusion (Partial Ruin)
2
1
Reality
3
Illusion
4th Story

Auststad Ruins

Hamlet in partial ruin, Nonstandard (monster outpost), AL: LE, gp limit: NA*. Assets: NA*. Population: 350, 100% human. Authority figure: Narling, vampire dragon, AL: LE, old red vampire dragon. Others: 6 various vampire dragons, AL: LE; 7 troll draconians, AL: LE; 7 ogre draconians, AL: LE; 7 hobgoblin draconians, AL: LE; 14 orc draconians, AL: LE; 14 goblin draconians, AL: LE. Taxation type: None. Accepted coinage: any.
* No trade is conducted in the ruins of Auststad.

The hamlet of Auststad (*Eastern Home* in old Turami) dates back to the original Turami settlers. It survived unscathed until its first total destruction in the Narfelli-Raumathari conflagration. During much of the Dale's history, it has served as an important milling center for communities along the Trade Route in the Eastern Dale.

Thrice Auststad has fallen victim to total destruction and twice it has arisen from its own ashes. The last devastation, caused by dragons, was in the Year of the Raging Flame (1255 DR). For more than a century, Auststad lay then in ruin, until vampire dragons and draconians from the ruins of Castle Perilous in Vaasa began arriving in recent years.

The draconians are the only significant life forms in Auststad today. The ruins of the hamlet are in the southeastern corner of the Dead Lands that surround Tower Threespires. No wild animals are to be found there. The only surviving plants are occasional wiry bushes and tufts of hardy grass. The draconians are under the command of the vampire dragons.

Usually, Auststad's only visitors are the nocturnally wandering skeletons raised from the dead by Urgrath Hurddh, arch necromancer of the Dragon Cult in Tower Threespires. Neither the vampire dragons nor the draconians have any fear of the wandering undead. On the contrary, the draconians often use the wandering skeletons as sparring partners when they practice melee combat, which accounts for the bones scattered around their hovels in Auststad.

Old Auststad once was a part of the Duchy of Bezentil, until the last duke's slaying by the Gallists in the Year of the Turning Wheel (937 DR). Auststad itself was in the vanguard of the Eastern Dale settlements that turned to Gall and the worship of Herne the Hunter. Auststad had succeeded from the Duchy of Bezentil and become a firm Gallist settlement as early as the Year of the Winding Road (917 DR), remaining under the rule of druid barons for more than 300 years, until its final destruction and abandonment.

The hamlet - then a village - was totally destroyed for the first time in the Narfelli conflagration, but it also was among the first Eastern Dale settlements to rebuilt. However, it quickly was destroyed again, this time by floods, not war, in the Year of the Cresting Floods (-146 DR). Eighteen years later the Freemen of the Dale restored Auststad again because of its important role as a milling center. It survived the rages of the Dale's civil war until its final destruction by dragons.

It is not difficult for travelers on the Trade Route to enter the remains of Auststad. A road connecting Tower Threespires to the Trade Route bridges Dender's Creek on the western edge of the ruins. However, Auststad is within the Dead Lands, and those who enter must counter its effects.

If a PC group enters the Dead Lands, its members will immediately feel the tug of unlife and undeath upon them. Their bodies will recognize that they are in an environment hostile to life. Each time a PC enters the Dead Lands, he or she must make a saving throw or temporarily lose one point of Constitution that is regained within 1d4 hours after leaving the Dead Lands. In a *D&D* 3E campaign, one saves for Fortitude against DC 20. In an *AD&D* 2E campaign, a saving throw against death magic is required.

PCs who enter the Dead Lands after sunrise and before sunset will normally encounter no skeletons. The undead will be in their barrows and will not perceive the PCs' presence. After sunset and before sunrise, the skeletons automatically will sound an alarm and attack any living being found in the Dead Lands who is not accompanied by a cult member from Tower Threespires.

Being in the presence of a vampire dragon or a draconian will not stave off the skeletons, although the undead will attack neither vampire dragons nor draconians. The game master should reckon with one attack by 1d4+1 skeletons every 300 feet/90 m, increasing by 1d4 skeletons for every 10 minutes they spend in the Dead Lands.

If intruders enter Auststad when the skeletons are wandering, the draconians will not react as long as it appears that the undead have the upper hand. If it appears that the skeletons are losing the battle, the draconians will deal en masse with the PCs. No intruders are tolerated here, regardless of affiliation, without orders from Urgrath Hurddh to admit them. Vampire dragons will remain in their hovels unless it appears that their draconians are taking severe losses.

Auststad serves as a base station for vampire dragons and draconians who have come into the Great Dale from Vaasa over the reception station in the ruins of Veidarhofn. There usually are seven operating groups stationed in Auststad, each commanded by a vampire dragon. A full group consists of two goblin draconians, two orc draconians, a hobgoblin draconian, an ogre draconian and a troll draconian.

Each time a new group arrives in Auststad, a current group will leave and head to various destinations on missions. In a *Northern Journey* campaign, the main missions are to hunt down and destroy the sigyll bearers and members of the non-Tiamatist faction of the Dragon Cult.

If a group of draconians is on a mission and has an encounter, the commanding vampire dragon always remains a safe distance from the site of the action. If his draconians are being destroyed, the dragon vampire will teleport back to Veidarhofn and wait there for a new group of draconians to lead to Auststad and then head out on a new mission.

Adventure Hook in Auststad

For encounter details, please see *Auststad Encounters* under *Unofficial NPC Encounters* in Version 7 or higher of the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.

- The Auststad adventure hook is pre-programmed. If the PCs wander into the hamlet unauthorized, they first will have to deal with the skeletons of the Dead Lands. If they succeed, the may encounter up to 50 draconians and seven vampire dragons.

Map of Auststad

1 - Narlings Hovel. This is the hovel of the old red vampire dragon Narling, AL: LE, who commands the units in Auststad. Narling is permanently stationed here and has his own band of two goblin draconians, two orc draconians, a hobgoblin draconian, an ogre draconian and a troll draconian. His band tends to bully the other draconians in camp, but they swallow it. Neither they nor the vampire dragons who command them wish to tangle with Narling, who seems to enjoy the bullying his servants do. While still alive, Narling was a hermit transmuter with a tower hidden in northern Vaasa. He was captured by a patrol of draconians from Castle Dragonblood and was taken to the ruins of Castle Perilous, where he was slain and transformed into an undead vampire dragon.

The remaining hovels: The occupants of these hovels change regularly. The following list describes the vampire dragons currently resident in these hovels. Each hovel also includes a band of two goblin draconians, two orc draconians, a hobgoblin draconian, an ogre draconian and a troll draconian.

2 - Darâhk's Hovel. Darâhk, a former Red Wizard of Thay captured while searching for ancient Narfelli magic near Tschedith, is an old black vampire dragon.

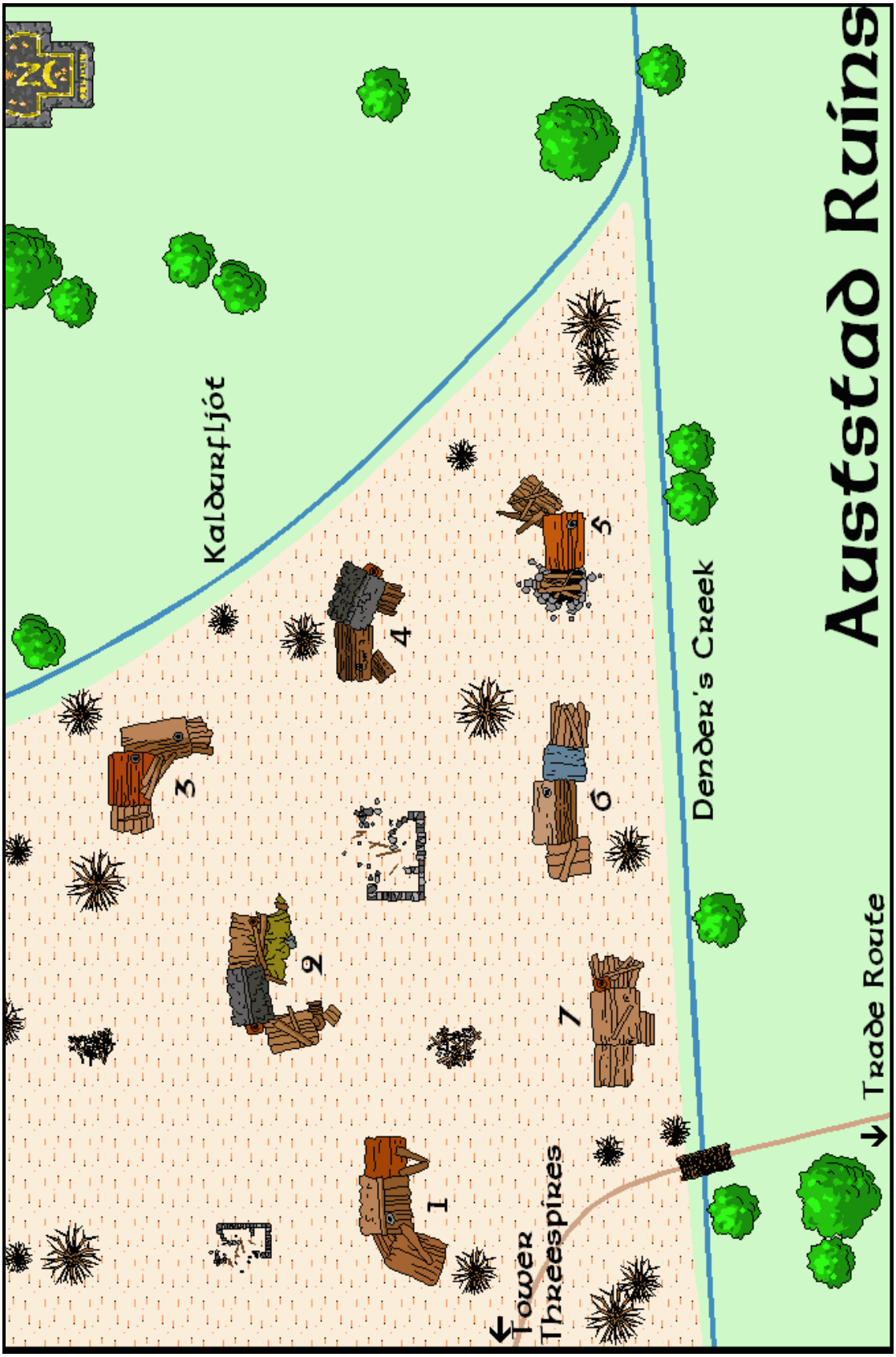
3 - Thinga's Hovel. Thinga was an independent enchantress from Damaran Heliogabalus. She and her band of adventurers encountered a vampire dragon and a band of draconians crossing the Damaran plain. It came to a battle, and her group lost. She and the evoker Jonan were taken captive. The rest of her party was slain. She now is a young blue vampire dragon.

4 - Jonan's Hovel. Jonan was an independent evoker from Damaran Heliogabalus. He and his band of adventurers encountered a vampire dragon and a band of draconians crossing the Damaran plain. It came to a battle, and his group lost. He and the enchantress Thinga were taken captive. The rest of his party was slain. He now is a young green vampire dragon.

5 - Gunar Dendlssonur's Hovel. Dendlsonur was a Zhentarim recruited in Briddh who infiltrated the Kront cell of the Dragon Cult in its Kront branch. He was caught, taken captive and turned over to Urgrath Hurddh, who sent him to Castle Perilous to be transformed. Dendlssonur now is a very young white vampire dragon.

6 - Alexa Ronova's Hovel. Ronova is a sorcereress from Rashmen who was caught spying near Nighthawk Tower. She now is a young adult vampire dragon.

7 - Tumbryl's Hovel. Tumbryl, a former diviner from Ilmwatch, came across a band of draconians led by a dragon vampire that was on a mission in the Trader's Bay area of Impiltur. The rest of her party was slain, but she was taken captive. She now is an adult red vampire dragon.


Auststad Ruins
Kaldurfljót
Dender's Creek
Trade Route
Tower Threespires
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Auststad

Nighthawk Tower

Liches' tower, Nonstandard (liches), AL: CE, gp limit: NA*. Assets: NA*. Population: 2 Liches, 1 Devil Infernal (Baatezu), 1 Demilich. Authority figure: Harbet Gall, divine lich, AL: CE, Lich (Tiamat) 24. Other: Klingszhrâd, arcane lich, AL: CE, Lich 24; Turgarth, arcane demilich 27, AL: CE; Zabaroth, tanar'ri infernal, AL: LE. Taxation type: None. Accepted coinage: NA.
*** Nighthawk Tower buys nothing from and sells nothing to adventurers.**

Overlooking the southern plain of the Nar tribesmen in northern Ashanath, a spire of utter evil peers outward from within the eaves of Rawlinswood.

Any Dalesman who has come cross this point in the wood, even before the destruction of Narfell more than 1,500 years ago, has felt a strong desire to move on again, to escape a cloud of evil that seems to blanket the clearing.

The clearing is a small half circle of land on the wood's edge where trees and other vegetation have refused to grow since the conflagration that destroyed most of Narfell including the Eastern Dale.

The cloud of evil drew the Malarite priest Harbet Gall to this location in the Year of the Watching Raven (913 DR). There he built the dark spire that Dalesmen call Nighthawk Tower. During the time of the tower's construction, aggressive ravens that at times attacked workers perched on the tower, hence the name.

Gall called it the *Temple of the Horned God,* named to honor the double identity he had invented for Malar the Beastlord, the pseudo-god Herne the Hunter. For nearly two decades, the tower had been the main house of worship for Herne in the Eastern Dale. However, as Herne's faith and the True Druids who represented it spread to more corners of the Gallist domain, fewer followers traveled to the tower. After 20 years, it had become Harbet Gall's private retreat, which is what he had intended.

Nighthawk Tower hides many secrets. Some of them Harbet Gall has discovered. But the greatest of them remain hidden yet, even to his red lich's eyes. The tale of Nighthawk Tower and the history of fell magic from the waning days of the Narfelli Empire are closely entwined. To understand what your PCs may find when they come to this spire of evil, you need to know something of both tales.
The seeds of the story trace back to truly ancient days when elves were the masters of magic in the North and to about -6000 DR, when a powerful human strain named the Imaskari pushed magic to its brink in the Raurin Empire, where now there is only desert. Both these sources of magic, of a power beyond modern day ken, are within the legacy of Nighthawk Tower.

In -3830 DR, the elves of the Northwest began teaching their magic to the human nation of Netheril, which also fell, leaving the great desert Anauroch as its heritage. Far from Netheril to the southeast, the great Raurin Empire had begun its decline, with the mightier of its folk challenging even their gods. In -2488 DR, the Raurin Empire met its final destruction in horrendous magical devastation.

Before its decline, however, Netherese flying spelljammers flew far eastward. One group of them became stranded in what now is the Great Dale. It was populated then by the simple Turami folk who had fled the Imaskari descendants who drove them from modern day Mulhorand and Unther. The Netherese subjected them to their rule and founded the magically powerful empire of Narfell, which included all of the Great Dale, much of Impiltur, the barren lands now known as Narfell and parts of the North Country south of the Icerim Mountains.

At about the same time, a new folk that developed through intermarriage between plains barbarians and descendents of refugee Imaskari formed a second great nation, one that commanded the power of what remained of Raurin's great magic. This nation, Raumathar, included modern day Rashemen. It spread eastward toward the Tuigan lands in the Endless Waste and southward across the Golden Way to Murghom. This was the empire of Raumathar.

By -900 DR, both empires had grown mighty. Narfell continued to master the advanced wizardry of its Netherese forebears, while Raumathar was strengthened with a host of war sorcerers who had mastered the great Imaskari magic. Unfortunately, the two empires hated one another.

By the Year of the Masking Shadows (-590 DR), Narfell and Raumathar had begun their long war, which would bring devastation upon both lands for 440 years. In the final conflagration, in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR), the two nations destroyed one another in an exchange of devastating magic paralleled - if at all - only by the magical devastation of the Raurin Empire more than 2,300 years earlier.

In the last battles, the Narfelli wizards and the Raumathari war sorcerers exchanged their most horrible and destructive magicks. The Raumathari summoned great demons, bound them and sent them to fight the Narfelli, and the latter summoned great devils, bound them and sent them against the Raumathari. Most scholars believe that the devastation of Narfell and Raumathar was beyond the ability even of these outsiders to withstand, and that most of the summoned demons and devils either were destroyed or blasted back to the Abyss and Baator.

For the most part, this assumption is correct, but there are exceptions. We already have detailed these under the description of Tower Threespires. However, the site of Nighthawk Tower plays a crucial role within both the rules and the exceptions.

When Gall found the fell-seeming clearing where he built his tower, the evil was a remnant left from the dastardly work of the Narfelli conjurers. In recent years, Gall has succeeded in unintentionally restoring a small part of that evil. The fell atmosphere about Nighthawk Tower now reaches as far as Tschedith, partially dimming the sun in those parts of Rawlinswood and bringing an evil burden upon all who live in those parts of the Eastern Dale.

Gall has discovered only some of the evil secrets upon the site of his tower. It is possible that your PCs may find others and, in the process, accidentally unleash them. If they do so, the Great Dale will come to know terrors far greater than those Gall has inflicted upon them.

On the spot where Nighthawk Tower now stands, the Narfelli began building another tower named Věžpeklo (*Hell Tower* in old Narfelli) in the Year of the Dark Roads (-351 DR). The emperor in Heligonius sent many of his mightiest conjurers to Věžpeklo, and their task was to summon and bind devils or baatezu to send against the Raumathari. The leader of Věžpeklo Tower was an epic conjurer-lich named Turgarth. He was in possession of one of the *Narfelli Emperor's Stones* named *Bunlûhn*.

Turgarth had no love for daylight. He shunned the tower laboratories of Věžpeklo and went to his own tower chamber only when he needed to use *Bunlûhn*, either to answer the calls of the emperor in Heligonius or to define power lines to strengthen his summons, which was one of the stone's abilities. *Bunlûhn* was relatively ineffective for communications when it was in the dungeons. It worked best in the heights.

Beneath the tower of Věžpeklo, Turgarth caused huge dungeons to be built to a depth of six levels. There are some hints in ancient Narfelli parchments that conjurers in the southeast of the empire had succeeded in summoning large numbers of lesser devils and then sending these forth in small hosts to attack the Raumathari on the other side of the water. Although this tower's name and specific location are not named, they seem to describe Věžpeklo well.

The summoning of the Narfelli conjurers and the Raumathari warrior sorcerers escalated in the last years of the war. Ever higher level tanar'ri and baatezu were being drawn into the war by the two sides. In the last days before the two empires' mutual destruction, Turgarth appears to have achieved his greatest success. Already, both sides had succeeded in summoning and binding a few pit fiends and balor, but Turgarth at last summoned and bound a tanar'ri infernal named Zabaroth to fight the Raumathari.

However, Zabaroth never went to war. He still was confined in his magical cage deep in Věžpeklo's dungeons when a Raumathari blast of magic blasted Věžpeklo tower to oblivion. Nothing that was above the surface survived, and the dungeons were blocked and totally buried.

At the time of the blast, only Turgarth, two other conjurers, his jailer, two prisoners and the infernal Zabaroth were in the dungeon. The five humans died in short order of a lack of oxygen, but the undead Turgarth and the outsider Zabaroth survived.

Turgarth hade been losing interest in the war above and already had begun making preparations to ascend to demilichdom. After the blast, he could sense that his phylactery had survived, buried deep beneath rubble but quite safe from anyone who might attempt to destroy him. As a demilich, the devastation of Věžpeklo or for that matter of all of Narfell would be of little consequence to him.

The only drawback was that he would be a weak demilich with no ability to swallow souls into his gems. However, he believed men might come again one day to the site of Věžpeklo, and with luck, his magic could draw them to excavate and then bring their souls to him. Thus, he followed his chosen path, succeeded in becoming a demilich and began exploring strange and remote paths far from the home of his skull and phylactery on the material plane.

Turgarth had lost interest in the infernal Zabaroth. The mighty Tanar'ri sits to this very day in a Narfelli cage 120 feet/36 m beneath Nighthawk Tower, although neither Gall nor his enslaved conjurer-lich Klingszhrâd is aware of this. In fact, it took many years before any of these things began coming to Gall's attention.

Once Gall's followers had begun worshipping elsewhere and he enjoyed the seclusion he long had wanted in Nighthawk Tower, his thoughts began turning toward lichdom. The priest's health had been failing. He saw lichdom as the only means to avoid an early death. At age 66 in the Year of the Cold Claws (940 DR), Gall, successfully conducted the dark rites to ascend from life into the undeath of lichdom.

After that time, visitors at Nighthawk Tower became rare and seldom were welcome. When Gall appeared before his followers, he did so in the shape of a large standing stag, declaring himself to be an avatar of Herne the Hunter.

In the Year of the Meddling Avatar (988 DR), Gall ordered the masters of the Kront slave farms to send several hundred slaves to Nighthawk Tower. They were assigned to rebuild the tower into the structure it is today, a seven-story complex with dungeon that has no physical means for entering the third through seventh stories. These are accessible only through teleports, and they can be activated only through a mental command with a secret password.

The remodeled Nighthawk Tower contains a number of secrets. To protect these, Gall had all of the slaves who worked on the reconstruction slain and buried in the barren clearing upon which the tower had been built. Their bones remained there until the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR). In that year, Gall called the Dragon Cult Necromancer Urgrath Hurddh to Nighthawk Tower and ordered him to raise the dead slaves as skeletons. Hurddh marched the newly-raised to his Tower Threespires, where they became a part of his undead host.

During the reconstruction, several slaves were killed or injured, when the earth caved in beneath them in the northwestern corner of the tower's foundation. Further exploration confirmed that at least a part of an old dungeon was on the site at this point. Gall forbade the slaves from entering the dungeon, but he did order them to construct a brick walled shaft leading into the first room that had been discovered.

In the Year of Dark Stalking (989 DR), after the reconstruction had been completed and the slaves slain, Gall began exploring the dungeon ruins his slaves had found. The lich thoroughly explored the areas shown on the dungeon plan entitled *Nighthawk Tower, Dungeon Level 1 - Northwest and Northeast*.

In the chambers numbered 1 and 2 on the dungeon plan *Nighthawk Tower, Dungeon Level 1 - Northeast,* Gall found a horde of Narfelli magical objects, which he removed to his own treasury. Chamber No. 2 also contained many documents that Gall found of interest. The most valuable of them was a Narfelli *Tome of Facets*, one of only two such tomes known to exist in Faerûn. The ghosts of two Narfelli conjurers who haunt these ruins did not trouble the lich.

Gall also opened the door to the western chamber shown on the dungeon plan entitled *Nighthawk Tower, Dungeon Level 1 - Southeast*, but before entering the chamber, he saw the jewels in the eye sockets and mouth cavity of the skull upon the throne. Gall was certain that the chamber was the domain of a Narfelli demilich. He also was certain he would have no chance against such a foe. He closed the chamber door. He never has returned. He also has ordered his enslaved lich Klingszhrâd not to enter this chamber.

Of the additional chamber shown partly on this plan and partly on the plan entitled *Nighthawk Tower, Dungeon Level 1 - Southwest* and of the deeper dungeon ruin in which the tanar'ri infernal Zabaroth is caged, neither Gall nor Klingszhrâd know anything.

Gall spent several years lost in studies of the documents found in the dungeon library of Věžpeklo Tower - a name he now knew. In these years, he appeared only infrequently among his followers, leaving day-to-day decisions in the hands of his Druid Infallible in Kront. Gall learned what kind of work the Narfelli wizards had done in the fallen tower. Finally, he learned how to use some of the magical items he had found there, although he was disappointed in this respect.

There were no Narfelli priests or clerics in Věžpeklo Tower. It was the domain of high conjurers. Therefore, the magical items they possessed had dealt largely with arcane magic, a field in which Gall had little talent, as his unsuccessful attempts centuries later to learn wizardry would prove.

The Malarite lich had to settle for using the few items he understood. The rest lay unused and all but forgotten in his hidden treasure chamber within Nighthawk Tower's base. One item that had not been found in the treasury of Věžpeklo Tower called particularly to Gall. It was the *Emperor's Stone Bunlûhn*. Gall first read journal entries regarding the powerful stone in journal entries from the dungeon's library. Thereafter, he desired it, for that was a part of the magic of the lost stone. It sought a new master.

However, Gall had no idea where the stone was. It had not been among the items in the dungeon treasury. In truth, *Bunlûhn* had been in Turgarth's chamber atop Věžpeklo Tower when the spire was obliterated by Raumathari magic. The orb had landed in the bed of the then evaporated Kaldurfljót where it was covered by boiling mud. Over the years it gradually washed downstream, until it struck a rock beneath the site of the present day bridge just east of Nighthawk Tower, and there it slowly worked its way beneath the sand of the streambed. However, Harbet Gall had no way of knowing this.

Over the centuries, both a yearning for *Bunlûhn* and a desire to have the use of some of the mighty Narfelli magic moldering in his treasure chamber gnawed at Gall's thoughts. At last, many years later, Gall withdrew his hand from day-to-day affairs in the Great Dale and merely observed events in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR).

It was the Time of Troubles. The deities of Faerûn had been thrown from the heavens, and his own master, Malar the Beastlord, had come to nearby Bezentil in the Dale. Malar had not chosen Gall as the host for his avatar. Indeed, his lich's frame may have been an unsuited vessel. Instead, the Beastlord took the body of his priest Hardhkjarkur Arnulfssonur in Bezentil. With such events at hand, Gall believed it was a time to watch, not a time to act.

It occurred to him that it also was a time when he could sate his hunger for the Narfelli magic in his treasure chamber and perhaps his desire for *Bunlûhn* as well. Parchments from the dungeon library of Věžpeklo Tower made clear how items in his treasury could be used to find *Bunlûhn* and then retrieve it. However, the use of these items was beyond the abilities of Gall's divine magic.

One alternative would have been to command wizards of his Kront Dragon Cult cell to activate these magical items for him, but Gall was loath to use this option. Many times during his reign, high magi of the cult had attempted to overthrow him. Knowledge of his magical treasury, Gall believed, would tempt the cult magi to do so even more often.

The solution to this problem came from his Druid Infallible in Kront in the Year of Shadows. He informed Gall of an offer being made by a lich-conjurer in Thay to sell a rival lich-conjurer whom he had enslaved. The lich-conjurer who had made the offer was named Thrúdzuin, and the lich he wished to sell had been his brother in life, Klingszhrâd, who also was his greatest rival in undeath.

Through means untold, Thrúdzuin had managed to capture Klingszhrâd's phylactery and thereby gain control of him. Thrúdzuin wished Klingszhrâd to be far removed from Thay. He was seeking to sell him, to the distant bidder who offered the highest price. It came to negotiations between representatives of Thrúdzuin and Gall. In the end, Gall paid Thrúdzuin half of the Narfelli magic in his treasury in return for Klingszhrâd's phylactery. Then he ordered his slave to come northward, to Nighthawk Tower.

Gall has known better than to make Klingszhrâd an embittered servant. He wanted the services of the conjurer-lich. He did not want to provoke Klingszhrâd to do all within his means to recover his phylactery and then turn upon his master. As a result, Gall seldom demands services from Klingszhrâd. Most of the time, he leaves him free to experiment in summoning and with other magic.

In return for his services, Gall has given Klingszhrâd the 3rd Story of Nighthawk Tower, which the conjurer-lich has turned into a conjurer's laboratory with a summoning cage of Narfelli containment magic. Gall turned most of the Narfelli magical items in his treasure chamber that are of use to a conjurer over to Klingszhrâd, and he also has given him most of the Narfelli documents that are pertinent to the slave lich's art. As a result, Klingszhrâd is relatively content with his existence in Nighthawk Tower.

Gall has ordered him not to leave his 3rd Story chamber without Gall's permission. This irks Klingszhrâd as a matter of pride, but he really has no desire to be anywhere else than in his laboratory. Therefore, this restraint has not been a motive for the slave to ponder how he can escape his master's control.

In the last 14 years, Gall has called upon Klingszhrâd only infrequently. Upon the slave's arrival, Gall ordered Klingszhrâd to use Narfelli magical items to find and retrieve *Bunlûhn* successfully. Shortly thereafter, he also had Klingszhrâd use the Narfelli scrolls that placed the ward *Ochrana* on the walls of Nighthawk Tower and Tower Threespires. The ward absorbs damage and keeps magic from penetrating the towers. Klingszhrâd also has activated other magical items that now are used by Gall.

Ochrana

Klingszhrâd has learned a few things about Nighthawk Tower that are not yet known to Gall. At times when Gall has been absent from the tower, the slave has violated his master's orders and done some exploration of the Narfelli dungeon below.

He too has discovered the chamber where the skull of the demilich Turgarth rests. However, Klingszhrâd was been a bit more daring than Gall. He has passed through Turgarth's chamber (see the dungeon plan *Nighthawk Tower, Dungeon Level 1 - Southeast*), staying close to the north and west walls and then proceeding through the passage (No. 4) into the ruined chamber (No. 5).

There Klingszhrâd discovered the secret door to the lower dungeons (No. 2 on the dungeon plan *Nighthawk Tower, Dungeon Level 1 - Southwest*) and explored the tunnel for about 15 feet/5 m, before turning back in terror. The slave lich knows that something of the uttermost evil and power lurks below, and he is terrified of it. He has closed the secret door to the lower levels and hidden it again. He has no intention of returning there, nor does he intend to inform Gall of the forbidden research he has conducted.

Klingszhrâd is strongly tempted to explore Gall's chambers too at some time when the master is away, but he is afraid that Gall may have magic in place that would record his exploits and betray him. It has occurred to Klingszhrâd that he perhaps has become less important and less useful to Gall since he has fulfilled all of his master's greater biddings. He believes if Gall were to find that his slave had violated his own chambers, the master might indeed react by destroying Klingszhrâd's phylactery.

It should be noted that the presence of the infernal Zabaroth, imprisoned in the Narfelli cell beneath Nighthawk Tower, rather than the works of Harbet Gall are the reason for the dark cloud of evil that surrounds Nighthawk Tower and its environs.

This cloud has spread, covering even Tschedith since Marpenoth of the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), when Gall began occupying himself intensely with the *Narfelli Emperor's Stone Bunlûhn*. Gall has begun mastering only the minor powers of the stone, and it makes him restless while always drawing him back to it. *Bunlûhn* receives the calls of the master stone, buried deep somewhere beneath the site where Heligonius once stood. However, he cannot react to these calls, because he knows neither where the master stone is nor where the precise location of Heligonius was.

Gall is becoming ever more competent in using the scrying abilities of *Bunlûhn,* but he has failed to date to bring the stone to look into areas that are magically shielded from scrying. If it has the power to penetrate such shielding, Gall has not yet learned how to use it. In a *Northern Journey* campaign, Gall also will attempt frequently to locate the sigyll bearers who have been sent to destroy him, however, the stone has been unable to sense them.

The lich does not know whether this is the result of his own inexperience with *Bunlûhn* or whether the stone is blocked magically from finding the sigyll bearers. In truth, the stone is unable to perceive them. The ancient dwarven magic upon the PCs clashes with the Narfelli magic in *Bunlûhn* and makes the PCs invisible to the stone.

Gall also is convinced that *Bunlûhn* is leading him gradually to the source of immense and awful power. When using the stone, he feels often that he is on the brink of that power and that he can make it his own, but somehow, it stays just slightly out of reach.

The truth is different. *Bunlûhn* possesses special properties for conjurers. It strengthens a conjurer's ability to build threads to outsiders and their domains in the Abyss, Baator and elsewhere. When Turgarth summoned Zabaroth some 1,500 years ago, he used *Bunlûhn* to construct such a thread. He had not yet closed it when Věžpeklo Tower fell, and it remains open today. The power Gall perceives is that of Zabaroth, who indeed is near and just out of reach.

If a PC group approaches Nighthawk Tower, it too will come under the influence of Zabaroth's evil cloud. It can be felt by one and all. One immediately perceives a deep and encompassing sense of utter evil. It reaches into every nook and cranny. Attempts to detect evil are futile, simply because they show everything as being evil. Even a visiting paladin would be shown by the spell to be a creature of evil.

The stone has more far-reaching effects in Tschedith that are beyond normal perception. Beings of utter evil are strengthened by the stone's cloud of evil. It gives them a bonus of 1 on all attack, damage and check rolls that they make within its area of influence.

Beings of utter good, such as paladins, are weakened by the cloud. It gives them a penalty of 1 on all attack, damage and check rolls that they make. Druids and clerics of evil deities also have a bonus of 1 on all throws used to implement spells, and these have a difficulty class bonus of 1 as well. Druids and clerics of good-aligned deities have a penalty of 1 on such rolls and on difficulty class. Druids and clerics of neutrally aligned deities are not affected.

Adventure Hooks in Nighthawk Tower

- **In and Out:** Getting into and out of Nighthawk Tower could be the most difficult thing your PCs do in all of the Great Dale. When anyone comes within 500 feet/150 m of the tower, both Gall and Klingszhrâd will be alarmed magically. The PCs will need powerful magic if they wish to avoid detection. Invisibility is not adequate. Regardless of whether the PCs are detected, they also need to gain entrance to the tower. Neither Gall nor Klingszhrâd will come to the door, open it and bid them to enter for a cup of tea. Nighthawk Tower is protected by *Ochrana*, therefore the players cannot teleport themselves into the tower or use other magic to penetrate it, at least not until they have damaged the tower to the tune of 2,000 hp. The tower's front door is not protected with magic, but it is locked, and the lock is a masterwork. A rogue could use his skills to open the door, but the lock has a DC of 40 in *D&D 3E* and a penalty of 60 in *AD&D 2E*. Likewise, a rogue could climb the tower and try to gain entry through a window, if he or she can find a means to open the window without using penetrating magic or causing even the most trivial damage. A particularly brilliant party with a dwarf member might have the dwarf seek underground passages and find the one connecting the dungeon to Zabaroth's cage. Gall is not at all prepared for such an intrusion - being unaware of this passage - and he would not be further alerted by his magic, because the PCs already will have been within its sphere of influence. Gall's strategy at first will be to hole up within the tower and assume the PCs cannot reach him. He sees that as his safest course. As long as he believes them to be outside of the tower, he will do nothing to attack them, to avoid placing himself in danger. Klingszhrâd will do nothing at all regarding intruders, if he can avoid it. He will defend the tower against them only if Gall orders him to do so. He also will defend himself, of course. Klingszhrâd knows nothing of the sigylls or their bearers. He also is not a target of a sigyll, thus, the symbols will not affect him in any manner. If the PCs gain entry to the tower, they then must find a way to go from level to level. Above the second story, there are no physical means to do so. However, once they are within the tower, their magic will work again. *Ochrana* works only against objects and magic outside the tower that try to penetrate or damage it. Thus, PCs could conceivably teleport from level to level. Gall will do all in his power to keep the PCs from coming within 20 feet/6 m of him. Should they succeed in such an attempt, the closest sigyll will destroy him, and he knows this.

- **Hello Turgarth:** If the PCs get nosy, enter Turgarth's chamber and disturb him, he will be elated at the possibility to at last fill his jewels with swallowed souls. Unlike Klingszhrâd, who slipped once through the chamber, the PCs are alive. It also will occur to Turgarth that the dungeon has been opened and his skull can take flight out of it. He will do both of those things, in that sequence. If, on the other hand, the PCs destroy him, they will free Zabaroth automatically without realizing it, because the Narfelli cage that contains the infernal was bound to Turgarth by the *Bunlûhn*. Once freed in this manner, Zabaroth will mentally seek his captor, Turgarth, and immediately determine that he no longer exists. He then will search mentally for Věžpeklo Tower and its inhabitants, who worked with Turgarth, and determine that neither they nor the tower exist anymore. At that point, the game master must determine what Zabaroth does. He is free to materialize at any point within the material plane or upon Baator that he chooses. He could, of course, investigate the place where he is at the moment, but after 1,500 years in captivity, one assumes that an epic level infernal might have more important things to do. If you are planning to run *In the Land of the Lich Lords*, the optional eighth part of *Northern Journey,* Zabaroth must materialize beneath the Greypeak Mountains of the North, where you will find him leading devils in a material plane campaign of the Blood War, fighting against demons.

- **Hello Zabaroth:** If the PCs somehow make it to Zabaroth's cage without destroying Turgarth, neither they nor the infernal will be able to do anything to one another at first. The Narfelli cage will prevent that. However, once the PCs are within earshot, a certain primitive level of thought transference will take place. The baatezu will become aware of Nighthawk Tower above him, of Harbet Gall, of Zabaroth and, if the PCs are aware of him, of Klingszhrâd. Zabaroth's voice has a special charming ability. Any living mortal hearing him is unable to leave his presence as long as Zabaroth is talking. One can escape this effect beginning only after the second round in which Zabaroth is talking. After that, each listener (in *D&D 3E*) is entitled to a saving throw for Will against DC 35 once every 10 minutes, to break the entrancement. In *AD&D 2E*, this listener must save for petrification with a penalty of five. Zabaroth will do his best to convince the PCs to free him, and he will accept any reasonable bindings the PCs insist upon to gain that freedom. If the PCs agree to free him, he also will attempt to convince them to let him destroy Turgarth. There are three means of destroying the Narfelli cage and freeing Zabaroth: Destroying Turgarth, touching a bar of the cage with *Bunlûhn* or using a spell that Klingszhrâd can say. If the PCs already have destroyed Harbet Gall at the time that they attempt to free Zabaroth, and the PCs now are attempting to convince Klingszhrâd to free the infernal, the conjurer-lich will bargain. If the PCs offer to let him in peace to search for his phylactery, that would be an acceptable bargain. Klingszhrâd has no particular desire to battle the PCs, and he knows that if they destroyed Gall, they perhaps can destroy him as well. Setting Zabaroth loose will not bother him, as long as he can bind the demon never to approach his domain in the Eastern Dale, a binding to which the infernal will submit. Zabaroth can teach Klingszhrâd the spell of release. If freed in this manner, Zabaroth will vanish and immediately reappear in the Northwest, as mentioned above.

Nighthawk Tower Maps and Dungeon Plans

Nighthawk Tower Overland

This map shows how the tower stands in the landscape. The base of the tower is green with pointed abutments jutting out from it. The spire is pitch black. The roof is green. Nighthawk Tower is 120 feet/36 m high, with a ground floor and six upper stories separated by equal distances of 20 feet/6 m. There are three windows each in the second through sixth stories. The upper story is open, with columns supporting the roof.

Nighthawk Tower Ground Floor

Most of the ground floor is Harbet Gall's hidden treasure chamber, which is accessible only from the 2nd Story (European first floor) and the dungeon.

1 - Entryway. The tower's door, made of steel-banded wood, is closed with a magic lock that is a masterwork. It can be opened only by non-magical and non-damaging means, because it is protected by the ward *Ochrana*. A rogue can use the *Open Locks* skill to open the lock, but he or she must roll against DC 40 in *D&D 3E* or with a penalty of 60 in *AD&D 2E*. A rogue who fails to open the lock on a first attempt cannot succeed until he or she gains a new level and makes another attempt. A non-magical skeleton key will keep its bonus against this lock, but a magical skeleton key has no chance of success at all, due to the protection of *Ochrana*. Viewed from the doorway, this level stands at a height 10 feet/3 m above the ground, with the stairway at the door opening beginning at ground level and ascending 10 feet/3 m. At the end of the stairway is a spiral staircase 8 feet/240 cm in diameter that ascends another 10 feet/3 m to the 2nd story. This area is walled in, making the treasure chamber both invisible and inaccessible from it.

2 - Ladder. The 20-foot/6-m high ladder reaches up to a secret door in the floor of the second story.

3 - Treasure. The game master should decide for himself or herself what most of the contents of this treasure room are, based on the balance requirements of his or her campaign. At a minimum, however, it should continue the following:

- Gall's Dragon Cult *Ring of Dragons* (see the *Cult of the Dragon* accessory by Dale Donovan - TSR 1998).
- The Orb of Dragon control Gall used in earlier years to command cult dragons.
- More than 2 million gold talers worth of coins and monetary bars of gold, silver and bloodstone. If defined properly, this treasure should not contaminate most campaigns, because the PCs will have considerable difficulty taking any substantial part of this treasure with them.
- Several magical weapons, most of them of the type that can be used by rangers and druids.
- Relatively little arcane magic. Most of the arcane magic Gall acquired has been turned over to Klingszhrâd and favored followers or paid to Thrúdzuin to buy the slave lich Klingszhrâd.
- A large collection of valuable silks from Shou-Lung.
- Jewels of a combined value of at least 1 million gold talers.

The PCs will ***not*** find *Bunlûhn* or the phylacteries of Gall of Klingszhrâd on this level.

Nighthawk Tower 2nd Story

This level is the reception area Gall used for meetings with his druids and high rangers of the Hunters of Herne. It is the only level to which guests ever have been admitted. It has been used little since the Time of Troubles.

1 - Stone Golem. The golem reacts to a mental command from Gall to allow a guest to remain. When there is no such command, the golem is under orders to expeditiously liquidate intruders. This is a standard 14HD stone golem.

2 - Pile of Skulls. They have no function and are not animate.

3 -Teleport. This is the only means of transportation between the 2nd and 3rd stories. It consists of visible green light, as shown on the floor plan. It functions only upon the mental utterance of the correct password, which is known only to Gall and Klingszhrâd.

4 - Ever-Burning Braziers. They serve no particular purpose.

5 - Spiral Staircase to Ground Floor.

6 - Conference Tables. The candles are magic and burn forever.

7 - Rostrum. Gall used this earlier to address guests.

8 - Secret Door to Treasure Chamber. The DC to find this door is 40 in *D&D 3E.* The check has a penalty of 3 in *AD&D 2E*.

Nighthawk Tower 3rd Story

This is Klingszhrâd's chamber. Because Gall has restricted his movement, Klingszhrâd is virtually certain to be here. He will not immediately, if the PCs arrive, but rather suggest that they move on before he finds it necessary to do so. Of course, some PC groups may mistake him for Gall, not knowing that Klingszhrâd exists, and attack him anyway. He will defend himself to the best of his ability.

1 -Teleport. This is the only means of transportation between the 2nd, 3rd and 4th stories. It consists of visible red light, as shown on the floor plan. It functions only upon the mental utterance of the correct password, which is known only to Gall and Klingszhrâd. Klingszhrâd does not know the password for the 4th story.

2 - Magic Circles. The purpose of these is not quite clear.

3 - Klingszhrâd in a Circle of Summoning at his lab stable.

4 - Empty Outsider Cage. Made of Narfelli containment magic.

5 - Library and Desks. The library contains several volumes on powerful Narfelli magic in the fields of conjuration and summoning. Gall gave these books to Klingszhrâd. They are from the library in the dungeon.

6 - Spell Components Cabinet.

Nighthawk Tower 4th Story

This is Gall's chamber of worship. The 10 braziers are magical, with ever-burning flames.

1 -Teleport. This is the only means of transportation between the 3rd, 4th and 5th stories. It consists of visible blue light, as shown on the floor plan. It functions only upon the mental utterance of the correct password, which is known only to Gall.

2 - Altar to Malar.

3 - Statue of Tiamat in Human Female Form.

4 - Statue of Tiamat in Red Dragon Form.

5 - Altar to Tiamat.

Nighthawk Tower 5th Story

This is Gall's laboratory.

1 -Teleport. This is the only means of transportation between the 4th, 5th and 6th stories. It consists of visible green light, as shown on the floor plan. It functions only upon the mental utterance of the correct password, which is known only to Gall. The 10 braziers are magical, with ever-burning flames.

2 - Workbench.

3 - Desk.

4 - Experimental Altars. An ever-burning flame is in the braziers.

5 - Library.

6 - Spell Component Cabinets.

Nighthawk Tower 6th Story

This is Gall's second laboratory. On this level, he is studying the secrets he needs to know to advance to demilichdom.

1 -Teleport. This is the only means of transportation between the 5th, 6th and 7th stories. It consists of visible blue light, as shown on the floor plan. It functions only upon the mental utterance of the correct password, which is known only to Gall.

2 - Magic Circles. These circles lend Gall extra strength during his work. As long as he stands within one of the circles, he gains a bonus of 5 on all throws he makes. He created these permanent circles with the help of Narfelli divine scrolls, which already have been used and exhausted.

3 - Scripture Desk. On this desk, one can find one of two known copies of the *Tome of Facets* in the Forgotten Realms. Among evil books, this is one of the most valuable in all of Faerûn. For details, see the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide,* Version 7.0 or higher.

4 - Altar.

5 - Cauldron of Blood.

6 - Shelves. Contain spell components and magical items.

7 - Bookshelves.

Nighthawk Tower 7th Story

This is Gall's observation chamber. As much as is possible, he divides his time in Nighthawk Tower between this level and the sixth story. Gall still is a rank amateur in the use of his *Emperor's Stone*, but he is learning. Fortunately or unfortunately - depending upon one's point of view - Gall has little interest in summoning and conjuring, which are the strong points of *Bunlûhn*.

Nonetheless, *Bunlûhn* shows him what is going on in much of the world around him, and it lets Gall see on a large scale what is happening in areas managed by his subordinates. It also has brought him the unwelcome news that his rival and ally, the arch necromancer Urgrath Hurddh, has come into possession of the Emperor's Stone *Undalûhn*. At present, Gall is laughing at Hurddh's experiments with the stone.

Anytime that Hurddh uses *Undalûhn*, Gall is able to observe him. Hurddh can observe Gall too, until Gall extinguishes the candles, but Hurddh has not added this up yet. He does not realize - as Gall does - that the stones are dependent upon light to show what they see. When the lights are out, they can show nothing.

Despite the humorous moments Gall spends enjoying watching Hurddh's first attempts with *Undalûhn,* his own use of *Bunlûhn* is weighing heavily upon him. The stone keeps bringing Gall a magnetic call to come to the emperor in Heligonius. Gall doubts that he would be able to resist this call, if he knew where to seek Heligonius. Even worse, however, is Gall's certainty that *Bunlûhn* is trying to lead him to a source of great evil power that remains just beyond the lich's reach. Gall is convinced that this power soon will be in his grasp.

The lich would be horrified to know that what really is calling to him is the stone's binding to the imprisoned infernal Zabaroth, who would liquidate Gall within the blink of an eye, were he given the chance.

A rogue who climbs the tower 120 feet/36 m to the top also can gain easy entrance here. This level is open. However, *Ochrana* protects it from the elements and intruders who might attempt to send violent or magical attacks through the open area beneath the roof.

1 -Teleport. This is the only means of transportation between the 6th and 7th stories. It consists of visible red light, as shown on the floor plan. It functions only upon the mental utterance of the correct password, which is known only to Gall.

2 - Three-Tiered Platform. Each level is 1 foot/30 cm higher than the last.

3 - Gall's Throne. With a mental command, the throne will rotate in any direction.

4 - *Bunlûhn's* Case. When Gall is elsewhere, he keeps *Bunlûhn* in the miniature chest upon this stone slab, which is covered with a red cloth. More interesting yet is the slab itself. After acquiring Klingszhrâd, Gall applied a *Transmute Rock to Mud* spell to the slab, placed his own phylactery and Klingszhrâd's into it, and then hardened it again with a *Transmute to Rock* spell. Afterwards, he used a Narfelli object to magically hide the contents of the slab.

Nighthawk Tower - Dungeon Overview

The detailed maps of the dungeon have been made in a manner to permit their use with miniature tin figures. To accomplish that, the dungeon levels had to be divided into five separate floor plans. The overview shows you how the five maps fit in relationship to one another as well as to the tower above.

Nighthawk Tower - Dungeon Level 1 - Northwest

If the players enter the dungeon from the tower, their route will be of necessity from the northwest to the northeast, southeast, southwest and then into the lower dungeon.

1 - Passage to the Northeast Section.

2 - Jailer's Room.

3 - Ladder to Tower 2nd Story. The jailer apparently tried unsuccessfully to escape the dungeon here. His skeleton lies at the foot of the ladder.

4 - Cells. Two prisoners apparently were in the cells at the time of Narfell's destruction. Their inanimate skeletons remain there today.

Nighthawk Tower - Dungeon Level 1 - Northwest

1 - Conjurers' Lab. This room is haunted by the ghost of a Narfelli conjurer.

2 - Conjurer's Library. This room is haunted by the ghost of a Narfelli conjurer. Most of the more valuable books were removed earlier by Harbet Gall. Some books are scattered on the floor,

Nighthawk Tower - Dungeon Level 1 - Southeast

1 - Entry passage from the Library. Leads to Point 2 on the map above.

2 - Turgarth's Throne. The demilich's skull remains upon the throne. The game master should try to convey the idea that this is the skull of a dead demilich, if the players know what a demilich is. The skull is under a heavy layer of dust, and there is no spark of life left in any of the jewels. Turgarth will be happy to swallow the souls of the flesh-and-blood PCs, to at last animate his long dead jewels.

3 - Conference Tables.

4 - Passage to the Ruins.

5 - Ruins. This chamber is continued on the floor plan *Nighthawk Tower, Dungeon Level 1 - Southeast*. The chamber is filled with mini-craters. They were made by a band of groundlings, a monster that is defined in the product *Minions Rebirth,* Copyright © 2002, Bastion Press ®. For more information see the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide,* Version 8.1.

Nighthawk Tower - Dungeon Level 1 - Southwest

1 - Ruins. Continuation of No. 5 on the previous map.

2 - Hidden Trapdoor. The stairway beneath the trapdoor begins a rapid descent.

3 - Blocked Passage. This passage has caved in. It is impossible to enter.

4 - Underground passage. This passage descends 120 feet/36 m into the depths. It connects with Point 6 on the dungeon plan *Nighthawk Tower, Dungeon Level 2 (Northwest)*.

Nighthawk Tower - Dungeon Level 2 (Northwest)

This is the area where the infernal Zabaroth has been caged for the last 1,500 years.

1 - Conjurer's Workbench.

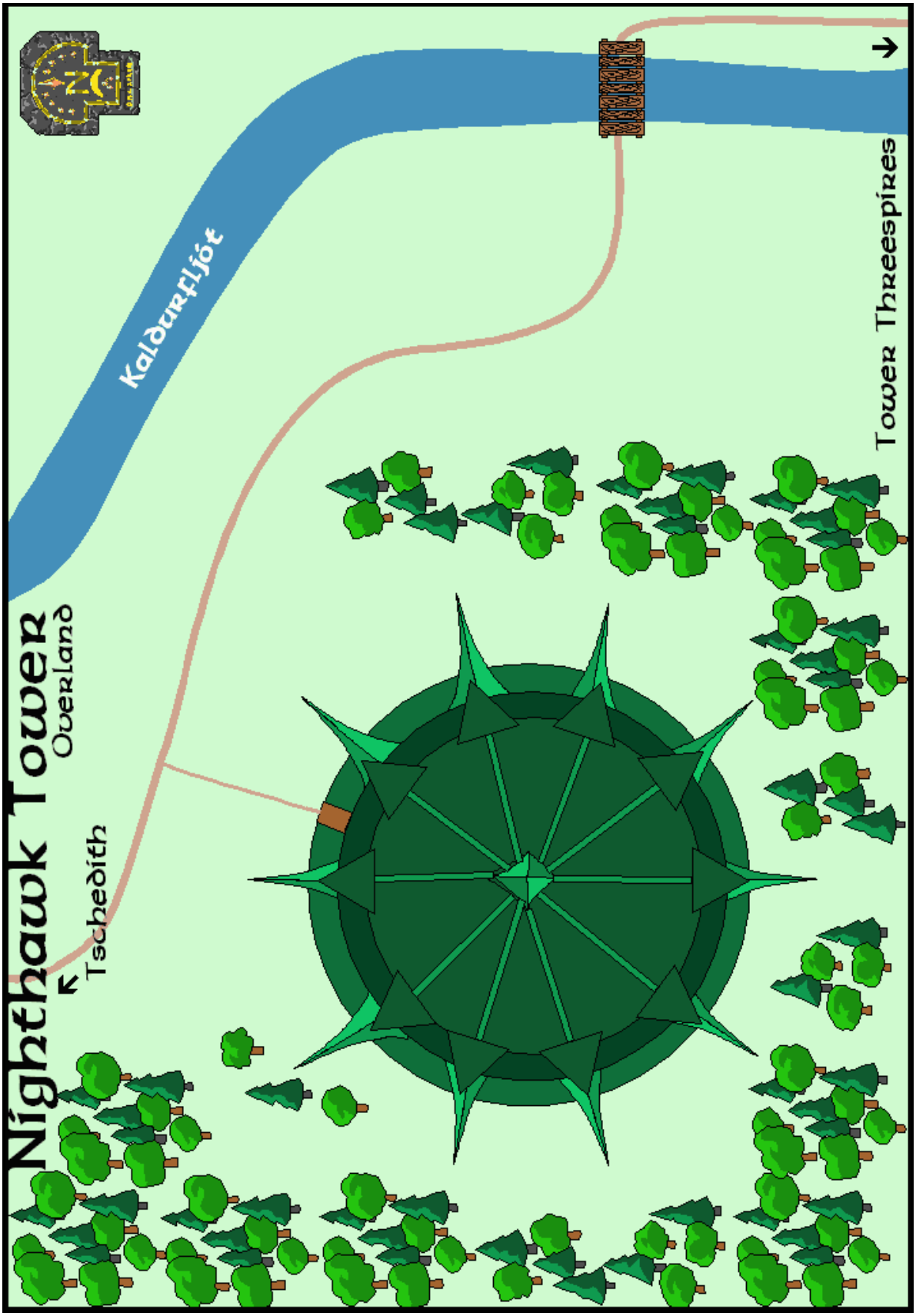
2 - Cabinet With Spell Components.

3 - Bookshelves.

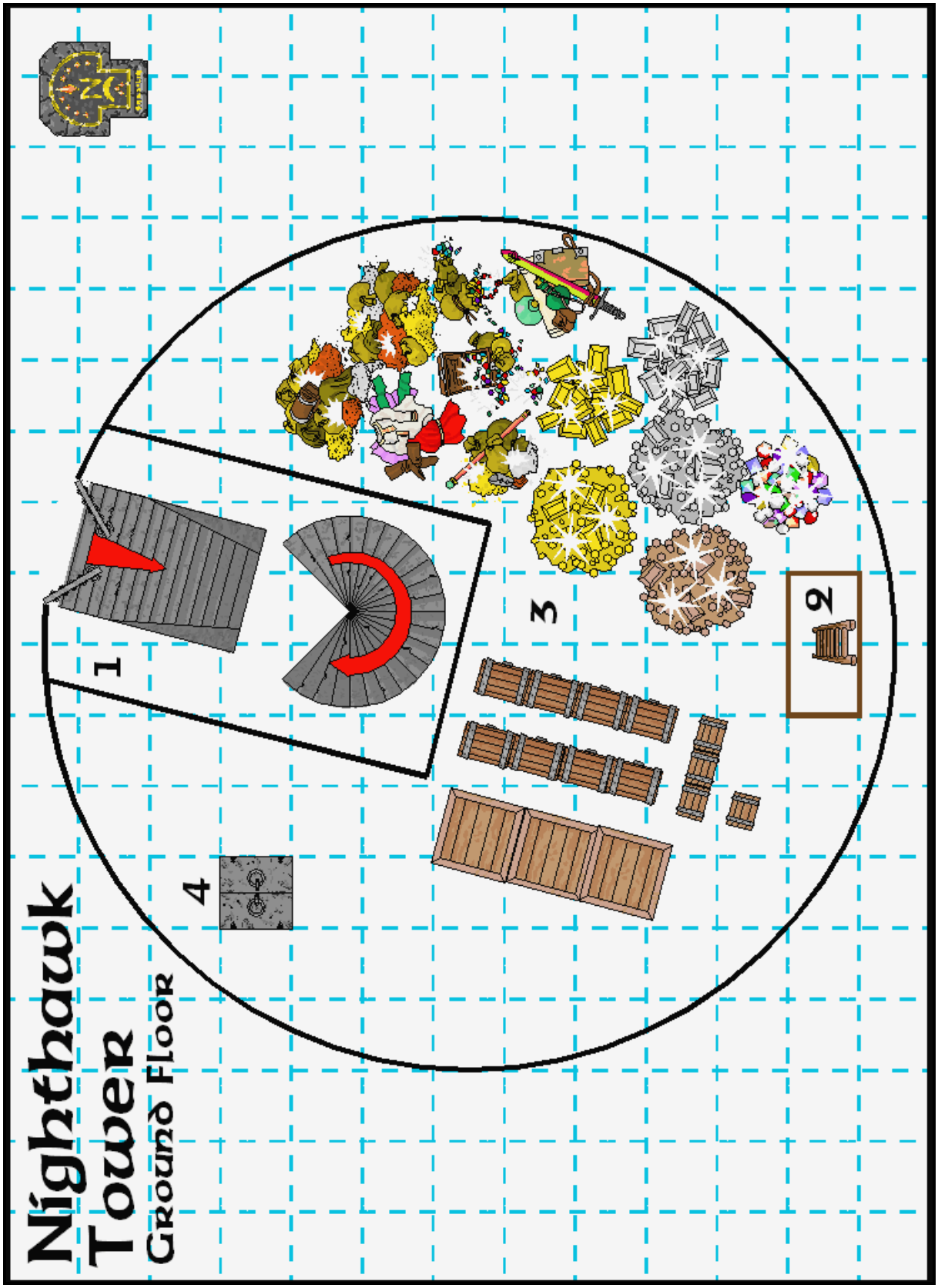
4 - Narfelli Magic Cage of Containment.

5 - Zabaroth.

6 - Passage to Dungeon Level 1.



Nighthawk Tower


Nighthawk
Tower
Ground Floor
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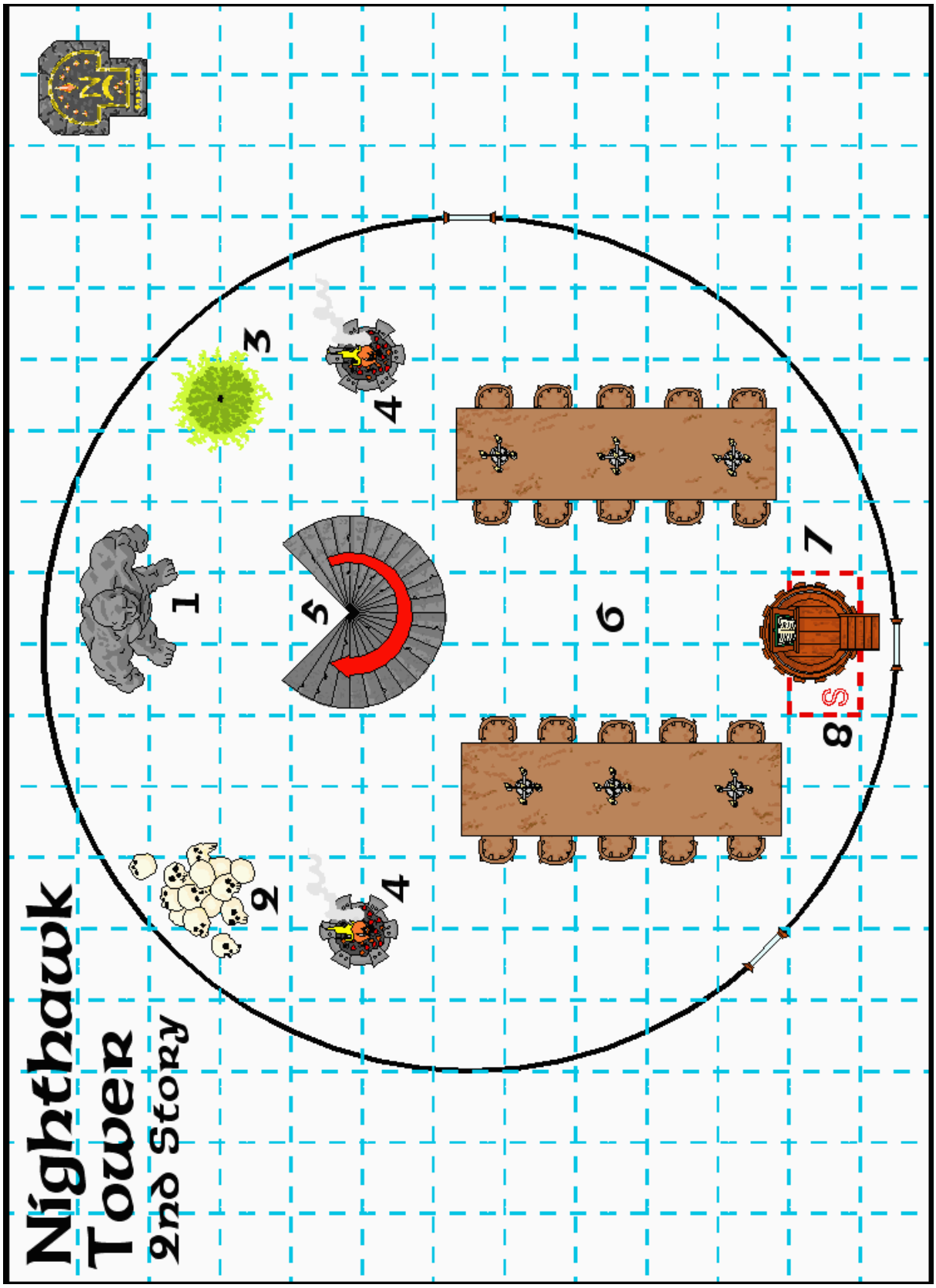
Nighthawk
Tower
2nd Story
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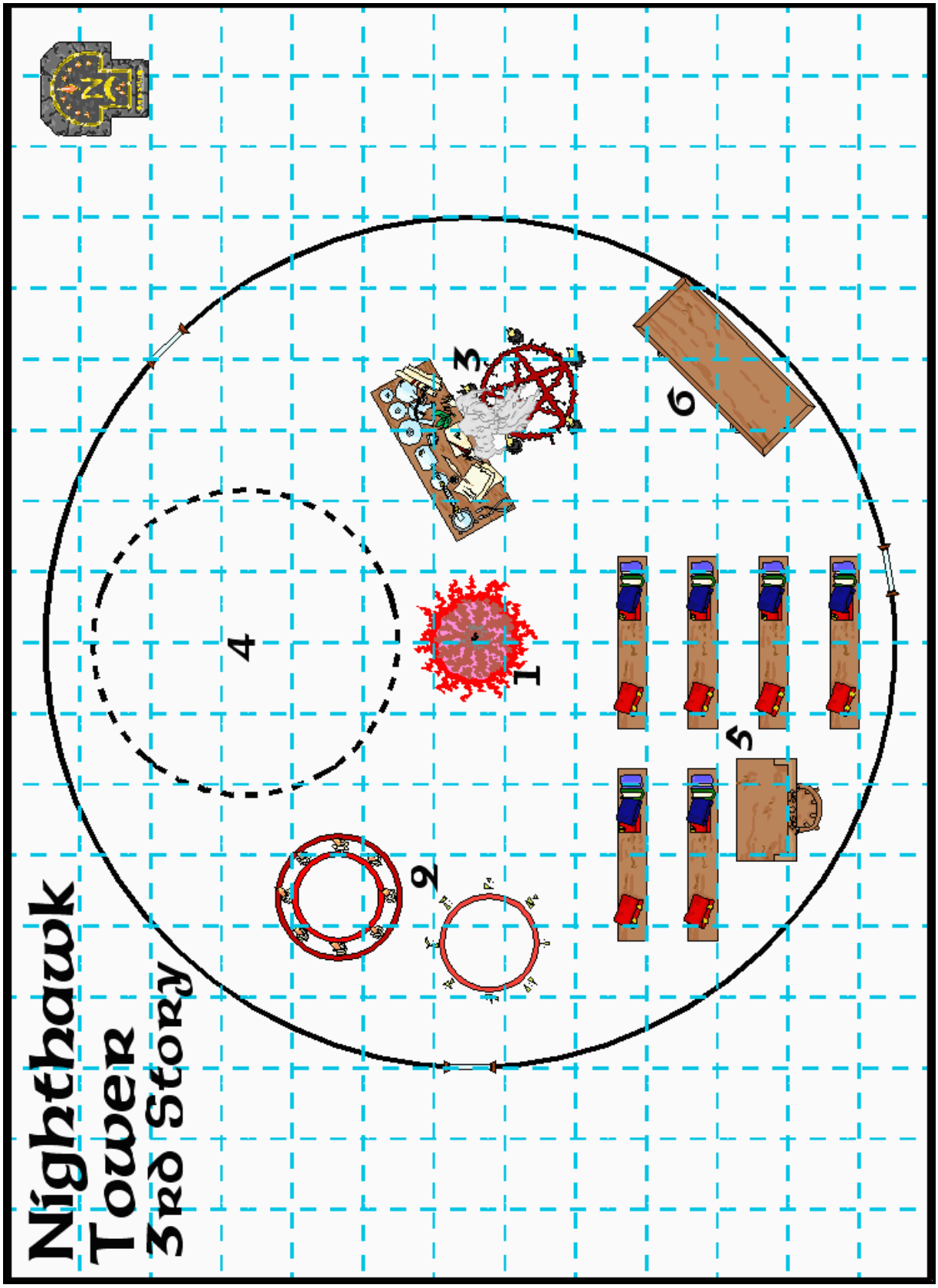
Nighthawk
Tower
3rd Story
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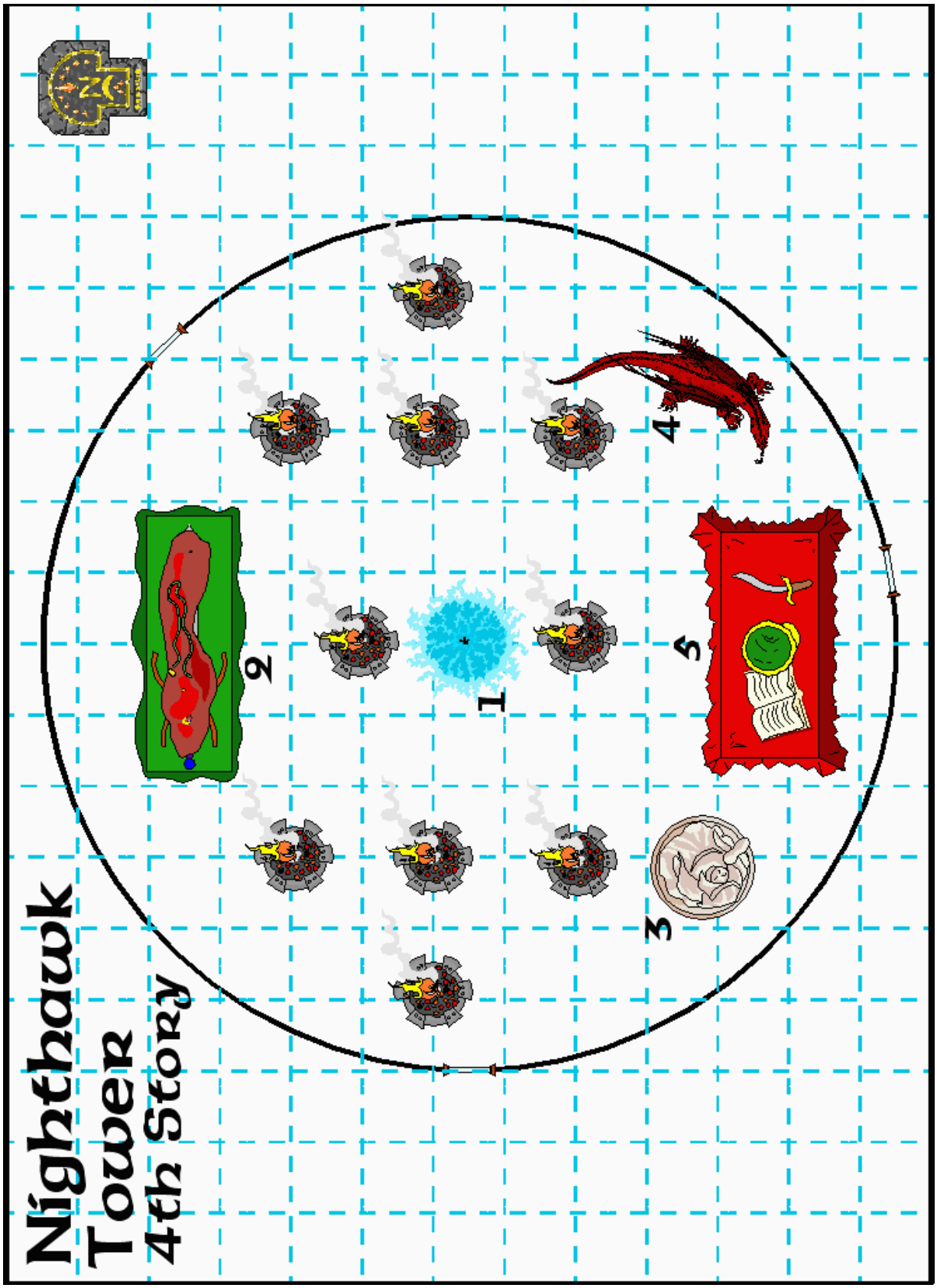
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4th Story
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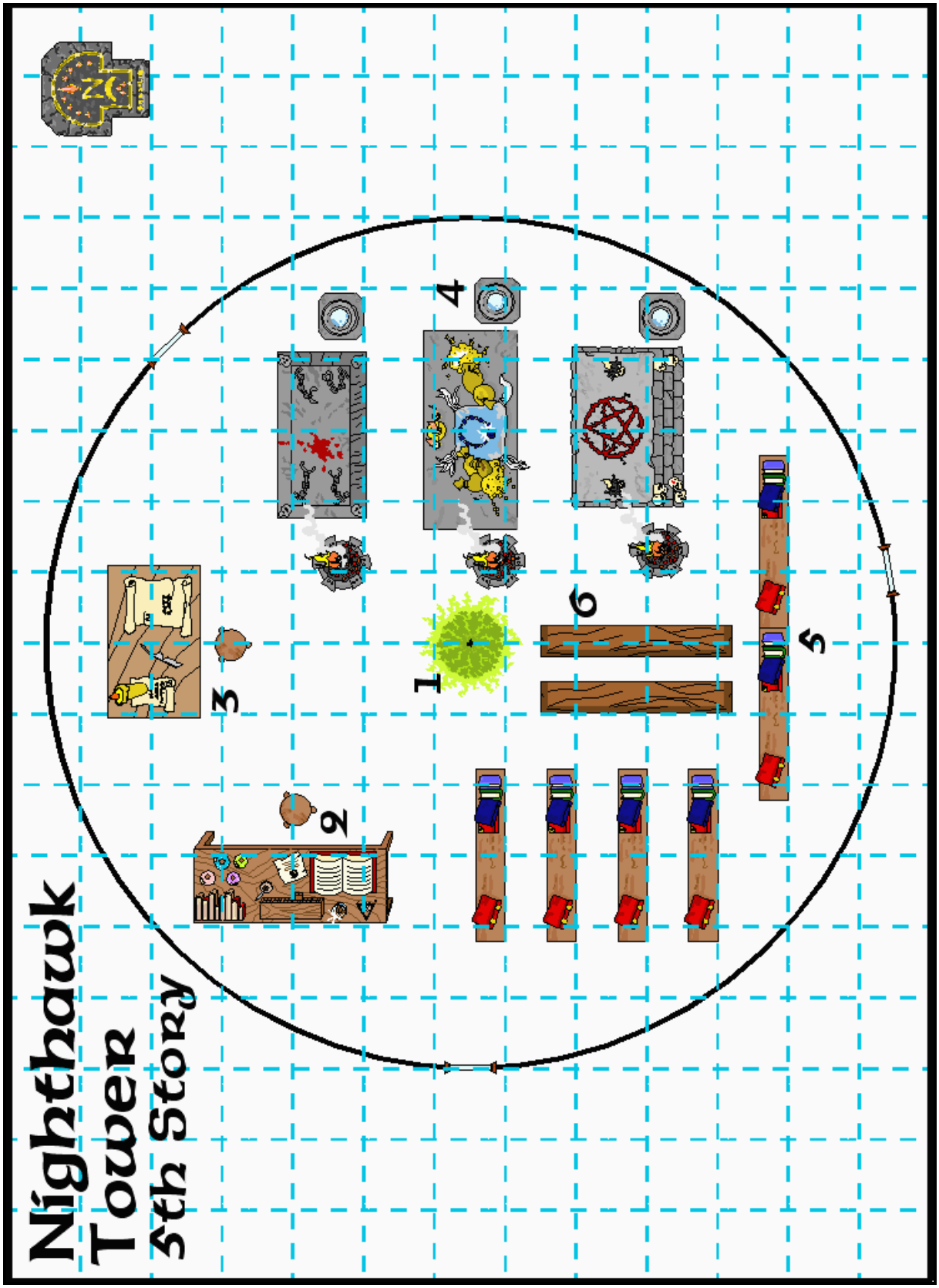
Nighthawk
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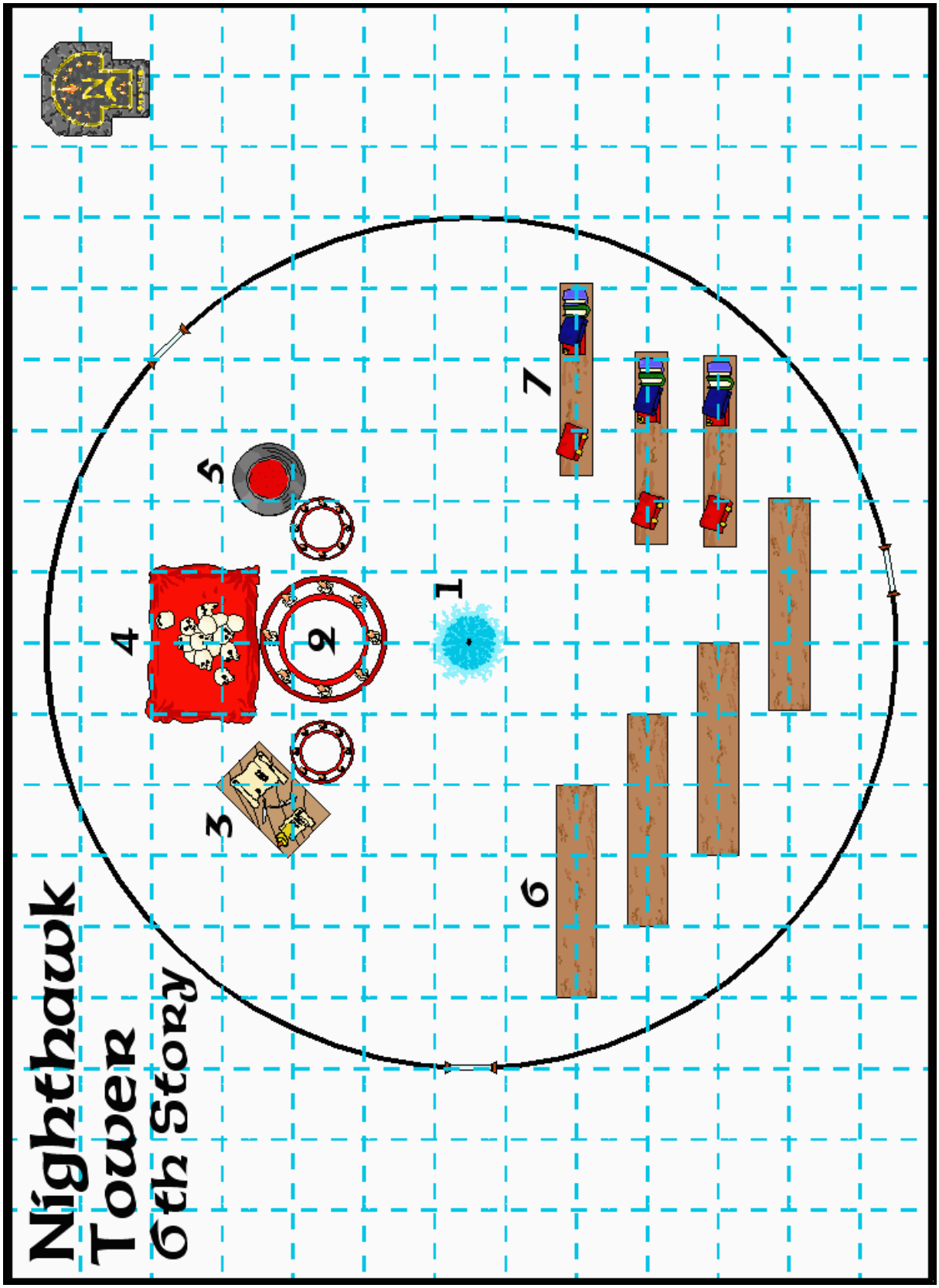
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Tower
6th Story
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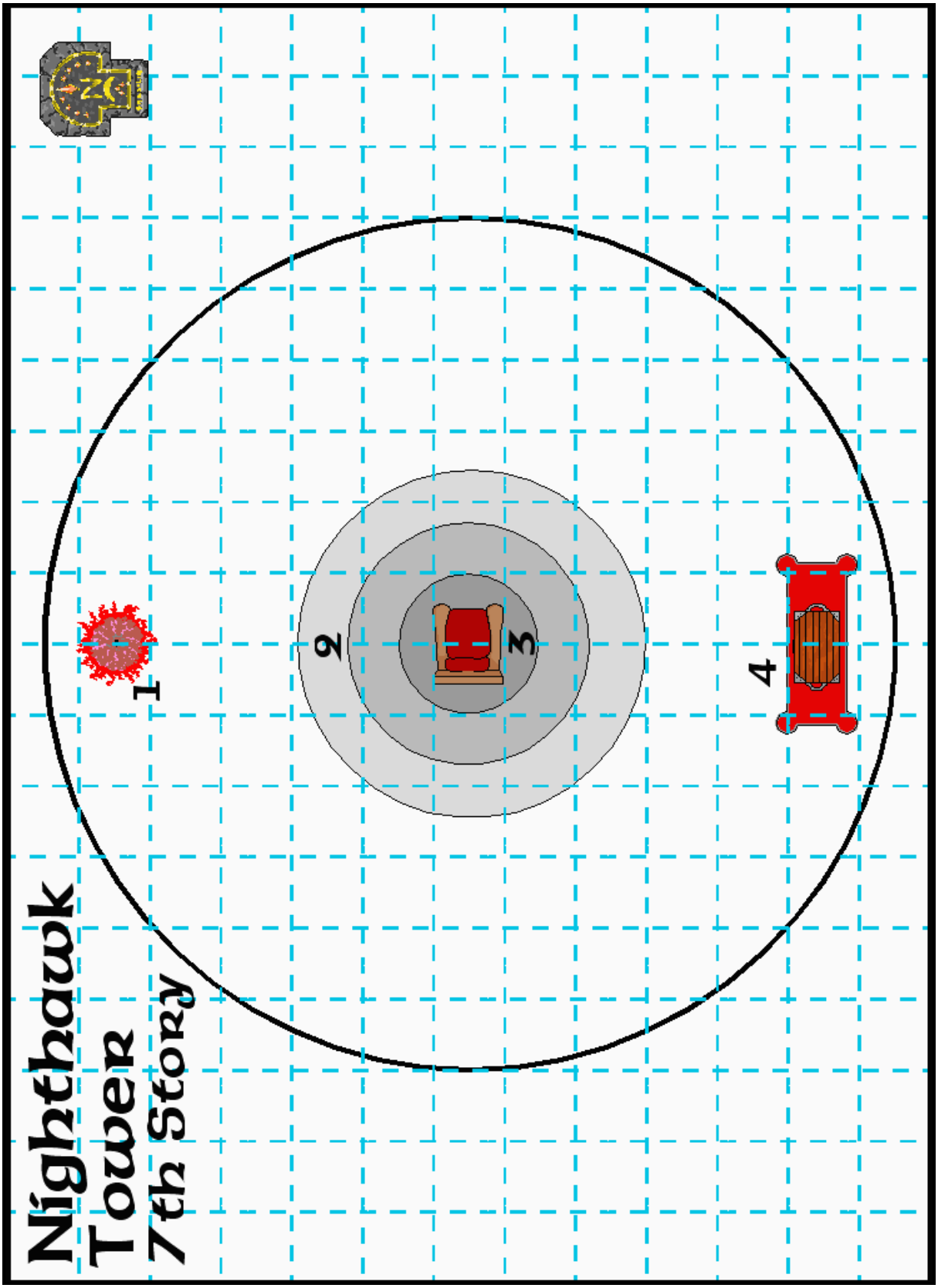
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Tower
7th Story
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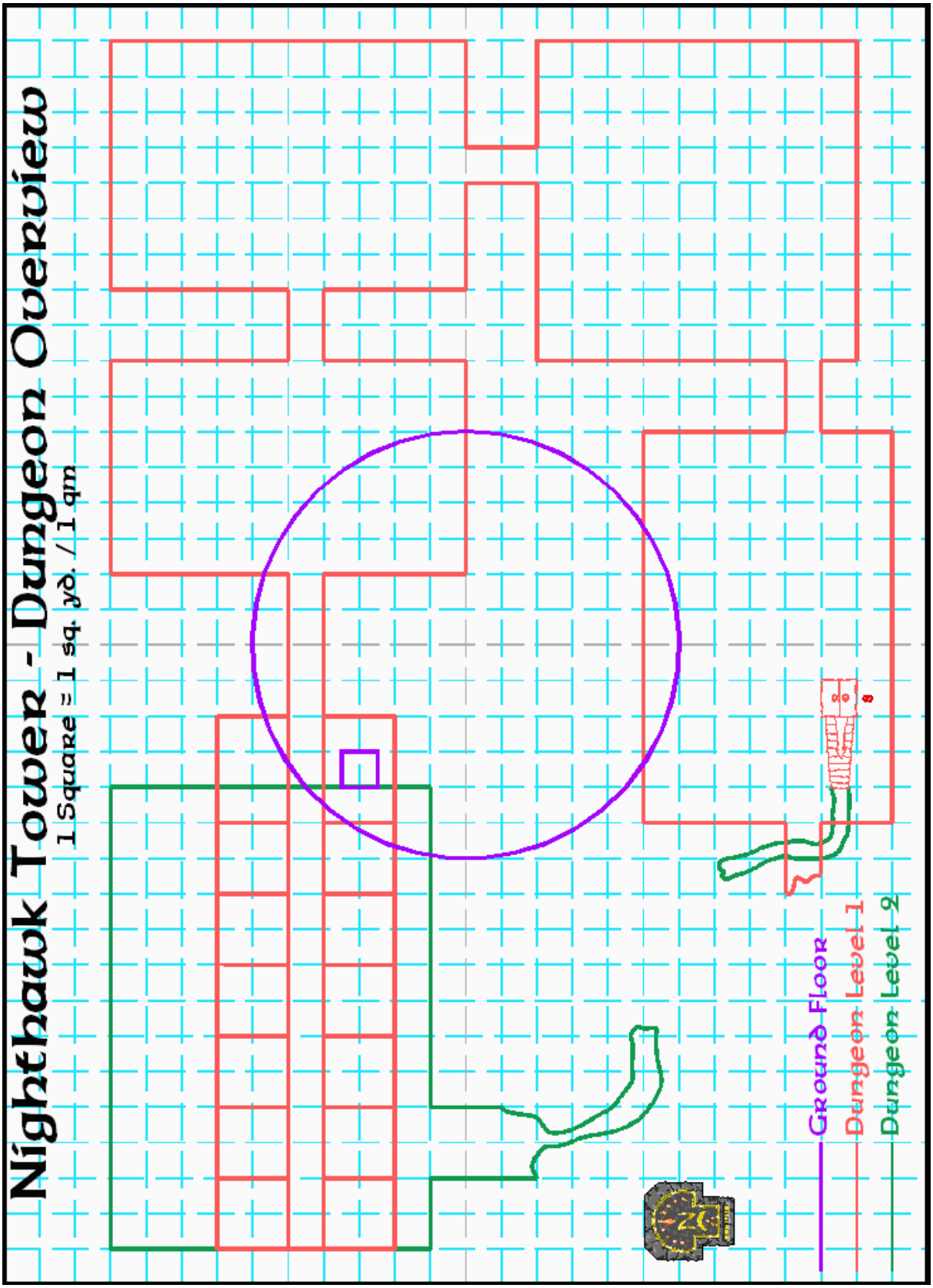
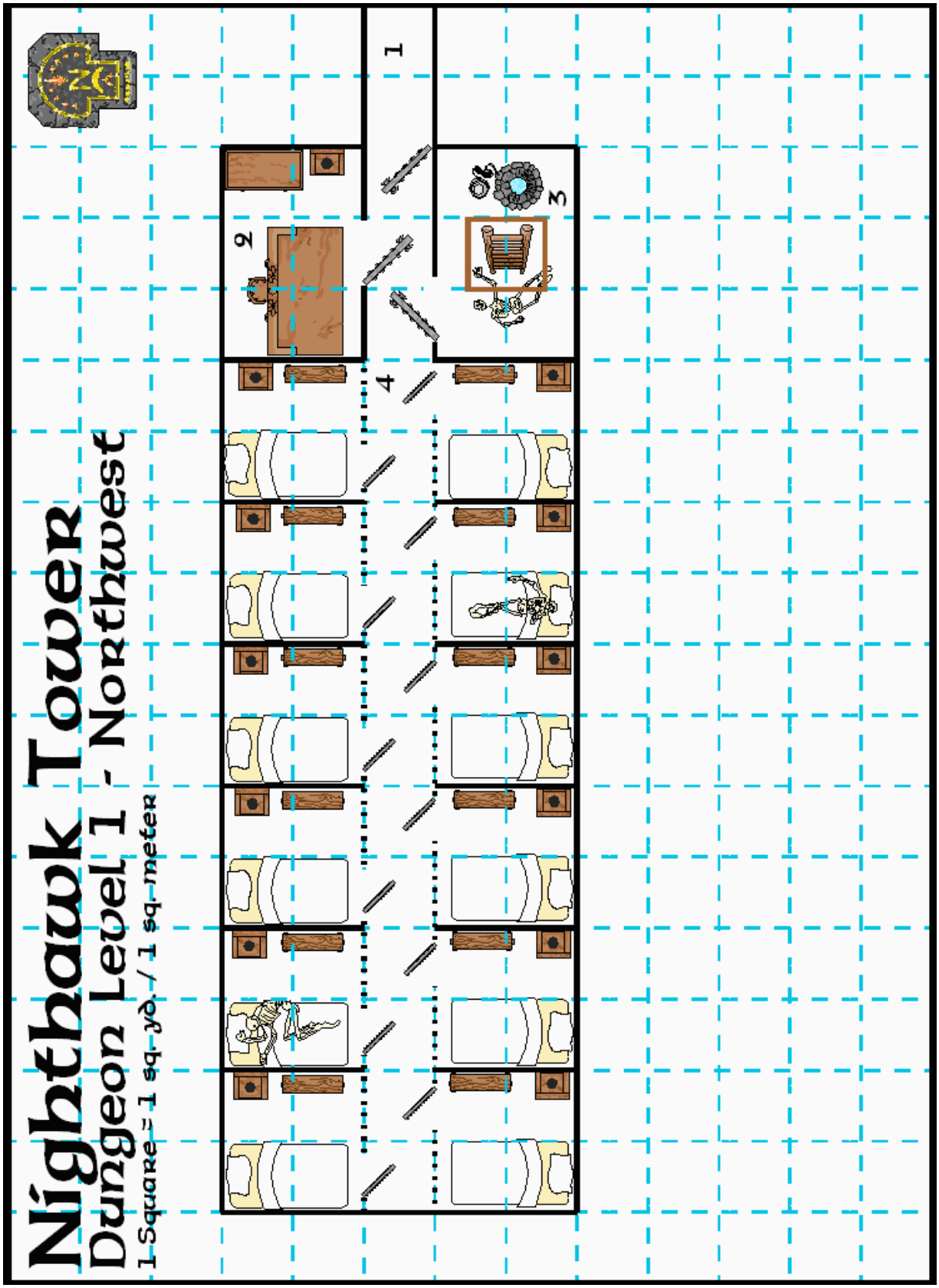

Nighthawk Tower - Dungeon Overview
1 Square = 1 sq. yd. / 1 qm
Ground Floor
Dungeon Level 1
Dungeon Level 2


Nighthawk Tower
Dungeon Level 1 - Northwest
1 Square = 1 sq. yd. / 1 sq. meter
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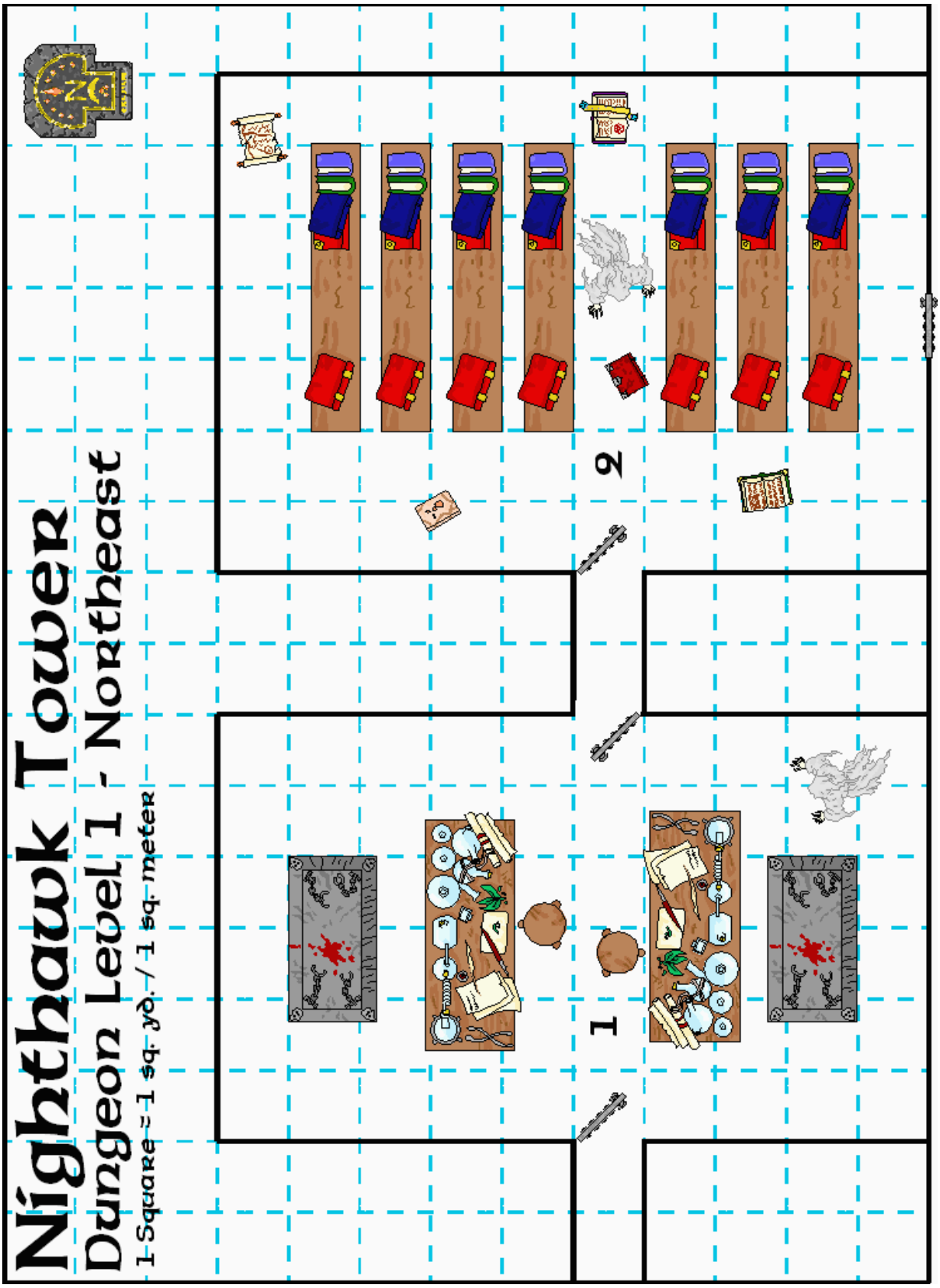
Nighthawk Tower
Dungeon Level 1 - Northeast
1 Square = 1 sq. yd. / 1 sq. meter
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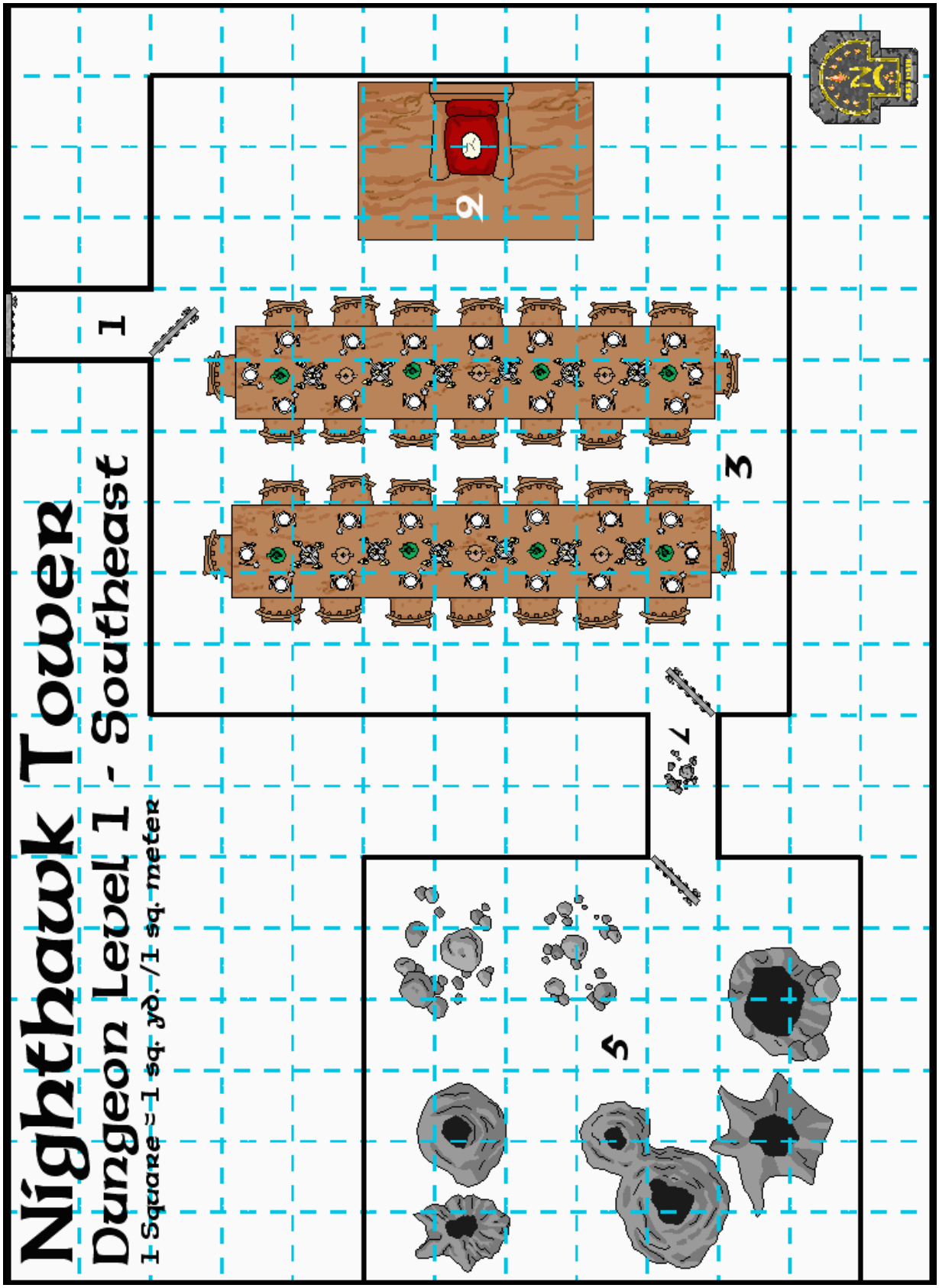
Nighthawk Tower
Dungeon Level 1 - Southeast
1 Square = 1 sq. yd. / 1 sq. meter
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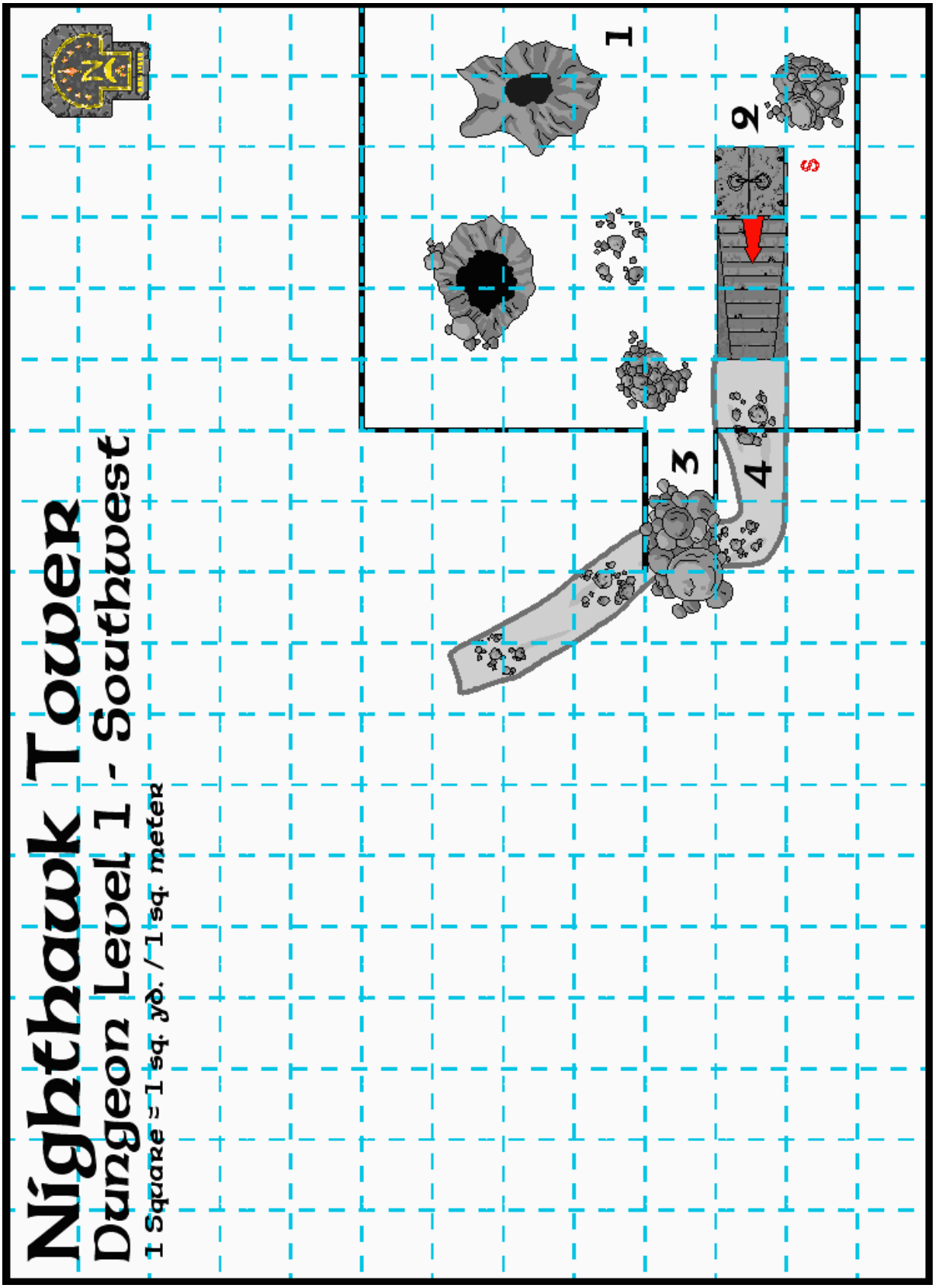
Nighthawk Tower
Dungeon Level 1 - Southwest
1 Square = 1 sq. yd. / 1 sq. meter
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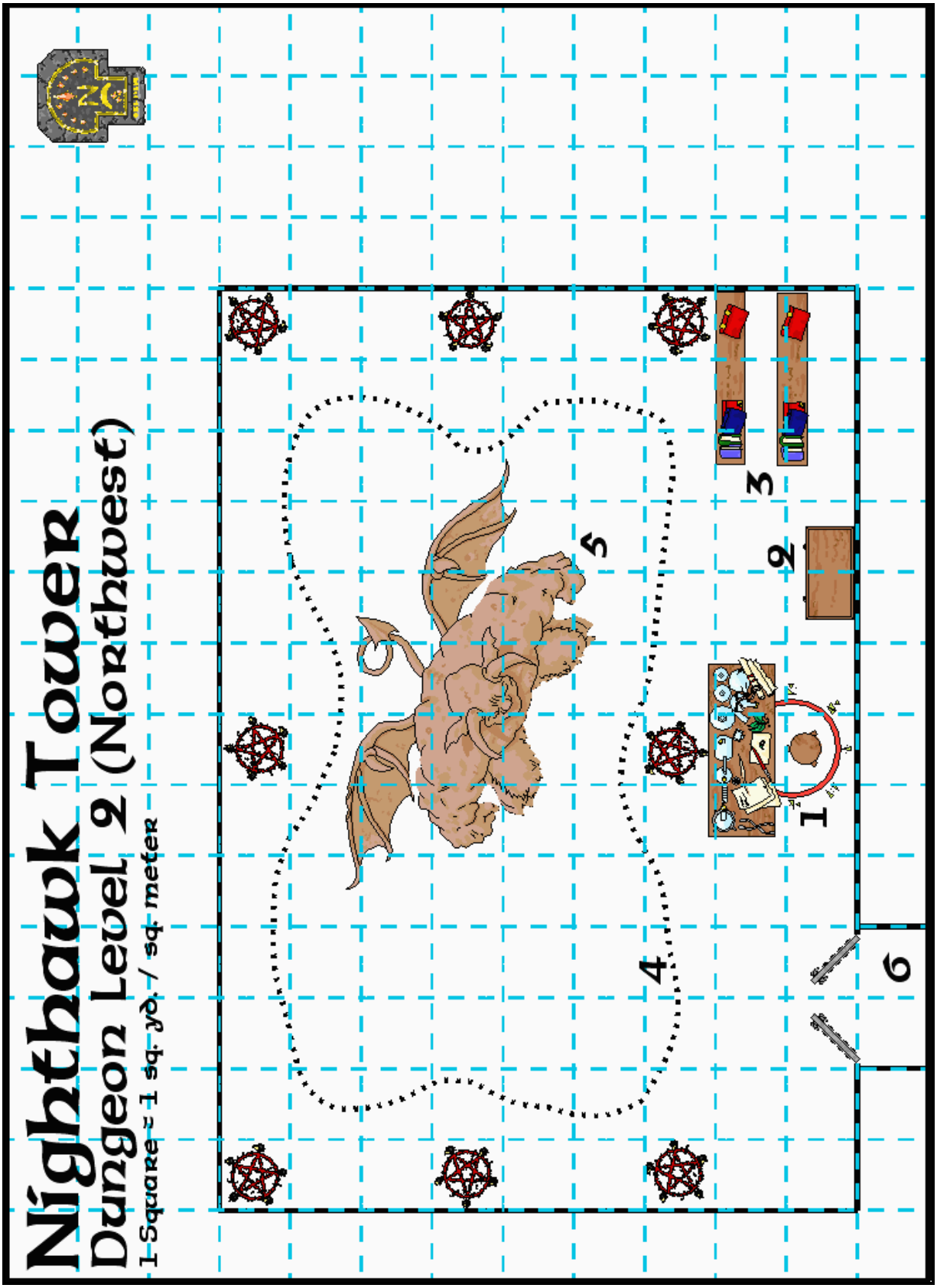
Nighthawk Tower
Dungeon Level 2 (Northwest)
1 Square = 1 sq. yd. / sq. meter
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3. Ashanath

This land on the western shore of the Lake of Tears is a barren plain north of Kront and a treasure chest of rich soil that, like the Trade Route of the Great Dale, easily could be the breadbasket of the East. Instead, Ashanath is a land of tragic tales, a land that never has been more than a temporary home for those who would settle there.

Because Ashanath never has been a nation in its own right, at least in recorded history, there are differences of opinion over what its boundaries may be. Some view Ashanath as being the land stretching westward from the western shore of the Lake of Tears northward to the Firward Mountains, westward to the eaves of Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest and southward to an imaginary line running between Lethyr Forest and the Golden Way in Thesk.

More practical minds draw Ashanath's northern boundary line at the Trade Route and just beyond the northern edge of Ashanath's single surviving town, Kront on the Lake of Tears. This northern boundary is more realistic, for the area north of Kront is claimed by the Nar tribes, some of whom also even claim Kront, although ineffectively, because the church of *Herne* firmly controls Kront.

The northern area, between the Firward Mountains, the Lake of Tears and the eastern fringe of Rawlinswood has extremely poor soil, except within about 10 miles/15 km of the lake, where the soil is fertile but relatively useless for farming because of the strong, cold winds that ravage it.

It is said that the rest of the land westward to Rawlinswood was in ancient days a sickly arm of the elves' Auldgloam Forest where only pines would grow, and these weakly, in the sandy and gravelly soil. Today, this stretch is barren land covered only by tall grass. Settlers would hardly succeed in eking out a living as farmers north of Kront.

The pass between the Firward Mountains and the northeastern edge of Rawlinswood acts as a funnel, drawing strong and bitterly cold winds southward from the Teardrops of Narfell along the open lands west of Lake Ashane and westward down the Trade Route. There Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest absorb the wind gradually.

The winds of the Teardrops and the poor soil north of the Trade Route also are visible to some extent in the easternmost parts of the Great Dale. However, the winds make their turn to the southwest nearly 20 miles/35km northwest of Kront, where the climate and the soil already changes dramatically. With less wind, the fertile topsoil from the beds of higher waters of an earlier age remains.

Ashanath south of the Trade Route also could be a breadbasket for much of the East, were it not in the hands of Harbet Gall and his huntsmen. Instead, one finds only Gall's one remaining slave farm and isolated peasant farmers and fishermen along the Tuigan Retreat south of the Trade Route. These must turn over a substantial part of their catch or harvest to the huntsmen as a tithe.

In the earlier years of Gall's reign in the Eastern Dale, the few clerics of Chauntea and Ilmater who came to Ashanath to aid or comfort the peasants there were chased and killed as prey of the hunt. But Gall and his men knew that they could not live on meat alone, and Gall changed his orders, so that the clerics were enslaved themselves and put to work together with the other slaves, because these were more productive when the clerics were allowed to remain among them.

In Ashanath south of the slave farm, clerics of Ilmater continue to entertain the huntsmen as prey. Gall does not want the poverty-stricken peasants of Ashanath to thrive in anything, including perseverance, but Chauntea's clerics are left in peace, because their presence leads to a greater yield at harvest time.

Many times throughout history, Ashanath has been built up and has enjoyed brief periods of prosperity through its farming, fishing, hunting and forest resources. However, each time the young settlements were destroyed by marauding invaders, be it orc armies fleeing from the Orcgate Wars, troops and ships of the ancient empire of Narfell, the huntsman of Harbet Gall or the Tuigan Horde. Each time, all that the Dalesmen of Ashanath had built was destroyed.

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Those riding southward today from Kront will find that the ruins of the past far outnumber the landmarks of the present. The journey first will take one past the single slave farm where Western Dalesmen captured in raids and in battles are forced to do the arduous work needed to feed Gall, his followers, his cultists and his huntsmen.

After that, the journey down the Tuigan Retreat to the Golden Way leads one through desolation, despite the lush brush and grassland that reach westward from the beautiful but cold Lake of Tears. Here one sees only the occasional peasant farmer or fisherman, living in abject poverty and doing his best to survive on what is left after the huntsmen of Harbet Gall have taken their tithes.

Ashanath is the name of a place, not a country or nation, just as is the case with the Great Dale. If there ever was an Ashanathi nation, it rose and fell long before the ancient Turami came to its wilderness in or about the Year -1150 DR. What stood there before - if anything - is lost to the pages of history.

Ashanath lies on the western shore of the Lake of Tears, clearly divided into two distinct parts. The dividing line is swampy Dender's Creek, which flows into Lake Ashanath at Kront.

North of the creek, Ashanath is a relatively barren, wind-blown plain akin to the Narfelli plain to the north. If one drew an imaginary line from the northeastern corner of Rawlinswood southward to a point on Dender's Creek halfway between Kront and Ulfshofn, one would find that the Gallists claim the land west of that line and the barbarian Narfelli the rest to the lake.

Most Dalesmen would tell one that this imaginary line defines the end of the Great Dale and the beginning of Ashanath. In word but not in deed, the Nars claim all of the Great Dale and Ashanath as their own.

In practice, living beings seldom are found on either side of this line. The only exceptions are occasional bands of nomadic Nar horsemen camping on the plain southeast of the Bildoobaris site.

The chill northeasterly winds that keep northern Ashanath barren turn westwards at Dender's Creek and blow down the Trade Route of the Great Dale, eventually diminishing.

Ashanath south of Dender's Creek is an entirely different landscape. Warmed by southeastern breezes that waft northwards from Thesk and Thay, southern Ashanath has some of the most fertile soils in all of the Great Dale region. Unfortunately, they too lie mostly barren.

Those in Faerûn who know of Lake Ashane often call it the *Lake of Tears*. Those who live in the Great Dale region often call Southern Ashanath the *Land of Tears.* The one important stream that flows through Southern Ashanath is called Tears Creek. In the Gallist era, it has its source near the slave-keeping settlement of Mettledale on the southern edge of Lethyr Forest. It flows into Lake Ashane south of Kront, where the Gallists maintain their slave farms.

These things culminate along history of sorrow and tragedy in Southern Ashanath, which has been settled, destroyed, abandoned and resettled time and again since the ancient Turami first came there some 2,500 years ago. The Narfelli burned it, the Narfelli-Raumathari conflagration destroyed it and more recently, the Tuigan raped and pillaged what remained there and put much of it to the torch.

Southern Ashanath should and could be the breadbasket of the Great Dale region. Instead, it is a mostly empty land where weeds and wild plants grow lushly and unchecked. The only two genuine settlements in all of Ashanath are the City of Kront and the slave farms south of the city.

Most Dalesmen believe Ashanath to be a land under a dark curse, but some Dalesmen have been hardy and stubborn enough to remain settled their on small and isolated farms and homesteads outside of Kront. Most of these can be found along Tears Creek, but a few others still farm in the coastlands near the trail known as the Tuigan Retreat.

Those who remain in Southern Ashanath are blessed each year by bountiful harvests and cursed a short while later by armed bands of the Hunters of Herne, who claim up to 50% of the harvests in tithes and taxes. The few fishermen who still live on the coast suffer the same fate. Their catch would be the envy of many who fish on Easting Reach, but the Hunters of Herne take up to two thirds of the catch as taxes.

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Harbet Gall's intentions in Ashanath are a mystery and a cause of concern in the Western Dale. The slave farms south of Kront once fed Gall and his minions, but the single farm that still operates is far smaller than the complex that stood before the Tuigan Khahan and his horsemen rode across Ashanath 12 years ago, plundering, pillaging, raping and burning. There also are far fewer slaves than had been the case before the Tuigan devastation. In the long run, this situation is untenable for Gall. But what his intentions are remains a mystery.

Those riding southward today from Kront will find that the ruins of the past far outnumber the landmarks of the present. The journey first will take one past the slave farm and down the Tuigan Retreat to the Golden Way. The trail leads one through desolation, despite the lush brush and grassland that reach westward from the beautiful but cold Lake of Tears.

Kront

Small city, Nonstandard (druidic dictator), AL: NE, 15,000 gp limit. Assets: 8,625,000. Population: 11,500 - 8,000 + 3,500 Hunters of Herne, 99% human, 1% other humanoid. Authority figures: True Druid Infallible Bödvar Bjarkissonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 19 (in truth Cleric (Cyric) 19), Imperator of the Great Dale and Ashanath; Narfing Lóptssonur, human male, AL: NE, Aris 12, Burgomaster of Kront; Githlur Habardssonur, human male, AL: NE, Hunter of Herne Rgr 18, commander of the military detachment; Sniedla, human female, AL: CE, Diviner 17, Wearer of the Purple, head of the Kront detachment, Cult of the Dragon; Tarask, human male, AL: CE, Conjurer 14, Wearer of the Purple, Kront detachment, Cult of the Dragon; Rafala, human female, AL: CE, Cleric (Tiamat) 12, high priestess of the House of the Undying Lady; Giezar, human male, AL: N, Wizard 19; Lunda, human female, AL: NE, Illusionist 14, Rogue 3 (covert Iron Throne agent); Rabardus, human male, AL: NG, Illusionist 12 (Harper agent), Tweevis Harnby, human male, AL: NE, Rogue 3, Exp 16, head of Southern Dale Trading and covert head of the Iron Throne in Kront; Dulgardh Narburssonur, human male, AL: LE, Rogue 15, Cleric (Mask) 5; head of the Pack Rats (Kront Thieves Guild affiliated with the House of the Master's Shadow in Telflamm); Tulwari, human female, AL: LE, Xvimist assassin monk 13, head of the Kront Mediation Guild (assassins guild) and covert head of Xvimist Zhentarim operations in Kront. Others: 3,500 militiamen, human male and female, AL: various, including 1,000 Hunter of Herne rangers, lvls 1-15, 2,500 Warriors of Herne, Fighter 1-15 and Warrior 1-15. Taxation type: Normal. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, Theskan, Rashemi, Aglarondi, Thayan, Telflammi and bloodstone bars.

If Nighthawk Tower and Tower Threespires are the summits of evil in the Eastern Dale, then Kront surely is its pits. Many of the lowest forms of human life in Faerûn have gathered here and made the ring city their home.

The concept *law and order* in Kront means not crossing the Gallists or the Hunters of Herne who control the port city, which sees few ships in its docks. Murder and robbery occur often in the nighttime streets of Kront, but the wise practitioners of these two evil arts learn quickly to avoid the areas where the Gallists are, or they cease to live.

All of that notwithstanding, there are corners of Kront where basically decent Dalesmen still live and eke out a living. The savvy scum of the city has learned to consider these folk Gallists, although most of them have only peripheral relationships with their rulers. The decent folk of Kront are those who produce the things the Gallists need. They farm. They fish. They also provide the city with artisans. For these reasons, their quarters are under the Gallist shield. Evildoers who fail to understand this perish.

Why do decent folk remain in a hell hole like Kront? The answers are relatively simple. There's good fishing and good farming in the Kront area. They receive good protection from the city's evil elements. And they have no other destination open to them, in most cases. Like their neighbors in the Eastern Dale, they need permission of the ruling druid to travel from Kront. Even if they received it, they still would be confined to the Eastern Dale, where life elsewhere probably would be poorer.

The fishermen of Kront could escape, if they're willing to leave their families behind. The Hunters of Herne are no mariners. A fishermen who decides to sail across the Lake of Tears to Immilmar in Rashemen can do so with little trouble. But the fishing docks are watched. A fisherman has virtually no chance of smuggling family or friends on board. Fishermen without families usually are drafted into service as Warriors of Herne.

Why do evil folk come to Kront? The answer is simple too. Most of them are fugitives who have a noose, a headman's axe, a rack or the plank of a pirates' ship waiting for them elsewhere in Faerûn. It is relatively easy to enter Kront, either with a caravan traveling up the Tuigan Retreat or by water. Questions seldom are asked when one enters Kront.

Legitimate traders and mariners coming to Kront know enough to get papers showing that they are there legitimately. With such papers, they also can leave again. Most fugitives who come to Kront have no legitimate reason to be there, and they know better than to apply for papers. Once they're in Kront, they have little choice but to remain.

The burgomaster gladly closes his eyes to such illegal immigration. It provides him with a population base to do much of the work Kront needs done, often at poor pay. Those who flee to Kront know that they may have no return ticket. But those who know how to survive in an environment like Kront can lead long lives far away from the hangmen and headsmen who wish to claim them.

Kront not only is a cesspool of evil in the Eastern Dale; it also is the seat of government for the Gallist region, at least to the extent that there is a government. The true ruler is the lich Harbet Gall in Nighthawk Tower, but the day-to-day ruler is True Druid Infallible Bödvar Bjarkissonur in Kront who claims the inflated title *Imperator of the Great Dale and Ashanath*. Bjarkissonur is Gall's own appointed lieutenant.

The True Druid Infallible works with a council that he personally appointed to make policies and appointments for the Eastern Dale. The council has eight members, all of them high true druids and ranking members of the Hunter of Herne rangers. Second to Bjarkissonur on the council is True Druid Huntmaster Lovar Fidhssonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 15.

The regional druid barons and counts who rule the settlements of the Eastern Dale are said to be appointed by Gall, but the lich in truth seldom occupies himself with such matters. He merely confirms appointments recommended by the True Druid Infallible and his council.

With the gradual collapse of Harbet Gall's ties to Malar and the lich's new affiliation with Tiamat, the church of Herne the Hunter slowly is beginning to become corrupt in many parts of the Eastern Dale. Several of the lesser True Druids are losing their commitment to the hunt and are being helped secretly by Cyric.

The god of strife has been working diligently in the East since the fall of Zhengyi the Witch King in Vaasa in the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR). With the decline of Orcus, Cyric began provide his goat's heads priests with the spells the demon god no longer could supply.

However, the Dark Sun's plan were foiled considerably in this respect, when the drow followers of Kiaransalee begun hunting down and slaying the priests of the Cult of the Goat's Head. It is believed that about 90% of the Goat's Head priests who survived Zhengyi's fall have been liquidated by the Legion of Vengeful Banshees and other followers of Kiaransalee from her Vault of Gnashing Teeth.

Upon his ascension to godhood in the Year of the Serpent (1358 DR), Cyric already had cast his eye upon the true druids of Herne the Hunter, noting that Malar had turned not to Gall but rather to the true Malarites of Bezentil when he made his temporary Faerûnian home there. However, Cyric's attention was diverted by Zhengyi's fall, when the entire Cult of the Goat's head had become godless and found itself without spells. By restoring their spell powers, Cyric that convinced them that Orcus still lived and was to be worshipped.

It is of little importance to Cyric whether he is worshipped under the name of Herne or Orcus. His own power is based on the strength of his faithful, who are inspired by his guidance to cause strife wherever they go. Both the goat's head priests of fallen Orcus and the True Druids of Herne serve him well in this respect.

Bjarkissonur is representative of Kront's decay and also of the corruption of Herne's church. Although he may not be aware of it himself, Bjarkissonur lost all contact with Malar more than a decade ago. He no longer serves the ideals of the Beastlord or the Herne variation of Malar; he serves only himself, seeking to amass as much power as he can. Nonetheless, his clerical powers grow rather than fading, because the Dark Sun Cyric has secretly taken the Druid Infallible under his wing too.

To Bjarkissonur, who once was a rabid follower of Herne's teachings as Gall preached them, religion has become irrelevant in its own right; it is nothing more to him than a tool to control the simple Dale folk of the East. He has become addicted to rule, and he hungers for riches.

His appetite has been whetted by visions of a growingly more prosperous Eastern Dale, visions painted by a Sembian immigrant named Tweevis Harnby (human male, AL: NE, Exp 16, Rog 3). Harnby came to Kront some 15 years ago and has been applying Sembian business principles and the deadly weapons of covert assassins in his pay to begin building a profitable business.

Harnby can afford this, because his operation is financed by its secret parent operation, the Sembian Iron Throne. His work is part of a great plan to monopolize trade east of the Vast, a plan designed by the covert Throne leader Shandaril, an epic wizardess in Damaran Heliogabalus

Southern Dale Trading began as a Gallist umbrella organization for all outside commerce passing through Spearmouthdale and Mettledale to the Golden Way in Thesk, those that go from Kront past the slave farms to Theskan Two Stars and the trade teams that deal with the Nar barbarians at the trade fair in Bildoobaris.

Interestingly, Southern Dale Trading is the only Gallist operation that the Iron Throne has succeeded in infiltrating to date. In Harnby's 15 years in Kront, he has arranged to have his own people running the other coster offices in the Gallist part of the Dale.

Harnby reports directly to Bjarkissonur in Kront, and he sees to it that the Druid Infallible receives a sufficient share of Southern Dale Trading's profits to assure Bjarkissonur's continued favor, just as Shandaril had planned it. However, keeping the high druid properly bribed is not Harnby's only talent. After a long career with the Iron Throne, Harnby understands the rules of trade well, where the Eastern Dalesmen have no understanding of them at all.

Harnby has two projects at present:

- He wants to convince Bjarkissonur to cease burdening the farmers and fishermen of Southern Ashanath with exorbitant taxes. Harnby understands that Southern Ashanath could easily be turned into a highly profitable breadbasket, one that could produce handsome profits both for his Iron Throne front and for the Druid Infallible. Harnby argues that reasonable taxes in the coastal region could draw capable farmers from many other areas of Faerûn who now have to cope with bad soil or weather conditions or with bad political conditions.

- Harnby is building a subsidiary of Southern Dale Trading that would sail small ships down and across Lake Ashane to bring wares of the Eastern Dale to markets in Rashemen and Thay.

Bjarkissonur is inclined to favor both of these ideas.

Ancient Narfelli parchments in the Royal Impilturian Library in Lyrabar claim that Kront was settled by migrant Turami in about -1150 DR. The Turami called it *Fiskihöfn*, *Fishermen's Harbor* in their tongue. For more than two centuries, it apparently was a fishing village of modest size with some primitive agriculture south of the settlement.

The Narfelli apparently saw more potential value in the settlement at the mouth of Dender's Creek, drove the Turami out of Fiskihöfn and leveled the village. They sought to build their city of Kront as a combination harbor- and border watch settlement. The new city was given the name of the Narfelli nobleman who led the operation.

Kront was the first of Narfell's three ring cities. Its reconstruction began in -908 DR and was completed three or four years later. Similar rings designs were used by the Narfelli when they later built Bezentil in -855 DR and Briddh in -801 DR. However, the construction of Kront was a more ambitious project than those in Bezentil and Briddh.

Kront Tandalus, who became the first duke of Kront, wanted to achieve substantial security for his city, which was on the border and facing then unfriendly Raumathar across the Lake of Tears. Kront stands in the middle of the Dender's Creek swampland. Tandalus thought he could take advantage of the dry winter season and the archmagi in his service to raise the level of his city above the swamp and at the same time create a protective moat about it. He saw to it that his vision was realized successfully.

Using *"summoned magickal creatures,"* according to the ancient parchments in Lyrabar, Tandalus excavated a deep moat around the cleared site upon which he intended to build his ring city. He piled some of the tailings along the coastline, creating a dike there three miles/five kilometers long to hold back the waters of Dender's Creek that he intended to dam. Other tailings were used to raise the bed of the city of itself. Along the dike, he built a mile/1.5-km long defensive seawall with a dam to control the outflow of Dender's Creek and the water level of his moat.

In a separate project, his workers and magi also dredged swamplands west of the ring city's site halfway to Ulfshofn, raising the level of the Trade Route to keep it above water and useable in all seasons. Only then did he begin constructing the ring wall of Kront and the city within it.

Had it not been for these Narfelli engineering marvels more than two millennia ago, there would be neither a Kront nor a safe Trade Route east of Ulfshofn today. Such engineering work is beyond the abilities of today's still relatively primitive Eastern Dalesmen.

Like most of the rest of Narfell in the Great Dale, Kront was devastated in the final clash between Narfell and Raumathar in the Year of Recompense (-150 DR). All that remained of Kront afterward were the raised city bed and Trade Route and sea dikes, which sustained only minor damage, as well as the *Narfelli Emperor's Stone* that had been used by Kront's archmagi. The Raumathari blasts sent te stone, known as *Mendalâhrn*, careening into Lake Ashane, where it remains today, under about 6 inches/15 cm of lakebed about 100 yards/30 m east of the dike.

The Dalesmen were not responsible for the next rebuilding of Kront. In those years, the superstitious Dalesmen believed that all of Ashanath was cursed, and none but a few of them would go there. It was a group of Impilturian traders that saw the possibilities of a revived Kront as a trade center. In the Year of the Laughing Nightmare (56 DR), they begin repairing the damage in the Trade Route and seawall dikes and then reconstructed the raised city, again within a ring wall, following the example of Tandalus.

Ironically, the Impilturians were too impatient for restored Kront to yield profits. They abandoned Kront and the native Dalesmen immediately took control of the city that Impiltur had rebuilt. Kront remained in the hands of the Dale's Freemen until the Year of the Winding Road (917 DR), when the majority of them shifted their alliances to the church of Herne the Hunter and his priest Harbet Gall.

Today, little of the Impilturian restoration remains. Modern day Kront is a city constructed by native Dalesmen, built upon Narfelli and Impilturian ruins. In the Year of the Dracorage (1018 DR), the century-old city sustained near total destruction from a flight of ravaging dragons. Today's Kront is the result of a reconstruction project started by the Gallist Hunters of Herne in the Year of the Smoldering Spells (1020 DR).

A visitor approaching Kront from the West arrives at the city's moat and comes to the end of a wooden bridge that partially spans the waters. A drawbridge is on the other side, but it is kept in a raised position. The guards on the city side lower it only when guards on the first bridge signal them to do so.

Visitors who sail into Kront from Lake Ashane see the shacks on the sea dike and the sea wall behind them. They too are cut off from the city by an always-raised drawbridge that is lowered only upon a signal from city guards on the dike.

Anyone wishing to leave the city must show papers that confirm that he or she is allowed to do so before the drawbridges will be lowered. This is the element the Druid Infallible uses to assure that the natives remain in Kront and that fishermen's wives and families have no means to escape with the man of the house over Lake Ashanath.

There are three gate towers on Kront's outer perimeter. The gate tower in the west wall guards the city's entrance and contains the controls to open and close the drawbridge. The towers in the inner and outer eastern walls are responsible for raising and lowering the dams. The inner eastern gate tower also raises and lowers the drawbridge.

The mechanics of the drawbridges and dams were built by the Impilturians some 1,300 years ago and have been maintained since by the Eastern Dalesmen. These outer facilities survived the dragon attacks more than 350 years ago.

The city wall forms a complete circle with watchtowers at regular intervals. Warriors from the garrison man all of them at all times. Dender's Creek divides the circular city into two nearly equal parts. Four bridges cross the creek. All four are patrolled regularly to control who enters the southern half of the city.

Although there are no signs or border fences to define them, Kront is divided into four quarters. Their bounds are known to all locals. A purple dotted line shows these boundaries on the city map. The southwest section is called the *Gallist Quarter.* Officialdom and the favored are seated in this part of town. The southeastern section is called the *Business Quarter,* but it also is the residential area for those who don't rank high enough to have their chambers in the *Gallist Quarter*.

The sea dike is the smallest of the four, called the *Harbor Quarter*. The largest is the area north of Dender's Creek, the *Commoners' Quarter*. This section houses those without standing but some means at the top of its social ladder and Kront's worst scum at the bottom. The city administration pays little attention to who is in this quarter or what goes on there, although it will cross the river in force and with violence to deal with anyone who crosses the Gallists and their cronies.

The southern part of the Harbor Quarter, where larger lake ships can dock, does relatively little business, but that is slowly changing. Tweevis Harnby has been developing a growing amount of trade with Thay in the south. In the Year of the Tankard (1370 DR) he founded the Southern Sails Trading Fleet in Kront as a wholly owned subsidiary of Southern Dale Trading (and therefore also as an Iron Throne front).

Harnby plans not only to develop strong trade ties with Thay in the South but also to reopen trade ties with the Rashemi across Lake Ashane, who remain highly suspicious of the Eastern Dalesmen. To make them friendlier, Harnby gave the Rashemi wharf in Immilmar a contract in the Year of the Tankard to build one lake ship and another contract in the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR) to build four similar ships.

The first Rashemi-built ship, the *Sailing Hunter,* already is in service. The four remaining ships are to be delivered between Eleint of the current year and late in the Year of the Lightning Storms (1374 DR). Harnby hopes to open trade with the Rashemi, but even more, he and Shandaril in Heliogabalus have large-scale plans for the Iron Throne to covertly take over all trade operations in Rashemen, where they have no footing at all at present.

Almost anyone who is a fugitive from anyone except the Gallists themselves can get into the Commoners' Quarter and disappear there, sometimes literally. The law of the jungle rules in the part of the city north of Dender's Creek. To survive, one needs to pay for protection or have muscle, good connections or an ability to keep from drawing attention and the savvy to keep one's quarters well barred at night.

Small storekeepers survive in the Commoners' Quarter by paying protection money to the Pack Rats, the local thieves guild, which is affiliated with the *House of the Master's Shadow*, the huge temple to Mask in Telflamm. By the tenets of Mask's church, the storekeepers pf the Commoners' Quarter pay high protection fees, but not so high that the smalltime merchants are driven out of business or left bankrupt. The temple in Telflamm knows that the best profits are gained when protection payments are painful but still affordable.

A year ago, there was something of an underground gang war in the north quarter, when assassins of the Kront Meditation Guild and the Pack Rats began killing one another. Although one faction represents the Zhentarim and Xvimists and the other the church of Mask, both sides saw that the conflict was suicidal and they reached a treaty.

When the Pack Rats need to teach someone the lesson that merchants who pay protection money are off limits, they do the work themselves when no fatal lesson is intended. When the Pack Rats issue a death warrant, they give the Meditation Guild the contract to execute it.

The peace is temporary and tenuous. The Zhentarim have every intention of taking control of the protection racket everywhere in the Great Dale, driving Mask's followers out of the territory. However, they don't have enough muscle in Kront at present to succeed.

The safest quarter in Kront is the Gallist Quarter, although the Hunters of Herne keep it unsafe for anyone who has no business being there. The Packs Rats and most other evildoers from the Commoners' Quarter know they have nothing to seek in this section.

A few years ago, a small band of independent thieves was foolish enough to attempt to break into and rob the main building of Southern Dale Trading. They were caught. The Druid Impeccable sentenced them to a slow and horrible death on the dike. The four thieves were stripped and chained to specially built spits. Their executioners used sharp knives to make innumerable fine cuts in their skin everywhere from head to toe. The spits, with the thieves chained to them, then were dipped in salt water.

After that, each spit was mounted above a wood fire, and the four thieves were slowly roasted to death. The executioner kept the dying far enough from the fire to prolong their suffering and forestall death, and True Druids used magic to revive them each time one of the condemned lost consciousness. The last of the four died after roasting for nearly two days. Since then, no thievery has been reported in the Gallist Quarter.

The Business Quarter is almost as safe as the Gallist Quarter, particularly in daylight. There have been occasional muggings at night, but successful robberies are rare. Paid and well-trained guards watch over the commercial facilities there. If a burglar, thief or mugger is caught, the guards ask the city administration whether it is interested in the apprehended culprit.

The answer usually is negative. What happens then is up to the guards. Most such culprits usually are slain outright, but if an infrequent ship is about to sail southward to Thay, the guards may put the culprit in irons and sell him to the captain, who in turn will sell him to a slave market in Thay. Those who escape death in this manner must, of course, be fitting enough physical specimens to bring a decent price. The frail are more likely to have their throats slit and their bodies weighted and dumped into the Lake of Tears.

The Harbor Quarter is relatively safe in daylight but it can be dangerous at night. Experienced criminals know which buildings are guarded and who is off limits. Anyone else can be fair game here after the sun goes down.

The ruler of Kront, the Druid Infallible, resides in a small fortress within his grove atop a hill in the center of the city. His city administration also is in the walled complex. Below the hill to the west is the huge garrison of the Hunters of Herne, their central command point for all of the Gallist domain. Directly southeast of the garrison is the large complex of the Iron Throne front, South Dale Trading.

East of it stands Fire Eye Tower inside of the Dragon Cult complex. The cult facilities here are subordinate to Urgrath Hurddh in Tower Threespires. Nonetheless, this is the main operating facility for the Kront Cell of the cult, while Tower Threespires serves as its arcane and necromantic focal point.

Southeast of the cult facility are the Kront Granaries and Cellars, where emergency food supplies are stored. The facility is under the direct command of the Druid Infallible and is well guarded. North of it is Kront's Temple to Tiamat and the rectory of her priests and priestesses, and north of the temple is the school where new True Druids of Herne the Hunter are trained.

Herne's Promenade runs along the north edge of the school's grounds. On the other side of the street are two *"safe"* inns and a tavern. The cemetery - where only prominent locals are buried - is at the eastern foot of the grove hill. North of it along Dender's Creek are the towers of three independent magi.

East of all these facilities in the Business Quarter one finds a brewery, fish and agricultural packing plants, a company that sells artisans' works and textiles from the Eastern Dale, a bordello, a tavern and a large provisions store.

NORTHERN JOURNEY Campaign Note

A game master running a *Northern Journey* campaign will want to know about Kront for background information, but most *NJ* PC groups probably will not go there. Their sigylls certainly will not attempt to draw them there. If the PCs succeed in bringing down Tower Threespires and destroying Harbet Gall, General Friedhleif Skjöldurssonur, commander of the Freemen in Uthmere, is certain to order his men into the Eastern Dale, to conquer it. He doubtless will ask for and receive help from the Sword and Wand of Impiltur.

Although your PCs probably won't take part in the conquest of Kront and the Eastern Dale themselves, they should begin to receive reports of Skjöldurssonur's victories when the reach the royal court in Damaran Heliogabalus, in *Bloodstone,* the seventh part of *Northern Journey*.

Adventure Hooks in Kront

- **Cleaning Up -** There's a lot of evil and corruption to clean up in Kront. In fact, there's almost nothing else there. The possibilities are almost limitless, as are the possibilities for failing.

- **Gaining Mendalâhrn -** If the PCs begin collecting *Narfelli Emperor's Stones* and they have magical abilities to seek them as well as the ability to work underwater, they might claim Kront's long lost stone.

Map of Kront

Game Master's Note: The Tuigan Retreat, the road leading southward from Kront to the slave farms and the Golden Way, intersects with the Trade Route about a mile/1,5 km west of the city and is not seen on the city map.

Gallist Quarter:

1 - West Drawbridge and Gate.

2 - Garrison of the Hunters of Herne. 3,500 rangers and warriors are stationed here. They are under the command of General Githlur Habardssonur, human male, AL: NE, Hunter of Herne Ranger 18.

3 - Garrison Training Grounds. These are used only for daily calisthentics, sword practice and the like. Major training exercises take place in open areas west of Kront.

4 - South Dale Trading Coster headquarters. This Iron Throne front operation is headed by Tweevis Harnby, human male, AL: NE, Exp 16, Rog 3, a native of Sembian Yhaunn who has been in service to the Gallists for 15 years.

5 - South Dale Trading Coster warehouses.

6 - South Dale Trading Coster stalls.

7 - Headquarters and Dragon Palace, Kront Cell, Cult of the Dragon. This detachment is Urgrath Hurddh's base headquarters. It also is the information center of the Kront cell, under the leadership of arch diviner and Wearer of the Purple Sniedla, human female, AL: CE, Diviner 17. Three other diviners also work for her. They use the smaller tower of the Dragon Palace building (by the number 7 on the map).

8 - Fire Eye Tower. The tower of Sniedla. Hurddh has ordered her to try to find the Emperor's Stone *Mendalâhrn*. To date, he has fathomed that it still exists and that it is not far from Kront, but she does not yet know where it is. She would pay a high price and even agree to magical bindings to protect the seller, were it offered to her.

9 - Tarask's Tower. Tarask, human male, AL: CE, Conjurer 14, Wearer of the Purple, is the Kront detachment's sole conjurer.

10 - Kront Granaries and Cellars. Under the direct control and protection of the Druid Infallible.

11 - Gardens of Tiamat. The gardens consist mostly of grass, but there are a fountain and statues of Tiamat in her five dragons forms and in her human female form.

12 - House of the Undying Lady. Temple to Tiamat.

13 - Rectory, House of the Undying Lady. The high priestess is Rafala, human female, AL: CE, Cleric (Tiamat) 12. She is served by two other priestesses, human female, AL: CE, Cleric (Tiamat) lvls 5 and 2.

14 - Collegium Herneum. The True Druids School of Herne the Hunter with grove and shrine. At any given time, 10 hopeful True Druids are in training. The rector is Nula Wundursdóttir, AL: NE, True Druid (Herne) 9.

15 - Golden Antlers Inn, with stables. Retired Gen. Mýsing Sigarssonur, human male, AL: NE, Ranger (Herne) 19, runs Kront's fanciest hostelry. Sigarssonur is the retired commander of the Hunters of Herne. The clientele usually is limited to those who live in the Gallist Quarter and their guests. However, the house also plays host to the richest merchants of the West who travel to and from the Bildoobaris Trade Fair and to travelers year round who have business with those who are in the Gallist Quarter. The public room of the Antlers is open only to guests with reservations but many people who are recognized guests have permanent reservations. This system makes it possible to keep unwanted guests out of the house. Most of the guest rooms are unoccupied, dusty and lightly maintained most of the year, being brought back up to par for the trade fair. The Antlers has five suites, 12 doubles and 30 singles. One suite is rented permanently to the society tart Nulinda (see No. 21 - Lunda's Tower). In the regular season, one suite, one double and four singles are kept prepared for guests at all times. The house serves Old Narfelli Lager Beer and an impressive maturbordh. During the Bildoobaris travel season, fine Uthving wines also are brought in over Briddh. In regular season, a suite costs 2 platinum marks, a double 9 silver shiners per person and a single 1 gold taler per night. Old Narfelli Lager costs 4 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard, and the maturbordh costs a gold taler per person. During the Bildoobaris travel season, a suite costs 1 bloodstone bar, a double 9 gold talers per person and a single one platinum mark per night. Old Narfelli Lager costs 1 silver shiner per quart/liter tankard, Uthving wines between 3 gold talers and two platinum marks per bottle and the maturbordh 5 gold talers per person. Most of the waitresses provide after hours services, but guests seeking them must make private arrangements with the waitresses themselves. Guests pay no stable fees.

17 - Horned Hunter Tavern. Retired Sgt. Narm Svipdagssonur, human male, AL: NE, Ranger (Herne) 7, runs this house, which tends to draw mostly younger rangers and warriors from the garrison. He sells a breadboard with cold sausage, rye bread and horseradish for a silver shiner and Old Narfelli Lager beer for 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard.

18 - Tears of the Lake Inn. Nekul Grímnirssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 4, owner of the former Kront Trading Coster, built this inn with the profits from his sale of the coster to Tweevis Harnby some 15 years ago. The Tears Inn is a much more modest house than the Golden Antlers, but Grímnirssonur does a steadier guest trade than the Antlers. Many of the guests in the Tears normally would be viewed as Business Quarter class people rather than Gallist Quarter class. However, as head of Kront Trading, Grímnirssonur owned a solid and permanent place among Kront's elite, and they accept his house and its guests as well as Grímnirssonur in their part of town. Kront has a steady but small flow of visitors, and most of them constitute the bulk of the Tears' guest trade. Among this group are representatives of the druid counts and barons who come to Kront on official business, common merchants - most of whom travel up the Tuigan Retreat - to negotiate business, visitors who come to see higher ranking relatives stationed in the hunter's garrison, etc. Grímnirssonur does not make any special effort to win guests traveling to and from the Bildoobaris Trade Fair, but he will not turn them down either, if there is room in his inn. The Tears' public room does good nightly business, drawing a wide variety of patrons from the Gallist and Business quarters. Grímnirssonur has six doubles and 10 singles, all maintained year round and all at year round prices of 5 silver shiners per person for a double and six silver shiners for a single per night. He sells Old Narfelli Lager Beer at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard and his maturbordh costs six shiners per person. His waitresses also make their own private arrangements for after hours services.

18 - City Hall. The city is ruled by Burgomaster Narfing Lóptssonur, human male, AL: NE, Aris 12, who lives in and governs from City Hall atop Grove Hill. The offices of his administration also are in this complex, along with the Kront jail, which is in the dungeon below City Hall. Traditionally, the Burgomaster of Kront is appointed by the Druid Infallible. In practice, the Druids Infallible have appointed the eldest son of Lóptssonur's family as burgomaster for the last six generations. Lóptssonur was appointed to succeed his father, Lópt Bragurssonur, upon the latter's death in the Year of the Banner (1368 DR).

19 - Fortress of the Druid Infallible. The regent ruler of the Great Dale, True Druid Infallible Bödvar Bjarkissonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 19 (in truth Cleric (Cyric) 19), Imperator of the Great Dale and Ashanath, is resident in this fortress. The entire complex atop Grove Hill is his.

20 - Cemetery. The lower levels of Kront society find no resting place here.

21 - Lunda's Tower. Lunda, human female, AL: NE, Illusionist 14, Rogue 3, came to Kront in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), claiming to be a fugitive of Damaran justice who had worked with Zhengyi the Witch King.

In truth, she is a close associate of the epic wizardess Shandaril in Damaran Heliogabalus, who is the covert head of the Iron Throne east of the Vast. The beautiful wizard-spy does hail from Heliogabalus, but she never was associated with Zhengyi. Lunda's real assignment in Kront is to be a second set of eyes and ears for Shandaril as well as to keep an eye on Tweevis Harnby, to make sure he is doing no double dealing or skimming. Harnby does not know Lunda from his previous work, although he has met her and is a frequent customer of her double identity Nulinda. Lunda circulates under her own name in upper level Kront society. She is a master of disguise and also does business two or three times a week disguised as the fictitious society prostitute Nulinda, who has a permanent suite in the Golden Antlers. Nulinda's customers have included every important male in Kront except for the Druid Infallible. When dealing with customers who do not command magic, she uses magical items of enchantment to gain information from them. Shandaril uses her magic to communicate from Heliogabalus with Lunda. The Druid Infallible allows Lunda to maintain her tower in turn for her pledge to help Kront, should it be attacked.

22 - Rabardus' Tower. Rabardus, human male, AL: NG, Illusionist 12, is a Harper spy in the service of Storm Silverhand. He claims to be a fugitive from justice in Suzail, the capital city of Cormyr. Harper agents there even have managed to forge documents that have gotten his name entered in Suzail's official journals as a wanted fugitive. Rabardus too is a master of disguise. In Kront, it is believed that he never leaves his tower, also that he accepts no contracts. It is said that his affairs are conducted by his manservant Candel. In truth, Candel is one of many disguises that Rabardus uses when prowling the streets of Kront. The Druid Infallible allows Rabardus to maintain his tower in turn for his pledge to help Kront, should it be attacked. Rabardus has a magical item from Storm Silverhand that will teleport him immediately at will to her farm in Shadowdale, should he ever be required to fill that pledge by performing evil deeds. It is not Rabardus' assignment to serve as a Harper contact in Kront. He has magical means for contacting Storm Silverhand. If he would become aware of another Harper or Harper ally in trouble in Kront, he would transmit this information to her, but he would not interfere without orders from her to do so.

23 - Giezar's Tower. Giezar, human male, AL: N, Wizard 19, is a reclusive mage from Chessenta who does arcane research in his river tower. He pays his own bills, minds his own business and tells no one what he's up to. He does accept occasional requests to do paid, private consulting. He also works secretly with the dwarf Báfur and magically enchants master blades produced in the smithy (see No. 38). The Druid Infallible allows Giezar to maintain his tower in turn for the wizard's pledge to help Kront, should it be attacked. Few residents of Kront ever have seen Giezar. He does not leave his tower. His manservant, Tembal, human male, AL: N, Com 3, conducts the wizard's regular business for him.

Business Quarter

24 - Kront Provisions. Officially, this store is owned and operated by, Gudrún Gjúkisdóttir, human female (sister of Gudhný Gjúkisdóttir), AL: NE, Exp 3. However, the real owner is Tweevis Harnby, head of Southern Dale Trading Coster and covert head of the Iron Throne in Kront. Harnby secretly purchased the store from her and added it to the Throne's assets, but she still runs it for him. She has or can obtain any normal supplies listed in the *Players Handbook,* at prices ranging 5 to 15% above those in the *PHB*.

25 - Mother Gudhný's Festhall. Gudhný Gjúkisdóttir, human female (sister of Gudrún Gjúkisdóttir), AL: N, Exp 6, runs Kront's only official bordello. Straightforward bordello business is done here with no kinky specials available (some of those can be found in the Loviatar temple, No. 40). Services are billed by the hour at 1 platinum mark per hour. The only drink on premises is Old Narfelli Lager Beer at 1 silver shiner per quart/liter tankard.

26 - Lovar's Fishing Supplies. The owner, Lovar Lóridhissonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 2, sells almost any supplies a fishermen might need at 5 to 10% above *PHB* prices.

27 - Salty Gate Tavern. This is a favorite hangout of fishermen and dockworkers. Owner Göndlir Hnikarssonur, human male, AL: CE, Com 1, sells smoked fish sandwiches on rye at 8 copper bites each and quart/liter tankards of Old Narfelli Lager Beer at 3 copper bites.

28 - Old Narfelli Brewery. Brewmaster Módgudh Narvissonur, human male, LN, Exp 4, inherited the brewery and malting house. He is the only beer brewer in Kront. His bottom-fermented beer stands up well against some of the better lagers in the Western Dale, due to the availability of quality hops and brewing barley from the slave farms. Narvissonur employs three journeymen and four apprentices.

29 - Ashane Agricultural Sales. This company is under the direct control of the Druid Infallible. It obtains the harvests of the slave farms and buys agricultural produce from other farmers. The agricultural products then are processed, which can include fermentation or canning, and packed for transportation and sale in the Eastern Dale as well as to Southern Dale Trading Coster for export sales. The manager is Grimhild Heremódhsdóttir, human female, AL: NE, Exp 4. She employs 20 workers, male and female.

30 - Ashane Fish Packing. This is another company under the direct control of the druid infallible. It buys most of the catch from local fishermen, cleans, processes and packs the fish and then sells them in the Eastern Dale and to the Southern Dale Trading Coster for sale elsewhere. The manager is Hamdhir Ekinssonur, human male, AL: NE, Exp 3. He employs 10 workers, male and female.

31 - Eastern Dale Artisans Cooperative. This operation is owned jointly on a cooperative basis by artisans in Kront and many parts of the Great Dale. It was formed to bring their works of craft together for unified sales. Most of the cooperative's wares are sold to the South Dale Trading Coster.

Harbor District:

32 - Chowder House. A seafood tavern and eatery without accommodations. Nari Baugissonur, human male, AL; N, Exp 2, a retired fisherman, runs the operation. Seafood dishes run from 8 copper bites to 2 silver shiners apiece. Old Narfelli Lager Beer costs 3 copper bites for a quart/liter tankard.

33 - Southern Sails Trading Fleet Offices. This is the new subsidiary of Tweevis Harnby' Iron Throne front operation, the Southern Dale Trading Coster.

34 - The Rashemi Witch. The tavern is popular with waterfront workers and some fishermen. Owner Kili Gerdhssonur, human male, AL; CE, Com 2, sells a quart/liter tankard of Old Narfelli Lager together with a board of thick salt crackers spread with fish paste for 5 copper bites. The beer alone costs 3 copper bites.

35 - Shrine to Umberlee. Unmanned.

Commoner's Quarter:

36 - Handless Thief Tavern. A popular night spot for commoners willing to risk walking the streets at night. Most customers live near each other and go to the tavern and return in groups to minimize the risks. Nonetheless, some customers still are mugged on the last leg of the way home, and there is an occasional slaying. Vidhar Thundssonur, human male, AL: LE, Com 1, owns the *Thief*. His quarters are on the second story, above the tavern, and he pays for protection. He sells Old Narfelli Lager Beer at 3 cooper bites for a quart/liter tankard. His wife, Mari Thúrghsdóttir, human female, AL: LN, makes fried fish sandwiches that sell for 1 silver shiner each.

37 - Nandar's Boarding House. Nandar, human male, AL: CE, Cleric (Cyric) 5, really is a priest of Cyric, as are his two boarders, Rubulla, human female, AL: CE, Cleric (Cyric) 2, and Fundul, human male, AL: CE, Cleric (Cyric) 1. They operate a secret temple and are slowly attempting to build a following for the Black Sun in the Commoners District. They know nothing of Cyric's interest in the Druid Infallible.

38 - Báfur's Smithy. The large smithy is owned by Báfur, dwarf male, AL: LE, Exp 14, War 3, a fugitive from Hillsafar Hall in Vaasa. He is sought there for allegedly illegal dealings with the minions of Zhengyi the Witch King. Báfur arrived in Kront in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR). Báfur is a master weaponsmith. He employs a master armor maker and a master blacksmith as well as eight journeymen and 10 apprentices. Báfur personally accepts contracts for masterwork blades, and he works secretly with the wizard Giezar (see No. 23), who enchants these blades with magic.

39 - Dender's Creek Carriages. Master Wainwright Lukas Niflssonur, human male, AL: N, Exp 3, makes wagons, sleds and small fishing boats. He employs four journeymen and five apprentices.

40 - Mother Tulga's House of Pleasure. Officially, this is a bordello run by Tulga Grimmarsdóttir, human female, AL: LE, Cleric (Loviatar) 6. Grimmarsdóttir buys slaves from the farm south of Kront and offers them to customers with special tastes, all a part of the operations of this house, which in truth is a covert temple to Loviatar.

41 - Kront Charity Lodge. This is the headquarters of the Pack Rats, the thieves guild of Kront. The guild master is Dulgardh Narburssonur, human male, AL: LE, Rogue 15, Cleric (Mask) 5. The lodge is affiliated with the House of the Master's Shadow, the huge temple to Mask, in Telflamm.

42 - Kront Meditation Guild. This is the home of four Xvimist assassin monks who attempt to monopolize murder for hire in Kront. It also is the Kront headquarters of the Zhentarim, however, the Black Network is relatively inactive in Kront. It is the de facto assassins' guild, and it keeps an eye on the Iron Throne, which the Zhentarim manipulate for their own ends. The guild accepts occasional contracts from covert Kront Throne leader Tweevis Harnby. The head of the meditation guild is Tulwari, human female, AL: LE, Xvimist assassin monk 13, a native of Mulmaster.

43 - Jolly Roger Tavern. This is the favorite hangout in Kront for thieves, cutthroats and the like. The owner is Tandar Gribb, human male, AL: CE, Fighter 14, a fugitive pirate from the Sea of Fallen Stars who had a falling out with his own crew. Gribb pays for protection and receives it, but it's not unusual for disputes to break out in his house that lead to a body or two being deposited in the streets near the tavern. Gribb sells only Old Narfelli Lager Beer, at 3 copper bites per quart/liter tankard.

Kront
in Ashanath
Lake Ashane
Fishermen's Wharf
New Harbor
Harbor Quarter
Commoners' Quarter
Business Quarter
Gallisc Quarter

Kront

Slave Farm

Slave village, Nonstandard (druid dictator), AL: LE, gp limit: NA*. Assets: NA*. Population: 625 - 550 slaves and 75 Hunters of Herne. Authority figures: True Druid Infallible Bödvar Bjarkissonur, human male, AL: NE, Druid (Herne) 19 (in truth Cleric (Cyric) 19), Imperator of the Great Dale and Ashanath; Captain Nep Thekkssonur, human male, AL: NE, Fighter 12; Kandartha, human female, AL: LE, Wizard 10. Others: 73 Hunters of Herne, human male and female, AL: NE, rangers and warriors, lvls 1-6. Taxation type: None. Accepted coinage: Any recognized, mainly Impilturian, Theskan, Rashemi, Aglarondi, Thayan, Telflammi and bloodstone bars.
*No commerce is conducted on the slave farm.

In the Year of Sudden Sorrows (941 DR), the followers of Harbet Gall began building a series of walled and fortified farms just south of Kront in Ashanath, to house and put to work the many foes from the Western and Central Dale that they had taken captive in battles and raids.

Until that time, the captives had been scattered among the various Gallist settlements, where they had been put to work as slaves. However, the Gallist leadership in Kront had been looking at the famine that often plagued the Eastern Dale as well the fertile but untilled lands of Ashanath. Gall himself gave the order to build the prison farms and then round up the enslaved prisoners and send them there to begin farming the fertile coastlands.

At its peak - in the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR) - the operation consisted of five separate prison farms, each holding some 500 slaves. These farms produced an annual harvest that could feed Kront and about 20% of the Eastern Dale.

That came to an end in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), when the Tuigan Khahan led his horde down the Tuigan Retreat to Thesk, pillaging and burning four of the five farms and slaying their occupants, slave and overseer, alike. It is unknown exactly what Harbet Gall's slave farm goals are at present, but after the Tuigan devastation, he appears to have consolidated all operations in the one farm that survived the Tuigan raid.

Today's slave farm straddles Tear's Creek about 5 miles/8 km south of Kront. It is under the control of the Druid Infallible in Kront, but the local command is in the hands of Capt. Nep Thekkssonur, human male, AL: NE, Fighter 12, a cruel veteran of the Hunters of Herne.

Some 550 men, women and children are under the whip in chains on today's farm, which can house 660 slaves. During the months when farming can be pursued, the slaves are chained in hobbles and marched out into the wide fields west and south of the farm, where they tend the crops. One whip-wielding guard on horseback stands watch for each group of 20 slaves.

The farm has a punishment area on the north bank of Tears Creek for slaves who make trouble. Three gallows and six whipping posts stand there. Most of the time, these remain unused. But Capt. Thekkssonur has a tendency to make an example by publicly hanging five or six slaves and brutally whipping a dozen or so more anytime the slaves become restless.

In the cold season on days when there is no outdoor farm work to be done, the slaves are allowed to walk in hobbles outside of their barracks for 30 minutes daily. They spend the rest of such days in the barracks, working at weaving looms, making clothing or producing wooden craft works.

The clothing they make is largely that which they wear when the weather requires it. In the warm season, the slaves are not clothed, simply to allow their textiles to last longer, although those who work in the fields are provided boots to protect their feet. The wooden craft works of the slaves are taken to market in Thesk and sold.

Since the Tuigan devastation of the other slave farms, the remaining slaves are forced to mate with one another, to produce children to maintain the slave population. Enslaved women also often are raped by guards, with the same goal in mind. A separate barracks is made available for slave mothers and their children, who live there until the children are eight years old, at which point they are moved to the main barracks and put to work.

Slaves who are too old or to ill to work usually are hanged, regardless of age or sex. Capt. Thekkssonur describes such hangings as educational. All the slaves are forced to view these public hangings, which he thinks remind them of their own fate, if they fail to work as is required of them. However, the majority of the farm's slaves end their lives dying while at work rather than on the gallows.

The slave farm also has a slave-operated mill that grinds various kinds of flour and hammers vegetable oil from seeds.

The guards at the slave farm are prepared for raids. Security at the farms were tightened after a partially successful raid in the Year of Chains (1321 DR). Magical assistance is available to the guards from the reluctant wizardess Kandartha, human female, AL: LE, Wizardess 10. She is a member of the Dragon Cult detachment in Kront who was ordered by Urgrath Hurddh to serve as mage of the farm.

Kandartha fell out of favor with Hurddh. She hates her assignment but does not know how to escape her fate. Nonetheless, if the slave farm should be raided at some point, Kandartha knows better than to expend anything less than her full magical resources upon the defense of the farm.

Adventure Hook at the Slave Farm

- **Freeing the Slaves -** The farm is well fortified, but a party of the strength recommended for this accessory could succeed, with intelligent planning. However, one must assume that heavy reinforcements will arrive from Kront within 90 minutes of the time a raid begins, unless the wizardess Kandartha is taken out of action immediately. She is capable of sending a magical alarm to Kront.

Map the Slave Farm

The wall surrounding the slave farm is 30 feet/9 m high and 1 yard/meter thick. It is made of stone bricks.

1 - Slave Barracks. Each two-story building can house up to 120 slaves. All slaves have permanent manacles riveted on their ankles. With these manacles, they are chained to the stone slabs they sleep upon at night.

2 - Special Barracks. The ground floor houses the kitchen and mess hall where the slaves are fed. The upper story is the barracks for slave mothers and their children

3 - Six Whipping Posts.

4 - Three Gallows.

5 - Five Light Towers. These towers stand 50 feet/15 m high. Each contains a magical beacon that can flood an area of 250 feet/75 m in diameter with light.

6 - Farm Mill. The master miller is Thjálfi Thjazissonur, humanmale, AL: NG, Exp 4, who was kidnapped along with his family in a Gallist raid upon Ganglhofn several years ago. All mill workers are slaves.

7 - Docks. Usually only fishing boats dock here. One small sailing boat also docks here. It is used by the guards who sail out onto Lake Ashane to oversee enslaved fishermen.

8 - Drawbridge. The bridge is always raised, except when authorized persons wish to cross it.

9 - Kandartha's Quarters.

10 - Granaries and Storage Halls.

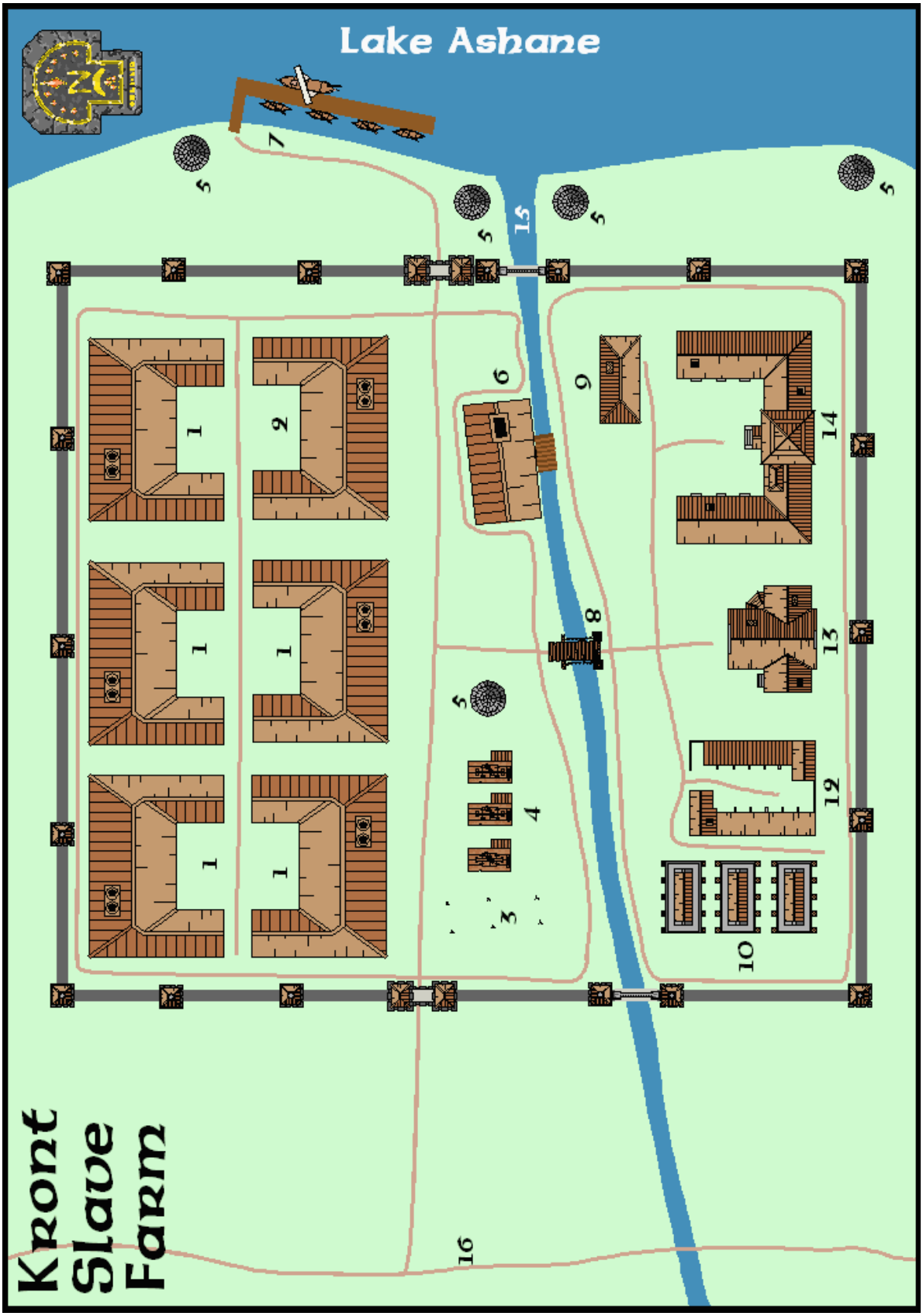
12 - Stables.

13 - Mess Hall of the Hunters of Herne. Rangers and warriors stationed on the slave farm eat here. It serves as something of a tavern at night, with Old Narfelli Lager Beer from Kront available at 3 copper pieces for a quart/liter tankard.

14 - Headquarters Building and Barracks. The farm administration and barracks are located in this building.

15 - Tears Creek.

16 - Tuigan Retreat. The road from Kront to Two Stars on the Golden Way.



Kront Slave Farm

4. Beneath the Surface

There are clearly a number of undercurrents of power running through both *Northern Journey* and the Great Dale. If your PCs haven't done so yet, they should began starting to have a rather clear picture of what these elements are by the end of this module.

Tiamat and the Dragon Cult

The Untheric Dragon Queen (see WotC's *Powers and Pantheons,* page 133, ESD download from RPG Now), has recently moved into the Faerûnian pantheon and is making a desperate bid to entrench herself as a power within the pantheon. If you're running the *NJ* adventure, the PCs and the sigylls that drive them are a part of that effort, but as the PCs crossed the Vast, Tiamat suddenly changed her mind and tried to send the PCs off to attack Xvimists in Chessenta instead.

There are two reasons for this sudden shift: The Xvimists and the forces opposing her in the Dragon Cult are beginning to cost the Dragon Queen more supporters than she gains. Her most powerful vampire dragon, Knellict, former archmage of the Citadel of Assassins in Damara, is negotiating with Harbet Gall. The lich is turning the eastern Great Dale into a stronghold of Tiamat's Church and the Tiamatist faction of the Cult of the Dragon. Gall's destruction by the PCs would be exceedingly inconvenient at this time.

Tiamat-Kargmelchina is indeed finding that her manipulations from the Vaasan no man's land, as she perceived it to be, have drawn far more negative awareness than she had anticipated. The Dragon Queen understands the need for caution. She needs badly to quell the flame she set burning beneath the Cult of the Dragon, or she may find that the opposing factions destroy each other, along with the power base she hopes to win.

In addition, the attacks of assassins of the Xvimist church against her followers in the Vilhon Reach have Tiamat alarmed. She is too new in the pantheon and has too few followers to be able to afford to lose them or to retaliate with open force, and yet she knows she must concentrate on this problem now before her losses rise to unacceptable levels. With at least three avatars active in Faerûn, she is extremely vulnerable and knows her own existence may hang in the balance.

Therefore, it was necessary for Kargmelchina-Tiamat to convince Sammaster that his revenge upon Harbet Gall must wait, that it is better now to use Gall as a foundation for a new stronghold of *their* faction of the Dragon Cult and then to destroy Gall later, when he no longer is needed.

With that accomplished, Tiamat began trying to turn the PCs toward Chessenta, where a team of Xvimist assassins is operating. The PCs' symbols remained but became inactive. They felt themselves drawn away from the Great Dale toward the South, but only briefly. The bodiless spirit of the great red dragon Grafvitnir had asserted true control over the PCs and their symbols long ago. It was he, not Tiamat-Kargmelchina, who had steered them to follow her will – until now. However, as of this time, Grafvitnir decided it was time for the PCs to know the will if not the identity of their true master.

With confusion and horror, Tiamat-Kargmelchina watched as the PCs' sigylls came back to life and the group returned on the path to Harbet Gall and – unknown to her – toward her as their next destination after Gall. This event in and of itself brought a slight sense of panic to the avatar, for she knew that another power of some might is dabbling in her doings, and she had no idea exactly who this dabbler might be.

However, she still has a critical problem to solve; she must keep the PCs from destroying Harbet Gall for the time being. So it is that bands of draconians guided each time by a vampire dragon continue to hunt the PCs.

Grafvitnir

Tiamat may not be aware of the great, red dragon whose body she stole for Sammaster, but Grafvitnir is fully aware who Kargmelchina-Tiamat is, and he does not fear her, for he believes he would be great and mighty enough to become a draconic power himself, if only he had his body back. To do that, both his spellbinder – Kargmelchina-Tiamat – and his usurper – Sammaster – must be utterly destroyed, and he intends for the PCs to accomplish this task for him. To achieve this goal, Grafvitnir thinks it would be best to reduce Tiamat's power as much as possible, and a logical first step in that direction would be to continue as planned with the elimination of Harbet Gall, so that the lich is not able to enhance her power. After that, Grafvitnir intends to steer the PCs northward to Damara and Vaasa, to destroy both Tiamat's Kargmelchina avatar and Sammaster, freeing him at last! He knows he must hurry, for the ability of the PCs to resist him is growing.

The Church and Hunters of Herne

Herne the Hunter in the real world is a Celtic god who, among other things, found his way into the works of William Shakespeare. Some believed that to see a manifestation of the antlered god was death.

According to *Faiths & Avatars,* Herne once was a Realmsian god, brought to Faerûn *by an ancient wave of immigrants along with Oghma and other powers.* The book goes on to tell us that Malar defeated Herne, who had been worshipped by orcs of the High Forest, and then went on to assume his portfolio.

It perhaps was with this knowledge that Harbet Gall reintroduced the name of Herne when he came to the Great Dale in the 10th century, then still a living, human priest of Malar seeking to spread the religion of the Beastlord among the huntsmen of the Dale. Gall learned in short order after his arrival that the Dalesmen had no ear for the word of Malar, a god whose name they knew and scorned in their basic conservationist viewpoints and in their love of the Dale's natural resources.

But Gall also learned nearly as quickly that many of the Great Dale's hunters had grown hostile to the druids of Silvanus, who were unbending in their determination to maintain the balance within the woodlands, and who did their best, including resorting to violence, to stop overhunting of the woods, even though many Eastern Dalesmen's families were starving.

It was at this time that Gall began preaching the gospel of Malar while claiming it to be the teaching of Herne the Hunter, a god unknown before that time in the Dale. Gall ingeniously twisted the tenets of druidism, called his Malarite priests the true druids of Herne and won a strong following among those Dalesmen who were dependant upon the hunt or logging for their living. He was particularly successful in the Eastern Dale and Ashanath.

Malar and his church are devoted exclusively to the hunt and the kill. To bring Dalesmen onto the Malarite path, Gall taught in Herne's name that humanity was superior to the rest of nature and that the maintenance of the balance was not an end in its own right but rather a means to support humanity and to assure that humans have the resources necessary to feed and shelter themselves.

The druids and rangers who serve the fictitious Herne the Hunter do not merely hunt ruthlessly, like the pure Malarites, but they also see to it that there is a continuing supply of new prey. They maintain their own controls to see that no area is hunted out and they also maintain feeding stations, to assure that prey survives until it can become the object of the hunt.

The church of Malar has little interest in trees, logging or forest husbandry, but to win converts in the Dale, Gall also included these elements within the original teachings of Herne. Trees, according to the fictitious Herne, grow to be fallen by humans when they are needed, but it also is the loggers' duty to see to it that new stands of forest are planted to serve the needs of future generations of humans.

The system of Herne's church does then, in effect, maintain a balance too, but in an artificial sense of farming the forests and its inhabitants, raising and nurturing them to a certain point and then killing them, to raise new woods and wildlife in their place. This artificial means of maintaining a balance is repulsive to the druids of Silvanus, Chauntea and Eldath, but it has drawn men and women of evil heart but druidic inclinations into Herne's church, where they serve as evil druids with Malar's blessing. In the Great Dale, they and their followers call them the *True Druids*, although other druids ridicule this claim.

In the early phases of Herne's church, Gall's teachings would have achieved too little to satisfy Malar's bloodlust for the hunt, so the Hunters of Herne learned to hate the druids and rangers of Silvanus as being defenders of a false and self-serving faith. With the urging of the True Druids of Herne, to whom they had turned, they began hunting down the "*false*" druids and their rangers in Great Hunts with human prey, the ultimate ritual in Malar's own church. Within short order, the priests of Ilmater, who represent the opposite of Malar's teachings, also became prime prey.

The Great Hunt has become an important element in the worship of Herne throughout the Gallist areas of the Great Dale, and it has expanded to use prisoners, slaves and wrongdoers from among the Gallists' own ranks as prey in such hunts.

That notwithstanding, the church of Herne has grown ever more distant from the true church of Malar since Harbet Gall's ascent to lichdom, and at the same time it has become ever more an institution designed to increase and entrench the lich's own power. It should be noted that it was only after Gall's ascent to lichdom that he began claiming to be an avatar of Herne.

There are those in the Great Dale who believe that Gall began slowly going mad at this time, at first being overwhelmed by a madness for power but later gradually becoming simply mad in its own right. Whatever the case may be, the church of Herne has been drifting slowly away over the years from the core teachings of Malar.

It may be that Malar made his own statement on this turn of events when his avatar appeared in the Great Dale and took Hardhkjarkur Arnulfssonur as his host rather than Gall. During this time, Malar's avatar established his own church in Bezentil, and he saw to it that his greatest temple in the Realms, the Divine Den, also was established there.

When Malar returned to Colothys after the Time of Troubles, Arnulfssonur did not survive the departure. Malar then chose the current High Huntmaster in Bezentil, Skith Tsornagar, as his foremost priest in the Realms. Since that time, the churches of Malar and Herne in the Great Dale have continued to exist as rivals, but without openly violent hostilities, although some skirmishes do occur behind the scenes.

After the Time of Troubles, Gall himself drifted somewhat away from Malar, turning from a priest lich into a cleric lich. Recently he has begun dividing his loyalties between his roles as a cleric of Malar in the form of Herne and as a cleric of Tiamat.

Under Gall's leadership and over a period of many years, the church of Herne has lost its singular focus upon the hunt. The church now espouses the mastery of the human race and the balancing of nature to serve humanity. The hunt is stressed strongly within this concept, but it no longer is the *raison d'être* of Herne's church.

There are some theologians in neighboring Impiltur who have taken an interest in the church of Herne and who have begun studying it. Individual theologians have drawn widely varying and often contradicting conclusions.

Many question whether the so-called True Druids of Herne really are druids or are specialty priests instead. Druids, according to many of the theologians (and also the third edition *D&D Player's Handbook*) do not attempt to master nature but rather to become one with it. The true druids of Herne preach that humans are the masters of nature, and it is the job of man to balance nature in such a manner as to serve his own needs.

The survival of the fittest and the cycle of life, death and rebirth, all guided by True Druids and rangers, are central to Hernian dogma. Forests are there to be harvested, replanted and to be fallen again once they mature. The soil of the meadows and plains is there to be tilled, planted and harvested, to serve the needs of the men who control the land.

The spiritual leaders of the church and their followers are firm believers in the righteousness of hunting and slaying the prey. They believe just as strongly that it is their duty to see that new animals are born, sheltered in nature and fed, to grow into new prey, completing the circle with the hunt and the kill. The only unmitigated homage still paid to Malar under Herne's name is the Great Hunt, conducted everywhere in the Gallist regions, with humans as prey for the hunt, their blood a tribute to the ultimate glory of their Gallist god.

Some of the Impilturian theologians believe that such strong deviations from both the tenets of druidism and the tenets of the Malarite faith suggest that the true druids are no druids at all and the god who provides them with spells is not the Beastlord but another. Cyric is the focus of their speculation.

Other theologians debunk this theory. They contend that Malar views the church of Herne for what it is, a schismatic sect that honors the Beastlord in its own strange manner. Their proud and ritualistic Great Hunts do Malar sufficient honor, they argue. And Ao's edict that the power of individual gods be determined by the strength of their following would make it unlikely that the Beastlord would reject those who follow him in Herne's name. After all, they contend, Malar remains a lesser power and needs as many followers as he can gain.

The lich Harbet Gall continues to believe that the Herne whose faith's banner he bears is none other than Malar in another manifestation, and the men who call themselves the True Druids of Herne believe themselves to be just that.

The Dalesmen who worship Herne do not ponder such questions. They are a dour, duty driven folk with evil in their hearts. Neither fine gold rings and glittering gems nor the simpler trinkets of affection are the symbols of their love. Their jewels are well-honed tools of death - swords and pointed arrows with which they slay and axes to fell the forests that once sheltered them.

The hunters' and loggers' trails are their lives' paths, and the scent of fear in their prey, blood of the kill and the sweet fading sap of fallen trees is their joy. It is dangerous to intrude upon their lands. They know no mercy; the simply have never learned it. An intruder is prey and is reason enough to organize a hunt.

In the free Dale, armed men of the East found in Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest generally are referred to as the *Hunters of Herne*, but this is not quite correct. The real *Hunters of Herne* are the rangers' branch of the church. All real Hunters of Herne are evil rangers in the service of the church and Harbet Gall. Together with the 350 Reavers and warriors of Garagos, the 215 ranger Hunters of Herne and the 20 non-ruling True Druids make up the core of Gall's military.

The True Druids and Hunter of Herne rangers command a host of roughly 1,900 conscripted Dalesmen in the East. And only True Druids and ranger Hunters of Herne are allowed to wear the Hunters' insignia, which shows the head and talons of an eagle on a black field. Normally warriors in their service show no insignia.

The followers of Garagos in the ruins of Fortress Clymph are a unit apart from the True Druids, the Hunters of Herne and their men. The Reaver priests of Garagos command a brute force that will attempt to slay everything in its path - or be slain trying. They are of use to Gall only in larger battles.

The main force of the Eastern Dale operates in a much different manner from the Freemen's militia. The ranger Hunters of Herne train their men to fight with guerilla tactics. Most Eastern Dale fighters work in small commando units, led by a Hunter of Herne. The Hunters' tactic is to emerge suddenly from the forest or other cover, strike and kill or burn precisely and then disappear again quickly beneath the trees.

At least one ranger Hunter of Herne is responsible for the military unit of each thorp, village, hamlet and town in the Eastern Dale. He knows who the active conscripted men in his settlement are and can call them to battle at will. Active service lasts for five years. However, a Hunter of Herne, in time of need, also can order men who have finished their active service into battle.

The ranger Hunters of Herne take their orders from the True Druids, although the Hunters are free to choose their own strategy and methods for carrying out those orders. Neither the True Druids nor the Hunters of Herne have any right to command the forces of Garagos, unless they are given that command by Harbet Gall for a specific battle. Under ordinary circumstances, the Reavers report directly to Gall and only to Gall.

Young men starting out in military service after being conscripted are sent into one of the two forests in small groups, where they undergo six months of rugged, intensive training at the hands of a ranger Hunter of Herne, who not only teaches them how to use weapons well but also helps them learn guerilla tactics. Most male commoners in the Eastern Dale and many females are first level Warriors. Conscripts who complete their training are second level warriors.

During the time of training, the ranger Hunters of Herne keep their eyes open for strong devotion to the ideals of Herne and competence in a ranger's ways. Those who show signs of both are invited to enter ranger training, to become a Hunter of Herne. Such training is intensive and lasts for two years.

The Church of Malar

The Beastlord's church under Malar's own name is a relatively new thing in the Eastern Dale, having been brought into existence by the god's avatar during the Time of Troubles. In its first years, the church, centered in Bezentil, was active in hunting within the Dale, making the Mucklestones Druids and the Nentyarch its prey.

After several bitter defeats and horrendous losses among his own following, High Huntmaster Skith Tsornagar has retreated from his earlier ideas of the *Magnificent Hunt* and the *Ultimate Hunt*, although he still pays lip service to his vow to one day return and destroy the Nentyarch. Fulfilling that promise does not appear to be on his immediate agenda, and he and his followers seldom are seen in the Gallists' or Freemen's areas of the Dale. As a result, both Tsornagar and his church have become something of an enigma, as far as most Dalesmen are concerned.

Both Tsornagar and Harbet Gall are reluctant to challenge one another. From a practical point of view, they know that any violent resolution of their rivalry would weaken their own resources and strengthen their mutual enemies. From a theological point of view, both acknowledge that the other is a recognized cleric of Malar, and each doubts the Beastlord would look kindly upon hunts that would be organized with his own loyal followers as prey.

For such reasons, the followers of Malar and Herne tend above all to avoid each other in the Great Dale, although they do have occasional small skirmishes when they encounter one another in the no man's lands of the Dale.

In his first years in Bezentil, Tsornagar ignored Gall and his followers. He marched into eastern Lethyr Forest and succeeded where Gall had failed, tracking down the Mucklestones Druids in his *Magnificent Hunt* and driving them from the wood. The High Huntmaster overestimated his own glory then, afterward launching the *Ultimate Hunt* with the goal of killing the mysterious Nentyarch in central Rawlinswood.

Only Tsornagar and a few other members of the original hunting party, more than 200 strong at the outset, survived. His resources then were so weakened that the Mucklestones Druids also managed to return and drove the Malarites out of their outposts in Lethyr Forest. Since that time, Tsornagar's eyes are focused largely upon goals beyond the Great Dale, and he and his leading Huntlords and Talons often are gone from the Dale, organizing and participating in Great Hunts elsewhere in Faerûn.

However, the church in Bezentil still does organize two Great Hunts annually in the Dale, and other smaller hunts are staged at times when human prey is captured and selected for the hunt. To avoid serious conflicts with the Hunters of Herne, both Great Hunts of the Bezentil church are staged in areas of Lethyr Forest that Gall's followers do not claim to control.

The most dangerous of the hunts occurs in spring. In early Tarsakh, regardless of whether the winter snows have vanished, the Malarite hunters of Bezentil march en masse to the ruins of Fortress Narder, where a central camp and staging area for the hunt is established. From there, the human prey is driven off into the wood south of the ruins.

Most parties of huntsmen then are set on the trail of the prey, following southbound trails that begin between the Mucklestones enclave and the ruins of Mal D'aan. Parts of the hunt spread out to the east and the west, to flank the prey and keep it contained within the hunt's domain. The prey is driven ever farther to the south. The goal of the hunt is to track down and kill its prey before it escapes the forest and reaches Tears Creek.

According to the rules of the hunt, prey that reaches the water has succeeded in eluding the hunt and wins its freedom. In practice, if a hunting party tracks its prey beyond the forest and finds it before the creek has been crossed, the prey usually is brought back into the forest and slain there wrongfully. The huntsmen have good cause to break their own rules. Any hunting party that allows its prey to elude it is condemned to be prey in the autumn hunt.

The Tarsakh hunt is much more than a contest between the hunters and their prey. There are other factors in play that make the spring hunt among the most dangerous and challenging organized by Malar's church within the Realms.

The corner of Lethyr Forest where the spring hunt is staged is home to the Mucklestones Druids, who refuse to tolerate such events in their woodland. Tsornagar also has declared all members of the Mucklestones Druids to be the prey of the hunters, but the Mucklestones rangers and druids are much more knowledgeable about the wood than the Malarites, and they in turn hunt down the hunters, with an invariably greater measure of success.

Hunters who bag a member of the Mucklestones Druids win the highest honors of the spring hunt, but such honors seldom are claimed. The Mucklestones woodsmen play a game of cat and mouse with the Malarites, slaying many of them, but they usually are taken with about the same frequency as a mouse defeating a cat.

The 1,500 formerly Zhentish orcs who now live as forest nomads in eastern Lethyr Forest also are officially prey, and in each hunt, some usually are slain, but the orcs too have become wise to the Tarsakh hunt and have learned to hunt the hunters, bringing down many more of Tsornagar's men than the tally of their own losses.

Tsornagar considers a spring hunt to be a success if 50% of his hunters survive, all the human prey is bagged and 20 orc heads are staked at Fortress Narder. Some might think that the heavy losses sustained by the Malarites would cause many to be reluctant to join this deadly hunt, but quite the opposite is true.

Huntmasters, Talons, rangers and other followers of the Beastlord come from all corners of Faerûn each spring to join in the Tarsakh hunt. To wear the red claw pin of one who has taken part in a Tarsakh hunt in the Great Dale and survived is one of the greatest badges of honor a follower of Malar can claim.

A second Great Hunt is staged half a year later in Marpenoth, but the autumn hunt is bound more to the purpose of bagging game to provide a supply of meat for Bezentil in the winter. The Marpenoth hunt alternates locations each year. It always takes place in southwestern Lethyr Forest, one year between the Eth and the Flam and the next between the Flam and Spear Creek.

The hunt marches from Bezentil along the northern fringe of the forest to Bridhh and then onward to the ruins of Rublshofn and past Herneburg to Leifrskross. The hunt is staged from logged areas south of the village. This part of the forest is visited by druids and rangers of all Dale factions but controlled by none of them.

The Malarite hunters not only have their captured human prey and the game they seek to contend with, but also possible opposition from Freemen rangers and druids as well as the Hunters of Herne. All sides view whatever is afoot in these areas of the forest to be free game, and it is the one time and place where the followers of Malar and Herne are allowed to track down and slay each other without having to worry about retribution from Harbet Gall or Skith Tsornagar.

In addition to the possibility that other factions of druids and rangers may be in the wood, the Malarites also have to contend with the hobgoblins who lair there as well as treants and dryads, who are unwilling to tolerate the followers of the Beastlord in their domain.

That notwithstanding, the autumn hunt is considerably less dangerous than the Tarsakh outing. At the end of Marpenoth, about 80% of the hunt usually returns to Bezentil alive. For this reason, it also draws a smaller base of followers of the Beastlord. Most are from Bezentil, with small numbers of others coming from Damara, Impiltur, the Vast, Thesk and Thay.

Tsornagar has one key strategic weakness of which he is unaware. In the Year of Shadows (1358 DR), when the avatar of the Beastlord was in Bezentil, he ordered Harbet Gall to send him several Reavers and 200 warriors of Garagos from Fortress Clymph to defend him. This contingent, headed by Reaver Lord Drómi the Bloodred, has remained in Bezentil and continues to guard the city, now at full battalion strength of more than 400.

Tsornagar has no suspicions at all that Drómi and his men are disloyal. For 14 years, they have guarded the city well and have proven their loyally. The High Huntmaster is aware that there are frequent exchanges of warriors between the temples of the Reaver in Bezentil and Westgate, but he sees no reason to raise his eyebrows over this. Drómi maintains the city's battalion at full strength and keeps it 100% fit. Tsornagar assumes the exchanges of warriors are a part of the ways of Garagos' church.

In truth, the garrison in Bezentil really is a covert training center that is subordinate to the House of Steel in Westgate under the priestess Chalass the Cruel. The new men who come to Bezentil are not warriors from the Westgate temple at all but rather new followers of Garagos who are sent to Bezentil for training as priests or warriors. Those who depart Bezentil have completed their training and are being sent into Damara and Thay, to infiltrate the military forces and spread the faith of the Reaver there.

Once Drómi completes his training mission, he will have a large surprise in store for Tsornagar. He and his battalion simply will saddle up and ride out of Bezentil and into Damara, to join a unit of the Damaran army and continue with their faith-spreading mission there.

The Reavers of Garagos

Harbet Gall first brought bloodthirsty Reaver priests of Garagos and berserker warriors who followed them to the Eastern Dale in the early 13th century. With the Reavers came quietly the first covert infiltration of the Dale by the predecessors of the Sembian Iron Throne, an organization known then as the Black Diamonds.

The leading Reaver priest that Gall drew to the Eastern Dale in the Year of the Private Tears (1204 DR), Tandus Luveigh of Calaunt, both a sorcerer and secret high priest of Garagos, used the temple to Garagos that Harbet Gall had established in the ruins of Fortress Clymph to steer early operations of the Black Diamonds in the Dale.

The connection between the Black Diamonds and the church of Garagos began to break in Luveigh's time, however. Luveigh found little of interest to the Throne's predecessor in the East and began concentrating agents of the Black Diamonds in Uthmere and the eastern coast of Easting Reach, steering their activities from his base in the ruins of Fortress Clymph. With Luveigh's death, the Black Diamonds replaced him with a successor in Uthmere and the connection between the church of Garagos and the budding Iron Throne ended.

In the nearly two centuries since Gall first brought the Reavers of Garagos to the Eastern Dale, the church has known moments of bloody glory. At the church's high point, Fortress Clymph once housed a full regiment of warriors and priests, some 1,800 men.

The Eastern Dale branch of the church has been in decline ever since Malar's avatar came to Bezentil in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR). That decline was accelerated when the Tuigan horde moved through Ashanath and into parts of the Eastern Dale in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR).

In the Year of Shadows (1358 DR) the Reavers in the ruins of Fortress Clymph became somewhat demoralized after the avatar of Malar ordered Gall to send two companies - 200 men as well as several ranking Reavers - from Fortress Clymph to serve him in Bezentil.

During the avatar's time in Bezentil, Reaver Lord Drómi the Bloodred, who led the followers of Garagos that had been ordered to serve the Beastlord, was contacted by Reavers of the House of Steel in Westgate. They told of the plans of the Priestess Chalass the Cruel (see the entry for Garagos in *Powers & Pantheons* by Eric L. Boyd - TSR 1997, ESD download from RPG Now) to spread the Reaver's faith into Thay and Damara.

After Malar's return to the planes late in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR), the contingency in Bezentil remained there rather than returning to Fortress Clymph, ostensibly continuing to serve the new high priest of Malar there, Skith Tsornagar. However, Drómi's true purposes focused instead upon Damara, where Zhengyi still reigned and where he and Chalass the Cruel believed that fertile soil was to be found in which to sow the seeds of Garagos' faith.

Drómi's decision to be independent of Gall and remain in Bezentil displeased the Malarite lich, but he was not willing to act, because he was afraid of risking the Beastlord's wrath by making a move against the warriors who were defending Tsornagar's church in Bezentil.

Nonetheless, Malar had been gone from Bezentil less than a year when Drómi suffered a brief setback. Contrary to his expectations, the Damaran paladin knight Sir Gareth Dragonsbane managed to destroy Zhengyi in the Year of the Serpent (1359 DR), and it appeared that the Reavers of Garagos might have difficulty winning followers in a Damaran host loyal to their paladin savior.

These fears proved to be unfounded, however, and with the help of a perhaps ill decision on Harbet Gall's part, Drómi became the man in the Great Dale that followers of Garagos elsewhere sought out, rather than the Reavers in Fortress Clymph, where the number of Garagos' followers was in decline. These events are the beginning of the story of Drómi's successes in Damara but they have little to do with the Great Dale. Therefore they are described in Part 7 of *Northern Journey, Bloodstone,* rather than here.

Significant to the Great Dale was the event that set the decline of Fortress Clymph in motion. A severe blow was dealt to the host of Garagos in the Eastern Dale in the Year of the Turret (1360 DR), when Gall sent more than 1,000 bloodthirsty warriors from the ruins of Fortress Clymph into Ashanath to drive the Tuigan out. The horse raiders had the upper hand in this battle from the start, and they maintained it. Of the three battalions of Garagos' warriors who were sent into Ashanath, only two companies returned alive.

Today, the remainder of Fortress Clymph is the home base for the approximately 350 Reavers and warrior followers of Garagos believed to still survive in the Eastern Dale outside of Bezentil, but only 200 of them at the most can be found within the fortress at any given time. The location of the other 150 is uncertain, and it is possible that an unknown number of them have died.

Four platoons are at all times on a kill-anything-that-moves border patrol, two each within Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest. There is a constant rotation of platoons, with those on the field returning to Fortress Clymph after a month of field duty to be replaced by a new platoon from the fortress.

The Reavers in Fortress Clymph are uncertain what has become of the two remaining platoons, a total of 50 fighting men accompanied by two mid- and lower level Reaver priests. It was sent out in Nightal of the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR) to battle against the minions of the Nentyarch and to attack Dun Tharos, if possible. No word ever was heard again from the mission.

In mid-Hammer a large number of winter wolves began trying to besiege the ruins of Fortress Clymph and continue to do so. The warriors of Garagos have tried to drive them off, but they have little wit for the ways of creatures of the wild, and most of the wolves easily elude them and vanish into Rawlinswood, only to re-emerge at another place. The Reavers of Garagos suspect the winter wolves were sent to them, but they have no idea who the responsible foe might be.

The ranger Hunters of Herne certainly would be a match for the winter wolves and doubtless would succeed with time in killing the beasts or driving them off, but they have made no attempt to do so. Instead, the rangers and the True Druids of Herne have been watching the situation bemused, assuming that the winter wolves are the two platoons of warriors that the Reavers sent off to Dun Tharos, transformed by the Nentyarch and sent back to Fortress Clymph to plague their erstwhile brothers-in-arms. They are indeed correct in this assumption.

The Hunters of Herne and the True Druids are convinced that Harbet Gall no longer considers the followers of Garagos useful, and that he has decided to slowly let them die out in battle. Events of recent years seem to confirm this belief. And Gall himself, in mad ramblings to high True Druids in an assembly in Nighthawk Tower late in the Year of the Unstrung Harp seemed also to confirm this, although few beyond his inner circle are aware of what he said.

Gall, who already was raving at the time, told the True Druids that the age of great battles in the Dale was past, that the future belongs to magic, dragons and guerilla warfare. If this reflects the lich's true intentions, then the Reavers of Garagos no longer play a role in his planning, and they well may be expendable.

The remaining warriors of Garagos in Fortress Clymph are a mixed lot. There still are a few descendants of the Vastans who originally brought the Reaver's faith to the Dale a century and a half ago. There also are some loyal followers of Garagos from Chondath and the Vilhon Reach, and a few converts among Tuigan warriors who had been taken prisoner. And there are a few descendants of the Tekumthari tribesmen, Raumvira ancestors of Raumathari survivors, who once entered Gall's service.

The majority of the troop, however, consists of east Dalesmen who, mostly because of their brawn, were forced into service in Fortress Clymph through conscription. Once there, some willfully took up Garagos' bloody instruments of war; others - like the captured Freemen in their ranks - were magically brainwashed into the Reaver's service.

What will become of the battalions in Fortress Clymph is uncertain. Morale there is low, for the warriors there are demoralized, dying too easily and too seldom tasting the enemy's blood on the field of battle. Many talk in whispers about a mass desertion to Bezentil and the ranks of Drómi the Bloodred, but no action has been taken yet toward this end.

The Mucklestones Druids

Game Master's Note: The term *Mucklestones* is *FR* canon, although the name remained unexplained through the FR 2E era. At the same location as shown upon our map of the Great Dale, the map that goes with FR9 *The Bloodstone Lands* by R.A. Salvatore (TSR - 1988, ESD download from RPG Now) shows a site labeled *The Mucklestones (Druids?)*. The WotC Product *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* (WotC 2001) offers a brief, one-paragraph description of the Mucklestones site that is incompatible with the more detailed version offered in this accessory. Our development of the so-called *Mucklestones Druids* therefore is strictly an unofficial invention of the Vintyri Project. The druids who are members of this group are described in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* under *Character Class Extensions*.

Records in Impiltur indicate rather clearly that flames leveled large parts of Lethyr Forest and Rawlinswood in the last days of the war between Narfell and Raumathar. The green elves of the Mal T'unan tribe, who had successfully resisted Narfelli attempts to control the more remote parts of the forests, abandoned all hope when the war generated into an apocalyptic cataclysm of mighty magic gone out of control.

In the Year of Unknown Fates (-561 DR), the green elves made their retreat, although their destination and fate remain unknown. They did not reach Evermeet, if that was their goal, and it may be that they were destroyed in the great conflagration before their retreat could succeed.

Only individual rangers and one clan of the Mal T'unan tribe stayed behind, the Mal K'ustan clan in Lethyr Forest, a crusty band of druid warriors whose ranks at first were purely elven but with time became more or less equally divided between green elves and half elves of mixed Mal K'ustan elven and Narfelli human blood.

Records in the Impilturian royal library in Lyrabar tell tales of the Mal K'ustan warriors, whose elven name had been bastardized into *"Mucklestone"* in the human Narfelli tongue. The Narfelli were not hunters, but they did pay Turami Dalesmen to enter the forbidden elven woods to bring back deer and boar for their plates.

What eventually turned into a religious civil war doubtless began with the often hard and bloody forest battles between the Dalesmen who hunted the elven woods for the Narfelli and the druid-led Mal K'ustan, or *Mucklestones Druids,* as the Narfelli called them.

Ancient documents in Lyrabar suggest that things were very much up and down between the *Mucklestones,* the Dalesman hunters that they hunted, and the Narfelli archmagi who hunted the druids. In about the Year of Fiendish Gambols (-201 DR), the Narfelli at last found *Mal K'ustan*, the hidden groves of the Mucklestones, and destroyed them. This location is marked by a white dot and the legend *Mucklestones Druids* on the *NJ* map of the Great Dale.

At the same time, the Narfelli began construction of Fortress Narder on a forest hill just north of the grove site they had razed. Narfelli records claim that the attack on the Mucklestones' groves all but eradicated the druidic organization. Other records, however, suggest that this claim was highly exaggerated.

Dalesmen who helped the Narfelli build the forest fell frequently to Mucklestones arrows, and in the Year of Wrongful Martyrs (-188 DR), the Narfelli gave up their attempts to clear the forests surrounding the hills because the Mucklestones sappers had killed so many of the Dalesman lumberjacks sent to do the job.

It also is noted that the *Mucklestones* mysteriously became much more elusive targets about two dozen years before the fall of Narfell. Until that time, patrols from Fortress Narder which had been combing the forest seeking members of the Mucklestones, brought bodies in rather regularly, but the druids and their followers became considerably more difficult to find starting in the Year of the Huntress (-179 DR).

One will search the old parchments in Lyrabar in vain for an answer to this riddle. The Narfelli apparently never learned it. But it is important for Game Masters to know the truth of this matter, for it continues to influence campaigns in the Great Dale today.

In the Year of Tragedies (-180 DR), the great Narfelli archmage Kiriagoth the Occularum gave up all hope for his ever more decadent empire. He disappeared from his tower, where modern day Impilturian Ilmwatch now stands. The great artifact that he had shaped for the Narfelli emperors, the *Crown of Narfell*, disappeared as well. The Narfelli parchments in Lyrabar do not reveal what became of Kiriagoth (that tale is told under the artifact description for the Crown of Narfell), but they do record tales of Kiriagoth being seen at remote points of the empire in the first years after his disappearance.

Before merging his own spirit into the Crown of Narfell, Kiriagoth did in fact travel hidden through Narfell, taking those steps he could to begin righting Narfelli wrongs or to share his power with those among the native populations and the Narfelli whom he believed might shape a better future.

In the Year of the Huntress (-179 DR), Kiriagoth found his way to Lady L'un tul D'arit, the Mal K'ustan green elven druidess who at that time led the few surviving members of the Mucklestones, and he gave her a magical Narfelli object of great might and power, the *Amulet of the Astral Vault* (see *New Magic Items* in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*).

With this object, Kiriagoth created for the Mucklestones an enclave on the astral plane where they could seek refuge. The gate to this enclave was created on the site of the enclave that the Narfelli had destroyed 22 years earlier.

With the *Amulet of the Astral Vault,* Lady L'un tul D'arit could place an invisible mark upon her followers that allowed them to pass through the magical gate to the astral enclave. The amulet remains in the possession of the Mucklestones today and still is used by them to escape the Hunters of Herne. The current bearer is Haspar Eriksbrodir, the half elven great druid who leads the Mucklestones Druids.

Many times, the Gallist forces in the Great Dale have attempted to raze Mucklestones, believing correctly that the Mucklestones Druids still are tied magically to the glade, but it is impossible to set it afire or to do anything else that causes damage that endures for more than a minute's time.

No parchment in the *Forgotten Realms* documents what is behind this strange situation, but the truth can be found in the entry for the *Amulet of the Astral Vault*. Briefly explained, the amulet has moved the true Mucklestones glade to the astral plane.

The area it once occupied in Lethyr Forest is a pure material void. Absolutely nothing is there beyond a lingering magical memory of Mucklestones on the day that the glade was shifted to the astral plane. Those who enter the area where the glade was enter a void, experiencing only the reality of the magical memory as they perceive it.

In or about the Year of Recompense (-150 DR), Narfell and Raumathar concluded their horrendous war with the mutual destruction of the two empires. All of Lethyr Forest as far westward as Gylving, Leifrskross and the source of Spear Creek north of Spearmouthdale burned to the ground. How many of the Mucklestones Druids survived the devastation is unknown, but at least some of their number apparently lived on, perhaps in the astral enclave, for the *Amulet of the Astral Vault* continued to be passed down to new generations.

Little news is recorded of the Mucklestones Druids in the millennium after the fall of Narfell and Raumathar. Most Dalesmen who survived in the West and gradually migrated Eastward, as the forests grew again, continued to be primitive farmers and hunters, almost to the man illiterate. The little history recorded during this time is in the songs of bards and minstrels that were handed down over the years.

While these do speak of conflicts between the Mucklestones Druids and both hunters and settlers in the Eastern Dale in the years when the newly regrown forest still was young, such ballads are known to be unreliable. It was not unusual for the ancient minstrels to make their songs *"better"* by spicing the ancient tales with interesting events from other times and places. While conscientious bards are more dedicated to preserving the truth of their ballads, it is impossible to guess to what extent the songs of the ancient Dale still known today are accurate.

In these matters, the royal library of Impiltur's queen provides little help. After being freed from Narfell's yoke, the Impilturians turned their attention inward, dedicated to building and then in more decadent times exploiting their own land and folk.

The Impilturians paid scant attention to the fortunes of their more primitive neighbors across Easting Reach, and they wrote few words about those things they may have observed there. The Great Dale was neither a threat to Impiltur nor a source of new income for the young city-states and the kingdom that grew from them.

The first important, newer documentation of the Mucklestones Druids can be found in Tantras, in the journal of the wealthy Tantran merchant Tobias Durnar, who had visions of leading a huge, well-armed caravan along the coast of the Inner Sea of Impiltur eastward to Kara-Tur. Apparently he succeeded.

His caravan hired a fleet of ships in Lyrabar in Flamerule of the Year of the Flourishing Forests (789 DR). It northward upon Easting Reach to Uthmere, where it disembarked following the Trade Route to Kront in Ashanath and then traveled southward along the Lake of Tears and the Mulsantir River to the point where the Golden Way crosses it, east of Two Stars.

Durnar intentionally made the large northern detour to avoid Thesk, which his journal claims was being devastated simultaneously by plague, drought and famine at that time. Neither the Mucklestones Druids nor the Great Dale were important entries in Durnar's journal.

However, he did describe the Western Dale as a primitive but peaceful and friendly land of farmers. However, after leaving Bezentil, Durnar claims his caravan saw frequent traces of *"misery"* resulting from skirmishes between the *huntesmen of yon dale and the woodelande druids of the Muggelstones."*

The drought that had begun devastating Thesk to the south also took its toll upon the agricultural valley of the Great Dale, although it was not so severe there as in the South. Nonetheless, hunger and famine were severe threats, particularly in the eastern reaches of the Dale, where farmlands were poor in quality. Having few crops to harvest, the sparse population in the East, where most men already were hunters, turned ever more to game as a source of nourishment.

The Mucklestones Druids, who had grown again into a formidable organization by the 8th century, were firmly determined to curb the incursion of hunters into eastern Lethyr Forest. It came to often deadly skirmishes between well-armed bands of huntsmen, who were prepared to defend themselves, and the Mucklestones Druids, who were just as determined to defend the balance in the forest.

Hostilities between the Mucklestones and huntsmen continued for more than a century. During this time, the druids of western Lethyr Forest and also the enclaves of druids in Rawlinswood also became alarmed by the increased hunting and logging in their areas, and they too took to defending their woods with both their magic and their scimitars.

Most tales and ballads that have been passed down from this time as well as the few surviving journals kept by merchants traveling the Trade Route suggest however that the hostilities were nowhere near as heated in the West or in Rawlinswood as they had become in eastern Lethyr Forest.

It appears that this stage of conflict lasted well beyond the time of drought and famine, that both the druids and the huntsmen had drawn strong and stubborn lines, and that neither side desired an end to the conflict based upon something less than the opponent's total capitulation.

It was in the times after Harbet Gall's arrival in the Eastern Dale and after his establishment of the church of Herne that the secretive Mucklestones Druids began coming back into their full glory. No single force over the many centuries up until the arrival of the Nentyarch has been such a thorn in the side of Harbet Gall as the Mucklestones Druids.

The Malarite lich does not know the secret of the Mucklestones' astral refuge. For centuries, the guerilla warriors and druids have made surprise hits against Gall and his followers all over within eastern Lethyr Forest and in the villages of the eastern Trade Route, vanishing again in most cases within the shelter of the wood, suffering only moderate losses of their own.

As an organization, the Mucklestones Druids have changed greatly over the years. The original forest defenders of Mal K'ustan who battled the Narfelli and their Dalesmen hunters no doubt were pure-blooded green elf druids and rangers of Rillifane Rallathil, members of the great but vanished Mal T'unan tribe.

Old ballads suggest that the Mal K'ustan elves were joined early in their battles by sympathetic human rangers who worshipped Silvanus, and this no doubt resulted in the growing number of half elven druids and rangers of Rillifane and Silvanus who already formed the early Mucklestones.

Over the years, pure Mal T'unan elven blood has vanished from the Mucklestones Druids, just as the rest of the Mal T'unan tribe has vanished from the memories of Faerûn. With the diminishing elven blood, worship within the Mucklestones began to concentrate more upon the church of Silvanus, with Rillifane relegated to a secondary role, although devout half elven druids and rangers still serve Rillifane today within the ranks of the Mucklestones. The band's current leader, L'arana Lunwinsdóttir, is a half-elven druidess of Rillifane.

The current day Mucklestones Druids consist of 12 human and half elven druids of Silvanus, three half elven druids of Rillifane, 34 human and half elven rangers who worship Silvanus, 7 half elven rangers who worship Rillifane, 23 human warriors who worship Silvanus, four human rogues who worship Silvanus and two halfling rogues who pray to both Sheela Peryroyl and Brandobaris.

The halflings who were accepted into the Mucklestones Druids were survivors of a thorp on the lower Soleine Valley in the Western Dale. The Nentyarch destroyed the village, although the halflings are convinced it was the work of the Gallists.

In greater Faerûn, the Mucklestones Druids are a virtually unknown organization, except within the ranks of Silvanus' druidic followers. The tale of the legendary Mucklestones is widespread among the druids and rangers who worship the Oak Father, and enough of these are drawn by their religious convictions to the Great Dale, to join the Mucklestones Druids and make up for the loss of those members who fall in battle with Harbet Gall or Skith Tsornagar.

The Freemen's Militia

The Freemen in a broad sense are the Dalesmen who live outside of the Gallist areas. They tend to be hard-working pioneer souls, close to the soil they work and the forests they tread. Most Freemen are illiterate, although the number of them who can read and write continues to grow slowly. The greatest degree of literacy is found in the Western Dale, in the area surrounding Uthmere and Uthving.

In a narrower sense, however, the term *Freemen* applies to the voluntary militia that wears the herald of the oak leaf and the acorn, the men who have protected the Western Dale from the Gallists and the Dragon Cult in the east for years and who now battle the Malarites of Skith Tsornagar when the enter southwestern Lethyr Forest on their Great Hunt in Marpenoth of each year.

Out of necessity, most of the independent counties, baronies and free settlements of the eastern and Central Dale have come to support a united Dale militia that is headquartered in Uthmere on Easting Reach in the West but operates all over the Dale, including behind enemy Gallist lines.

Service in the militia is in principle voluntary, although few young men in all but the westernmost areas of the free Dale would think of not performing their so-called *Year in Bezentil,* which has nothing to do with either a calendar year or with Bezentil. The term comes from an earlier time when Bezentil was the easternmost stronghold of the Freemen, making it a dangerous assignment, and those Freemen taking time out from their lives to do a hitch with the militia were assigned to a year's service in Bezentil.

Anyone who signs up for a hitch with the militia, and that includes most young free Dalesmen after reaching their 16th through 22nd birthdays, actually serve for four years before returning to their chosen lives, unless of course they continue to serve on in the militia and make a career of it.

Most communities of the Central and Western Dale down to the smallest thorps support the Freemen's militia financially. Support for the Freemen's militia also comes from the settlements on the Herald's Road and Merchant's Run that are within the borders of the kingdoms of Impiltur and Damara.

However, there are areas of the West that do not contribute to the militia and are not defended by it. New Sarshel is an independent port city on Easting Reach controlled by the Iron Throne. The town does nothing to support other parts of the Dale. Nyth and Ethdale on the eastern coast of the Easting Reach are independent. They do not participate in the Freemen's militia but maintain their own local militias.

Just as the Dale itself is without a central government, the Freemen's militia too is without a strong central command structure, although it does have a prominent and powerful central headquarters in Uthmere on Easting Reach. But many militiamen work in isolated groups as crack guerilla sapper units who do their best to make life miserable for the Hunters of Herne in contested areas. Such militiamen know where the next level of command is and who gives the orders, but under normal circumstances, there is little contact. However, networks of runners can communicate quickly and effectively in times of trouble.

The militia also has more conventional units concentrated in the larger villages and the towns of the West, and these have battled heroically for centuries in large-scale battles against the hosts of Harbet Gall and the Reavers of Garagos from the ruins of Fortress Clymph in the Eastern Dale. The high command post of the Freemen in Uthmere serves both as a strategic center and a training base. Most new militiamen spend their first three months in Uthmere to gain combat and other types of training.

The high commander of the militia is General Friedhleif Skjöldurssonur, who is based in Uthmere. Skjöldurssonur has a vision of a day when Harbet Gall exists no more, the Hunters of Herne have been destroyed or driven from the Dale, and the entire Dale, perhaps along with Ashanath, is united into a nation. Many other Dalesmen share this vision, and most who do think of Skjöldurssonur as the best man to lead whatever new country would emerge from the hundreds of years of civil war. (More details on Skjöldurssonur can be found in the section *New Unofficial NPCs* of the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide*.)

In all, Skjöldurssonur has nearly 6,000 Dalesmen under his command. 3,200 of them are in two combat regiments headquartered in Uthmere and Vulddin. 1,600 are in the 3rd Combat Regiment, a training regiment, in Uthmere. An estimated 800 more serve in scattered sapper units. It should be mentioned that at least two militiamen of five are not native born Dalesmen but rather outsiders - more than 2,000 in all - in most cases adventurers, who came to the Dale, were inspired by its tough spirit and decided to earn their living as career members of the militia rather than as seekers of fortune.

Skjöldurssonur has considerably more men under arms than the Gallist leaders of the East, but the Freemen are weaker in magic than their foes. The divine magic of the Freemen is largely a matter of the support they receive from druids of Silvanus and Chauntea. The Freemen have few users of arcane magic.

Most Dalesmen are uneducated and illiterate and therefore outside the spectrum of those who are likely to become wizards, although there are some naturally talented sorcerers among the Dale's population, and some of these serve with or work with the Freemen's militia.

Skjöldurssonur realizes that he needs to strengthen the magical support for his forces in order to defeat Harbet Gall and to eliminate the Hunters of Herne in the East. He will do his best to convince adventuring wizards who come to the Dale to join his cause. If the PCs of the *Northern Journey* campaign who bear the sigylls and are en route to encounter Harbet Gall come to his attention, they can be certain of his support.

The main garrisons of the organized militia and their average strengths are:

- **Uthmere:** Headquarters unit (100 men); 1st Combat Regiment with its 1st Battalion (400 men); 3rd Combat Regiment (Training) with 4 Battalions (1,600 men). Total strength: 2,100.
- **Uthving:** 2nd Battalion of the 1st Combat Regiment (400 Men). Total strength: 400. Provides combat support to Timbertown as well.
- **Veststad:** Companies A and B, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment (100 Men). Total strength: 100.
- **Mauberg:** Company C, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment (100 Men). Total strength: 100.
- **Mauberg's Oak:** Company D, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment (100 Men). Total strength: 100.
- **Gylving:** Company A, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment (100 Men). Total strength: 100.
- **Riggstad:** Company B and C, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment (200 Men). Total strength: 200.
- **Karlshofn:** Company D, 3rd Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment (100 Men). Total strength: 100.
- **Hnútar:** Companies A and B, 4th Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment (200 Men). Total strength: 200.
- **Zieth:** Companies C and D, 4th Battalion, 1st Combat Regiment (200 Men), occupational force. Total strength: 220.
- **Ganglhofn:** 4th Battalion, 2nd Combat Regiment (400 Men). Total strength: 400.
- **Vulddin:** 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 2nd Combat Regiment (1,300 Men). Provide combat support to Denderdale and Torside as well. Total strength: 1,300.

The names of these units give them the misleading air of being crack infantry or cavalry units. While the combat regiments certainly are well trained for battlefield combat, their real specialty, under the leadership of ranger officers, is guerrilla and forest warfare.

The operations of the Freemen's militia are supported through local taxation. In the Northern Journey Campaign Guide Paul Hoyak covers how local taxes are raised in the section *Taxes in the Realms*. The armed forces tax is not levied in the Great Dale. The rural taxes mentioned in this section are levied. In addition, farm goods are taxed at a rate of 5% of production, although local lords and governments sometimes forgive this tax in cases of abject poverty. As an example, in most cases, a farmer must turn 5 pounds/kilograms of each 100, pounds/kilograms harvested wheat over to the local ruler as a tax.

The amount paid to the militia is determined by agreements made between the governments and the militia's leadership. The militia is not under the command of any of the local governments. Skjöldurssonur and the other high officers of the militia decide the promotion of officers within the militia.

The Iron Throne

The Iron Throne controls New Sarshel in the East and manipulates some of the trade in the western part of the Great Dale, particularly the export of wines and spirits, but for the most part, its corrupt fingers are not yet deeply entwined in the doings of the Dalesmen. Nonetheless, the highest levels of the Throne in Sembia entertain long-range ideas for the Dale that could cause a serious war to explode throughout the entire region.

The real regional Iron Throne power in the Great Dale is Nordolf Gilding, who for all intents in purposes appears to be the neutrally good aligned owner of Acorn Wine Shipping in New Sarshel in the Great Dale. More details on Gilding and his operation can be found in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* and in the entry for New Sarshel in Book 2 of this sixth part of *Northern Journey*. Gilding is No. 2 in the Throne's operations east of the Vast. He answers only to the hidden regional leader, the epic wizardess Shandaril in Damaran Heliogabalus.

Under Gilding's covert control, the Throne in the Great Dale is in a state of preparedness to move swiftly into the rest of the Dale, should Harbet Gall fall in the Eastern Dale. The Throne has a tight network of talented, covert agents throughout the Great Dale, from Uthmere to Kront in Ashanath and also in the enclaves of the Dragon Cult in Tower Threespires, the warriors of Garagos in Fortress Clymph and the Malarite city of Bezentil.

Throughout the Eastern Dale, the Throne's agents believe that Gall's empire is on the verge of crumbling. The Great Dale is rich in resources, and the Iron Throne intends to capitalize upon them, if the civil war ends. The Throne has its eye above all on the rich timber resources of Rawlinswood, which can be harvested.

Due to strange environmental conditions resulting from the rapid melt of the bottom of the Great Glacier some three centuries ago, parts of Rawlinswood grew far too many trees far too fast. For that reason the druids of Silvanus allow intense cutting of some parts of the wood, and the Throne would gladly capitalize on the timber market potential, if the civil war were ended.

The Throne has no intention of quarreling with the druids but rather would work cooperatively with them. Neither Gilding nor his superiors would be foolish enough to rekindle a civil war in which the druids have held out for six centuries against the likes of Harbet Gall and his Hunters of Herne. The goal of the Throne is to amass an ever growing fortune and economic power, not to bog itself down in an endless civil war.

The Throne is aware that much of the land along the Trade Route west of Vulddin could be put to excellent use for large scale cattle grazing. And the Sembians appreciate fully the potential of the fertile soils in Ashane south of Kront between the Lake of Tears and Lethyr Forest, land that would have become the regional breadbasket several years ago, had there been no civil war. As far as the Dale itself is concerned, obtaining economic power in the wake of a possible fall of Harbet Gall is the Throne's top priority.

Preparations for the time when Harbet Gall may no longer be a factor are only one element in the strategy of the Iron Throne for the lands surrounding Easting Reach, all of which are steered by Gilding in New Sarshel within the Great Dale under the secret guiding hand of Shandaril in Heliogabalus.

A tug-of-war, friendly on the surface, deadly earnest beneath, is going on between the Throne and the church of Mask in Impiltur, and Gilding in New Sarshel is responsible for the Throne's part in these matters. There are ongoing negotiations between the Iron Throne and the House of the Master's Shadow in Telflamm.

The Throne and the largest temple of Mask's church in the Realms are working together to gain ever more control of affairs in Impiltur and to some extent Damara as well. However, the alliance with Telflamm requires Gilding's constant attention and watchfulness. Mask's church is so taken with intrigues that it is quite capable of having one element working together with the Throne on the Damaran and Impilturian intrigues and another separate element plotting just as diligently an intrigue against this group.

New Sarshel also is the command center for covert Throne activities in Impiltur. The main Impilturian operatives in the kingdom are in Hlammach, and they report directly to Gilding's agents, although they are unaware of Gilding's name. Both legal investments and profit skimming are important sources of income for the Iron Throne.

But the main thrust of the Throne in Impiltur, working in league with the church of Mask, is to discredit the paladin Lords of Imphras II who rule the kingdom in the service of the dowager Queen Sambryl, so that the paladin government can be brought to a fall when the heirless queen dies. A new government to the Throne's liking would replace it.

Shandaril in Heliogabalus and Gilding in New Sarshel together are responsible for the consolidation of the Throne's activities in Damaran Heliogabalus. The Throne already has a tight grip on the Damaran Merchants Council in the capital city and it controls much of the private bloodstone trade beyond the mines. Gilding's task is to see to it that the non-governmental mines eventually come under direct or indirect control of the Throne. The Throne's main competitor in Damara is the government's own Royal Damaran Bloodstone Trust.

Finally, from New Sarshel, Gilding is steering trade route development in Vaasa for Shandaril. This is an area where Gilding could find himself in trouble in the future. On the surface, it appears that competing trails are being forged through Vaasa by front operations of both the Harpers and the Throne, but the Throne's trailblazers are in truth operatives of the Zhentarim.

Neither Gilding nor Shandaril is aware of this, but the Harpers are. The top echelon of the Throne in Sembia hasn't occupied itself directly with the Vaasan operation and also is unaware of the Black Network's involvement. If other elements of the Throne learn of this before Gilding does, it could bounce back upon Shandaril, who is too powerful for the Throne in Sembia to give the blame. She would fault Gilding, and that could jeopardize his standing within the Throne.

It is likely that any PC group will unknowingly encounter some members of the Throne in their travels through the Dale, but it's doubtful in most places that those who are encountered will be involved in any nefarious activities the PCs can uncover. Most representatives of the Iron Throne in the Great Dale are spies who are keeping a close eye on what's happening while doing business that may be shady but not necessarily illegal.

The spreading sphere of influence of the mysterious Nentyarch in central Rawlinswood and his seeming invulnerability trouble the Throne, above all, because the Throne has no idea what the Nentyarch's intentions are. What he does in most of the Dale concerns the Throne little, but the Sembian organization does not want the Nentyarch's hand to reach farther westward, toward Merchants Run, where it might interfere with Throne trade and the transportation of wares to and from Damara.

Of more immediate concern to the Throne is the increasing activity of the Kront cell of the Dragon Cult. The cult also is quite active in the Throne's homeland of Sembia, and it has often proved to be a costly irritation and nuisance to the Throne there. The indications that the cult cell in the east of the Dale is preparing for some kind of large scale operation trouble the Throne's leaders considerably.

On a long-range basis, the Throne could pose a much bigger threat than at present. In recent years, Sembian merchants who represent the Throne have come to be on increasingly friendlier terms with the House of the Master's Shadow, the great temple to Mask in Telflamm, and the temple's ruling puppet merchant prince there.

Recently, a purportedly new Sembian merchants organization calling itself Ashane East Development, a pure front for the Throne, bought a large row of commercial docks in Telflamm, and it has been expanding the port facilities since, in such a manner that the docks also could serve as a naval base.

Although few are aware of it, the Sembian ambassador to Telflamm recently signed a treaty with the merchant prince which would allow Sembian naval vessels to dock in Telflamm for military action in the Great Dale, should Sembian interests in New Sarshel be threatened.

In truth, a faction of the Sembian government that is thoroughly infiltrated by the Throne arranged this treaty. What really is behind this move is rooted in the Throne's belief that Harbet Gall is becoming shaky in the Eastern Dale. Should Gall be on the verge of falling at some future point, the Throne hopes then to convince the Sembian government to invade and conquer the Dale, which the Throne views as a potentially profitable trade resource.

While the Throne is influential in the Sembian government, one hardly could argue that the Throne rules Sembia. It is questionable whether the Throne really could draw Sembia into such a war, and many influential people in Sembia including some Throne members believe such a military adventure would be insane.

They believe a Sembian invasion of the Dale would lead to a conflagration that not only would spread quickly across the Vast and Impiltur but also lead to the devastation of Sembia, which in turn could draw Cormyr into occupying parts of western Sembia. What Sembia really would do in the case of Harbet Gall's fall is an open question, but there is little doubt that the Throne would at least attempt to gain a covert but dominant hand in the doings of the politically altered Dale.

Impiltur and Damara

In some ways, the kingdoms of Impiltur and Damara look upon the Great Dale in the way the Iron Throne does. The Dale is an unstable neighbor, and that instability is a potential threat to both kingdoms. Since the alliance of the Kront cell of the Dragon Cult with the Church of Tiamat, that threat has become considerably greater, although the two kingdoms are only beginning to piece this fact together.

The threat against Damara is more imminent than that against Impiltur. King Gareth has brought his devastated land back together to a certain extent, but its own merchants in Heliogabalus with their ties to the Iron Throne already are corrupting the slowly reunifying kingdom, and the king has found no medicine to date to heal this internal illness.

Nor can he devote as much time as needs must be to deal with such troubles, for his borders are not yet safe or secure. A quarter century ago, Zhengyi's Castle Perilous arose from the swamps of Vaasa, and the witch king used it as a base to bring the fall of the first Damaran kingdom. King Gareth, then still uncrowned, destroyed Zhengyi and his evil castle but did not succeed in scouring the ruins of all evil.

Within short order after their return to Damara, the king and his companions learned that an estimated 50 dragons had flown to the ruins to swarm there, and most of them continue to do so today. At nearly the same time, one began observing the shape of a fortress castle peering out occasionally from the clouds that always surround the peak of Suncatcher Mountain, where the Galena and Earthspur ranges meet above Damara and Vaasa.

These two seemingly separate occurrences soon were linked, when one observed dragons flying back and forth between Suncatcher and the Ruins of Castle Perilous. Since that time, the Damarans have been convinced that something is brewing between these two evil locations that bodes ill for the kingdom rearisen.

This situation has been brewing now for a dozen years without any direct and visible aggression being mounted against Damara, but there are other unsettling things happening that the king and his followers believe may have to do with the castle in the mountains and the Vaasan ruin, although they have no evidence yet to confirm their suspicions.

The dragons in the ruins of Castle Perilous and those flying between there and Suncatcher never can be seen by daylight. Only in the fading colors of sunset and the morning grey before sunrise can they be observed in flight. In the dark of night, they often can be heard in the sky over Damara as well, and on moonlit nights they can be observed.

They have been seen to light down upon the broad Damaran wastelands and then vanish from sight in the shadows of the landscape, only to rise again in the grey light of dawn and wing back northward. None know what the wyrms are seeking in Damara or what they do there during their nocturnal visits. All attempts to track them down at night have failed. The dragons simply vanish without a trace.

Northern Damara also has suffered under another strange phenomenon. Sleeping residents in the towns and settlements of the North often awake to discover what clearly are vampire bites upon their throats, but there has not been a single case of death from these vampire attacks, nor has a single Damaran been transformed into a vampire from such bites. No victims can recall being bitten or seeing the vampire that attacked them.

These cases of vampirism have been going on for a dozen years in the north of Damara, and there are those who speculate that dragons from the ruins of Castle Perilous and Suncatcher Mountain may be flying vampires into the kingdom.

The priests of Ilmater and the Ilmatari monks of the Monastery of the Yellow Rose both have been trying to solve this riddle but without success to date. Confusing above all is that fact that the vampire attacks cause no death or lasting damage to the victims. The priests and monks are little impressed with the argument that dragons are flying vampires into Damara. They do not see why this would be necessary; vampires could fly into Damara of their own power, in bat form.

Still another element is troubling the king. Strange creatures have been seen crossing the Damaran wastelands, following the Goliad and then crossing south of Kinbrace and Steppenhall and continuing on toward the Giantspires. The king and his advisors suspect that these creatures may be coming down from Suncatcher Mountain.

No one in a position of authority in Damara has seen these creatures to date, and all signs are that they are attempting to cross the kingdom unseen. Peasants who have spotted these strange parties always describe the creatures in approximately the same manner: They seem to be lizardmen who have been hybridized with dragons or wyverns, and they usually are accompanied by a black man with small, dragonlike wings on his back.

What their purpose may be eludes the king and his advisors, but their concern over this matter has grown since they have received word from Impiltur that such creatures are reported to be settling in within the Gallist enclaves of the eastern Great Dale.

Impiltur is farther removed from these threats than Damara, but the Lords of Imphras II share the concerns of King Gareth, with whom they are allied. In Zhengyi's time, they learned all too well that what threatens Damara will threaten Impiltur as well, if it is not contained on time. In addition, much to the consternation of the Impilturian paladins, there have been reports lately of small bands of such lizard-dragonmen wandering through rural Impiltur as well.

Damara never has set its eyes upon the Great Dale with thoughts of expanding its own borders. Parts of the Great Dale once belonged to the kingdom of Impiltur. Although it cannot be said that the Lords of Imphras II are considering an invasion of the Great Dale, there are those in the kingdom who advocate that the Sword and Wand of Impiltur be sent eastward, to bring down Malarite Bezentil, destroy the Dragon Cult at Tower Threespires and then at last eliminate the lich Harbet Gall and bring a Dale without civil war under Impilturian protection.

It is not likely that Impiltur will make any such move in the foreseeable future, however. Queen Sambryl and the Lords of Imphras II feel that the greatest threats to regional security are not in the Great Dale but rather atop Suncatcher Mountain and in the Vaasan ruins of Castle Perilous, and Impiltur and Damara currently are forging mutual plans to rid the Bloodstone Lands of these dangers.

The Nar Tribes

The tribesmen of the Narfelli plain normally concern themselves more with the trinkets that men of the West trade with them at the Bildoobaris Trade Fair than with the doings of their neighbors, but Zhengyi's overrunning of Damara a quarter century ago has caused a change of thinking in the minds of many Nar chieftains as well.

Since the rise of Zhengyi and continuing into the present, the hobgoblins of the Giantspires have been awakened and are constant cause of problems for the tribes. In addition, several parties of strange lizard-dragonmen and black men with dragon wings have crossed the foothills of the Giantspires and the southern edge of the Narfelli plain, trespassing upon the Dag Nast and Qu'encesta tribal regions, to enter the Gallist reaches of Rawlinswood.

The Nars are highly superstitious and frightened of magic. A few of their scouting parties have challenged these intruders and have been liquidated, not only in conventional battle but also with powerful magic.

The Qu'encesta have come under considerable criticism from other tribes and have been given much of the blame for these territorial transgressions. Traditionally, the Nar tribes have barred their lands outside of the Trade Fair to all intruders. In earlier times, the Qu'encesta violated this tradition by reaching an agreement to allow Harbet Gall to move his followers across the southern plain north of Rawlinswood. In doing so, the tribes say, the Qu'encesta set a precedent, and now any intruders who feel strong enough to defy the Nars cross their plains arrogantly and at will.

At the same time that these criticisms are made, the Nar tribes also debate what they will do if war breaks out anew, for word has reached them that conflict is brewing. They also discuss anew the oft-rejected proposal of Chief Var of the Var tribe that Damarans be allowed to begin mining for gemstones in the Giantspires above the lands of the Var tribe.

The Var and Aingst tribes, who live beneath the Giantspires, suffer the most from the hobgoblins in the mountains. Chief Var long has believed that the hobgoblins could at last be dealt with effectively if the Damarans were allowed to mine in the Giantspires, because the fortune-seeking miners would bring with them enough fighters and weaponry to defend themselves against the hobgoblins and perhaps begin to eradicate the monsters.

Until recently, the Aingst tribe, which rides the lands at the foot of the Giantspires north of the Vars and the Nar-sek Qu'istrade campsite, has been skeptical of Chief Var's proposal, but the new hobgoblin attacks and a suggestion brought to the Var and Aingst tribes from King Gareth's court have caused opinions within the Aingst tribe to begin shifting.

The proposal from Heliogabalus is no longer that Damara mine the Giantspires but rather that the Damarans, working within the framework of a royal mining company under the king's control, and members of the Nar tribes work the mines together and divide the profits equally. King Gareth also has promised to send Damaran mining experts into the Giantspires to teach the tribesmen how to become professional miners, should they agree to his proposal.

5. Changing of Hands

Austtad

Year:	Ruler:
-1150	Turami
-888	Narfell
-150	Destroyed
-146	Floods destroy reconstruction
-128	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale
917	Hunters of Herne
1255	Destroyed in dragon battle

Bezentil

Year:	Ruler:
-855	Narfell
-283	Destroyed - Raumathar
-280	Rebuilt - Narfell
-150	Destroyed
-143	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale
937	Hunters of Herne
972	Freemen Great Dale
1004	Hunters of Herne
1009	Freemen Great Dale
1018	Destroyed - Dragon Rage
1020	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale
1255	Severe damage in dragon battle
1260	Partially rebuilt - Freemen
1288	Massive attacks - taken by Gallists, 90% destroyed
1310	Restoration as large town completed - Hunters of Herne
1358	Claimed by Church of Malar, magically walled in stone

Bildoobaris Trade Fair

Year:	Ruler:
28	Nar tribes

Briddh

Year:	Ruler:
-801	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
913	Hunters of Herne

Cairnpur

Year:	Ruler:
1039	Freemen Great Dale
1094	Destroyed - Hobgoblins
1097	Rebuilt Freemen
1196	Partially Destroyed
1198	Reconstruction completed
1347	Impiltur

Denderdale

Year:	Ruler:
-807	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale

Dender's Valley Logging Camps

Year:	Ruler:
999	Freemen Great Dale

Dun Tharos

Year:	Ruler:
-208	Narfell
-150	Unclaimed
1338	Nentyarch

Ethdale

Year:	Ruler:
-1250	Turami (Name unknown)
-892	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
-146	Impiltur
890	Freemen Great Dale
975	Annexed by Telflamm
1360	Freemen Great Dale

Fortress Clymph

Year:	Ruler:
-503	Narfell
-150	Destroyed
988	Rebuilt - Gallist Dragon Cult Cell
1055	Abandoned - Decline into ruin begins
1204	Restored - Fortress and Temple to Garagos
1292	Tekumthari Warriors enter training
1343	Devasted by beasts of the Nentyarch
1355	Rebuilt - Reavers of Garagos

Fortress Narder

Year:	Ruler:
-201	Narfell
-150	Destroyed
1005	Rebuilt - Hunters of Herne
1009	Destroyed - Mucklestones Druids

Ganglhofn

Year:	Ruler:
-803	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
942	Hunters of Herne
969	Freemen Great Dale
1288	Dragon attack - 90% burned
1292	Resoration completed - Freemen

Great Boar

Year:	Ruler:
1025	Hunters of Herne

Guidodale

Year:	Ruler:
1043	Freemen Great Dale
1094	Destroyed - Hobgoblins
1098	Rebuilt Freemen
1262	Badly Damaged - Dragon Attack
1263	Reconstruction complete - Freemen
1347	Impiltur

Gurshofn

Year:	Ruler:
-1150	Turami
-888	Narfell
-150	Destroyed
-146	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale
916	Hunters of Herne
1288	Destroyed by Fire - Mucklestones Druids
1307	Rebuilt - Hunters of Herne

Gylving

Year:	Ruler:
-798	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
1288	Dragon Attacks, 150 dead, 30% destroyed
1301	Restoration complete

Herneburg

Year:	Ruler:
1011	Hunters of Herne

Hnútar

Year:	Ruler:
-892	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
1004	Destroyed
1008	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale
1012	1 - Hunters of Herne/2 - Freemen Great Dale

Karlshofn

Year:	Ruler:
-803	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
946	Hunters of Herne
965	Freemen Great Dale
1004	Destroyed
1007	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale
1012	Destroyed
1013	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale

Kars

Year:	Ruler:
1009	Hunters of Herne

Kílstad

Year:	Ruler:
1024	Hunters of Herne

Kjarr

Year:	Ruler:
1008	Hunters of Herne (village)
1053	Destroyed
1333	Military hamlet - Hunters of Herne
1339	Destroyed and claimed by Nentyarch

Kro Tharos

Year:	Ruler:
-9000	Green elves
-561	Mostly abandoned
1339	Nentyarch (illusory ruins)

Kront

Year:	Ruler:
-1150	Turami
-908	Narfell
-150	Destroyed
56	Rebuilt by Impilturian Merchants
58	Freemen Great Dale
917	Hunters of Herne
1018	Destroyed - Dragon Rage
1020	Hunters of Herne

Leífrskross

Year:	Ruler:
-1150	Turami
-846	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
1010	Hunters of Herne

Lenchbugar

Year:	Ruler:
1098	Freemen Great Dale
1114	Damaged - Dragon attack
1115	Restored - Freemen

Lenchengí

Year:	Ruler:
999	Tellerth Druids
1114	Destroyed - Dragon attack

Lenchford

Year:	Ruler:
1046	Freemen Great Dale
1094	Destroyed - Hobgoblins
1097	Rebuilt Freemen
1117	Damaged in dragon attack
1123	Annexed into Damaran Polten
1347	Citizens declare independence
1360	Polten again acknowledged as ruler

Lenchstígur

Year:	Ruler:
1002	Tellerth Druids
1114	Destroyed - Dragon attack

Mal D'aan

Year:	Ruler:
-9000	Green elves
-561	Abandoned
-150	Destroyed

Mal Nu'ill

Year:	Ruler:
-9000	Green Elves
-561	Mostly abandoned - illusory ruins
1339	Nentyarch - illusory ruins
1365	Destroyed during Malarite Hunt

Maracrath

Year:	Ruler:
1042	Freemen Great Dale
1094	Destroyed - Hobgoblins
1098	Rebuilt Freemen
1347	Impiltur

Mauberg

Year:	Ruler:
-886	Narfell
-150	Impiltur or Freemen?
890	Freemen Great Dale

Mauberg's Oak

Year:	Ruler:
-9000	Green Elves
-847	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale

Mettledale

Year:	Ruler:
-1250	Turami
-887	Narfell
-150	Destroyed
-89	Freemen Great Dale
1009	Hunters of Herne

Mucklestones (Mal K'ustan)

Year:	Ruler:
-9000	Green elves
-561	Mucklestones Druids
-201	Destroyed

Mugh

Year:	Ruler:
1012	Hunters of Herne
1051	Destroyed

Mulltown

Year:	Ruler:
1195	Freemen Great Dale
1347	Impiltur

New Sarshel (Borkurstad)

Year:	Ruler:
-894	Borkurstad: Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
-147	Impiltur
890	Borkurstad: Freemen Great Dale
1357	Impilturian merchants, renamed
1358	Sembian merchants of Iron Throne

Nighthawk Tower

Year:	Ruler:
-506	Narfell (Věžpeklo)
-150	Destroyed (Věžpeklo)
913	Nighthawk Tower built - Hunters of Herne

Nordhofn

Year:	Ruler:
1007	Hunters of Herne

Nyldyng

Year:	Ruler:
-1150	Turami
-900	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
1009	Destroyed

Nyth

Year:	Ruler:
-1250	Turami
-890	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
-146	Impiltur
890	Freemen Great Dale
975	Annexed by Telflamm
1360	Freemen Great Dale

Ríggh

Year:	Ruler:
-850	Narfell
-150	Destroyed
-144	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale
917	Hunters of Herne
1262	Destroyed - dragon attack
1264	Rebuilt - Hunters of Herne
1288	Destroyed - Hunters of Herne

Ríggstad

Year:	Ruler:
-804	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
941	Hunters of Herne
966	Freemen Great Dale
1288	Dragon attacks, 60% destroyed, 95 dead
1311	Reconstruction completed - Freemen

Rublshofn

Year:	Ruler:
-801	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
913	Hunters of Herne
1310	Destroyed by fire - Mucklestones druids

Skarlshofn

Year:	Ruler:
-850	Narfell
-150	Destroyed
-138	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale
917	Hunters of Herne
1288	Destroyed by fire - Impilturian expedition
1299	Restored - Hunters of Herne

Slave Farms

Year:	Ruler:
941	Hunters of Herne
1360	Tuigan destroy four of five farms

Spearmouthdale

Year:	Ruler:
-1250	Turami
-888	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
1009	Hunters of Herne

Sudhofn

Year:	Ruler:
1009	Hunters of Herne
1010	Destroyed - Mucklestones Druids
1012	Rebuilt - Hunters of Herne
1310	Destroyed by fire - Mucklestones Druids
1315	Fortified way station built - Hunters of Herne

Tangetsjódur

Year:	Ruler:
1012	Hunters of Herne
1053	Destroyed
1335	Rebuilt as forest outpost - Hunters of Herne
1339	Destroyed - Nentyarch

Tarkstad

Year:	Ruler:
1025	Hunters of Herne
1114	Destroyed - Dragon attack

Tellerth Grove (Damara)

Year:	Ruler:
-1150	Druids of Silvanus

Tíghofn

Year:	Ruler:
1007	Hunters of Herne

Tíls

Year:	Ruler:
1012	Hunters of Herne
1051	Destroyed

Tímbertown

Year:	Ruler:
1044	Freemen Great Dale
1094	Destroyed by Hobgoblins
1097	Rebuilt Freemen
1262	Destroyed by fire - dragon attack
1265	Reconstruction completed - Freemen
1288	Destroyed by fire - dragon attack
1309	Reconstruction completed - Freemen

Tíníng

Year:	Ruler:
1023	Hunters of Herne
1114	Destroyed - Dragon attack

Torside

Year:	Ruler:
-850	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale

Tower Threespires

Year:	Ruler:
1202	Gallist Dragon Cult

Tschedith

Year:	Ruler:
1007	Hunters of Herne
1018	Destroyed - Dragon Rage
1019	Hunters of Herne - mostly ruins
1181	Rebuilt as thorp - Hunters of Herne
1314	Growth back to hamlet level

T'uluar

Year:	Ruler:
-9000	Green Elves
-561	Abandoned
1001	Dracolich Nestamanur
1004	Unclaimed
1339	Nentyarch (ruins)

Tumbling Stars

Year:	Ruler:
-1150	Druids of Eldath

Ulfshofn

Year:	Ruler:
-1150	Turami
-888	Narfell
-150	Destroyed
-134	Rebuilt - Freemen Great Dale
917	Hunters of Herne
1225	Many die in dragon battle
1288	Destroyed in fire - Mucklestones Druids
1304	Rebuilt - Hunters of Herne

Uthmere

Year:	Ruler:
-992	Narfell
-150	Dalesmen
890	Freemen Great Dale
1236	Dragon attack upon harbor, fishing settlements
1288	2 Green Dragon attacks, 250 dead

Uthving

Year:	Ruler:
-889	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
-147	Impiltur
890	Freemen Great Dale
1262	Badly damaged - Dragon attack
1266	Reconstruction complete
1288	Green Dragon attack - 200 dead

Veídarheím

Year:	Ruler:
1022	Hunters of Herne
1114	Destroyed - Dragon attack

Veídarhofn

Year:	Ruler:
1009	Hunters of Herne
1018	Destroyed - Dragon Rage
1019	Hunters of Herne - mostly ruins
1188	Rebuit as thorp - Hunters of Herne
1222	Abandoned - Hunters of Herne
1344	Restored as Gallist outpost
1345	Destroyed by Nentyarch's beasts and green elves
1371	Ruins - Draconian encampment

Veídarsudur

Year:	Ruler:
1012	Hunters of Herne

Veststad

Year:	Ruler:
-790	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
-148	Impiltur
890	Freemen Great Dale
1288	Green Dragon attack, 20 dead

Vuldín

Year:	Ruler:
-802	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
941	Hunters of Herne
973	Freemen Great Dale
1255	East gate destroyed in dragon battle
1262	75% burned - dragon attack
1265	Reconstruction completed - Freemen
1288	40% burned - dragon attack
1290	Reconstruction completed - Freemen
1342	70% of town burns in battle
1346	Reconstruction completed - Freemen

Wanneth

Year:	Ruler:
-792	Narfell
-150	Freemen Great Dale
-148	Impiltur
890	Freemen Great Dale
1288	Green Dragon attack, 18 dead

Zieth

Year:	Ruler:
1012	Hunters of Herne
1051	Occupied by Freemen

6. Old Turamí

Although most native Dalesmen can speak at least some common (few can read and write, however), they usually speak their native tongue among themselves, old Turami. This means that your PCs probably won't understand much of anything that the Dalesmen don't intend them to understand, and they will misunderstand some things regardless of intentions. When someone who does business has a sign painted by someone who is literate, it may be in common or Turami, sometimes both, but often a pidgin mix of the two.

The version of Turami used in *Northern Journey* is based upon old and modern Icelandic, although it is not quite identical with either. Lists of common terms follow:

Numbers

0 - núll
1 - einn *or* eitt
2 - tveir *or* tvö
3 - brir
4 - fjórir
5 - fimm
6 - sex
7 - sjö
8 - átta
9 - níu
10 - tíu
11 - ellefu
12 - tólf
13 - brettán
14 - fjórtán
15 - fimmtán
16 - sextán
17 - sautján
18 - átján
19 - nítján
20 - tuttugu
21 - tuttugu og einn (20 and 1, other numbers formed in the same manner)
30 - brjátíu
40 - fjörutíu
50 - fimmtíu
60 - sextíu
70 - sjötíu
80 - áttatíu
90 - níutíu
100 - hundradh
200 - tvöhundrudh (other hundred numbers formed in the same manner)
201 - tvöhundrudh og einn (200 and 1, other numbers formed in the same manner)
1,000 - Þúsand
1,201 - Þúsand tvöhundrudh og einn (1000, 200 and 1, other numbers formed in the same manner)
1,000,000 - ein milljón
first - fyrsti
second - annar
third - bridhjii
fourth - fjördhi
fifth - fimmti
sixth - sjötti

seventh - sjöundi
eighth - áttundi
ninth - níundi
10th - tíundi
11th - ellefti
12th tölfti
13th - brettándi
14th - fjörtándi
15th - fimmtándi
16th - sextándi
17th - sautjándi
18th - átjándi
19th - níutjándi
20th - tuttugasti
21st - tuttugasti og einn (20th and 1, other numbers formed in the same manner)
30th - brítugasti
40th - fertugastu
50th - fimmtugasti
60th - sextugasti
70th - sjötugasti
80th - áttugasti
90th - nítugasti
100th - hundradhasti
200th - tvöhundrudhasti
201st - tvöhundrudhasti og einn (200th and 1, other numbers formed in the same manner)
1,000th - Þúsandasti
1,000,000th - milljónasti

Selected Words

afi - grandfather
ahorntré - maple tree
akarn - acorn
akur - farm field
aldin - fruit
Aldradögun - Rawlinswood and Lethyr Forest combined (literally *Auldgloam*), Rawlinswood is *Nordhaldradögun* and Lethyr Forest is *Sudhaldradögun*
álfar - elf, elves
amma - grandmother
askar - ash tree
adhall - no´bility
Austnornlönd - Rashemen (literally *east witch land*)
Austströndlönd - the Vast (literally *east coastland*)
austur - east
Austurlönd - seldom used expression for the East, as opposed to the direction east (*austur*), in other words the rest of Faerûn east of the Great Dale (literally *east land*), more common: *Morgunlönd*.
bardagamadhur - fighter (PC class)
bardagaöxi - battle axe
bardagabardagi - battle
barn - child
barnabarn - grandchild (literally: *child's child*)
beyki - beech tree, also *beykitré* (literally *beech tree*).
bikar - wine glass, chalice
bjarn - old but still used for *barn* (*child*)
bjór - beer
blár - blue

bladh - leaf
bogi - bow
bóndakona - farmer's wife
bóndi - farmer
braudh - bread
brennivín - schnapps (literally *distilled wine*)
bródir - brother
bugar - riverbend
bygg - barley
dalur - dale
Dalmadhur - man - Dalesman
daudhi - death
daudhur - dead
dögun - dusk
dóttir - daughter
dótturdóttir - granddaughter, born of a daughter
dóttursonur - grandson, born of a daughter
draugur - undead, ghost
drepur - slayer, bane
druiur - druid
dvergr - dwarf
dyrrkur - a drink or liquid potion
eik - oak, also *eikartré* (literally *oak tree*)
elding - lightning
eldur - fire
eltri - alder tree, also *eltritré* (literally *alder tree*)
engi - meadow
epli - apple
eplvin - cider
fasani - pheasant
fell - mountain
fjall - mountain
fjöll - mountain range
fljót - flow, flood, river
fljótur - fast, quickly
födir - father
fugl - bird
fura - pine or fir tree
galdradraugur - lich
galdrakona - female mage
galdramadhur - male mage
galdrar - magic
gálgi - gallows
ganndakona - sorceress
ganndamadhur - sorcerer
Gardhmódir - the goddess Chauntea (literally *garden mother*)
gardhur - region, also garden
ginnungagap - the void
Godhsudhnornlönd - seldom used name for Aglarond, see *Sudhnornlönd*
göltur - boar, male (also *villigöltur*).
grænmeti - vegetables
grænn - grün
graf - grave
greni - spruce tree (less frequent *raudhgreni*)
Grímnir - the god Mask (literally *the masked one*)
gröf - grave
gudh - god

gudhdómur - deity, godhood
gulrót - carrot
hægur - slow, slowly
hafrar - oats
hagl - hail
hálf - half
hálfmannkyu - halfling
hálmur - straw
hamar - hammer
hár - hair, also high as in high noble, high age
hátíd - feast or festival (less frequent: *veisla*)
haukur - hawk
Haust - the season Harvesttide, also the holiday.
heim - settlement (thorp, hamlet, village), also homeland, native land
heitur - hot
héri - hare
hermadhur - soldier
hestur - horse
hey - hay
hjalmur - helmet
hjartarhorn - antlers
hlýr - warm
hobgøblínur - hobgoblin
hofn - settlement (thorp, hamlet, village)
hrafn - raven
hrím - frost
humal - hops
hundur - dog
hús - house, building
hveiti - wheat
hvitur - white
is - ice
já - yes (also *jü*)
járn - iron
járnsmidhur - smith
jörd - Abeir-Toril, also Faerûn (no differentiation)
jötun - giant
jü - yes (also *já*)
kaldur - cold
kanina - rabbit
karlmadhur - man
kartafla - potato
kind - sheep
kjöt - meat
kló - claw
komast - accommodations at an inn
kona - woman
korn - grain
köttur - cat
kross - crossing
krukka - tankard
krús - tankard
Kvöldlönd - the West, as opposed to the direction west (*vestur*), in other words the rest of Faerûn west of the Great Dale (literally *evening land*).
kýr - cow
lækna - to heal
lækning - healing

lik - corpse
lingørmr - wyvern
ljösálfar - elf (light elf)
logi - fire
Logleidhar - the month Flamerule
lönd - land
madhur - man
magúr - brother-in-law
magúrkona - sister-in-law
malt - malt
maltöl - barley malt for brewing
mannkyu - human race
matur - food
maturbordh - large table with assorted food, Dale custom
maur - ant
Maurfjall - Mauberg (literally *ant mountain)*
meistar - master
Midhsumar - the season Midsummer, also the holiday (less frequent: *sumar*)
Midhvetur - the season Midwinter, also the holiday (literally: *middle winter*)
mjödur - mead
mjólk - milk
módir - mother
morgun - morning, tomorrow
Morgunlönd - the East, as opposed to the direction east (*austur*), in other words the rest of Faerûn east of the Great Dale (literally *morning land*)
munkur - monk
mýri - swamp, mire
myrkur - darkness
Nar - Narfelli tribesman
nár - corpse
Narfjöll - Narfell
Narfjöllar - Narfelli, also the word used to describe the common tongue
naut - bull
nautakjöt - beef
nei - no
Nordhaldradögun - Rawlinswood (literally *North Auldgloam*)
nordhur - north
Nornislönd - Vaasa (literally *witch ice land*)
nótt - night
Nóttal - the month Nightal
Nýrislönd - Damara (literally *new ice land*)
ørmr - dragon
önd - duck
örn - eagle
ostur - cheese
öxi - axe (general)
pera - pear
pílvidhur - pasture
piparót - horseradish
prestur - priest, cleric (no differentiation)
rádýr - deer
rádýrshafur - deer buck
raudhgreni - spruce tree (literally *red spruce,* more frequent *greni*)
raudhrófa - beet
raudhur - red
rigna - rain
rófa - turnip

rúgar - rye
rúm - bed
saudhur - mutton
silungar - trout
sjór - ocean, sea
skjaldarmerki - coat of arms. herald
skjaldur - bard
skjöldur - shield
skjótur - fast, quickly
Skógfödh - the god Silvanus (literally *father of the forest*)
skógur - forest
skógvegverandi - ranger (literally: *forest wanderer*)
skuld - the future
smidhja - smithy (smith or blacksmith is *járnsmidhur*)
smjör - butter
snjór - snow
sól - sun
sólskin - sunshine
sonardóttir - granddaughter, born of a son
sonarsonir - grandson, born of a son
sonur - son
spjót - spear
stad - settlement (thorp, hamlet, village)
stígur - path, climb
stólpi - arrow
stór - big, large, great
Stórdalur - Great Dale
straumur - stream, river
strídh - war
strídhur - Warrior (NPC class)
stormur - storm
strönd - coast or beach
Sudhaldradögun - Lethyr Forest (literally *South Auldgloam*)
Sudhnornlönd - used for both Aglarond and Thay, literally *south witch land*. Most Dalesmen do not know the difference between Aglarond and Thay. The few who do call Aglarond Godhsudhnornlönd, literally *good south witch land*, but this name is seldom heard.
sudhur - south
Sumar - The season Midsummer, also the holiday (more frequent: *midhsumar*)
Sumarlönd - the South, as opposed to the direction south (*sudhur*), in other words the rest of Faerûn south of the Great Dale (literally *summerland*).
svart - dark, black
svartálfar - draw (dark elf)
sverdh - sword
sveskja - prune plum
systir - sister
tár - tear
Tárfödh - the god Ilmater (literally *father of tears*)
töfrar - magic
töfrasproti - wand
tönna - wall
tré - tree
Tumbrarheim - Impiltur
tungl - the moon
Tunglhátíd - the season *Feast of the Moon*, also the holiday, (literally: *Moon Festival,* less frequent: *Vetur*).
Þeskur - Thesk
Þing - Thing, meaning a large meeting or gathering to deal with important matters
Þjófur - thief

Þorpari - rogue
Þræll - slave, thrall
Þruma - thunder
úlfur - wolf
úrd - the past, also destiny
urkr - orc
uppspretta - a water spring, particularly the source spring of a stream
út - out, outer
uxi - oxen
vadh - ford (of a stream)
vagn - wagon
vatn - water
vatnfoss - waterfall
vegur - route, trail, road
vegverandi - wanderer
veidar - hunter
veisla - seldom used word for *feast* or *festival* (see *hátíd*).
veidhídyr - barbarian
veitingahús - inn
veitingaherbergi - room at an inn
veitinakona - innkeeper, female
veitingamadhur - innkeeper, male
veitingar - food and drink at an inn
veitingasalur - public room at an inn
verdhandi - the present
verslun - trade
Verslunvegur - Trade Route through the Great Dale
vestur - west
Vesturlönd - seldom used expression for the West, as opposed to the direction west (*vestur*), in other words the rest of Faerûn west of the Great Dale (literally *westland*), see *Kvöldlönd*.
Vetur - the season Deep Winter, also the holiday.
Veturlönd - the North, as opposed to the direction north (*nordhur*), in other words the rest of Faerûn north of the Great Dale (literally *winterland*).
vidharöxi - forester's axe
villisgöltur - boar, male (also simply *göltur*)
villisvín - boar, female
vín - wine
vindur - wind
vitnur - wolf
Vor - the season Greengrass, also the holiday

Names of Dalesmen

Most Dalesmen have only a first name. In place of a last name, they almost always use a family identifier built upon the following formula:

Father's first name + *s* for the possessive + *sonur* (son) or *dóttir* (daughter)

Thus, *Sigurd*, the son of *Hafurd Nardungssonur*, would be known as *Sigurd Hafurdssonur*, and his daughter *Brigga* would be known as *Brigga Hafurdsdóttir*.

In some cases, for reasons lost in time, the ending *-sonur* is shortened to *-son*, simply because it has been the practice within a certain family. Therefore, if the father had been known as *Hafurd Nardungssonur*, his son *Sigurd* would be called *Sigurd Hafurdsson*.

For reasons equally lost in time, some families at some point lost this naming tradition and acquired a genuine last name. Thus, if *Sigurd*, had been the son of *Hafurd HeaÞvyng*, he would be known as *Sigurd HeaÞvyng*, and his daughter *Brigga* would be known as *Brigga HeaÞvyng*. Such cases are relatively rare, however.

Dalesmen who do great deeds, good or evil, often acquire through common use a new identifier name. Thus, if *Sigurd Hafurdssonur* were to slay the dragon *Grafvölludh*, he could become known as *Sigurd Grafvölludhsdrepur* (literally: *Grafvöllud's Bane*). If the dead were truly great and his father *Hafurd* still lived, it is possible that the father would become known as *Hafurd Sigurdsföd* (literally: *Sigurd's Father*), and that his wife *Hestla* would become known as *Hestla Sigurdsmód* (literally: *Sigurd's mother*).

In some cases, when the doer of great deeds is a brother or sister, the identifier name also may reflect this. If, for example, *Sigurd's* sister *Heidrun* killed the dragon, *Sigurd* might start to be known as *Sigurd Heidrunsbródir* (literally *Heidrun's brother*). If *Sigurd* slew the dragon, *Heidrun*, on the other hand, might become known as *Heidrun Sigurdssystir*. The endings also could extend as far as in-laws. Therefore, identifier names could be *Sigurd Halmarsmágur* (literally: *Sigurd, Halmar's bother-in-law)* or *Heidrun Halmarsmágurkona* (literally: *Heidrun, Halmar's sister-in-law*).

The naming of identifiers applies more or less within the current two generations. If, for example, *Sigurd's* grandfather *Nardung Bargissonur* had been a doer of great deeds, he would not be named *Sigurd Nardungssonarsonir* (literally: *the son of Nardung's son,* or Nardung's grandson) but would continue to be known as *Sigurd Hafurdssonur*.

This system may at first seem strange, but it has many parallels in both history and our own modern world. It may be easier to understand if one looks at it in the same manner as the people who use it. They perceive a person as having a single name, in our main example, *Sigurd*. What comes after this name is not a second name but rather a word that identifies which *Sigurd* one means, and that identification can change based on the question of who *Sigurd's* most prominent relative is. If there is no question of prominence, then the father's name usually is used.

Pronunciation Guide

Letter	**Pronunciation**
a (general)	like the *O* in *Tom*
a before *ng* or *nk*	like *OU* in *ouch*
a before *gi*	like the *I* in *smile*
á	like the *OW* in *owl*
æ	like the *E* in *semi*
au	like the *OU* in *out*
b (general)	like the *B* in *baby*
b after *m*	like the *P* in *lamp*
d after a vowel or	like the *D* in *dog*
dh after a vowel or between *r* and a vowel	like the *D* in *dog*
dh otherwise	silent

Letter	**Pronunciation**
e (general)	like the *A* in *hay*
e before *ng, nk, gi, gj*	like the *E* in *grey*
e before *ga* or *gu*	like the *E* in *beg*
é	like the *E* in *hey*
ei and ey	like the *E* in *hey*
f	like the *F* in *find*
f before *f, s* and *Þ*	like the 2nd *F* in *coffee*
f between vowels, between a vowel and *g, j, r* or *Þ*, between *l* or *r* and a vowel and before *l* and *n*	like the *V* in *slave*
g (general)	like the *G* in *saga*
g between a vowel and *I* or *j*	like the *Y* in *beyond*
g between *l* and *d, n, s* or *t* or between *r* and *n, t* or *Þ*	silent
h (general)	like the *H* in *hammer*
hl, hr, hj, hn	like the *H* in *hammer, but strongly aspirated*
hv	like the *UE* in *Quentin*
i	like the *E* in *hey*
í	like the *IE* in *thief*
j	like the *Y* in *yet*
k (general)	like the *K* in *kitchen*
k before *a, á, au, I, n, o, ó, ö* and *r*	like the *K* in kitchen, but aspired after *k*
k before *æ, e, ei, e, I, í* and *j* and in *sk-* before *æ, e, ei, ey, I, í, y* and *ý*	like the combination *KY* without an intervening vowel
k between a vowel and *k, I* or *n*	like the *K* in kitchen, but aspired before *k*
k between a vowel and *r* or *s*	like the German *CH* in *Nacht*
l (general)	like the *L* in *life*
l before *k, pt* or *t*	like the *L* in *life* but aspired before *I*
l after *f, g, r* and *s*	like the *L* in *towel*
ll between vowels or between a vowel and *u, n* or *r*	like the *L* in *handle*
ll in nicknames or in words taken from other languages	like the *LL* in *pillar*
m	like the *M* in *market*
n	like the *New York* and *Hoboken*
ng (general)	like the *NK* in *tanker*
ng before *l, s* or *t*	like the *NG* in *thing*

Letter	**Pronunciation**
nk	like the *NK* in *tanker*
o	like the *O* in *holy*
ó	like the *O* in *Olga*
ö (general)	like the *OR* in *word*
ö before *ng, nk* and *gi*	like the *OI* in *coin*
ø	like the *O* in *horn*
p (general)	like the *Ps* in *papa*
p between a vowel and *l, n* or *p*	like the *Ps* in *papa* but aspired before *p*
p before *t*	like the *F* in *rift*
r (general)	like the German rolled *R*
r before *f, k, p, s* and *t*	like the *P* in *harp*
rl	like the *RL* in *Marlboro*
t	like the *T* in *task*
th	rare alternative for *Þ*
Þ	like the *TH* in *thing*
u (general)	like the *OR* in *word*
u before *ng* and *nk*	like the *U* in *put*
ú	like the *O* in *who*
v	like the *V* in *raven*
x	like the *X* in *lax*
y	like the *E* in *hey*
ý	like the *IE* in *thief*

Old Letters

The old letters used by the Narfelli to write Turami words sometimes are seen in the writing of literate and semi-literate Dalesmen. They should be understood as follows:

å	same as á
ë	same as é
ï	same as í
ÿ	same as ý

7. Behind the Scenes

7.1 Smuggling in the Great Dale

Game Master's Note: The smuggling routes discussed here are fully described in the text that follows. If you are using the map of the Great Dale in the FCW-Format of *Campaign Cartographer 2,* you also can see these routes in orange by switching on the layer entitled *Game Master-SMUGGLING*. This layer normally is hidden as the default setting. The locations mentioned in Damara and Vaasa are described in *Bloodstone*, Part 7 of *Northern Journey*.

The lack of a central government in most Freemen's areas of the Great Dale along with the corrupt rule of the Malarite lich in the Eastern Dale and Ashanath pose critical problems for Impiltur and Damara. Both are in their attempting to curb smuggling as well as to get a grip on clandestine activities by the Sembian Iron Throne in their kingdoms. Smuggling drives a wedge into these efforts.

In all of the Great Dale, only five of the six settlements along Merchants Run - Cairnpur, Maracrath, Guidodale and Mulltown, which were annexed into Impiltur, and Lenchford, which is a part of the Damaran Barony of Polten - even have laws that make smuggling a crime. The six settlements in the Merchants Run region and Timbertown do not recognize smuggling as a crime, nor does any other settlement or community in the remainder of the Dale.

The movement of goods usually becomes a matter of smuggling once laws are passed to regulate such transportation and goods being transported in or out of a legal jurisdiction are taxed. Except for the five annexed settlements on Merchants Run, no duchy, barony or independent community anywhere within the Great Dale has laws to general regulate the transportation of wares.

The closest one will find to such legislation are laws which deal with the movement of arms, laws which prohibit aid to the enemy and laws which prohibit stealing. The two former cases are frequent in the form of law or edicts in both the Freemen's areas and those controlled by the Gallist Hunters of Herne in the East. The latter is a matter of interpretation of the individual who administers law and justice in a given area of the Dale. If a smuggler is transporting contraband through certain areas of the Great Dale, he well may be convicted of possessing stolen goods but not of smuggling.

This makes most of the Great Dale a *de facto* free trade zone. What isn't specifically prohibited to transport is, by default, legal to transport. Therefore, a wagon full of swamp whisky from Impiltur's Traders Bay region can move freely anywhere within the Freemen's areas without threat of legal interference, regardless of whether Impilturian taxes were paid.

A wagonload of Damaran leather wares also can be transported without worry about legal problems through the Freemen's areas, regardless of whether Damaran customs fees were paid. There simply is no law against it.

This situation compounds itself, because when there is no law prohibiting the free movement of goods, there usually also is no just legal base for a law-abiding ruler, judge, militiamen or member of the watch to insist upon a search.

The kingdoms of Impiltur and Damara, on the other hand, both have similar customs laws. When wares from another destination cross the Impilturian or Damaran border, those who transport the merchandise must pay an import customs tax. When goods from domestic production leave one of the two kingdoms, a customs export tax must be paid. When merchandise of foreign manufacture leaves one of the kingdoms, the transporter must either show an official certificate that import customs were paid or pay an export customs tax.

These taxes amount to 20% of assessed value in Impiltur and 15% of assessed value in Damara. Customs officials at border entry points make the assessments. Most entries into Impiltur are well-controlled except in the swamps of Traders Bay and Buzzard Beak Harbor and in the foothills of the Earthspurs between the Great Imphras and Lench rivers. Damara still is rising from the ruins left by Zhengyi the Witch King in Vaasa. It has very poor border controls and cannot afford to improve them at present.

Smugglers take advantage of the two kingdoms' weak spots and the lack of customs controls in the Great Dale and use parts of the Dale frequently to move goods from or into Damara and Impiltur in manners that are not legal in those countries. Much of the swamp whisky distilled in Impiltur's Traders Bay region leaves Impiltur without whisky tax being paid and then moves over parts of the Great Dale and on into distant parts of Faerûn.

Because Damara still is recovering from its conquest by Zhengyi the Witch King, prices for materials and labor tend to be considerably lower there than in other states in the Inner Sea region. Exported wares carry higher prices, because the kingdom levies an export tax on such goods to raise money to finance reconstruction.

Smugglers attempt to slip such wares out of Damara without paying tax and slip them into the Great Dale, where they are legal merchandise rather than smuggled goods. Such smugglers have a considerably larger profit span than those who export legally from Damara.

The focal points of smuggling activity, which to a great extent is steered by the Sembian Iron Throne, are the free port town of New Sarshel in the Great Dale and the Damaran capital Heliogabalus. New Sarshel once was the small Dale port of Borkurstad, but it was bought out by disgruntled merchants from Impilturian Sarshel, who were rapidly displaced and in some cases eliminated by Sembian figures. Today, the smugglers' haven is in the firm control of so-called *Sembian interests*, which is another way of saying *the Iron Throne*.

New Sarshel has become a virtual enemy of neighboring Impiltur, although no state of war exists. The Iron Throne has succeeded in detouring a lot of business past Impilturian commercial interests and also past the crown's tax collectors. There are loud voices in Impiltur who demand that the crown take military action against this coastal town of swindlers, smugglers and worse, but a government headed by paladins of Ilmater and Tyr is hardly likely to take such aggressive action, particularly when there is no legal foundation for doing so.

The three northern coastal settlements in the Great Dale - Uthmere, Uthving and Wanneth - on the other hand have become not completely deserving recipients of unfriendly envy on the part of some Impilturian and Damaran bureaucrats and merchants. In Ilmwatch, Uthmere often is called *little Hlammach*.

The reason for this attitude is the knowledge the goods deemed to be smuggled under Impilturian law often are stored and transported legally in Uthmere, where the goods in question are legal. Merchants in Uthmere earn a certain amount of money through the movement of such goods, thus the simplified but not necessarily false conclusion drawn on the other side of Easting Reach that money counts for more than the principles of paladins in Uthmere, just as in Hlammach, Impiltur's largest city.

The Impilturian critics of see these independent areas of the Great Dale as having all of the benefits of Impilturian life without having to pay the taxes the queen's subjects do to maintain the Impilturian lifestyle. The great and nearby strength of the Sword and Wand of Impiltur, they reason, is enough to deter most enemies from attempting to take over the northern coastal settlements of the Great Dale, although the Dalesmen pay nothing for this *de facto* protection.

Royal bureaucrats and simple folk at the regulars' table in many an Impilturian tavern argue - perhaps correctly - that the Lords of Imphras II would not hesitate to send massive military aid to Uthmere if a foe were to march upon the city and the duke requested help. What's more, they say, Impilturians alone would foot the bill for such a rescue.

Smuggling is indeed a serious problem for Impiltur, but its roots are to be found within the kingdom itself as well as in New Sarshel and in Sembia. Uthmere plays only a marginal role in this problem. That is best illustrated by looking at the smuggling routes being used, who is using them and what is being smuggled. The names of the routes are those used by the smugglers:

Imphras Trail: This actually is a waterway, the Great Imphras River, and not a trail at all. It begins at various points on Lake Mogador in Damara and follows the river downstream through the wilderness foothills of the Earthspurs in Impiltur. The smugglers travel by on small river rafts that simply are abandoned at the end of the line. The docks of Bay Town on Impilturian Traders Bay are the main terminal, but some raftsmen dare Easting Reach by night and strive to reach the port of New Sarshel.

The *Imphras Trail* is used for some legal transport of bloodstone into Impiltur. Smuggling on the route is done mainly by private traders rather than more organized groups such as the Iron Throne. One exception is the smuggling of bloodstone skimmed off from the yield of the mines, but this is explained in greater detail below under the discussion of Zhentarim smuggling operations.

The small-time smugglers who use this route bring mainly leather wares and bloodstone downstream, most of it contraband. They smuggle at considerable risk, with occasional Impilturian patrols along the Great Imphras being only one of the threats. River rafts also are attacked occasionally by orcs and hobgoblins.

The *Imphras Trail* is a one-way smuggling route. The river runs too fast in too many places to make upstream rafting feasible. The last leg of the *Imphras Trail,* from Impilturian Bay Town to New Sarshel on the coast of the Great Dale, sometimes also is used by freelance whisky smugglers.

Whisky Road: This too is no real road but rather a way through the swamps that crosses both water and land while avoiding quicksand. As far as is known, it is used exclusively by the whisky smugglers of the criminal Regdresk family in the Impilturian swamps. The whisky runners transport their bootleg through the depths of the Traders Bay swamps and into Impiltur's Buzzard Beak harbor. There, some boats are launched, usually on dark and foggy nights, and most succeed in running past or outrunning Impilturian naval ships that patrol Easting Reach in an attempt to catch the smugglers, who violate Impilturian customs laws. Once the whisky reaches New Sarshel, it makes its way quickly into more distant reaches of Faerûn, without a single copper nib in Impilturian whisky tax ever being paid.

Lich Trail: This is a tricky smuggling route to use, but one that can yield substantial profits and also make a big loop past tax collectors in Thesk, Telflamm and in some cases elsewhere in the Heartlands and the Moonsea region. The Lich Trail consists of the Trade Route from Uthmere in the Great Dale to Kront in Ashanath and the Tuigan Retreat from Ashanath to the Golden Way on the eastern border of Thesk. One could say that these are normal roads, but be that as it may, moving merchandise across Harbet Gall's territory in the Eastern Dale is anything but normal.

Technically speaking, there is no smuggling on the Lich Trail. Instead, it is the connecting point for major smuggling operations. The special aspect of the Lich Trail is its access to Gallist roads in Ashanath and the Eastern Dale. Caravans run by Iron Throne fronts are allowed under direct orders from Harbet Gall to cross the Trade Route and the Tuigan Retreat in peace.

The Throne caravans that pass through these areas carry secret shipments of items the Gallists seek. This activity is the result of an arrangement between Gall and the Zhentarim of which the Throne is not aware. More details are provided below in the description of Zhentarim smuggling.

Zhentarim aspects left aside for the moment, the caravans which cross the Eastern Dale and Ashanath deal in luxury items sought in the Far East, Thay and in the Moonsea area and to some extent the Heartlands. These caravans all are sponsored by Throne front organizations. Those coming into the Great Dale from the South and East pick up their wares on the Theskan bank of the Golden Way ferry crossing over the Mulsantir River.

The Throne fronts - with Zhentarim aspects aside for the moment - transport fine silks and expensive perfumes, wines and oils from Shou Long as well as luxurious fruit preserves from Thay. These wares are transported from Thay by boat to the ferry crossing.

The wares from Shou Lung are transported on the Silk Road by the Mei Ting Coster, an Iron Throne front recently founded in Yenching in Shou Lung, over Semphar, Gbor Nor Lake and Murghom into Maerlar in Mulhorand. At that point, the wares are brought to Thayan Pyarados, where they are loaded onto boats for transportation north to the Golden Way.

The same route is used in the opposite direction, with the caravans carrying bloodstone and reed whisky from the Impilturian swamps. The bloodstone bars are used to pay for the wares from Thay and Shou Lung. Swamp whisky is considered a rare treat in the south and east, and being able to offer it to guests is a sign of position and affluence in Shou Lung.

Zhengyi's Trail: The last leg of the smuggling routes northward begins in Uthmere in the Great Dale and follows the open roads to Uthving and then over the Uth toward Maracrath. Shortly before reaching the Impilturian border, however, the caravans turn northward over farm trails and then take the road to Timbertown. Neither Uthving nor Timbertown places controls on the transportation of goods, nor do they collect custom taxes.

From Timbertown, the smugglers have worn their own path northward along the western edge of Rawlinswood, where they ford the Lench and enter Damara at a shallows beneath a waterfall about half a mile/1 km west of the forest. The trail continues on the Damaran side of the river into Tellerth. Once the smugglers reach Tellerth, they are legally in the kingdom, and it is difficult to prove the origins of the goods they carry.

Both Damaran King Gareth and Baron Donlevy the Young of Polten are to some extent aware that smugglers use the forest route to Tellerth, but they cannot afford to main permanent patrols along the route. Caravans using Zhengyi's Trail always send scouts forward. When a Damaran patrol is sighted, the caravans simply take cover within Rawlinswood until the patrol has passed. This is not always without risk; some caravans that have ducked into the forest between Timbertown and the Lench have not returned. It is assumed that they have fallen victim to the mysterious Nentyarch.

Once a caravan reaches Tellerth in Damaran Polten, it can travel openly und unchallenged through and out of Damara. Covert agents of the Iron Throne in Tellerth provide arriving caravans immediately with counterfeit papers showing that their goods entered the kingdom in Lenchford and that customs taxes were paid. They same route is used by the smugglers to leave Damara and return to the Great Dale.

From Tellerth, the caravans ride to Trailsend in Polten, ferry across Lake Mogador to Praka, the capital of the Barony of Ostel, and continue on to Heliogabalus, the kingdom's capital and its center of trade, where Damara-bound goods are delivered. The remaining cargo continues onward over the Ford of Goliad to Bloodstone Village.

There, all merchandise is loaded onto wagons specially built for rigorous routes, and extra mercenaries are hired on as guards. The caravans leave Damara at Bloodstone Pass and travel on into lawless Vaasa. Because the caravans have counterfeit parchments showing that their merchandise passed customs in Lenchford, they depart Damara with few questions and no trouble.

After leaving Damara, the caravans begin their dangerous trek over Dead Man's Walk in Vaasa, resting only after reaching the Zhent-controlled outpost of Twilight Veil in the western part of Vaasa's swampy no man's land. After departing Twilight Veil, the caravans continue, crossing the West Galenas into Thar, crossing the grey wastes of that forlorn land and continuing on to the Moonsea region, where their wares, particularly those from Shou-Lung, demand exorbitant prices.

As far as anyone in Impiltur, Damara or even within the Iron Throne knows, fruit preserves, silks, perfumes, wines, oils, bloodstone, whisky, leather wares and similar items are the sum and essence of these smuggling operations. In truth, they are absolutely secondary to the real goal behind the smuggling.

Of course, there is considerably lower level smuggling, where untaxed merchandise or contraband of lesser value simply moves from destination to destination concealed in innocent-looking farm wagons. And there is more refined smuggling. The Iron Throne unwittingly transports items from Shou Lung and Thay for the Zhentarim.

These seemingly normal wares are shipped in containers with magically hidden compartments that conceal the true merchandise - exotic magical items purchased by Zhent agents in distant places, which are being transported through the Great Dale and Damara and over Vaasa into the Moonsea region. This clandestine smuggling has been kept secret to date. It is doubtful that any are aware of it outside of Fzoul Chembryl in Zhentil Keep, Manshoon in the Citadel of the Raven and perhaps a few of their most trusted associates. However, they are amassing powerful and unusual magical items at an alarming rate.

7.2 The Running Clock of the Year of Wild Magic

In all campaigns where the game master plans to have the PCs encounter Kargmelchina, he or she should seriously ponder at the start whether an avatar encounter is desirable in the campaign.

- If so, only two items capable of destroying an avatar have been introduced in *Northern Journey*, the *Wand of Orcus* and the *Honor Sword of Baergil*. Your PCs must have one or both of these weapons, or they must have another weapon of equal abilities that you have introduced. Otherwise they will have no chance to destroy the avatar when they encounter her.

- If an avatar encounter is not desired, this should pose no problem. Tiamat has spread herself very thin in the Realms. She has too many avatars for a lesser power, and that is dangerous. If she feels that her Kargmelchina avatar is in danger of being destroyed, she will abandon it, and Kargmelchina will return to being herself and encounter the PCs in her own vampire dragon lich form.

Likewise, the game master who plans to run *In the Land of the Lich Lords*, the optional 8th part of *Northern Journey*, should ponder what he or she wishes to do with Sammaster. In this case, the PCs might find only a facet of Sammaster in Castle Dragonblood. His main essence then would be found then in the northwest of Faerûn, in the Land of the Lich Lords.

If you make these decisions in advance, you will have fewer complications when the encounters with Sammaster and Kargmelchina actually take place.

Non-NORTHERN JOURNEY Game Masters

Much of the following material is essential only in those campaigns where the actual *Northern Journey* adventure is being run or being used in some manner. In the *NJ* adventure, the PCs will at last come up against the enemies they long have been seeking, Sammaster and his female partner, Kargmelchina, in Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain, when they are playing Part 7, *Bloodstone*.

This accessory was designed to be equally useable with and without the *NJ* adventure. If you are using *The Great Dale* as a *Forgotten Realms* campaign setting expansion without regard to the *NJ* adventure, there is absolutely no need for your PCs to deal with Sammaster, Kargmelchina or their minions in the ruins of Castle Perilous.

On the contrary, you'll find loads of information on the various regions, cities, villages and settlements that you can exploit to whatever extent you wish in your campaign, while those game masters running the *NJ* adventure are forced to bypass many of these possibilities, leaving them unused as they and their PCs concentrate on the heart of the adventure.

Thus, you should not necessarily feel compelled to adhere to the following sequence of events but rather do whatever you need to do, to make it fit your campaign. If you aren't running the *NJ* adventure, this section may, indeed, be totally irrelevant in your campaign. Whatever *NJ* adventure elements you may wish to use can occur upon your own timetable.

Some game masters who want a part of the *Northern Journey* adventure going on in the background of their own non-*NJ* campaigns have found this difficult to implement. This need not be the case. It depends upon how you go about doing it. Through playtesting, we are aware of some campaigns that are doing precisely that. The PCs in those campaigns are off on their own adventures, while the *NJ* PCs become NPCs whom the real PCs never have encountered but who are doing deeds that are a matter of tales and bard song.

Your PCs well may have heard of a strange band of adventurers with even stranger red symbols upon their arms who have left a trail of havoc for all evildoers who have crossed their path as they've traveled slowly toward Faerûn's Northeast.

Most recently, it is said, these PCs have been in the Great Dale, perhaps seeking to destroy Harbet Gall and a powerful coven of the Dragon Cult in the eastern Great Dale. At the same time, the armies of Impiltur and the Bloodstone Kingdom are reported to be preparing to march to Vaasa, to fight a hard war against dragons and their minions in the ruins of Zhengyi's Castle Perilous in Vaasa, to the north. All of these things can be happening while your PCs are pursuing their own adventure in the Great Dale, or, if you wish, none of these events need to have taken place.

The threats of Suncatcher Mountain and the ruins of Castle Perilous in Vaasa may be known, but the battle that seems to be brewing may not take place for a few more years, when your PCs have the levels necessary to play a heroic role in it. Then again, they may have nothing at all to do with the war, when and if it takes part in your campaign. As game master, the choices are yours, and almost all options are open.

NORTHERN JOURNEY Game Masters

Once your PCs have entered the Great Dale, they will be out to destroy - at a minimum - the lich Harbet Gall in Nighthawk Tower. They also may destroy Urgath Hurddh and his Dragon Cult cell in Tower Threespires and, hopefully, the followers of Garagos in the ruins of Fortress Clymph. Please keep these points in mind:

If Gall is destroyed, mark the date. For 30 days after that date, all non-defensive actions will come to a standstill in the ruins of Castle Perilous and in Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain in Vaasa. You may need to adjust the pace of events listed below accordingly. During this time, Sammaster and Kargmelchina will ponder what to do without Gall.

If the PCs destroy Gall but neglected to destroy Hurddh and his dragon vampires and draconians in the Great Dale, the surviving cult members will arrive at Castle Dragonblood flying upon the vampire dragons in dragon form in the PCs' most desperate moment of battle and they will give their all at that time to help destroy the PCs. If your PCs destroy some cultists and/or vampire dragons in the Great Dale, deduct these from the amount available to attack the PCs later in Vaasa.

The Realms Draconians serving Hurddh in the Great Dale will not be able to reach Castle Perilous in Vaasa in time to reach Castle Dragonblood and join in the battle there, but they will arrive in the interior of the ruins of Castle Perilous at the time the PCs are exploring it and encounter them just when the PCs are in their most dire straits in the dungeon. All draconians who were not destroyed in the Great Dale will arrive in the ruins.

If the PCs have not destroyed the followers of Garagos in the ruins of Fortress Clymph in the Great Dale, these will arrive in Damara as they intend and disrupt things there. The PCs may not have to occupy themselves with them, but it will divert strength from the Bloodstone Army.

Going Events

Since late summer in the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR), bands of draconians, led by dragon vampires have been crossing Vaasa, the East Galenas and Soravia, heading into Rawlinswood east of the Nentyarch's domain in the eastern Great Dale.

They arrive at a reception station in the northern ruins of Veidarhofn, then move on to a new base they are establishing in the ruins of Auststad, just east of Tower Threespires, where their commanders, the archwizards of the Tiamatist faction of the Dragon Cult reside. These activities and locations are described in detail in this segment of *Northern Journey, The Great Dale.* During the winter months, this migration continues. Another critical event also occurs in the winter. The other avatars of Tiamat that are active in the Realms have reached some of their goals. The goddess now can concentrate much of her power upon producing the army she intends to use to conquer the Bloodstone Lands, the Cold Lands and the Vast.

The *D&D 3E* and *AD&D 2E* descriptions and statistics for the various Realms Draconians and for vampire dragons in their human, hybrid and dragon forms can be found in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide Version 8*. The campaign guide can be downloaded free in separate *2E* and *3E* versions from the *Northern Journey* Internet site at:

http://www.vintyri.com

It is quite possible that many of the events that are critical to *Bloodstone*, Part 7 of *Northern Journey*, already will be taking place while your PCs are in the Great Dale. You need to be making determinations in the background, so that you will know who still is in Damara and Vaasa when the PCs arrive there in Part 7. You also need to determine whether important NPCs are slain in battle in Vaasa while your PCs are in the Great Dale. And you need to keep track of the vampire dragons and draconians destroyed by the PCs or by NPCs during the time your PCs are in the Great Dale, because these vampire dragons and draconians no longer will be available to encounter the PCs when they are in Part 7.

Hammer

As the new year dawns, Tiamat begins vesting a substantial share of her godly power in the mercury pool beneath the ruins of Castle Perilous. She and Sammaster use magic to call goblins, orcs and ogres in the West Galenas, trolls in the Vaasan swamps and bogs and hobgoblins in the Giantspires to march to the ruins of Castle Perilous.

The first call is mostly successful, drawing 1,000 goblins, 600 orcs, 100 ogres and 100 trolls. However, the power of the remaining magical blades among the famous *10 times 10 Swords of Impiltur* in the hands of the hobgoblins in the Giantspires gives most of them the power to resist the call, and only 20 hobgoblins leave the Khanate in response.

The march of the monsters toward the ruins is observed by winter-hardy rangers of the Bloodstone Riders. In some cases, it comes to combat, and the rangers are slain. In other cases, the rangers flee the advancing monsters and begin the slow journey toward Darmshall, Hillsafar Hall and Palishchuk, the only locations in Vaasa where there are Bloodstone Talismans that can be used to alert King Gareth and his cabinet in Bloodstone Village.

By the month's end, 860 goblins, 560 orcs, 90 ogres, 90 trolls and 12 hobgoblins survive the harsh winter conditions and snow and arrive in the ruins of Castle Perilous to be transmuted. From this date on, roughly the same number of monsters arrives each month to be turned into draconians. The vampire dragons and draconians working in the laboratory within the ruins and at the mercury pool transmute about a third of this lot each tenday. The transmuted monsters begin making a military camp on the perimeter of the ruins.

Alturiak

At the beginning of the month, Impilturian Archwand Daerthnur uses his Bloodstone Talisman to communicate to the Impilturian hierarchy and King Gareth news of the Tiamatist activities in the Great Dale. Impilturian spies have become aware of the full strength of the reception station in the ruins of Veidarhofn and the draconian settlement in the ruins of Auststad:

- **Veidarhofn:** 5 dragon vampires, 5 troll draconians, 4 ogre draconians, 8 hobgoblin draconians, 16 orc draconians and 16 goblin draconians. These figures remain rather constant until either Veidarhofn itself or Tower Threespires and Auststad are destroyed. In most campaigns, the PCs should have eliminated the inhabitants of Tower Threespires and Auststad before reaching the Bloodstone Kingdom. If they have done so, Kargmelchina and Sammaster will have abandoned their plans for establishing a base in the Great Dale at this time.

- **Auststad:** At the end of Hammer, there are 3 vampire dragons, 3 troll draconians, 3 ogre draconians, 3 hobgoblin draconians, 4 orc draconians and 5 goblin draconians in the settlement. In each succeeding month until the destruction of Tower Threespires or the 1st day of Tarsakh, whichever occurs first, the numbers grow monthly by 1 vampire dragon, 2 troll draconians, 2 ogre draconians, 2 hobgoblin draconians, 4 orc draconians and 5 goblin draconians.

Toward the end of the month, news reaches King Gareth of the march of various monsters toward the ruins of Castle Perilous. He uses his Bloodstone Talisman to pass the news on to his allies in Impiltur.

Ches

Sammaster continues to draw monsters to the ruins of Castle Perilous and Kargmelchina sees to it that they are transformed into draconians. Most of the draconians remain in the growing military camp on the perimeter of the ruins of Castle Perilous, but others are sent into the Great Dale. The rates of growth are listed above under Hammer and Alturiak.

The magic of Kargmelchina and Sammaster is not great enough to hide the summoned monsters that constantly are marching toward the ruins of Castle Perilous or the growing host of draconians around its perimeter. But the two wish the Bloodstone Kingdom and Impiltur to know as little as possible about the nature of their enemy.

Therefore, Sammaster issues orders to the leader of the vampire dragons, Knellict, that none of the vampire dragons are to engage in combat anywhere or under any condition without specific orders to do so. If a party led by a vampire dragon is engaged, the vampire dragon is to use its magic, if possible, to whisk the entire band away without engaging in battle. If this is not possible, the vampire dragon is under orders to teleport itself from the scene rather than personally being engaged in combat.

During the course of the month, rangers of the Bloodstone Riders who have engaged draconians bring the king reports of the strange ways in which this foe dies. The king passes these reports on to Impiltur. If vampire dragons have been downed anywhere within your campaign, Archwand Daerthnur in Ilmwatch will have received news of these events and will know that the bodies of the dead wyrms degenerate after their destruction into rotting dragon carcasses, indicating that they have been dead for some time.

In this case, Daerthnur will assume that at least some of the dragons in the ruins of Castle Perilous are undead wyrms of an unknown type. Daerthnur knows of only one type of undead dragon, the dracolich, and he is certain that the wyrms of Vaasa are a new type of undead dragon rather than dracoliches. He also is certain, from reports, that these dragons can polymorph themselves between dragon and hybrid forms, and if your campaign has discovered the human form, he will be aware of this too.

Near the end of the second tenday in Ches, King Gareth, Queen Sambryl, Kyrlraun and the other important powers of Impiltur and the Bloodstone Kingdom use the Bloodstone Talismans and the Scrying Stones of Myth Drannor to engage in a long and troubled conference.

Although they agree that they still know too little about their enemy, they are certain that he, she or both are preparing to wage war. They settle for the theory that the best defense is an offense and decide they will mount their attack against Castle Perilous in the coming summer.

However, they want the enemy to be as poorly prepared and as much surprised by their attack as possible. They cannot hide the large movement of troops involved, but they hope to delude their faceless enemy into a feeling of false security. They decide not to make known that they plan real war with the inhabitants of the ruins of Castle Perilous as their goal, but rather to claim that Impiltur and the Bloodstone Kingdom are planning a huge, two-month military exercise on the Vaasan Plain in Kythorn and Flamerule.

The orders given to all of their commanders and soldiers will contain the same false information, indicating that a large training exercise is planned. The Impilturians will bring caravans of unneeded training equipment with them to maintain this ruse.

Their orders will state that the exercises will take place in the swampfree areas of the Vaasan Plain between and to the north of Gatehold and Asfaloth and south of the ruins of Castle Perilous. King Gareth agrees that the Bloodstone Riders will spread the news of the exercises across Damara and Vaasa in Tarsakh and Mirtul, as travel becomes possible again in the kingdom, to alert the public to the massive but peaceful movement of troops that is planned.

Most of this plan is suggested by King Gareth's old sage, Prince Quillan of Damara. The prince argues that the plan has two advantages:

- If executed well, the enemy will believe that an exercise is planned and will not be properly prepared for a massive attack.

- Unless the enemy also wishes to start his or her own war at that time, it will be forced to keep its own activities in bounds as Impiltur and the Bloodstone Kingdom make their war camp, to avoid provoking a war it does not yet want to fight.

In the course of the summer, King Gareth and Kyrlraun agree to send 5,200 warriors of the Bloodstone Army, as many battlemagi as King Gareth can muster, 5,000 warriors of the Sword of Impiltur and 18 war magi and sorcerers of the Wand of Impiltur onto the Vaasan Plain. Both sides also will send war priests.

Prince Quillan of Damara meets with Chancellor Dargun of Polten, Duke Olwen of Soravia, Duke Dormythyrr of Brandiar and Baron Hobart of Bloodstone to begin preparing for the northward march of the Impilturian and Bloodstone troops. A long series of encampments must be prepared and wells must be dug to accommodate the more than 10,000 soldiers who will march into Vaasa.

Prince Quillan has decided to move the soldiers over Trailsend, Withermeet and Daleport in Polten and Kinbrace in Soravia and Goliad and Fort Kane in Brandiar, before they march through Bloodstone Pass into Vaasa. He, Chancellor Dargun, Baron Hobart, Duke Olwen and Duke Dormythyrr also begin the extensive logistical planning needed to supply and feed the army as it moves across Damara.

Vaasan Prince Darren in Darmshall takes similar measures in Gatehold and also stations 200 soldiers there in a tent city outside of the walls, to see that law and order is established in relatively lawless Gatehold until the war is over. Baron Wingham in Palishchuk orders 50 trained half-orc scouts to head out onto the Vaasan Plain when late Tarsakh comes, to observe the enemy in the ruins of Castle Perilous from the distance and also to report all enemy movements.

Near the month's end, orders are issued for the great mobilization. Regent War Captain Kyrlraun in Impiltur mobilizes 2,000 men of the Southern Sword, headquartered in Lyrabar, 1,500 men of the North Sword, headquartered in Vordric-Dun, and 1,500 men of the Eastern Wave, headquartered in Ilmwatch, to take part in the alleged exercises. Because more than half of the members of the Sword of Impiltur are sailors rather than soldiers, Kyrlraun orders naval personnel to undergo three tendays of training in land combat before departing northward.

General War Captain Haelimbrar of Vordric-Dun will command the Impilturian host. His deputy is Admiral War Captain Rilimbraun of Lyrabar. Two other Lords of Imphras II also are assigned to take major commands: War Captain Silmgar of Hlammach and War Captain Soargilm in Dilpur. All four are paladins of Ilmater. Kyrlraun also grants Haelimbrar's request and assigns Holy Strategist Lashilana, High Dean of the College of Strategical Planning in Lyrabar and priestess of the Red Knight, to Haelimbrar's command staff.

Archwand Daerthnur informs Kyrlraun that he will take the personal command of the 18 wizards and sorcerers from the Wand of Impiltur whom he is sending into Vaasa. Twenty war priests of various faiths also report for service in Vaasa. Kyrlraun assigns their command to Battleguard General Wilmbrar, rector of the Great Imphras War College in Lyrabar and priest of Tempus.

The regent war captain also orders Admiral War Captain Rilaunyr of Ilmwatch to dispatch naval troops to march by land to prepare war camps for the marching Impilturian troops at intervals of 12 miles/20 km to all of their starting points. The troops are to have a day's rest for every three days of marching.

A contingent of the first 1,000 Impilturian troops is scheduled to march out of Ilmwatch during the second tenday in Tarsakh. Subsequent contingents of 1,000 each are scheduled to leave every 10 days afterward, with the last departing during the last tenday of Mirtul. With the march from Ilmwatch to the Vaasan war camp taking an estimated 40 days, the first 1,000 Impilturians should reach the camp in late Mirtul and the last 1,000 in late Kythorn.

King Gareth says he will send 1,600 of his own men to the war camp. He orders Prince Darren to supply 1,600 men from the Vaasan host and Prince Quillan to send 2,000 soldiers northward from Damara. He also orders the princes to establish war camps for the marching Bloodstone and Impilturian hosts at regular intervals of roughly15 miles/20 km along the march route from Lenchford to the main war camp in Vaasa. As in Impiltur, the troops are to have a day's rest for every two to three days of marching.

The two princes also are ordered to see to it that necessary provisions and supplies are available for the members of the two armies in Lenchford, Trailsend, Kinbrace and Bloodstone Village with special military supplies being available in Southwatch and Fort Kane.

Over the objections of both princes and all of the dukes and barons as well as the burgomaster of Heliogabalus, the king says he will take command of the Bloodstone troops in Vaasa. However, he says, until a tenday before the order is given to march upon the ruins of Castle Perilous, he will remain and rule from Bloodstone Village. At that point, Prince Quillan will take over the throne until the king's return, acting as his regent.

Until then, King Gareth says, General Liam MacAroon, his War Minister and Commander of the Bloodstone Army, will command the Bloodstone troops and bring them to the Vaasan war camp. MacAroon is, like the king, a paladin of Ilmater ordinarily stationed in the Monastery of the Golden Cup.

The king appoints Duke Olwen of Soravia, Duke Riordan of Carmathan, Duke Dormythyrr of Brandiar, Baron Garumbelly of Sunderland and Baron Celedon of Morov as the high command officers of the Bloodstone host. He also asks Prince Darren of Vaasa to assign Commander Mariabronne and a number of rangers from the Vaasan Bloodstone riders to join and take command of the half-orc scouts from Palishchuk who are watching and attempting to gain information about the ruins of Castle Perilous.

In turn, he asks Prince Quillan of Damara to give Damaran Bloodstone Riders Commander Myrddin Viligoth the assignment of assembling and taking command of a group of wizards and sorcerers to aid the Bloodstone troops as war magi. Then the king requests his old companion, Friar Dugald, high priest of Ilmater in Goliad, to assemble and command a group of war priests to go to Vaasa with his troops.

The Bloodstone commanders are given the timetable for the marching Impilturian units and told to coordinate movements so that both hosts will arrive in Vaasa in approximately the same numbers at the same time, but with no war camp needing to be occupied by members of both hosts on the same night.

King Gareth and Regent War Captain Kyrlraun agree that if the full joint host manages to reach the war camp in Vaasa by late Kythorn, as planned, then it should stay camped in place for at least the first tenday in Flamerule, to prepare for battle and to learn their commanders' strategies. At that time, they agree, the commanders will choose the time of their attack, based upon the news from Mariabronne's scouts and whatever events happen to be taking place at the time.

Both agree that all efforts must be made to end the war before the end of Eleasias, so that all of the joint host can be withdrawn from Vaasa before it becomes locked in for the winter there. However, they say, if the situation remains indecisive at that time, it might be necessary to establish and supply winter detachments, particularly for the Impilturians, in southern Vaasa and northern Damara.

In the waning days of Ches, an excited Friar Dugald in Goliad uses his Bloodstone Talisman to contact King Gareth. He says he has experienced a vision in the night and is certain it was sent directly from Ilmater. In the vision, Friar Dugald says, a small group of heroes with strange, glowing, red symbols on their arms come to the Bloodstone Kingdom, destroy the evil powers atop Suncatcher Mountain and then descend into the ruins of Castle Perilous and destroy the evil there.

This is a clear sign, Friar Dugald claims, that the planned war isn't necessary at all, that heroes are under way to do the task at hand.

During the Bloodstone Wars, King Gareth had other experiences with the friar's visions. The king believes that they were indeed sent by Ilmater, and they were reliable. Only Friar Dugald's interpretations were problematical. The friar knew, of course, that one must undergo hard trials and persevere, but he always was inclined to be prepared to persevere tomorrow and enjoy his tankard today.

The king smiles and tells Friar Dugald that it may be as he says, but Gareth suspects that the armies must do their duty, persevere and open the way for the heroes the friar has seen, before they can scour the ruins of Castle Perilous of its evil and filth.

Nonetheless, the king is enlightened by the friar's vision, and he uses his Bloodstone Talisman to tell the Impilturian Regent War Captain Kyrlraun of it. To his surprise, Kyrlraun and Archwand Daerthnur already know of the sigyll bearers, although neither has been quite certain what the real role is that they have to play.

But Kyrlraun tells King Gareth that he has discussed this matter with Queen Sambryl, who says she believes that the sigyll bearers are fated to destroy one great evil and unleash another upon the world. The king ponders, as the magical communication ends.

With such momentous events occurring and such great decisions being sealed, the winter and the month of Ches slowly draw to a close.

Other Things in Motion

The bearers of the red sigylls should be in the Great Dale and on their way to Harbet Gall by the beginning of Tarsakh. They could and should cause three rather momentous events in the Great Dale before they depart for Damara:

- They should destroy Nighthawk Tower and the lich Harbet Gall in the Eastern Dale.
- They should destroy Tower Threespires of the Dragon Cult and its nearby settlement of vampire dragons and draconians in the ruins of Auststad.
- They also should destroy the draconian reception station in the ruins of Veidarhofn, although this is less urgent.

When either or both of the first two events occur, Sammaster and Kargmelchina will withdraw all of their vampire dragons from sight and reduce the activities of their draconians to defensive measures while the two ponder what their next moves should be. When the first of these events occur, this will last for a month. The second time it will last only a tenday. At that point it is clear that their hopes of attacking from the rear out of the Great Dale have been dashed.

In addition, the sigyll bearers also might destroy the ruins of Fortress Clymph and the warriors and priests there who follow Garagos. This will have no substantial impact, however, upon events in the Vaasan war or upon the doings of your PCs in the Bloodstone Kingdom.

Because we have no way of knowing when the sigyll bearers will do things in your campaign, we likewise have no way to determine precisely what events in Damara and Vaasa will be influenced by the work of the sigyll bearers elsewhere or when that influence will be felt.

Likewise, it is impossible for us to know when in the planned sequence of events your PCs will arrive in Damara. If they arrive there while King Gareth still is in Bloodstone Village, once it is determined who the PCs are or what their importance is, they will be sent posthaste to see the king.

If, on the other hand, King Gareth already is leading his host in battle in Vaasa, they will be sent first to see Prince Quillan acting as regent in Bloodstone Village, who then will communicate with the king via Bloodstone Talismans and, following the monarch's orders, send the PCs to him in the Vaasan war camp.

Once the two armies start marching northward, Sammaster and Kargmelchina will be watching them closely. Lower level vampire dragons will be sent out to fly over the march routes in Damara and Impiltur, observe the marching armies and report back upon what they have seen, but the dragons will have orders to fly above the range of weapons and normal spells and not to engage in combat. If they are fired upon with high-powered magic that can reach their altitude, they have orders to ascend rapidly, out of range if possible, and to fly to Castle Dragonblood as quickly as possible.

While Sammaster and Kargmelchina are doing almost everything possible to keep their vampire dragons from being involved in combat, there will be one continuing exception in a campaign running the *Northern Journey* adventure. Kargmelchina is genuinely frightened by the sigyll bearers ability to often act against her will, and to a certain extent, she fears them because of this. For this reason, individual squads of draconians led by vampire dragons will continue to be under way with the mission of destroying the sigyll bearers.

The vampire dragons who lead these squads are allowed to engage in combat against the sigyll bearers, if the draconians cannot defeat them. But they have strict orders not to use their dragon form unless there is absolutely no other alternative.

The Friendly and Enemy Counts

From this point on, it is essential for the game master to know the strength and nature of the forces on all sides of the pending conflict. Sammaster and Kargmelchina have spies in the Bloodstone Kingdom whose identities and descriptions are listed in Part 7, *Bloodstone*, under the descriptions of the cities, villages and settlements in which they live.

By the 1st day of Tarsakh, Sammaster and Kargmelchina will know from these spies that a huge troop movement from Impiltur, Damara and within Vaasa to the Vaasan Plain is about to begin. At that point, no further draconians will be sent into the Great Dale. Under certain circumstances airborne vampire dragons may be sent into the Great Dale to deliver messages to Harbet Gall or Urgath Hurddh, although is unlikely, but they will return afterward to Suncatcher or Vaasa and not remain in the Dale.

Because of the decision to send no new vampire dragons into the Dale, the reception station in Veidarhofn will be ordered closed on the 1st day of Tarsakh. The vampire dragons and draconians there will join their comrades in the ruins of Auststad, arriving there on the 3rd day of Tarsakh.

Sammaster and Kargmelchina will tend to believe that the hosts plan only military exercises, above all because they don't think the Impilturians, Damarans and Vaasans are courageous or foolhardy enough to start a war with the vampire dragons and draconians in the ruins of Castle Perilous, and they do not think Impiltur or the Bloodstone Kingdom is able to attack them upon Suncatcher.

Nonetheless, they also know they could be wrong. They are staying on guard, and they are keeping their guard up. They have no intention of sending vampire draconians that can defend them in Vaasa off to the Great Dale, where there is no direct threat.

The following pages should be printed separately and used by the game master to begin tallying the counts of friends and foes, making modifications every time one side or the other sustains losses and every time new draconians are created in the ruins of Castle Perilous.

If you're running the *Northern Journey* adventure, it's probable that a number of draconians have been slain already in your campaign, and some vampire dragons may have been destroyed as well. The checklists on the following pages take into account all draconians that were slain in Parts 1 through 5 of *Northern Journey,* that is, *Silverymoon* through *Impiltur.* Those that are listed still existed when your PCs entered the Great Dale

If you are following the texts, none of the vampire dragons or draconians based in Castle Dragonblood atop Suncatcher Mountain or in the ruins of Castle Perilous will have been destroyed yet. None of them have left these sites yet to travel into areas where they might be engaged in combat.

Do not be too concerned about the lack of detail in the vampire dragon descriptions listed in the tables on the following pages. The complete statistics for these creatures can be found in Version 8 of the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* under *Castle Dragonblood Inhabitants* and *Castle Perilous Ruins Inhabitants* in the section *Unofficial NPC Encounters*.

Game Master's Calendars and Tally Sheets

One of the key points made by game masters who tested this product in advance was the need for extensive action adjudication and tracking tools. As the Year of Wild Magic (1372 DR) moves through its months, some matters still may be occupying your PCs in the Great Dale at the same time very momentous events are going into motion in Impiltur and the Bloodstone Kingdom.

What is happening in many other places while your PCs are occupied in another area can have a critical impact upon the encounters your PCs have later. Regardless of whether the PCs are in the Great Dale, Impiltur or the Bloodstone Kingdom, a major war is brewing in Vaasa, and the factors that are in motion and building the stage for that war likely will remain in motion, either unaffected or little affected by the actions of your PCs elsewhere.

The joint Bloodstone and Impilturian armies will launch their attack sometime after the start of the second tenday in Flamerule, as soon as conditions are favorable. The exact date of the attack's launch is left up to individual game masters.

In the pages that follow, you'll find a general calendar of events for the first three months, Hammer through Ches, and then separate calendars for the Impilturian and Bloodstone armies for the months Tarsakh through Flamerule. These calendars describe exactly where troops of the two armies are in movement on any given day.

In the pages thereafter, you also will find tally sheets to keep track of who and what is slain in remote battles and suggested rules for adjudicating losses outside of the area where the PCs are.

This accessory assumes that the PCs will arrive in the Great Dale during the winter of the Year of the Unstrung Harp (1371 DR) and the Year of Wild Magic. It also is assumed that they will arrive in Damara sometime in late spring or early summer of the Year of Wild Magic. If your campaign cannot fulfill this schedule, you should adjust the given dates accordingly.

Units of the Royal Bloodstone Army in Vaasa (5,200 Men, Dwarves and Half-Orcs)

- The king and his Men, elite unit, Bloodstone Village and Monastery of the Golden cup, 400 Men
- 3rd Battalion, 1st Regiment, Command Brigade, Monastery of the Golden cup, 400 Men
- 1st Battalion, 2nd Regiment, Command Brigade, Bloodstone Village, 400 Men
- 3rd Battalion, 2nd Regiment, Command Brigade, Windless, 400 Men
- 2nd Battalion, 1st Regiment, Princely Brigade Damara, Heliogabalus, 400 Men
- 3rd Battalion, 2nd Regiment, Princely Brigade Damara, Ostrav, 400 Man
- 2nd Battalion, 3rd Regiment, Princely Brigade Damara, Ravensburg, 400 Men
- 1st Battalion, 4th Regiment, Princely Brigade Damara, Kinbrace, 400 Men
- 3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment, Princely Brigade Damara, Cutrock, 400 Men
- 2nd Battalion, 1st Regiment, Princely Brigade Vaasa, Darmshall, 400 Men
- 1st Battalion, 2nd Regiment, Princely Brigade Vaasa, Hillsafar Hall, 400 Dwarves
- 3rd Battalion, 3rd Regiment, Princely Brigade Vaasa, Ironspur, 400 Dwarves
- 2nd Battalion, 4th Regiment, Princely Brigade Vaasa, Palishchuk, 400 Half-Orcs

Units of the Impilturian Army in Vaasa (5,000 Men)

- 4 Battalions from the Southern Sword in Lyrabar, 2,000 men
- 3 Battalions from the Northern Sword in Vordric-Dun, 1,500 men
- 3 Battalions from the Eastern Wave in Ilmwatch, 1,500 men

Hammer 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Tiamat issues first call of monsters to Castle Perilous	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 860 goblins, 560 orcs, 90 ogres, 90 trolls and 12 hobgoblins converted to draconians	26	27	28	29	30

Alturiak 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 840 goblins, 550 orcs, 90 ogres, 92 trolls and 14 hobgoblins converted to draconians	26 New total: 1700 goblins, 1110 orcs, 180 ogres, 182 trolls and 26 hob-goblins	27	28 King Gareth informs Impiltur of monster movement to Castle Perilous	29	30

Ches 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16 Baron Wingham sends 50 half-orc scouts onto Vaasan Plain	17	18 Damara and Impiltur confer magically, decide secretly to attack Castle Perilous	19	20
21	22 890 goblins, 570 orcs, 85 ogres, 88 trolls and 14 hobgoblins converted to draconians	23 New total: 2590 goblins, 1680 orcs, 265 ogres, 210 trolls and 39 hob-goblins	24	25	26	27 Kyrlraun mobilizes in Lyrabar, Vordric-Dun und Ilmwatch	28	29 400 Damaran soldiers leave Ravensburg	30 400 Damaran soldiers in Zarach

Impiltur - Tarsakh 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1 1,000 leave Lyrabar	**2** 1,000 betw. Lyrabar and Hlammach	**3** 1,000 betw. Lyrabar and Hlammach	**4** 1,000 betw. Lyrabar and Hlammach	**5** 1,000 Hlammach	**6** 1,000 Hlammach	**7** 1,000 betw. Hlammach and Axe Trail	**8** 1,000 Axe Trail	**9** 1,000 Axe Trail	**10** 1,000 Filur
11 1,000 leave Lyrabar. 1,000 Outentown. Vassan war camp: 1200 Bloodstone soldiers	**12** 1,000 betw. Lyrabar and Hlammach. 1,000 betw. Outentown and Old Water	**13** 1,000 betw. Lyrabar and Hlammach. 1,000 betw. Outentown and Old Water	**14** 1,000 betw. Lyrabar and Hlammach. 1,000: Old Water	**15** 1,000 Hlammach, 1,000 betw. Old Water and Ilmwatch	**16** 1,000 Hlammach, 1,000 Ilmwatch	**17** 1,000 betw. Hlammach and Axe Trail. 1,000 leave Ilmwatch	**18** 1,000: Axe Trail, 1,000: Guidodale	**19** 1,000: Axe Trail, 1,000: Lenchford	**20** 1,000 Filur: 1,000 betw. Lenchford, Trailsend
21 1,000: Outentown, 1,000 betw. Lenchford, Trailsend; war camp 2,000 Bloodstone soldiers	**22** 1,000 betw. Outentown and Old Water. 1,000: Trailsend	**23** 1,000 betw. Outentown and Old Water. 1,000: Daleport	**24** 1,000 leave Vordric-Dun, 1,000: Old Water. 1,000: Kinbrace	**25*** 1,000 betw. Vordric-Dun and Wye, 1,000 betw. Old Water and Ilm-watch. 1,000: Kinbrace	**26** 1,000 Wye, 1,000: Ilmwatch, 1.000: Southwatch	**27** 1,000 betw. Wye and Malburg, 1,000 leave Ilmwatch, 1,000: Fort Kane	**28** 1,000 betw. Wye and Malburg, 1,000: Guidodale, 1,000: Bloodstone Village	**29** 1,000: Mal-burg, 1,000: Lenchford, 1,000: Bloodstone Village	**30** 1,000 betw. Malburg and Outentown, 1,000 betw. Lenchford, Trailsend, 1,000: Gatehold

* 25 Tarsakh: New total converted in Castle Perilous: 3440 goblins, 2220 orcs, 353 ogres, 351 trolls and 50 hobgoblins

Impiltur - Mirtul 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1 1,000 Outentown, 1,000 betw. Lenchford, Trailsend, 1,000 War Camp + 2800 Bloodstone troops	**2** 1,000 Outentown, 1,000: Trailsend	**3** 1,000 betw. Outrentown and Old Water, 1,000: Daleport	**4** 500 leave Vordric-Dun, 1,000 Old Water, 1,000: Kinbrace	**5** 500 betw. Vordric-Dun and Wye, 1,000 betw. Ilmwatch and Old Water, 1,000: Kinbrace	**6** 500 Wye, 1,000 Ilmwatch, 1000: Southwatch	**7** 500 betw. Wye and Malburg, 1,000 leave Ilmwatch, 1,000 Fort Kane	**8** 500 betw. Wye and Malburg, 1,000: Guidodale, Bloodstone Village	**9** 500 Malburg, 1,000: Lenchford, 1,000: Bloodstone Village	**10** 500 betw. Malburg and Outentown, 1,000 betw. Lenchford and Trailsend, 1,000: Southgate
11 500 Outentown, 1,000 betw. Lenchford and Trailsend; War Camp 2,000 + 3600 Blood stone troops	**12** 500 Outentown, 1,000: Trailsend	**13** 500 betw. Outentown and Old Water, 1,000: Daleport	**14** 500 Old Water, 1,000: Kinbrace	**15** 500 betw. Old Water and Ilmwatch, 1,000: Kinbrace	**16** 500 Ilmwatch, 1000: Southwatch	**17** 1,000 leave Ilmwatch. 1,000: Fort Kane	**18** 1,000: Guidodale, 1,000 Bloodstone Village	**19** 1,000: Lenchford, 1,000 Bloodstone Village	**20** 1,000 betw. Lenchford and Trailsend, 1,000 Southgate
21 1,000 betw. Lenchford and Trailsend; War Camp 3,000 + 4,000 Bloodstone troops	**22** 1,000: Trailsend	**23** 1,000: Daleport	**24** 1,000: Kinbrace	**25** 1,000: Kinbrace	**26** 1000: Southwatch	**27*** 1,000 leave Ilmwatch. 1,000: Fort Kane	**28** 1,000: Guidodale, Bloodstone Village	**29** 1,000: Lenchford, Bloodstone Village	**30** 1,000 betw. Lenchford and Trailsend, 1,000 Southgate

* 27 Mirtul: New total converted in Castle Perilous: 3440 goblins, 2220 orcs, 353 ogres, 351 trolls and 50 hobgoblins

Impiltur - Kythorn 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1 1,000 betw. Lenchford and Trails-end, War Camp 4,000 + 4,800 Bloodstone troops	2 1,000 : Trailsend	3 1,000: Daleport	4 1,000: Kinbrace	5 1,000: Kinbrace	6 1,000: Southwatch	7 1,000: Fort Kane	8 1,000: Bloodstone Village	9 1,000: Bloodstone Village	10 Gatehold
11 1,000 arrive War Camp: Total 5,000 + 4,000 Bloodstone soldiers + 5200 Blood-stone troops	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24*	25	26	27	28	29	30

* 24 Kythorn: New total converted in Castle Perilous: 3440 goblins, 2220 orcs, 353 ogres, 351 trolls and 50 hobgoblins

Impiltur - Flamerule 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Joint army ready to attack at most favorable time	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27*	28	29	30 1

* 27 Flamerule: New total converted in Castle Perilous: 5153 goblins, 3378 orcs, 527 ogres, 466 trolls and 74 hobgoblins

Bloodstone Kingdom - Tarsakh 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1 400 leave Zarach	**2** 400: Praka	**3** 400 arrive Heliogabalus	**4** 800 leave Heliogabalus	**5** 800: Morovar	**6** 400 leave Ostrav; 800: Goliad	**7** 400 leave Cutrock, 400 south of Windless, 800 Fort Kane	**8** 400 between Cutrock and Kinbrace; 400 Blood-stone Vil-lage; 800 leave Fort Kane	**9** 400 between Cutrock and Kinbrace; 1,200 leave Bloodstone Village	**10** 400 between Cutrock and Kinbrace; 1,200 Gate-hold
11 400 between Cutrock and Kinbrace; 1,200 arrive war camp	**12** 400 arrive Kinbrace	**13** 400: Kinbrace	**14** 800 leave Kinbrace	**15** 800 Goliad	**16** 800: Fort Kane	**17** 800: Fort Kane	**18** 800: Bloodstone Village	**19** 800: Gatehold	**20** 800 leave Gatehold
21 800 arrive war camp Total: 2,000	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25***	**26**	**27** 400 leave Hillsafar Hall	**28** 400 arrive Darmshall, 800 leave Darmshall	**29** 800 arrive Gatehold	**30** 800: Gatehold

* 25 Tarsakh: New total converted in Castle Perilous: 3440 goblins, 2220 orcs, 353 ogres, 351 trolls and 50 hobgoblins

Bloodstone Kingdom - Mirtul 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1 800 leave Gatehold, arrive war camp, Total in Camp: 2800 + 1000 Impiltur soldiers	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6** 400 leave Ironspur	**7** 400: High Walk	**8** 400 arrive Palishchuk	**9** 800 leave Palishchuk	**10** 800 between Palishchuk and war camp
11 800 arrive war camp. Total 3600 + 2000 Impiltur soldiers	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18** 400 leave Windless	**19** 800: Bloodstone Village, 1,200 leave Monastery of the Cup	**20** 1,200: Gatehold
21 1,200 arrive war camp; Total: 4,800 + 3,000 Impiltur soldiers	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**	**27***	**28**	**29**	**30**

* 27 Mirtul: New total converted in Castle Perilous: 3440 goblins, 2220 orcs, 353 ogres, 351 trolls and 50 hobgoblins

Bloodstone Kingdom - Kythorn 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1 War Camp total: Bloodstone 4,800 plus Impiltur 4,000	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 400 King and his Men: leave Blood-stone Village and Monastery of the Golden cup	10 400 King and his Men: Gatehold
11 400 King and his Men arrive War Camp. Total: Bloodstone 5,000 plus Impiltur 5,000	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24*	25	26	27	28	29	30

* 24 Kythorn: New total converted in Castle Perilous: 3440 goblins, 2220 orcs, 353 ogres, 351 trolls and 50 hobgoblins

Bloodstone Kingdom - Flamerule 1372 DR

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Joint army ready to attack at most favorable time	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27*	28	29	30

* 27 Flamerule: New total converted in Castle Perilous: 5153 goblins, 3378 orcs, 527 ogres, 466 trolls and 74 hobgoblins

Enemy in the Great Dale

(No new vampire dragons or draconians enter the Great Dale beginning with the 1st of Tarsakh. On that day the reception station in Veidarhofn is closed and the vampire dragons and draconians there move on to the ruins of Auststad, arriving on the 3rd day of Tarsakh.)

Monster	Number	- Number Killed*	Total alive
Narling, vampire dragon, Wizard 14, old red dragon	1		
Fragostandir, vampire dragon Wizard 11, mature adult red dragon	1		
Vampire dragon, Wizard 8, adult black dragon	1		
Vampire dragon, Wizard 7, young adult blue dragon	1		
Vampire dragon, Wizard 6, young adult blue dragon	1		
Vampire dragon, Sorcerer 6, adult green dragon	1		
Vampire dragon, Wizard 5, young adult black dragon	1		
Vampire dragon, Sorcerer 5, young adult white dragon	1		
Vampire dragon, Sorcerer 2, juvenile white dragon	1		
Troll draconian	10		
Ogre draconian	9		
Hobgoblin draconian	13		
Orc draconian	24		
Goblin draconian	26		

* Be sure to subtract those killed in the ruins of Veidarhofn as well.

Enemy in Castle Dragonblood

(No vampire dragons or draconians in Castle Dragonblood will have been destroyed before the PCs arrive there and do the job themselves.)

Monster	Number	- Number Killed	Total alive
Sammaster, vampire dragon lich, Wizard 26 (epic), advanced red dragon (epic) 65 HD, male.	1		

Monster	Number	- Number Killed	Total alive
Kargmelchina (avatar) vampire dragon lich, Necromancer 24 (epic), advanced blue dragon (epic), 64 HD, female	1		
Knellict, vampire dragon commander, Wizard 24, Assassin 2 (Epic 26), great wyrm red dragon, 40 HD, male	1		
Randgha, vampire dragon, commander of the guard, Sorcerer 18, very old blue dragon, 30 HD, female	1		
Ragzigul, vampire dragon, laboratory master, Necromancer 18, old red dragon, 28 HD, male	1		
Tarflea, vampire dragon, group commander 1, Sorcerer 10, mature adult blue dragon, 24 HD, female	1		
Ninnea, vampire dragon, group commander 2, Sorcerer 9, mature adult black dragon, 22 HD, female	1		
Larthur, vampire dragon, group commander 3, Wizard 9, adult green dragon, 20 HD, male	1		
Sarbina, vampire dragon, group commander 4, Sorcerer 7, adult white dragon, 18 HD, female	1		
Multar, vampire dragon, group commander 5, Wizard 5, juvenile blue dragon, 15 HD, male	1		
Rark, vampire dragon, group commander 6, Sorcerer 5, juvenile black dragon, 13 HD, male	1		
Troll draconian	6		
Ogre draconian	6		
Hobgoblin draconian	6		
Orc draconian	12		
Goblin draconian	12		

Enemy in the ruins of Castle Perilous

(All vampire dragons and draconians that were destroyed after the beginning of the *Great Dale* segment came either from Auststad or from the ruins of Castle Perilous, but not from Castle Dragonblood. The vampire dragons in the ruins - 32 at the start - are listed with the named leaders first and the remaining subcommanders afterward, ordered by dragon color.)

Monster	Number, start of *Bloodstone*	Number Killed	Total alive
Grandl, vampire dragon, grand necromancer, Necromancer 24 (epic), wyrm red dragon HD 37, male	1		
Dagget, vampire dragon, base commander, Wizard 22 (epic), wyrm blue dragon HD 36, male	1		
Wiluna, vampire dragon, deputy commander, Sorcerer 22 (epic), wyrm green dragon, HD 35, female	1		
Zurn, vampire dragon, commander of the South Wing, Sorcerer 19, ancient red dragon, HD 34, male	1		
Ghiela, vampire dragon, commander of the East Wing, Wizard 18, ancient blue dragon, HD 33, female	1		
Siehbar, vampire dragon, commander of the West Wing, Sorcerer 16, ancient green dragon, HD 32, male	1		
Wrultar, vampire dragon, commander of the North Wing, Wizard 10, ancient black dragon, HD 31, male	1		

Monster	Number, start of *Blood-stone*	Number Killed	Wing	Total alive
Narma, vampire dragon, commander of the Base Wing, Sorcerer 9, ancient white dragon, HD 30, female	1		Base Wing Commander	
Red vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 8, adult red dragon, 22 HD	1		Unassigned	
Red vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 7, young adult red dragon, 19 HD	2		Unassigned	
Red vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 5, juvenile red dragon, 16 HD	2		Unassigned	
Blue vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 8, mature adult blue dragon, 24 HD	1		Unassigned	
Blue vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 6, young adult blue dragon, 18 HD	1		Unassigned	
Blue vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 4, juvenile blue dragon, 15 HD	2		1 Unassigned 1 South	
Green vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 7, mature adult green dragon, 23 HD	2		1 East 1 North	
Green vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 5, adult green dragon, 20 HD	1		West	
Green vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 3, juvenile green dragon, 14 HD	1		Base	

Monster	Number, start of *Blood-stone*	Number Killed	Wing	Total alive
Black vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 6, mature adult black dragon, 22 HD	2		1 South 1 East	
Black vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 4, young adult black dragon, 16 HD	2		1 North 1 West	
Black vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 4, juvenile black dragon, 13 HD	1		Base	
White vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 5, adult white dragon, 18 HD	2		1 South 1 East	
White vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 3, young adult white dragon, 15 HD	2		1 North 1 West	
White vampire dragon, Wizard/Sorcerer 1, juvenile white dragon, 12 HD	1		Base	
Troll draconian	600		(90 monthly)	
Ogre draconian	600		(90 monthly)	
Hobgoblin draconian	80		(12 monthly)	
Orc draconian	3,700		(560 monthly)	
Goblin draconian	4,750*		(860 monthly)	

* The 950 goblins selected to be slaughtered and butchered *are not* included in this figure.

GAME MASTER NOTE: One dragon vampire, whom Kargmelchina and Sammaster believe to be Krepp Nargthong, but who really is Szarkh Gortth, has escaped the control of the two and is bound instead and enslaved to the spirit of the advanced red great wyrm Grafvitnir. Further information on Gortth can be found in the *Northern Journey Campaign Guide* Version 8.

Friends in the Vaasan War Camp
Bloodstone Forces

Description	Number	- Number Killed*	Total alive
King Gareth Dragonsbane, Paladin (Ilmater) 26, (Epic) Commander	1		
General Liam MacAroon, Paladin (Ilmater) 24 (Epic), Deputy Commander	1		
Brigadier Finia Driscoll, Paladin (Ilmater) 18, Strategist			
Brigadier Kardlnyr, Paladin (Ilmater) 18, Adjutant			
Duke Olwen, Ranger 24 (Epic), Commander, Damaran 4th and 5th Regiment units	1		
Duke Riordan, Bard 24 (Epic), Commander, 2nd Brigade	1		
Duke Dormythyrr, Fighter 14, Commander, Command Brigade Regiments	1		
Baron Garumbelly, Fighter 17, Commander, Vaasan Regiments	1		
Baron Celedon, Rogue 14, Wizard 10 (Epic 24), Commander, Damaran 1st, 2nd and 3rd Regiment units	1		
Mariabronne, Ranger 12, Scout Commander	1		
Myrddin Viligoth, Wizard 18, Fighter 4 (Epic 22), Commander, War Magi	1		
Friar Dugald, High Priest (Ilmater) 25 (Epic), Commander of the War Priests	1		
Baron Donlevy, Paladin (Ilmater) 5, Aristocrat 5, aide to the commander	1		

Description	Number	- Number Killed*	Total alive
Wizard/Sorcerer 13, War Mage	1		
Wizard/Sorcerer 12, War Mage	3		
Wizard/Sorcerer 11, War Mage	2		
Wizard/Sorcerer 10, War Mage	3		
Wizard/Sorcerer 9, War Mage	3		
Wizard/Sorcerer 8, War Mage	5		
Cleric (various good) 14, war priest	1		
Cleric (various good) 13, war priest	1		
Cleric (various good) 12, war priest	2		
Cleric (various good) 11, war priest	3		
Cleric (various good) 10, war priest	4		
Cleric (various good) 9, war priest	2		
Cleric (various good) 8, war priest	5		
Brigade commander, Paladin (Ilmater) 10	1		
Battalion commander, Paladin (Ilmater) 8	2		
Company commander, Paladin (Ilmater) 6	10		
Brigade commander, Fighter 10	1		
Battalion commander, Fighter 8	6		
Company commander, Fighter 6	26		

Description	Number	- Number Killed*	Total alive
Half-Orc Scout, Ranger 10	10		
Half-Orc Scout, Ranger 8	14		
Half-Orc Scout, Ranger 6	26		
Squad Leader, Fighter 5	128		
Soldier, Fighter 4	128		
Soldier, Fighter 3	500		
Soldier, Fighter 2	500		
Soldier, Fighter 1	1,000		
Soldier, Warrior 3	500		
Soldier, Warrior 2	500		
Soldier, Warrior 1	1,000		

GAME MASTER NOTE: The tables for the Damaran forces assume that the joint Bloodstone-Impilturian force will attack in mid-Flamerule and that the PCs will have finished with Castle Dragonblood within a month of that and then be on the scene in the ruins of Castle Perilous to take on their mission there. However, there will be many campaigns that won't stick to or even manage such a timetable.

In the early stages of the Vaasan Plain, the joint attack force will be spending a lot of its time wiping out goblin and orc draconians, while the stronger draconians and the vampire dragons hold back for the main defense. As long as the Bloodstone-Impilturian force doesn't proceed too quickly, this will work rather well, because the mercury pool will be turning out 560 new orc draconians and 8600 new goblin draconians monthly as replacements. That's more than 180 orc draconians and 280 goblin draconians a tenday. This will go on as long as nothing is undertaken to prevent new monsters from answering Sammaster's magical call.

As long as the main foes are goblin and orc draconians, losses to the Bloodstone-Impilturian host will be modest but cumulative. With time, however, the alliance will begin to be outnumbered. When this occurs, you can supply the Bloodstone host with some reinforcements. These will be volunteers and adventurers from within the Bloodstone Kingdom and the Moonsea Region who have learned of the war and decide to join the Bloodstone-Impilturian side, some because they believe in the cause and others because they hope the Bloodstone Kingdom will reward them with opportunities for a better life after the war.

Such volunteers should be added to the force at whatever rate they're needed, as long as the sums remain credible. The majority will be warriors and fighters. There may also - for religious reasons - be a respectable influx of clerics. Some lower and middle level wizards, sorcerers and rangers will be among the volunteers, and such a battle is sure to draw bards, some even of middle-high rank. Most of the volunteers, however, will have levels ranging from 1 to 7 and weighted toward the lower end.

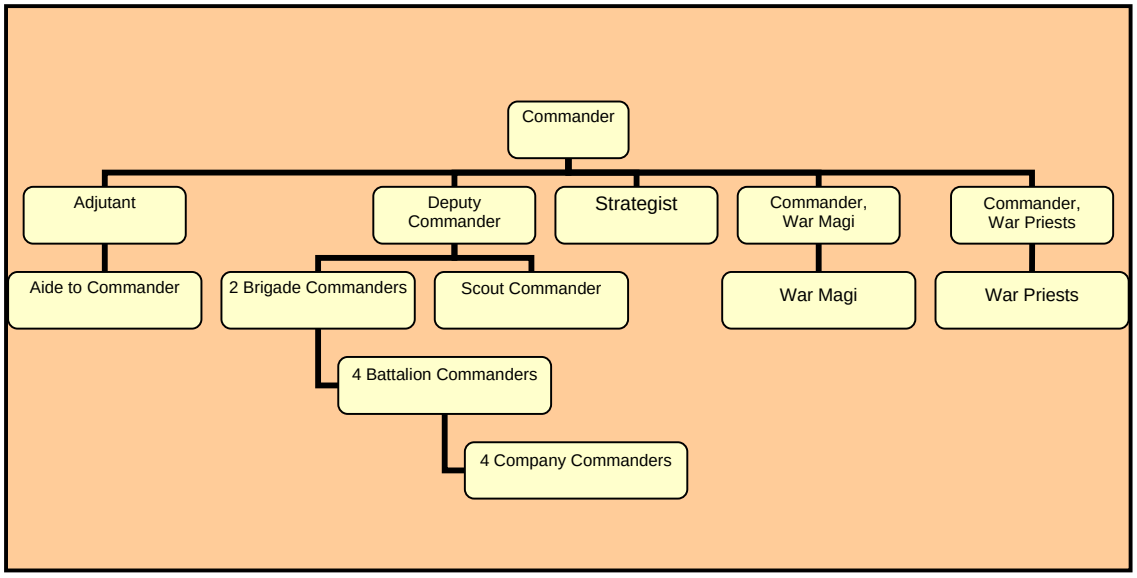
Additional volunteers who move north from Impiltur to join the Swords and Wand of Impiltur there will be minimal, although some important paladins may be replaced if they fall, and if needed, the queen will send up to 40 wizards and sorcerers with levels 1 to 5.

Friends in the Vaasan War Camp
Impilturian Forces

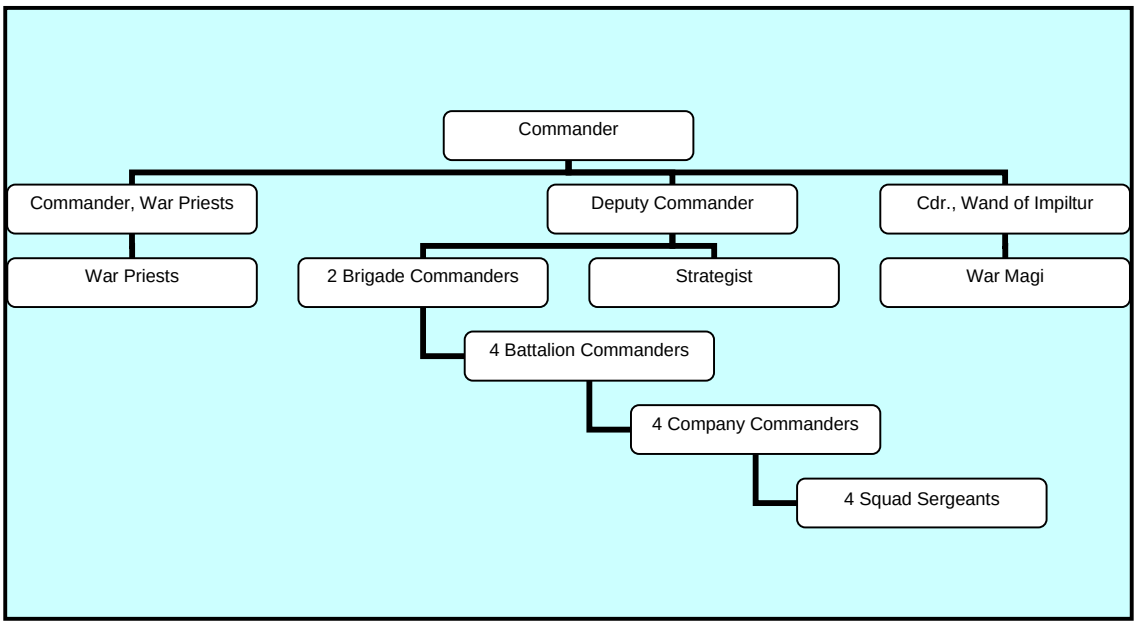
Description	Number	- Number Killed*	Total alive
General War Captain Haelimbrar, Paladin (Ilmater) 26 (Epic), Commander	1		
Admiral War Captain Rilim-braun, Paladin (Ilmater) 20, Deputy Commander	1		
Holy Strategist Lashilana, Priestess (Red Knight) 17, Adjutant	1		
War Captain Silmgar, Paladin (Ilmater) 13, Commander 1st Brigade	1		
War Captain Soargilm, Pala-din (Ilmater) 13, Commander 2nd Brigade	1		
Archwand Daerthnur, Invoker 25 (Epic), Commander Wand of Impiltur	1		
Battleguard General Wilmbrar, Priest (Tempus) 19, Comman-der of the war priests	1		
Wizard/Sorcerer 14, Wand of Impiltur	2		
Wizard/Sorcerer 12, Wand of Impiltur	3		
Wizard/Sorcerer 10, Wand of Impiltur	6		
Wizard/Sorcerer 8, Wand of Impiltur	7		
Cleric (various good) 14, war priest	3		
Cleric (various good) 12, war priest	3		
Cleric (various good) 10, war priest	4		
Cleric (various good) 8, war priest	4		

Description	Number	- Number Killed*	Total alive
Cleric (various good) 6, war priest	6		
Brigade commander, Paladin (Ilmater) 10	1		
Battalion commander, Paladin (Ilmater) 8	2		
Company commander, Paladin (Ilmater) 6	12		
Brigade commander, Fighter 10	1		
Battalion commander, Fighter 8	6		
Company commander, Fighter 6	24		
Scout, Ranger 10	6		
Scout, Ranger 8	10		
Scout, Ranger 6	16		
Sergeant, Squad Commander, Fighter 5	128		
Sergeant, Fighter 4	128		
Soldier, Fighter 3	500		
Soldier, Fighter 2	500		
Soldier, Fighter 1	1,000		
Soldier, Warrior 3	500		
Soldier, Warrior 2	500		
Soldier, Warrior 1	1,000		

Bloodstone Command Structure



Impilturian Command Structure



Alturiak to Kythorn

During these months, we assume the sigyll bearers will be crossing the Great Dale, dealing with Harbet Gall and the Dragon Cult and then heading on into the Bloodstone Kingdom. The Impilturian and Bloodstone hosts are marching toward and gradually reaching the Vaasan Plain. The Khanate War in the East has lapsed into an unofficial cease fire. The hobgoblins have been contained in the Giantspires. Forces from Impiltur, the Bloodstone Duchy of Soravia and the Freemen of the Great Dale guard the perimeter of the Giantspires which are the border of the hobgoblin Acragash Khanate. The are occasional skirmishes between the Bloodstone, Impilturian and Freemen forces on one side and hobgoblins on the other, but for the most part, the war horns are silent in Soravia and the Giantspires.

The Bloodstone and Impilturian troops are scheduled to begin reaching the Vaasan Plain War Camp in late Mirtul, and the full contingent of more than 10,000 men should arrive by the end of the last tenday in Kythorn. The two high commanders, King Gareth and General War Captain Haelimbrar of Impiltur, will depart Bloodstone Village in the first days of Flamerule and arrive in the war camp before the end of the first tenday in Flamerule.

The joint host will begin its one-day march to attack the ruins of Castle Perilous on the first day of the second tenday in Flamerule. From that point on, the Vaasan war is raging. At the end of each tenday, the game master should make the necessary dice checks (see below) to determine what occurred during the preceding tenday.

> **CAREFULLY CONSIDER** how you want to react if the dice show King Gareth, Haelimbrar or some other key NPC being slain in battle! The *Northern Journey* adventure makes no attempt to protect these people from death, and the Bloodstone Kingdom and Impiltur can survive without them. However, if key NPCs die and cannot be resurrected in your campaign, it may limit your own possibilities for the time after the Vaasan War. We can offer you little help in deciding whether you wish to let some of those who are slain by the dice actually die. You must weigh how you as game master wish things to be in your campaign after the war. If the dice show a key NPC being slain and you do not wish to accept that result at that time, simply negate it and reroll!

Running the Vaasan War

Once Flamerule comes in your campaign, the Bloodstone and Impilturian troops in Vaasa will move out of their war camp and begin trying to conquer the ruins of Castle Perilous. This will not be a fast war. The draconians are well-entrenched in the ruins, and vampire dragons will fly attacks upon the Bloodstone-Impilturian alliance at times.

At the end of each tenday beginning with the second tenday in Flamerule, you should make a series of dice rolls to determine what events took place in the war during the preceding 10 days. After making that determination, consider the result and, if necessary, modify or even fudge it to meet the needs of your campaign. Don't let unfortunate dice rolls derail the campaign itself.

As an example, if the dice tell you that King Gareth is slain in battle during the first tenday of war, they have given you a spectacular result, to be sure, but using this result may complicate your campaign in a manner that is simply detrimental to gaming. If that's the case, change the result. You should use the dice as a consultant but never forget that you, as the game master, and not the dice are responsible for giving your players and their PCs an enjoyable game.

The dice rolls also may set up a situation where one side clearly begins losing the war. That's neither good nor bad in itself; it's simply a neutral factor. But if a winner and a loser begin emerging too soon, it may throw your campaign needlessly off the track. If so, reduce the dice-indicated losses on the losing side. Your campaign will run best when you use the dice to help you establish trends but reserve key decisions for yourself as game master.

FIRST ROLL - Overall Trend, 1d20

Roll	Result
1-8	No trend, minor losses both sides
9-13	No trend, serious losses both sides
14-16	Alliance minor losses, Castle Perilous serious losses
17-19	Alliance serious losses, Castle Perilous minor losses
20	Critical loss, use critical loss table

CRITICAL LOSS - Step 1, 1d20
(Use only when the table FIRST ROLL *indicates a critical loss!)*

Roll	Result
1-7	No trend, minor losses both sides, Alliance critical loss
7-12	No trend, minor losses both sides, Castle Perilous critical loss
13-14	No trend, serious losses both sides, Alliance critical loss
15-16	No trend, serious losses both sides, Castle Perilous critical loss
17	Alliance minor losses, Castle Perilous serious losses, Alliance critical loss
18	Alliance serious losses, Castle Perilous minor losses, Alliance critical loss
19	Alliance minor losses, Castle Perilous serious losses, Castle Perilous critical loss
20	Alliance serious losses, Castle Perilous minor losses, Castle Perilous critical loss

Friendly Minor Losses

Roll	Result
6d20	Soldiers (Various) (BK)
6d20	Soldiers (Various) (I)
1d10	Squad Leaders (BK)
1d10	Sergeants (I)
1d10	Scouts (BK)
1d10	Scouts (I)
50%	1 Company Commander (BK)
40%	1 Company Commander (I)
5%	1 Mage (NK or I)
5%	1 Priest (BK or I)

Friendly Serious Losses

Roll	Result
10d20	Soldiers (Various) (BK)
10d20	Soldiers (Various) (I)
1d20	Squad Leaders (BK)
1d20	Sergeants (I)
1d20	Scouts (BK)
1d20	Scouts (I)
75%	1d4 Company Commanders (BK)
60%	1d4 Company Commanders (I)
20%	1d4 Mag1 (NK or I)
20%	1d4 Priests (BK or I)

Friendly Critical Losses

NOTE: *Any time the dice chooses an NPC who already is dead, throw again until a living NPC is chosen.*

CRITICAL LOSS - Alliance, 1d20
(Use only when the table CRITICAL LOSS - Step 1 *indicates a critical loss for the Alliance! BK = Bloodstone Kingdom, I = Impiltur.)*

Roll	Result
1-2	Baron Donlevy of Polten (BK)
3-4	Mariabronne, Bloodstone Riders (BK)
5-6	Myrddin Viligoth, Bloodstone Riders (BK)
7-8	Brigadier Finia Driscoll, Strategist (BK)
9-10	Holy Strategist Lashilana (I)
11-12	Brigadier Kardlnyr, Adjutant (BK)
13-14	Friar Dugald, War Priest Commander (BK)
15-16	Battleguard General Wilmbrar, War Priest Commander (I)
17-20	Member of the High Command (see table)

HIGH COMMAND - Alliance, 1d20
(Use only when the table CRITICAL LOSS - Alliance *indicates a High Command death. BK = Bloodstone Kingdom, I = Impiltur.)*)

Roll	Result
1-3	Baron Donlevy of Polten (BK)
4-6	General Liam MacAroon, Deputy Commander (BK)
7-8	Baron Garumbelly of Sunderland (BK)
9-10	Duke Dormythyrr of Brandiar (BK)
11-12	War Captain Soargilm (I)
13-14	War Captain Silmgar (I)
15-16	Admiral War Captain Rilimbraun, Deputy Commander (I)
17	Baron Celedon of Morov (BK)
18	Duke Riordan of Carmathan (BK)
19	Duke Olwen of Soravia (BK)
20	Top Command (see table)

TOP COMMAND - Alliance, 1d20
(Use only when the table HIGH COMMAND - Alliance *indicates a Top Command death. BK = Bloodstone Kingdom, I = Impiltur.)*)

Roll	Result
1-7	Archwand Daerthnur (I)
8-14	General War Captain Haelimbrar (I)
15-20	King Gareth Dragonsbane (BK)

Enemy Minor Losses

Roll	Result
20d20	Goblin Draconians
10d20	Orc Draconians
50%	1d10 Hobgoblin Draconians
1d10	Ogre Draconians
1d10	Troll Draconians
30%	1 Unnamed Vampire Dragon

Enemy Serious Losses

Roll	Result
40d20	Goblin Draconians
20d20	Orc Draconians
80%	1d10 Hobgoblin Draconians
2d20	Ogre Draconians
2d20	Troll Draconians
1d4	Unnamed Vampire Dragon

Enemy Critical Losses

NOTE: *Any time the dice chooses an NPC who already is dead, throw again until a living NPC is chosen. If four of the seven named vampire dragons at Castle Perilous are slain, Kargmelchina and Sammaster will send all of the vampire dragons at Castle Dragonblood except Knellict to the ruins of Castle Perilous. If that already is the case in your campaign, use the table* CRITICAL LOSS, Castle Perilous expanded.

CRITICAL LOSS - Castle Perilous, 1d20
(Use only when the table CRITICAL LOSS - Step 1 *indicates a critical loss for Castle Perilous.)*

Roll	Result
1-4	Wrultar (Wizard 10, Black HD 31)
5-8	Siehbar (Sorcerer 16, Green HD 32)
9-12	Ghiela (Wizard 18, Blue HD 33)
13-16	Zurn (Sorcerer 19, Red HD 34
17-18	Narma (Sorcerer 9, White HD 30)
19	Wiluna (Sorcerer 22, Green HD 35)
20	Dagget (Wizard 22, Blue HD 36)

CRITICAL LOSS - Castle Perilous expanded, 1d20
(Use only when the table CRITICAL LOSS - Step 1 *indicates a critical loss for Castle Perilous.)*

Roll	Result
1-2	Rark (Sorcerer 5, Black 13 HD)
3-4	Multar (Wizard 5, Blue HD 15)
5-6	Sarbina (Sorcerer 7, White HD 18)
7-8	Larthur (Wizard 9, Green HD 20)
9-10	Ninnea (Sorcerer 9, Black HD 22)
11	Tarflea (Sorcerer 10, Blue HD 24)
12	Narma (Sorcerer 9, White HD 30)
13	Wrultar (Wizard 10, Black HD 31)
14	Siehbar (Sorcerer 16, Green HD 32)
15	Ragzigul (Necromancer 18, Red HD 28)
16	Randgha (Sorcerer 18, Blue 30 HD)
17	Ghiela (Wizard 18, Blue HD 33)
18	Zurn (Sorcerer 19, Red HD 34
19	Wiluna (Sorcerer 22, Green HD 35)
20	Dagget (Wizard 22, Blue HD 36)

The Vaasan War - The Autumn Wind-Down

By the onset of autumn, the PCs and the Bloodstone-Impiltur-Alliance should have things wrapped up. The PCs should have destroyed Kargmelchina and Sammaster (short version of *NJ*) or have destroyed Kargmelchina and Sammaster's Suncatcher facet (long version of *NJ*) and ended the threat of Castle Dragonblood.

The Bloodstone-Impiltur-Alliance should have vanquished most of the enemy in the ruins of Castle Perilous, and the PCs should at least have started on their mission to destroy the mercury pool and the pool of blood beneath the ruins.

However, things aren't always as they should be. Your PCs may have been too slow to meet this timetable. If things are unresolved by mid-Eleint, the Bloodstone and Impilturian troops will have to make their pullback for the winter. They will resume the Vaasan War during Tarsakh of the following Year of the Rogue Dragons (1373 DR), but the war will take on some new aspects:

- If the PCs managed to destroy Harbet Gall, the Freemen of the Great Dale will send 1,000 soldiers to aid the alliance. They will reach the Vaasan battlefield in late Mirtul of the Year of Rogue Dragons.

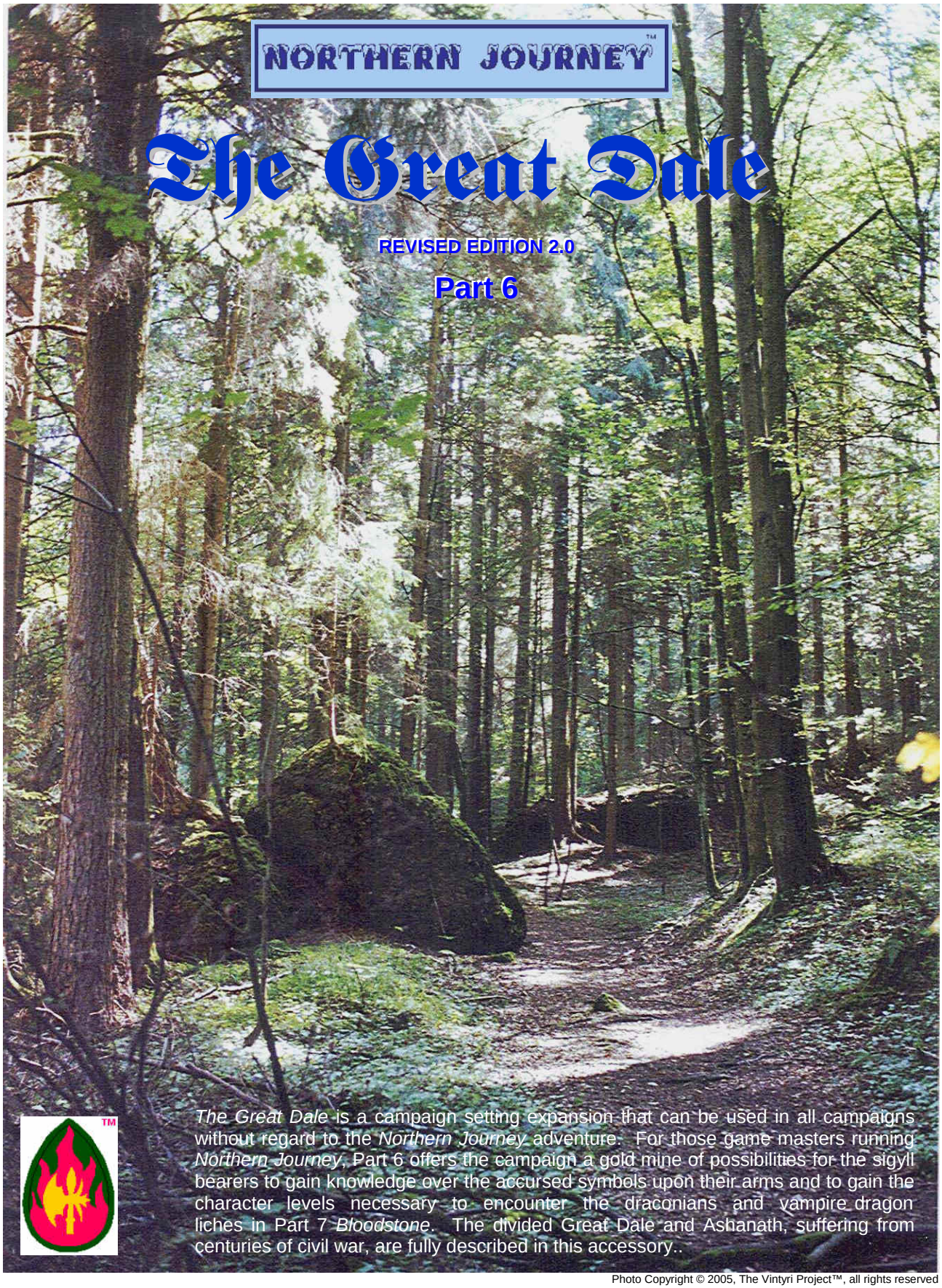
- Kargmelchina will continue to turn out as many draconians as possible over the winter, and they will attempt to break the alliance lines and invade Bloodstone Pass in Tarsakh.

If the alliance troops withdraw in mid-Eleint of the current Year of Wild Magic (1372 DR), they will be in a retreat situation. The draconians of the ruins of Castle Perilous will not pursue them, but the vampire dragons will conduct regular aerial attacks for the last two tendays in Eleint and the first tenday in Marpenoth. The following tables will help you decide what happens at the end of each of these tendays:

FIRST ROLL - Overall Trend, 1d20

Roll	Result
1-10	Minor alliance losses
11-14	Major alliance losses
15-16	Minor alliance losses, 1d4 vampire dragons downed
17-18	Major alliance losses, 2d4 vampire dragons downed
19	Minor alliance losses, 1d4 vampire dragons downed with critical alliance loss (see table)
20	Major alliance losses, 2d4 vampire dragons downed with critical alliance loss (see table)

To determine the exact losses, use the tables above.



NORTHERN JOURNEY™

The Great Dale

REVISED EDITION 2.0

Part 6

The Great Dale is a campaign setting expansion that can be used in all campaigns without regard to the *Northern Journey* adventure. For those game masters running *Northern Journey*, Part 6 offers the campaign a gold mine of possibilities for the sigyll bearers to gain knowledge over the accursed symbols upon their arms and to gain the character levels necessary to encounter the draconians and vampire dragon liches in Part 7 *Bloodstone*. The divided Great Dale and Ashanath, suffering from centuries of civil war, are fully described in this accessory..

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